

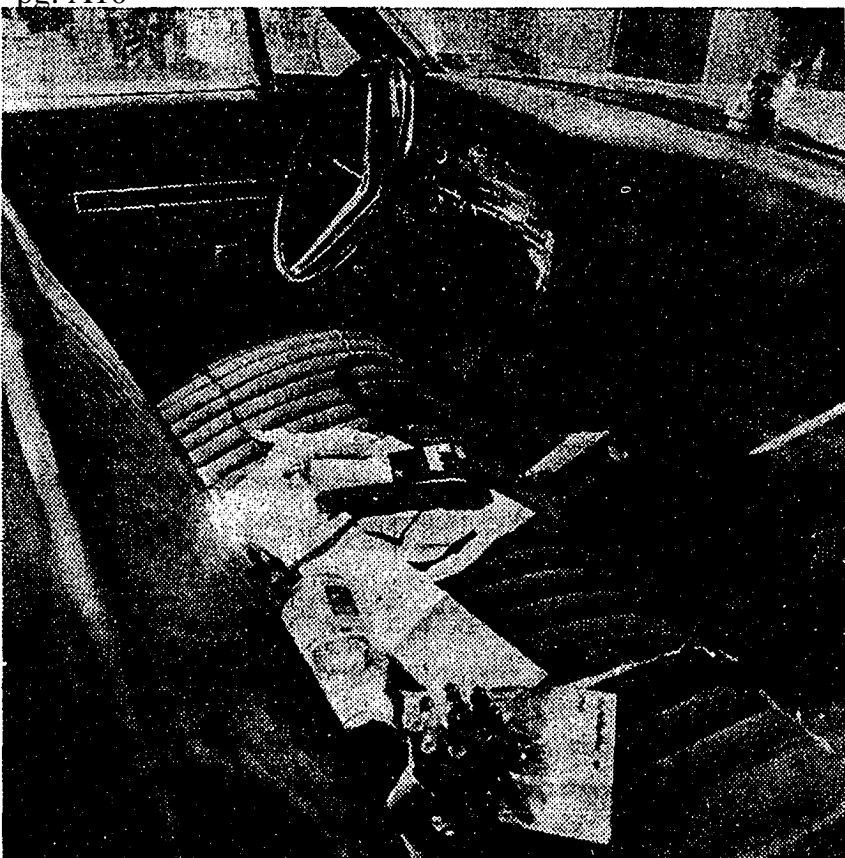
Berkowitz Is Described as 'Quiet' and as a 'Loner'

By LEONARD BUDER

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On seat of David Berkowitz's car are maps, a bottle, an automobile distributor cap and a copy of parking ticket that led to his arrest.

Berkowitz Is Described as 'Quiet' and as a 'Loner'

By LEONARD BUDER

To his co-workers and most of neighbors, David R. Berkowitz was a quiet, almost cherubic-looking individual who kept pretty much to himself, never went out with women and was hardly the type to attract attention, much less inspire fear or terror.

But inside his Yonkers studio apartment, where he kept the windows covered with bed sheets, the man the police say is the "Son of Sam," the .44-caliber killer scrawled lurid poetry and mystical statements on the walls, including references to Sam and his dog, police sources said.

Around a hole in one wall, Mr. Berkowitz drew a circle and made an arrow pointing to the circle and wrote, in effect "This is where I live."

His neighbors did not know of this life and his co-workers at the Bronx Post Office regarded him as a conscientious employee who caused no trouble.

Mike Elliot, a mail handler, recalled that on one recent occasion Mr. Berkowitz, referring to the so-called Son of Sam killings, told Theresa Graziano, another worker: "Theresa, you should put your hair up in a bun because he's going after girls with long hair."

Not Much of a Talker

But such conversation, during a coffee break, was apparently uncommon. Most of the time, Mr. Berkowitz, when he was not working, sat alone and read books, Mr. Elliott said. Leon Barta, a postal clerk, added: "When you talked with him, he seemed to have his mind on something else."

During his yearlong spree of shootings, which left five young women and a man dead and seven other persons injured, the .44-caliber killer, was the center of mystery. Yesterday, the police and other authorities attempted to piece together the background of the man they have accused of being the killer.

The police would not discuss what might have set off the murderous spree. Earlier they had described the man they were seeking as a psychopath who hated or resented women.

According to the information that was made available from official sources, Mr. Berkowitz, who turned 24 years old last June 1, was born in Brooklyn, but was reared in the Bronx. He served in the Army from January 1971 to June 1974, and qualified as a "sharpshooter" — the middle level on the army's scale for marksmanship — with an M-16 rifle.

During the hunt for Son of Sam, the

police had theorized that the gunman being sought might be a former policeman because of the way he reportedly fired his .44-caliber revolver—from a crouching position, as officers are trained to do—and because he seemed to have knowledge of how the police operated.

Mr. Berkowitz, it turned out, had been a New York City auxiliary police trainee before going into military service. Police officials emphasized that trainees and even auxiliary policemen are not trained to use firearms, but are generally assigned to unarmed patrols. Mr. Berkowitz worked on an emergency service truck in the Bronx.

The police originally said that the suspect's father was named Nat Berkowitz and that the father had remarried after David's mother had died. Yesterday they said that papers found in David Berkowitz's Yonkers apartment showed that he had been adopted and that his original family name was Falco.

The accused killer was said to have a married sister living in New York City and a grandmother, who still lives in the Co-op City building in the Bronx where David and his father once lived. A security guard in the building said she left her apartment earlier yesterday morning and had not returned.

David's father, who has not been available for comment, flew from Boynton Beach, Fla., where he now makes his

home, to New York City after his son was arrested.

Julia Berkowitz, David's stepmother, told reporters: "Leave me alone, I don't want to talk about it."

A Florida neighbor described the elder Berkowitzes as "a lovely couple" and said, "I just can't believe something like this could happen to such fine people."

David's father was recalled by some of his Bronx neighbors as having owned a hardware or dry goods store before moving to Florida about two and a half years ago.

Robert Folchi, principal of Christopher Columbus High School, from which the suspect graduated, had no recollections of David Berkowitz. At the Bronx Community College, which Mr. Berkowitz attended in the 1975 spring semester, an official said that there was nothing in the young man's college records to distinguish him from any other student.

While attending high school and college, Mr. Berkowitz lived with his father in a four-and-a-half-room apartment on the 17th floor of 170 Dreiser Loop in Co-op City.

Two young men who did not want to have their names published, said that they had been friends of Mr. Berkowitz during his teen-age years at Co-op City. They described him as a "peaceful" person but said that they felt that something may have happened to him while he was in the Army in Korea. They said that some of the letters he sent back then had sounded "incoherent."

"He was a loner, a nice boy," said Philip Lerner, who still lives in the building. "He stayed by himself. He was as human as anyone else. But he was alone. I never saw him with girls. Never saw him with any friends. Not Dave."

"He was always alone and never spoke to you more than to say hello," added Marie Magbe, another resident. After the father moved to Florida, David Berkowitz took an apartment at 2161 Barnes Avenue in the Bronx. Jacqueline Taglieri, a former neighbor, said: "He enjoyed drinking beer. We used to joke about watching his waistline. He was always carrying six-packs."

Early last year, Mr. Berkowitz — who was then working part-time as an unarmed guard for I.B.I. Security Services Agency—moved to an apartment in a private house at 171 Coligni Avenue in New Rochelle, N.Y. Three months later, he got into a dispute with the landlord over their two German shepherd dogs and suddenly moved out, without even claiming his \$200 security deposit.