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Then there were the sporadic visits to the Syrian Orthodox Cathedral.

Then she took up the First Baptist Church in Pasadena, even enrolling Sirhan, her brightest and most devout child, in the Sunday school and group of young teens. But here, as in Jerusalem years before, the serious young Sirhan was offended by the conduct of his peers. He complained about the other youngsters' frivolity; they held hands and giggled, while he felt that church was a place for praying and reading the Bible.

They remained with the Baptists for a few years, and in late June, 1960, this church sponsored the entry into the United States of Sharif and Saidallah, by then in their late 20s.

The older brothers, long accustomed to living away from the family, soon took quarters by themselves. Saidallah in an apartment nearby, Sharif in Highland Park.

#### Uses Nickname

Sirhan, meanwhile, now known by his mother's nickname of "Sol," was a student, first at Longfellow Elementary School for sixth grade, where a friend now recalls, "He was a very hard worker after school—sold papers, swept out a coffee shop nearby. My parents tried often to have me behave like him, he was so polite."

But even so, Sirhan was different from his schoolmates. Scholastically he was behind the American school system, although two years older than his classmates. This, in addition to his small size, dark skin and accented English made him an easy target for youngsters' gibes.

By the time he moved on to Eliot Junior High School, his pattern of social conduct was unalterably fixed, never to change significantly in the years ahead. A friend at that time recalls him only as a "loner who stayed to himself a lot." When they were graduated from junior high, Sirhan signed the friend's yearbook in Arabic; the friend couldn't translate Sirhan's message, but the point was, it was distinctive, something only Sirhan could do.

#### Situation Improves

Outwardly, things were going well for the Sirhans in the early 1960s. Sirhan was doing well in his studies, getting "A" and "B" grades without visible effort and working after school. Ayda was an accountant, Saidallah worked occasionally as a house painter, and Adel, despite resistance from Mary, got a night job at the Fez. Sharif was an accountant for the California Baptist Convention, and Mary found a \$195-a-month job as housekeeper for the nursery school in Pasadena's Westminster Presbyterian Church. The family bought the house they had been renting, and though their payments were sometimes late, they managed to hang onto it.

But behind the facade the Sirhans had erected against the world, things were not so smooth. Pasadena police were becoming acquainted with the Sirhan brothers.

Least seriously involved with the police was Saidallah, now 36, who in 1966 was convicted in Pasadena Municipal Court of being drunk in a public place. He also is said to have accumulated a number of traffic violations, in sufficient number that in June of 1968—only two days after the Kennedy assassination — his scheduled naturalization as a U.S. citizen was cancelled indefinitely and his traffic record was cited as meriting further investigation.

The youngest son, Munir, now 21, had progressively failing eyesight, a worry to him and his family. One day in 1963, when he was 15, he sneaked away in Saidallah's car and promptly smashed into a telephone pole because he could not see well enough to drive.

Three years later, in May, 1966 Munir was arrested in Flagstaff, Ariz., and pleaded guilty to a vagrancy charge. He couldn't meet bail and served 15 days in jail.

The next month, he was arrested and charged with

possession and sale of marijuana to an undercover narcotics agent. In October he was convicted and sentenced to five years' probation — one year to be served in jail — but early in 1967 the conviction was set aside since he was a juvenile at the time. Deportation proceedings against Munir were dropped in mid-1968, after his appeal on grounds that his was a juvenile offense.

Most seriously involved with the police was the eldest, Sharif, now 37. In May, 1963, Sharif was in an auto accident and suffered whiplash injuries to his back, neck and head. His supervisor in the Baptist accounting office, George Matas, said Sharif seemed to "withdraw from the group and from society. He complained of headaches, said his eyes hurt. His work deteriorated. We finally had to let him go."

The family was so embittered at Sharif's dismissal that they quit the Baptist church. That was in December. That same month, Sharif was arrested and charged with attempted murder after a romance which went on the rocks.

One Dec. 18, Sharif was arrested while in the act of sawing through the hydraulic brake lines of his girl friend's car. He was convicted of tampering with the auto and placed on one year's probation.

Ayda, meanwhile, in a surprisingly independent move for an Arab daughter, had gone off alone to Palm Springs, to work in a date shop run by a man named Mennell. Mary was closest to Ayda and opposed the move, but Ayda, in her mid-20s, was apparently possessed of

"His children did not speak in the house. They were afraid of the father."

some of Mary's own strength and determination.

She married Mennell, several years her senior, in 1961, and when she revealed the marriage to her family, a bitter scene ensued. Sharif, the eldest male, beat his wilful sister with a shoe, and Ayda fled.

Ayda later died of leukemia, and Sharif, a friend said, was so overcome with remorse that "he cried like a baby."

Throughout this period of the family's life, Sirhan was the least outgoing but most promising of the sons. It was Sirhan who would put the family on the map, everyone agreed: he was serious-minded, religious, polite, devoted to his mother, absorbed in books. One neighbor recalls he thought he might go into dentistry. Another felt he was better suited to a more intellectual pursuit — teaching, perhaps, or religious work.

It is a curious facet of Sirhan's personality that by that time—insofar as it is recalled by his acquaintances—he had a peculiar facility for showing only certain sides of his nature to certain groups of people—and never very much to anyone. The recollections of different persons have

about Sirhan are strangely flat and one-dimensional, dissimilar in content but strikingly similar in their lack of emotional force.

The heart-to-heart talks normal to adolescents apparently were not for him. With some family friends, for instance, he never discussed politics, yet with school friends he rarely discussed anything else.

His grades at John Muir High School were good and classmates remember him as very smart, very quiet, inclined to be somewhat competitive and given to discouragement when bested.

One of his better friends was Curtis Townsend, a Negro who lived not far away.

"He was a smart boy," says Townsend. "He caught on quick. We ran around with an interracial group, and we used to have contests to see who could get the highest grades on tests. He got discouraged if he didn't win."

Townsend also recalls how "a kid teased him because he often showed up at school with mixed pairs of socks—each of a different color—and Sirhan told him to lay off. He'd speak up if he was crossed. But it was funny, he was always doing something like that, maybe out of absentmindedness. Like in sports, for instance, kids made fun of him because he'd show up for sports, him with his 30-inch waist in 36 trousers. He'd just look funny."

Sirhan used to talk of going back to Jordan someday, Townsend says, and "he gave me the impression that when he got back to Jordan he'd be somebody big—a prince or something. He used to talk about going back to help his people."

Throughout his entire time in high school, Townsend says, he cannot recall a single girl Sirhan ever dated, or expressed an interest in, with one possible exception. However, this girl, when interviewed, said she not only never had dated Sirhan but could not recall him at all.

#### Mideast History

A girl in Sirhan's history class recalls that that was one of his better subjects and that he often used to come to class early or stay late to talk to the history teacher, Darwin Russell. Sirhan's card at the Pasadena Public Library bears out this observation; almost all of the books he checked out dealt with the Middle East.

William Spaniard, now in Saigon, recalls that Sirhan was "a taciturn individual who didn't say very much: friendly, really pleasant, but hard to get to know. He was brilliant. He was studying Russian when everyone else was barely getting by in Spanish and English."

Swedish foreign exchange student Christian Ek—now in Stockholm—says Sirhan "dreamed of being something big in Jordan after his studies in the United States. He was a calm, well-mannered boy, nothing evil about him." But Robert Chase, now of Glendale, remembers him as "so quiet and such a weirdie that at assemblies he wouldn't stand for the National Anthem."

Still another classmate, now in Mexico City, says Sirhan was "always so shy you hardly knew he was there. He sat in the back

of the class, never saying much of anything.

When Sirhan did say anything, others recall, it was almost always on the subject of politics, civil rights or, most often, the Middle East. Then, they say, he would become impassioned and make bitterly anti-Zionist statements.

Because of his lack of stature, Sirhan was not good at sports and disliked physical education classes, so he switched to R.O.T.C. He also was a member of the junior and senior class councils at John Muir, and is remembered by John McGrain, president of the council, as a likable fellow who seemed left out.

In the fall of 1963, Sirhan went on to Pasadena City College, a two-year institution that fell short of his dream of a college career. His grades continued to be above average.

His social life continued to be almost non-existent, consisting mainly of occasional cups of coffee with students at a hamburger place across from the campus.

Occasionally Adel, now 30, would take Sirhan with him to the Fez, where Sirhan would play the tamboura, a kind of drum. But these visits were infrequent, since Sirhan didn't date and his mother disapproved of nightclubs.

There were only two fleeting encounters with girls at this period. At PCC he became interested in a girl named Gwendolyn Gum and phoned her a few times for dates, but she was always busy. At one school carnival he sought to impress Gwendolyn, who was running a booth, by buying \$10 worth of votes from her at a penny a vote. Nothing happened. She never dated him.

#### Names in Diary

On another occasion, when he and others were in Newport Beach, Sirhan bought a soft drink for a girl named Peggy Ostercamp. That was the extent of his outward involvement with her.

Inwardly, Sirhan evidently fantasied these encounters as hopeful signs. He was in the habit of keeping an informal diary, and both girls' names are written in it, with names of other people Sirhan either wished or imagined were his friends.

From his late teens into college, he also attended meetings of the Organization of Arab Students, a loosely organized group whose status fluctuated from burgeoning to defunct, largely in response to the changing enthusiasms of its student membership. The group in Pasadena now is disbanded.

Sam Farraj, a Jordanian—now a medical lab technician living in Arcadia—has known the Sirhan family for many years. He knew Saidallah in Jerusalem and was once a close friend of Sharif. Sirhan, Adel and Sharif used to attend OAS meetings, Farraj says, and he recalls that Sirhan was an ardent nationalist, extremely anti-Zionist but not, he stresses, anti-Jewish.

At some point in late 1964 or early 1965, Sirhan's dreams of education and a profession began to fade and his studies took a sharp turn for the worse. By the end of his second year at PCC he was flunking every subject, and on the advice of a teacher, he dropped out of school. Once the faintest hope of his family, he now was not even qualified to continue his education at an upper division university.

#### What triggered this pre-

cipitous change in the grades that had always meant so much to him is not known. During this time Ayda's illness was wasting her life, and in March of 1965 she died. Perhaps the loss of his strong-willed, self-sufficient sister was more than he could withstand. But perhaps not, for emotional bonds among the Sirhan family were never the subject of outside discussion. From this time on, however, Sirhan was no longer the serious, scholarly boy.

For a while he worked at filling stations, but then another plan came to him. He had long been fond of horse racing, often spending afternoons at Santa Anita, where he would bet freely, sometimes losing every nickel, sometimes winning heavily.

So he decided to become a jockey. He had always been poor in sports, but as a jockey his lack of size would be an advantage. Perhaps it crossed his mind that successful jockeys were not made to feel unmanly, however small they were.

As a first step, Sirhan got a state license as an exercise boy and a "hot walker"—one who walks horses around to cool them down after a workout. He took a job at the Granja Vista del Rio ranch near Corona in the summer of 1966. But in September he fell from a horse and landed on his head.

Sirhan was "generally banged up" from the fall, one doctor said, and was hospitalized overnight for observation. At that time,



no major injury was noted, but Sirhan soon complained of impaired eyesight and insisted upon further treatment.

An ophthalmologist examined Sirhan in November and December, after Sirhan had complained of pain and blurred vision, but tests showed nothing wrong with Sirhan's eyes. When the doctor refused to write a letter confirming the alleged eye injury, he said Sirhan threatened him.

In July of 1967, no longer at the ranch, Sirhan filed a disability claim for workmen's compensation. The insurance firm, rather than dispute the claim, settled out of court for \$2,000. In February, 1968, after paying medical and legal fees, Sirhan had a nest egg of \$1,700—and no further hope of being a jockey.

Sirhan's fall is reminiscent of Sharif's 1963 auto accident, in light of the fact that Mary has since said Sirhan's behavior changed after the fall. "He didn't seem to be hurt too bad, I mean physically," she said. "But he changed

"He was a clever boy — very quick — but unstable and very unhappy . . ."

somehow. After that accident, we seemed not so close any more. I couldn't even get through to him when we talked."

Whether or not Sirhan incurred some barely detectable but nonetheless affective brain damage is the subject of much speculation today. A defense attorney has indicated this possibility will be exhaustively probed.

For several months after leaving the ranch, Sirhan didn't work. Finally Mary appealed on his behalf to John Weidner, owner of a Pasadena health food shop, and in late 1967 Weidner gave Sirhan a job as stock and delivery boy at \$2 an hour.

Weidner found his new employe bright, "pleasant and witty, eager to please and so honest that he soon trusted Sirhan to make bank deposits.

But he also found him quick to resent what he construed as criticism of his work. "He was a proud man with a good opinion of himself," says Weidner, adding that Sirhan visibly resented authority.

Weidner's wife, Naomi, adds "He had a lot of pride, a lot of arrogance. We were always careful how we gave him an order. If you gave him an order he didn't like he became very resentful."

Weidner, a Dutch World War II veteran who worked in the underground saving Jews from the Nazis, took a more than routine interest in the nationalistic young immigrant, and when business was slow he would lead Sirhan into conversation.

