

# Dallas Club Owner Victim of Obsessions

Continued From Page 4

stalled him as secretary of the scrap iron and junk workers union, one Cook had formed.

Ruby's tenure with the union expired shortly after Cook himself expired in a hail of bullets during a union meeting. Theodore H. Shulman, an executive of Chicago's waste trades industry, which dealt with the union, recalled Ruby's inability to handle complaints calmly.

Ruby, he told the FBI, "would threaten to call a strike and shut down

a company before the grievance could be discussed."

World War II took Ruby into the Air Force for three years where he was awarded a Good Conduct ribbon and permanent assignment in the United States. It was shortly after his release from service that Ruby followed his sister, Eva Grant, to Dallas to help her manage a small nightclub.

In Dallas in 1947 Jack Rubenstein changed his name officially to Jack L. Ruby, adding the middle name Leon in memory of his departed benefactor,

Leon Cook.

In the years between 1947 and November 1963, Ruby operated — either as a front, partner or outright owner — several different Dallas nightclubs, gathering acquaintances mostly among the strippers, B-girls, bouncers, bartenders, policemen, reporters and small-time hoodlums who make up much of any big city's nightlife.

He was arrested nine times on charges ranging from assault to violating local liquor laws, but was convicted only once on a minor charge.

For almost 10 years, Ruby had a steady girl, Alice R. Nichols, who remembered him as someone who worked out regularly at the local YMCA (he was a weightlifter), took good care of himself physically, complained about taxes and was a poor businessman.

No sooner did a business begin to show some signs of success, she said, than Ruby would overexpand and bring on collapse.

Like many others interviewed, she described Ruby as "violent" and "highly emotional." But devoid of strong political views. Indeed, several witnesses, including George Senator, a bachelor neighbor who moved in with Ruby one month before the assassination, said they never heard Ruby mention President Kennedy.

News of Kennedy's assassination, however, seems to have deranged Ruby, according to several witnesses.

His sister, Eva, told the FBI that Ruby was upset even before the shooting by an ad in the Dallas morning news that attacked Kennedy and depicted him surrounded by a thick, black border. Ruby, she said, called the Dallas paper to complain and was especially upset that the ad was signed by a Bernard Weisman.

"Is that guy a Jew?" she quoted Ruby as saying. "They ought to whack the hell out of him."

When word of Kennedy's death spread, Ruby seems to have fallen into despair. He closed his two nightclubs, the Vegas and the Carousel, for the weekend. But that night he called radio station KLIP and brought over drinks and sandwiches for the night staff while notifying them that he closed his clubs because, "I'd rather lose \$12,000 to \$15,000 than not be able to live with myself."

He wanted the publicity it appears to assuage his grief.

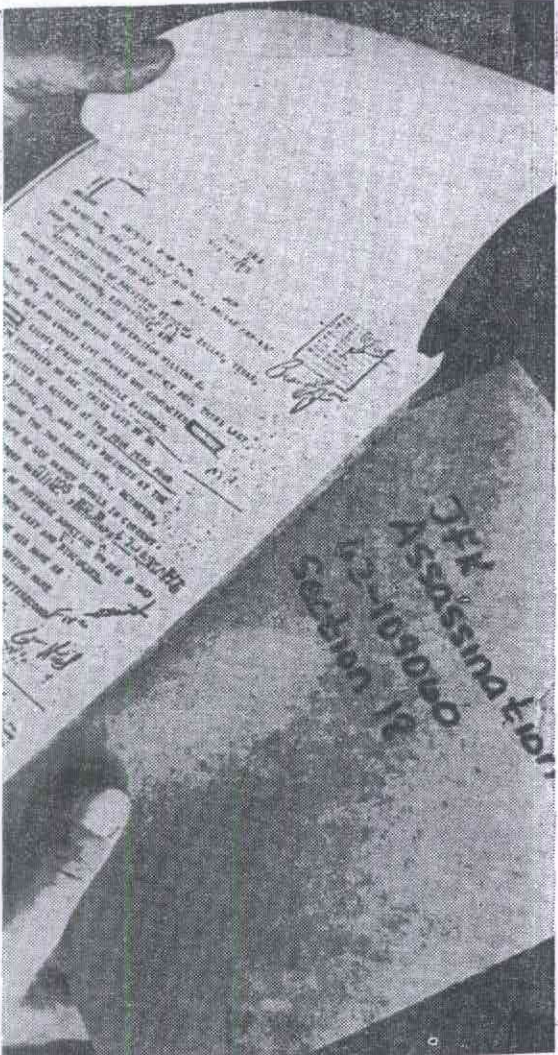
Ruby seems to have stayed up all night Nov. 22d after Kennedy was killed. He called a friend in California, Alexander P. Gruber, to report his distress.

His sister, Eva, was "hysterical," Ruby told Gruber, and he finally ended the call, saying, "I'm crying and can't talk to you anymore," according to the reports.

A day later Ruby killed Oswald with a single shot from a .38-caliber revolver in what he described to police as "a compulsive act" and "a burst of insanity."

Eva Grant, his sister, related how Ruby had talked of Kennedy fondly as "a family man" and of "how much Robert F. Kennedy must want to do something to Lee Harvey Oswald but couldn't." The Dallas police were similarly inhibited, Ruby declared, according to his sister.

But Jack Ruby knew no such inhibitions. And he was, in the eyes of most of those who knew him and finally in his own eyes, expendable.



Packets from the FBI files on the assassination of John F. Kennedy that are open to the public.

AP Photo.