

Mr. BELLOCCHIO. That's correct.

Mr. HUBERT. Thank you very much for coming, Mr. Bellocchio, and I appreciate your help.

Mr. BELLOCCHIO. Thank you.

TESTIMONY OF JOHN HENRY BRANCH

The testimony of John Henry Branch was taken at 1:30 p.m., on June 26, 1964, in the office of the U.S. attorney, 301 Post Office Building, Bryan and Ervay Streets, Dallas, Tex., by Mr. Leon D. Hubert, Jr., assistant counsel of the President's Commission.

Mr. HUBERT. This is the deposition of John Henry Branch.

Mr. BRANCH. Yes; that's right.

Mr. HUBERT. Mr. Branch, my name is Leon D. Hubert. I am a member of the advisory staff of the general counsel on the President's Commission. Under the provisions of Executive Order 11130, dated November 29, 1963, and the joint resolution of Congress No. 137, and the rules of procedure adopted by President Johnson's Commission in conformance with the Executive order and the joint resolution, I have been authorized to take a sworn deposition from you. I state to you now that the general nature of the Commission's inquiry is to ascertain, evaluate, and report upon the facts relative to the assassination of President Kennedy and the subsequent violent death of Lee Harvey Oswald.

In particular as to you, Mr. Branch, the nature of the inquiry today is to determine what facts you know about the death of Oswald and any other pertinent facts you may know about the general inquiry, and about Jack Ruby and his operations and associates and movements on the dates in question.

I think you have appeared here by virtue of a letter written to you by Mr. J. Lee Rankin, general counsel of the staff of the President's Commission, asking you to be present, is that correct?

Mr. BRANCH. That's correct.

Mr. HUBERT. Do you know the date of the letter, do you remember the date?

Mr. BRANCH. I have it here—it's the 22d.

Mr. HUBERT. When did you receive it?

Mr. BRANCH. Yesterday.

Mr. HUBERT. Yesterday?

Mr. BRANCH. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Now, under the rules of the Commission every witness is entitled to a 3-day written notice, dating actually from the date of the letter, but in any case the rules of the Commission provide that a witness may waive that 3-day notice and testify, and I ask you now if you are willing to testify and if you are willing to waive the 3-day notice?

Mr. BRANCH. Yes; that's all I can do.

Mr. HUBERT. You have no objection to testifying now?

Mr. BRANCH. No, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. Would you stand then and let me administer the oath to you?

Do you solemnly swear that the testimony you are about to give in this matter will be the whole truth and nothing but the truth; so help you God?

Mr. BRANCH. I do.

Mr. HUBERT. Will you state your name, please?

Mr. BRANCH. John Henry Branch.

Mr. HUBERT. Where do you live, Mr. Branch?

Mr. BRANCH. 3722 Greenleaf.

Mr. HUBERT. That's in Dallas?

Mr. BRANCH. Dallas, Tex.

Mr. HUBERT. How old are you?

Mr. BRANCH. Fifty-three.

Mr. HUBERT. What is your occupation, sir?

Mr. BRANCH. I am manager of the Empire Room and agent for American Federation of Musicians.

Mr. HUBERT. What is the Empire Room?

Mr. BRANCH. That's a nightclub.

Mr. HUBERT. Where is it located?

Mr. BRANCH. 1710 Hall Street, Dallas.

Mr. HUBERT. Is it a part of a hotel?

Mr. BRANCH. No, sir; it's only a nightclub.

Mr. HUBERT. 1710 Hall Street?

Mr. BRANCH. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Do you operate a business known as the Branch Agency?

Mr. BRANCH. Correct.

Mr. HUBERT. What sort of a business is that?

Mr. BRANCH. I'm a licensed agent for the American Federation of Musicians—they employ musicians.

Mr. HUBERT. And you also manage the Empire Room?

Mr. BRANCH. Yes; a nightclub.

Mr. HUBERT. Now, I think that you have on a previous date, to wit, December 9, 1963, been interviewed by FBI Agents Hardin and Wilkinson?