"I think he was a man of revolt," says Weidner. "He was a kind of anarchist against society, against law and order, against those who possess. Against those who have more than he has and are more successful in life." He says that when they discussed civil rights and racial disorder, Sirhan would say, "In America, freedom does not exist. I agree with the violence."

#### Atheistic Views

Sirhan also expressed dislike for wealthy people, said Weidner, and "a real hatred for Jews. He said the Jewish people were rich and had taken his country, so he was very angry against them."

When Weidner said Sirhan should try to forgive injustice, Sirhan answered, "I would like to be like you but I cannot."

And once, in a discussion of religion, Sirhan told Weidner, "There is no God. You see in Israel what happens to the Arab. There is no God. How can you have a God?"

Sirhan at this point had begun to explore theosophy and somehow became attracted to the Rosicrucian

ans, or Ancient Mystical Order of the Rosae Crucis, which sells mail-order courses which purport to help one unlock the psychic powers of the mind. He also corresponded with a mystically inclined man in Napa—whose identity and whereabouts are presently unknown—who confided to some theosophist friends after the Kennedy assassination that the tone of Sirhan's letters had caused him to be fearful months before that Sirhan's mental health was perhaps endangered as a result of uninformed dabbling with mystical concepts.

Mysticism aside, Sirhan evidently had not repudiated conventional religion as thoroughly as his brash arguments with Weidner would indicate. In his jail cell he still prays to the Christian God with his mother.

Adding fuel to his arguments with Weidner was the still-recent six-day war in which Israel so humiliated her Arab adversaries. Sirhan often

"I saw him walking barefoot. He said it was because his father had beat him . . . and that he took a piece of iron, heated it on the stove and put it on the boy's heel . . ."

equated the Jews' victory with the Nazis' treatment of Jews and demanded: "You think the Jews can't be cruel, too?"

Mrs. Weidner also talked with Sirhan, and she recalls one particularly memorable story. "I'm going to tell you something I've never told anyone, not even my parents," she quotes Sirhan as saying. "When I was small, I saw an Israeli soldier cut off the breasts of an Arab woman."

#### No Evidence

There is no evidence that he ever did tell this story, or any other, to anyone else. It is also interesting to note that of the several atrocities Bishara said his son witnessed, this one was not among them.

In March, 1968, a month after getting his disability claim, Sirhan and the Weidners fell out. There was a dispute about some order Weidner gave him. Sirhan insisted he had been called a liar. Weidner insisted he meant no such thing and attempted to patch it up, even going to Sirhan's home to talk it over. Sirhan was adamant and quit his job.

Soon after, he filed a claim for severance before the Labor Relations Board, but he lost the claim.

Meanwhile, he was still the model neighbor youth, dropping in on Mrs. Olive Blakeslee for games of Chinese checkers, talking with Mrs. Martin Pulite about how to plant a garden for his mother, or visiting with Linda Massri, a longtime family friend, about religion, psychology and books.

"We used to talk about Freud," says Mrs. Massri, herself American-born but of Syrian parentage. "We'd talk about the psychological motivations for people's actions, and Sirhan would say that God was in a person's mind."

She was especially close to Sirhan, she says. "He was like a little brother to me. . . I don't know where the reports of Sirhan's violent hatred toward the Israelis came from. He never discussed such feelings with me as long as I knew him. I could see all the nice things in his character. He was especially good to his mother; he was always with her. He was a well-educated and well-behaved boy, an intellectual."

And neither did Sirhan ever discuss his father with Mrs. Massri, she says, but after the assassination she wondered at some length about his feelings toward Bishara. On the day of the shooting, a badly shaken Saidallah came to see her, she says, and told her, "My father was a second Hitler."

#### Failed in Hopes

As the summer of 1968 drew near, Sirhan had little to look forward to. He had failed to achieve his hopes through education, his dream of becoming a jockey had turned into a bitter joke, and even jobs that he had felt beneath him had fallen by the wayside.

All he had left was the remainder of his disability claim, which he had given to his mother for safekeeping, and for which he had to argue every time he wanted money, because she feared he would waste it.

He puttered around the house, read the newspapers regularly, followed the continuing ferment in the Middle East and was interested in the accelerating political campaign here. In late April the two interests converged, in a political column in which Sen. Kennedy was criticized for his support of the Israeli cause. Sirhan cut out the column and put it in his wallet.

#### The Fatal Day

He also jotted down his own political thoughts, we are told, in a couple of stenographic notebooks—anti-Israeli, pro-Arab thoughts—and sometime about the middle of May, the notation that Kennedy must die before June 5.

On the morning of Tuesday, June 4—election day—Sirhan lounged around the house for most of the morning. He was at home when his mother left for work at 8 a.m. and he was still there around noon.

By early afternoon he was at the pistol range of the San Gabriel Valley Gun Club, where he practiced rapid firing of several hundred rounds until about 5 p.m.

#### Met Acquaintance

Then he drifted over to Bob's Big Boy hamburger stand, next to PCC, where he met a casual acquaintance, also an Arab, named Gaymoard Mistri. After talking for a while they walked over to the PCC cafeteria, where they met three more of Sirhan's slight acquaintances, Abdul Jabra Malki, Marouf Badran and Anour Saigh.

None of the four knew Sirhan well enough to sense his real frame of mind—for no one had ever known him well—but he seemed, they said, to be in a good mood. They chatted desultorily about nothing special until about 7:15, when the others had to excuse themselves and go to evening classes.

Sirhan waved a casual good night and strolled off into the early evening toward his car.

The polls would be closing soon, the voting would be over. All but his. It was time he was getting to the Ambassador.

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Last spring, about the time the leaves were budding, a man decided to test that recurrent, highest promise of the American dream. He decided to run for President.

Robert Francis Kennedy was fortune's darling, some said. Son of one of America's wealthiest families, influential senator, brother to a martyred President and, as the martyr took on the lineaments of folk-hero, heir to an incomparably rich political legacy of goodwill and sympathy. He was the new exponent of the legendary Kennedy mystique, idealism's new standard-bearer, the new champion of the poor.

Now it is winter, the world is no newer, and those same leaves have long since fallen on a hillside in Virginia, skittering drily across the grave of Robert Francis Kennedy. Alongside the brother whose dreams he shared and from whose torch he took his fire, Robert Kennedy also faces now the city that was Camelot to both. The season advances, the world rolls, the people have selected another, not Kennedy.

And in the night, when the wind blows across the Potomac River and up the forlorn Arlington hillside of the dead, Robert's grave is lit by the fitful flicker of the eternal flame that burns above John, but shares the light.

One man decided that Robert F. Kennedy should not be President of the United States. The voters who might have elected him were disenfranchised by a gun. Hopes were pinned elsewhere or abandoned, old allegiances forgotten, new ones made—all because of one little man with a .22 pistol.

The assassin's name is Sirhan Bishara Sirhan, and though he has pleaded innocent, that he shot Kennedy is beyond dispute; he was seized before he finished shooting. What is pertinent, and what the defense will hinge upon, his attorney says, is "Why did he do it? Is he responsible?"

These questions may one day be answered, hopefully at Sirhan's trial which opens Tuesday. It would be socially profitable for us to know.



**HIS NAME MEANS 'WANDERER'**—He was injured in the war between the Arabs and Israelis in 1948, his father says of Sirhan Sirhan, not physically, but "woundings, sufferings in his head and heart."

Times photo





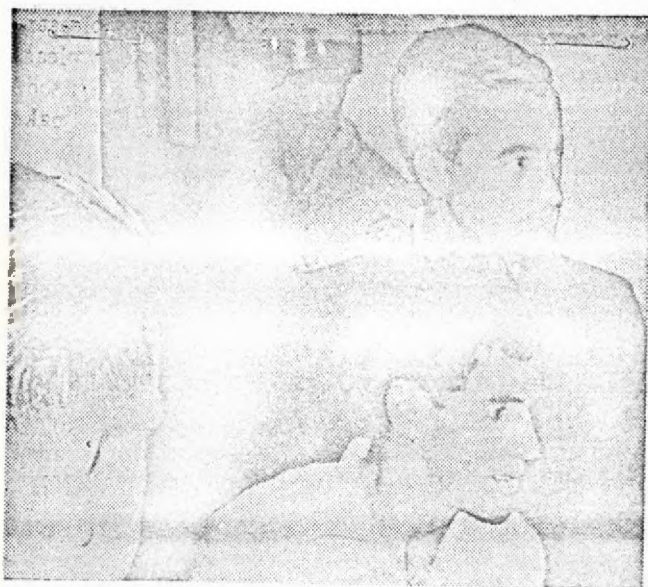
**THE PATRIARCH**—Bishara Sirhan, head of his family, states in his village near Jerusalem that son Sirhan suffered traumatic experiences in Arab-Israeli war in 1948.

UPI photo



**A MOTHER'S TEARS**—Mrs. Mary Sirhan, weeping in the arms of a neighbor, Mrs. Clarence C. Robinson, believed that her son Sirhan was the most promising of her children. Mrs. Sirhan attempted to keep her family together despite a divorce from her husband.





**AT ARRAIGNMENT**—Sirhan B. Sirhan is taken by officers into court for arraignment hours after the shooting of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy at Ambassador.

Times photo



(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

# Sirhan Trial Starts; Three Ways to Go

By JOHN DOUGLAS

Herald-Examiner Staff Writer

Sirhan Bishara Sirhan, 24, goes on trial for murder today in a historic case which conceivably could cost him his life, send him to a mental institution, or see him go free.

The charge is that he killed Sen. Robert F. Kennedy in an Ambassador Hotel kitchen early on the morning of June 5, 1968.

Sirhan's will be the first major political assassination trial in this country since Leon Czolgosz was tried for the murder of President William McKinley in Erie County Court at Buffalo, N.Y., in 1902.

Defense counsel are Grant B. Cooper, widely known criminal lawyer; Russell E. Parsons, veteran criminal and appeals lawyer and New York attorney Emile Zola Berman, known for

his 1956 defense of Marine Sgt. Matthew McKeon in the Camp Lejeune "death march" case.

Opposing this trio is a team from the office of Dist. Atty. Evelle J. Younger led by Chief Dep. Dist. Atty. Lynn Compton. Backstopping Compton are Dep. Dist. Attys. David N. Fitts and John Howard.

First order of business ordered for today by Superior Court Judge Herbert V. Walker, who will preside, is submission of a number of defense motions.

Cooper and Parsons delivered these to Judge Walker at a pre-trial conference yesterday, but the decision of that conference was that no motion in the trial should be submitted or argued except in open court.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

A-1 Herald-Examiner  
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It is understood that in one of the motions the defense seeks copies of the statements taken by the prosecution from its listed preliminary witnesses. That list was furnished Parsons last Oct. 22.

In order for security to be maintained over Sirhan, the conference was held in the temporary 13th floor Hall of Justice courtroom in which nearly all preliminaries in the case have been handled. Today's case will open in Dept. 107—an eighth-floor courtroom in the Hall of Justice which has been armored and sealed within a security perimeter for the young Jordanian's trial.

Newsmen and spectators entering the courtroom will be carefully searched before entering, but prospective jurors will

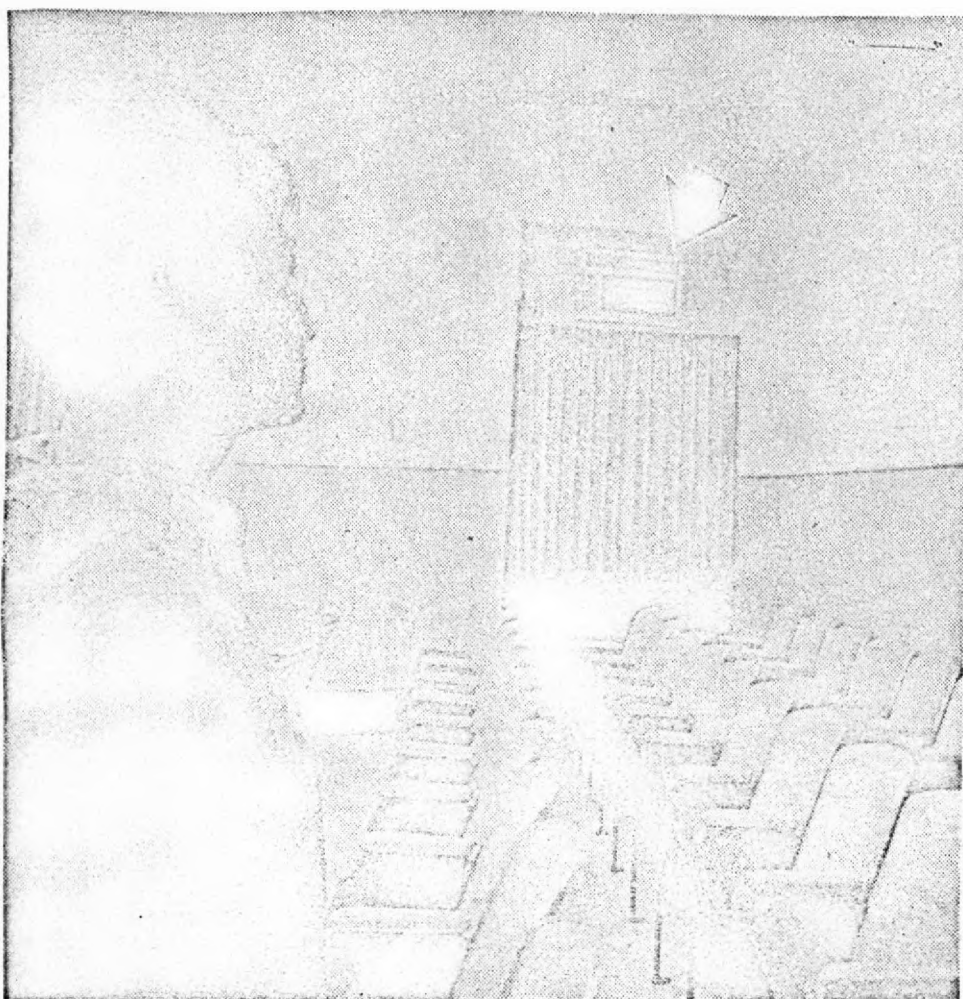
not, a court attache said yesterday.

