

# Sirhan Murder Charge Put Before Grand Jury

By JACK SCHREIBMAN  
LOS ANGELES (AP) — The Los Angeles County Grand Jury met today to hear 23 witnesses and consider a first-degree murder indictment against a young Jordanian in the assassination of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy.

Sirhan Bishara Sirhan, 24, was not present as the 22 grand jurors met on the fifth floor of the Hall of Justice. He is jailed under constant surveillance in a maximum security cell.

One witness, who said he was a porter at the hotel where Kennedy was shot but who did not give his name before going into the witness room, told newsmen he saw the accused gunman at the scene half an hour before the shooting.

THE ACCUSED asked several times if Kennedy would pass through the area, the witness said, and "looked worried, but not nervous . . . I didn't see anyone with him."

Another witness was Irwin Stroll, one of the wounded. Shot in the left leg, he arrived in a wheel chair. Another was Ira Goldstein, shot in the hip, who arrived limping.

Richard Walker, an ambu-

lance driver, said another victim, William Weisel, told him he felt "three sharp stings" as he was hit by bullets that wounded him.

Negro athletes Rafer Johnson and Roosevelt Grier, who caught the accused slayer

and wrested a gun from him, were not present. Police said special arrangements had been made to get their stories, so they could attend the funeral, but declined to elaborate.

JURY FOREMAN L. E. Mc-

Kee, a retired garage man from nearby Long Beach, said before the hearing began, "The jury is made up of persons from all walks of life, creeds and colors and I feel that after we have heard all

Turn to Page 11, Column 1

NO. 0. STATES - ITEM  
7 June 68

## Continued from Front Page

the evidence and deliberated, a fair decision will be rendered."

The grand jury was composed of 13 women and nine men. One jury member was absent due to illness. The foreman said a vote of 14 is required for an indictment.

Heading the presentation to jurors was Dist. Atty. Evelle J. Younger, who requested the indictment.

YOUNGER SAID Sirhan would then be arraigned in person within 48 hours in Superior Court, make a plea at that time or shortly after, with trial expected to begin within 60 days from that time. Should the defense seek a change of venue, Younger said he would not oppose it.

The public defender's office is providing Sirhan legal advice.

The prisoner originally was held under \$250,000 bond, but that was revoked by Superior Court Judge Joan Dempsey Klein after Kennedy's death. California law permits no bond in a murder case.

IN ADDITION to the murder indictment, Younger said he would ask five additional indictments in the wounding of five others who were in Kennedy's vicinity at 12:17 a. m. Wednesday morning at the Ambassador Hotel.

At that minute, with Kennedy joyous with the victory he had freshly scored in the California Democratic presidential primary, a tiny pellet of lead smashed into the brain of the 42-year-old senator who hoped to lead his country.

He died a little over 25 hours later. And nearly 12 hours after that, his body, accompanied by his mourning family, was flown east to await honored burial in Arlington National Cemetery.

As the shock of Kennedy's death spread through the country and the world, the intense young man accused of the shooting sat in a bleak cubicle of three square yards in the county's main jail on Bouchet Street.

FIRST DETAILS of Sirhan's imprisonment were disclosed yesterday by Sheriff Peter Pitchess.

Sirhan's grey-colored cell is on the second floor of the jail in an isolated wing with limited access. An unarmed deputy is constantly in the cell with him.

Outside the steel door with a built-in lock, another guard peers at all times through an unbreakable glass porthole in the door.

"We can get to him fast if we have to," Pitchess said.

Flanking the corridor outside the cell, four other deputies remain alert. All the guards are picked men, Pitchess said.

Sirhan is in the medical section of the jail because he is under treatment for a broken indexfinger and a sprained ankle—injuries he suffered in his capture at the hotel. Sirhan has facial bruises as well from the arrest, Pitchess said.

PITCHESS SAID Sirhan got a thorough medical examination when he was brought to county jail Wednesday morning after his Municipal Court arraignment on the original charges, attempted murder.

Sirhan is under the care of Dr. Marcus Crahan, jail medical director and also a psychiatrist. Asked whether Sirhan underwent psychiatric examination, Pitchess said yes.

The accused man, he said, has behaved well and has not asked for any visits from his family. Pitchess repeated what other officers have repeatedly said, that Sirhan refuses to talk about the shooting.

Sirhan is "totally noncommittal to our personnel," the sheriff said.

Sirhan learned of Kennedy's death and the worldwide reaction to it when, Pitchess revealed, he asked for and received Wednesday and yesterday copies of the morning Los Angeles Times and the afternoon Herald-Examiner.

Sirhan also received at his

request — but barely read, Pitchess said — two theosophical books—“The Secret Doctrine” by Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, and “Talks on ‘At the Feet of the Master’” by C. W. Leadbeater.

The books are the works of leaders in the theosophical movement—a body of thought claiming special knowledge of divine wisdom. Some theosophists looked on India as the source of all wisdom and most espoused the Indian doctrine of reincarnation.

All security has been beefed up at the concrete jail, mostly because of Sirhan's presence some of it due to mailed and telephoned bomb threats

—“at least a dozen”—against the life of Pitchess and department personnel.

“We are ignoring these,” Pitchess said, adding that most of the calls came yesterday.

Within a mile or so of the jail, official activity was at fever pitch. Four news conferences were held at different times by the sheriff, district attorney, county coroner and Mayor Samuel W. Yorty.

Yorty has aroused the ire of state and local legal authorities over his release of portions of Sirhan's notebook taken from his Pasadena apartment.

THE OFFICIALS expressed concern that the material might prejudice a fair trial. Yorty said Wednesday that Sirhan's notebook contained one entry about “the necessity to assassinate Sen. Kennedy before June 5, 1968.”

That is the date of the first anniversary of the Arab-Israeli war decisively won by Israel.

Younger told reporters the assassination was a great tragedy and would be a “greater tragedy . . . if successful prosecution of the person responsible for the terrible crime was jeopardized by statements prior to the trial commenting on evidentiary matters.”

California Atty. Gen. Thomas C. Lynch, saying he was concerned “over giving out information that might prejudice a fair trial,” said that U.S. Supreme Court and California Supreme Court decisions severely limit what public officials can say.

YORTY TOLD newsmen he had “exercised my judgment” in the matter, pointed out that he was a lawyer, and declared the trial would not be affected because the public had seen so much more on television.

Police said yesterday after-

noon they had issued an all points bulletin for a white woman between 23 and 27 years old who reportedly was seen with Sirhan prior to the shooting. She was wearing a white dress with black polka dots. She was not named.

Inspector Peter Hagan added later, however, that the bulletin was only an informational one following a report from a young Kennedy campaign worker and was not for the purpose of arrest.

“We are merely asking for anyone to come forward with information regarding the girl in the polka dot dress,” he said.