

Ruby Says 'It's a Shame' He

Insists He Hadn't Known the Man He Killed—Tells Why He Went

By Jack Ruby

With William R. Woodfield

Sixth and last 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.

Q: Did you ever know Lee Harvey Oswald?

A.: I never saw him in the Carousel Club, never in the world, at any time. The master of ceremonies at the club, Bill DeMarr, said he thought he had seen Oswald at the club, but now he denies he ever saw him. It was such a shock to me because Bill has such a wonderful memory.

I never heard Oswald's name and I usually greet customers at the club by name. When I first saw Oswald in the newspapers and on television, I associated him with Paul Newman for some reason.

Someone even said I once had an apartment next to Oswald, but this is absolutely not true.

Q: Why did you carry a gun?

A.: I've been cut at, knifed at, and the only way to get respect in Dallas is to carry a gun, and the thugs and hoodlums know it. Hoods can cause all kinds of trouble. They get put in jail and get out the next morning with a mere \$10 fine. That's the way it is in Dallas, and that's why I carried a gun, to protect my business and my money. I have no permit—they know it—but they know all night club owners carry guns. You have to carry a gun. Dallas is like a jungle.

Q: You said you had done some fighting. Could you give us more details about this?

A.: I've had to defend myself a number of times in my life. I've had people pull knives and guns on me and I've defended myself. I backed them off with my gun when I had to. Once I chased a fellow down and beat him up. He was insulting a waitress and I came to her defense. Another time, I came across three hoods beating up a Dallas police officer. His name was Blankenship. They were about to kill him, and I jumped in and helped the cop. He later said I saved his life. I'm proud of this. Not everyone would have done it. But I did.

Q: What are your feelings toward the Dallas police, and how do they feel toward you?

A.: I love the Dallas police. I love the department. I love to hang around there. They handle civil rights with less fuss than any town. The Marcus family has

helped the Dallas Jew tremendously, but still you find bigotry.

We often have off-duty policemen working in the Carousel to keep order. They get \$7 per night. This is common. Christmases, cops get whisky. But the police never have their hands out in Dallas. They get a special price on beer in the club—40 cents instead of 60 cents—but they don't drink while they're on duty. And I don't make them pay the cover charge to come in. I never ask an officer to do special favors for me.

I pass out permanent guest cards for the Carousel to certain people to use any night but Saturday and Sunday. I give these cards to the police. It's public relations.

Bill Alexander, the deputy district attorney who is prosecuting me, has a complimentary card. Bill and I were great friends—that is, until he brought a prosecution psychiatrist, Dr. Holbrook, to jail to examine me. It hurts to have your faith shaken in your friends. Then, after that, Bill came back with another doctor, but I wouldn't see him. I remembered that Dr. Holbrook talked to me for about an hour. He didn't have a stenographer or a tape machine, and we didn't get into talking about the shooting at all.

Three days before the shooting, Bill Alexander told me he heard I was upset because a competitor was hiring Candy Barr (an exotic dancer), bringing her back to Dallas. She was run out of Dallas after serving a jail sentence. Bill said, "If you know anybody she's running with, that's

wrong, you let me know and nobody will ever know you told me."

Bill told Capt. Fritz, "See that Jack gets his rights." The next day he came in with the psychiatrists. What a friend!

Q: Did you have a romance with Candy Barr?

A.: No. We were good friends.

I visited her for a couple of days a while ago. I took her an air-conditioning unit and two dogs, dachshunds.

Q: Let's get back to your police record. Have you ever been arrested for anything other than fighting?

A.: They were mostly minor fights. I had a little trouble with the liquor men. Then I was in traffic court, and was pulled in for carrying a gun. Even though I know many of the officers, I never asked anyone to dismiss a case against me. Only once did I ever have trouble with an officer. He tried to rough me up. I hit him with my pistol and when I apologized to the captain, he told me to forget it. They didn't want cops like this one on the force.

Q: Do you have any animosity toward Dallas?

A.: (Ruby breaks down and cries.) I'm so grateful for the opportunities I've had in Dallas. I'm a Jew from the ghetto of Chicago. I came to Dallas and was accepted, made a fine success. It thrills me very much to think of it—me, a Jew, a Democrat, accepted in this Republican hotbed. I love Dallas. I love the police department. I am grateful that I've risen above the ghetto I came from, and the people of Dallas have accepted me—or they did until this. I believe I am a righteous man. I have tried to be a decent man. My greatest ambition was

Shot, Oswald

Armed, Describes Some of His Fights

to rise to sheriff of Dallas.

Q: Let's go into your personal life for a few minutes. Will you tell us something about your father?

A.: My father was a very belligerent person. He embarrassed the entire family. He was an alcoholic and he died an alcoholic.

Q: Mr. Ruby, are you a homosexual?

A.: (Extremely agitated) No. I've fought guys who've asked me that.

Q: Have you ever been involved in pandering?

A.: Absolutely not. I never took a prostitution dime. I never pushed prostitutes at all. I have been described as hypersensitive, hypermoral. Andy Anderson, who works at the Carousel, will swear I never took calls for prostitutes at the place.

