

Ruby's Reaction to Kennedy

SL-1/31
'I Felt Like a Nothing Person,' He Says; Closed His Night Club, Was

By Jack Ruby

With William R. Woodfield

Fourth installment of the story of Jack Ruby, as taped by William R. Woodfield in the Dallas jail, where Ruby awaits trial for the killing of Lee Oswald.

FRIDAY, NOV. 22; approximately 1:40 p.m.: That fine man was dead. A part of me died then, too. I could barely speak. I said to John Noonan: "I'm going to leave Dallas because this town is ruined. The shooting of our President will destroy Dallas. Dallas will die." I was myself a man who felt dead.

I called Ev again. She was hysterical, crying and wailing. She couldn't talk. I couldn't talk. I held the phone to John Noonan's ear so that he could hear Ev's grief.

Ev said, "You'd better come here." I said, "I'll come." I told John Noonan my club would be closed and I left.

About 2 p.m.: I went down in the elevator and left the Dallas Morning News (tears well in Ruby's eyes as he speaks.) I was stunned. I started to cry and I left the building in tears. I felt like a nothing person. I felt the world had ended. (Ruby is now crying.) I didn't want to live any more. I didn't want to go on living.

About 2:15 p.m.: I went to the club and told Andy to call everybody and tell them we wouldn't be open tonight. I called Al Gruber, a friend in California, to apologize for not having sent him a dog, as I had promised I would.

I don't know why, and then, even though we hadn't seen each other for about a year, I called Alice Nichols (a Dallas secretary to whom Ruby has been engaged on and off, for about 11 years). I just had to call her—to hear her voice. She was badly shaken and told me she had been in Neiman-Marcus (the Dallas department store) when the news broke. She said everyone was running out of the store and the store closed down.

The poor President was being flown back to Washington, his wife at his side.

Someone came in to sell me some merchandise. I told him I didn't feel like buying any merchandise. Some people! I

was building up in my mind what a great President he was—what a great person he was. I didn't want to care any more. I called the people I felt close to: Ev, Alice.

Approximately 3 p.m.: I called another sister, Eileen—the baby in the family—in Chicago. I was in tears. I told her how terrible I felt about it and I kept saying, "Oh, my God! Oh, my God!" I said maybe I'd fly up to be with the family, and she said it isn't really necessary, and asked how Ev felt and how she was taking the news.

I told Eileen she felt terrible, and she said I should stay with Ev and she would call that night after 9 o'clock and talk to both of us.

She did call and spoke to Ev but I had gone to the synagogue. I called Eileen because—I don't know—I just had to speak to those close to me.

Approximately 3:30 p.m.: I had about \$2000 in cash on me, but I just couldn't go to the bank with it. There was too much commotion. I carried it with me. I also had my gun. I went to the Ritz delicatessen and bought \$10 worth of kosher food, even though it's bad for me. I got dill pickles, lox (smoked salmon) and corned beef and went to Ev's.

Approximately 4 p.m.: The television was on at Ev's. We cried and cried.

"Why did they do it? Why did they do it?" I asked. "He was such a beautiful man. Why did they do it?"

We cried and cried. We ate. We got drunk on that kosher

food. We grieved and watched television.

I saw the President's coffin as it was moved from the plane to the ambulance with Mrs. Kennedy at its side. I saw her husband's blood on her dress and stockings.

"My God!" Ev said, and made the sign of the crucifix. (Eva Grant, a Jew, made the sign of the cross and she is unable to

Assassination

Shocked That Others Were Open

explain why.) I cried and thought, "That poor woman. Poor John and Caroline—without a father."

They showed Oswald on television. I thought to myself, "If he's the right man, he's got to be either a John Birchler or a Communist." I was sure that there was more than one person involved. I had no feelings about him at all. I never even thought of him.

Ev has since told me that I was incensed at the Weissman ad. She said, "You brought me two papers—the Dallas Morning News and The Dallas Times Herald. You looked at them, stared at them, studied them. You kept looking back at the Weissman ad and you said, 'Don't worry. There will be about \$2,000,000 worth of ads canceled in the morning.' You also told me the Dallas Times Herald had turned the ad down."

She told me a few days ago that I was "broken, baffled and depressed." She was no better off. Ev heard "Fair Play for Cuba" mentioned on the television, and she became hysterical worrying about her son and granddaughters—convinced that this would be the start of World War III.

