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of Dean Martin. We were told he was on the golf course.

On Tuesday, July 20, newsman Joseph Bente broadcast on ABC the following news: *It has now been confirmed. Frank Sinatra is suffering from seriously progressed cancer of the throat in Yale-New Haven hospital.*

PHOTOPLAY called the station and was informed that the source was Sinatra's doctor. That evening, too, we were tipped that Nancy Sinatra, Jr. had left Las Vegas on an emergency to the East. We called the Park-Plaza Hotel in New Haven, a retreat for many celebrities in that area (Tom Jones had just left) and asked if there was a reservation for Nancy Sinatra, Jr. "No," we were told. Was there a reservation, then, for Mrs. Hugh Lambert (Nancy's married name)? "Yes." She was expected to arrive that evening.

The situation was getting a little too much for us. We sent a team of reporters to the Park-Plaza. That evening, our reporters were told first that Nancy had not shown up, then that she had no reservation. We tried every hotel and motel in the area with no luck. While we were at it, we tried for Dean Martin, too, remembering that he was supposedly there on the 19th. Nothing.

Many times, in-between, we had phoned the Yale-New Haven hospital asking for Sinatra's condition under his alleged alias. At least, we were sure there was a patient in the hospital under that name. We were also told that he was wavering between "poor" and "fair," faced surgery shortly, and had been visited by his daughter. The evening our reporter arrived, he got through to the patient's room, but was not permitted to speak with him. Had his daughter Nancy been there? our reporter wondered. "They've all gone home," we were told by the nurse and *click* that was the end of the conversation.

On Wednesday, July 21, a reporter and photographer arrived from PHOTOPLAY at the hospital. We headed for the section, Hunter 5, where our New Haven sources told us Sinatra was staying. This is what happened:

Reporter (to receptionist): "I'm supposed to meet Nancy Sinatra here at 10:30 A.M."

Receptionist: "Sit here. You'll be able to see her down that hall when she gets off the elevator, or she'll pass right through the lobby."

The radiology center is in a separate wing of Yale-New Haven. We were told that Sinatra was on the fifth floor (Hunter 5) where the laboratories were located. Our New Haven contact, however, was not a member of the hospital staff, so our reporter had to assume that the receptionist may have only been fulfilling her job of screening visitors, not locating Sinatra, who was allegedly in her sector.

After about 20 minutes, our reporter again asked for Nancy Sinatra, Jr.

Receptionist: "Did she say to meet her in the Hunter 5 waiting room?"

Reporter: "Yes."

Receptionist: "Why don't you go down the hall and contact a nurse called Mrs. —? Tell her your name and explain what Miss Sinatra told you."

Our reporter did, but the nurse on duty only laughed and said, "You've got the wrong floor and the wrong hospital." He

thanked her and continued into the unit. Now, he thought, he would do some looking on his own. He got nowhere. Within a few short moments, hospital security guards were called out, and he was asked to leave the hospital.

Our photographer, who had staked out the only exits and entrances to the unit, joined him and reported that he had seen no one, or nothing, unusual.

What had this hunt developed in the way of real information? Did the receptionist know if Nancy Sinatra was there? Was the nurse on duty the final screening person? Or did no one really know anything? Was it all a mistake?

Again that day, we received word from a contact on the West Coast, who had lunched with Nancy Sinatra, Sr. that very day, that Frank was in Europe and perfectly well. Ex-wife Mia Farrow, when contacted by us, swore that she knew nothing about Frank's alleged condition. These people, it seemed reasonable, ought to know what they were talking about.

On Thursday, July 22, a New Haven resident, over 60 and a medicare patient, met with our contact there and told him that he had just shaken hands with Frank Sinatra in the waiting room of Hartford (Conn.) Hospital. Hartford Hospital is only a short distance from Yale-New Haven; it also contains a radiology center. The man said Sinatra passed through the waiting room and stopped to talk with several older people.

Was this man sure? What did Hartford Hospital have to say?

Hartford had nothing to say.

In the evening, we were again tipped by a source on the West Coast that Sinatra's lawyer, Mickey Rudin, was urging Frank, in Europe, to hold a press conference to deny these rumors once and for all.

As we go to press, such a conference is yet to be held. Frank's friends say that is because he doesn't care what gossip is circling about him; he's retired and non-pressured for the first time in his life. Let the rest be silence. But they also say that Frank's family is upset and disturbed by the talk; they don't know what to do about it.

Our investigation led us up and down many paths, but brought us to no certain end. We read that Frank is in Lisbon now; he dined with the Spiro Agnews and golfed. A wire service picture shows him leaving a hotel in that city with Mrs. Harry Dundore, a member of Vice-President Spiro Agnew's party. Certainly, a man with *seriously progressed throat cancer*, according to that report, would hardly be so energetic or healthy-looking. Yet, rumor continues and our New Haven sources stick to their story. We wish that Sinatra would have a conference so that those fans who know him and read reports that he's grievously ill might at last rest easy, so that we can know what the "informants" in New Haven were talking about, if anything, so that at last he can enjoy the privacy his 30 public years have earned him.

—JACK SIMPSON

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