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Electronics Worker Picked As First Ruby Trial Juror

Attorneys Select 24th Venireman

By CARL FREUND

Attorneys chose a 35-year-old electronics worker Thursday as the first juror in the Jack Ruby murder trial.

He is Max E. Causey of 710 Peachtree Lane in Garland, a Ling-Temco-Vought analyst. A former KC97 tanker pilot, he holds a master's degree in education.

Causey was the 24th venireman questioned by prosecution and defense lawyers in the quest for a jury which must decide whether Ruby committed murder when he shot Lee Harvey Oswald while millions watched on television.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

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Ruby shot Oswald in the City Hall basement after his arrest as the prime suspect in the assassination of President Kennedy. Defense lawyers contend Ruby was temporarily insane and "acting like a robot" when he pulled the trigger.

Ruby, himself, made the final decision to accept Causey.

The stocky, sandy-haired juror said he could vote for the death penalty if he thought evidence justified it. On the other hand, he said, he would find Ruby innocent if defense lawyers showed the striptease club manager was insane.

"I feel I have no opinions which would affect my verdict," Causey said.

Causey said he was attending Sunday morning services of the First Baptist Church in Garland when Ruby shot Oswald. Later, Causey said, he watched "a re-run" of the shooting on television.

The day, which was marked by more heated wrangling among lawyers, also brought these developments:

—Judge Joe B. Brown rejected a defense request that he transfer the trial to another county "where it is apparent that we are not in the Dark Ages—that there is such a thing as insanity."

—Defense lawyers used their fifth peremptory challenge to reject L. E. McBride, a 58-year-old aircraft inspector, after charging that he "wanted to get on the jury." (These challenges allow lawyers to reject prospective jurors without giving any reason.)

—Judge Brown turned down a defense contention that a prospective juror is disqualified simply because he believes Oswald was shot to death.

—Prosecutors charged that defense lawyers deliberately asked questions which they knew were improper in an attempt to create a "circus atmosphere."

—Melvin Belli of San Francisco, the chief defense attorney, charged that Sheriff Bill Decker's deputies, who were guarding Ruby, eavesdropped on strategy conferences of defense lawyers.

—Belli asked Judge Brown to give the defense more than the 15 peremptory challenges normally allotted each side. The judge said he had not "given any thought" to increasing the number, but did not reject the request outright.

Ruby, who smiled at reporters Wednesday, appeared more grave during Thursday sessions of Criminal District Court No. 3. Peering through horn-rimmed glasses, he examined documents and conferred repeatedly with his lawyers.

Most veniremen Thursday were excused because they did not believe in the death penalty or had opinions which would affect their verdicts.

Judge Brown disqualified one prospective juror, J. P. Carr, after Carr commented, "I don't think they can prove to me that he is insane."

Belli and Joe Tonahill, a 240-pound Jasper lawyer who also represents Ruby, said they still believe they cannot get a fair jury here.

They complained that rulings by Judge Brown handcuffed them in their attempts to "probe the subconscious thoughts" of prospective jurors.

Dist. Atty. Henry Wade said he is "more convinced than ever" that lawyers can select an impartial jury here, but conceded the tedious task "may take two or three weeks."

Wade and First Assistant Dist. Atty. A. D. Jim Bowie spent much of the day objecting to defense questions which they termed "obviously improper."