

New FBI Papers Question: Why Did Ruby Wait to Kill?

By Jeremiah O'Leary
and James R. Dickenson
Washington Star Staff Writers

Jack Ruby had several opportunities to kill Lee Harvey Oswald before he finally shot the assassin of President John F. Kennedy to death in Dallas police headquarters Nov. 24, 1963, according to newly released FBI documents.

One of the mysteries of the case has been why Ruby, who usually had unquestioned access to the police station where he was well known, waited until Sunday morning to shoot Oswald when he could have done it more easily Friday night or Saturday.

In his statement to the FBI, Ruby sheds no light on the timing.

Not an especially religious man, Ruby went to his synagogue, Shearith Israel, at 7 p.m. the day Kennedy was assassinated, Nov. 22, 1963. Then he bought some sandwiches for his police friends and went to the police station where he saw Oswald for the first time, Ruby told the FBI.

A detailed FBI report reveals that the Dallas nightclub operator was carrying a revolver in his right front trouser pocket all that evening. His

statement emphasizes that he had the .38 caliber pistol with him because of all the money he was carrying, but that he did not take the pistol into the synagogue.

OSWALD SUBSEQUENTLY was led into the jam of news people, police and curiosity seekers in the Dallas police station several times during the next 48 hours. Several newsmen recall seeing Ruby in the throng where one could literally reach out and touch Oswald. Ruby was there every time Oswald was brought into view, but made no attempt to attack the prisoner.

Ruby, asked why he killed Oswald, said, "I was in mourning Friday and Saturday. To me, when he shot before me like he did, something in my insides tore out and I just went blank."

"I listened to a eulogy Saturday morning, and I heard Rabbi Silverman speak about our president. He said, 'Here is a man that fought in all battles, but he didn't have a chance to fight here. He was shot from the rear.' Then about Oswald being associated with communism, and how he blemished this beautiful city, and Mrs. Kennedy having to come back to the trial.

"I TOLD NO ONE I was going to kill him. No one knew I was going to shoot him. No police officer assisted me in any way or said anything to suggest my shooting Oswald."

The late FBI director, J. Edgar Hoover, and the top brass at the FBI evidently thought it was likely the police had collaborated to cause or permit Oswald's death because Oswald was a "cop killer" and the FBI investigation was strongly oriented in that direction.

Later Hoover wrote the Warren Commission, "The Dallas Police Department conducted very little investigation concerning Ruby as it spent most of its time defending itself with regard to the shooting of Oswald."

But Ruby insisted he acted alone, and the FBI's final conclusion was that Oswald and Ruby did not know one another, that each had acted alone and that no foreign intrigue was involved in either murder.

Ruby said he came downtown to send a \$25 Western Union money order to a Fort Worth dancer named Little Lynn on Nov. 24. The message went out just four minutes before Ruby crossed the street from Western Union, entered the guarded police station ramp and shot Oswald in the midsection.

RUBY SAID HE had no press card or any kind of identification to enter the basement, that he spoke to no one and no one challenged him.

Two Dallas policemen, Roy Vaughn and Napoleon Daniels, were on duty at the ramp. The FBI questioned both. Vaughn said he never saw Ruby and a lie detector test said

WS 12-11-77
this was the truth. Daniels said he did see a man enter the ramp but the polygraph indicated most of his answers were made up.

The shooting was described by Ruby in these words: "A person who pops out with two men, that's all I can remember. Naturally I know who he is. To me, he has this smirky, smug, vindictive attitude, I can't explain what impression he gave me — well, I just lost my senses. The next I knew I was on the ground and five or six people were on top of me."

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT
Memorandum SECRET

TO : Director, FBI (105-82555) DATE: 12/31/63

FROM : Legat, Bern (105-257) (RUC)

SUBJECT: LEE HARVEY OSWALD
 IS - CUBA
Lee H. Oswald
 Re Paris cable 12/3/63.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

ENCLOSURE REC-96 105-82-1216

3 - Bureau (Encls. 7)
 (1 - Liaison)
 1 - Bern
 HDG/b
 (4) Exempt from GDS, Category 1
 Date of declassification: Indefinite

JAN 2 1964

SOVIET SYSTEM 12/6

4 JAN 8 1964

NET 7-23-77

SECRET

Among the 40,001 pages of FBI files on President Kennedy's assassination released last week were hundreds like this document, covered with a blizzard of initials, that were so heavily censored as to be meaningless.