

## Reopen The Warren Commission

Mrs. Bertha Cheek is another important witness who had a bad memory while testifying before the Warren Commission. Attorney Burt Griffin did not determine the date of the second conference Mrs. Cheek had with Jack Ruby. Any investigating attorney worth his salt would have pursued the matter further.

Mrs. Cheek volunteered the information that her sister, Mrs. Earlene Roberts, ran the rooming house where Oswald lived. On Oswald's first attempt to rent a room, there were no vacancies. Even though the area has dozens of such rooming houses, Oswald returned a week later and rented a small room where Cheek's sister worked. The Commission apparently thought it of no importance that Cheek knew Olsen, Ruby, and Mrs. Roberts, as no questions were asked in this area. We begin the testimony with:

Mr. GRIFFIN. Now since you have lived in Dallas, have you met Jack Ruby?

Mrs. CHEEK. I met him on two occasions.

GRIFFIN. How did you first happen to meet Jack?

CHEEK. He called me to invest in a nightclub.

GRIFFIN. When was that?

CHEEK. Oh, sometime in November, the latter part of November, I think it was.

GRIFFIN. The first time?

CHEEK. The first time I don't remember. Just what year it might have been, could have been 1957 or 1958, I don't know. Whenever he was over here in the Carousel, and he was trying to sell half of it, and I talked to him about it.

GRIFFIN. He owned the Carousel at the time he called you the first time?

CHEEK. Yes.

GRIFFIN. Did he want to sell you part of the Carousel?

CHEEK. Yes.

GRIFFIN. Had you invested in any nightclubs before?

CHEEK. No; but I am in the real estate business, and I invest in properties all the time.

Some testimony omitted here.

GRIFFIN. During the 3 or 4 years that you have owned that particular residence, have you owned any other pieces of property?

CHEEK. Yes.

GRIFFIN. Any other places that you rent out rooms?

CHEEK. Yes.

GRIFFIN. Could you tell us what those were?

CHEEK. 5430 Gaston; 5310 Gaston; 5212 Gaston; 5302 Gaston; 591—wait just a minute—5917 Gaston; the Beachcomber and the Holiday Apartments.

Some testimony omitted here.

CHEEK. Yes. And I told them what connection I had in connection with Jack Ruby. He asked me to put \$5,000 in a nightclub.

GRIFFIN. I am wondering if I could ask you if you will make those records available again?

I think what I would like to do is ask one of the Secret Service agents to go out there and either make some arrangements to photocopy them and then return them to you, or else if it would be more convenient to let me look

at them for some short period of time, and then return them to you. I think I would prefer to photocopy them, unless they are voluminous and it would be prohibitive. I think I would only be going back to January 1959.

CHEEK. Those two men went through everything I had and looked at it.

GRIFFIN. Would you object if I—

CHEEK. It is just an awful lot of trouble for me right now because I am very busy and I have illness in my home. If I thought I could help you, and really if there is anything there, I would bring them down myself to you.

GRIFFIN. I would like to do this in a way that would be least inconvenient.

CHEEK. But I don't know Oswald and I just knew Jack Ruby when he asked me to invest \$6,000 and I didn't do it. I didn't like the way he wanted me to invest. He wanted to put in \$1,000, and me \$6,000.

Some testimony omitted here.

GRIFFIN. Now, are we talking about your most recent discussion with Jack or the first one?

CHEEK. Yes.

GRIFFIN. Let's talk about the first time you contacted Jack.

CHEEK. He had it for sale.

GRIFFIN. He had the Carousel for sale?

CHEEK. Yes; and I had someone that was interested in a night club, so I went down to see about it, see how much he would sell it for, and he said \$12,500. I said that was too much. My conversation was very short, and I left.

GRIFFIN. All right, you met him at the Carousel?

CHEEK. Yes.

GRIFFIN. Was anybody with him at that time? Anybody else at this meeting?

CHEEK. There was activity all in there. I don't know who the people were.

GRIFFIN. Did anybody accompany you in connection with this.

