

## Chapter Two Lee Harvey Oswald

### *Introduction*

It is natural to begin our study of the Kennedy assassination with a close look at who Lee Harvey Oswald was, though as we observed in the previous chapter, there will always remain a significant distance between determining who Oswald was and who it was that was responsible for the assassination. Determining that he was involved in intelligence operations does not establish that he was part of a conspiracy; determining that he was not involved in intelligence operations does not establish that he was not a scapegoat put together by a conspiracy. We must consider the sum total of the evidence, and see how it fits together.

In the studies of Oswald's brief life, two principal questions have been addressed in much of the literature. First, was Oswald involved in governmental intelligence operations? and second, was Oswald's personality, and his world as he saw it in 1963, of such a character as to impel him to assassinate President Kennedy for his own private or political reasons? These questions are ultimately those which will interest us the most.

To these questions, the evidence available appears to provide some guarded answers -- answers which are based on such evidence as is available to us at present. Oswald was, most likely, involved in intelligence operations, and he was, most likely, not impelled by personal, internal forces to kill President Kennedy.

### *early childhood. Connections to Muritz/Marcello; David Ferrie*

Lee Harvey Oswald was born on October 18, 1939 in New Orleans; his father had died two months earlier.<sup>1</sup> He had a brother, Robert Oswald, born 5 years earlier, and older than Robert was a half-brother, John Pic, born during an earlier marriage of Lee's mother Marguerite.<sup>2</sup> Lee Oswald's early family included a good deal of support from his aunt, a point we will return to as we consider Oswald's adolescence in New Orleans.<sup>3</sup> When Lee was four years old, his mother and he moved to Dallas; his brothers were in an orphans' home at the time, though they joined Lee and Marguerite shortly thereafter.<sup>4</sup> Marguerite married Edwin A. Ekdahl in May, 1945, a man with whom Lee had apparently established a good and healthy relationship, but Marguerite and Ekdahl were divorced in the summer of 1948.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> WCR, ch. 7

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.* The summary of Lee's early life composed by the Warren Commission is replete with only lightly veiled criticisms of a lifestyle imposed on a single mother of three children, a lifestyle that is plainly foreign to the writer of the Warren Commission Report. Marguerite's constant concern with money, and her inability to provide babysitting at all the hours that she was at work, are offered as if they were indictments of her ability to provide a decent home, rather than

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In August 1952, Lee and Marguerite moved to New York, just before Lee's thirteenth birthday. Lee's brother Robert had recently joined the Marines. In New York, they lived briefly with John Pic and his wife, but that arrangement, in a small apartment, was extremely tense and unsatisfactory for all concerned.<sup>6</sup> Lee was enrolled in school, but he became a chronic truant. He was put in Youth House from April 16 to May 7 of 1953 for psychiatric observation to determine the basis of his truancy. The Warren Commission says that there was little or no evidence in New York that he would turn violent.<sup>7</sup> The Warren Commission reports that

Contrary to reports that appeared after the assassination, the psychiatric examination did not indicate that Lee Oswald was a potential assassin, potentially dangerous, that "his outlook on life had strongly paranoid overtones" or that he should be institutionalized. [He was found to be] a tense, withdrawn, and evasive boy who intensely disliked talking about himself and his feelings.<sup>8</sup>

Evelyn Siegel, a social worker who interviewed Lee and his mother, said of Marguerite Oswald that she was:

a "smartly dressed, gray-haired woman, very self-possessed and alert and superficially affable," but essentially a "defensive, rigid, self-involved person who had real difficulty in accepting and relating to people" and who had "little understanding" of Lee's behavior and of the "protective shell he has drawn around himself."<sup>9</sup>

### *New Orleans*

Early adolescence is a formative period in one's life, and the period that Oswald spent in New Orleans at this time has rightly attracted the attention of researchers.

In January of 1954, the Oswald family returned to New Orleans. Lee and his mother

lived in a small apartment over a saloon at 126 Exchange Alley in New Orleans' then run-down Vieux Carre, and he attended Beauregard Junior High in the same neighborhood. Exchange Alley at the time was a squalid street lined with pool halls, bars frequented mostly by homosexuals and prostitutes, and illegal bookmaking establishments controlled by the Mafia organization then headed by...Sam "Silver Dollar" Carolla.<sup>10</sup>

Lee finished 9th grade [at Beauregard Junior High School, quote from *Mafia Kingfish*], and then tried to join the Marines (in October of 1955), but he was turned down because he was too young.<sup>11</sup> He was at this point "an introverted boy who read a great deal," in the words of the Warren Commission. He started to read Communist literature that he got at the public library.<sup>12</sup>

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being the result of an economic situation over which she plainly had little control.

<sup>6</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> WCR p. 382.

<sup>8</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> John Davis, *Mafia Kingfish*, p.126

<sup>11</sup> WCR p. 384.

(383f). Rather than continuing in school in 1955-1956, he worked for a year, and then in October, 1956, he succeeded in joining the Marines.

During his years in New Orleans, Oswald spent a good deal of time with his mother's sister, Lilliane, and her husband, Charles F. Murret. Charles Murret was known as "Dutz" Murret; he was a figure known in the local sports world, known for having been a boxer, and known (even to the FBI, for whom New Orleans remained more of a mystery than many other cities<sup>13</sup>) as a boxing manager, as a professional gambler, and as a "handbook manager" in part of a larger gambling structure that was run by Sam Saia, who was himself part of a larger criminal organization eventually run by Carlos Marcello, a major figure in organized crime in the United States (as we shall see in chapter 4). Murret was associated with Saia from as early as the 1930s until the 1960s (Saia died in October 1964 [check date]).<sup>14</sup>

### *Ferrie and the Civil Air Patrol*

During Oswald's time in New Orleans, he was a member of a youth group called the Civil Air Patrol. This affiliation becomes important because while in the Civil Air Patrol, he came in contact with a man named David Ferrie, who had close contacts with the Mafia chieftain Carlos Marcello, and whom Jim Garrison (and a number of researchers) have argued was associated with the assassination.

One of Oswald's best friends during this period was Edward Voebel, who confirmed to the FBI immediately after the assassination that Oswald had been in the organization with "Captain David Ferrie"<sup>15</sup>; David Ferrie will play an important role in the discussion of New Orleans activities in Chapter 5 below.<sup>16</sup> A photograph recently uncovered from this period shows Oswald and Ferrie in the same photo.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>WCR p. 383-4.

<sup>13</sup>Blakey-Billings 370

<sup>14</sup>Blakey-Billings 371.