Mr. BRANCH. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. I have previously shown you just before beginning this deposition a report of the interview of you by them, and I asked you to read it?

Mr. BRANCH. Yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. It begins at about the middle of a page which bears at the bottom, No. 206, and goes over to about a quarter on the top of page numbered at the bottom 207. I have marked it for identification as follows: "Dallas, Texas, June 26, 1964, Exhibit Number 1 of the deposition of John H. Branch" under which I have signed my name on the first page, and on the second page I have put my initials in the lower right-hand corner.

Now, have you read the report concerning the interview of you to which I have just referred?

Mr. BRANCH. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Is that a correct and accurate statement of what occurred during that interview and what you told them and so forth?

Mr. BRANCH. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Are the facts that you told them true?

Mr. BRANCH. Yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you see Ruby on the night of the 23d of November?

Mr. BRANCH. Yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. Let me fix that date in your mind—the 23d was a Saturday?

Mr. BRANCH. Saturday—that's right—Saturday night.

Mr. HUBERT. The President of the United States had been shot and killed on Friday, the 22d, so that when we are speaking of the night of the 23d, we are speaking of the next night?

Mr. BRANCH. That's right.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you see Ruby then?

Mr. BRANCH. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Where?

Mr. BRANCH. At the Empire Room.

Mr. HUBERT. That's the place you operate?

Mr. BRANCH. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. What time was it?

Mr. BRANCH. I'm speaking of between 9 and 10.

Mr. HUBERT. What makes you fix that time?

Mr. BRANCH. Because the band just had kicked off. The band hadn't been playing over 15 minutes, and they go from 9 to 1 on Saturday, and they hadn't played—oh, I guess—three or four numbers.

Mr. HUBERT. In other words, they began at 9 o'clock?

Mr. BRANCH. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Was it a rather strict time that they began?

Mr. BRANCH. Every Saturday night at 9—to 1. They kick off at 9.

Mr. HUBERT. They start playing at 9 or should have—is it exactly 9 or sometimes a little later?

Mr. BRANCH. Sometimes it's 5 minutes after or 5 minutes till.

Mr. HUBERT. But it wouldn't vary more than 5 minutes?

Mr. BRANCH. It wouldn't vary more than 5 minutes.

Mr. HUBERT. You said that they had played about three or four numbers when you saw Ruby?

Mr. BRANCH. Yes; about three or four numbers.

Mr. HUBERT. How long does a number usually last?

Mr. BRANCH. About 3 minutes—with the singing, it would maybe run 5.

Mr. HUBERT. So, it would be about no more than 20 to 25 minutes after the beginning time, which could have been 5 minutes before 9 or 5 minutes after, so that in any case, it was no later than 9:30 and it could have been as early perhaps as 9:20. is that right?

Mr. BRANCH. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Now, under what circumstances did you see him? Did he just walk into the club?

Mr. BRANCH. Well, he came in and asked me about a pianoplayer.

Mr. HUBERT. Was he driving an automobile, or do you know?

Mr. BRANCH. Well, the car was up the street there.

Mr. HUBERT. You saw it—did you see him outside of the club?

Mr. BRANCH. I walked outside with him.

Mr. HUBERT. But the first time you saw him, he walked into the club?

Mr. BRANCH. He came in.

Mr. HUBERT. You knew him, of course, and had known him for years?

Mr. BRANCH. I had been knowing him for about 14 years—I've been doing business with him that long.

Mr. HUBERT. Supplying talent to him?

Mr. BRANCH. Yes, to his sister or him.

Mr. HUBERT. And what did he want to talk about?

Mr. BRANCH. He needed another pianoplayer because the pianoplayer she had out there couldn't make it.

Mr. HUBERT. That was at the Vegas Club?

Mr. BRANCH. That was at the Vegas Club.

Mr. HUBERT. When did he want that pianoplayer for?

