

land, Calif. Naval Hospital, to six months for taking part in a peace demonstration while in uniform. Military police stop, question and sometimes threaten servicemen attempting to visit off-post coffee houses. Since many of the dissenters are otherwise model soldiers, the armed forces also use administrative discharge procedures to get rid of them. Last week the Army discharged *Last Harass* Editor Dennis Davis, 26, a member of the pro-Communist Progressive Labor Party, as "undesirable" 16 days before the end of his two-year hitch.

Leaders of the protest movement, however, remain undaunted. They plan further court tests of the armed forces' prohibitions against political activities. Their efforts should guarantee that *The Last Harass* will not be their last harassment of the military.

## POLICE

### Heaven's Angel

Darting about on her chrome-festooned motorcycle in her self-designed uniform—white crash helmet and boots, tight black pants and leather jacket—she might be taken for a Hell's Angel auxiliary. Up close, Esther Winders gives no such false impression. The badge on her breast, the pearl-handled pistol and the can of Chemical Mace that hang from her hips, clearly label Mrs. Winders what she is and always wanted to be: a lady cop.

In fact, Marshal Winders, daughter of a marshal and niece of a police chief, constitutes the entire police force of University Heights, Iowa. The tiny suburb (pop. 2,000) in the shadow of sedate Iowa State is honeycombed with law and order and can rely on nearby Iowa City police if more—or masculine

—officers are needed. Mostly, they are not. Mrs. Winders has never discharged her pistol or Mace can in anger, although she did arrest a drunken driver two years ago.

Yet she is hardly idle. Patrolling on her Harley-Davidson, or in the battered red Studebaker she prefers for late-night cruising, Mrs. Winders keeps University Heights safe from traffic offenders. "I still average one fine or so a week," she says. She also brings a feminine touch to police work. One couple in town had a spat during the night and headed out of their house in opposite directions; the marshal sat with their children until the parents returned the next morning. On the rare occasions when an escaped convict has been in the vicinity, Mrs. Winders and her bloodhound Portia join police from neighboring areas in the chase. Her most serious current problem is an ubiquitous peeping Tom. "They're the hardest to catch," she says. "But I'd like to put some buckshot into him."

Mayor Chan Coulter, a retired Army colonel, credits his one-woman force with providing a "very special kind of protection in our town." But soon University Heights, which hired Mrs. Winders in 1935 when she asked for the job, will have to start looking for a new marshal. Winders and Portia are contemplating retirement. "The council," says the grandmother, "thinks I'm getting too old to chase cars." The council may have a point. At 70, Esther Winders claims to be the oldest working policewoman in the nation.

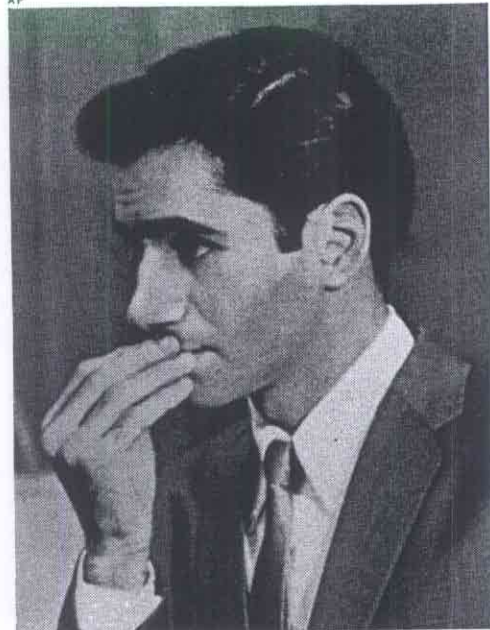
## TRIALS

### The Sirhan Verdict

The victim was one of the most arresting personalities of his time, world-famous while still young, striving for the ultimate in political power. Into his path stepped a pathetic young man whose only claim to recognition was the misery of his life. Suddenly, with a horrified nation as witness, yet another of America's most promising leaders was gunned down. The obscure assassin became the center of attention for investigators, lawyers, psychiatrists. Much of the trial became an exploration of Sirhan Bishara Sirhan's fantasy-ridden mind and how that mind led him to commit murder. Last week seven men and five women found Sirhan guilty of first-degree murder in the assassination of Robert Francis Kennedy.