<sup>15</sup>Blakey Billings note (p. 374-5) that Voebel was certain of the Ferrie-Oswald connection in the report submitted by the FBI immediately after the assassination, but rather less certain in his testimony before the Warren Commission. Edward Voebel died in 1971 (Blakey-Billings, 375).

<sup>16</sup>Posner gives a misleading account of the materials provided by the House Select Committee on Assassinations report. He offers information that he says the HSCA did not have, and which, he suggests, makes it plainly clear that Oswald and Ferrie had no contact. This is what Posner writes:

According to the House Select Committee and its investigator, Gaeton Fonzi, the two most credible pieces of information linking Oswald and Ferrie are Oswald's 1955 Civil Air Patrol service, when Ferrie was allegedly the commanding officer, and an incident in Clinton, Louisiana...When Oswald was fifteen, he briefly joined the New Orleans Civil Air Patrol (CAP), at a time the House Select Committee believed Ferrie was the squadron captain. Several witnesses told the Select Committee, twenty-three years after the event, that they thought they recalled Ferrie as the group leader in 1955 when Oswald was in CAP....Ferrie was interviewed by the FBI on November 27, 1963, and denied ever knowing Oswald in the Civil Air Patrol. CAP records show he told

***Early interest in communism***

Voebel also said that Oswald showed no interest in Communism at the time.<sup>18</sup> Other witnesses have confirmed this connection.<sup>19</sup>

Summers notes several sources that indicate an interest of Oswald's in socialism and communism at an early age: Oswald's mother Marguerite Oswald,<sup>20</sup> and two high school friends, plus a letter that Oswald wrote to the Socialist party.<sup>21</sup>

***In July 1956, Oswald and his mother moved to Fort Worth. Was Oswald a 'loner'?***

There are two series of useful interviews of the people that Oswald came in contact with -- the Warren Commission, and Epstein's *Legend*, and in both we find accounts of Oswald interacting in a wide range of different styles and fashions, some more intellectual, some more personal, but there is little to support the image of the loner suggested by the Warren Commission. There is a young 17 year old in the Marines who is not comfortable with the rough language and the macho

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the truth. Although he was a member through 1954, Ferrie was disciplined because he gave unauthorized political lectures to the cadets. *When he submitted his 1955 renewal, he was rejected. Ferrie was not reinstated until December 1958. He was not even in the Civil Air Patrol when Oswald was a member in 1955. It is not clear why these records were evidently not available to the House Select Committee.*(p. 13)

But the fact is, the HSCA knew this perfectly well, as its report makes clear (see HSCA vol. 10, pp. 109f):

(416) Ferrie did not bother to renew his CAP commander charter when it ran out in 1954,(84) although he continued to wear the insignia of the CAP on his fatigues. (85) He did renew his commander charter in 1959, when he augmented his cadet's standard CAP rifle training by instituting an association with the New Orleans Cadet Rifle Club.

The footnotes referred to in that citation are the following:

(84) Synopsis of SBA hearing, testimony of John R. Espenan, pp. 2-3 (J.F.K. Document 014930); testimony of David Ferrie, synopsis, p.6; and see ref.11, SR 11-N-224, Nov. 19,1962, exhibit EEE, p.9.

(85) Ibid., SR-11-N-224, vol. K, FAA file. ALBA SBA, D. W. Ferrie, 15-63, 29-63, 48-63, brief of EAL on grievance of Ferrie, p. 13.]

<sup>17</sup>This photo was shown on nationwide television in the fall of 1993 in a documentary on Oswald's life broadcast on public television.

<sup>18</sup>Davis, *MK* p. 198.

<sup>19</sup>Blakey-Bilings 375: they discuss the testimony of Frederick S. O'Sullivan, who had recruited both Voebel and Oswald; and Collin Hamer, another former Civil Air Patrol member, interviewed for the HSCA, who confirmed that Oswald and Ferrie were active participants at the same time and place. Other witnesses providing relevant information include Goerge Boesch, Anthony Atzenhoffer, and John Irion.

<sup>20</sup>*NY Times*, Dec 10 1963, cited in Summers.

<sup>21</sup>Check that: Summers gives XIX.319; VII.-- William Wulf; HSCA III IX.109; and also WC XXV.140.

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life style that some of the Marines expected of the enlisted men, but that is not suggestive of an avoidant personality. In addition, there is a recent interview with Kerry Thornley, who was close to Oswald during one period that Oswald was in the Marines.

Two of Oswald's other friends from the Marine Corps, Richard Call and Nelson Delgado, recalled considerable interaction with Oswald, in their testimony and interviews. Call, for example, recalled playing "hundreds" of chess games with Oswald.<sup>22</sup> Epstein notes that Oswald developed a number of friendships in the Soviet Union with both male and female Russians, including Pavel Golovachev, son of General P.Y. Golovachev, Hero of the Soviet Union, Rosa Kuznetsova, and Ella German.

### *Marines*

#### ◆ Tokyo

On October xx, 1956, Oswald, having just turned 17, joined the Marines. He was trained in radar techniques and air traffic control, and assigned in 1957 to the Marine Air Control Squadron (MACS-1) located in Atsugi, Japan.

Writes the Warren Commission: "He did not adjust well to conditions which he found in that service" <sup>23</sup>

Atsugi was one of the top secret locations where the CIA's U-2 spy plane was based. The U-2 was a top secret project, devised and supervised by Richard Bissell, head of the Operations Division of the CIA. Marines based there had security clearances. The record is unclear as to whether Oswald had the minimal Confidential clearance, or the higher Secret clearance.<sup>24</sup>

Oswald spent a significant amount of time in the Tokyo night life-- again, hardly reflecting the image of a young man unable to interact socially with others. He told one of his Marine buddies, Zack Stout, that he had fallen in love with one of the Japanese hostesses at the Queen Bee, one of the most expensive nightclubs in Tokyo.<sup>25</sup> Several Marines reported seeing them together; he invited her back to the base on several occasions. Oswald's connection with this hostess, whose name was Midorii, has puzzled researchers, in that the Queen Bee was a club where a patron could be expected to spend upwards of \$60 a night, and this at a time when Oswald's monthly salary was less than \$85.<sup>26</sup> David Bucknell, a friend of Oswald's in the Marines, said that Oswald told him of being approached by an attractive Japanese woman in a bar. According to Bucknell, a superior of Oswald's "arranged for a meeting on the base between Oswald and a man

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<sup>22</sup>Epstein, , 101.