He said that no special provisions for selection of the Sirhan jurors had been made. They will be selected from the county's regular jury pool.

Panels of 25 prospective jurors each will be drawn and taken to a waiting room in the old Hall of Records, then transferred to the courtroom when they are needed.

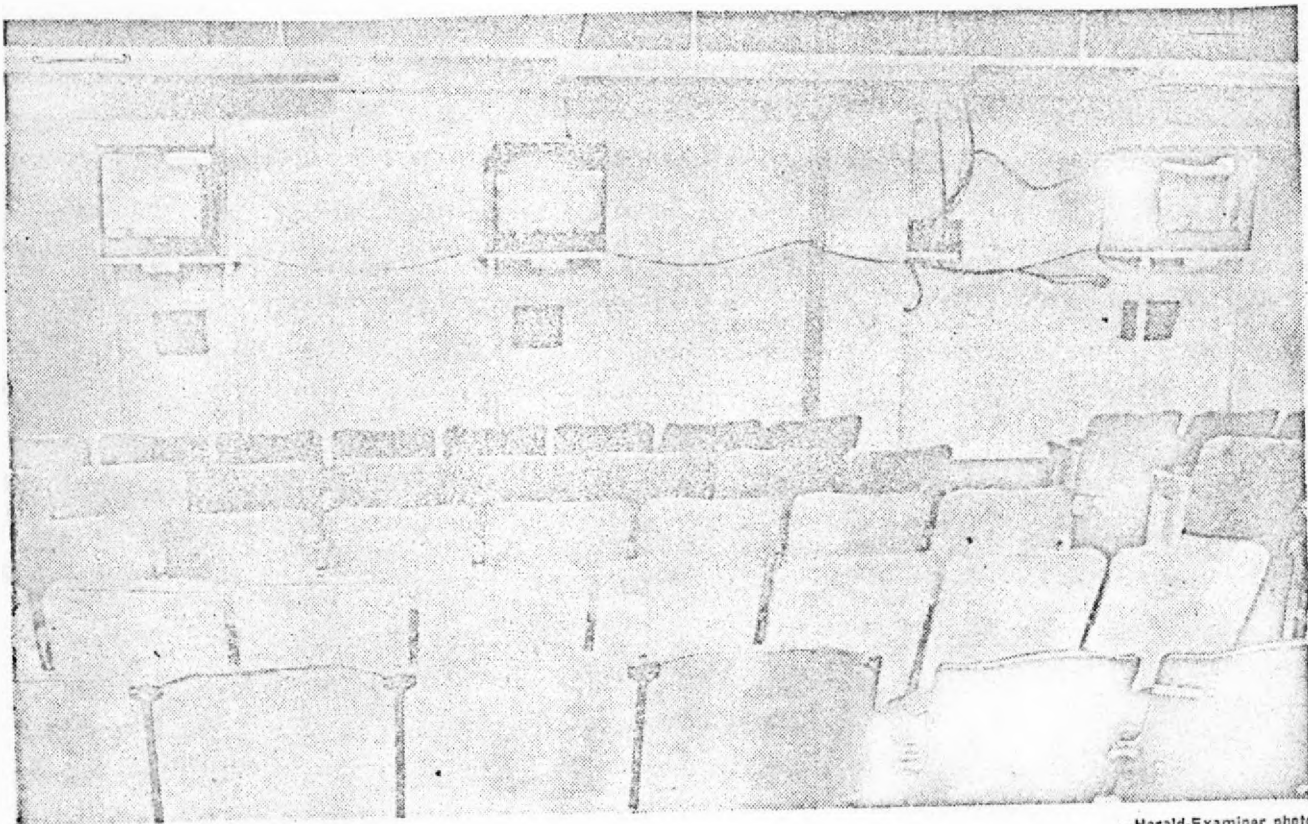
Jury selection which may take as long as three weeks, will follow submission of the defense motions.

Once the jury is selected, it will be "sequestered"—locked up for the duration of the trial.



—Herald-Examiner photo

**COURT CLERK ALICE NISHIKAWA EYES HIDDEN TV CAMERA**  
It will survey Sirhan trial from position in air conditioner (arrow).



—Herald-Examiner photo

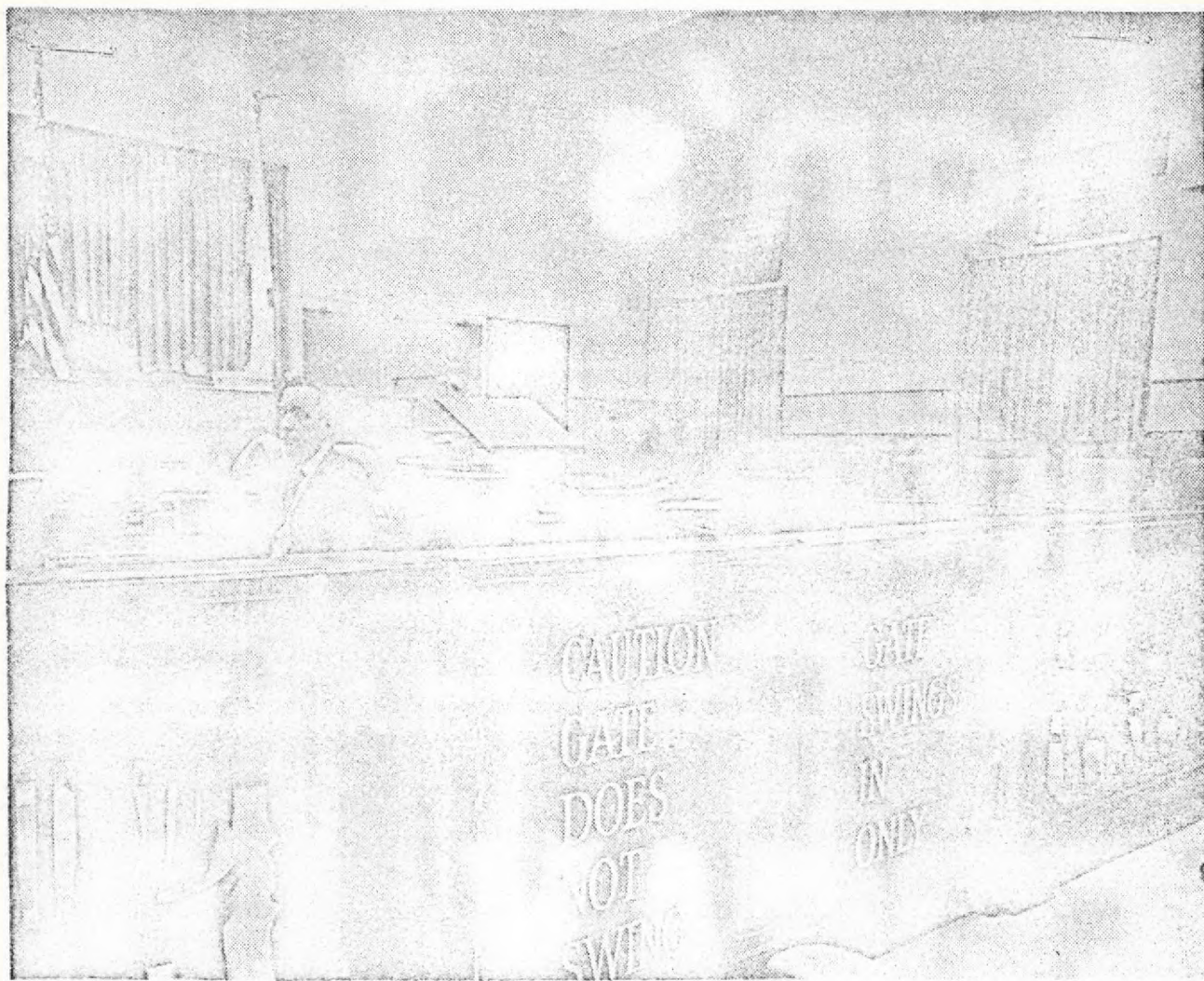
**TELEVISION MONITORS IN OVERFLOW PRESS ROOM WILL AID IN TRIAL COVERAGE**  
Closed-circuit network has been set up in the Hall of Justice Building.



—Herald-Examiner photo

**SUPERIOR COURT JUDGE HERBERT WALKER**  
He presides at trial of Sirhan B. Sirhan





—Herald-Examiner photo

**SIRHAN WILL BE TRIED IN THIS HEAVILY SECURED COURTROOM**  
Elaborate precautions for his safety have been taken, including bullet-proofing of the area

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

# Sirhan's Trial Opens, Recesses Until Today After Brief Session

BY DAVE SMITH

Times Staff Writer

The long-postponed trial of Sirhan Bishara Sirhan began in a heavily guarded Hall of Justice courtroom Tuesday and proceeded briefly before defense maneuvers delayed it again.

Superior Judge Herbert V. Walker took the bench at 9:40 a.m. and formally opened the case of the People vs. Sirhan, the slight youth charged with the murder of Robert F. Kennedy.

But immediately one of Sirhan's attorneys asked that a closed session be held in Judge Walker's chambers to discuss a motion neither the court nor attorneys would describe to newsmen—although there were reports it was a request for yet another postponement in the celebrated case.

After an hour in chambers, four motions were introduced in court. The argument on motions was continued until the trial resumes this afternoon.

Defense attorney Grant B. Cooper made the four motions, two of which were denied.

## Two Motions Set for Today

Today's session will take up a defense motion to set aside Sirhan's plea of not guilty, then to a motion to set aside the indictment.

The first motion is a legal technicality; an indictment cannot be quashed while a plea stands. After a plea is withdrawn, if another indictment is returned, the original plea may be re-entered.

It had been anticipated that Cooper, 65, now under federal grand jury investigation arising from the Friars Club card-cheating case, would seek a fourth continuance of Sirhan's trial, on grounds that the publicity involving himself might be prejudicial to Sirhan's right to a fair trial.

Two minutes after Judge Walker took the bench Cooper asked for a closed session in the judge's chambers to consider a motion which, Cooper said, "would only complicate matters" if introduced in open court.

Judge Walker, Sirhan and attorneys for the defense and prosecution withdrew to chambers for more than an hour. Cooper introduced his four legal motions upon their reappearance at 11:16 a.m. The session was adjourned shortly afterward.

But in a corridor news conference after adjournment, Cooper was asked to comment on speculation that he might seek a continuance because of his involvement with the federal grand jury.

"I'm not allowed to comment on anything that was discussed in chambers," Cooper said, thus indicating that the topic was at least discussed.

## Reason Indicated for Rejection

It would also indicate that Judge Walker rejected a continuance on those grounds, since the four motions Cooper introduced in court did not touch on the Friars Club investigation.

Of the four, Judge Walker denied Cooper's motion to impanel two juries—one to decide the question of guilt or innocence, the other to set a penalty if Sirhan is found guilty—and a motion that prospective jurors be given written questions to answer as a time-saving device during jury selection.

Cooper said he and his two associates in the Sirhan defense, Russell F. Parsons, 69, and New York attorney Emile Zola Berman,

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

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65, would seek to quash the first-degree murder indictment by attacking the system by which grand juries and petit juries are selected.

Parsons, after adjournment, said the defense teams feel the grand jury that indicted Sirhan last June 6 "was not a proper cross-section." Parsons said such juries frequently exclude women, minority group members and people of various professions.

Grand juries are selected after nomination by Superior Court judges, while petit juries are selected from lists of voters.

#### 14 Women on Jury

(The 23-member County Grand Jury that indicted Sirhan contained 14 women—believed to be the most ever on an L.A. County Grand Jury.)

Chief Dep. Dist. Atty. Lynn D. Compton objected to Cooper's motion to name two juries, contending that California law did not intend, though it does allow, separate juries for the trial and penalty phases.

Compton said it would be "very premature and improper to announce now that there will be two juries," but if that becomes warranted during the course of Sirhan's trial, "the court, at its own discretion, can do so later."

Cooper countered that "the law is a living, growing thing. The law yesterday is no longer the law today."

Judge Walker denied the motion, but said he would entertain its reintroduction later as circumstances warrant.

