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Oxygen, Massage Used

Death Ascribed To Blood Clot

By SUE CONNALLY

Jack Ruby, who gunned down accused presidential assassin Lee Harvey Oswald, succumbed to a blood clot at 10:30 a.m. Tuesday, despite massive efforts to forestall his death.

Ruby, the former nightclub owner and the last surviving key member of the tragic events of Nov. 22, 1963, died in Parkland Hospital—where President Kennedy and Oswald were taken.

With sisters Mrs. Eva Grant and Mrs. Eileen Kaminski and brother Earl Ruby waiting outside his hospital room, some 20 doctors worked inside to revive the cancer-stricken Ruby.

He had had a routine morning, ordering eggs after his morning bath, when he was struck by a "convulsive seizure" about "9:10 or 9:12," Dr. Eugene Frenkel reported. "He was nonresponsive after that."

Dr. Frenkel, a member of the team from the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School attending the stricken Ruby, said that "massive cardiopulmonary efforts" (oxygen administration and external heart massage) were carried out without success.

While medical bulletins had begun to note weakening changes in his condition several days ago, Ruby had appeared to be comfortable. However, Monday evening he experienced "increased shortness of breath" about 11 p.m.

Under continuous oxygen administration and other procedures, he responded well. A blood clot—not uncommon with the type of cancer that Ruby had—was suspected, but "there was no evidence that a pulmonary (lung) vessel was occluded," Dr. Frenkel said.

In response to questioning, the physician said that while there are drugs to "stop the propaga-

tion" of blood clots, there are none to dissolve them. Administration of such a drug to Ruby would have been more a "hazard" than a help, he added.

He did "respond well to supportive measures" Monday night, Dr. Frenkel said.

Officially, the cause of death was listed by County Medical Examiner Earl Rose as "pulmonary emboli (clot) secondary to cancer."

The large clot, located behind his right knee, broke loose and was carried into lung, blocking vital passages. This, with the extensive cancer found on autopsy, eventually made it impossible for Ruby to get oxygen into his blood.

Direct massage of Ruby's heart was not attempted, doctors said, since the cancer in his lungs made "access to the heart difficult."

Members of Ruby's family, who had been at the hospital since the early hours Tuesday, left Parkland about noon without speaking to anyone except hospital officials. They were closeted for some time in the administrative offices, with hospital staff members standing watch at the door.

Then they left quietly through a side entrance of the big city-county hospital, passing through a number of reporters and cameramen who had gathered after word of Ruby's death.

Phil Burleson, one of Ruby's attorneys, escorted the family to a waiting car and returned to speak briefly at a news conference.

He said the family "took it very well under the circumstances . . . they held up very well."

The family, he added, was "extremely laudatory of the doctors . . . they felt like Parkland

and the doctors did everything they could under the circumstances."

He said that within a few "days or weeks" he expected Dist. Atty. Henry Wade to file a motion dismissing the criminal charges against Ruby, for whom a second trial had been ordered. The trial, tentatively scheduled for next month in Wichita Falls, was postponed indefinitely after discovery that Ruby had cancer.

"If there is anything good in this from Jack's standpoint (it was that) he died not a convicted man," Burleson commented.

After the seriousness of his condition was known, there was talk in some quarters that he should be moved to M. D. Anderson Hospital and Tumor Institute in Houston, the state's major hospital specializing in the treatment of cancer. It was Ruby's choice to stay at Parkland.

"He did not wish to leave Parkland," Dr. Frenkel commented. Responding to a question about the matter, Dr. Frenkel said that Southwestern Medical School is a part of the University of Texas system—as is Anderson — and data are exchanged between the two institutions.

Being a full medical school, he pointed out, there were services available here "which might not be available in a single institute." Meanwhile, he said, "there was no clinical, scientific basis for such a transfer."

Autopsy findings reported by Dr. Rose revealed "extensive tumor involvement" of both lungs and regional lymph nodes. The findings ruled out the pancreas as the site of the primary cancer.

Additional microscopic studies are being carried out to determine if the lung was the primary source of the cancer which felled Ruby, a non-drinking, non-smoking man who frequented health food shops and gym centers.

Studies as late as Friday showed evidence that the drug used to treat Ruby was effective against his cancer. Dr. Frenkel reported that X-ray findings showed a "decrease in the size of the tumor nodules" in his lungs.

The physician admitted, however, that a cure for Ruby would have been "unlikely."