<sup>23</sup>WRC p. 385.

<sup>24</sup>As Summers (157) notes, three marines testified to the HSCA that Oswald must have had the higher clearance: Lt. Donovan, Oswald's commander later in California; Nelson Delgado, a fellow Marine with Oswald; and Kerry Thornley, another fellow Marine (see section below on Thornley).

<sup>25</sup>Epstein, *Legend*, 71.

<sup>26</sup>*Legend*, 71.

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dressed in civilian clothes. The man, a "security" or "security-intelligence" operator, explained to Oswald that he could do his country a great service. Oswald was told that the woman was a KGB contact and that he would be given false information to pass on to her....His liaison with the woman continued; he was given money to spend at the Queen Bee, and apparently encouraged by American intelligence to enter into a sexual relationship with the woman.<sup>27</sup>

Even the skeptical Posner writes,

His contact with Japanese Communists may have come through a hostess at Tokyo's Queen Bee, one of the three most expensive nightclubs in the capital. .. Oswald only made \$85 a month, and he was extremely tightfisted. By the time he defected in the fall of 1959, he had saved \$1,500, nearly 75% of his Marine salary during two years of service. [citation is given to notes of interview of Lee Oswald conducted by Aline Mosby in Moscow, Nov. 1959 CD 352, CE 1385, XC XXII, 705]

As far as I can determine, there is no documentary basis to the Posner's notion that Oswald had saved \$1,500 by the fall of 1959; this is, rather, an airy assumption that Posner makes in view of the fact that the transportation that Oswald will decide to take in the fall of 1959 to Moscow will cost that much. The fact is that we are in the fork of a dilemma at this point. Either Oswald was indeed tightfisted while in Tokyo--or he was not. If he was indeed frugal, and saved up out of his less than modest salary all the money that he needed to get himself to Moscow in 1959, then Oswald was able to frequent a high flying nightclub in Tokyo at no expense to himself, and some account of that is necessary, for someone else was paying his way. It might conceivably have been the hostess at the Queen Bee, or it might have been some covert source, such as an intelligence operation that wished to keep track of activities at the Queen Bee. The notion of Oswald innocently becoming the boyfriend of a hostess at a bar catering to high-rolling American officers, and having his way paid by her in Japan, makes little sense at a human level. We are led to wonder how they could have met, and where? What would have attracted her to Oswald over the American officers that she would have otherwise socialized with? But to reject that possibility is to be forced to one of two alternatives: either Oswald was having his way paid at that point by some other covert group, such as military intelligence, or he was spending his own money recklessly in Tokyo, and in no way could have afforded to pay his own way to Moscow in 1959 -- or both. In the former case, where Oswald was having his way paid by some unit or organization, we are brought face to face with an Oswald in the service in Japan already engaged in covert activities, while the latter assumption means that Oswald's flight to the Soviet Union in 1959 was not an innocent and personal choice.

Information has been published recently shedding more light on Oswald's Tokyo period. According to Richard Case Nagell, a former intelligence officer, Oswald was observed by the Japanese police entering the Soviet embassy in Tokyo "allegedly to have some coins identified," and visiting with Col. Nikolai Eroshkin,<sup>28</sup> the GRU resident in Japan (GRU was the Soviet military intelligence organization), and a target of American enticement at that time; Nagell,

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<sup>27</sup>Mark Lane, "The Assassination of President John F. Kennedy: How the CIA Set up Oswald, *Hustler* (October 1978, p. 50, cited in Russell, p. 146.

<sup>28</sup>Russell, *The Man Who Knew Too Much*, 136.

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working for the military Counter Intelligence Corps, was temporarily assigned to a CIA project, and arranged to have himself introduced to Oswald.<sup>29</sup>

- ◆ MACS-1 gets ready to go; Oswald shoots himself, goes to the hospital for three weeks.
- ◆ Oswald leaves with the group on Nov. 20, 1957 for the Philippines in Operation Strongback.

This was apparently related to the attempted (but failed) CIA-backed coup against Sukarno. Back to Atsugi, March 18. April 11, 1958, he is found guilty in a court-martial of having an unauthorized gun (with which he -- perhaps -- shot himself). The sentence is suspended, on the condition of continuing good behavior. He put in for hardship discharge. He provoked a fight with Technical Sergeant Miguel Rodriguez at the Bluebird Cafe on June 20. July 27, Oswald was sentenced to 28 days in the brig.

◆ Sept 1958, Quemoy and Matsu situation warms up, and MACS-1 is sent to Formosa.<sup>30</sup> October 6, 1958, after a strange incident while Oswald was on guard duty, he was sent back to Atsugi, Japan, before the rest of the unit. He was reassigned to Iwakuni, to a Marine squadron there, 430 miles southwest of Tokyo. A fellow Marine, Owen Dejanovich, recalls seeing Oswald speaking to an attractive Eurasian woman.<sup>31</sup> Dan Powers, in the same unit, thought that she was teaching Oswald Russian.

For Oswald was learning Russian at this point. At the end of 1958 (he left November 2), he returned to the United States, and became part of Marine Air Control Squadron (MACS) 9 in Santa Ana, California, based adjacent to El Toro Air Base. On February 25, 1959, records show that he was administered a Russian language examination. The results showed that his command of Russian was "poor", but the surprise, of course, is that he knew enough Russian, both written and spoken, to manage the score that he did -- and that the US. Marine Corps choose to recognize his nascent interest in things Russian and Communist, and to set him down and give him a Russian language exam.<sup>32</sup> Shortly thereafter, he passed a high school equivalency examination. This prepared the way for his applications to college in Europe later in the year.

John F. Donovan, Oswald's training officer in MACS-9, reported to the Warren Commission that the main function of the base was "basically to train both enlisted [men] and officers for later assignment overseas." (<sup>33</sup>.)

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<sup>29</sup>Russell, p. 715 and p. 136.

<sup>30</sup>Or perhaps Oswald did not go to Formosa? See HSCA p. 280-281, which casts doubt on the notion that Oswald went there with his unit.

<sup>31</sup>Legend, 82.

<sup>32</sup>Cf. e.g. *Legend* 85. His reading score was +4, his written Russian score was +3, while his oral comprehension score was -5; these numbers indicate the total number of correct answers less the number of incorrect answers.