Mr. BRANCH. Starting that Tuesday, beginning that next Tuesday, because they was letting that one go that Saturday night—yes—he was letting him go that Saturday night, but they were supposed to close on Sunday, and he wanted him that Monday night.

Mr. HUBERT. He wanted him Monday night?

Mr. BRANCH. He wanted him to start to playing that Monday night.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you make arrangements for him?

Mr. BRANCH. I was that Sunday—I was going to get a new pianoplayer that Sunday.

Mr. HUBERT. What was your conversation with him that night?

Mr. BRANCH. I told him I would get him another pianoplayer.

Mr. HUBERT. You didn't know who you would get?

Mr. BRANCH. No; I didn't know which one, you see, you've got to try two or three.

Mr. HUBERT. But he told you to go ahead and get one?

Mr. BRANCH. To go ahead and get one.

Mr. HUBERT. And to report on Monday night?

Mr. BRANCH. To his sister.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you arrange the price?

Mr. BRANCH. No; she does that. I let them talk with her about the price, but when I sell him something, I talk with him about it—the price.

Mr. HUBERT. How long did that conversation last?

Mr. BRANCH. It didn't last long. He drank a Coca-Cola and said he had to go down to the Carousel—to his other Club.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you walk out with him?

Mr. BRANCH. I walked out with him to the Hall Diner.

Mr. HUBERT. To his car?

Mr. BRANCH. To the next door there—to the Hall Diner—where his car was.

Mr. HUBERT. There's a Hall Diner there?

Mr. BRANCH. Next door to us.

Mr. HUBERT. His car was parked there?

Mr. BRANCH. His car was parked just below the driveway there.

Mr. HUBERT. You walked with him to the car?

Mr. BRANCH. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Did he stop at the diner?

Mr. BRANCH. No, no; he walked on to his car—it was right at the edge there.

Mr. HUBERT. And he left?

Mr. BRANCH. He left.

Mr. HUBERT. How much time do you think elapsed between the time he first came into the club and he drove off?

Mr. BRANCH. Maybe about 30 or 40 minutes, because he talks a whole lot—you know how fast he talks. He drank a Coca-Cola when he first got there.

Mr. HUBERT. And you discussed these various things?

Mr. BRANCH. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. He left then about somewhere a little after 10?

Mr. BRANCH. It might not have been quite 10, because he kept saying he was in a hurry because he had to go down to the Carousel Club, because he had one new act.

Mr. HUBERT. It was somewhere about that time?

Mr. BRANCH. Yes; it was close to 10.

Mr. HUBERT. Did he talk at all about the death of the President?

Mr. BRANCH. He didn't discuss it. He didn't discuss it at all.

Mr. HUBERT. Did he say he was going to fire the pianoplayer he had?

Mr. BRANCH. He had already gave him his notice. He had his notice—she gave him his notice already.

Mr. HUBERT. Did he tell you whether he was closed or open?

Mr. BRANCH. He didn't say.

Mr. HUBERT. He just said he was going to go down to the Carousel for the new act?

Mr. BRANCH. Go down to the club.

Mr. HUBERT. He told you he had to leave, he was in a hurry, and he had to go to the Carousel Club?

Mr. BRANCH. He was in a hurry and he wanted to go to the Carousel Club and he wanted to be sure that I got him another pianoplayer.

Mr. HUBERT. Did he say what he was going to the Carousel Club for?

Mr. BRANCH. No, sir—that's his other club.

Mr. HUBERT. Yes. I know, but you said something about he wanted to see a new act?

Mr. BRANCH. He said he had a new act.

Mr. HUBERT. And he wanted to see it, and that's why he was in a hurry?

Mr. BRANCH. He was in a hurry to go down there and see it—I guess he was going to give them an audition. You know, you generally give them an audition, a new act.

Mr. HUBERT. Did he indicate to you whether his club was open or closed?

Mr. BRANCH. Which club?

Mr. HUBERT. The Carousel?

Mr. BRANCH. He didn't mention that.

Mr. HUBERT. It was your impression it was open?

