

Sirhan Gun: Not Death Weapon

Affidavits and a letter challenging expert gun identification testimony in the Sirhan Bishara Sirhan and Jack Kirschke murder trials have been filed with the Los Angeles Civil Service Commission.

The documents raised a possibility that the weapon in evidence at the Sirhan trial might not have been the one used in the slaying of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy.

Barbara Warner Blehr, Los Angeles civil and criminal attorney, submitted the material yesterday in an admitted effort to block the appointment of Deputy Wayne A. Woffler as head of the Police Scientific Investigation Crime Laboratory.

Davis also said he has instructed Woffler to make no comment pending the outcome of the inquiry.

Woffler testified for the prosecution in the trials in which Sirhan was convicted of the 1968 assassination of Kennedy, a presidential candidate, and Kirschke, a former deputy district attorney, found guilty of killing his wife and her lover.

Sirhan is on San Quentin's possible next week.

Experts Is Challenged

Both are appealing their cases.

"Death Row." Both are appealing their cases.

As the cases are awaiting appeal, Davis said he urged the board of inquiry—Asst. Chief Jack Collins, Dep. Chief John McAllister and Cmdr. George Beck—to have Attorney General, District Attorney and City Attorney representatives at the hearing.

Mrs. Blehr told The Herald-Examiner she is questioning Woffler's testimony only because she is interested in seeing that the Police Department has "the best there is" in scientific personnel.

She added she does not believe Woffler is qualified for the top post, on the basis of declarations made by other criminal investigation authorities.

The documents she submitted were signed by Raymond H. Pinker, retired chief forensic chemist and pioneer of the LAPD Crime Laboratory; Walter Jack Cadman, Orange County Sheriff's chief criminologist, and Dr. LeMayne Snyder, author and authority in legal medicine and homicide investigation.

The experts' affidavits, filed in Sirhan's defense, challenge the testimony of the police scientific investigation team that identified the gun as the murder weapon.

In the affidavits, the experts state that the gun is a .38 Smith & Wesson Model 1917, which is not the same as the gun identified by the police as the murder weapon.

The experts also state that the gun is a "blow-off" type, which means it is designed to fire a bullet that will not penetrate a target.

The experts' affidavits were filed with the Los Angeles Civil Service Commission.

CHALLENGE GUN EXPERT

(Continued from Page A-1)

similar guns were being fired at the scene of the crime," she added. "Such a conclusion then leads unavoidably to the question: which of the two guns fired the single fatal bullet?"

But the second similar gun was reportedly destroyed by the Los Angeles Police Department in July, 1968, a month after the assassination, she said.

In the Kirschke case, Mrs. Blehr said, Woffler violated a precept by matching a single hand impression on the test bullet with two different hand impressions on a fatal bullet, thus invalidating identification of the defendant's gun.

She also made a similar charges relating to a murder trial referred to only as "SC number A234557, Terry."

Woffler was described by Chief Davis as "a cautious, conservative, straightforward and thorough scientist," and as a "distinguished expert."

Davis said Woffler has been acting head of the crime lab, and had been recommended by the chief for a permanent appointment effective July 1.

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Wrong Gun in Kennedy Slaying

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Three top Los Angeles police officials will meet Tuesday to begin a probe of charges that police ballistics expert Wayne A. Wolfer erred in testimony concerning the weapon used in the assassination of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy.

The panel, chaired by Asst. Chief Jack Collins and consisting of Dep. Chief John McAllister and Cmdr. George Beck, will meet at Parker Center at 9 a.m., at the direction of Police Chief Edward M. Davis.

Barbara Warner Blehr, Los Angeles civil and criminal attorney, Friday submitted affidavits and a letter challenging testimony given by Wayne A. Wolfer in the Sirhan Bishara Sirhan and Jack Kirschke murder trials.

Mrs. Blehr, admitting her efforts are aimed at blocking the appointment of Wolfer as head of the Police Scientific Investigation Crime Laboratory, filed the documents with the Los Angeles Civil Service Commission.

They raise the possibility that the weapon in evidence at the Sirhan trial might not have been the one used in Kennedy's slaying.

Pending the outcome of the inquiry by the blue-ribbon panel, Davis said he has instructed Wolfer to make no comment concerning the matter.

Wolfer testified for the prosecution in the trials in which Sirhan was convicted of the 1968 assassination of Kennedy, a presidential candidate, and Kirschke, a former deputy district attorney.

Kirschke was found guilty of killing his wife and her lover, and was given a life sentence. Sirhan is on San Quentin's "Death Row." Both are appealing their cases.

As the cases are awaiting appeal, Davis said he urged the board of inquiry to have Attorney General, District Attorney and City Attorney representatives at the hearing.

Mrs. Blehr told The Herald-Examiner she is questioning Wolfer's testimony only because she is interested in seeing that the Police Department has "the best there is" in scientific personnel.

She added she does not believe Wolfer is qualified for the top post, on the basis of declarations made by other criminal investigation authorities.

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The experts listed six precepts considered inviolable in firearms identification. Mrs. Blehr, in her letter to the commission, said Wolfer violated those precepts in his expert

testimony, and thereby
tion of murder weapon

In the Sirhan case—
only by its court nu
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other victims.

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which his testimony
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second similar gun
H18602," she wrote.

"The only possible
reached is that two s
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"Such a conclusion th
the question: which of
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