<sup>33</sup>Cited in Russell, *The Man Who Knew Too Much*, p. 177, given there as WC VIII, 290; Russell notes that the minimum requirement there was a "Secret" classification, and who goes on to observe that "all of this seems a unique situation for a young Marine who twice had been court-martialed in Japan and whose previous foreign-duty extension had been canceled." (p. 177)

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There has been controversy and, indeed, acrimony concerning the question as to whether Oswald studied Russian in an official capacity while in the military. Much has been made of an observation by Chief Counsel J. Lee Rankin: "...we are trying to run that down, to find out what he studied at the Monterey School of the Army in the way of languages..."<sup>34</sup> Oswald's fellow Marines during this period recall him spending a great deal of time studying Russian and familiarizing himself with things Russian. *Studying Russian*: Kerry Thornley (see *infra*) told the Secret Service on the day after the assassination that Oswald spoke and read Russian, and that he had learned it while stationed in Japan.<sup>35</sup>

A striking testimony to the improvements in Oswald's Russian during this period comes from an account offered by Rosaleen Quinn, an airline stewardess who had been studying Russian for a year at that point. She was introduced to Oswald by one of Oswald's fellow Marines, who was her nephew; she later reported that they spoke for two hours in Russian, and that Oswald's fluency and his confidence in Russian was superior to hers. His only explanation of that, she said, was that he had been listening to Radio Moscow.<sup>36</sup> We may reasonably conclude that at least as early as this California period, Oswald was being trained and educated in the Russian language by some part of the military -- perhaps Naval Intelligence, which serves as the intelligence agency for the Marine Corps. This may appear to be a conclusion of considerable moment to draw on the basis of fairly slim evidence -- a novice's competence in Russian, and an official record of a Russian exam -- but the appearance of this language proficiency in the official record of Oswald's background is, all things considered, thoroughly extraordinary. It is worthy of note, as well, that in all of the research that has been conducted into Oswald's background (and most particularly in the case of the Warren Commission research), no other soldier's case has been brought forward in which an enlisted man was fortuitously administered a Russian foreign language exam in the absence of any training as part of duty.

Gerry Patrick Hemming is a soldier of fortune whose name comes up frequently in investigations of the parapolitical demimonde. Hemming was "recruited by Naval Intelligence at the end of his own time in the Marines,"<sup>37</sup> which included a period at Atsugi Base, just like Oswald, though at a

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<sup>34</sup>Jan 27, 1964, executive session, released in 1974, and cited in Summers, *Conspiracy*, 155. This material was released pursuant to a request by Harold Weisberg.

<sup>35</sup>Russell 1992, 143, citing Secret Service memo at the National Archives in Washington.

<sup>36</sup>Epstein, *Legend*, 87.

<sup>37</sup>Sumner, *Conspiracy*, 171. The flowery editorial language of *Argosy* (April 1976, p. 25) describes Hemming in these terms: "Hemming, a six-foot-six ex-Marine and Green Beret who knew personally Lee Harvey Oswald, Fidel Castro, Frank Sturgis and Che Guevara, has also identified several of the "hit men" code-named in the Senate's report on CIA-attempted assassinations of foreign leaders; discussed the maverick, operation of Florida CIA contract employees in forming proprietary companies to launder money for Latin American assassinations and analyzed the Mob's attempt to infiltrate the White House during the Kennedy years. The odyssey of Gerry Hemming began in the mountains of Cuba where, like many other adventurers in the days before Castro turned to the Communists, he came to aid Fidel's rebels in their efforts to overthrow the corrupt Fulgencio Batista. Eventually, he was assigned by Castro to work as an officer-instructor of a parachute regiment, later as adjutant at a Cuban air base. By this time, he was really working against Castro for American intelligence. In the fall of 1960,

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different period. Hemming tells of meeting Oswald in January of 1959 at the Cuban consulate in Los Angeles, just shortly after Castro had come to power in Havana. Hemming had worked with Castro in the hills of Cuba in 1958. Hemming observed, "He was attempting to get in with the representatives of Castro's new government, the consular officials in Los Angeles. And at that point in time I felt that he was a threat to me and to those Castro people, that he was an informant or some type of agent working for somebody. He was rather young, but I felt that he was too knowledgeable in certain things not to be an agent of law enforcement or of Military Intelligence, or Naval Intelligence." Hemming was struck by Oswald's "knowledge of *my* background. At a first meeting, not thirty minutes after we first met, he automatically not assumed but stated that *I'm* a radar operator and named the outfit he was attached to and details not every Marine would know -- the crypto, the abbreviation of the outfit he was attached to. He obviously stated it knowing my background. Somebody had briefed him; somebody told him to approach me."<sup>38</sup>

Hemming recounted a similar version to another researcher:<sup>39</sup> "There had been a shooting incident when Castro's Twenty-sixth of July Movement people took over the consulate in January [in Los Angeles]. It was under both physical and photographic surveillance by the local police, at the request of the State Department. One day a Cuban who was coordinating the movement there called me aside. He said there was a Marine who'd come around, saying he was prepared to desert and go to Cuba to become a revolutionary. The Cuban asked if I'd meet with this Marine, check him out. I did. The young guy told me he was a non-commissioned officer. He was wearing sport clothes. He talked about being a radar operator and helping the Cubans out with everything he knew. It turned out to be Oswald." When asked whether he thought Oswald was sincere, Hemming said, "No, he didn't look like he was worth a damn, maybe just trying to create a scandal. I thought he might've been on the Naval Intelligence payroll. You know, a penetrator. I told the Twentieth-sixth of July leadership to get rid of him."

- Honorable discharge

- ◆ Oswald as marksman:

See Chapter 4 of Warren Commission Report, subsection on "Oswald's Rifle Capability":

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discovered by Fidel and facing possible execution, he escaped. After contacting the CIA to tell them all he knew about Castro's operations, Hemming settled in Florida. There he started Interpen, a specialized group that trained embittered Cuban exiles in special Florida camps for long-range penetration and guerrilla warfare against Castro's regime. He maintained a cadre of twenty-five instructors. And he began a long friendly-adversary relationship with the CIA, the Mob, the Hughes interests, Congress, and many wealthy and influential Americans. For the last ten years [written in 1976], since Interpen disbanded in 1964, Hemming has worked for a NASA project in Africa; as a paid investigator on Jim Garrison's staff looking into the Kennedy assassination; and as a part of a paramedic team that rescued survivors in the 1970 Peruvian earthquake."

<sup>38</sup>Summer, *Conspiracy*, 172.

<sup>39</sup>Dick Russell, in 1976; the quotations are from Russell, *The Man Who Knew Too Much*, p. 178.