Mr. BRANCH. Im sure—that's the impression I was under—that it was open, because I know the other one is open from 9 till 1, and until 2 on Saturday.

Mr. HUBERT. Was it open that Saturday?

Mr. BRANCH. It was open then.

Mr. HUBERT. Are you sure about that?

Mr. BRANCH. Yes; I'm sure it was open.

Mr. HUBERT. You mean the day after the President died?

Mr. BRANCH. I'm sure it was open.

Mr. HUBERT. What makes you believe that; were you there?

Mr. BRANCH. No, sir—I don't go out—very seldom, but I had talked to her that day about it, and I know they was closed up the day before.

Mr. HUBERT. Friday?

Mr. BRANCH. Yes—after that—they closed that night, I'm sure. I'm sure they closed that night.

Mr. HUBERT. How did you know that?

Mr. BRANCH. Because the band was off, because we were closed.

Mr. HUBERT. You were closed on Friday night?

Mr. BRANCH. We closed that evening, you know, after it happened.

Mr. HUBERT. Friday?

Mr. BRANCH. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. But you didn't close on Saturday?

Mr. BRANCH. We didn't close on Saturday.

Mr. HUBERT. When Ruby came to your place the band was playing. I think you said?

Mr. BRANCH. Either the band has just started and played two or three numbers—it wasn't long.

Mr. HUBERT. Did he comment to you as to whether or not you should be open or closed on that night?

Mr. BRANCH. He didn't mention that.

Mr. HUBERT. Did he seem to object to the music or the dancing?

Mr. BRANCH. No, sir—he just came. There wasn't too much dancing then because we didn't have over seven or eight people in there then.

Mr. HUBERT. In any case he didn't fuss at you because you had opened your club on Saturday night?

Mr. BRANCH. No; he didn't fuss.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you tell him you had closed your club on Friday night?

Mr. BRANCH. I don't think I discussed that with him.

Mr. HUBERT. It was your impression that his club was open on Saturday night?

Mr. BRANCH. Saturday night; yes.

Mr. HUBERT. In any case, he told you he was in a hurry because he wanted to—

Mr. BRANCH. Go and see a new act at the Carousel.

Mr. HUBERT. You don't know whether that was an audition or whether it was to be played to an audience?

Mr. BRANCH. No, sir; I don't. I don't know.

Mr. HUBERT. What about this rumor of his distributing \$5 bills all over the Empire?

Mr. BRANCH. Well, he do that all the time. You see, everybody knew him, and they said, "Give me somethin', Ruby", and he always do that.

Mr. HUBERT. Did he do it on this occasion?

Mr. BRANCH. He gave away about three that night, going out the door. You see, everybody know him whenever he comes up there.

Mr. HUBERT. I think you told me that the statements you made in this document which I have identified as Exhibit No. 1 were correct, and I would like you to, if you could, see if you can clarify this point: On the second page of that document, the FBI agents report you as saying the following: "He said"—that's you—"that he did not see or hear of Ruby being in the Empire Room dancehall or any other Negro nightclub passing out \$5 bills on November 23 or on any other occasion." Is that correct—he was in your place?

Mr. BRANCH. He was in our place.

Mr. HUBERT. So this statement that he was not in your place is not correct?

Mr. BRANCH. He was really in our place.

Mr. HUBERT. And he did give out some \$5 bills?

Mr. BRANCH. I said he give out one or two—yes.

Mr. HUBERT. You said "three" a while ago?

Mr. BRANCH. When he started out that door, you know, all of them knew him—everybody in north Dallas knew him.

Mr. HUBERT. Who did he give these \$5 bills to?

Mr. BRANCH. Just some of the customers there at the door.

Mr. HUBERT. Really?

Mr. BRANCH. Yes; it don't make him no difference.

Mr. HUBERT. Has he done that on previous occasions?

Mr. BRANCH. Yes; he do that a lot of times.

Mr. HUBERT. How much would he give?

Mr. BRANCH. Sometimes he give away \$25 or \$30.