CHEEK. Yes; I think Mrs. Davidson went down with me.

GRIFFIN. Davidson? What is her first name?

CHEEK. Lula B. Davidson.

GRIFFIN. Does she live here in Dallas?

Mrs. Davidson might have supplied the date of this conference had anyone bothered to ask her.

CHEEK. Yes.

GRIFFIN. Where does she live?

CHEEK. Over on Normandy.

GRIFFIN. Is she in the real estate business?

CHEEK. No. She was a schoolteacher of mine. Just happened to be at the house when I started to go down, and I asked her if she would like to go. She taught me in school in Tyler, Tex. I don't think that she would remember too much about it, because it was such a—just went down with me. It wasn't a real big issue made, and I said, "Would you like to go with me to see about a nightclub," and she said, "Yes; I would." So I just walked up and talked to Jack Ruby and asked him how much he wanted for the club's half interest, and he said \$12,500, and I left because I didn't think it was worth it.

Some testimony omitted here.

GRIFFIN. Did Jack talk to you about how much he was making off of this business?

CHEEK. No. He might have talked to me about that,

but I don't remember the exact figures.

GRIFFIN. How did you come to the conclusion that his price was too high?

CHEEK. I just thought it was too high. I could build a club for that. I know the prices of material.

Some testimony omitted here.

GRIFFIN. How long did you talk to him on this occasion?

CHEEK. It wasn't very long.

GRIFFIN. Did you talk to him for 3 hours?

CHEEK. I just don't know how long I talked to him the first time, because it's been so long ago. But the last time I stayed down there, I think, an hour or so or 3. It might have been 3 hours or 2 hours, because he brought in this other fellow named Frank, his interior decorator, or that decorated the club, and I talked to him, and he was telling me what a nice fellow he was, because I didn't know Jack Ruby very well.

Some testimony omitted here.

CHEEK. No.

GRIFFIN. Now as I understand it, Jack at this particular time got your name through somebody, a fellow by the name of Alexander, or another fellow that you talked to in connection with buying a club?

CHEEK. Olen Alexander.

This is an interesting name, but the Commission gave us no further information about Olen Alexander.

GRIFFIN. Now had you inquired about Jack Ruby from other people?

CHEEK. No.

GRIFFIN. You mean now you only met him?

CHEEK. I had heard people talk about Jack Ruby, but I didn't inquire about him.

GRIFFIN. I take it other people that you know had told you things about Jack Ruby?

CHEEK. Yes. I have heard people talk about him.

GRIFFIN. What had you heard about Jack prior to the time you went to talk to him about this club where he wouldn't tell you where it was located?

CHEEK. I haven't heard anything except he ran the Carousel Club and was a good operator.

GRIFFIN. You had heard what kind of businessman he was? How well he ran his business?

CHEEK. No.

GRIFFIN. Had you heard whether he was honest or dishonest?

CHEEK. No.

GRIFFIN. Can you tell us what you heard?

CHEEK. I just knew he run a club and I heard people say that he was a good operator, and I figured if he was a good operator and made money, he must have been a good businessman. You don't make money unless you are a good operator.

GRIFFIN. Do you recall who it was that told you Jack was a good operator?

CHEEK. I don't recall right off.

GRIFFIN. I take it you had the impression that Jack was able to make money off of his operations?

CHEEK. That's right.

GRIFFIN. Well, do any of your friends or acquaintances or tenants know Jack Ruby?

CHEEK. Not that I know of.

GRIFFIN. Do you recall at all who it might have been that had known Jack well enough to tell you that he was running his business well?

CHEEK. I think it was a policeman that had rented from me that I had talked to occasionally and said something about Jack Ruby's place. I don't know just who it was that told me, and their name. I would be talking to someone something, and I can't remember their names to save my life.

GRIFFIN. What was the name of the policeman?

CHEEK. I don't know.

GRIFFIN. Have you had a number of policemen rent from you?

