

F.B.I. Theory Is Schlam Himself or Father Administered

By LAWRENCE VAN GELDER

The Justice Department is leaning toward the belief that the drugs that made Assistant United States Attorney Peter R. Schlam ill during the trial of Representative Angelo D. Roncallo were self-administered or were administered by his physician father.

Sources within the Justice Department, which is continuing to investigate the case said yesterday that this theory—despite earlier contentions by the United States Attorney's office that the young prosecutor had been the victim of foul play—was based on an investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Source said that the F.B.I. had reported that all but one of the drugs found in Mr. Schlam's

blood on May 9 had also been found in his apartment in Brooklyn Heights.

The analysis of his blood was made within a few hours after he denied having administered source said.

As mystery continued to surround the drugging, the F.B.I. was reported to have ended its investigation, unable to reach conclusive findings.

Thus crucial questions remained unanswered: Was Mr. Schlam's illness, coming as the Government's extortion case against Mr. Roncallo and a co-defendant was faltering, caused by the drugs or by exhaustion? If the drugs caused the illness, who administered them and why?

And if the drugs were self-administered, why was it as-

serted that foul play was involved?

According to an authoritative source, the analysis of Mr. Schlam's blood on May 9 revealed the presence of three sedatives—methaqualone and two kinds of barbiturates—and also of salicylate (aspirin) and phenacetin, a painkiller.

Voluntary Dosing Denied

The same source said that all of these, with the exception of methaqualone, had been found in Mr. Schlam's apartment, according to the F.B.I. The source noted that there was "nothing unusual" about the presence of these drugs, which, he said, are found in medicine cabinets in many homes.

The source said that prior to the analysis of Mr. Schlam's blood, he had been examined at the home of his father, Dr. Isaac Schlam, in Lindenhurst, L.I. At that time he was asked: "Did you administer to yourself on this occasion any drugs of any kind?"

According to the source, Mr. Schlam answered, "No."

The source said yesterday that there was still "no idea how the drugs were ingested into the body."

Report to Judge Recalled

Dr. Schlam has consistently maintained that his 30-year-old son was "involuntarily drugged." Although there have been reports that Mr. Schlam's illness was caused by a mixture of alcohol and drugs, a reliable source has said that alcohol was not involved in the illness.

Another source close to the situation said the combination of drugs found in Mr. Schlam's

system could make an individual drowsy or tired.

In an interview on May 11, two days after Mr. Schlam was reported ill, Judge Edward R. Neaheer, the former United States Attorney who was presiding over the trial that Mr. Schlam had been conducting against Mr. Roncallo, said he was told of the illness by Assistant United States Attorney Thomas P. Puccio.

He said Mr. Puccio, who shares a Brooklyn Heights apartment with Mr. Schlam, had described Mr. Schlam as being "drowsy and nauseous" and, difficult to wake up on the morning of May 9.

According to the judge, Mr. Puccio was asked if it were possible that Mr. Schlam had taken a sleeping pill, and the judge said Mr. Puccio had responded, "No, that wasn't it."

According to an official court transcript of the trial of Mr. Roncallo, who was acquitted, Mr. Puccio, who heads the criminal division of the United States Attorney's office for the Eastern District of New York, also stated the following on May 10:

"All investigation has shown that Mr. Schlam voluntarily never has taken any drugs, as we all suspected, and that the F.B.I. is now convinced, and we are all convinced, that the—his sickness—was the result of foul play."

U.S. Attorney Asks Inquiry

At the time of these events, the office of the United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York was headed on an acting basis by Edward J. Boyd 5th, who has since been succeeded by David G. Trager.

the Drugs

Mr. Boyd, however, remains on the staff. Through a spokesman that he had asked the Justice Department to conduct a full-scale investigation of Mr. Schlam's illness and of all other issues in the Roncallo case about which public questions have been raised.

The spokesman said the United States Attorney had asked that the investigation be completed "as soon as possible," and he said that when the results were in, he would attempt to answer all public inquiries about the case.

An inquiry has also been undertaken by the staff of Representative Peter W. Rodino, chairman of the House Judiciary Committee.