

Jack Ruby: I Just Lost My Senses

By FRANK VAN RIPER

Washington (News Bureau) — All Jack Ruby said he could remember of the man he murdered was that the man emerged from nowhere between two men. "That's all I can remember. Naturally, I know who he is. To me he had this quirky, smug, vindictive attitude.

"I can't explain what impression he gave me, but that is all I can . . . well, I just lost my sense. The next I knew I was on the ground and five or six policemen were on top of me," Ruby told the FBI.

From thousands of pages of newly released FBI documents, Ruby emerges as a tormented, sometimes belligerent, often emotional man whose decision to kill Lee Harvey Oswald appears to have been made on the spur of the moment, minutes after he managed to walk unnoticed into the basement of Dallas Police Headquarters on Nov. 24, 1963.

"No one knew I was going to shoot him," Ruby, a Dallas night-club operator, told FBI agents. "I didn't discuss anything with anyone about shooting him."

Always Carried a Gun

It was easy, Ruby told the agents. He always carried a gun. You had to in the night-club business in Dallas, he said. There were so many stickups and he often carried large amounts of cash. For months, the FBI tried to deter-

mine Ruby's motives. Was there a connection between him and Oswald? A one-time emcee in Ruby's Carousel Club, Bill Demar, insisted that Oswald had been in the club the night before. Kennedy was killed. But the bureau found nothing to link Ruby and the President's assassin.

Congratulatory letters and telegrams poured into the jail where Ruby was held. These, too, were painstakingly checked, often to the chagrin of the sender.

Moved by Strong Emotion

A Dallas man sent Ruby a congratulatory wire saying, "Congratulations. You killed a snake. Don't worry. I'll be in Dallas and help you get a lawyer." The FBI investigation of this man indicated that he was "a heavy drinker" who fancied himself a big spender. The man sheepishly admitted to the FBI that he had been drunk when he sent the message.

Others simply were moved by strong emotion. A Key West, Fla., woman was in her doctor's office, being treated for a cold, when she and her doctor watched Ruby murder Oswald on television.

She told agents she immediately wrote Ruby a warm letter of praise. It was a spur-of-the-moment thing. She probably would not have done it had she thought more about it.

It might have been that way with the Oswald killing, too.

"When he shot before me like he did, something in my insides tore out," Ruby said. He said he thought about Oswald "being associated with communism and how he bleminated this beautiful city, and Mrs. Kennedy having to come back for the trial."

Reached Into His Pocket

Then, Ruby said, he reached into his pocket and took out his gun.

Ruby, convicted of Oswald's murder, died of cancer three years later, after being transferred from Dallas County Jail to Parkland Hospital, where both Kennedy and Oswald were also pronounced dead.



Jack Ruby
Oswald slayer later died