

REPORT

TO: File  
FROM: Vince Carraher  
DATE: August 4, 1998  
RE: Duke  
FILE NO. 9345/35393 - hbmisc

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INTERVIEW OF JEFFREY BALLARD (JB):  
Taken on July 27, 1998

Q: This is Vincent Carraher. Today is July 27, 1998. This is a telephone interview with Mr. Jeffrey Ballard. Would you please state your full name, age and address sir?

JB: My name is Jeffrey Ballard. I am 38 years old, residing at [REDACTED], Gates, Oregon 97346.

Q: What is your home phone and if you are working, please give me your work phone?

JB: Home phone (503) [REDACTED]-[REDACTED], work phone 503-[REDACTED]-[REDACTED].

Q: Mr. Ballard, I am not recording this interview, but I am taking notes. Would you consent to a report of this interview, which will be transcribed, mailed to you for your review?

JB: Yes. That's okay with me.

Q: I will ask you, after reviewing it and making any corrections, adding something you may have thought of later, to sign a copy and return it to me at your earliest convenience, will that be satisfactory?

JB: Yes, I will do that.

Q: Now, Mr. Ballard, do you happen to know a person by the name of Ralph Chevous Duke, also known as Plukey Duke?

JB: Yes, I know him. He is my cousin.

Q: Mr. Ballard, sometime back, in years, did you live in Minnesota and then move to California?

JB: Yes, I lived Minnesota until I was 12 years old and then we moved to Los Angeles. I moved from Los Angeles because Oregon is a better place to raise my son.

Q: Mr. Ballard, would you see Mr. Ralph Duke from time to time when he came to California?

JB: Yes, Plukey would stop and see his relatives out here. We would have some family get togethers.

Q: At any time, did Ralph Plukey Duke ever ask you to transport narcotics from California to the State of Minnesota?

JB: No, never.

Q: At any time, did Mr. Ralph Duke ever ask you to do anything that was illegal or questionable in your mind?

JB: No.

Q: Did you ever drive a vehicle on behalf of Mr. Ralph Duke, from the State of California to the State of Minnesota?

JB: Yes. I made four or five trips driving some cars for Plukey. Plukey was in the car business and he used to get cars in California, expensive type cars and he would have them brought to Minnesota, where he would sell them. I made some trips back to Minnesota from Los Angeles, sometime 1986 and 1987. I think I made four or five trips.

Q: Mr. Ballard, were you paid a salary or paid expenses for driving these cars to Minnesota.

JB: Yes. We were paid expenses, reimbursed money that was spent for gas, food.

Q: Mr. Ballard, do you have a brother named Joseph?

JB: Yes. My brother Joe also made some trips driving cars from L.A. to Minnesota.

Q: Mr. Ballard, were you ever stopped by the police driving one of these vehicles from California to Minnesota and were you ever arrested for doing anything illegal or carrying contraband?

JB: I remember being stopped in Utah one time, but was not arrested, because I wasn't doing anything wrong. I let the police search the car, even though they didn't have a warrant. They had stopped me because they said I was speeding. Another time, I was pulled over in Denver, but there was no problem and I was never arrested. I think on two occasions, I was

with my brother Joe, or he was driving a different vehicle, but we were sticking together.

Q: So, what you're saying is that you were stopped on those occasions and even one time your car was searched, but you were never arrested?

JB: That's right, we never brought drugs from California to Minnesota. We were never asked to bring any drugs. We were asked to drive these cars back to Minnesota. My cousin Robin also did some driving for Plukey Duke and there were others that would do some driving, but I don't believe anybody was ever arrested.

Q: Were you ever stopped by the authorities in the State of Minnesota while transporting a vehicle on behalf of Ralph Plukey Duke?

JB: Yes, Joe was driving ahead of me and I think he was driving a corvette and I was some distance behind him and I was driving a truck and we were stopped in this small town in South Minnesota.

Q: Do you remember the name of that town or community where you were stopped?

JB: I'm not sure, but I think the town was Faribault, Minnesota.

Q: Will you please tell me what you remember about being stopped by the authorities?

