

Ruby Near Incurable Insanity, Doctor Says

By Bill Kalb
Times Science Writer
Jack Ruby, condemned
slayer of President Ken-
nedy's assassin, is on the
road to becoming incur-
ably insane, a psychiatrist

who examined him three
times says.

Dr. Louis Joylon West,
University of Oklahoma
school of medicine profes-
sor and chairman of the
department of psychiatry

and neurology, added:

"Under stresses of the
assassination and subse-
quent events, he (Ruby)
has developed a full blown
mental illness."

Dr. West said Ruby's
acute psychotic reaction,
a "paranoid state," is de-
veloping into a more
chronic kind of paranoid
illness that is difficult to
cure.

The doctor explained
there are three degrees of
mental illness in this cate-
gory: paranoia, paranoid
state and most severe of
all, paranoid schizophre-
nia.

If he isn't cured, the
slayer of Lee Oswald will
elude the Texas electric
chair, Dr. West said. "The
law says he has to be
sane to be executed."

Even if the appeal for a
new trial is successful, as
long as Ruby is insane he
can't be tried, Dr. West
said.

"When I examined him

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Ruby's Mental Problem Grows

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the first time in Dallas (April 26), I thought to myself, 'He's got a 50-50 chance of being restored to his previous condition — such as it was — in six months,'” the psychiatrist said.

“Now (after a visit June 19), I wouldn't even guess at his chances. It's almost impossible to treat him properly in jail.

“His condition today is just as bad now as it was then, only it's more ominous now. The longer it goes on, the harder it is to treat.

“He has probably been unstable and borderline as far as sanity is concerned most of his adult life,” Dr. West said.

“He can't be treated in his cell. He thinks the doctors are trying to poison him.”

Ruby, West explains, is in a kind of legal limbo.

His defense, now led by Clayton Fowler as chief counsel, doesn't know where and under what conditions Ruby will be committed and treated if attorneys proceed with a full blown jury sanity trial.

Is Ruby faking to escape the “Huntsville chair?”

“No,” says Dr. West.

“I doubt that someone unfamiliar with technical psychiatry could play the part of a paranoid . . . with such accuracy, con-

sistency and typical detail.

“Second, it places Ruby at cross purposes with his attorneys, who have repeatedly encouraged him to believe that he has an excellent chance for a successful appeal.

“They have told him that at a new trial he would not only be saved from the death penalty, but also that a much more sympathetic understanding of him would emerge,” the doctor said.

“Third, I don't believe he wants to go to a mental hospital at all, despite his attorney's belief that he should. He actually prefers the jail, where he says, ‘They know me.’

“Finally he rejects the idea that he is mentally ill or that he is suffering from abnormal thoughts and feelings. The true malingerer usually grasps eagerly at such an explanation,” he said.

If Ruby is declared insane, what kind of treatment will he get?

“If he gets into a proper hospital,” Dr. West outlined, “he can expect a three-fold program.”

The treatment would include round-the-clock environmental or “milieu” therapy, drugs (probably one of the tranquilizing phenothiazine family, Dr. West thinks), and psychotherapy.