

Ruby Link to Oswald

By BERNARD GAVZER

DALLAS, Tex., Jan. 3 (AP)—Jack Ruby denied it to the edge of death.

But even his family couldn't help asking, because so many other people seemed to be asking, whether he really acted alone, and not as part of a conspiracy, to kill the accused assassin of President John F. Kennedy.

And so, near the end, Earl Ruby asked his brother again, as he had many times before:

"Are you sure, Jack, there was nothing else?"

And Jack Ruby answered, says his brother:

"I'm no hiding anything. I'm not protecting anybody. There is nothing to hide, no one to protect. Believe me."

As he lay in his guarded room in Parkland Memorial Hospital, stricken with cancer, Jack Ruby often seemed to be beginning the world to

believe he would take no secrets to the grave.

He also was tormented by hallucinations in which he imagined that millions of American Jews were being slain in a program as punishment because he, a Jew, silenced the alleged killer of a president.

IRRATIONAL AT TIMES

Ruby could be rational on certain levels and wholly irrational on others, according to those closest to him. For example, he might be watching a football game on televi-

sion and something would touch him off — like a penalty. Worse is being done to the Jews, he would say.

Ruby insisted that he alone, without plan or prompting, shot Lee Harvey Oswald.

He swore also that rumors of secret meetings relating to the President's assassination, the killing of Dallas policeman J. D. Tippit and the slaying of Oswald, were lies invented by

EDITOR'S NOTE—If Jack Ruby hadn't killed Lee Harvey Oswald, there might be little or no controversy today about the assassination of John F. Kennedy. But Jack Ruby ended any possible Oswald testimony and, as his own death approached, begged the world to believe what many find it hard to believe, that he was part of no conspiracy to silence Oswald. Here is a report on Jack Ruby's last days:

"momserem," a Yiddish epithet.

These details of Ruby's last days came from his brother Earl, a Detroit businessman; Elmer Gertz, a Chicago attorney prominent on the legal team which won reversal of the death sentence given to Ruby in 1964, and others from the family.

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The Ruby murder trial and the Warren Commission

Denied to the End

port supported conclusions that Ruby acted alone in shooting of Oswald — a shooting that was witnessed by a television audience of millions of Americans Sunday, Nov. 24, 1963.

But a long controversy about the Warren Report has produced a host of theories which give Oswald a role in the assassination. "I don't think Jack would have thought he could take this and twist it into a premise for giving him a role in a plot against the President, a man he worshipped,"

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But Jack Ruby sought forgiveness from America's Jews. He was convinced that his crime had triggered a pogrom in which Jews were being transported to Dallas and tortured to death in the basement of the Dallas County Jail.

"That is not true, Jack. It is not true," Earl told him. And so did many others whom he ordinarily trusted.

"Don't tell me! I hear them screaming from the basement every night."

Jack Ruby also complained that his cancer was induced secretly in jail. When he experienced difficulty breathing early in December and was taken to the hospital, it was thought that he had pneumonia. He took this as proof that mustard gas was seeped into his cell. When his condition was diagnosed as cancer, he was certain it had been injected into him.

However, his family praised the treatment Ruby received in Parkland, although they complained that his condition had been neglected or brushed off as "hamming it up" in jail.

Jack Ruby spent his last day in a large private room which had one wall dominated by a wide window. A nurse and two deputy sheriffs were always on duty. Ruby spent hours watching television, especially football games.

On Saturday afternoon, Dec. 17, he felt so good, he motioned for his sister, Elmer, to come to his side.

"Elmer, do me a favor," he asked.

He handed her a list for mustard, corned beef, ketchup, pickles, rye bread, cheddar cheese, green onions, bagels.

The doctors didn't object. Elmer Gertz, "Of course, Jack couldn't field the food down, but to deny it to him would be like denying a condemned man his last meal."

Near the end his mood — according to his family — changed to one of despair.

And he said he didn't want to go home. Home was a bad word. He said he didn't want to go home.