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For a rifleman situated on the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository the shots were at a slow-moving target proceeding on a downgrade in virtually straight line with the alignment of the assassin's rifle, at a range of 177 to 266 feet.<sup>40</sup>

Oswald's testing for use of rifle: After his initial training, he was tested in December 1956, scoring 212, 2 points above the minimum for a "sharpshooter", the second of three passing categories (marksman, sharpshooter, expert). In May, 1959, he scored 191, one point above the minimum for marksman (i.e., one point over the passing point).

### *Flight to Russia: real or staged?*

There are grounds for belief that one or more intelligence agencies in the United States was involved in the late 1950s with establishing a number of false defectors seeking citizenship in the Soviet Union. The most direct grounds come from an interview that Victor Marchetti, a former executive assistant to the Deputy Director of the CIA<sup>41</sup> had with the journalist Anthony Summers in which Marchetti indicated that the Office of Naval Intelligence had an operation run out of Nag's Head, North Carolina, that set up young men to look disenchanted with the American way of life; they would then attempt to defect to the Soviet Union.<sup>42</sup>

#### ◆ *Discursus on military defectors to the Soviet Union in the late 1950s, and Oswald's ability to return*

The most cited case of a defector to the Soviet Union is that of Robert E. Webster, largely because his case is remarkably parallel to Oswald's in a number of respects, raising the question as to whether this is a coincidence, or the result of both participating in the same false defector program. Webster had been in the Navy; he went to Moscow to renounce his citizenship, as Oswald did -- just two weeks before Oswald did, and he became disillusioned with the Soviet Union, returning to the United States -- again, two weeks before Oswald.<sup>43</sup> Webster worked for the Rand Development Corporation.

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<sup>40</sup>WCR, NYT edition, p. 189.

<sup>41</sup>Marchetti joined the CIA in 1955, after serving in the U.S. Army, and left in 1969. He is the author, with John Marks, of *The CIA and the Cult of Intelligence*.

<sup>42</sup>Summers, *Conspiracy*, 174. Summers recently discussed at a public panel (Chicago, dates April xx 1993) the fact that he had heard Marchetti recently quoted as saying that he (Marchetti) had no knowledge of such a program, and Summers apparently felt that Marchetti's more recent denial was more worthy of belief than his earlier statement. This is one of the quite numerous cases where each reader must consider the facts and draw an independent conclusion. Marchetti's original comment is very much in line with the facts discussed immediately below regarding the number and timing of American defectors to the Soviet Union.

<sup>43</sup>Cf. Summers, *Conspiracy*, p. 177-178, and also the New York Times, October 20, 1959, cited by Scott, *Dallas Conspiracy*, II-10. Three further confounding points, as Russell points out: ""When Oswald first set about arranging his own departure home in 1961, at the U.S. embassy he 'asked about the fate of a young man named Webster..." After the Kennedy assassination, a U.S. intelligence check into Marina Oswald's background found an address matching that of Webster's Leningrad apartment building in her address book. And Marina herself, some years later in America, told an acquaintance that her husband had defected after working at an American exhibition in Moscow. The trouble was, that defector was not Oswald, but Webster."

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Peter Dale Scott notes that there was a virtual stream of defectors to the Soviet Union following Richard E. Snyder's appointment as consul at the American embassy in Moscow in June, 1959.

Commenting on the first of these, that of Mr. and Mrs. Libero Ricciardelli in July, the *New York Times* noted that "similar cases have been rare" since the 1930s [*NYT* July 20, 1959, p.4]; yet Oswald in October 1959 was the fifth such person and there were two more by the year's end.<sup>44</sup> The second, after the Ricciardellis, seems to have been Nicholas Petrulli. "The *New York Times* reported on September 19 that Petrulli, despite having formally renounced his U.S. citizenship, was allowed by U.S. authorities to regain it (he flew home two days later). [*NY Times*, Sept 22, 1959, p. 10]"<sup>45</sup>

Scott also makes the troubling observation that Oswald's Historic Diary and Snyder's testimony agree that Oswald first came to the Snyder at the Embassy on October 31;<sup>46</sup> but the day before, in a confidential letter to Washington, Snyder raised the question "as to how far the Embassy ought to go in 'defection' cases...of persons like Webster." (18 H 110).<sup>47</sup>

### *Oswald's travel itinerary:*

August 17, 1959: Oswald requested a dependency discharge from the Marines, and received word that the request was to be approved on September 4; he applied for a passport the same day. He went to Los Angeles on September 10 to pick the passport up, and received his discharge the following day.

The Warren Commission simply suggests that Oswald was able to pay for his trip of defection out of the thriftiness of his Marine years; later researchers have dug deeper, and been mystified how Oswald was able to pay for the \$1,500 trip (see Summers on this). He had \$203 in his bank account at the time of his departure.<sup>48</sup> His boat ticket cost \$220.75.<sup>49</sup>

October 9, 1959: arrives in London

October 11, 1959: arrives in Helsinki or the 10th?. Checked into the XX Hotel. He applied for a visa as a student on October 12 to go to the Soviet Union, and received one; his visa was valid for no more than six days.

Oswald say the consul Gregory Golub at the Soviet consulate, suspected by the CIA to be a KGB officer. Oswald got a visa in two days, where it would normally be two weeks, according to information obtained by the Warren Commission. Posner writes,

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Russell, p. 212 [he gives citations in fn 47, 48, 49 p. 754: to McMillian *Marina and Lee*, p. 197; Summers *Conspiracy*, p. 191; and WC V 259, resp.]

<sup>44</sup>P.D.Scott *Dallas Conspiracy* II-11.

<sup>45</sup>P.D. Scott *Dallas Conspiracy* 11-12.

<sup>46</sup>citing R 264, CE 24, 16 H 97; 5 H 262; R 747.

<sup>47</sup>Scott, *Dallas Conspiracy*, II-12.

<sup>48</sup>CE 1150, 22 H 180, cited in P.D.Scott, *Dallas Conspiracy*, II-9.

<sup>49</sup>WCR, *NYT* page 614.

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"Questions have been raised about the speed with which the visa was issued. Summers says, "Oswald's easy access had encouraged the belief that the Soviets were expecting him." According to Nosenko, that speculation shows no understanding of how the Soviet tourist system worked. Nosenko should know, since he was deputy chief of the KGB's Tourist Division in the Second Chief Directorate. Thousands of tourist applications were processed annually, and only a cursory review was given the forms, with the names checked against a security watch list. Also, the Soviet consul in Helsinki, Gregory Golub, had the authority to give Americans an instant visa if he was convinced the tourist was "all right." [citing HSCA p. 55]...Two days was well within the ordinary time for that consulate. [here he cites Nosenko interview as his source]

October 16: Oswald arrives in Moscow. He is met by an Intourist guide, and registers as a student at the Hotel Berlin. He is told he must leave Moscow. Oswald attempts to slash his wrists; is taken to a hospital.