In arguing for the submission of written questions for prospective jurors, Cooper said it would save time in what would otherwise, he estimated, take as long as six weeks for jury selection.

#### Question of Consultations

But Judge Walker denied this motion, saying "we have no real experience to go by in this state, particularly in this court" regarding this procedure. He added that if jurors were given written questions, "there could be some consultations" about how to answer.

Compton said the prosecution team—including Dep. Dist. Attorneys John E. Howard and David N. Fitts—was ready to argue Cooper's motion to set aside the plea, "in the morning or this afternoon, if necessary."

Cooper requested, however, that the trial be recessed till 2 p.m. today "because I have other commitments."

Judge Walker, smiling broadly, granted the request.

Cooper appeared in federal court at 1 p.m. Tuesday, where he was ordered to answer questions by the federal grand jury.

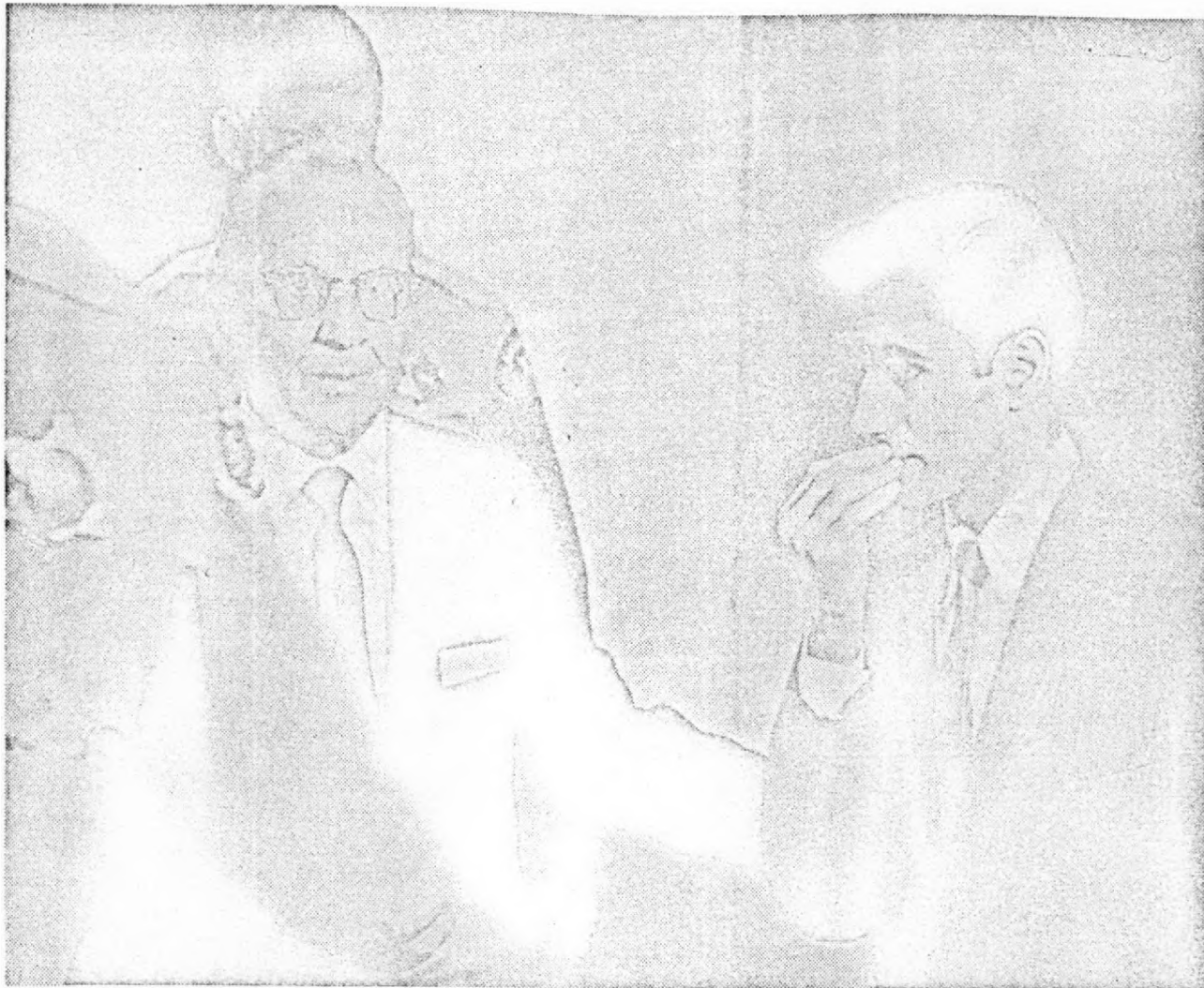
#### Sat Close to Parsons

Throughout the brief proceedings, Sirhan, clad in a new blue-gray suit, remained silent. He sat close to Parsons, first attorney to enter the defense, and gazed nervously at the public area of the 75-seat courtroom.

The seats were divided about evenly between security officers and newsmen, with only five members of the general public admitted after the trial began.

In two seats in the back row sat the defendant's mother, Mrs. Mary Sirhan, 55, of Pasadena, and Munir (Joe) Sirhan, 21, the only one of Sirhan's four brothers in this area to attend the first day of trial.





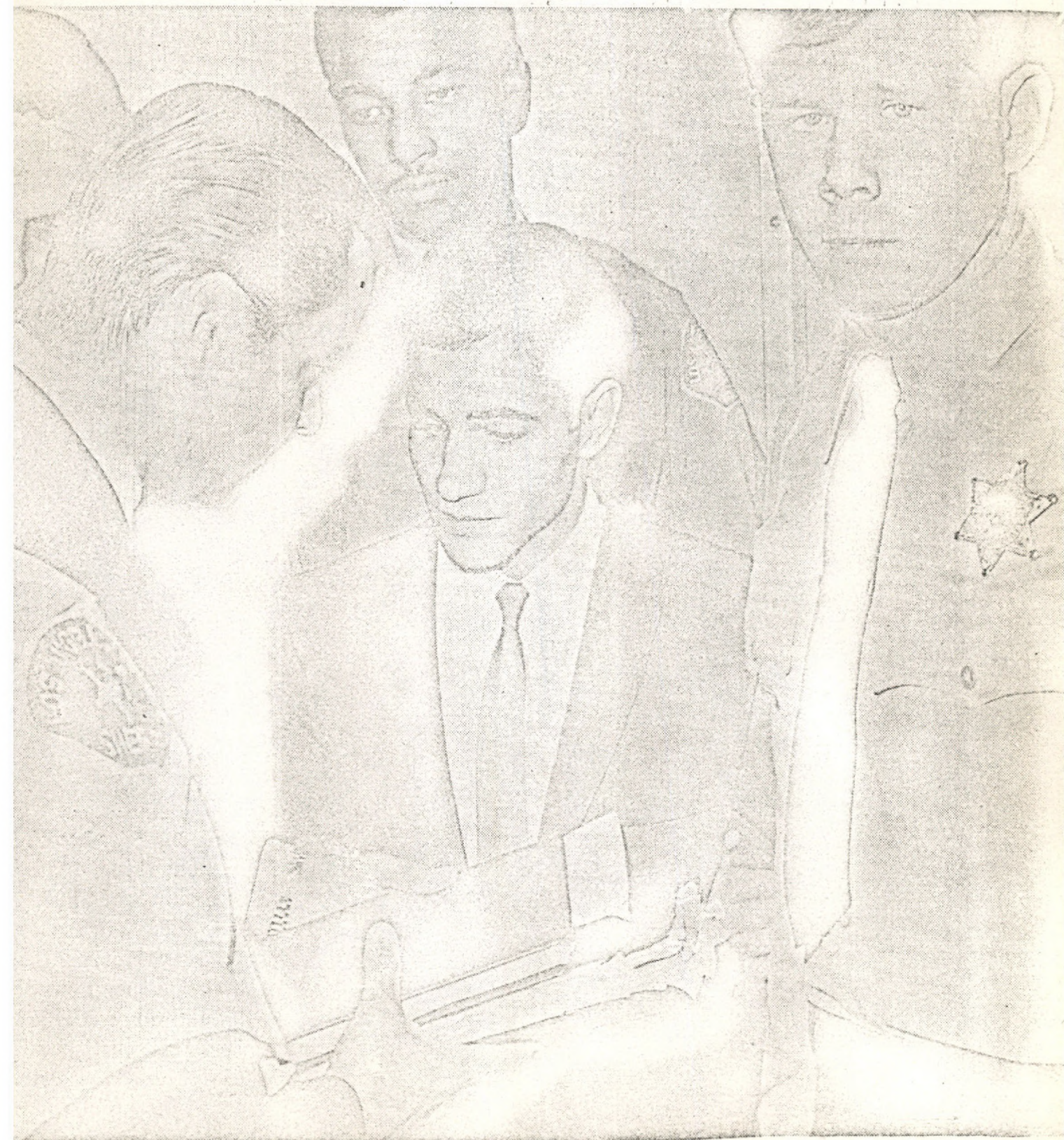
**TRIAL BEGINS**—Sirhan Bishara Sirhan is escorted by a defense attorney, Russell E. Parsons, on arrival

at courtroom in the Hall of Justice for the start of his trial in the slaying of Robert F. Kennedy.

AP photo



# Sirhan Arrives Under Heavy Guard



2025 RELEASE UNDER E.O. 14176

INDEXED — Sirhan Bishara Sirhan, ringed by deputy sheriffs, is handed  
to his defense investigator Michael A. McGowan on way to courtroom





**MOTHER ARRIVES**—Mrs. Mary Sirhan, 55, of Pasadena, is escorted to the courtroom by another son, Munir (Joel) Sirhan, 21. They had seats in back row.

