Jack Ruby Ruled Sane; Case Will Be Appealed

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From News Dispatches

DALLAS, June 13 — A jury found confessed slayer Jack Ruby sane today after Ruby dramatically told the jury — over his attorneys' objections — that he was not insane.

"Never at any time have I tried to make anyone believe that I was of unsound mind," he said.

His attorneys had taken no part in the sanity trial — in selecting jurors, in calling witnesses, or in presenting final arguments.

The defense had requested the sanity trial but objected at the last minute on the grounds it would violate Ruby's constitutional rights in several respects and prejudice an appeal of his conviction for slaying presidential assassin Lee Harvey Oswald. The appeal is pending before the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals.

Among those in the courtroom today was Oswald's mother, Mrs. Marquerite Oswald, who snapped pictures of her son's killer until the judge ordered her to stop.

After the State called the last of its five witnesses in the surprisingly fast-moving trial, Ruby said he wanted to take the stand, and over his counsel's protest, did so.

"Never at any time since I was convicted have I ever done anything to make anybody believe I was of unsound mind," Ruby said looking directly at the jury from the witness stand.

"I don't know who conspired to do that (to spread the story that he was insane) and I never tried to camouflage my mental capacity. I never gave them (his lawyers) any reason to believe anything but that I was sane."

After hearing Ruby's plea and a short argument from Assistant District Attorney Bill Alexander, the jury took less than 15 minutes to reach its decision.

"Jack Ruby is in a better position than his lawyers be-

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cause he takes a realistic view of things," said Alexander.

He accused Ruby's lawyers of "piddling around" and said "I almost feel sorry for Jack."

Sol Dann of Detroit, one of Ruby's lawyers, said Monday's proceedings would be appealed either to the U.S. District Court or the U.S. Supreme Court because there is no appeal available in Texas from a sanity trial.

The jury of seven men and five women was selected in only 42 minutes Monday morning because the defense refused to take part in questioning of jurors.

All of the state's witnesses—four county jail guards and a doctor—testified they believed Ruby was sane.

Jailer R. H. Croy said that Ruby was "far above the other prisoner's in mental ability, and that he was also a good gin rummy player.

"Did you ever catch him cheating?" Alexander asked.

"Occasionally," Croy replied.

"What was his reaction when you caught him?" Alexander asked.

"He didn't like it," Croy said.

Jail physician Dr. John W. Callahan said Ruby's spirits are high and that he sleeps well.

When asked if it was his opinion that Ruby is of sound mind, Callahan said: "That is my opinion."

Deputy Sheriff and prison guard Archie F. Watson said he guarded Ruby during the evening shift in December of last year, and that Ruby knew what month it was, when the guard was changed, the jail officials and other prisoners. Watson said Ruby read newspapers from front to back.

Watson said his prisoner played dominoes, checkers and card games, and he said he himself had played double solitare with Ruby.

"Did Jack Ruby ever say anything to you to make you believe he had hallucinations?" Alexander asked.

"No, sir," Watson replied.

Earlier in the day Judge Louis Holland overruled a defense motion for a delay in the sanity trial, and also cracked down on photographers taking pictures of the jury or Ruby while court was not in session. Sheriff Bill Decker also ruled out taking Ruby's picture in the jail's corridors.

Holland called Mrs. Oswald into his office and told her not to make any use of the pictures she shot through a window in the courtroom door early today.

Holland said his decision in regard to photographers was made because of the recent Supreme Court ruling in the case of Dr. Sam Sheppard, convicted Cleveland, Ohio, osteopath who won a new trial because of the way his case was handled by news media.