After an interview during this period (date?), Aline Mosby said of him that "he appeared totally disinterested in anything but himself. He talked almost non-stop like the type of semi-educated person of little experience who clutches what he regards as some sort of unique truth."<sup>50</sup>

The New York Times reported Oswald's defection in an article on Sunday, Nov. 1, 1959, p. 3:

### EX-MARINE REQUESTS SOVIET CITIZENSHIP

Moscow, Oct. 31 (AP) - A former marine from Texas told the United States Embassy today that he had applied for Soviet citizenship.

"I have made up my mind, I'm through," said Lee Harvey Oswald, 20 years old of Fort Worth, slapping his passport on the desk.

The embassy suggested that he withhold signing papers renouncing his citizenship until he was sure the Soviet Union would accept him.

Mr. Oswald is the third American in recent months to apply for Soviet citizenship upon arriving in Moscow. Nicholas Petrulli of Valley Stream, R.I., filed a renunciation form, then changed his mind and decided to keep his United States citizenship. Robert Webster of Cleveland, Ohio, completed formalities for taking Soviet citizenship ten days ago.

\_\_\_\_\_ (bar in original)

The rest of this dispatch was held in censorship.

Mr. Oswald's mother, Mrs. Marguerite Oswald, lives in Fort Worth. His sister-in-law, Mrs. R. L. Oswald of Fort Worth, said he got out of the Marines about a month ago and returned to Fort Worth for a visit.

According to Nosenko (a KGB defector whose bona fides we will discuss in detail in the next chapter; suffice it to say for the moment that this author finds his credentials highly dubious, while some writers (notably Posner) take his statements at face value), he took charge of

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<sup>50</sup>CE 1385, 703, cited in Posner, p. 48

## Chapter Two: Oswald

Oswald's dossier a few days after it was brought to the KGB's attention by Rima Shirokova, his Intourist guide, that Oswald wanted to defect.<sup>51</sup> Did the KGB interrogate him? Nosenko says, No:

The KGB was not at all interested in him. I cannot emphasize that enough -- absolutely no interest....People who raise this point [about Oswald's connection to the U-2, and the U-2 incident] do not understand intelligence work. I am surprised that such a big deal is made of the fact that he was a Marine. Even the House Select Committee kept saying to me, 'But he was a Marine -- that must have interested the KGB.' I was astonished at their naiveté. So what is the big deal that he was in the Marines? First, he wasn't in the Marines any longer, but even if he had come to us in a uniform, we still would have had no interest. What was he in the Marine Corps -- a major, a captain, a colonel? We had better information already coming from KGB sources than he could ever give us. If he had been a Marine guard at the U.S. embassy, then we would have been very interested. But that wasn't the case with Oswald. As for Atsugi, we didn't know he had been based there. The media section of the KGB would have seen Oswald's public interviews, but they would not necessarily have transferred that information to us. Even if we knew about Atsugi, it is unlikely we would have spoken to him. Our intelligence on the U-2 was good and had been for some time.

On the other hand,

At El Toro Air Base in California, Oswald's last assignment before leaving the Marines, there was a flurry of activity when local commanders learned of his defection. According to Oswald's former commanding officer there, the defection precipitated wholesale changes in codes, frequencies for radio transmission and for radar, and aircraft call numbers -- changes designed to repair any leaked secrets. [citation to VIII 298] Marine Lt. John Donovan told the Warren Commission that Oswald had a wealth of knowledge about West Coast air bases, including "all radio frequencies for all squadrons, all tactical call signs, the relative strengths of all squadrons, number and type of aircraft in a squadron,...the authentication code for entering and exiting [the air defense zone],...the range of surrounding units' radio and radar." [citation to VIII 298, and Meagher p. 339]<sup>52</sup>

Again,

Lt. Donovan told the *New York Times* "He knew the location of every unit on the West Coast and the radar capacity of every installation. We had to spend several thousand man-hours changing everything and verifying the destruction of the codes. Oswald was a very unpopular man that month."<sup>53</sup>

And yet also on the third hand, Lt. John Donovan told the WC about the things that were changed due to Oswald's defection, and what Oswald could tell; but there was no "net damage

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<sup>51</sup>Posner 48

<sup>52</sup>Melanson, *Spy Saga*, p. 16.

<sup>53</sup>New York Times, Dec 5, 1963, cited in Scott, *Dallas Conspiracy*, II-15.

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assessment" for Oswald's defection, though there should have been (even if he were a plant, it would seem, to keep up his cover). See Epstein *Legend* pp. 102, 366.

28 October: released from Botkinskaya Hospital, and checked into the Metropole [Hotel].<sup>54</sup>

But Nosenko's firm denial that the KGB interrogated Oswald was contradicted by none other than Vladimir Semichastny, former head of the KGB, in an interview aired in the US in the fall of 1993. Semichastny says that following Oswald's release from the hospital, he was interrogated for three days, and both Counterintelligence and Intelligence considered recruiting him, but declined the opportunity. "There were conversations," Semichastny said, "but this was such outdated information, the kind we say the sparrows have already chirped to the entire world, and now Oswald tells us about it, not the kind of information that would interest such a high level organization such as ours."

31 October: goes to American embassy, and tries to renounce his citizenship; Richard Snyder, the American consul, tells him it's too late in the day, and that he should come back on Monday.

John McVickar, vice-consul at U.S. embassy in Moscow told the Warren Commission that Oswald seemed to be following some "pattern of behavior in which he had been tutored by person or persons unknown, that he had been in contact with others before or during his Marine Corps tour who had guided him and encouraged him in his actions."<sup>55</sup>

We learned in the fall of 1993 that at this point, for a reason that we do not know, Yakatrina Fritseva, the highest ranking woman in the Politburo, insisted that Oswald be given permission to remain in the Soviet Union. Semichastny said in 1993, "He's begging, to hell with him, let him stay here in order to avoid an international scandal, on account of such a nobody. We were not convinced this would be his last act of blackmail, we expected he would try again, which would be difficult to deal with in Moscow, so we decided to send him to Minsk."<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>54</sup>Posner 52

<sup>55</sup>CE 941; XVIII: 155, cited in Melanson p. 14.

