

ecuting Attorney John Howard told the jurors in arguing against a life sentence. "He has no special claim to further preservation."

Too Harsh. Having reached the first-degree murder verdict the previous week, the panel, under California law, had to decide on Sirhan's punishment. The defense and prosecution made brief pleas, after which the jury spent eleven hours and 45 minutes deciding Sirhan's fate. "I know he premeditated the murder with malice," said Broomis, "but I still thought the death penalty was too harsh." Four formal ballots were taken, but life imprisonment never received more than three votes. Finally, unanimity was achieved. George A. Stitzel, a pressroom foreman for the Los Angeles *Times*, reported later: "One item that was very important was the idea that we should stand behind our laws."

will now ask Judge Herbert Walker to commute the death sentence to life imprisonment—a request he has granted only once in more than 15 years on the bench. If this fails, there will be appeals. The defense will argue that the court did not exercise its discretion when it failed to accept a plea of first-degree murder with a recommendation for life sentence—a pretrial settlement to which the prosecution had agreed. Judge Walker insisted the case had too much significance to be settled out of court. It was, in fact, just such a plea in Memphis that saved James Earl Ray, the hardened criminal who killed Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., from the same type of trial. Perhaps Ray thus escaped the same death penalty that now hangs over Sirhan, the Palestinian refugee who had no criminal record before he ended Kennedy's life last June.



SIRHAN CONFERRING WITH HIS LAWYERS
No special claim to further preservation.

TRIALS

Toward the Gas Chamber

Throughout the long days of the trial, George Broomis had listened attentively to both sides. An openly emotional man, he tried his best to control himself, but at times found it impossible. "I'm a sentimental person," says Broomis, "and every time the tears came to my eyes I tried to stop them. Day after day, sitting there with him sitting in the chair in front of me, it was terrible. I tried not to look at him and I tried not to look at his mother, but they were always there."

For Broomis and the eleven other jurors, the ordeal of Case No. 233421 ended last week. The seven men and five women decreed that Sirhan Bishara Sirhan, killer of Senator Robert F. Kennedy, should be put to death in the gas chamber at San Quentin.

The first-degree verdict and the death sentence showed how little impact the defense had had in trying to prove with psychiatric testimony that Sirhan was incapable of telling right from wrong. It was the uncomplicated, law-and-order approach by the prosecution that convinced the jury. "Sirhan Sirhan was entitled to a fair trial," Pros-

Benjamin Glick, owner of a women's clothing store and the only Jew on the panel, reasoned that Sirhan was not only anti-Zionist but "fanatically" against anyone who supports Israel. "Bending over backwards to give him more of a break," Glick voted for life imprisonment on the first ballot. He stayed up all the next night, finally deciding that Sirhan "deserved death for his heinous, dastardly crime."

Defense testimony by two psychiatrists and six psychologists was often obscure, at times conflicting—and never convincing to the jury. When the defense pressed its experts for judgments on Sirhan's sanity, the imprecision of the science became obvious. Each psychologist and psychiatrist seemed to have a slightly different theory about Sirhan's mental state. "All those psychiatrists—they really had us all stirred up," said Albert N. Frederico, a plumber. "It was confusing. It stunk."

Under California law, the defense