Rarely had a jury been as respected by court personnel as the panel that decided the fate of Sirhan. A friendly, cooperative group, they accepted their 64 sequestered days and nights without bickering or bitterness. In court, their attentiveness to the intricate testimony of 90 witnesses, which helped to fill 107 volumes of transcript, caused Judge Herbert V. Walker to praise them as the best jury he had ever encountered.

But their job did not end with the verdict. Under California law, the jury then had to hear arguments on wheth-



SIRHAN SIRHAN

*A cold and calculated decision.*

er Sirhan should get life in prison or death in the gas chamber. A decision is expected this week. If spared, Sirhan will serve his time in a special cell block at the California Medical Facility at Vacaville. California authorities do not want to expose him to the mercies of fellow inmates at a regular prison, and Vacaville treats disturbed but legally sane convicts. Though he would be eligible for parole in seven years, his chances for release would be remote. In fact, Defense Attorney Grant Cooper told the jury that his client "deserves to spend the rest of his life in the penitentiary."

**Restated Distinction.** During its 16 hours 42 minutes of deliberation in a drab, ninth-floor room of the Hall of Justice, the jury temporarily buoyed the defense's hope for a second-degree verdict. Jury Foreman Bruce Elliott, a systems analyst with a Ph.D. in electronic engineering, asked Judge Walker to restate the legal distinction between second- and first-degree murder.

Weighing the massive accumulation of evidence, the jury had to decide whether Sirhan was completely responsible for his act. In a summation that ran nearly four hours, Deputy District Attorney David Fitts derided defense testimony by psychiatric experts and portrayed the murder as a "cold and calculated decision."

The state concerned itself with presenting Sirhan's thoughts and movements immediately preceding the killing. The prosecution recounted his hatred of Jews and of Kennedy for allegedly espousing their cause. The jury was told how Sirhan had practiced with the murder weapon and later stalked Kennedy on the night that the presidential candidate was celebrating his victory in the California primary.

**Impassive Reaction.** Against this clear-cut charge, the jury had to consider the more esoteric plea by the de-



MARSHAL WINDERS & PORTIA  
*Pearl on the pistol, Mace on the hip.*

## WHAT TO DO UNTIL THE FLOOD COMES

fense. Not surprisingly, the twelve at times appeared bewildered by the masses of confusing and contradictory psychological evidence presented to convince them that Sirhan was a "schizophrenic, paranoid psychotic." Defense Attorneys Cooper, Russell Parsons and Emile Zola Berman portrayed their client as a man hopelessly crazed by his role in history. They repeatedly referred to his traumatic youth as a Palestinian refugee, victimized by the warring Arabs and Israelis. On the murder night, the "deluded dreamer" was in a "hypnotic trance," his obsession with the murder ritual heightened by liquor. In his summation, Cooper pegged his plea to Sirhan's "diminished capacity" to tell right from wrong. For his part, the proud, hotheaded Sirhan seemed to like being described as a cold-blooded killer. He erupted violently at the mention of his low IQ and the public exposure of irrational jottings found by police in his notebook.

In anticipation of yet another fit of rage, three security guards were positioned around the sallow, dark-eyed defendant while the verdict was being read. Sirhan reacted impassively, however, and was led quietly back to his high-security cell to await sentencing. The first-degree verdict will be appealed, a process that could take a year or more. It is doubtful that all three members of his volunteer team of expert criminal lawyers will continue very long on the case. For them, it has been a wearing and expensive several months. Nor is it likely that Sirhan will be executed, regardless of the sentence the jury proposes. Capital punishment is increasingly rare. Although at least 435 convicts languish on death rows around the country, no murderer has been put to death in the past two years, no matter how heinous the crime.