Times photos by John Malmin

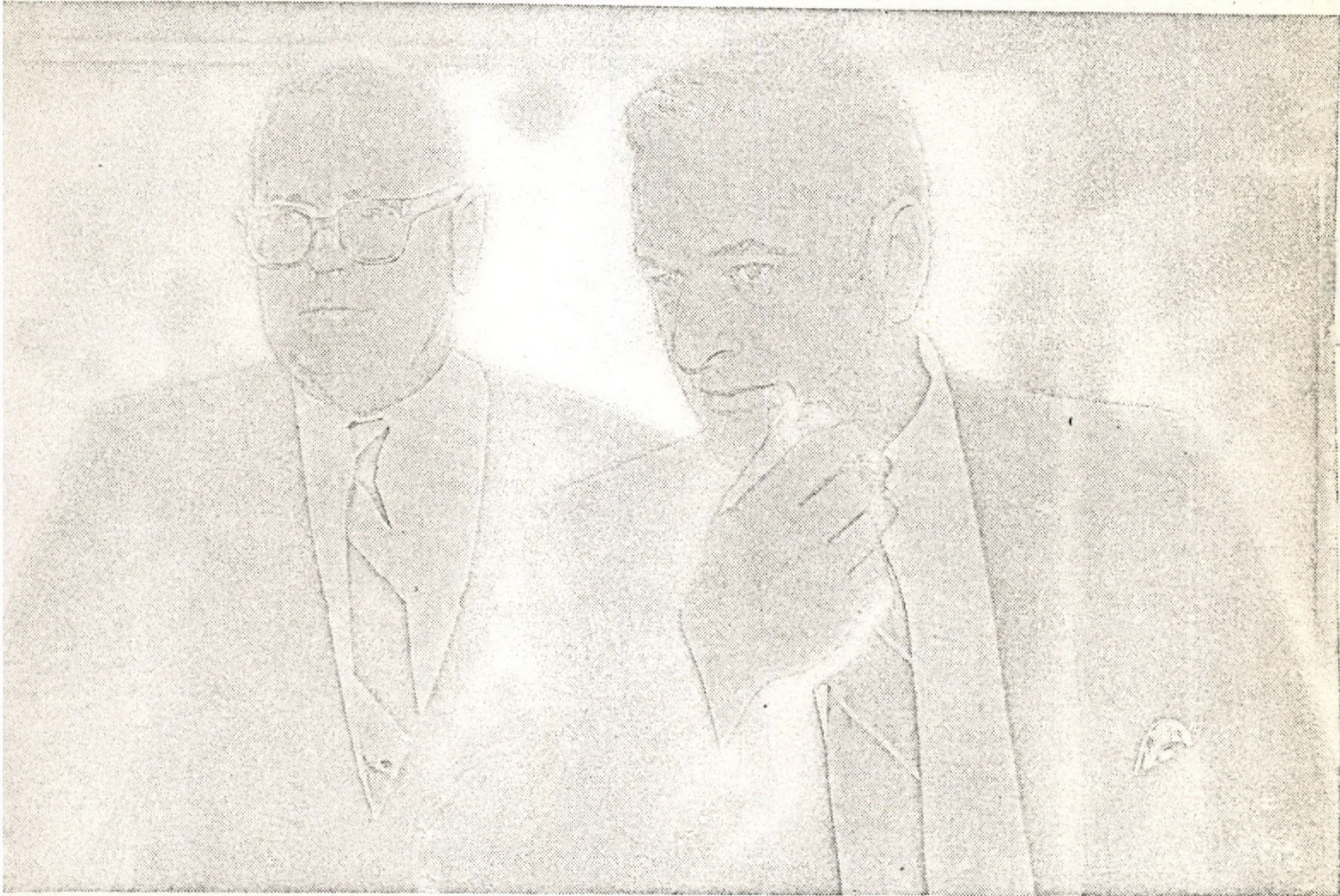




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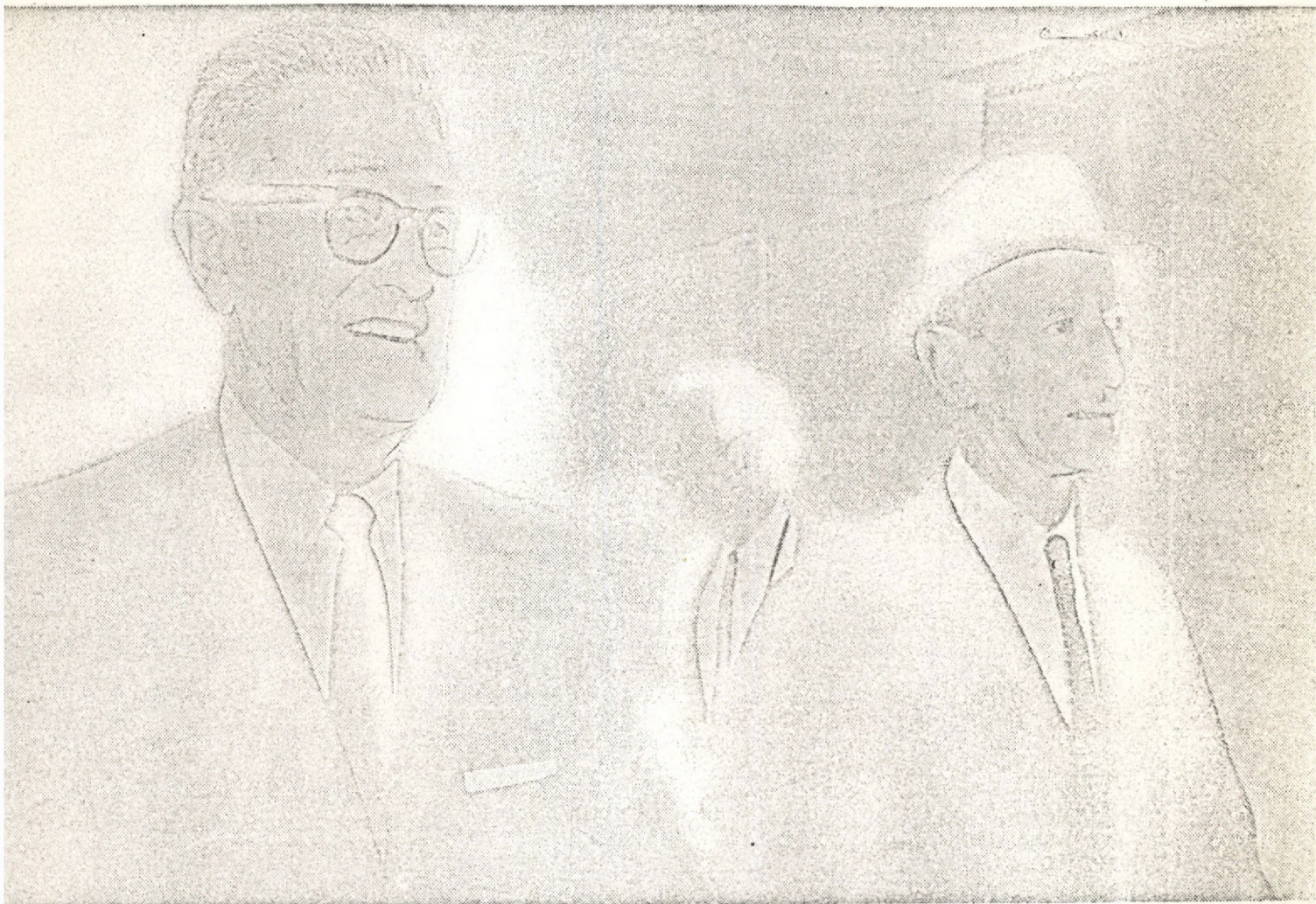


# Attorneys for the Prosecution and Defense



PROSECUTION — Chief Dep. Dist. Atty. Lynn D. Compton, with pipe, and Dep. Dist. Atty. John E. Howard arriving.





THE DEFENSE — Attorneys Grant B. Cooper, on left, with one of his two associates in trial, Emile Zola Berman of New York.

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

# Sirhan Lawyers Seeking To Rescind Not Guilty Plea

By JOHN DOUGLAS

Herald-Examiner Staff Writer

Efforts by defense lawyers to make precedent-setting law in California today delayed selection of a jury in the murder trial of Sirhan Bishara Sirhan, 24, accused as the slayer of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy.

Chief defense council Grant B. Cooper has indicated that testimony he wants to introduce in support of one of his legal maneuvers will be lengthy. At one point in yesterday's proceeding, he suggested a 30-day delay in the trial to iron out legal points.

Cooper's suggestion, which never reached the formal motion stage, was brushed aside by Superior Court Judge Herbert V. Walker, presiding over the trial.

Arguments today centered around attempts by Cooper to get Judge Walker to "set aside" Sirhan's plea of "not guilty" to the indictment returned against him by the County Grand Jury June 7, 1968.

That indictment charges him with murder in the slaying of Sen. Kennedy early the morning of June 5, 1968, in a kitchen off the Ambassador Hotel's Embassy Room.

Cooper has made it clear that the reason he wants the plea set aside is to lay the groundwork for an attack against the 1968 Los Angeles County Grand Jury, and California's Grand Jury selection system in general. The system has been attacked before, and at the level of the State Supreme Court the attacks have been unsuccessful. However, Cooper points out that the attack against the system is being carried to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Cooper has assailed selection of the 1968 Grand Jury on the grounds that the system which permits judges to nominate Grand Jury candidates, who are then chosen by a spin of the wheel, inherently excludes "members of some minority groups and persons of some national background."

The legal concept of "timeliness" could mitigate against Cooper's move to withdraw the "not guilty" plea, even though withdrawal of the plea is but a technical maneuver. The concept's rationale is that there was a proper time and place for Cooper's argument, and that it may not have been made.

The chief defense counsel's answer to that is: "I wasn't in the case then." (Cooper joined defense attorney Russell E. Parsons in the Sirhan case last month after conclusion of the Friars Club card cheating trial. The third defense lawyer, Emile Zola Ber- man of New York, joined his colleagues even later.) In yesterday's proceedings Cooper lost two of his moves. He failed:

- To get Judge Walker to agree to two juries in the case—one to hear the evidence, the other to set the penalty, should

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Date: 1/8/69

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there be a first degree murder conviction.

• To get the jurist to assent to written, instead of oral, examination of prospective jurors.

Chief Deputy District Attorney Lynn Compton, who heads the prosecution, opposed both moves. Walker rejected the two-jury request out of hand, and denied the plea for written examinations on the grounds that the jury prospects might act in collusion in filling out written questionnaires.

At a post session news conference yesterday Cooper confirmed speculation that the Sirhan defense will be based on legal and psychological grounds.

He said:

"The defense will not deny Sirhan shot Kennedy. A lot of people saw him.

"The defense will be along other lines."

Motions introduced at yesterday's session indicated these other grounds:

• An attack on California's petit (trial) jury system because it automatically excuses

members of certain professions from jury service.

• Another attempt to overthrow the system which allows the same jury to decide guilt or innocence in a first degree murder case, and then to deliberate again as to what penalty the defendant shall suffer.

The defense maintains the law which permits automatic excusing of lawyers, physicians, teachers and nurses from jury duty, denies "whole classes of people" to a defendant as jurors in his trial.

The so-called penalty jury system Cooper maintains is "clearly unconstitutional." Although he denied this plea yesterday, Judge Walker made it clear he did not foreclose the defense from putting it forth a second time.

Finally, it is clear that the defense has not abandoned, but on the contrary continues to work to develop, defenses of "diminished capacity" aimed at showing that Sirhan's reasoning faculties may have been impaired at the time Kennedy was shot.





—Associated Press Wirephoto

**SIRHAN'S MOTHER, BROTHER LEAVE COURT**  
Mary, Munir Sirhan attended opening day of trial



**ATTORNEY RUSSELL PARSONS LEADS APPREHENSIVE SIRHAN**  
They were on way to courtroom for beginning session of murder trial.

—UPI Telephoto

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

# Officers Search One Another Before Trial

BY ROBERT RAWITCH

Times Staff Writer

Security precautions at the Sirhan Bishara Sirhan trial Tuesday reached the point where deputy sheriffs were searching each other before entering an auxiliary courtroom where the proceedings were shown on closed circuit television to newsmen.

The newsmen were astounded by the extraordinary security precautions in a room four floors below where the trial was taking place on the eighth floor of the Hall of Justice.

A Sheriff's Department spokesman said the practice of deputies searching each other was a part of the "total security" program for the trial to assure that no unauthorized weapons, cameras, or recording devices were brought into restricted areas.

"If anything should happen, we want to make sure none of our men are responsible for smuggling anything in and giving it to a spectator," the spokesman said.

## Newsmen Also Searched

About 40 newsmen were thoroughly searched for hidden recording equipment or cameras before being allowed to enter the specially equipped room with its three closed circuit television receivers. The room is being used to accommodate the overflow of newsmen who cannot get in the relatively small courtroom.

Forty more newsmen were admitted to the eighth-floor courtroom while television cameramen and photographers waited in the halls.

Newsmen without special credentials were not even admitted to the auxiliary room.

Those entering the courtroom were searched even more thoroughly. Men were searched in a hallway and checked for concealed weapons

with a metal detector, while the women were taken into a separate room and searched by female deputies.

No one was allowed to leave or enter the courtroom once the proceedings started.

By Superior Judge Herbert V. Walker's order officially extending the courtroom to include the fourth-floor room, numerous corridors were ruled as "restricted areas" where photographers were prohibited.

But photographers and television cameramen shadowed Sirhan's attorneys—Grant Cooper, Russell E. Parsons and Emil Zola Berman—as they entered the courtroom area. The same was true for his mother, Mrs. Mary Sirhan.

## Five From Public at Trial

Despite the tight security precautions five members of the general public were allowed to witness the trial of the man accused of killing Sen. Robert F. Kennedy.

After filling out a detailed form with identifying information and being searched like everyone else, the five were allowed to enter the courtroom.

Mrs. Beth Peck, of 122 Mountain View Ave., said she visits the Hall of Justice daily to view trials and regularly attended the widely-publicized 1959 trial of Dr. Bernard Finch, who, along with his girlfriend Carole Tregoff, were accused of slaying Finch's estranged wife.

All five said their primary motivation for attending the trial was general curiosity to see what Sirhan is like.

One woman when asked upon leaving the courtroom if she was bored with the highly technical nature of the proceedings answered:

"How can you be bored when a man's life is at stake?"

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

I-2 Los Angeles Times  
Los Angeles, Calif.

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Author: Robert Rawitch  
Editor: Nick B. William  
Title: Kensalt

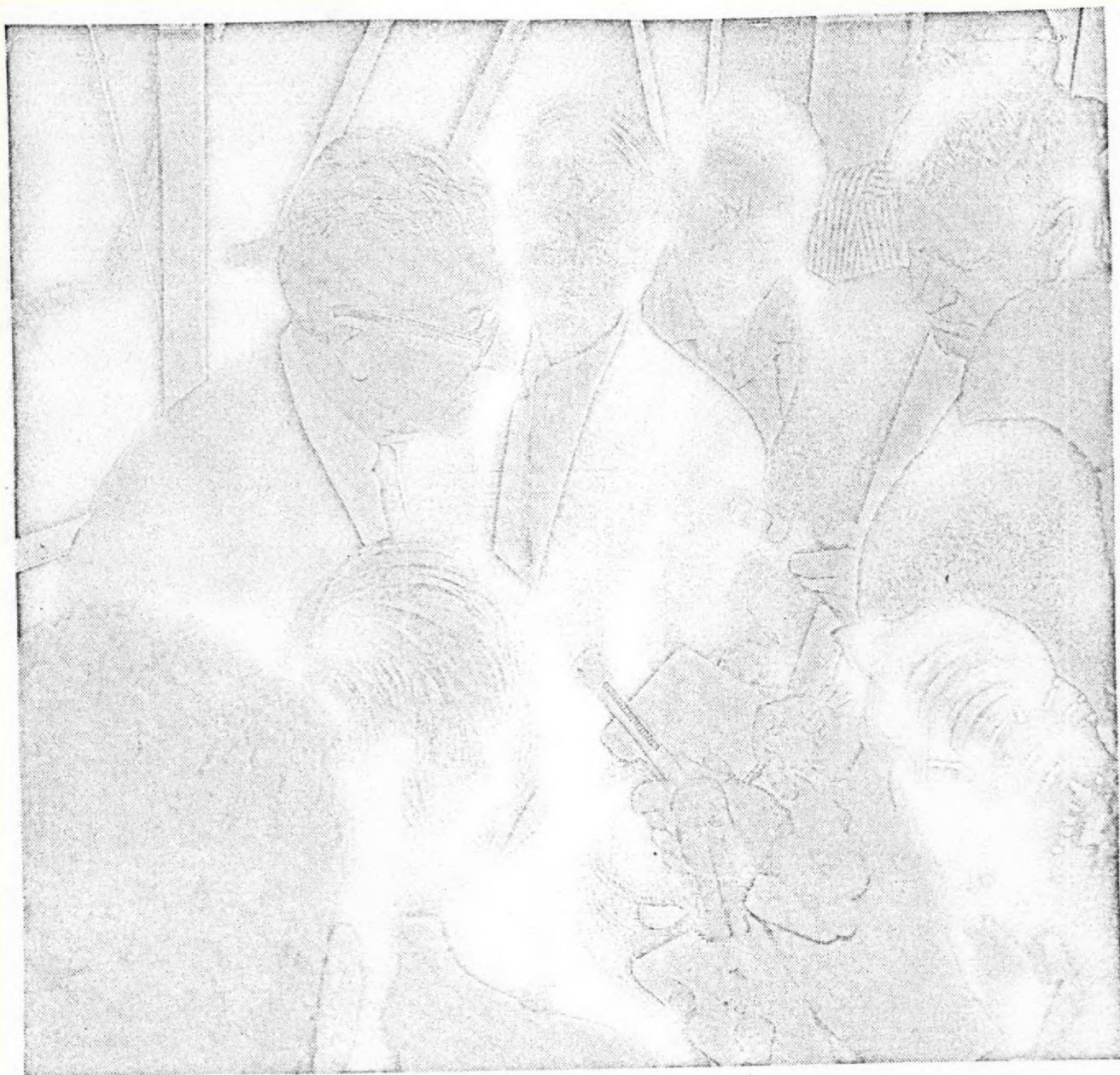
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*cc to Bureau 1-8-69*