CHEEK. I think Mr. Olson said something—I am not sure of the name— on the police force. I wouldn't like to say anything else unless I know for sure I can give the exact name and address. I just heard this conversation.

GRIFFIN. Well—

CHEEK. See.

Griffin did not check on the spelling of this name, and no further mention is made of this officer. The only name on the police roster for 1963 was Harry N. Olsen, but it rang no bells for Griffin.

GRIFFIN. When did the police officer whose name might have been Olson, when did he rent from you?

CHEEK. Beachcomber in 1961 or 1960, I believe.

GRIFFIN. How long did he continue to rent from you?

CHEEK. I don't think he rented there very long, 3 or 4 months. But this was after. Let's see, no, it wasn't after. That was after the first time I had met him.

GRIFFIN. Well, other than Mr. Olson, you don't know of anybody else of your acquaintances or tenants who knew Jack Ruby?

CHEEK. No. You know, his name has been in the paper and his advertising; and I am sure a lot of people had heard about him and go to the club, but I had never gone to the club.

GRIFFIN. Now did your husband know Jack Ruby? Mr. Cheek, did he know Jack Ruby?

CHEEK. No. I don't know whether he did or not. He may know Jack Ruby because he is a National Cash Register man downtown that fixes all of the cash registers. He might have gone up and worked on a cash register. I really don't know. I haven't asked him.

GRIFFIN. The FBI talked with you sometime ago, I believe you indicated that you had some recollection that some Cubans had rented from you back in 1959, two Cubans had rented from you?

CHEEK. I don't know just exactly what was said on that, whether they got that off of the books or whether my sister had told them about it, that rented to Oswald over on Beckley.

GRIFFIN. Yes.

CHEEK. Mrs. Roberts or Miss Roberts—Mrs. Roberts

GRIFFIN. Miss?

CHEEK. Mrs. Roberts. I don't know whether she told me about that or if they got it off the book, or whether I had rented to a Cuban. I think one or two, and also Dr. Florescent of the Philippine Islands.

GRIFFIN. Tell us what recollection you have of the Cubans that you rented to.

The lack of questioning of Mrs. Cheek with regard to her sister, Mrs. Roberts, is no small oversight. Mrs. Cheek knows Ruby, a policeman named Olson, and her sister ran the rooming house where Oswald had to try twice in order to get to live there.

Some testimony omitted here.

GRIFFIN. Do you recall when your sister, Mrs. Roberts was working at or managing your boarding houses?

CHEEK. Not the exact date.

GRIFFIN. Do you recall whether she was managing

any boarding house for you back in 1955 or 1956?  
CHEEK. She might have been in 1956. You would have  
to ask her. I believe you would have a more direct answer  
on that.

Some testimony omitted here

GRIFFIN. Now you also indicated in your first report  
that you had been acquainted with Jack Ruby since 1948.  
What date was that date?

CHEEK. They asked me—when 1948?

GRIFFIN. Yes; that is what they reported here.

CHEEK. I didn't say 1948. I thought the house in 1948,  
and it might have been 1956. They have that 1956 down  
there at the bar on 3212 Gaston.

GRIFFIN. Yes.

CHEEK. I didn't meet Jack Ruby in 1948, 1948 is when  
I bought 3212. They also the date mixed up.

And then 1954 or 1957, I might have went down there  
to the club, but I don't think I knew him in 1948, at all.

GRIFFIN. This report also indicates that you formerly  
operated night clubs in Dallas?

CHEEK. No. I told them that I went down and operat-  
ed a club, but I didn't operate a club for Frank and Virginia Nick  
on Broadway Street.

GRIFFIN. What was the name of that night club?

CHEEK. The name had been at that time.

GRIFFIN. What was the name of the club?

CHEEK. Club name is what Virginia and Frank Nick  
named it.

... on the day President Kennedy was shot. I went  
to the picture and knew there were a lot of pictures  
being taken. I saw the President in the picture. I  
was up there when they got in touch with the picture of  
the microphone mirror. The pictures you took might be  
very important.