JB: Well, I was driving along the highway and up ahead, I saw what was like a road block. My brother Joe was up ahead and he had been stopped and I was also stopped. I got out of the truck and there were a lot of agents there and I remember the name of one agent, Agent Carey. They all had guns drawn and I was made to get on the ground - face down, and this agent, whose name I learned was Carey, asked me who's car I was driving. At first I didn't reply, then this Carey, cocked the gun that he had to my head. I then told him it was Ralph Duke's car. Agent Carey then said, we're going to arrest you for drugs and we're going to confiscate the cars. We were taken to the local jail, we were searched, our clothes were taken away from us and the whole thing was pretty scary. I was able to get another guy in jail to call my dad, whose a Ramsey County Sheriff. It wasn't too long later that the jailers and everyone started to treat us real nice and we were finally let go. There were never any charges, or anything. We weren't carrying any drugs or guns in the car. We were only transporting these cars, so we weren't doing anything wrong.

- Q: Do you know if this was around the time that Ralph Plukey Duke was arrested along with his son Monty, his nephew Loren, Tony Turner and some other young men?
- JB: As I remember, Joe and I were stopped in that small town, three to four weeks before Plukey Duke and all those other people were arrested. It was about one week after we were stopped. I went back to California and I think a couple weeks later, is when Ralph and all those people were arrested.
- Q: Do you know if your brother Joe remained in Minnesota and do you know where he was living?
- JB: Joe stayed in Minnesota. He had been staying with Ralph Plukey Duke.
- Q: Do you know why Joe was staying with Plukey Duke in Minnesota?
- JB: Joe had had some problems out in California and he was trying to get his life together and so he came to Minnesota and Ralph was trying to help him out. Ralph always helped out the family. He was concerned with the young guys that they stay out of trouble.
- Q: Did you brother Joseph ever talk to you about his testimony in the Ralph Duke case?
- JB: Joe hasn't talked to me about that testimony that he gave. He is real private about that and I never pushed him on what he testified about.
- Q: Did Joe ever tell you why he went forward and testified against his cousin Ralph.
- JB: Joe never came right out and said, and again I don't know what he talked about on the witness stand and I would have to ask Joe about that.
- Q: Would you take my phone number and ask your brother, Joe to call me?
- JB: I will do that, but I'm not sure how he will react.
- Q: You mentioned your father was a sheriff here in Ramsey County, State of Minnesota. What is his name and do you have his phone number?
- JB: My dad's name is Harry Ballard and his phone number is 487-9054.
- Q: Do you know anything about your father's home being broken into?

JB: Yes. Agent Carey broke in my dad's house and broke a window to get in and stole a gun belonging to my dad.

Q: How do you know it was Agent Carey that broke into your father's house?

JB: There was a neighbor who saw the break-in and described Carey. This was reported.

Q: Do you know what, if anything, happened about this break-in to your father's house?

JB: No, I don't know what happened, after the break-in, and I'm not sure who it was reported to. You would have to talk to my father about this.

Q: Did you ever know a guy by the name of Marvin Macalb?

JB: I think I know the name, but I don't know any thing about this guy.

Q: Did you ever socialize with this Marvin McCalb or have any kind of dealings with him?

JB: No, all I know is the name and that I believe my cousin Plukey knew this guy.

Q: There has been reference in some court testimony back here in Minnesota, specifically, U.S. v. Long Cadillac, that there was an organization called the Duke Gang. Was there any such organization?

JB: No. There was never any kind of Duke Gang.

Q: So, you're telling me there was no organized Duke Gang. Was Ralph Duke ever known as the leader or main man regarding any type of gang?

JB: No, not at all. There was the Duke family, the family is kind of a large family, cousins, nephews, aunts and uncles, but there was nothing organized about the family. The family didn't always get along well, like any large family, there was sometimes quarrels or disagreements. There was never any such thing as a gang.

Q: Living in California, would you have known if there was a Duke Gang?

JB: Absolutely. I would have know because the family stays in touch all the time and you kind of know what all the relatives of the family are doing with their lives.