**IN THE CORRIDOR** — Defense attorney Grant B. Cooper meets newsmen after first session of Sirhan trial.  
Times Photo by Jack Carrick

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

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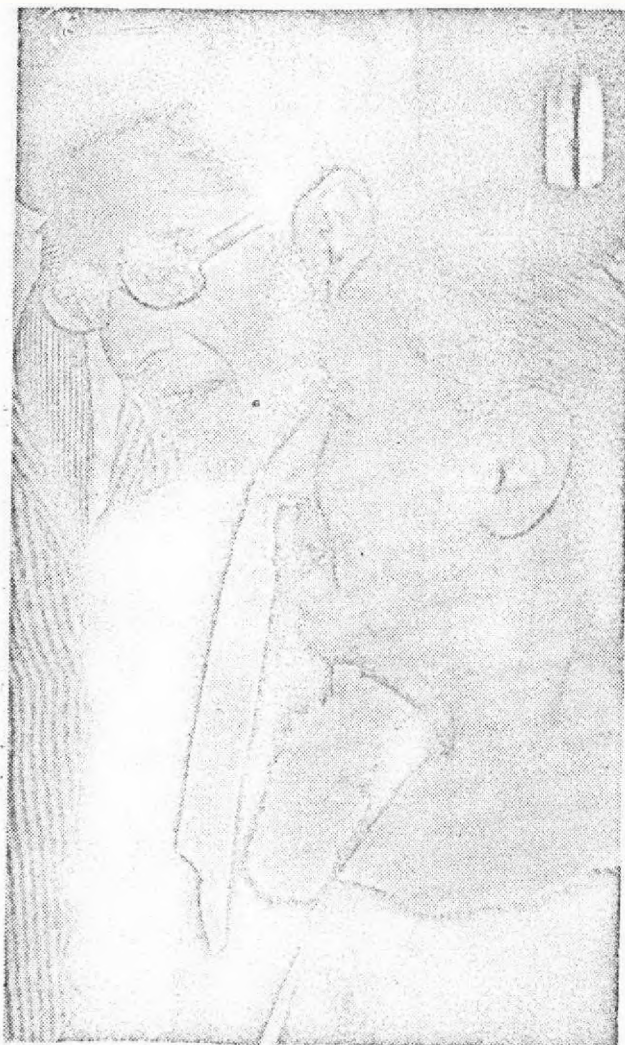
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—Associated Press Wirephoto's

**SIRHAN'S MOTHER, BROTHER LEAVE COURT**  
Mary, Munir Sirhan attended opening day of trial



—UPI Telephoto

**ATTORNEY RUSSELL PARSONS LEADS APPREHENSIVE SIRHAN**  
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(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

# Sirhan Trial

## Glimpses

### Guards Find Reporter's Recorder Part

By AL STUMP

Herald-Examiner Staff Writer

Sharply but censored, the blond girl reporter from a national news service shrieked with dismay, her hands flapping in disavowal of any deliberate wrongdoing, when security guards at the Sirhan B. Sirhan trial pounced upon her . . . after they found part of tape-recorder equipment in her carry-all bag.

"I didn't know it was there!" she cried. "I know recorders are illegal. And I do own one. But I didn't bring it here, honestly."

Sheriff Pete Pitchess' detail at the Hall of Justice runs

young, tough, suspicious of anything that moves. They just stood and pointed at "tape" earphones found in a search of the girl's bag. "Quietly step to one side," they ordered. "We want to talk to you."

★ ★ ★

"Crosspopuli" might be a term coined for the people encountered in the teeming corridors outside the Jury Room and the Auxiliary Courtroom.

Here is a highly-nervous female who works as a clerk of the court in Auckland, New Zealand, standing in line, hoping to gain one of the almost impossible-to-attain half-dozen seats within the chamber of testimony

granted to the general public. Her name: Helen Butts..

Helen is late-thirtyish. First trip to the U.S. A trip mostly made because "I loved Bobby as did all New Zealanders" and "I had to come here and see how they tried and handled his killer."

Soon after Robert Kennedy was blasted out of life, Helen Butts was attending a lecture at the Auckland Uplift League Hall. "A man ran out on the stage and broke into the lecture and yelled that Bobby had been killed. The audience yelled and booed him. We refused to believe it," says Helen, standing in line, her foot tapping, her face tense.

"Do you Americans know,"

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

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she asked, "who you destroyed?"

★ ★ ★

As Helen Butts from Auckland spoke, a slim, quiet man, Melvin Latterman, stood listening. He, too, hoped for a seat.

Latterman, about 30, is in the restaurant business in Westwood Village.

"I came to witness this," he said, "because I worked in Bob Kennedy's campaign from the day he filed for President. I was in the Wilshire office, writing letters and working on arrangements for his public appearances.

"Sen. Kennedy dropped by our place several times. He drank coffee with me.

"He told me, 'I like L.A.—it's a place of constant motion and excitement—where something always is happening.'"

Latterman's eyes brimmed:

"I don't hate Sirhan . . . he's a human being, after all, and the law will deal with him."

★ ★ ★

Eastern reporters—and dozens have converged upon this epic trial from the Chicago Tribune, Cleveland Press, Toronto Telegram, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, Newsday, New York Post, Times and News, the Boston Globe, not to mention Blick of Zurich, Paris Match, Le Figaro of Paris, Epoca of Italy, Deutsche Press-Agentur, London Daily Express and London Daily Sun—generally agree upon one "clue" to Sirhan's personality.

Veterans of many a high-stake criminal trial, they tell you:

"He's smug. That's the single biggest impression we get of him. He's expecting to beat this rap."

Will he? The "expert" press voting is that he will never see the inside of the San Quentin cyanide chamber.

A guy who said he exercised horses with the defendant at the Granja Vista del Rio ranch near Corona in the summer of 1966, when Sirhan had aspirations to be a jockey, sipped coffee in the Hall lobby and made his point.

"He ain't worried? When he was working around the stables and walking 'hots' after workouts, he weighed about 118 pounds.

"I got a good look at him today. He's lost so much weight. I doubt he tops 105. His cheekbones have sunk in so far I wasn't sure it was him, when I first saw him.

"Don't they feed him enough up there on the 13th floor jail?"

★ ★ ★

They feed Sirhan like every other prisoner in County Jail.

Yesterday, he lunched on smoked salami, vegetable soup, fresh fruit (an orange), vegetable salad, bread and coffee.

Dinner involved a hot dog, liberally sauced, a partially-battered potato, vegetable salad again, mixed fruit, hot tea and bread.

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

# 30-Day Trial Delay Sought

By JOHN DOUGLAS

Herald-Examiner Staff Writer

Defense lawyers, who have failed in three previous attempts to win delay in the trial of Sirhan Bishara Sirhan, will try their luck again today — this time raising the question of one of their number's involvement in a federal grand jury matter.

In closed-door proceedings in the chambers of Superior Court Judge Herbert V. Walker, the defense will argue that the trial of the man accused of killing Sen. Robert F. Kennedy should be put off at least 30 days because of publicity surrounding the federal grand jury's investigation into attorney Grant B. Cooper's premature possession of a grand jury transcript in the Friars Club card-cheating trial.

Cooper has appeared twice before the grand jury, and must make at least one more, as yet unscheduled, appearance to explain how he came to possess the transcript before the scheduled time.

Emile Zola Berman, who with Cooper and Russell E. Parsons represents Sirhan, said after yesterday's court session he would put before Judge Walker a record of the number of newspaper and television accounts of the Cooper investigation.

Before Judge Walker shut him off at the trial yesterday, Berman, speaking for the first time since the case opened, said:

"We expect to have information on the saturation of certain information throughout the community.

"... Saturation with respect to publicity in the case."

Asked what effect he thought the publicity had, Berman later said:

"That's what we're going to find out tomorrow."

Yesterday's court session saw Judge Walker reject another defense delay plea—this one sought by Cooper to gain more time to prepare arguments attacking the indictment against Sirhan. The grounds are that the 1968 Los Angeles County Grand Jury, which June 7 indicted Sirhan for Kennedy's June 5 murder, was not constitutionally selected.

Cooper assails the system of nomination of grand jurors by Superior Court judges because, he maintains, it excludes members of certain minority groups.

Judge Walker turned Cooper down, and read into the record the list of continuances Sirhan has had since he entered his formal plea of "not guilty" to the murder indictment July 28.

"The court feels there have been many continuances and there has been competent counsel from July 28 to this date," Walker concluded.

The judge did agree, however, to allow Cooper to put off his arguments against the grand jury system until later in the trial. After yesterday's session chief prosecutor Lynn Compton forecast this argument would not come until after selection of the trial jury.

Both sides want time to study a similar attack against the grand jury system made by defense counsel in the Sal Castro-Brown Beret case here earlier this year. The record of this became available only yesterday.

Both defense and prosecution have agreed that jury selection

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can begin Monday, but there is some indication Judge Walker Los Angeles County Superior may push to begin that process Court Jury Commissioner Wil-Friday.

Cooper mounted an attack yesterday on the system of choosing trial jurors. He said it because certain members of certain professions may be automatically excused from jury duty. These professions range from attorneys and physicians through prison guards to telephone operators and civil servants.

Called as a defense witness, Los Angeles County Superior Court Jury Commissioner William A. Goodwin testified that these exemptions were granted by state law, and that in some cases — notably telephone workers and civil servants — the exemptions were not sought by prospective jurors. Judge Walker made no ruling, and told Cooper he could argue the matter further at a later date, provided he did it before the Sirhan jury was finally selected and sworn in.

Called as a defense witness, Cooper renewed his motion for two juries in the case — one to try it and the other to set the penalty. Judge Walker again turned him down.

