

Jack Ruby's Story of Oswald Killing; Asserts No One Knew About His Plans

He Denies Ties to Far Left or Right—Tells of Chicago Boyhood

The following is the story of Jack Ruby as told in his jail cell in Dallas where he awaits trial for killing Lee Oswald. It was taped and transcribed by William Read Woodfield, author of "Ninth Life," a biography of Caryl Chessman.

By JACK RUBY

With William R. Woodfield

I, Jack Ruby, shot and killed the murderer of our President John F. Kennedy.

I am now in the Dallas county jail, charged with murder with malice. The State of Texas demands that I be electrocuted for killing Oswald. My fellow citizens are divided in their feelings toward me.

Millions of them regard me as a hero. Some have foolishly, I think—suggested I be given the Congressional Medal of Honor. Others are equally determined to see me die for my act.

Wild rumor and dark speculation abound regarding me and the reasons I did what I did. Everyone, it seems, knows what should be done with me, yet only my attorneys know my story. In effect, I am being praised and condemned by millions who know nothing more than that on Sunday, Nov. 24, 1963, in Dallas, Tex., at 11:20 a.m. Central Standard Time, I did shoot and kill Lee Harvey Oswald.

How? Why? That is what I want you to know. First, I swear to you that:

(1) I did not know the deceased, Lee Harvey Oswald, before he murdered President John F. Kennedy;

(2) I was not employed by anyone to "silence" Oswald;

(3) No one helped me do what I did;

(4) No one knew what I was going to do;

(5) I am not now, nor have I ever been, a Communist, a fellow traveler, a Communist sympathizer, or a member of any Communist or subversive

organizations;

(6) I am not a member of the so-called extreme right wing, nor do I support any extremist philosophy;

(7) I am not, nor have I ever been, a gangster, a racketeer, or a member of an underworld character;

(8) I am not a white slave, a panderer, a homosexual, a sex deviate or a narcotics user.

I have, since Nov. 24, been accused or suspected of all these things, and I swear that they are not true.

Says FBI Believes Him

The FBI has questioned me at great length on all the points, and I have volunteered to submit to a lie detector test, truth serum, or any other scientific means of determining the truth about any of these—or any other questions. I feel sure that the FBI is satisfied that I am telling the truth. When their report is made public, I am confident that the facts as I now relate them to you will be verified without question.

Before I tell you about the approximately 48 hours from the time our beloved President was murdered until his killer was himself shot, let me tell you about Jack Ruby.

I was born Jack Leon Rubenstein in Chicago, Ill., on March 24, 1911, the fourth child of eight. I was the second son born in my family, and my sisters thought I was a doll that the store had delivered for them to play with. Pa was happy to have another son. The women were driving him crazy.

* Father in Russian Army

Pa was a carpenter by trade, but in his heart he was a Cossack. He was born in Sokolov, Poland, and was drafted into the Russian army and made a horseman. Pa used to have a picture of himself in the parlor, and he was astride a big, brown horse with a sword raised as if to strike down the enemy. He had a great mustache and blazing eyes.

He had power in his face and used to tell us violent stories of his adventures in the Cossacks. He served in Siberia and Japan and finally, when he was

21, he and two of his buddies deserted in Zembroba, Poland. They hid at a farm and were discovered by the woman who owned the farm. She found out that my father and his buddies were Jewish. Well, that's all she needed. She had three marriageable daughters. She was a wise old lady, and she hid the three deserters. Within a few weeks, the three of them were married to the three daughters. That's how my father met and married my mother.

He Liked to Fight

My father came to this country 60 years ago and settled in Chicago. He worked hard and drank hard. He told fabulous stories and drank. I was his favorite, because I was the fighter in the family. I believed the stories he told me and like a little Cossack would fight anyone who hurt my family or friends. I was always scrapping, and I would always tell Pa about my fights. He called me his "little Cossack."

We lived a half-block from Maxwell street in Chicago. It was a ghetto, a slum. We always had enough to eat, but we never had any of the luxuries. We didn't buy toys—we made them. Carts and coasters we made from old roller skates and baby buggies. Balls we made by foraging for old rubber bands in the alleys behind the banks. The banks would throw away hundreds of rubber bands each day, and we kids would gather them up and roll them into a ball. After a week of scrounging in the "rubber band slips" (that's what we called the alleys), we had a good ball for catch or stick ball games.

In Business at Age of 9

Whatever we had, we earned. We didn't steal or beg for anything. We earned our own money, even as tiny kids. I used to save pennies all year so that a week before the Fourth of July I could buy fireworks in Maywood—a town 15 miles outside of Chicago—and "import" them to sell to the kids in the neighborhood.

It was a 15-mile walk each way, but I could make 5 to 10 dollars profit. That was a lot of money for a 9-year-old slum kid. I learned early that the secret

of business was to buy wholesale and sell retail. I was a business man.

I also fell in love early. Her name was Mary Katzen. She was a redhead—an immigrant from Dublin. Her Irish accent always sounded cultured and refined to me. We broke up, because between my businesses and baseball, I didn't have much time left over for love. Besides, I was only 10.

Another Enterprise

We lived half a block from the produce market on Maxwell street, which attracted customers from all over Chicago by selling distress produce (food about to spoil, thus marked down for a quick sale). I used to buy shopping bags for 2½ cents a piece. I persuaded by sister Ev to join me in the enterprise. She had capital—10 cents—and was a good salesgirl. (It was always Ev who would sell my mother's milk bottles back to the store. My job was to sneak them out of the house without my mother knowing me outside.)

Before Thanksgiving we had

about eight shopping bags a day. We knew that during that busy season we would have no difficulty selling them. Ev would stand on one side of the street and I on the other. As shoppers would struggle to the streetcar with their many individual purchases, Ev and I would hawk, "Shopping bags! Ten cents apiece!" The people didn't have cars. They were glad to pay 10 cents to carry just a single bag.

Discovered by Father

Ev had enough sense to hide if she

