

Lawyer Disputes Oswald's Death

By MIKE SLOAN

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Presidential assassin Lee Harvey Oswald was not killed by Jack Ruby, a Texas attorney who defended Ruby, said in Las Vegas Saturday.

Joe H. Tonahill said he has medical evidence that Oswald "didn't die from a gun shot wound but was killed by an air embolism," an obstruction in a blood vessel.

TONAHILL said the embolism — an air bubble in the bloodstream—was believed to have developed while Oswald was receiving a plasma transfusion at Parkland Hospital in Dallas and eventually resulted in a cardiac arrest.

"If he would have received

proper attention and they had salvaged him, all the unanswered questions about Kennedy's death would be answered," Tonahill said at a press conference at the Sahara Hotel.

The Texas attorney said he did not believe Oswald's death was deliberate but that it was the result of his being a "person non grata" at Parkland Hospital in Dallas.

Tonahill referred to a report by Dallas pathologist Dr. Howard Wilcox which says "there is little question that an air embolism was the cause of death."

Dr. Wilcox produced statistics from a review of gunshot wound cases involving the aorta which reflect that cases similar to Oswald's have been salvaged, Tonahill said.

He said he had reason to believe air was in the plastic bags used to give Oswald transfusions and the air had caused his death.

Asked if he would pursue the question of Oswald's death further, Tonahill replied, "No, but I believe it should be pursued by some proper authority."

"I couldn't care less. I would have liked to kill Oswald my-

self," he added.

TONAHILL said that he and defense attorney Melvin Belli disagreed on the use of the air embolism testimony and finally decided to delete it from the Ruby trial.

"We issued a subpoena to Parkland Hospital but I was told the man in charge had Oswald's medical records locked in a safe and that he had left the state," Tonahill said.

He said Dr. Wilcox did not believe that the air embolism developed as a result of the gunshot wound.

THE ATTORNEY also referred to the death of Jack Ruby, who died 24 days after being admitted to Parkland Hospital with what was diagnosed as cancer.

"He went awfully fast and had far less care than the average citizen in the Dallas jail. Ruby was allowed to die of cancer," said Tonahill. Again he stressed that he did not feel it was deliberate.

Tonahill said he believed that medical tests made on Ruby showed that there was brain damage and that the damage was there when he shot Oswald.

"RUBY had cancer cells on long vantage and they probably were there when he shot Oswald," said Tonahill.

He theorized that powerful drugs used on Ruby may have "activated cancer cells and sped them up."