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HA

JOHNSON

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Q. Mr. Johnson, when did you first meet Jack Ruby?

Source: Wisconsin Historical Society, USMss, 117AN "Rush to Judgment" Box 60, Folder 1

A. I met Jack Ruby in 1952 on Irving Street at a place called the Silver Spur. At that time I didn't have a band of my own. I was working with a group that was led by Robert Moss.

Q. Later on, when you had your own band, did you go to work for Ruby?

A. I did, I went to work for Jack Ruby in 1956, and - uh - the club was the Vegas Club . I worked for him for about - oh, ~~six~~ six years...I believe about two weeks before the assassination of President Kennedy.

Q. How would you assess Ruby's personality?

A. Well he had a very, I would say, perplexed personality. He was a very warm fella, and to be Jewish, like they say, most Jewish people are tight, but he was not tight and he always had plenty of money to do what he wanted to do, and of course we argued maybe about three or four times a week (laughing) but we never left unless he would shake my hand. Whatever the - you know - the circumstances might be, we never lingered you know with any animosity you know in our hearts.

Q. How did Ruby treat the customers?

A. Well it all depends - I guess - depended on how he
~~was~~ - uh - felt, ~~what~~ you know. Because the moon
might have been (laughing) you know - different -
you know, some nights. Er - he always wanted to be
- I would say the cen - the center of attraction.
-you know -
He wanted to be/always the big shot; he wanted people
to know that he was the boss at all times, you know.
And - uh - he treated them all right unless maybe one
night - uh - he didn't feel good. Let's just put it
that way .

Q. Did you know Ruby had a gun before November 24, '63?

A. Well, he had a permit to carry a gun, because he al-
ways carried money, he always had a gun, you know, all
the times.

Q. Did you ever see him use it?

A. Well, I never saw him shoot anyone, but occasionally,
when we had some confusion in the Club, maybe he would
shoot into the ceiling or something to scare people off...
...occasionally. But he never shot anyone; I never saw
him - uh - saw him fight a couple of times but never
shoot anyone .

Q. Did Ruby know many Dallas police officers?

A. Well, yes, he did. I would say that he knew probably
half the people on the force.

Q. There were about twelve hundred police officers on the
force.

A. Yes, well I'm sure he knew about half of them, as he was

very nice to them. He was flamboyant - a very wonderful dresser. He always liked to be, you know, sharp - you never saw him with a sport shirt on, or anything like that. He was always fully dressed every day.

Q. Did you see police officers drop into the Vegas Club during the six years you worked there?

Oh
A./Very definitely. They would come in there all the time, off duty, on duty, and so forth.

Q. How were they treated?

A. They were treated royally. I mean, he was never afraid to have police come whenever any confusion would come, he would call the police. /Evidently he was not trying to hide anything, you know.

Q. Did he ever have any trouble in the Club where he was arrested for drinks after hours or those other (xxxxxx) infractions?

A. Well, any time you have a public club, I mean, I don't care how strict you try to be, you're gonna always run into occasions like that. Yes, he did have to go down, but he didn't stay long because he had very good attorneys, that - You know he could come back, you know, pose his bail and get out.

Q. And what was the final disposition of those cases, do you know?

A. Well, I didn't go into that; I don't know about that. I just knew, you know, about ... we were not buddy-buddy ~~you know~~

or anything like that but - uh - naturally if you deal with a person six or seven years - well then you find out a lot about them and I think he's a very wonderful person he just jumped to conclusions, I think.

Q. You testified before the Warren Commission, didn't you?

A. Yes, I did.

Q. Did they ask you how many police officers Jack Ruby knew?

A. No, they didn't ask me that question.

Q. I've just read your testimony and, as I recall, they asked you one question about a police officer. They asked you if you knew a police/~~officer~~^{man} named Harry Olsen. You said that you didn't remember the name.

A. That name didn't register with me.

Q. But that was the only question they asked you about policemen?

A. About policemen, yes. They asked me numerous questions but nothing about police, other than that one that you've just named.

Q. Would you say that you were surprised by Ruby's killing Oswald; would you say it was unusual for Jack Ruby as you understood him?

A. Well he wasn't ~~really~~ a violent man, and I was really surprised ~~because~~^{because}, naturally, /it was so close to me, when it happened, you know - uh - and when they said Jack Ruby and the fact that I had been associated with him for six or seven years,

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uh - naturally I was stunned by this. But I never thought
~~that~~ he would ~~xxxx~~ shoot anyone - kill anybody.

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Music

(background talk - directions)