Of Jack Ruby and His Connections

To the Editor: 9/5/75

The lengthy news article by Wallace Turner (Aug. 19) regarding Jimmy Hoffa and his early alliance with organized crime touched upon an area of special concern. Mr. Turner reported that Jack Ruby was in some fashion associated with "Paul Dorfman, head of the waste handlers union in Chicago." Mr. Dorfman, allegedly one of Hoffa's ties to the underworld, was closely associated with Jack Ruby.

In 1960, Robert Kennedy's book, "The Enemy Within," was published recording his experience with the Senate committee that investigated the relationship between organized crime and the trade union movement. In the book, Mr. Kennedy wrote, "Dorfman took over as head of the Chicago Waste Handlers Union in 1939 after its founder and secretary-treasurer was murdered" (Page 84). One of the ironies is that the murdered secretary-treasurer, Leon Cooke, was replaced by Jack Ruby, who was seized by the Chicago police for questioning in that murder (Chicago Daily Tribune, Dec. 9, 1939) and then went on to murder Mr. Oswald 24 years later.

The Warren Commission was informed by the F.B.I. that the murder never took place. "An extensive research of the records of the Chicago Police Department did not reflect any reference to John Martin, Jack Ruby or Jack Rubenstein or to the murder of Leon Cook [sic]" (Warren Commission document Volume XXII, Page 345). The State Attorney's office in Illinois seized the books and confiscated the charter in 1939 while Mr. Ruby was its secretary-treasurer, explaining that it was not a union but rather "a fraud, a front for organized crime."

The Warren Commission reported that "several long-time members of the union reported that it had a good reputation when Ruby was affiliated with it" (Warren Commission Report, Page 788).

As time passes, it becomes clearer that no material question was resolved by the Warren Commission and that an investigation by the Congress into all of the facts surrounding John F. Kennedy's death might be far more topical than some suspect.

MARK LANE
Dir., Citizens Commission of Inquiry
Washington, Aug. 19, 1975