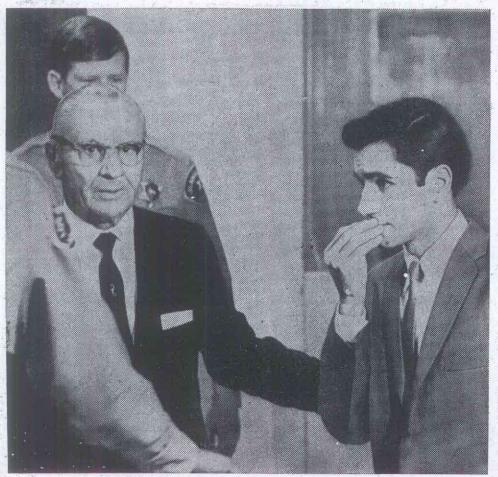
Defense Motions Stall Trial of Sirhan



United Press International

Sirhan B. Sirhan is led to courtroom by one of his attorneys, Russell Parsons.

By George Lardner Jr. Washington Post Staff Writer

LOS ANGELES, June 7 — With a bouncy step and a smile on his face, Sirhan B. Sirhan walked into court here today to go on trial for the assassination of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy.

But a last-minute rash of defense maneuvers kept the trial from getting started.

Sirhan's chief defense attorney, Grant B. Cooper, asked for 30 days to thrash out the motions he filed—including a bid for two separate juries to determine the 24-year-old Jordanian's fate.

Superior Court Judge Herbert V. Walker, the bushy-browed judge who will preside at the trial, said he hoped the issues could be settled faster than that.

Under California law, a separate trial is held to determine the penalty in first-degree murder cases. The defense wanted one jury to determine Sirhan's guilt or innocence and another, in the event of conviction, to choose between life in prison and the gas chamber at San Quentin. The request was denied, but with the understanding that it could be renewed again later at the conclusion of the first trial.

Dressed in a blue-gray suit See SIRHAN, A16, Col. 4



Mary Sirhan, mother of Sirhan Sirhan, ing Sen. Robert Kennedy, arrives for the Jordanian immigrant accused of murder-start of his trial with another son, Munir.

Defense Moves Stall Sirhan Trial

SIRHAN, From A1

by his attorneys, occasionally finger at his client. whispering with defense counsel Russell E. Parsons, who had escorted the accused assassin from his isolated, 13th-floor jail cell.

Cooper had indicated that he might seek that flat postponement of the trial because

legalestablishment, Cooper confidential communication. admitted to the grand jury last last year during the Friars Younger have voiced fears defense table at the trial.

ly admitted that he had four Walker's chambers for 50 minpossession, but protested that convened.

to have told the truth at the The session opened in a tive jurors to written queries. with matching tie, Sirhan sat trial, would have pointed a 1925-vintage courtroom, com- Another hearing was set for

shortly before noon. An hour television camera shoved into later, Cooper marched across the street to the Federal Sirhan's mother, Mary, and Courthouse, where he was to another courtroom set aside his 21-year-old brother, Munir, ordered to answer abbut 45 for the overflow crowd of watched together from the last questions before the Grand newsmen. row of the antiquated court- Jury investigating the leak of room in the Hall of Justice transcripts in the Friars Club

Would Go To Jail

Cooper has indicated that he of his own involvement in a would go to jail for contempt Federal Grand Jury investiga- if necessary and rely on an appeal, presumably based on the A pillar of the Los Angeles attorney-client privilege of

Prosecutors for Los Angeles week that he had lied in court District Attorney Evelle J. Club card-cheating trial. A that Cooper's headaches in the grounds that the Grand transcript of secret testimony Federal Court could cause the before an earlier Federal assassination trial to misfire. Grand Jury was found on the The issue, however, did not other motion attacked the meth- he was incapable of comcome up in open court today Cooper, who represented one although a closed-door conof the defendants, subsequent-ference was held in Judge of the secret transcripts in his utes immediately after court

plete with rolltop desk, on the Wednesday. The Sirhan hearing ended Hall of Justice's eighth floor. A an old air conditioning unit in the back of the small room sent pictures down four flights

Security precautions were so tight that sheriff's deputies were seen frisking one another. Typewriters were banned from the fourth-floor courtroom on the tenuous theory that they might be concealing weapons that could kill via closed-circuit TV.

Request Denied

Other defense moves today included a motion to quash the indictment against Sirhan on Jury that handed it down was mental state was of such "diillegally constituted. And anod of selecting trial juries in mitting premeditated California.

ings on these while denying turn into an attack on Zionto limit questioning of prospec-political life.

Cooper said he wanted separate juries because he felt It would be an "unconstitutional burden" to be forced to ask prospective panelists how they felt about the death penalty. Walker replied that he felt the problem could be overcome with "proper instructions" from the bench to the jurors finally selected.

After the session, Cooper told newsmen that the defense has no intention of denying that Sirhan shot Kennedy. But he denied that its task is simply to save Sirhan from the gas chamber.

"The defense," he "will be along other lines." These will reportedly include the contention that Sirhan's minished responsibility" that firstdegree murder. In this effort, Judge Walker withheld rul it is expected, the trial could still another defense request ism and its role in American