Mr. HUBERT. But on this night you said it was two?

Mr. BRANCH. Two or three.

Mr. HUBERT. So, I suppose you want to modify your statement in Exhibit No. 1, page 2, the top paragraph, to indicate that he was in the dancehall for the purpose you said, and that he did give out at least two or three \$5 bills, is that right?

Mr. BRANCH. That's right.

Mr. HUBERT. Now, do you know whether he went to any other Negro nightclub on the night of November 23?

Mr. BRANCH. No; I don't.

Mr. HUBERT. Do you know anything about Lee Harvey Oswald?

Mr. BRANCH. I don't know him at all.

Mr. HUBERT. Have you ever seen him before in your life?

Mr. BRANCH. No, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. Have you seen pictures of him?

Mr. BRANCH. Only in the paper.

Mr. HUBERT. But you don't identify him with anybody you ever saw?

Mr. BRANCH. No.

Mr. HUBERT. What was his mood, was he sad or glad?

Mr. BRANCH. What do you mean—Mr. Ruby?

Mr. HUBERT. Yes.

Mr. BRANCH. You can't never tell about him—he's a weird person.

Mr. HUBERT. How did he seem that night?

Mr. BRANCH. He's always in a hurry. He's fidgety, you know, he talks fast.

Mr. HUBERT. Did he seem to be crying, grieving, gay, happy, or what?

Mr. BRANCH. He wasn't too happy—he wasn't too happy.

Mr. HUBERT. What makes you believe that?

Mr. BRANCH. Because he will take time and set down, but this time he was—he just wanted to know for sure if she's going to have a pianoplayer—get his sister a pianoplayer out there because they was disgusted with the pianoplayer they had.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you tell your wife that Mr. Ruby had been there?

Mr. BRANCH. No; I didn't tell her.

Mr. HUBERT. What?

Mr. BRANCH. I didn't tell her.

Mr. HUBERT. Your wife is named Eleanor?

Mr. BRANCH. I didn't tell her that night.

Mr. HUBERT. When did you tell her?

Mr. BRANCH. I may have told her 2 or 3 days after.

Mr. HUBERT. She works for Mrs. Mandell?

Mr. BRANCH. That's right. As soon as she heard it was him, she knew that we were always taking care of business with him. I sold him the first band he had in Dallas—Red Calhoun—when he was at the Silver Spur, and when I got sick the first time, he gave me some money.

Mr. HUBERT. Did Mr. Ruby talk about the President's assassination at all?

Mr. BRANCH. Nothing; he didn't say a word.

Mr. HUBERT. He didn't say a word?

Mr. BRANCH. He didn't say a word—he didn't say anything.

Mr. HUBERT. Are you familiar with the so-called Weissman ad, the ad that appeared in the paper that had to do with the President, and so forth?

Mr. BRANCH. I don't think so.

Mr. HUBERT. He didn't talk about that?

Mr. BRANCH. No, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. Did he talk about any posters that he had seen on the streets about impeaching the Chief Justice, Mr. Earl Warren?

Mr. BRANCH. No; the only discussion we had was about the pianoplayer and then him going to the Carousel.

Mr. HUBERT. Well, you said he talked a lot and he was there for about 40 minutes, there must have been something else he talked about all that time?

Mr. BRANCH. That's all he talked about—the pianoplayer.

Mr. HUBERT. Well, how much talk could there be about him, you mean that he would be paid, or who he would be or what kind of music he would play or what?

Mr. BRANCH. That he don't want no jazz pianoplayer, he wanted just the straight rhythm and blues pianoplayer.

Mr. HUBERT. Yes; I'm just trying to see, Mr. Branch, what could have kept him as long as 30 minutes, if all he talked about was the pianoplayer?

Mr. BRANCH. That's mostly what he talked about—and the club. I should come down to the club and see it. I've never seen it.

Mr. HUBERT. And that he was going to the club?

Mr. BRANCH. That he was going to the club.

Mr. HUBERT. He was listening to the music?

