

AD: I don't remember the approximate month or date.

VC: Alright, however, during that meeting Mr. Otis Smith recorded this conversation between the three of you. Is that correct?

AD: Yes, he did.

VC: O.k. Now do you have an independent recollection of what was discussed?

AD: Yes, I do.

VC: Alright sir. Let me start here, your uncle Ralph Duke was charged with a crime, went to trial, was convicted and is now incarcerated. Is that correct?

AD: That's true.

VC: O.K. Are you familiar with the background and the dynamics of his case?

AD: Yes, I am.

VC: O.k. Were you in any way involved in that case?

AD: Not actually involved in it, no.

AC: Can you tell me.....Alright you weren't charged with anything?

AD: No, I wasn't charged with any crime. I was involved in the extent that my home, I own, was seized by the Government during that crime, I mean during that time.

VC: Now this particular crime or incident was a sting operation run by the United States Government authorities. Is that correct?

AD: That's correct.

VC: You have knowledge about that? Can you tell me what you know about it?

AD: I knew about it after it took place, after they raided the houses and stuff. I had conversations with district attorneys, Federal District attorney John Hopeman, and also people out of his office.

VC: Why would they confiscate your residence?

AD: Well, the way they stipulate it, that it was bought with proceeds from drug and criminal activity, which it wasn't. And I subsequently got the house back.

VC: Well, what provoked them into thinking it was purchased with illegal money? What was the proof or reason?

AD: The only reason they told me, was that I was a nominee for Pluky Duke in the purchase of the property, which there was no facts or evidence to prove that.

VC: O.k. Now reflecting back to this conversation you had with Lauren and Mr. Otis Smith. Mr. Lauren Duke was involved in that sting operation. Is that correct?

AD: Yes, he was there at the sting operation.

VC: O.K. And he was arrested and what not?

AD: He was arrested at the sting operation.

VC: O.k. Now, the Government insisted that Mr. Ralph Duke provided the money to make a drug purchase. Can you tell me anything about that?

AD: Well, I know from Lauren's conversation at that particular meeting with Otis that, that was in fact not the case. That the money came from other individuals not Pluky Duke.

VC: Alright, we'll put this on hold, you have a call. (his cellular phone rings during the conversation)

VC: Alright, so at any rate, Mr. Duke, Mr. Ralph Duke was accused charged etc., with providing the money to make this purchase. Are you telling me that Mr. Lauren Duke stated that, that was not the case?

AD: Lauren Duke was the one who had the money at the time of the sting operation and he didn't receive any of that money from Pluky Duke, which is what he told the police.

VC: And that's what he told you at this meeting with Mr. Smith?

AD: Yes.

VC: Had he told you that prior, to the meeting with Mr. Smith?

AD: Yes, he have.

VC: Can you tell me why then, that he gave testimony to the United States Government, that Mr. Duke actually did provide the money?

AD: He told me that the Government threatened to arrest, my dad and his mother, if he didn't provide testimony the way they wanted it to be. Even though that was, in fact, not the truth and he told them so.

VC: He told the Government that it was not Mr. Ralph Duke's money, but yet he went ahead and ultimately, because of the pressure, stated what the Government wanted to hear?

AD: Yes, Lauren told me, when he first talk to them, that they had heard from other people, other sources, that the money was, in fact, Pluky's but, he told them that it wasn't, in fact,

it was not Pluky's money, and yet and still they wanted Lauren to make the story fit, the way they needed it to fit, so it had to be Pluky's money. That he had to say that it was, even though, in fact, it wasn't.

VC: And the threat was that your father and mother will be indicted, is that correct?

AD: John Hopeman had told my brother Lauren, that, in fact, he would indict my dad and Lauren's mother, if, in fact, he didn't cooperate to where they needed him to cooperate. And also, to make drive at that way they had the set of facts laid down, even though that wasn't the truth.

VC: Now, this means then, that your brother Lauren was trying to protect your mother and your father. Is that why he agreed to false testimony?

AD: Yes, he had told them the truth in his conversations. He had many conversations with the Government and, in fact, I talk to him before, during, and after his conversations with the Government. And he had told them the truth that, in fact, it wasn't Pluky's money involved in the sting operation. They told him to forget about that and just make the story fit, and say that it's Pluky's money that was involved in the sting operation.