Q: Do you consider yourself a religious man?

A.: I'm a very conservative Jew but I don't go to schul (synagogue) regularly any more. You must say a service for your deceased parents every morning for 11 months after death. I did this.

Q: We have heard that you traveled to Cuba. Would you tell us about this and about any other traveling you have done?

A.: Well, three or four months ago I went to New Orleans and stopped off at Aetna to see Candy Barr. I spent two days with her. I was also in Houston. I haven't been back to Chicago since 1958.

Q: What about foreign travel?

A.: I never traveled abroad. I only went to Laredo and Juarez, Mexico. Also to Windsor, Canada, out of Detroit. I did go to Cuba in '59. I had a good friend there from Dallas named L. C. McWhiters (Las Vegas gambler). He wanted me to come to Cuba to see him. He sent me the

plane ticket to Havana. I stayed eight or 10 days at the Focsa Apartments.

Q.: Did you have anything to do with Cuban politics?

A.: No. I didn't fool around at all in any political activities in Cuba. I bought a ticket to a day-long celebration, that's all. I never went back and I had never been there before. And I haven't received any letters from Cuba.

Q.: Did you ever run guns into Cuba?

A.: No. But when Castro came to power, I thought Cuba was going to be a new and democratic country, and I tried to arrange to sell them surplus jeeps. I was going into the G.I. surplus business. I saw a lawyer about it in Houston, Tex., but he told me I was too little a punk for such a deal. But there was no talk of gun running. A lot of people have called the FBI and told them a lot of things, just trying to get into the act.

Q.: It has been rumored that you went to Parkland Hospital on Friday, the day after President Kennedy died. Is this true?

A.: I was not out at the Parkland Hospital. Any account that says I was is wrong.

Q.: What organizations do you or did you belong to?

A.: The Boy Scouts, the Democratic party, the Variety Club and AGVA, the entertainment union. I was never a member of the Communist party or any such thing, or any subversive organization. I made donations to Angels, Inc., which is a home in Dallas for homeless kids. As for the Fair Play for Cuba Committee, I do not belong to it, never belonged to it, and I have

never received any literature from it or any other Cuba organization. I once had an argument with some guy about Communism and had to throw him out of the club.

Q.: Who is your favorite political commentator?

A.: It was Edward R. Murrow.

Q.: Why did you move from Chicago to Dallas?

A.: Ev went into the night club business here and she needed help.

Q.: Who did you vote for in the last election?

A.: John F. Kennedy.

Q.: Before that, in 1956?

A.: Adlai Stevenson.

Q.: Have you ever had any trouble with mental illness? Or has your family had a history of mental illness?

A.: Well, I've been hit on the head a few times, but I don't have a metal plate in my head or anything like that. There's no history of mental illness. In 1958 my brother Earl had some problems and had himself committed to the Veterans Administration hospital. My mother, who passed away in 1943, thought my father was taking the children's love from her, but I don't know if that means anything.

Q.: Have you ever thought of suicide?

A.: I was very depressed when my business failed in '52. I broke down completely. I wanted to commit suicide. I just stayed

in the Cotton Bowl Hotel for several weeks. I didn't want to face people. I was ashamed of being a failure in Dallas. I left for Chicago. Earl helped me a lot. I found the courage to return to Dallas, and I've been here ever since.

Q.: You have been known to be a very emotional person. What are your feelings about death?

A.: I've always been preoccupied with anyone who dies who's a friend of mine. I have to go to the funeral and send a wreath. Particularly anyone who dies violently. I have to do something more. I can't just be satisfied with going to the funeral. Detective Leonard Mullenix of the narcotics squad was working under cover here in Dallas. He was killed. I barely knew him, but I had to do something. I donated some money (\$200) to poor Mrs. Mullenix, closed my club, took my employes and my sister to his funeral. I just had to pay my respects. I raised more money from other people for Mrs. Mullenix, too.

Sue Bailey, a stripper, lost her husband in an auto accident. I had to arrange a benefit for her. I barely knew her, but my heart bled for her loss. I had tickets printed to the benefit and started selling them. The owner of the club where Sue worked became incensed that I was giving the benefit instead of him. What did I care who gave it? I just kept selling tickets, even though the benefit was going to be held at my competitor's.

I get shocked and saddened by violent death. I have to do something. I felt so sad and sorry for Mrs. Kennedy and her fine children. I felt sad that they would have to endure life without the President. I became depressed that they would have to go through a long trial for that person. I get so involved I want to do something. I want to help.

Q.: Let's go into your feelings about the events of Nov. 22.

A.: I was in mourning from the minute I heard the news. The world had come to an end.

Q.: Did you know J. D. Tipp

pet, the officer who was shot by Oswald?

A.: I did not know him. I don't recall meeting him or seeing him in the club.

Q.: How did you feel about Oswald?

A.: When he appeared before me, something inside me went blank and it just tore out of me. (Ruby cried as he spoke.) "I heard a rabbi eulogize: 'Here was a man who fought in all battles. He didn't have a chance to fight this one. He was shot before he could.'" I never saw that kind of person (Oswald) before in my life. Oswald had blemished this beautiful city. Those are the things that went through my mind. No one knew I was going to shoot Oswald—not even me. I had not discussed it nor thought of it. There was nothing to discuss. No one helped me or gave me access.