<sup>56</sup>*Frontline*, on Oswald, fall 1993. We would naturally want to know more about Yakatrina Fritseva. She is the same person as the Yazkaternina Furtseva mentioned by Ernest Volkman, in *Spies* (John Wiley and Sons, 1994), who notes that Furtseva was "the Soviet Minister of Culture (and the reputed mistress of Nikita Khrushchev)." (255). Her name comes up in the context of a discussion of the infamous Soviet defector Nikolai Artamonov, a.k.a. Nicholas Shadrin, who may or may not have been a real defector. Artamonov defected to the U.S. in June of 1959, a few months before Oswald defected to the Soviet Union. She is discussed also in *Widows* (p. 242ff), by William Corson, Susan Trento, and Joseph Trento. Their version of the story is that Furtseva told her son-in-law, a high-ranking KGB officer named Kozlov, that "she had kept Semichastny from recruiting Lee Harvey Oswald in Minsk years earlier." (The connection between Furtseva and Artamonov is a bit complicated, and there is no connection that we can make at the moment to the Oswald story that concerns us here--except to note that there is a perfect symmetry in that Oswald's false defection seems to match Artamonov's false defection, and each had his defenders among the highly placed officials of the countries to which he defected.) The two accounts are different: did Furtseva appeal for Oswald to be permitted to remain in the Soviet Union, or did she argue that he should not be used by the KGB? Equally importantly: whichever it was, why?

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4 January 1960, Oswald is told that he would be going to Minsk. According to Nosenko, at this point the KGB in Minsk was ordered to conduct only indirect surveillance, so they could track his behavior and thoughts only through informants, not directly through agents.<sup>57</sup> In fact, Nosenko has claimed that the central KGB files in Moscow did not have anything like complete files on Oswald when he was arrested after the assassination, and Nosenko's superior, Gen. Gribanov, the section chief, had him get the files on Oswald from Minsk, which consisted of some five file folders. The files made clear, Nosenko has said, that Oswald had no KGB connection. "The files were clear. The KGB didn't want Oswald from day one."<sup>58</sup>

Oswald worked as a metalworker at the Belorussian Radio and Television Factory, his diary tells us. He was given a one-room apartment in a good location with a fine view. Opinions differ as to whether this was unusual treatment for a defector.<sup>59</sup> He had an active social life, going out a great deal with both male friends and female friends. He went out with Ella Germann for some six months, and proposed to her in January of 1961; she turned down his offer. A month later, he wrote to the American embassy in Moscow, saying he wished to return to the United States. Richard Snyder, at the embassy, conducted a correspondence over the winter in which it was made clear that Oswald would have to appear at the embassy in Moscow if the process was to proceed further.

He seems to have had sufficient language skills now to be trained and to work together with Russians at the Radio Factory. [based on *Frontline* program]

According to a 1993 program,

"Vacheslav Nikonov was an aide to the first KGB chief after communism. He reviewed the entire Oswald file. 'Oswald looked very suspicious to the KGB and to the authorities because he was not interested in Marxism. He didn't attend any Marxist classes, he didn't read any Marxist literature, and he didn't attend even the labor union meetings. So the question was, what was he doing there?'

"The KGB kept Oswald under constant surveillance, and coopted most of the people he met, including his best friend, Pavel Golovachev. 'I was met by one of their people, and it was like this. He said, "your country asks you, your country demands, there is a foreigner here, it's in your country's interest, for security, and so on, that was [unintelligible] one, but I told him about a year later. I had three or four meetings with the KGB people, they gave me little assignments to provoke him, saying, try this out on him, see what he says."<sup>60</sup>

Nikonov also points out that the KGB was alarmed at the thought of Oswald going out on a hunting trip in the outskirts of Minsk, thinking that he might approach a military base -- so the hunting party was joined by some KGB agents! There were five in the party.

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<sup>57</sup>Posner 54.

<sup>58</sup>Posner 56.

<sup>59</sup>Not surprisingly, Posner believes it was normal treatment(p. 58), while others (Henry Hurt, Jim Marrs) say it was not.

<sup>60</sup>Frontline, on Oswald, fall 1993.

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[Oswald had a southern accent -- recordings were played on the air, and sounds like the familiar Oswald of 1963. ]

Meanwhile, Oswald met Marina at a trade union dance (March 17, 1961), and he proposed a month later; she accepted, and two weeks later they were married. Marina soon became pregnant, and Oswald continued with his efforts to return to the U.S. He was able to get to Moscow on July 8, 1961; he phoned Marina, and she joined him in Moscow, where they met with Richard Snyder outside of the embassy. Oswald filled out a form for renewal of his passport, which would expire in two months. He got his passport back. In Washington, Oswald's file was reviewed and approved by Bernice Waterman, 36 year veteran of the Passport Office, and this decision was confirmed by the chief of the Passport Office's foreign operations division and its legal division.<sup>61</sup>

On Christmas day, 1961, Oswald and his wife are given permission<sup>62</sup> to leave the Soviet Union. On one account, the head of the KGB explained the reason: "We realized that Oswald was a useless man."<sup>63</sup> Nosenko says of Marina, "There was no reason to keep her. She was not the daughter of a prominent family or a government official. She was not considered so wonderful herself..." Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) gave its approval for a visa to Marina in May of 1962.

On June 1, Oswald signed a note for \$435.71, received the money, and along with Marina and his new daughter June, left the Soviet Union. One account, the official account and the one that Marina testified to, has them going by train to Rotterdam. A disagreement in the literature exists over the significance of the fact that Oswald's passport does not contain a stamp from Helmstedt, while Marina's does. Summers cites research<sup>64</sup> indicating that "State Department and West German sources are emphatic that it would have been stamped," while Posner says that "Marina's passport, a Soviet document, would automatically be stamped at a crossing to the West. As for Oswald's American passport, the decision to stamp it was at the discretion of the border guards."<sup>65</sup>

Summers extends the uncertainty of Oswald's own itinerary by noting that Oswald's notebook contains a handdrawn map of Berlin with a train station prominently drawn, the train station used by most long-distance trains, such as one that Oswald would have been on if he had come from Russia.<sup>66</sup> No other explanation has arisen, as far as I know, for the appearance of this map in Oswald's notebook; he was not in Berlin at any other time, as far as we know.

*Meanwhile, back home in the US, intelligence offices are...*

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<sup>61</sup>Posner, p. 69

<sup>62</sup>ibid.

<sup>63</sup>Posner, p. 71, citing NBC interview.