VC: O.k. Did the Government attempt to get information from you concerning your uncle and history?

AD: John Hopeman had spoke with me and my father on a couple of incidents and we went to his office to inquire about the

property he had seized from me and the property he had seized from my father. John Hopeman had stated, in fact, that he would, if my brother Lauren and my Marcel cooperated, he would, in fact, release the property that he had seized from my father, or he would indict my father, Lauren's mother, Fran and possibly even me. That's what he stated to my face. If, in fact, my brother Marcel and Lauren did not cooperate.

VC: O.k. So your family made the decision then to cooperate?

AD: That's true.

VC: O.k. You mentioned a woman's name there "Fran" who might Fran be?

AD: Francis Duke is Lauren's mother my dad's wife.

VC: Alright, fine. Now do you know the names of people that did provide the money, that were ultimately arrested?

AD: I know some of the names of the people that provided the money for the sting operation. But I don't know all of the names.

VC: O.k. Correct me if I'm wrong, but isn't it true that a number of those people did not know Mr. Ralph "Pluky" Duke?

AD: That's a fact.

VC: Can you tell me some of those people that did not know Mr. Duke, but yet named him as a source of money?

AD: (PAUSE) During the trial there were people who said that they knew Pluky Duke, that he, in fact, had never met. But I don't remember all the names. There were several people who testified against Ralph "Pluky" Duke at the trial. A Laurie

Hutchinson and Ramon Hutchinson are brothers that were friends of LaMont Duke's, they in fact didn't have any dealings, as far as I understood it, with Pluky Duke. In fact they didn't really even know him. They may have known of him but, I don't think that they had ever actually even met up until the proceedings at that time, and I actually never saw them together. And they testified that fact that the money was related to Pluky, that it was his money.

VC: O.k. Can you give me the names of some of the individuals that put up the money that resulted in the sting operation?

AD: Um.....I don't, I remember the names, but I'm kind of drawing a blank, I'll have to think about that.

VC: O.k. That's alright. Now LaMont is called Monty, right?

AD: Yeah.

VC: That's Mr. Ralph Duke's son?

AD: Yeah, LaMont is Ralph Duke's son.

VC: Alright. Had you had any conversations with him prior to the trial or during the trial or after the trial of all these individuals?

AD: I had spoken with Monty on occasions. Previous to the bust. But, I don't remember a specific conversation.

VC: O.k. Now he's incarcerated, correct?

AD: Yes, he is.

VC: Has he ever said to you, that his father did not provide funds to this operation?

AD: On the phone, when they first got busted, Lauren, LaMont, Kim Willis and Tony Turner, were all in a cell together or in the same jail in Wisconsin. And they were talking on the phone to me, to my father, and I was on the line too. Me and my father. And that's when they said that LaMont said it wasn't Pluky's money, it was in fact some of it was his money, and some of it was Kim Willis's money and some of it was a couple of other people, one of the Hutchinson's, at least that's what LaMont said at the time.

VC: Is the name Givens familiar to you?

AD: Yes, I do know a, I think his name is Danny Givens.

VC: Did you know that he provided funds to this? But he was not charged.

AD: I was under the understanding, from what LaMont had said, during some jail house conversations on the phone with Lauren that, that was, in fact, the case.

VC: O.k. But prior to this bust you had no knowledge that these people were intending to make a purchase?

AD: No, I didn't know about anything before the actual bust.

VC: O.k. Now you have been a working man all these years, did you travel in the, you know, same social circle with these folks?

AD: I didn't associate socially with most of the individuals, but in fact I do know them personally on a friend basis acquaintance.

VC: O.k. And you father recently retired, is that correct?

AD: Yes, my father just retired after 21 years at the phone company.

VC: O.k. So he had a full working career and he was not social friends with any of these young people, was he?

AD: Not to my knowledge. My dad pretty much kept to his self.

VC: O.k. Is Mr. Ralph Duke much older then these individuals too?

AD: Old enough to be their father.

VC: Would you have had any independent knowledge whether or not he traveled in the same circle has these younger comers.

AD: I have knowledge that he, in fact, didn't. Every time I would see him he wouldn't be with any young kid. Unless they were family.

VC: O.k. Did you attend the trial?

AD: I attended some of it.

VC: Did you know anything about witnesses from Iowa?