Q.: What are your feelings now?

A.: I am even more remorseful now than after President Kennedy's death. The very thought of the man who was the champion of the Jew is like the world has died.

Q.: Do you feel you did a service to the United States by shooting Oswald?

A.: No. It isn't a service to the country. It's a shame. But I

didn't do it intentionally. I didn't even know I had done it. I'm sorry I did it. I've embarrassed my country.

Q.: What do you think should be done with you?

A.: I feel that something should be done with me. I'm willing to go into a mental hospital and stay as long as it's necessary—even if it's the rest of my life. I've offered to submit to truth serum test, polygraph test or any other scientific test the FBI wanted. They said they didn't want me to. I want to be bona fide with the FBI.

Q.: Are you sorry?

A.: Yes.

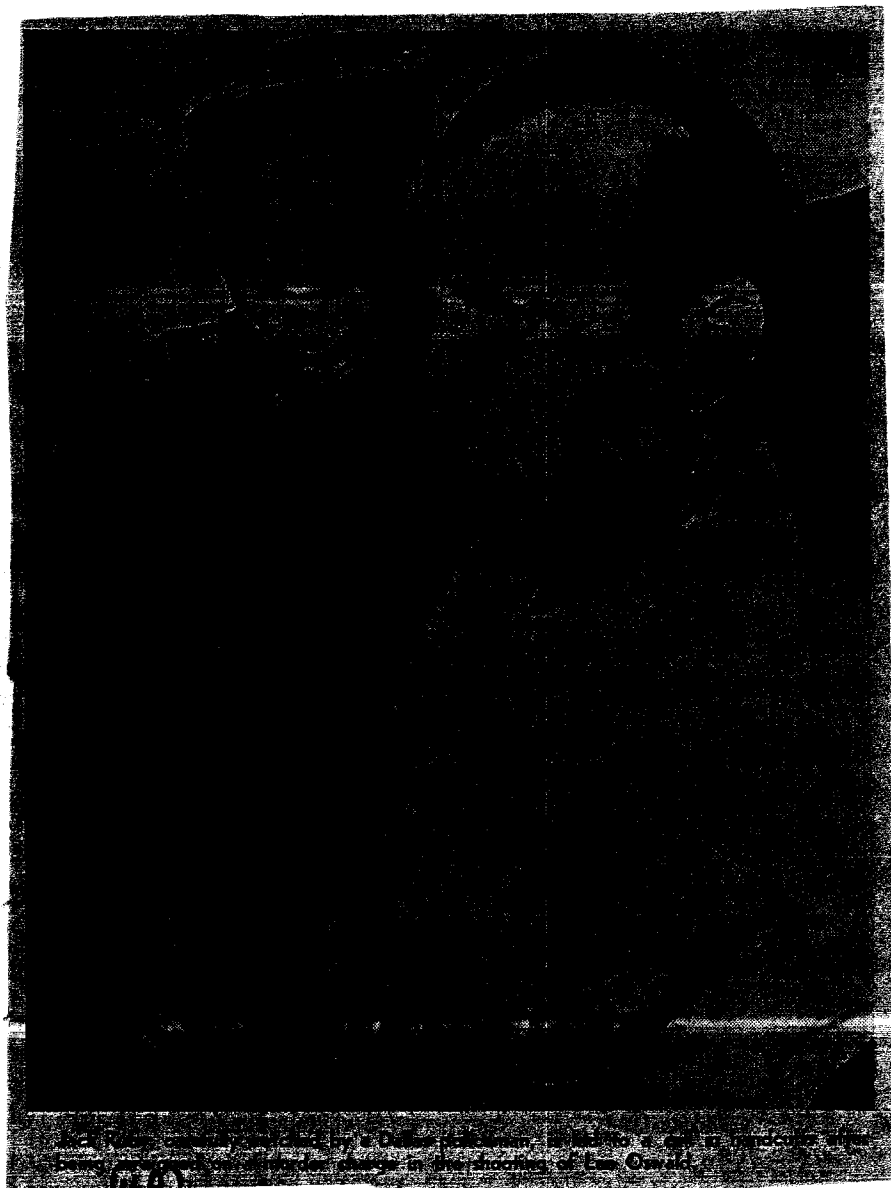
Q.: Would you do it again?

A.: Oh, hell no!

Q.: What if Oswald were not the man?

A.: Then Dallas police and the District Attorney's office made a hell of a mistake. My attorneys tried to get Henry Wade to agree in court that Oswald was the killer of our President. Henry Wade refused. I can't understand why. With my own ears I heard Henry and Chief Fritz say there was no doubt that Oswald was the assassin. And he said Oswald wasn't insane, that he knew what he was doing, that he planned the murder of our President, and Henry promised that he would kill Oswald in the electric chair. I know Henry Wade is an honest man. I believed him. Oswald was a dead man before I shot him.

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THE END



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