

Some Puzzles on Ruby Medical Aid

Dallas

The handful of relatives and lawyers who saw Jack Ruby just before he was ad-

mitted to Parkland Memorial Hospital with cancer December 9 believe that he did not receive adequate medical at-

tention in the Dallas county jail.

Inquiry by the Los Angeles Times ran up against inconclusive answers from officials responsible for Ruby's care in the jail and their refusal to permit examination of Ruby's jail medical records.

However, the Times found that:

- Ruby was not hospitalized until after Sheriff Bill Decker expressed grave concern about Ruby's condition after visiting him in his cell.

- Ruby was transferred to the hospital one day before a private physician, called by Ruby's brother and sister, was scheduled to see him.

REQUEST

- Dr. John W. Callahan, assistant county health officer, apparently saw Ruby frequently, but Dr. J. M. Pickard, the chief county health officer who has responsibility for the prisoners, had not examined or seen Ruby from 1964 until December 9, when he came at Sheriff Decker's request.

When a Times reporter asked Dr. Pickard if he thought Ruby looked like he needed hospitalization when he saw him December 9, the doctor quickly replied: "You're damned right, I did!"

Ruby began having coughing spells about two months before he was taken to the hospital and had been unable to keep food down much of the time.

Dr. Callahan had treated Ruby for a cold for a week and thought he might have pneumonia.

ILL

While almost everyone who saw Ruby during his last weeks in jail agrees that he looked very ill, apparently no one is willing to explain who was chiefly responsible for seeing that Ruby was given a more thorough medical examination.

Dr. Callahan, who has a private practice in Dallas besides attending to the prisoners, described Ruby as "very incommunicative."

"I thought he might have pneumonia," Dr. Callahan said. "We thought he had a cold. As we found out to our dismay, it was more than that. It's kind of discouraging, but that's the way the ball bounces."

"We had him on a diet. He was having some trouble with gagging. It was a soft bland diet. There wasn't much more we could do about it."

Callahan said Sheriff Decker "was concerned because he had Ruby's relatives on his neck."

Decker said it was Dr. Pickard's duty to permit inspection of the records. But Dr. Pickard said it was up to the sheriff and added: "We don't keep any records as such. We record medications given."

Apparently, Dr. Callahan was the only physician to examine Ruby after two doctors visited Ruby in the spring of 1964 when he apparently attempted suicide by slamming his head against a wall and put his hand into an electric light socket.

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