

Night-Club Man Who Admired Kennedy Is Oswald's Slayer

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DALLAS, Nov. 24 — President Kennedy's assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald, was fatally shot by a Dallas night-club operator today as the police started to move him from the city jail to the county jail.

The shooting occurred in the basement of the municipal building at about 11:20 A.M. central standard time (12:20 P.M. New York time).

The assailant, Jack Rubenstein, known as Jack Ruby, lunged from a cluster of newsmen observing the transfer of Oswald from the jail to an armored truck.

Millions of viewers saw the shooting on television.

As the shot rang out, a police detective suddenly recognized Ruby and exclaimed: "Jack, you son of a bitch!"

A murder charge was filed against Ruby by Assistant District Attorney William F. Alexander. Justice of the Peace Pierce McBride ordered him held without bail.

Detectives Flank Him

Oswald was arrested Friday after Mr. Kennedy was shot dead while riding through Dallas in an open car. He was charged with murdering the President and a policeman who was shot a short time later while trying to question Oswald.

As the 24-year-old prisoner, flanked by two detectives, stepped onto a basement garage ramp, Ruby thrust a .38-caliber, snub-nose revolver into Oswald's left side and fired a single shot.

The 52-year-old night-club operator, an ardent admirer of President Kennedy and his family, was described as having been distraught.

[District Attorney Henry Wade said he understood that the police were looking into the possibility that Oswald had been slain to prevent him from talking. The Associated Press reported, Mr. Wade said that so far no connection between Oswald and Ruby had been established.]

Oswald slumped to the concrete paving, wordlessly clutching his side and writhing with pain.

Oswald apparently lost con-

sciousness very quickly after the shooting. Whether he was at any point able to speak, if he wanted to, was not known.

The politically eccentric warehouse clerk was taken in a police ambulance to the Parkland Hospital, where President Kennedy died Friday. He died in surgery at 1:07 P.M., less than two hours after the shooting. The exact time Oswald was shot was not definitely established.

Four plainclothes men, from a detail of about 50 police officers carrying out the transfer, pounced on Ruby as he fired the shot and overpowered him.

Ruby, who came to Dallas from Chicago 15 years ago, had a police record here listing six allegations of minor offenses. The disposition of five was not noted. A charge of liquor law violation was dismissed. Two of the entries, in July, 1953, and May, 1954, involved carrying concealed weapons.

The city police, working with the Secret Service and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, said last night that they had the case against Oswald "cinched."

After some 30 hours of intermittent interrogations and confrontations with scores of witnesses, Oswald was ordered transferred to the custody of the Dallas County sheriff.

This was preliminary to the planned presentation of the case, next Wednesday or the following Monday, to the county grand jury by District Attorney Wade.

The transfer involved a trip of about a mile from the uptown municipal building, where the Police Department and jail are. The route went down Main Street to the county jail, overlooking the spot where President Kennedy was killed and Gov. John B. Connally was wounded by shots from the book warehouse where Oswald worked.

A Change in Plans

The original plan had been for the sheriff to assume custody of Oswald at the city jail and handle the transfer. Late last night, for unspecified reasons, it was decided that the city police would move the prisoner.

Police Chief Jesse Curry declined to comment on suggestions that he had scheduled the transfer of Oswald at an unpropitious time because of pressure from news media.

Chief Curry announced about 9 o'clock last night that the investigation had reached a point where Oswald's presence was no longer needed. He said that Oswald would be turned over to the county sheriff today.

Asked when this would take

place, the chief said: "If you fellows are here by 10 A.M., you'll be early enough."

When newsmen assembled at the police administrative offices at 10 o'clock, Chief Curry commented: "We could have done this earlier if I hadn't given you fellows that 10 o'clock time."

Armored Van Used

This was generally construed as meaning that preparations for the transfer had been in readiness for some hours, rather than implying a complaint from the chief that the press had had any part in setting the time.

Chief Curry disclosed this morning that to thwart an attempt against Oswald, the trip was to be made in an armored van of the kind used to transfer money.

"We're not going to take any chances," he said. "Our squad cars are not bullet-proof. If somebody's going to try to do something, they wouldn't stop him."

A ramp dips through the basement garage of the municipal building, running from Main Street to Commerce Street. Patrol wagons drive down this ramp and discharge prisoners at a basement booking office. The garage ceiling was too low for the armored car, so the van was backed up in the Commerce Street portal of the ramp.

The plan was to lead Oswald out the doorway in the center of the basement and about 75 feet up the ramp to the back of the armored car.

Prisoner on Fourth Floor

At about 11 o'clock, Chief Curry left his third-floor office, followed by plainclothes detectives and newsmen, to go to the basement. Oswald was still in a fourth-floor jail cell.

