

4 January 1968

Announcer: At 14 minutes after five, this is the news:  
San Francisco attorney Melvin Belli told KGO News today that a San Francisco cab driver gave him information concerning the assassination of President Kennedy. Belli emphasized that he has turned the matter over to the FBI. He recalled the incident this way:

Belli: I was working in here Christmas Eve finishing this law revolt (?) book of mine, and toward the latter part of the evening a cab driver came in and told me that he had a passenger in his cab, whom he identified as Jack Ruby, two days before the assassination, who told him: "you don't know me," but he identified himself to the cab driver's satisfaction as Jack Ruby -- "but you'll be hearing a lot a bout me; I've got to go back to Dallas. In two days I've got to kill a man."

Announcer: San Francisco attorney Belli added that he believes in the Warren Report. He thinks his good friend Jim Garrison is on the wrong track; but the government, he said, should not stop leaking news regarding Garrison's health record. The FBI in San Francisco had no comment on Belli's story today. ....

Jim Dunbar: ...Okay, go ahead .

Belli: I was working in the office on Christmas Eve, trying to get this damned book of mine out. The cab driver came in about 11 o'clock and he was very much upset. He said he'd been waiting a long time to tell me this. To make a long story short, he told me had had Jack Ruby in his cab two days before the assassination, and Jack Ruby was maniacal, very upset, and said: "I've got to get back to Dallas to shoot somebody. You don't know who I am, but you'll read about me and see about me." And it was two days later that -- or four days later, because there was the assassination and then the shooting of Oswald -- the cab driver saw this fellow on TV who said he was Jack Ruby.

The cab driver is a very substantial cab driver, and the weirdest part of the whole thing is that I commented on the air on that, and a listener phoned in and said that she was in that cab, right after the cab driver had let Jack Ruby out and the cab driver was really shook up. And he was very upset, and he commented about what Ruby had said. So, I just don't know what to say .....

Dunbar: Well, now let me ask you two questions, the two obvious questions. One, a man who has had as much experience before the bar examining ~~times~~ the views of others as you would be pretty hard -- it would be pretty difficult to take you in -- you feel that this guy was a substantial type witness?

Belli: ~~RIGHT~~ If this guy came before me and I was sitting as a judge or a jury I'd find it very hard to disbelieve what he told me.

Dunbar: Right.

Belli: And I think his powers of observation -- this fellow showed him some cards, and all the rest of that -- was very credible. He went to the FBI, so I immediately called the UPI, the wire service, and told them to check it out, but I didn't want ~~somebody~~ to put my own investigator on it because it's not my business but it is the public's business.

Dunbar: Right.

Belli: I said you'd better check it out and see what you can find. I don't know what they're doing.

Dunbar: Now, second question: you almost got to, and that is, how come this fellow waited so long to come forward with this information?

Belli: Ah, but he didn't. He went to the FBI immediately afterwards, and he'd been back and forth with the FBI ever since then. And he tells me the FBI sort of pats him on the head and says, nice boy, nice boy, every now and then.



Dunbar: One final fast question....

Belli: You've got more final questions than you've got final arguments.

Dunbar: Sorry about that, Mr. Counsellor.

Belli: Ha ha ha.

Dunbar: This'll only take a second; I know you've been in contact with Jim Garrison, and recently we talked about this. Did you happen -- and I can't give you my word that I won't mention what the picture contains -- but did you happen to see the two pictures that either Garrison or Turner had in their possession, taken in Dealey Plaza -- did you see those pictures?

Belli: Mmmmm, no, I didn't. You see I haven't talked with Jim recently. Jim's supposed to come out and talk to the Press Club. Ed Montgomery asked me if I would host the Press Club for Jim, and I'd like very much to, and I think we will, in February. I've got to go to Viet Nam next week, and I'll be gone about two weeks, but as soon as I get back we'd like to do it.

Dunbar: Okay. Well, I'll let you go. Thanks very much.

Belli: Okay, m'friend.

Dunbar: Right. 'bye.

Belli: Good t'talk t'you.

Dunbar: Good talking to you. That was Melvin Belli, and you heard the story. And it's 24 minutes now after ten, .....

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(Asked later if he could supply the name of the cab driver, Belli turned caller over to his secretary who supplied this name and address (spelling rechecked with the secretary):

Aubrey (Duke) Ve Pellatin (Luxor cab)  
1422 47th Avenue, San Francisco 731 3303 )