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INSIDE LABOR

Jack Ruby's Life: A Glimpse
Into the Underworld's Snake Pit

By Victor Riesel

Washington, D.C.: -- For days I have been wandering through the life and times of Jack Ruby, indicted for the murder of the murderer of John Kennedy. I have traced Ruby, his friends and friends of his friends.

I have been in a snake pit through which have slithered such characters as "Needlenose" Labriola, Paul Jones, goons from Joe Valachi's Cosa Nostra and killers and con-men out of the Chicago Capone combine.

I have found that Ruby's night spot at one time was a haunt of Chicago hoods who came to Dallas to "case it" for its possible "take." They decided they could take at least \$18 million a year out of the city from labor rackets and other operations.

From Dallas they planned to expand the business to cover Oklahoma, Arkansas and Louisiana.

Their gall was matched only by their arrogance and disdain. One of them suggested that to prove their toughness they murder four local gamblers, put their bodies in a car and leave it outside police headquarters.

Jones, who was friendly with Ruby now in prison, had broad horizons. One Dallas police lieutenant later told the McClellan Committee that Jones had told him that the group planned to unionize every truck driver in the U.S. Jones said: "When we do that, we can bring industry to its knees, and even the government if we have to...." Jones indicated that his combine thought this was the most important area of their activities.

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The hoods terrorized restaurant operators. They forced some owners to buy meat from them at prices higher than the market. How? By cutting off linen supplies -- and workers.

But they reached too far, too hard. Jones tried to bribe a sheriff. He was convicted. "Chicago" became disgusted. The others were recalled. "Needlenose" wound up with a tight wire around his throat in the back of a car. This interfered with his breathing. And so went "Needlenose."

But Chicago never held any terror for Jack Ruby. He knew lots of the boys. Back in 1937, Ruby was so cocky that he stepped in where the wise ones are loath to tread.

Here starts a bizarre play cast in the image of ancient Greek tragedy.

Ruby knew a lawyer called Leon Cook. The former got Cook to lunch and suggested they organize a union in an unorganized area. It was indicated there would be no difficulty getting a federal charter from the old AFL. (A federal charter is one issued directly by the central office in Washington, not by a national union.) The CIO called these "L.I.U.'s" -- Local Industrial Unions.

They got their charter -- local 20467, Waste Material Handlers Union. Ruby was secretary. He and Cook worked hard. Someone decided Cook was working too hard and eased his pain with some bullets on Dec. 8, 1939. Ruby stayed on for a while. Then the AFL regional office removed him. Out of nowhere came the new secretary-treasurer -- Paul "Red" Dorfman, buddy of Jimmie Hoffa.

"Red" Dorfman, an ex-pug had no difficulties for a long while -- perhaps some 15 years.

Then came the McClellan committee. Its chief counsel, Robert Kennedy, decided to probe this friend and intimate of Jim Hoffa.

To this investigation Kennedy assigned one James McShane. Today he is chief of the federal marshals.

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On Jan. 29, 1957 Kennedy put McShane on the Senate committee witness stand.

Kennedy asked: "...Do you have some information that would summarize your investigation, as well as the investigations that have been conducted by other government departments?"

McShane replied: "According to our investigation, Mr. Kennedy, Mr. Paul Dorfman is a major figure in the Chicago underworld. He is an associate of most of the leading gangsters in the Chicago area. He is the contact man between dishonest union leaders and members of the Chicago underworld...."

And then McShane continued: "...Of Mr. Dorfman's criminal and other associates, there is one Anthony "Tony" Accardo, known as the head of the Chicago mob since the death of Al Capone. Another is Mr. Abraham Teitelbaum, former attorney for the Capone mob. Another is Abner "Longy" Zwillman, one of the top figures in the American underworld...

"Now there is Mr. John Dioguardia, alias Johnny Dio, a notorious New York gangster in the garment district...."

At the end of 1957, Dorfman was ousted from the Waste Handlers union by labor's national office here. But soon he was organizing for a Teamster' local in Chicago.

When last heard from he was in the Palm Springs sunshine.

He said he thought Jack Ruby was a "real nice guy."

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