As the group with the chief walked through a short corridor past the basement booking office and out the door onto the guarded ramp, uniformed policemen checked the reporters' credentials. But they passed familiar faces, such as those of policemen and collaborating Secret Service and F.B.I. agents.

Ruby's face was familiar to many policemen who had encountered him at his two night clubs and in his frequent visits to the municipal building.

Inconspicuous in Group

Neatly dressed in a dark suit and wearing a fedora, he was inconspicuous in a group of perhaps 50 men who for the next 20 minutes waited in a 12-foot-wide vestibule and adjacent portions of the ramp.

Television cameras, facing the vestibule, were set up against a metal railing separating the 15-foot-wide ramp from the rest of the garage. Some newsmen clustered along this railing.

Across Commerce Street, in front of a row of bail bondsmen's offices, a crowd of several hundred persons was held back by a police line.

Soon Oswald was taken in an elevator to the basement. He was led through the booking office to the open vestibule between two lines of detectives.

Walks Behind Captain

Captain Fritz, chief of the police homicide division, walked just ahead of him. Oswald was handcuffed, with a detective holding each arm and another following. On Oswald's right, in a light suit, was J. R. Leavelle and on his left, in a dark suit, L. C. Graves.

As they turned right from the vestibule to start up the ramp, Ruby jumped forward from against the railing. There was a sudden loud noise that sounded like the explosion of a photographer's flashbulb. It was Ruby's revolver firing.

A momentary furor set in as Ruby was seized and hustled into the building. Policemen ran up the ramp in both directions to the street, followed by others with orders to seal off the building.

About five minutes elapsed before an ambulance could be rolled down the ramp to Oswald.

The ambulance, its siren sounding, was followed by police and press cars on the four-mile drive to the hospital.

The hospital's emergency department had been on the alert for possible injuries arising out of the projected transfer.

Oswald was moved almost immediately into an operating room, at the other end of the

building from the one where President Kennedy was treated.

The bullet had entered Oswald's body just below his heart and had torn into most of the vital organs.

Dr. Tom Shires, the hospital's chief of surgery, who operated on Governor Connally Friday, took over the case. The gamut of emergency procedures — blood transfusion, fluid transfusion, breathing tub and chest drainage tube — was instituted immediately.

But Dr. Shires quickly reported through a hospital official that Oswald was in "extremely critical condition" and that surgery would take several hours.

Family Put in Custody

Oswald's brother, George, a factory worker from Den-

ton, Tex., got to the hospital before the assassin died.

The police took Oswald's mother, wife and two infant daughters into protective custody. They were escorted to the hospital to view the body, then were taken to an undisclosed lodging place in Dallas.

Governor Connally is still a patient at the Parkland Hospital. The excitement of the Oswald case swirled around the temporary office the Governor had set up there.

Back at the jail, Ruby was taken to the same fourth-floor cellblock where his victim had been the focus of attention the last two days.

Reports that filtered out

about his preliminary remarks said that he had been impelled to kill President Kennedy's assassin by sympathy for Mrs. Kennedy. It was reported he did not want her to go through the ordeal of returning to Dallas for the trial of Oswald.

District Attorney Wade said yesterday he was sure the prosecution of Oswald could be carried out without the personal involvement of any members of the Kennedy family.

A half-dozen lawyers who have worked for Ruby converged on police headquarters in the next hour or two. They said they had been directed there by relatives and friends of Ruby and had not been called by Ruby himself.

One lawyer said that he had arranged for a hearing before a justice of the peace tomorrow morning to ask for Ruby's release on bail.

"He's a respectable citizen who's been here for years and certainly is entitled to bail," the lawyer said. "We'll make any amount of bail."

"He is a great admirer of President Kennedy," the lawyer said, "and police officers."

The last remark was an allusion to the fact that Oswald was accused of fatally shooting the Dallas patrolman after the President's assassination.

Ruby, the lawyer said, "is a very emotional man."

Chief Curry called the second formal news conference of the

last three days in the police headquarters basement assembly room at 1:30 P.M.

His face drawn, he said in a husky voice:

"My statement will be very brief. Oswald expired at 1:07 P.M.

"We have arrested the man. He will be charged with murder. The suspect is Jack Rubenstein. He also goes by the name of Jack Ruby. That's all I have to say."

Sheriff Bill Decker commented that the police "did everything humanly possible" to protect Oswald, as he said they had in the case of President Kennedy.

"I don't think it would have made a bit of difference if Oswald had been transferred at night," he said. "If someone is determined to commit murder, it's almost impossible to stop him."

Ironically, it appeared that Ruby might have had a number of far easier opportunities for killing Oswald than the method he finally used.

He was reported to have circulated repeatedly the last two days among the throng of people that was constantly in the third-floor corridor near the homicide bureau. Oswald was led along this corridor a number of times as he was taken down from the fourth-floor jail for interrogation.