

EA711MH

COPPOLINO 2ND NL 340

BY BEN FUNK

AP STAFF WRITER

(1267)

NAPLES, FLA., APRIL 17 (AP)-A NEW YORK MEDICAL EXPERT TESTIFIED MONDAY THAT HE FOUND THE DEADLY DRUG SUCCINYLMCHOLINE IN THE AREA OF A NEEDLE PUNCTURE IN THE BODY OF CARMELA COPPOLINO.

AND ANOTHER SAID THAT IF SOMEONE INJECTED CARMELA WITH THE DRUG, ITS SUDDEN PARALYZING ACTION WOULD HAVE MADE HER HELPLESS TO RESIST, ALTHOUGH SHE WOULD HAVE BEEN FULLY AWARE THAT SHE WAS BEING KILLED.

THE TWO NEW WITNESSES WERE BROUGHT IN AS THE DEFENSE LAUNCHED A MOVE TO BRING THE MURDER TRIAL OF CARMELA'S HUSBAND, DR. CARL COPPOLINO, TO AN END.

CIRCUIT JUDGE LYNN SILVERTOOTH SAID HE WOULD RULE TUESDAY ON A MOTION TO STRIKE THE EARLIER TESTIMONY OF DR. MILTON HELPERN AND DR. CHARLES J. UMBERGER THAT THE DEAD WOMAN DIED OF A DRUG.

REMOVING THIS MATERIAL FROM THE RECORDS WOULD LEAVE NO EVIDENCE THAT MURDER OCCURRED AND THE STATE ADMITS A MOTION FOR A DIRECTED VERDICT OF ACQUITTAL WOULD BE IN ORDER.

DEFENSE ATTY. F. LEE BAILEY ARGUED THAT UMBERGER, WHO MADE THE FIRST REPORTED FINDING OF SUCCINYLMCHOLINE POISONING IN A HOMICIDE CASE, HAD WORKED IN "AN UNCHARTED AREA" AND HIS DETECTION METHOD WAS UNPROVEN.

IN AN APPARENT EFFORT TO STRENGTHEN UMBERGER'S TESTIMONY, THE STATE BROUGHT IN DR. BERT LA DU, PROFESSOR OF PHARMACOLOGY AT NEW YORK UNIVERSITY.

TESTIFYING THAT HE USED TECHNIQUES DIFFERENT FROM THOSE OF UMBERGER, LA DU SAID HE ISOLATED AND IDENTIFIED THE DRUG IN TISSUE AROUND THE PUNCTURE, BUT DID NOT FIND IT IN TISSUE FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE BODY.



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BAILEY LAST WEEK TOLD THE COURT THAT A DEFENSE EXPERT WITNESS WOULD TESTIFY THAT HE TESTED TISSUE AROUND THE WOUND AND DID NOT FIND ANY TRACE OF THE DRUG.

DR. VALENTINO MAZZIA, PROFESSOR OF ANESTHESIOLOGY AT N.Y.U., SAID THAT IF CARMELA HAD BEEN GIVEN A LETHAL DOSE, SHE WOULD HAVE LOST HER ABILITY TO MOVE IN 30 SECONDS OR LESS.

THIRTY SECONDS AFTER THAT, HE SAID, HER LUNGS WOULD HAVE BEEN PARALYZED AND HER BREATHING STOPPED.

MAZZIA SAID THIS TESTIMONY CAME FROM PERSONAL EXPERIENCE. IN 1964, WHILE EXPERIMENTING WITH THE DRUG, HE HAD HIMSELF INJECTED WITH 100 MILLIGRAMS, HE SAID.

FOR FIVE MINUTES, HE SAID, HE WAS TOTALLY PARALYZED AND WOULD HAVE DIED WITHOUT ARTIFICIAL RESPIRATION BY FELLOW DOCTORS.

EARLIER, BAILEY CHARGED DR. MILTON HELPERN AND DR. CHARLES J. UMBERGER HAD TESTIFIED TO "IMPOSSIBLE THEORIES."

"NOW IS THE TIME TO TERMINATE THIS CASE," BAILEY TOLD THE COURT.

DR. HELPERN A12MH

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