

Ruby's Death

To the Editor:

Your Jan. 4 editorial "Death of a Nobody" deftly points out once again the bizarre vagaries of history: how incredible it is that so insignificant and obscure a person as Jack Ruby became a central figure in one of the world's most tragic events. However, the editorial suffers essentially from lack of balance.

As you indicate, the case of Jack Ruby is truly tragic. But you gloss over or perhaps miss the cardinal tragedy involved here—one that Jack Ruby contributed to and in turn became victim of. Jack Ruby, whether out of madness, anguish or whatever, judged Lee Oswald to be a worthless nobody devoid of rights—worthy only to be slain.

In time Ruby's own turn came. Exposed to the convulsed ire of an outraged nation and the city of Dallas, Jack Ruby, small-time failure that he was, was judged a murderer and trundled off to jail to await execution and was allowed to rot, literally. Who was to be concerned with such a nobody?

Here is the tragedy: disturbed, troubled Lee Oswald was worthy of more than he got. He was a somebody, a human person. Jack Ruby, punk, was worthy of earlier, better medical treatment while in jail. He was a person, a somebody.

Western civilization's central thesis holds, and our own nation's Constitution proclaims, that there are no nobodies—only human beings, somebodies, with basic inviolable, personal rights. But men and nations and newspapers at times forget this.

How tragic to realize the "Death of a Nobody" was in fact the death of a somebody.

PAUL R. CLARKSON
Irvington, N. J., Jan. 5, 1967

'Death of a Nobody'

To the Editor:

The Jan. 4 editorial on the death of Jack Ruby was a magnificent piece of writing, not only in terms of its immediate import but even more so in terms of the larger perspective. I have reference to the very last paragraph. I do believe it said a lot in a few well-chosen words.

(Rabbi) BERNARD GOLDENBERG
New York, Jan. 4, 1967