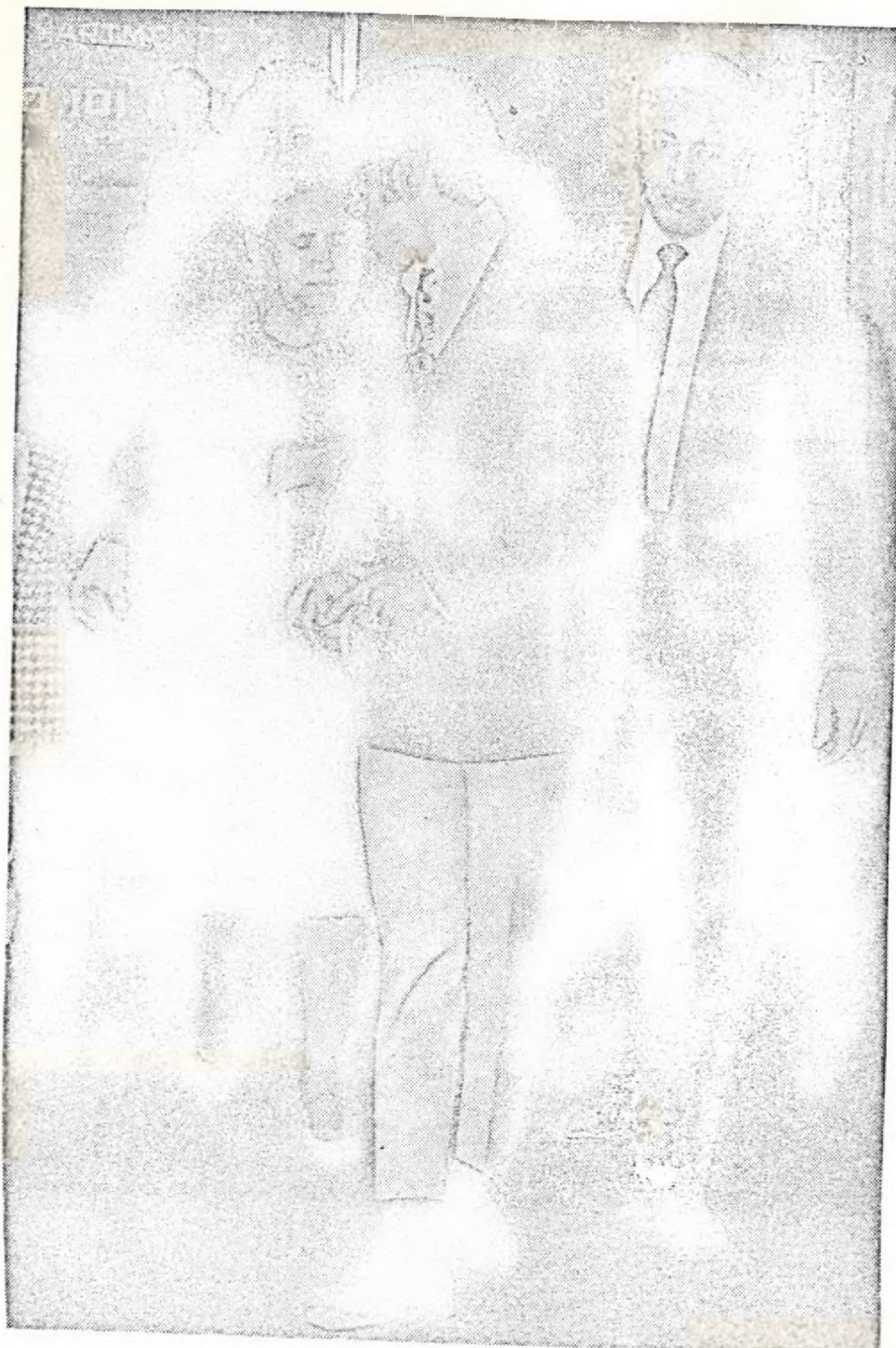
by state law, and that in some cases — notably telephone workers and civil servants — the opening of his trial Tuesday forecast this argument would display a much more cheerful demeanor yesterday. not come until after selection of the trial jury.

Both sides want time to study and, with a broad smile, waved a similar attack against the grand jury system made by Sirhan, and his two brothers, Adel, defense counsel in the Sal Cas-30, and Munir (Joe), 21, who tro-Brown Beret case here earlier this year. The record of this, Mention of the possibility of the death penalty by Judge Walker Tuesday caused the young Jordanian immigrant to jerk ramrod straight in his seat.

Both defense and prosecution have agreed that jury selection can begin Monday, but there is some indication Judge Walker may push to begin that process Friday. Yesterday, during a discussion of the penalty lasting several minutes, he moved not a muscle, but sat with his chin propped in his right hand gazing off into space.

Cooper mounted an attack yesterday on the system of choosing trial jurors. He said it because certain members of certain professions may be automatically excused from jury duty. These professions range from attorneys and physicians through prison guards to telephone operators and civil servants. Mrs. Sirhan's eyes brooded as she watched the second day of the trial which may cost her son his life. She stared straight ahead, her attention seemingly riveted on her son's back and those of his attorneys. When Sirhan waved at her, she did not wave back. Much of the time she sat with her hands clutching the armrests of her chair.

Her greying hair was drawn tightly back from her forehead. She was dressed in a coat dress of black and paisley gold.

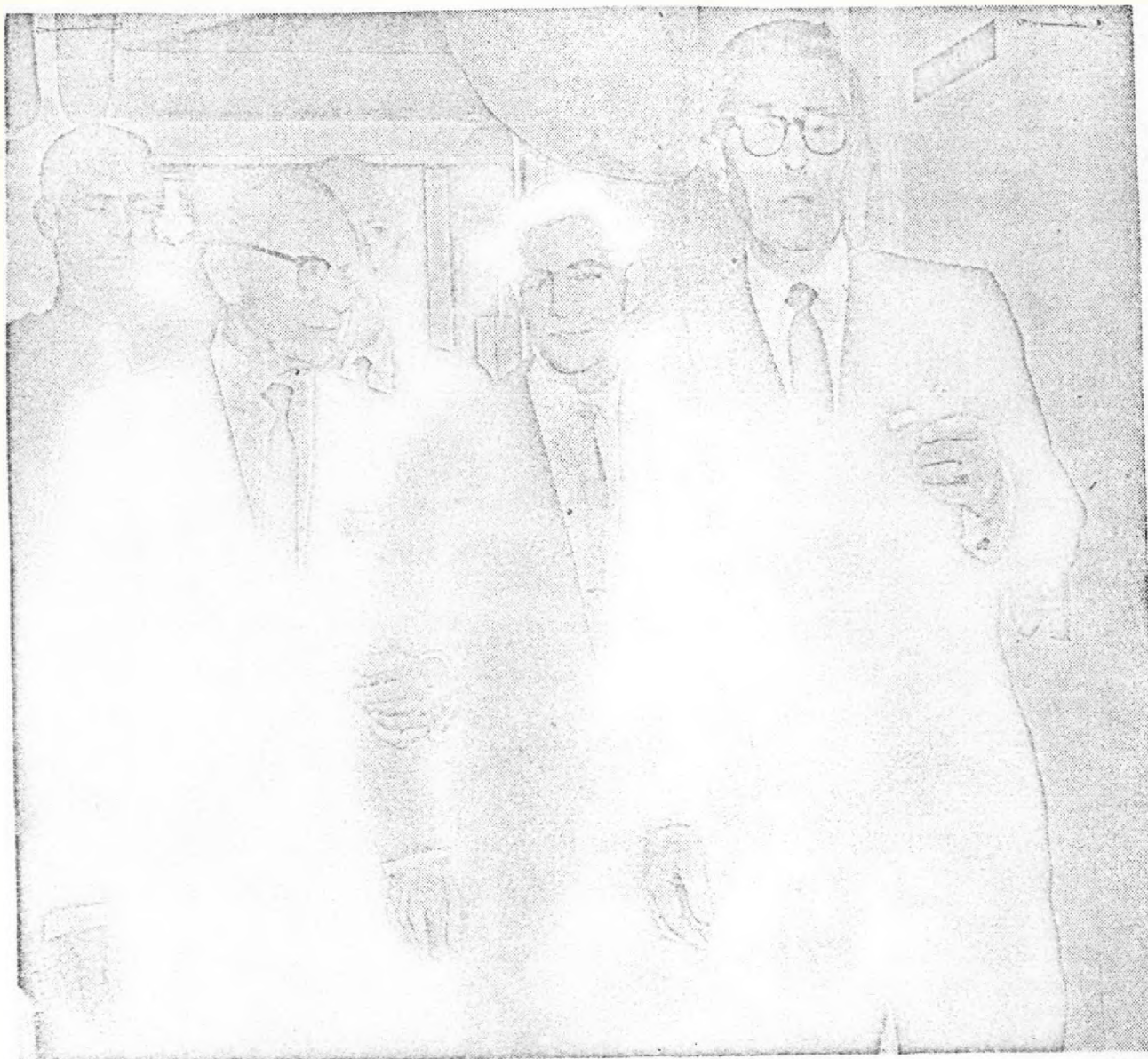


—Herald-Examiner Photo

**SIRHAN'S FAMILY ARRIVES FOR SECOND DAY OF TRIAL**

From left, defendant's mother Mary, brothers Adel and Munir





—Herald-Examiner photo

**SIRHAN, ON WAY TO COURT, IS FLANKED BY HIS THREE ATTORNEYS**  
From left: A deputy sheriff, Russell Parsons, Emile Zola Berman, Sirhan, Grant B. Cooper



(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

# Attorney Advises Cooper Not to Quit Sirhan Defense Team

Lawyer Who Faces Contempt of Court Threat in Friars Case Had Sought Advice on Fears of Adverse Publicity

BY DAVE SMITH

Times Staff Writer

Attorney Grant B. Cooper, faced with the threat of contempt proceedings in federal court, sought advice from another lawyer on whether he should withdraw from the defense of Sirhan Bishara Sirhan, it was learned Thursday from a source close to Cooper.

That lawyer, The Times also learned, considered for 24 hours before advising Cooper to remain on the three-man defense team for the 24-year-old Jordanian.

The identity of the other attorney was not definitely known, but A. L. Wirin, American Civil Liberties Union lawyer, originally proposed that Cooper join the Sirhan defense.

The trial, in its third day Thursday, was marked by two closed sessions in the chambers of Superior Judge Herbert V. Walker on defense motions designed to delay the start of jury selection.

## Trial to Resume Monday

The motions continued to meet with disapproval from Judge Walker, who declared that after a one-day recess today, the trial will resume Monday morning. Hopefully, the arduous task of jury selection will begin then.

Publicity linking the Sirhan case to the grand jury investigation of Cooper was the focus of the closed sessions Thursday. The Times learned, and the defense again sought a 30-day continuance, unsuccessfully.

Cooper reportedly is concerned that publicity surrounding the grand jury probe of his admitted unauthorized possession of secret transcript in the Friars Club card-cheating case could prejudice prospective jurors who will sit on the Sirhan case.

Cooper has introduced several motions designed to delay the start

of the trial, presumably until his own legal situation is resolved.

But Judge Walker has frequently expressed privately and in open court his determination to get the long-delayed, oft-postponed Sirhan trial moving. Sirhan was arraigned seven months ago.

Thursday the defense subpoenaed 17 witnesses to the closed session in support of its contention that "saturation of publicity"—and publicity

involving Cooper more than Sirhan—was prejudicial to Sirhan's right to a fair trial.

Los Angeles television and radio newsman John Goodman said before testifying that the defense indicated to him it was concerned not with stories that dealt with the Sirhan and Cooper cases separately, but with stories in which both cases were linked.

Another witness was a secretary for Arbitron, a television rating firm which gauges how widely any given television program is viewed in a certain area.

It was expected that such evidence, aside from supporting the unsuccessful defense motion for continuance, could also be used later as grounds for motions for change of venue or for a continuing motion for mistrial.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

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### Sheppard Trial

Cooper also referred in court Thursday to the murder trial of Dr. Sam Sheppard in Cleveland, in which pretrial publicity was ruled grounds for both a continuance and, later a change in venue.

Thursday's session was also marked by little activity in open court. A closed session began in Judge Walker's chambers shortly after 9 a.m., delaying public proceedings until shortly after 10.

After 15 minutes of hearing motions in open court, Judge Walker, the attorneys for the defense and prosecution, and the pale, subdued defendant withdrew to chambers for the remainder of the day.

The public proceedings concerned Cooper's earlier motion to quash the first-degree murder indictment by attacking the constitutionality of the grand jury which indicted Sirhan for the slaying of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy.

### Castro Case

In support of that motion, Cooper introduced the four volume, 1,010-page transcript of the case against East Los Angeles teacher Sal Castro in which several judges were called to explain and defend their methods of nominating members to the grand jury.

The defense team also planned to study the transcript in hope of finding relevant points in support of another motion by Cooper to set aside the trial jury list.

Cooper contends that the method of selecting jurors from voters' lists automatically excludes so many classes of citizens that such juries do not represent "a proper cross section of the population."

Sirhan sat quietly throughout the brief proceedings in open court. His mother, Mary, was absent for the first time Thursday, as were two brothers, Munir and Adel, who attended earlier sessions.

Thursday, as on the previous two days of trial, the name of the slain New York senator was never mentioned in court.

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

# Attorneys for Sirhan in New Plea for Delay

**Pretrial Publicity Cited as  
Newsmen Are Questioned;  
Case to Resume Monday**

**BY DAVE SMITH**  
Times Staff Writer

The stop-and-go trial of Sirhan Bishara Sirhan continued Thursday with defense attorneys pleading in closed session for further delay.

After 15 minutes of proceedings in open court, Superior Judge Herbert V. Walker recessed the public trial until 9:30 a.m. Monday, but both the defense and prosecution continued meeting Thursday afternoon in Judge Walker's chambers.

Although the press was barred from the closed session in Judge Walker's chambers—the fifth such meeting in only three court sessions—it was clear that pretrial publicity was the basis of continued defense maneuvers for time.

The three-man defense team for the accused slayer of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy subpoenaed 17 witnesses for the closed session—most of them Los Angeles radio and television newsmen.

One was John Goodman, of radio station KNX, who said before testifying that the defense had indicated it was concerned about news reports discussing both the Sirhan case and a federal grand jury investigation involving Sirhan's chief defense attorney, Grant B. Cooper.

## Refuses to Produce Records

Goodman said the defense asked him to bring the station's records for last Monday and Tuesday, but that he refused on advice from an attorney for the Columbia Broadcasting System.

Defense Atty. Emile Zola Berman said in court Wednesday that the defense would introduce a motion in Thursday's closed session pertaining to "the saturation of publicity in this area."