- Q: Do you know if Ralph Plukey Duke ever told the younger people in the family, such as his son Monty or Loren Duke or Andre Duke or Marcell Duke what they should be doing and not doing; giving them direction as to their activity or giving them orders to do something?
- JB: Ralph would never do that. When he'd see the young people in the family, he would just try to be friendly with them. Caution them to stay out of trouble and sometimes help the young people out. Ralph was older, so he wasn't hanging around with his son and their nephews or their friends. Ralph was hanging out with people more his age.
- Q: Do you know anything about the sting operation that Monty Duke, Loren and all those other young people were caught up in?
- JB: I don't know anything about this, I was not in Minnesota when that happened, I wasn't any way involved in it, but I heard from relatives and other people back in Minnesota that Ralph had nothing to do with this operation.
- Q: As you probably know, the allegation was that Ralph Plukey Duke put up a large amount of money for the purchase of narcotics and it turned out to be his son dealing with an undercover agent. Do you have any specifics about that?
- JB: No, I don't. But, everyone in the family, cousins, nephews and what not, know that Ralph Duke did not put up any money, that this deal was done by those young guys and Ralph wasn't involved. I learned later that all these young guys blamed it on Ralph, but through family and I guess, the word on the street up in Minnesota - everyone knew that Ralph was not involved in this.
- Q: Is there anything else you can think of concerning your cousin Ralph Duke and his conviction?
- JB: There is nothing right now I can think of. I may think of something later.
- Q: I will leave room on this statement if you wish to add something to it -- please do it in ink.
- JB: Okay.
- Q: Now, Mr. Ballard, have I made any promises, threats or inducements for this interview with you today?
- JB: No.

Q: Has anyone made any promises, threats or inducements for you to give me an interview?

JB: No.

Q: Mr. Ballard, is this interview true and correct, based on the best of your recollection?

JB: Yes it is.

Q: All right, thank you very much sir. I will transcribe this, mail it to you for your signature and have a copy for you to keep for your records.

JB: Thank you very much.

Additional Comments: (PLEASE SEE ATTACHED)  
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Jeffrey Ballard

Subscribed and sworn to before me  
this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 1998.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public

Friday, August 14, 1998

Re: *Response to report*

To: *Vince Carraher*

From: *Jeffrey Ballard*

The additional comments that I would like to add is that the prosecuting team that put Ralph Duke behind bars were/are all a bunch of liars. They had been after Ralph for some years because of their speculation that he was involved in drug dealing. The vicious way in which they tore him down, making him basically unrepresentable in court, was done so simply because they could not stand watching him live the life style he led. Pure jealousy on their part. All of the prosecutions *supposed* factual statements and/or theories made in court (*falsely*) corroborated or otherwise, were all part of a concocted *script*, to completely bury the man. I also firmly believe that the Judge conspired with the prosecutors to permanently slam the door on Ralph's life, just so he could send a message to the black youth. Of course I have no proof of this, but even though I was not present at the trial, everyone know's, including myself, what exactly went down. Concerning the initial entrapment, Ralph's son Monty, told Ralph, (at Tom Thumb in St. Paul), that he, (Monty) was about to make a big move. Ralph's reply back to Monty was that he should not get involved with that stuff and just to go out and enjoy the summer. Further proof that Ralph had no ideal about *the deal* that Monty and Loren had set up, *or had been set up in.* Another comment was made by Ralph's *hand picked attorney*, Joe Freeburgh. He made the comment to Agent Mike Carey in the hallway of the courthouse. His comment was, "*as much time as he's gonna get, Who cares*"? The DEA went way out of their way to make it look like Ralph was some Columbian drug lord, all part of the script, to make any potential jurors hate the man with the same intensity they hated him with. With the reports that I received after Ralph's arrest, I could only come to the conclusion that these people, the DEA, the prosecutors and the Judge, were definitely out to get *their man* at all costs, simply because they knew that they could get away with it.

I don't know if you have gotten in touch with my dad, but I was told that he did file a report about the break-in at his apartment. My brother Joe, has been trying to contact you, but has not been successful as of yet. I will say that he is becoming more reluctant the more time he has to think about it, mainly because of the role he was forced to play in the first trial. If I can think of anything else I'll be in touch. *Thanks!*

Sincerely,



Jeffrey Ballard