Approximately 5 p.m.: I saw the rerun of the film of the President and Mrs. Kennedy arriving at Dallas's Love Air Field just a few minutes before he was murdered. Do you remember how he stopped at the rail or the fence and shook everyone's hand? I wish I had been there to shake his hand and tell him how much I loved him.

Don Saffran called. He's with the Dallas Times Herald and he doesn't like me. He wanted to know since Autry's and the Cabana (two rival night clubs) were going to close, would I be closed?

I said, "Don, I'm closed."

Don said, "I don't know about Saturday and Sunday. Abe and Barney (owners of night clubs) don't know what to do."

I said, "Well, I'm closing Saturday and Sunday." I can

Ev and said, "Money don't mean that much."

I said to Don, "That means I'm closed tonight, Friday night, Saturday night and Sunday night. Money don't mean that much to me. Out of respect to the President, I'm closing."

I didn't know about the funeral being Monday, so I didn't make any plans for Monday.

I called my friend and physician, Dr. Coleman Jacobson (who, in recalling this call says Ruby was "very emotional, sounded peculiar" to ask what time Rabbi Silverman would be holding services for our President at Shearith Israel (synagogue).

Dr. Jacobson told me 8:30 and I said, "It's terrible. It's terrible," and Dr. Jacobson asked me what he could do for me. He wondered if I needed any medication. What could he do for me? Could he restore the President to life?

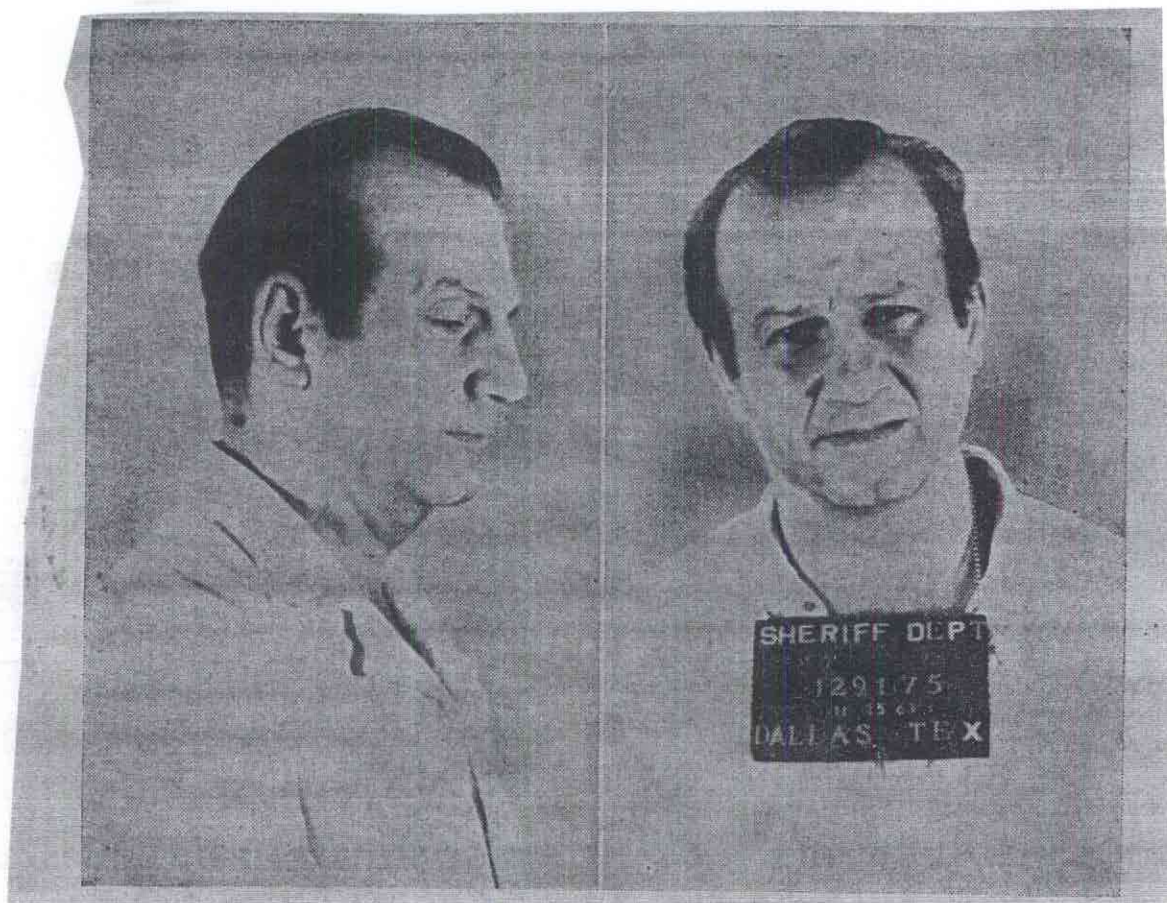
Ev and I watched television. We saw the President's coffin arrive in Washington. We saw Mrs. Kennedy, still covered with her husband's blood, join him in the ambulance with the Attorney General.