Mr. BRANCH. He had a new act—he was standing up to the bar talking and drinking a Coca-Cola, and then he did say something about some reducing pills I should take—I should take some tablets—I had just came out of the hospital and had been operated on.

Mr. HUBERT. He thought you were too fat?

Mr. BRANCH. Well, I was.

Mr. HUBERT. And he suggested some pills?

Mr. BRANCH. Well, he had some—vitamins.

Mr. HUBERT. Did he give you some?

Mr. BRANCH. No; he didn't give me none of them, but he said he had some vitamins he was using.

Mr. HUBERT. Did he comment on the fact that some of his competitors like Mr. Abe Weinstein were keeping their nightclubs open while he was closing his?

Mr. BRANCH. He didn't mention that.

Mr. HUBERT. You know the Colony Club?

Mr. BRANCH. Yes; I know all the clubs. You see, a lot of times he's just carrying on a lot of foolishness anyway.

Mr. HUBERT. He did what?

Mr. BRANCH. I said—a lot of times he just talked about foolishness, anyway.

Mr. HUBERT. Like what?

Mr. BRANCH. Just about different acts and different musicians he had out to the place—"Slick," and different ones he'd got out of jail and all that and how much I'd done for them, and you know how that is.

Mr. HUBERT. You knew he was a Jew?

Mr. BRANCH. Who, Mr. Ruby?

Mr. HUBERT. Yes.

Mr. BRANCH. Yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. Was he sensitive about being a Jew?

Mr. BRANCH. I don't know—you see—he was a good fellow, but the thing was, he was a parlor-type fellow.

Mr. HUBERT. A what?

Mr. BRANCH. Temperamental—real temperamental, but he was a good fellow. The only thing, though, he bragged because he was a Jew.

Mr. HUBERT. He bragged because he was a Jew?

Mr. BRANCH. A lot of times.

Mr. HUBERT. Could you give us an example of that, please, or several examples?

Mr. BRANCH. You see, a long time ago he had a place down here in the bottom called Cavalcade of Blues and he went busted and he said he was going to leave, and he was going to come back and still have the Cavalcade of Blues, and they busted him, and he got broke, and he said, "I'm coming back," and he said, "I'm going to be the only Jew that ever come back and repeat it again"; and he did—he came back.

Mr. HUBERT. And he boasted about it later—you heard him do so?

Mr. BRANCH. He done that—he told me two or three times.

Mr. HUBERT. Can you give us some other examples of episodes or things he said which would indicate that he was proud of being of the Jewish faith?

Mr. BRANCH. I don't believe I can.

Mr. HUBERT. Did he ever indicate to you the thought that the Jews were getting a bad deal in society?

Mr. BRANCH. No; he would be happy nearly every time you see him.

Mr. HUBERT. He was what?

Mr. BRANCH. He'd be happy nearly every time you'd see him.

Mr. HUBERT. What did you mean then when you said he was temperamental?

Mr. BRANCH. Well, the least little thing—if you say something to him and the price would be too high and he would get mad and said something like, "You know that's too much," but he was just like that—he was a good man.

Mr. HUBERT. Where is the Pago Club?

Mr. BRANCH. Now, it's over on—over here on McKinney. Which one do you mean—the one that used to be on Lemmon? They've done moved it now; it's over on McKinney.

Mr. HUBERT. Where was it on November 23?

Mr. BRANCH. That was on Lemmon.

Mr. HUBERT. On Lemmon Street?

Mr. BRANCH. On Lemmon Avenue. Mr. Norton's.

Mr. HUBERT. There weren't two of them, were there?

Mr. BRANCH. Only one.

Mr. HUBERT. It's moved to another address now?

Mr. BRANCH. It's down there on McKinney now.

Mr. HUBERT. How far is your place, that is, the Empire Room at 1710 Hall Street, to the Pago Club, where it used to be?

Mr. BRANCH. You come down Lemmon all the way to Washington and turn right on Washington at Ross and come right on to the Empire Room and I'd say it's about 15 blocks.

