

picture. The cropped photograph was then enlarged to make it identical in size to the other pictures, and published in the Report.

PLAYBOY: In any case, does Ruby's ubiquitousness lessen the possibility that his perfect timing in the jail was just a coincidence?

LANE: No, it doesn't. I believe in chance, in the random factor, but you reach a point in this case where the Warren Commission asks you to accept one too many coincidences. They proceed as if cause and effect are alien doctrines. The American press speaks of Europeans rejecting the Report because of their conspiracy theories of history. We Americans are asked to accept a coincidence theory instead. Europeans rejected the Commission's Report earlier than Americans, because the European press presented both sides. Here those who dissented from the findings—including me—were denied access to the press for two years following the assassination.

PLAYBOY: Do you believe that Ruby killed Oswald in a conspiracy with the Dallas police—to silence him?

LANE: This is possible and should have been investigated—but it never received thorough examination from the Commission. Let me add that there is no doubt in my mind that had Oswald lived to face trial, he would have been acquitted of the assassination of President Kennedy. A Commission attorney, Alfreda Scooby, conceded that in the January 1965 issue of The American Bar Association Journal. Perhaps the real authors of the assassination decided to "close the case" in the most effective—and final—way possible.

PLAYBOY: What exactly were Ruby's relations with the Dallas police?

LANE: The Commission more or less accepted the statement of Jesse Curry, chief of the Dallas police, that Ruby knew "only" 25 to 50 Dallas policemen. But Joseph Johnson, who was Ruby's bartender at the Carousel Club for more than six years, says Ruby had a "very close, warm relationship" with the police, and personally knew more than half the Dallas force. There are 1200 policemen on the force. Another witness, Nancy Ferrin Rich, Ruby's former bartender at the Carousel Club, also said Ruby knew over half the Dallas police force. The Warren Commission said that Ruby would occasionally serve the few cops he knew "free coffee and soft drinks," but Mrs. Rich, who got her job with Ruby through a Dallas policeman, said in a filmed interview with me that he supplied "booze, women and gambling" to the police. There was a vast amount of evidence and testimony before the Commission attesting to the long-standing corrupt relationship between Ruby and the Dallas police. The evidence shows that Ruby bribed the officers and that in turn they quashed a

number of criminal charges and licensing violations that had been brought against him. It was a cozy, symbiotic relationship, and the final pay-off may have been Ruby's murder of Oswald.

PLAYBOY: Was Ruby linked to organized crime in Dallas?

LANE: The Commission concluded he wasn't—but many witnesses said he was. Several told the local or Federal police that before opening a gambling operation in Dallas, they were told by Syndicate kingpins in Las Vegas to clear it with Jack Ruby, who was their "contact man" with the Dallas police. One witness testified that Ruby was also deeply involved in the Dallas narcotics racket. And there is evidence that Ruby was the "bagman," or paymaster, for a clandestine group of anti-Castro Cuban exiles.

PLAYBOY: What evidence?

LANE: The testimony of Nancy Ferrin Rich. She swore that her husband was contacted by an anti-Castro group and asked to run guns into Cuba and smuggle exiles out. He was selected because he'd previously accomplished similar missions for Franco during the Spanish Civil War. Mrs. Rich says she attended a meeting with her husband to discuss the terms of the deal. It was presided over, she told me, by a lieutenant colonel of the U.S. Air Force, and there was at least one man present who she thought "might have been Cuban." Mrs. Rich's husband was promised \$10,000 for the job, but they haggled with the group and eventually succeeded in raising the sum to \$25,000. But the negotiations hit a snag because there was no money at hand, and Mr. Rich demanded a large cash retainer. According to Mrs. Rich, when she testified before the Commission, she then was surprised to see her old friend Jack Ruby walk in the door, his coat pocket bulging ostentatiously. Ruby and the colonel went into the bedroom and a few minutes later Ruby came out, his pocket no longer bulging, and left soon afterward. Though she didn't see it, she testified that the money was then forthcoming.

PLAYBOY: What did the Warren Commission conclude about Mrs. Rich's testimony?

LANE: Nothing. They never even mentioned her in the Report. There was no effort to track down the Air Force colonel Mrs. Rich says presided over the meeting, or to identify anyone else involved. Let me show you how the Commission dealt with her testimony. When I interviewed Mrs. Rich in Lewiston, Maine, on April 18, 1966, she informed me that, after the meeting, the Air Force colonel showed her a cache of military armament in a shed in the back yard of the apartment building where they met. "I got the general impression from what was said," she told me, "that these were pilfered from U.S. Army or Air Force

bases." I asked Mrs. Rich if she gave this information to the Commission. She replied: "I did, but apparently they chose to discount it. . . . At the time it was given . . . Mr. Griffin [Burt Griffin, Commission counsel] said, 'Strike that from the record.'" Mrs. Rich's testimony, of course, was incompatible with the Commission's evaluation of Ruby as an honest and aboveboard, though possibly deranged, character with no shady connections—so it was ignored. And let me stress that the Commission's conclusion that Ruby was an insignificant character without criminal connections is vital to their determination that there was no conspiracy. If their evaluation of Ruby goes, so does much of their case against a conspiracy. In fact, Mrs. Rich's testimony about the arms cache wasn't just ignored—it was deleted from the public version of the 26 volumes. As you probably know, the Commission reserved the right to edit the transcripts on which the volumes of testimony were based, prior to publication, to improve the "clarity and accuracy" of the witnesses' testimony.

PLAYBOY: Is there any further evidence linking Ruby to the anti-Castro underground?

LANE: Yes, there's the testimony of Robert McKeown, a Houston resident who was convicted of conspiracy to smuggle arms to Fidel Castro while Castro was in the Sierra Maestra. When Castro visited the U.S. in the early days of his regime, he personally greeted McKeown and hailed him as a friend of the revolution. I have an FBI report that reveals that in January 1959 McKeown received a telephone call from one "Jack Rubenstein" in Dallas. Rubenstein, of course, was Ruby's real name. "Rubenstein" said he knew that McKeown had influence with Castro, and told him "he wanted to get three individuals out of Cuba who were being held by Castro." He stated that if McKeown could accomplish their release, "Rubenstein" would pay \$5000 for each person. The caller added that "a person in Las Vegas, Nevada, would put up the money." A few weeks after this call, a man visited McKeown in Houston and offered him \$25,000 for a letter of introduction to Castro. This man never gave his name, but according to the FBI report, "McKeown advised that he feels strongly that this individual was in fact Jack Ruby, the man whose photographs he has seen many times recently in the press." Now here is further evidence linking Ruby to anti-Castro activity, and the FBI forwarded this report to the Warren Commission; but the Commission never published it in its Report or referred to it in any way. I only came across it myself while poring over the mass of unindexed material in the 26 volumes.

PLAYBOY: Aren't you drawing a great