

D.A. WILLING TO SEEK LIFE TERM FOR RUBY

DALLAS (AP)—Dist. Atty. Henry Wade said Thursday his office is willing to recommend that Jack Ruby's death sentence be reduced to life imprisonment.

Ruby was sentenced to death for slaying Lee Harvey Oswald, who assassinated President John F. Kennedy in Dallas, Nov. 22, 1963. His case is on appeal.

Wade said he has made an offer for a reduction of the sentence to Ruby's lawyers on two occasions but they have not accepted the proposals.

"One of their attorneys—Mr. Sol Dann of Detroit—wants to hold out for a five-year sentence," said Wade.

"We do not feel this would be a proper punishment," Wade said. "The punishment should be at least life imprisonment."

Under Texas law, a person sentenced to life in prison can be freed in as few as seven years. The prisoner is permitted to apply for parole under any circumstances after he has served 15 years, and this can be reduced by several means, including good conduct, blood donations, and work as a trusty.

Wade said it would be a responsibility of Ruby's lawyers to apply for a commutation of the death sentence. Application would be to the

Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles.

The sentence then could be reduced on the recommendation of Gov. John Connally. Prosecutors frequently make recommendations to the pardons board.

"If they (Ruby's attorneys) apply for a life sentence we would join with them in recommending a life sentence," Wade said. "If we (the district attorney's office) recommend a life sentence, there would be an excellent chance the board would reduce" the death sentence to a life term.

Needed for Questions

"There is an advantage to keeping Ruby alive for interviews and historical purposes. There are still a lot of unanswered questions," said

Wade.

Attorney Dann, reached in Detroit by telephone, declined to comment on Wade's offer but maintained that Ruby's offense is no more than murder without

malice which would call for a maximum five-year sentence.

Dist. Judge Joe B. Brown, who presided at Ruby's trial, said several months ago that he did not feel Ruby ever would be executed. "After all," said Brown, "we are talking about the man who killed the man who killed President Kennedy."

Another Ruby attorney, Phil Burleson of Dallas, asked why the defense should make an agreement "when there are reversible errors in the case." **END.**