

many conclusions from the testimony of two people?

LANE: McKeown's and Rich's are not the only evidence of a Ruby-Cuba link. Shortly after the incident with McKeown, Ruby flew to Havana with a Las Vegas gambler named Lewis J. McWillie. Ruby told the Commission of his trip but didn't say what he did in Havana. McWillie testified that his plush gambling casino had been expropriated by Castro, and he "personally left Havana to avoid arrest." McWillie said he had known Ruby for some time, that Ruby had once procured a pistol for him, and that he knew Ruby "to be well acquainted with virtually every officer of the Dallas police." When the Commission spoke to McWillie, they already knew of the FBI report on the McKeown incident, but they never questioned the gambler about it, and never bothered to determine a possible link between Ruby's Havana trip and his earlier contact with McKeown. The Commission simply brushed off the whole incident as unimportant.

PLAYBOY: Do you believe, as some have implied, that Ruby was involved with the CIA in his alleged anti-Castro activities?

LANE: I don't know, but at that time the CIA was firmly in charge of anti-Castro exile activity in the United States. Ruby may have had nothing to do with the CIA, however; he may just have been acting for some expropriated gambling interests out for revenge against Castro. What I object to is the Warren Commission deliberately suppressing these facts. Let me add a vital point: By hushing up things like this, the Commission didn't dispel rumors; they provided more fertile ground for them. Because people naturally wonder, if there's nothing sinister here, why did the Commission suppress the facts? The Warren Report may have won a little time for the Government, but its methods have opened up a whole Pandora's box of rumors and speculation. No cover-up at all is better than a poor one.

PLAYBOY: Since you've mentioned rumors and speculation, let's discuss your contention in *Rush to Judgment* that on the evening of November 14, 1963, a two-hour meeting took place at the Carousel Club between Ruby, Patrolman Tippit and Bernard Weissman, the ultra-right-wing activist who placed that full-page ad in the November 22 *Dallas Morning News* accusing Kennedy of treason. Where did you hear about this alleged meeting?

LANE: I learned of it from Thayer Waldo, a respected reporter for the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, who told me that an acquaintance of his, a prominent Dallas figure, was in the Carousel Club that night. Waldo's friend was a frequent visitor to Ruby's place, because he was

carrying on an affair with one of the strippers. This man told Waldo, and later repeated directly to me, that he had seen Ruby, Officer Tippit and Weissman sitting together at a back table engaged in deep conversation for almost two hours.

PLAYBOY: Why would they hold such a meeting in public view?

LANE: I don't know.

PLAYBOY: If there was such a meeting, do you believe that its purpose was to plot the assassination of President Kennedy?

LANE: I don't know what its purpose was. That's the whole issue. There is some evidence to support the contention that there was such a meeting. The Commission should have found out where those three men were that night, and told us. They didn't. Maybe my informant was wrong about seeing the men together. The point is that here is a potentially critical lead that the Commission stubbornly refused to follow up. The meeting itself could mean nothing—or everything. We'll never find out from the Commission's Report.

PLAYBOY: The Report concluded that "The Commission has investigated the allegation of a Weissman-Ruby-Tippit meeting and has found no evidence that such a meeting took place anywhere at any time."

LANE: Of course they conclude that. It assists their coincidence thesis. But let me tell you how the Commission "investigated" this meeting. As I said, Thayer Waldo was the source for my information on the two-hour Ruby-Tippit-Weissman meeting. Waldo testified on June 27, 1964—but the Commission counsel never once asked him about the meeting. I told the Commission I could not reveal the name of the man Waldo said had witnessed the meeting, because I had promised the man he would not be involved; he was a leading Dallas citizen; he was married, and the stripper he was going with had become pregnant. But the Commission wasn't interested in the truth, only in discrediting my report of the meeting. For example, after I told the Commission what I knew, Chief Counsel J. Lee Rankin asked me, "Do you realize that the information you gave in closed session could have an unfavorable effect on your country's interests in connection with this assassination?" Mind you, Rankin wasn't concerned with investigating the report and finding out if such a meeting had really occurred; he was only disturbed that talking about it could harm our country's interests. This, of course, was the whole problem with the Commission; they weren't interested in pursuing the truth, but in performing a prophylactic function, in protecting their conception of the national interest. In this case, unfortunately, they couldn't do both.

PLAYBOY: Apart from the alleged meeting

at the Carousel Club, didn't the Warren Commission include there was "no credible evidence" that Ruby knew Tippit?

LANE: You continue to confront me with Commission conclusions as if they were facts. Yes, the Commission did, but the evidence says otherwise. Ruby's sister, Mrs. Eva Grant, told a *New York Herald Tribune* reporter who asked her about Tippit that "Jack knew him and I knew him." She added that "Jack called him Buddy" and "We liked him. . . . He was in and out of our place many times." At least six other witnesses—including Dallas Police Lieutenant George C. Arnett—swore that Ruby knew Tippit. For example, one of Ruby's bartenders, Curtis La Verne Grafard, and another club employee, Andrew Armstrong, were at the Carousel Club when Tippit's death was announced over the radio, and both men told the FBI that Ruby told them then that he had known Tippit. Still another witness, who once sought Ruby's OK to open a numbers operation in Dallas, told the FBI that Tippit "was a frequent visitor to Ruby's night club, along with another officer who was a motorcycle patrolman in the Oaklawn section of Dallas." The FBI agents who interviewed Hardee reported that "from his observation there appeared to be a very close relationship between these three individuals."

One of the many witnesses the Commission never chose to call was Harold Richard Williams. On April 3, 1966, I filmed and tape-recorded an interview with Williams in Dallas, and he told me that early in November 1963 he had been roughed up and arrested in a raid on an after-hours club called the Mikado, where he worked as chef. Williams says he carefully studied the face of the officer driving the police car to headquarters, intending to find out who he was and make a complaint. Seated alongside this cop in the front of the car, according to Williams, was Jack Ruby, whom the driver called "Rube." Williams said he knew Ruby well, since Ruby "used to furnish us with girls" for parties at the Mikado Club. On November 22 Williams saw a photograph of Patrolman J. D. Tippit in the papers and recognized him as that same officer. When Williams told acquaintances about seeing Ruby and Tippit together, he was promptly taken into custody by the Dallas police and told to keep quiet about the incident, since "it would be very easy" to charge him with a crime "and make it work." Nevertheless, Williams agreed to tell me all he knew. Despite all these facts, the Commission concluded there was "no credible evidence" that Ruby and Tippit were acquainted.

PLAYBOY: Do you also challenge the Commission's conclusion that Ruby had