"My God," I thought. "How can she find the strength to tell those poor children?"

I became depressed again and could barely eat the scrambled eggs and lox Ev cooked. Everything tasted of tears.

Approximately 7:15 p.m.: I left Ev's.

About 7:30 p.m.: I arrived at my place, cleaned up and dressed to go to Shearith Israel. I turned the television on in the living room and kept watching the news that was happening and the reruns of earlier news. I was low, depressed. The phone rang. It was Karen Linn Bennett, a stripper who works for me under the name "Little Linn." (The same "Little Linn" charged with carrying a concealed weapon—a .25 caliber automatic—into the Ruby bond



Jack Ruby as he appeared when he was booked at the Dallas County Jail, charged with murder of accused presidential assassin Lee Oswald.

hearing in Dallas on Dec. 22, 1963.)

Linn had gone to the club, found it closed and didn't understand why. I got sore.

"Don't you have any respect for the President?" I asked her. She said she did, but that she had come from her home in Fort Worth (about 20 miles away) without any money, ex-

pecting to go to work. She said she was stranded.

I asked her where she was and she said, "The Colony Club." I was shocked that it was open but I told her I was going to the synagogue and would drop off some money to her on the way so she could get home.

About 8:45 p.m. I just sat and grieved and watched television. About an hour later, Linn called again and I told her I just couldn't make it.

I said, "I'm just too sad." I asked her to put the parking lot attendant on the phone, and I asked him to give Linn \$5 to get home, and promised him I would pay him back. I watched television and my heart ached ... for Mrs. Kennedy, the children, the entire world.

I thought, too, of how when Ambassador Stevenson spoke in the Dallas Memorial Auditorium (on Oct. 24, 1963) just a couple of weeks before, pickets chanted:

"Kennedy will get his reward in hell. Stevenson is going to die. His heart will stop, stop, stop and he will burn, burn, burn."

"My God, what a world! Who are these people who hate?"

About 10:15 p.m.: I arrived, late, at Shearith Israel, and took my gun out of my pocket and slipped it down behind my car seat. I missed the services, but I said a Kaddish (a prayer for the dead) and asked a few people what Rabbi Silverman had said. My mind was foggy. I didn't really want to talk to anyone. I was morbid.

Someone named Leona tried to talk to me but I didn't want to. I got in line to shake hands with the rabbi, then I left the temple and got back in my car. I sat on my gun and put it back into my right trouser pocket.

About 10:30 p.m.: I drove around downtown Dallas. I saw clubs open, people having fun. "My God," I thought, "why aren't they in mourning?" I found the Bali Hai (another night club) open. I was shocked that there was not more sadness.

I went to a delicatessen opposite the Vegas Club. The BIB was open. I had coffee and read the paper. I read that homicide was working overtime. I called homicide and talked to my friend, Detective Sims, and I said, "I know you have been working hard and I want to bring you some corned beef sandwiches."

Sims said, "Gee, Jack, thanks, but we are all through. We are winding up our interrogation."

Then I thought of my friends at KLIF-TV. I called my friend, Gordon McLendon, to see if they wanted some sandwiches. I knew they had been working hard all day. As the phone rang, the thought that it was an organization that had killed the President went through my mind. I couldn't get through to KLIF-TV so I called Gordon McLendon's home to get the private night number. His daughter Christine answered, and I told her I wanted to help those people at the television station, bring them sandwiches. She gave me the number, but it didn't answer, either.

I figured everyone was at the City Hall or police headquarters and I told Bill Miller (the delicatessen owner) to make me "10 good corned beef sandwiches and don't spare the meat."

I promised I would give him a free pass to the Carousel Club. He only made eight for some reason, and I got a black cherry (carbonated soda) and went to the phone to call Ev. I asked her if she was all right, and she said she was in a daze, and she asked me if I had said a prayer for the President. I told her that I did, and that I was going down to the City Hall with some sandwiches for the KLIF-TV crew.

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SUNDAY: Ruby goes to the Dallas police station.