

Ruby Is Mentally Ill, His Dallas Rabbi Says

Pastor, Now at Los Angeles Temple, Believes Killer Should Be Hospitalized

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Jack Ruby is so emotionally unstable he should be in a mental institution instead of facing execution as the slayer of President Kennedy's alleged assassin.

This is the opinion of Rabbi Hillel E. Silverman of Sinai Temple, Wilshire at Beverly Glen Blvds.

Rabbi Silverman came there three weeks ago from Dallas, where as spiritual leader for 10 years of a large congregation, he numbered Ruby among his members and counseled with him innumerable times before and after that tragic weekend last fall.

Case Reviewed

On Nov. 22 President Kennedy was felled by bullets from a sniper-assassin. Two days later his alleged slayer, Lee H. Oswald, was mortally wounded by Jack Ruby in the Dallas Police Station before a dozen wit-

nesses and a vast television audience.

In February and March Ruby was tried and on March 14 was sentenced to death in the electric chair.

"I was rabbi of Shearith Israel Temple for 10 years," said Rabbi Silverman. "It is an old temple, founded in 1884, and with 1,200 families one of the largest in the southwest.

"I met Jack Ruby, in 1958, when his father passed away.

Gets Acquainted

"He attended a service where I said the prayers for the departed and then began to come to chapel services. Eventually he affiliated with the temple."

Rabbi Silverman soon discovered that Ruby was a very emotional and unstable man.

"He is extremely neurotic," he said. "I would call him almost a psychopath, bordering on the manic-depressive. Nowadays he just doesn't make sense. I have talked to him an hour at a time and gotten little or nothing coherent from him."

The rabbi said Ruby was of about average intelligence, but had had very little schooling.

"Sometimes he believes the world is accusing him of the assassination of Kennedy, not of Oswald," said Rabbi Silverman.

He added that Ruby's en-

tire family (he is not married) was very emotional, his mother in a mental institution and Jack put into a foster home as a child.

"Jack has told me that his mind went blank from the time of Kennedy's assassination until he pulled the trigger on Oswald and he was wrestled to the ground by the police.

"Actually, he had the opportunity to do something which many Americans, in the back recesses of their minds, may have wished at that time to do.

"But there was absolutely no connection before the shooting between Oswald and Ruby. No one who knew Jack Ruby would believe there could be. He just doesn't think along those lines. To think of him as a 'Communist' is absurd. He doesn't know what one is."

Tried Suicide

Ruby has had a series of lawyers and along the line "got a lot of bum advice," said the rabbi, which might account for the sentence, at least in part.

"He has made three attempts at suicide in his cell," he added. "Once he tore up his blanket to make strips to hang himself, but the guard stopped that. Again he unscrewed a light bulb and tried to electrocute himself by sticking his finger in the socket."

Rabbi Silverman denied that Ruby "had the run of the Dallas jail," before the shooting and said he gained entry by accident.

"He carried a gun because he used to lock up his night clubs in the early morning and take the accumulated cash home and didn't feel safe doing it unarmed," he said.

Slipped Past Guards

"The police run a pretty tight jail at Dallas. Ruby gained entry into the cellar where the shooting occurred by ducking past two guards at the entrance when their attention was distracted."

"He had attended services at the synagogue Friday after the President was shot, and seemed distraught."

Some time before the slaying, Rabbi Silverman had an opportunity to see how unstable Jack Ruby was. One day he stopped in front of the Silverman house with a car full of dachshund puppies, and presented one to the rabbi.

"I want it to have a real good home," said Ruby.

His 'Family'

"Why do you feel so strongly about the dog, Jack?" asked Rabbi Silverman. Ruby started to cry.

"They're my children. They're all the family I've got," he confessed.

Rabbi Silverman was in Palestine in 1947 and was impressed into service as a machine gunner in the Israeli army although, he hastens to add, "I never took the oath of allegiance to any foreign government!"