

Trial in RFK Death Nov. 1

SIRHAN PLEADS INNOCENT

# Attorney Eyes Plea Of Insanity

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Speaking in a forceful voice, Sirhan Bishara Sirhan pleaded "not guilty" today to a charge he murdered Sen. Robert F. Kennedy. His trial was set for Nov. 1.

The 24-year-old Jordanian immigrant spoke but 10 words during a 22-minute hearing, denying his guilt and approving a trial date later than guaranteed by his constitutional right for a "speedy trial."

**SIRHAN ALSO PLEADED** innocent to five counts of assault with intent to commit murder. The New York senator and five bystanders were shot June 5 after Kennedy won the California Democratic presidential primary. The others recovered.

Sirhan's attorney said the door has not been closed on a possible plea of innocent by reason of insanity. He said tests of Sirhan's brain have not been completed and results of the tests could affect his view of whether the defendant is sane.

"If a man's insane at the time of trial, you can't try him. You know, people sometimes lose their minds very suddenly . . . The door is open for almost anything."

**SIRHAN WAS** seized immediately after the shooting at the Ambassador hotel and has been held in maximum security since. Two previous hearings for plea were continued pending psychiatric examination by two defense experts.

Sirhan, slender and black-haired, wore an open-necked, button-down, light blue shirt and dark slacks for his appearance in a heavily guarded

courtroom on the 13th floor of the Hall of Justice.

He was freshly shaven and directed his attention entirely to the proceedings, not glancing at his mother and three brothers who were in the

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small spectator section.

**HIS ATTORNEY**, Russell E. Parsons, asked for a trial date of no sooner than Nov. 1, saying an attorney who will assist him is involved in another case. He did not identify the attorney.

Superior Court Judge Richard A. Schauer then told Sirhan that he was constitutionally entitled to trial within 60 days after arraignment and asked: "Do you now give up rights to a speedy trial?"

"We waive that right," Sirhan said firmly after consulting Parsons.

"Do you personally waive that right?"

"Yes sir."

Schauer said he would name a trial judge, Oct. 4.

**SIRHAN WAS** returned to his cell, only steps from the courtroom.

Earlier, the judge refused a request from Dist. Atty. Evelle J. Younger to modify an order sharply restricting public statements about the case by public officials, attorney and witness.

Younger argued that "where it is possible, we believe that people should know as much as possible about what their government is doing."

He said that as district attorney he should be able to give the press answer to such questions as:

**ARE YOU GOING** to call the coroner, Mrs. Kennedy, Roosevelt Grier and others to testify at the trial? Was there a conspiracy involved? Is any foreign government involved? Is there any evidence that a second gun was fired? Was one of Sirhan's brothers really fired at? Was a brother involved in the Kennedy shooting?

"If I were the defendant and if there was no foreign involvement or no sinister organization involved, I would want the district attorney to

say so," Younger argued.

But Judge Schauer made only a minor adjustment in the court's order.

"This case demands an order to restrict publicity," he declared.

**HIS CHANGES** were merely to delete a comma and change a "nor" to an "or" and slightly amend a phrase, the effect of which was to include in the order all chiefs of police or sheriffs who have "obtained information related to this action, which information has not previously been released to the public."

Parsons said earlier he believes Sirhan can get as fair a trial in Los Angeles as anywhere.