Mr. HUBERT. How far would the Hall Diner or the Empire Room be to the Carousel?

Mr. BRANCH. Well, that's down on Commerce Street.

Mr. HUBERT. Yes; I mean how many blocks?

Mr. BRANCH. I've never been to it.

Mr. HUBERT. Well, it's near the Adolphus Hotel, and let's put it this way—how far would it be from your place to the Adolphus?

Mr. BRANCH. That should be about between 12 and 14 blocks, according to which way you go—which way you come down.

Mr. HUBERT. About a 5-minute drive in an automobile?

Mr. BRANCH. About 7 minutes.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you have any indication from what Ruby said as to where he had been before he came to see you on the 23d?

Mr. BRANCH. No, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. How was he dressed?

Mr. BRANCH. He had on a gray pair of trousers and a blue coat.

Mr. HUBERT. Did he have a hat on?

Mr. BRANCH. He wore a hat.

Mr. HUBERT. What color?

Mr. BRANCH. It was black.

Mr. HUBERT. Did he have an overcoat?

Mr. BRANCH. It wasn't cold—it wasn't even cold.

Mr. HUBERT. And he indicated to you that he was going directly to the Carousel?

Mr. BRANCH. Yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. When you saw him drive off, did he drive in the direction of the Carousel?

Mr. BRANCH. He went up Hall Street. He had to go to the corner and turn back right.

Mr. HUBERT. Would that be the way you go to the Carousel?

Mr. BRANCH. The way he was headed, he had to go one block and turn right and come down Ross. He didn't seem like he was angry or anything.

Mr. HUBERT. The band would have a break, wouldn't it, have several breaks?

Mr. BRANCH. Our bands don't have but one break. In a white club you have four breaks. You see, you play 45 and off 15 in a white club, and in a colored club, you play 2½ hours and take 30 minutes.

Mr. HUBERT. So, if it started at 9, you would go to 11:30, and then start up again at 12?

Mr. BRANCH. That's right.

Mr. HUBERT. You are definite that when Ruby came the band had started and had played about three or four pieces?

Mr. BRANCH. About three or four numbers.

Mr. HUBERT. Would it be possible that he came to see you at the beginning of the second half?

Mr. BRANCH. No, no; it was just after we kicked off—it wasn't much after.

Mr. HUBERT. I'm thinking about whether it was possible it was the kickoff of the second half after the recess?

Mr. BRANCH. No; it was the kickoff.

Mr. HUBERT. It was the kickoff of the evening?

Mr. BRANCH. It was the kickoff of the evening, because we didn't have over four or five people in the house.

Mr. HUBERT. And later there were more?

Mr. BRANCH. Yes; they came in—you see—it was Saturday night, and they started coming in all the way to 11.

Mr. HUBERT. There's no possibility that he was there as late as 11 or 12 o'clock at night?

Mr. BRANCH. No, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you ever see him after that night?

Mr. BRANCH. No, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. In regard to your statement, Exhibit No. 1, there is some material on the top of the first page that does not deal with you, and then there is the material that does deal with you, and I asked you to read the part marked by a mark placed by me on the first page called "X-1," and on the second page, it's squared off with "X-2." That's the part we're talking about that you have testified about previously.

What happened to the pianoplayer that you engaged for Monday night?

Mr. BRANCH. You know—they closed up.

Mr. HUBERT. Right away?

Mr. BRANCH. Yes—after he got in that trouble, they closed the place up.

Mr. HUBERT. So, the pianoplayer never was sent?

Mr. BRANCH. No, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you ever get word from somebody not to send him?

Mr. BRANCH. No, sir; but it was in the paper. You see there was all the news in the paper where he done got in trouble.

Mr. HUBERT. Yes; but did they say that the club would be closed?

Mr. BRANCH. No, sir—you see—I'm living out that way, and I got by there every day and it was closed.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you talk to Miss Eva and ask her if she wanted him?

Mr. BRANCH. I never talked to her but one time. You see, she called me and asked me about it, but you see, I didn't do business with her.

