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Pathetic End to Tragedy News 1/4/67

ALL along Jack Ruby insisted, over and over, that the man who shot Lee Oswald was Jack Ruby, and nobody else had any hand in it.

It was an obsession with him, and he carried the obsession to his death from cancer Tuesday.

The very ardor of Ruby's insistence, of course, is enough to "prove" to those zealots who want to believe otherwise that Ruby simply was covering up for Oswald or somebody else in a conspiracy.

But the Warren Commission which investigated the assassination of President Kennedy sifted Ruby from every angle, checked and rechecked his whole life and everybody he knew. Other than Oswald, nobody connected with the Dallas tragedy was so thoroly shaken out. Pages and pages of the commission's report are given over to Ruby.

There was nothing the Commission found to link Ruby with Oswald or with a conspiracy. Ruby's rambling and sometimes almost incoherent testimony indicates a creature of impulse and a high degree of instability. The stuff of a conspirator is utterly lacking.

But Ruby's death doubtless merely will provide new stimulus for the rumor wolves. It would have been the same had he been retried, again convicted and the death sentence originally imposed carried out.

What Ruby did in killing Oswald was stupid. It was a crime of flagrant proportions because it was a frustration of our system of justice. Ironically, Ruby himself now has been saved from the ultimate course of justice by another killer, cancer.

But, looking at it philosophically, the end result is the same.

There is no doubt that Ruby shot Oswald. Millions saw the act on television. The evidence against Oswald is wholly telling.

So we come now to the last authentic chapter of a monstrous tragedy, acted out helplessly by a pathetic character who, as he once testified, was "at the wrong place at the wrong time" to commit a blind, unthinking crime.

The fates have contrived to confuse and torment the ugly facts of Nov. 22, 1963. May they now rest.