

Doctors Say Lowenstein Suspect Cannot Be Held Criminally Liable

By E. R. SHIPP

Psychiatrists for both the prosecution and defense have concluded that Dennis Sweeney, who is accused of killing former Representative Allard K. Lowenstein, cannot be held criminally responsible for the slaying, Mr. Sweeney's lawyer said yesterday.

The lawyer, Jesse Zaslav, said Mr. Sweeney would enter a plea today of "not responsible by reason of mental disease or defect." Mr. Zaslav said he expected the plea to be accepted by the prosecution and by Acting Justice Brenda Soloff of State Supreme Court in Manhattan.

In a telephone interview yesterday, Mr. Zaslav said a psychiatric examination carried out in January at the request of the Manhattan District Attorney's office concurred with results reported by psychiatrists hired by the defense last spring.

If the plea is accepted, Mr. Sweeney, who is 37 years old, will probably be sent to the Mid-Hudson Psychiatric Center in Accord, N.Y., Mr. Zaslav said. If it was eventually determined that he had been cured, he would be released; if not, he could be hospitalized there for life.

Mr. Lowenstein was killed on March 14

at his law office at 50 Rockefeller Plaza, at 51st Street. Mr. Sweeney — an acquaintance of Mr. Lowenstein who had been active in the civil rights and draft resistance movements of the 1960's — was arrested at the scene, after putting

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an automatic pistol on a secretary's desk, lighting a cigarette and taking a seat nearby.

The two men met in 1961 at Stanford University. Mr. Lowenstein was the assistant dean of men and a political science instructor. Mr. Sweeney, who grew up in Portland, Ore., was a freshman majoring in history.

In December 1963, Mr. Lowenstein was arrested on charges stemming from his civil rights organizing efforts in Mississippi. When he issued a call to students to join in the movement there, Mr. Sweeney was one of the first to respond. He later worked in voter registration projects in Jackson, Miss., and in Memphis, Tenn.

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