WHEN the people of Crookston, Minn., looked out their windows one morning last week, they were reassured. Their city was still there. Despite a brutal, 70-hour battering by the rampaging Red Lake River, Crookston had survived relatively undamaged. Other communities in the upper Midwest were not so fortunate. Swollen by the heaviest accumulation of melting snow in history, the region's rivers gushed over their banks and crested in five states—North and South Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa. Tumbling gigantic chunks of ice before them, the torrents inundated vast areas, causing at least \$31 million in damage and driving more than 22,000 people from their homes. Fortunately, only eight people died.

North Dakota was the hardest hit. Twelve thousand persons had to be evacuated from Minot when the Souris River went wild. Similar emergencies were faced throughout the upper Midwest. Yet despite the seriousness of the floods, the toll in damage, injury and death could have been much worse had it not been for precautions taken by the U.S. Government and some individual communities.

**Going It Alone.** As early as last February, weather bureau experts predicted floods because of the massive Canadian snow packs dissolving with the spring thaw. To try to protect at least some of the area, state and Federal Government agencies joined together to form Operation Foresight, an \$18 million emergency effort. Under it, the Army Corps of Engineers produced 183 linear miles of dikes and assisted 283 communities with their flood preparations. The engineers distributed pumps and more than 10 million sandbags and used

vast numbers of construction equipment. Even with its limited means, the program successfully prevented an estimated \$113 million in damage. Many towns that suffered in 1965 were kept dry by the hastily built dikes.

Other communities had to go it alone. Some, such as Crookston (pop. 9,200), were prepared; experience had been a cruel teacher. In 1897, 1916 and again in 1950, the town had been devastated by floods. The Army engineers studied Crookston in 1943 and somehow concluded that it had no serious flooding problems, but the town disagreed and several years later began building a small dike system funded by local assessments and general taxes. By 1965, Crookston had 2.8 miles of new dikes, which cost nearly \$63,000. The investment paid off immediately. The flood four years ago—the worst in a century—caused only \$80,000 in damage, one-twentieth of the cost in 1950. Further improvements were made after 1965. Still, when the crisis came this spring, it was not the dikes but the people that made the difference.

Each section of the community was organized. Neighborhood headquarters were established with radios to communicate with dike patrols, troubleshooting teams and civil defense units manned by local citizens. Each neighborhood paid for its own equipment—everything from walkie-talkies to coffee urns. The preparations were as complete as the town's foresight and finances allowed.

**Race with the Crest.** Yet when the high waters arrived, it became apparent that a dike built last summer would not hold. Mayor Harold Thomforde broadcast an appeal for help, and soon 50 high school youngsters appeared. Working most of the night sandbagging the sagging dike, the youngsters saved 350 homes. The next day, the mayor organized 1,000 youths from the local high school, surrounding schools and a branch of the University of Minnesota. They labored in shifts on into the night, keeping the level of the dikes just above the ever-rising waters. But by 4:30 a.m., the river was still coming up, and the 250 youngsters on the night shift were clearly exhausted.

Once again, Thomforde went on the radio and called for assistance, and this time 150 adults came to man the dikes. At dawn, the mayor again asked for help, and whole families streamed to the dike lines. Nearly 400 people, including a dozen teaching nuns from Corbett College and Mount St. Benedict Academy, were at work at 7 a.m. At last the waters began to recede.

**Treading Water.** Other towns less prepared than Crookston suffered heavily. Forty-five miles downstream from Crookston in Grand Forks, N. Dak., individual homeowners suffered severe losses. The swirling Red River rapidly rose to a crest of 45½ ft. and flooded 50 houses in the city's most expensive



VOLUNTEERS WORKING ON SANDBAG BRIGADE IN CROOKSTON  
Everything from walkie-talkies to coffee urns.