

Sol A. Dann, Who Won Reversal Of Ruby's Death Sentence, Dies

SAN DIEGO, April 12 (AP)—Sol A. Dann, a retired Detroit lawyer who represented Jack L. Ruby and managed to set aside his death sentence on conviction of murdering Lee Harvey Oswald, the assassin of President Kennedy, died at his home here yesterday, apparently of a heart ailment. He was 72 years old.

Ruby died in jail before his new trial could begin.

Mr. Dann was credited earlier with bringing about management charges at the Chrysler Corporation through a stockholder's suit. His suit was filed after he announced at the 1960 annual meeting that he had evidence of payoffs, kickbacks, incompetence and waste in the company. Later he filed a civil action in Delaware's chancery court naming as defendants Chrysler's chairman, former chairman, president, former president, 11 directors, nine vice presidents, 41 suppliers and 26 others.

Chrysler management announced at the 1961 meeting that it had enough proxies to defeat Mr. Dann's efforts to elect outside directors, but William C. Newberg was later forced out as president.

Survivors include Mr. Dann's wife, Anne, a son and four daughters.

Police Officer's Testimony

In 1964, when Ruby was convicted of premeditated murder in the Oswald slaying, Mr. Dann, at the behest of the Ruby family, became one of half a dozen lawyers who pressed a number of appeals, one of which led to a reversal by the Texas Court of Appeals two years later.

The court held that key testimony by a police officer should not have been allowed because it was based on a statement made by Ruby after he was in police custody. The officer had quoted Ruby as saying that he had planned the killing, thus supporting the prosecution contention, accepted by the jury, that the killing had been premeditated.

Ruby died a few months later, before a new trial could be



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Sol A. Dann

held, and the indictment against him was dismissed.

When District Attorney Jim Garrison of New Orleans later started an inquiry in which he said he would prove that Ruby had been part of a conspiracy, Mr. Dann sought unsuccessfully to have the prosecutor disbarred for unwarranted attacks on the commission.

Mr. Dann, who sometimes described himself as a management gadfly, specialized successfully in representing injured employees in workmen's compensation cases when he started his court fight against the Chrysler Corporation hierarchy. Detroit newspapers paid little attention until the sudden resignation of Mr. Newberg in June 1960. Although there was no clear indication that his charges had brought about Mr. Newberg's downfall, he subsequently got a more respectful hearing.

Following an internal investigation at Chrysler, one more executive, Jack W. Minor, was asked to resign. The law firm conducting the investigation then announced that all remaining executives had been cleared of conflict of interest. Suits and counter-suits against Mr. Dann dragged on for several years.

Mr. Dann, son of a Detroit scrap-metal dealer, worked in his father's foundry while studying nights at Detroit Law School.