AD: Yes, I did hear testimony from the Iowa witnesses.

VC: Do you know if Mr. Ralph Duke knew who those folks were?

AD: Obviously, I can't say everyone he knew, but, in fact, I had never seen those people. And they specifically say, when they testified, that they had actually met him. But they did insinuate that they knew him, and, in fact, that whatever illegal activity they were involved in, it involved Pluky, but, in fact, they had never known him.

VC: O.k. Now your father, does your father have any kind of a criminal record?

AD: No, my father has no criminal record at all.

VC: Alright, your father was never involved in any way, in any drug activity, to the best of your knowledge?

AD: My father has never been involved in any illegal activity, that I know of.

VC: O.k. Now there was someone that was accused of running a safe house. You know who that would have been?

AD: That may have been what they charged my uncle Sunny with. I know they were going to charge him. They ended not doing it because he was in ill health, and, in fact, I don't think they had any evidence that would have proven that, any way there was a house in his name that he rented out from Pluky, so that's probably where they were making a connection.

VC: O.k. Reflecting to the taped conversation between Mr Otis Smith, Lauren and yourself, did Mr. Lauren Duke state that prosecutor Hopeman knew that money provided on a sting operation was not Pluky Duke's money?

AD: Lauren stated, that during the particular interview, that Mr. Hopeman did, in fact, know, he, in fact, personally told him that Pluky didn't have any money in the sting deal.

VC: O.k. That was a rather lengthy interview with Mr. Smith. You believe Lauren was telling you the truth at this meeting and telling Mr. Smith the truth?

AD: I believe that Lauren was telling the truth.

VC: O.k. Did Prosecutor Hopeman and investigators, based on your conversation with Lauren and at this taped interview, know the real story about the money.

AD: John Hopeman would say several sources, including Lauren Duke and myself, that, in fact, the money for the bust didn't not originate with Pluky Duke and that they, if necessary, the agent, the agent Salinsky in fact didn't want to hear anything about the fact that Pluky wasn't involved in the sting operation. They merely wanted my brother Marcel and my brother Lauren to testify that, in fact, Pluky had something to do with that. And they asked my brother Marcel to go and talk with Joseph Ballard, which is my cousin, who was actually living with Pluky at the time of the bust, to have him testify against Ralph Pluky Duke, which in fact he ended up doing it, but not until the last minute. And they ask him to, they ask my brother Marcel to basically lie about a gun, so they could put the gun case to Ralph "Pluky" Duke, and Marcel wouldn't do it because Marcel wouldn't lie about this gun with the silencer, he in fact, they tried to renege on his cooperating deal, based on the fact that my brother wouldn't lie about the gun.

VC: Now where's Joseph now?

AD: Joseph served five years in prison, and no he lives in Oregon with his mother. That was part of his deal, was to testify against Pluky as it pertains to, the gun with the silencer.

VC: O.k. His last name is Ballard?

AD: His last name is Ballard.

VC: O.k. Where is Marcel?

AD: Marcel is in Minneapolis.

VC: O.k. And Marcel is another source who originally told the Government it was Ralph "Pluky" Duke's money?

AD: Yes, that's exactly what he told the Government.

VC: O.K. Now at that meeting with Mr. Smith, was Mr. Lauren Duke then saying, he was intimidated, coerced, threatened to fabricate a story?

AD: He was intimidated and he was basically threatened by Salinsky and Hopeman. Salinsky being the District Attorney, and another agent, I can't remember his name right now, in fact told him that, in fact, if he didn't make his story fit with the way they set the story up, the scenario, then, in fact, they would indict his family.

VC: And all of this was discussed, you know, in this meeting with Mr. Otis Smith?

AD: Yes, Lauren told us the whole story, again on tape with Otis, yeah.

VC: O.k. Your father then encourage Lauren to cooperate with the Government to protect the rest of the family, is that correct?

AD: My father, my stepmother Fran, Marcel and myself, all of us talked and decided that it would be best to, in fact, do whatever the Government said, so they wouldn't indict innocent people, basically, and ruin their lives and so that they would

returned the seized property that they had just taken for no reason.

VC: O.k. fine, is there anything else you can think of, that may be of importance regarding your statement?

AD: No.

Andre Duke

Subscribed and sworn to before me
this ____ day of _____, 1997.

Notary Public