

RUBY TESTIFIES TO TAKING PILLS

Tells Hearing About Actions
Before He Shot Oswald

DALLAS, May 24 (AP)—Jack L. Ruby, who killed President Kennedy's assassin, declared today that he had taken numerous pills—"they stimulate you"—shortly before he shot Lee Harvey Oswald.

He made the admission—the first such revelation—at a court hearing during which his counsel, Joe Tonahill, was removed from Ruby's forthcoming sanity hearing.

Judge Louis T. Holland of Montague, Tex., ruled that Mr. Tonahill should be removed as Ruby's counsel for the sanity hearing.

After that, said the visiting judge, the question of Ruby's representation will be decided by the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals.

Judge Holland also said he would hold a hearing tomorrow on whether Judge Joe B. Brown, who presided at the original Ruby murder trial, should be disqualified from presiding at the sanitary hearing.

Ruby's fresh testimony that he took pills which "make you want to do positive things" before shooting Oswald to death, and that he feared there would be an attempt in future years to link him as a conspirator with Oswald against President Kennedy's life caused a stir at the hearing.

An Emotional Scene

"To the American people and the world I'm going to be branded a part of a conspiracy with Oswald," he declared in an emotional courtroom scene.

"You're going to forget how I felt about the beloved President Kennedy. There has been so much torment, so much hardship," he said.

The Warren Commission sought for months to determine if a conspiracy existed between Ruby and Oswald but found none.

In his sometimes rambling discourse, Ruby appeared to have given up hope of escaping the electric chair.

"I know that I am a lost cause as far as saving my life," he said. Don't believe Joe Tonahill. I know there is a whole conspiracy behind it."

He testified to waking up Sunday morning, Nov. 24, 1963, and brooding about the fact that the Kennedy children were fatherless.

"What quirked me after that I don't know," Ruby said. "As God is my judge, that is the truth."

Ruby said that after getting up the day he killed Oswald he took 30 antibiotic pills and some other pills that "stimulate you and make you want to do positive things." This was the first time he had referred to taking any pills that morning.

"I walked into a trap when I walked down that ramp [into the city hall basement where he shot Oswald]. I know I am going to die a horrible death."

Two Sets of Lawyers

Today's hearing was called to determine which set of lawyers would represent Ruby at his sanity hearing and in any further appeals procedures.

When he talked about matters pertinent to the hearing, Ruby declared he would have been better off had he dismissed his attorneys and thrown himself on the mercy of the court.

"I'd have done better if I'd thrown myself at the mercy of the court without [Melvin] Belli and Tonahill and Phil Burleson," he said.

Ruby and his family had sought to have Mr. Tonahill removed from the case. Mr. Tonahill contends that Ruby signed a valid contract and that Ruby since has become insane and is incompetent to determine who his counsel will be.

"When Joe Tonahill and Melvin Belli were in my cell," Ruby said, "they were like two little snakes sneaking pictures of me."

Cites Role of Hero

The pictures Mr. Tonahill and Mr. Belli are alleged to have taken have figured in charges and counter-charges that each set of attorneys sought to capitalize financially on the case.

The family says Mr. Tonahill sought to sell the jail pictures to a magazine.

Ruby, looking directly at the judge, asserted of that chaotic Sunday morning when he killed Oswald.

"I shouldn't have tried to play the part of a hero."

Then the former night club operator added:

"My background wasn't clean enough to play the part of a hero."

Mr. Belli was discharged shortly after Ruby was convicted. Mr. Burleson, the third member of the original defense team, is still on the case, apparently with the approval of the Ruby family.

Ruby declared that Mr. Tonahill did not have his interests at heart. He said he did not want him as counsel and that Mr. Tonahill had not visited him in three or four months.

Ruby asked the lawyers to question him, but Mr. Tonahill commented that it would be "cruel and inhuman to question this man."