It was believed that the defense would cite the character and extent of news coverage as grounds for a motion for mistrial or for a change of venue—or perhaps merely a 30-day continuance, which Judge Walker had earlier denied.

It was Cooper who indicated one possible grounds for a motion for a continuance or a change of venue. In the trial's opening day Tuesday Cooper referred in court to the trial of Dr. Sam Sheppard in Cleveland in which pretrial publicity was ruled grounds for both a continuance and a later change in venue.

## Publicity on Cooper

In Sirhan's case, however, it did not appear Thursday that publicity on Sirhan was as much an issue as publicity on Cooper.

With Goodman, as with other newsmen, it apparently was the linking of Sirhan's defense with Cooper's actions in the Friar's Club card-cheating trial that was the focus of discussion.

Cooper, 65, has admitted unauthorized possession and use of a secret transcript during that trial, and has refused, at the risk of contempt proceedings, to answer grand jury questions on how he got the transcript.

Cooper reportedly is concerned that publicity about his own case could have a prejudicial effect on Sirhan's right to a fair trial.

Judge Walker reportedly is concerned about the same thing, but is at least as concerned about the seven-month delay between the 24-year-old Jordanian's arraignment and opening of trial.

An indication that saturation of publicity is the grounds for a defense motion for a fourth continuance was the fact that one witness called Thursday was Diana Smith, a secretary for the West Coast office of Arbitron, a television rating firm which determines the extent of viewership of certain programs.

Miss Smith and all other witnesses were warned not to disclose their testimony in Judge Walker's chambers.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

I-3 Los Angeles Times  
Los Angeles, Calif.

Date: 1/10/69  
Edition: Preview  
Author: Dave Smith  
Editor: Nick B. Williams  
Title: Kensalt

Character:  
or  
Classification: 56-156  
Submitting Office: Los Angeles

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56-156-N-605

cc to Bureau 1-10-69

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It was believed that the defense had already introduced into evidence stories from local newspapers regarding both Sirhan and Cooper.

The only activity in open court Thursday concerned Cooper's earlier motion to quash the first-degree murder indictment by attacking the constitutionality of the grand jury which indicted Sirhan.

#### Other Trial

In support of that motion, Cooper introduced the four-volume, 1,010-page transcript of the case against East Los Angeles teacher Sal Castro—a case now on trial—in which several judges were called to explain and defend their methods of nominating members to the grand jury.

Judge Walker then granted the recess until

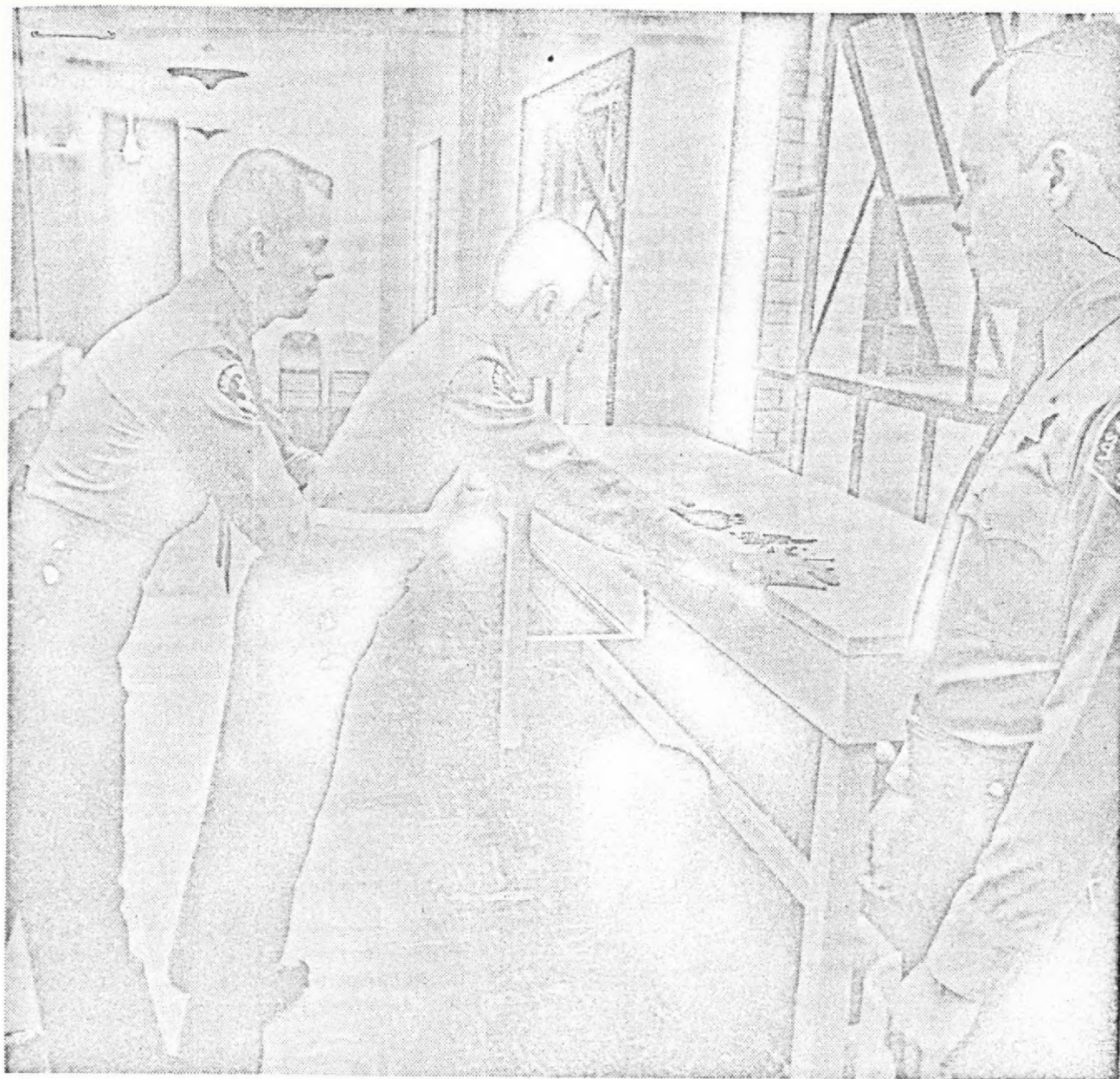
Monday morning, during which defense and prosecution were to study the massive transcript for points Cooper contends are relevant to the Sirhan case.

On Wednesday it appeared that jury selection might begin sometime Monday, but it is expected that arguments on the Castro transcript now forecloses that possibility. Jury selection is expected to take as long as three or four weeks.

Sirhan sat quietly throughout the brief proceedings in open court. His mother, Mary, was absent for the first time Thursday, as were two brothers, Munir and Adel, who attended earlier sessions.

Thursday, as on the previous two days of trial, the name of the slain New York senator was never mentioned in court.





**DOUBLY CAUTIOUS**—Deputy sheriffs on duty at Sirhan Bishara Sirhan's trial search each other be-

fore entering auxiliary courtroom. From left are Robert McWilliams, Robert Ford, Gordon Keenoy.  
Times photo by John Malinin



(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

# Sirhan's Thoughts Told by Writer on His Defense Staff

BY WILLIAM J. DRUMMOND

Times Staff Writer

Sirhan Bishara Sirhan's thoughts on America, on himself and on his lawyers were revealed here Sunday by a journalist on the staff of the Jordanian's defense counsel.

Robert Blair Kaiser, formerly a Time magazine correspondent, has written an article for Life magazine based on long interviews with the man accused of assassinating Sen. Robert F. Kennedy.

Sirhan, Kaiser said, smokes 10 cigars a day and then switches to six packs of cigarettes a day, has a normal 24-year-old's interest in women and can talk at length about subjects ranging from literature to theology.

Kaiser said Sirhan told him, "It's all violence, chaos, unrest. Whatever happened to the old saying, 'peace and quiet?'"

Kaiser was appointed to the staff of Russell B. Parsons, one of the defense lawyers, and was granted permission to interview Sirhan exclusively. Kaiser said the privilege was given him because he was a friend of attorney Grant Cooper and used his influence to persuade Cooper to join in Sirhan's defense.

## Talks With Sirhan Many Times

Kaiser said in an interview he had talked with Sirhan at least a dozen times since Aug. 14.

"We talked about different subjects—his background, family, acculturation in America, his friends, his foes," Kaiser said. "He is intellectually inclined, expansive, articulate, well-read but untrained."

Kaiser said Sirhan knows that Cooper has been defense attorney in many famous trials and can command a large fee. "And he's defending a punk like me," Sirhan was quoted as saying.

Kaiser said his article would not include matters having a bearing on the issues in the trial for the murder of Sen. Kennedy. "I won't try the case in the public prints," he said.

Dep. Dist. Atty. Lynn D. Compton, head of the prosecution team in the case, said Kaiser, as an agent of the defense counsel, was included in the coverage of a court order banning comment by parties in the case on the issues in the trial.

However, Compton said the significance of the Kaiser material could not be known until the article is actually seen. It is to be published Jan. 17.

Kaiser said he had also talked with Sirhan's mother, Mary, about a dozen times. She keeps a buffet table covered with magazines that tell the story of the Kennedy assassination, Kaiser said.

The article says, "She picks up the magazines now and then and talks to the face of Robert Kennedy as drawn by Time artist Louis Glanzman, telling him how sorry she is.

"Kennedy, moreover, talks to her. 'It's okay, Mary,' she says he says. 'I forgive you. It's okay.'"

Kaiser said of Mary Sirhan:

"Obviously, this is a very traumatic experience for a woman who has gone through a lot of traumatic episodes.

"She is a woman who prays. I believe that in the Arab Orthodox religion ikons are used and prayed to. It's not unusual to talk to a picture, or for that matter for a person in a picture to talk to her."

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

I-1 Los Angeles Times  
Los Angeles, Calif.

Date: 1/13/69

Edition: Home

Author: William J. Drummond

Editor: Nick B. Williams

Title: Kensalt

Character:

or

Classification: 56-156

Submitting Office: Los Angeles

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Sirhan recounted the scene in the Ambassador Hotel after the shooting, Kaiser said.

"I felt a choking in my throat, and people were holding me, and beating me, twisting my left knee, and pounding my head on the table. They hurt my left eye . . ." Sirhan said.

The author said Sirhan feels that even his name sets him apart and prevents him from feeling fully an American. The Jordanian is quoted as saying:

"My name! My name! Sear-hann Sear-hann. As soon as anyone heard it, everything else stopped. They wanted to know, 'What kind of a name is that?' I began to associate more and more with my name. Sirhan meant 'wolf' and I became more and more of a lone wolf."

A. L. Wirin of the American Civil Liberties Union had first asked Kaiser to talk to Cooper about joining the defense, the writer said. And in return Kaiser would get the interview rights.

"If I'd help him (Wirin) do his thing, he'd help me do my thing," Kaiser told The Times.

Kaiser declined to say how much he would be paid for the article, but said he was working on Sirhan's defense for nothing. Asked if any of the attorneys would share in his writing fee, he said, "That's private. It goes to me. What I do is my own business."

Kaiser noted that Sirhan's interest in females was "normal," and that he had taken a fancy to a striking blonde reporter present at his trial.

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

# SIRHAN INTRIGUES THE CURIOUS

By MYRNA OLIVER

Herald-Examiner Staff Writer

Sirhan Bishara Sirhan emerged yesterday as a pathetic, intriguing curiosity in the imaginations of strangers who stood outside his courtroom, waiting.

"I came to be in the hallway and watch them take pictures and everything, but I wouldn't want to go in the courtroom. He's too disgusting," said Mrs. Clara Flekstein, who often stood in line outside another courtroom to observe the trial of Dr. Bernard Finch. Grey hair caught under a beret, she shook her head emphatically—intrigued by Sirhan without wanting to see him.

Quieter and more businesslike about watching the historic trial on its third day than at its opening Tuesday, a few spectators prowled the hallway during the brief court session and judge's chamber proceedings yesterday. None got into the courtroom.

The eight-minute court ses-

sion was too short to allow deputies to check any members of the public into the chamber.

"I've been here since 6:30 a.m., and I'm very disappointed I didn't get to see Sirhan Sirhan," complained Herbert Becker.

Becker shouted repeatedly and heatedly, "Sirhan—is he still alive?" as David Fitts, top assistant to chief deputy district attorney Lynn Compton, emerged from the courtroom. He was assured that the defendant was still very much alive. "They should hold this trial in the Sports Arena and sell tickets which would bear the cost of the trial," said Becker.

Reflecting on the death of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy which brought Department 107 of the Hall of Justice into prominence, Becker added sadly, "What is it about this Kennedy family that stop on their California vacation. tragedy follows it everywhere it goes?"

Mr. and Mrs. John Connolly, St. Paul, Minn., made the Hall of Justice hallway a "must" get in."



—Herald-Examiner Photo

**HERBERT BECKER**  
"Is Sirhan still alive?"

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

A-2 Herald-Examiner  
Los Angeles, Calif.

Date: 1/10/69  
Edition: Night Final  
Author: Myrna Oliver  
Editor: Donald Goodenow  
Title: Kensalt

Character:

or

Classification: 56-156  
Submitting Office: Los Angeles

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