Mr. HUBERT. When was that?

Mr. BRANCH. Well that was the same day he came by—I talked to her about the pianoplayer.

Mr. HUBERT. You mean—before he came?

Mr. BRANCH. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. You talked to her before he came that night?

Mr. BRANCH. Yes; that was the day.

Mr. HUBERT. Was it on the telephone?

Mr. BRANCH. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. It was on Saturday during the day?

Mr. BRANCH. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. She wanted a pianoplayer from you?

Mr. BRANCH. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. What did you tell her?

Mr. BRANCH. I told her I'd talk to Mr. Ruby about it.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you ask him to come by?

Mr. BRANCH. He always come by when he wants something.

Mr. HUBERT. You say you would not talk to her?

Mr. BRANCH. No, sir; I don't do business with her.

Mr. HUBERT. Why?

Mr. BRANCH. Because she's too hard to get along with.

Mr. HUBERT. You have had experience along that line?

Mr. BRANCH. Yes; that's why all the musicians was quitting—on account of her. They worked for him, but they don't want to work for her, but he put her over there and so they just stayed along.

Mr. HUBERT. Was there anybody with Ruby on the night you saw him?

Mr. BRANCH. No, sir; he was by himself.

Mr. HUBERT. When did you first learn that he had shot Oswald?

Mr. BRANCH. When I was looking at television.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you recognize him?

Mr. BRANCH. No, sir; not at first, because he was just like that—I was a little surprised.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you know Andy Armstrong who worked over there at the Carousel?

Mr. BRANCH. No, sir; I don't know nobody over at the Carousel at all. I knew Joe Johnson and all the band that worked up there.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you know Mr. Ralph Paul?

Mr. BRANCH. I'm trying to think of who that is—I didn't know him. I know Miss Grant and I knowed nothing but the band.

Mr. HUBERT. Do you know Mr. George Senator, a roommate of Ruby's?

Mr. BRANCH. No, sir; I didn't know him at all. I have never seen him. I have seen some men with him sometimes but I didn't know who it was. You see, he would get out of there—he'd get out when he'd drive up there, and a lot of times I'd see him pass and call him and he wouldn't stop, and I wouldn't stop him.

Mr. HUBERT. All right, just to close this—is there anything more you want to say?

Mr. BRANCH. No, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. There has been no conversation between us other than what's been recorded in this room, is that correct?

Mr. BRANCH. Yes; that's correct.

Mr. HUBERT. Thank you very much, Mr. Branch. I appreciate your coming by.

Mr. BRANCH. Thank you, I appreciate it too.

TESTIMONY OF WILLIAM GLENN DUNCAN, JR.

The testimony of William Glenn Duncan, Jr. was taken at 3:45 p.m., on June 26, 1964, in the office of the U.S. attorney, 301 Post Office Building, Bryan and Ervay Streets, Dallas, Tex., by Mr. Leon D. Hubert, Jr., assistant counsel of the President's Commission.

Mr. HUBERT. This is the deposition of William Glenn Duncan, Jr.

Mr. Duncan, my name is Leon Hubert. I am a member of the advisory staff of the general counsel on the President's Commission. Under the provisions of Executive Order 11130, dated November 29, 1963, and the joint resolution of Congress No. 137 and the rules of procedure adopted by the President's Commission in conformance with that Executive order and that joint resolution, I have been authorized to take a sworn deposition from you. I state to you now that the general nature of the Commission's inquiry is to ascertain, evaluate and report upon the facts relative to the assassination of President Kennedy and the subsequent violent death of Lee Harvey Oswald.

In particular, as to you, Mr. Duncan, the nature of the inquiry today is to determine what facts you may know about the death of Oswald and any other pertinent facts you may know about the general inquiry, and about Jack Ruby and his operations and movements and associates and so forth.

I think you appear here today by virtue of a letter written to you by Mr. J. Lee Rankin, general counsel of the staff of the President's Commission asking you to be present, is that correct?