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Sirhan Bjt 500 2 Takes, Total 900

By HARRY F. ROSENTHAL

Associated Press Writer

LOS ANGELES AP — Sirhan Bishara Sirhan has failed in another volatile try to fire his attorneys, change his plea to guilty and go to the gas chamber for murdering Sen. Robert F. Kennedy. And he's been warned: Any further tantrums and he'll be gagged and strapped to his chair.

"From here on you keep quiet, and if not, I will see to it that you are kept quiet," said Judge Herbert V. Walker after a heated 10-minute exchange with Sirhan.

In the course of his third courtroom outburst of the week, Sirhan said "I plead guilty to murder and ask to be executed."

It began with a commotion at the defense table, the jury being sent from the room, and Sirhan telling the judge:

"I, at this time, sir, withdraw my original plea of not guilty and submit the plea of guilty as charged on all counts." Sirhan had made the same request in chambers Tuesday.

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"Stand up," commanded the 69-year-old judge. "Do I understand that you want to plead guilty to murder in the first degree?"

"Yes, sir, I do," said the 24-year-old Sirhan with determination.

"All right, and what do you want to do about the penalty?"

"I will offer no defense whatsoever."

"The question is, what do you want to do about the penalty?"

"I will ask to be executed, sir."

Ten feet behind Sirhan in the spectator section sat his mother, 56, with tears streaming from her eyes. Another son, Munir, 21 leaned over her attentively.

Sirhan's lawyers stood aside as the diminutive defendant who once had hopes of being a jockey-faced the bench alone. He was white-faced but he spoke in an even, measured tone.

The judge said he knows nothing in the law that permits a defendant to enter a guilty plea to first-degree murder and ask for execution.

"Well, I have, sir," said Sirhan.

"Well, now, just a minute. Why do you want to do this?"

"I believe, sir, that is my business, isn't it?"

Sirhan said.

"You just believe it is your business" said the judge.

"That is my prerogative."

Walker said Sirhan would have to give a reason and the slender young defendant recited—almost as if it had been rehearsed:

"I killed Robert Kennedy wilfully, premeditatively, with 20 years of malice aforethought. That is why."

The indictment, returned by a grand jury last June 7—the day after Kennedy died—charged Sirhan did "wilfully, unlawfully, feloniously and with malice aforethought murder Robert F. Kennedy, a human being."

Kennedy was shot after attending a party celebrating his California Democratic presidential primary victory.

Sirhan's attorneys contend the young Jordanian's childhood experiences in war-torn Palestine robbed Sirhan of the mental capacity to meaningfully and maturely plan the murder. Its first witnesses Friday testified how poorly Arab refugees lived after partition of Palestine in 1948.

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Judge Walker told Sirhan evidence had to be produced in court and the defendant replied, "I will withdraw all evidence sir."

"There is no such procedure," said the judge.

"To hell with it," replied Sirhan.

The judge told Sirhan he would not put up with more interruptions: "I mean by that you will have a face mask put on you which will prohibit you from talking and further, your arms will be strapped to your chair and the trial will proceed. You understand that?" Sirhan said he understood but said he didn't want to be represented by his counsel.

"You have retained counsel," the judge said. "Counsel is staying in the trial."

"I don't want anyone to have a trial shoved down my throat, sir, and you are not going to shove it down my throat, sir, in any way you want," said Sirhan, adding that he wanted to defend himself.

The judge asked a legal question.

"I don't know," said Sirhan.

"I find you are incapable of representing yourself," said Walker. "Sit down and keep quiet and, if not, I intend to keep you quiet."

Sirhan's voice rose: "No sir, I still maintain my original point. I plead guilty to murder and ask to be executed."

Soon afterward, the three defense attorneys talked with Sirhan in a cell outside the courtroom.

"He has advised us definitely, positively and unequivocally that he does not desire us to continue to represent him as his counsel," said Grant B. Cooper. "I have conferred with my brethren of the defense, Mr. Russell E. Parsons and Mr. Emile Zola Berman . . . We are willing—I might say anxious—to leave this case . . . but none of us wants to desert the defendant."

The judge said he knew of no law that permits attorneys to withdraw in the middle of a trial without good cause and he could see no good cause.

Sirhan's mother wept throughout this exchange. She was then called to the stand as the fourth defense witness. After a few questions, Munir asked the defense counsel to let her continue another time.

The trial then w

s recessed until Monday.

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