<sup>64</sup>Summers, p. 215, 567

<sup>65</sup>Posner, 74.

<sup>66</sup>Summers, 215.

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Meanwhile, back in the United States, offices at the highest levels are expressing interest in Oswald.

- FBI:

June 6, 1960: J. Edgar Hoover memo [astonishing memo in which Hoover alerts FBI offices that someone may be using Lee Harvey Oswald's birth certificate! --discuss further ]

- CIA

[Material that John Newman has dug up on FBI/CIA files on Oswald before his return to the US]

### ***What else did he do in Minsk? Did he send back intelligence?***

At one point, Oswald wrote up a summary of the functioning of the plant he worked at in Minsk:

"The Minsk Radio and Television plant is known throughout the Union as a major producer of electronic parts and sets. In this vast enterprise created in the early '50s...the party secretary... controls the activities of the 1,000 communist party members here and otherwise supervises the activities of the other 5,000 people employed at this major enterprise...

"This factory manufactures 87,000 large and powerful radio and 60,000 television sets in various sizes and ranges...It is this plant which manufactured several console model combination radio-phonograph television sets which were shown as mass produced items of commerce before several hundreds of thousands of Americans at the Soviet Exposition in New York in 1959.

After the Exhibition these sets were duly shipped back to Minsk and are now stored in a special storage room on the first floor of the Administrative building -- at this factory, ready for the next International Exhibit.

...The plant covers an area of 25 acres in a district one block north of the main thoroughfare and only two miles from the center of the City with all facilities and system for the mass production of radios and televisions; It employs 5,000 full-time and 300 part-time workers, 58% women and girls."<sup>67</sup>

This is a remarkably good piece of informative writing, both from the point of view of expository organization and concerning his familiarity with the details of the factory in which he works. It compares favorably with many essays that I have read of undergraduates at outstanding universities, and if Oswald lacked for formal education, and suffered from poor spelling, he was a man not incapable of clear expository writing. Furthermore, while many of my well-informed colleagues at the University of Chicago may be aware of the total faculty size, I doubt that more than one in a hundred could cite the number of full-time and part-time workers employed here. Why was Oswald up on such figures?

Recently published information provides substantial support for the hypothesis that Oswald was engaged in providing the CIA with information regarding the Minsk Radio and Television plant during the period that he was employed there. Robert Morrow, a former contract agent for the CIA, has described a job he performed in 1961. He had gone under orders to Madrid from Greece, where he had been, and in Madrid his instructions were to go to the offices of Permindex, a CIA proprietary company. At the Permindex office, he received further instructions from Switzerland, in a phone call from David Ferrie, a pilot with whom he had worked before on CIA business in Cuba and elsewhere. These instructions were to meet an American couple, the Hamiltons, in a Paris hotel called the Plaza d'Athene. Morrow picked up a

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<sup>67</sup>*Legend*, 296. No source provided; apparently his diary. Check on that.

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packet of papers from them, and passed them on to his own case officer, Tracy Barnes, with the message that it came from Harvey in Minsk.<sup>68</sup>

- U2 incident: 1960.

Oswald apparently first told the U.S. embassy in February 1961 that he wanted to return to the U.S., and opinions in the literature vary as to whether the alacrity with which his case was treated are significant of an intelligence connection. Those who believe there was no such connection suggest, of course, that his case was treated in a routine fashion. Posner, for example, writes

Records show that within two months of Oswald's return, two other American defectors to Russia also returned. One of the Americans, Robert Webster, was an even more extreme case than Oswald in that Webster had successfully renounced his American citizenship. H was repatriated as a Soviet alien under the USSR's immigration quota for 1962 and his application to return to the U.S. took less time than Oswald's....By 1963, thirty-six defectors to Communist countries had come back to the U.S.<sup>69</sup>

As the reader will have seen, using Webster as a standard of comparison assumes that Webster's status as a true defector, a notion that requires substantiation in the eyes of most researchers, no doubt.

Oswald met Marina at a trade union dance in Minsk in mid-March 1961. He entered the hospital for an adenoid operation shortly thereafter, and he proposed to her while still in bed in the hospital. They were married on April 30, 1961.

- ◆ Diary:

Edward Jay Epstein noted that a

microscopic examination of Oswald's handwriting in this diary indicates that the entire manuscript was written in one or two sessions. The misdating of a number of events further shows that the writing took place at least one year after the events described. For example, in the October 31, 1959, entry Oswald discusses his visit to the United States Embassy in Moscow that day and notes in passing that John McVickar had replaced Richard Snyder as "head consul." This change he points to did not occur, however, until August 1961, twenty months later, when Snyder was recalled to Washington. Another anachronism appears in Oswald's diary entry supposedly written on January 5, 1960; he quotes the salary he is to receive at the Minsk factory in new rubles, although the ruble was not revalued until approximately one year later. Such anachronisms strongly suggest that the entire diary was prepared after the decision was made to repatriate Oswald to the United States.<sup>70</sup>

Epstein notes that the diary emphasizes those aspects of Oswald's life and those political events that would substantiate Oswald's transition from a firm supporter of Soviet Communism to a disillusioned American hoping to come home. Epstein sees Oswald as having been set up at this point as an agent working for the KGB, that is, for Soviet intelligence, and he points to the fact

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<sup>68</sup>Russell, *The Man Who Knew Too Much*, 216f.

<sup>69</sup>Posner, p. 62.

<sup>70</sup>Epstein, *Legend*, 109-110.

that Oswald was able to take this ersatz diary with him when he left the Soviet Union as supporting the notion that Oswald's disillusionment was the creation of the KGB.

Posner 1993 writes of the diary:

Oswald calls the document his Historic Diary, and it is an account of his time in Russia...The early entries seem to be written after the events described, but the later ones, reflecting life in Minsk, appear contemporaneous. Robert Groden, in *High Treason*, declares the diary "clearly a fake." He maintains the spelling is too good to belong to Oswald, a terrible speller. But the diary is replete with misspellings and Oswald's trademark transpositions. Handwriting experts used by both the Warren Commission and the House Select Committee determined the diary was written by Oswald.<sup>71</sup>

### ***Return to US***

Lee and Marina Oswald arrived in New York on June 13, 1962, where they were met by Spas. T. Raikin. He has been described (by the Warren Commission) as "a representative of a travelers' aid society which had been contacted by the Department of State."<sup>72</sup> He was also the secretary-general of the American Friends of Anti-Bolshevik Nations, as first pointed out by Peter Dale Scott.[create sidebar on ABN] This observation causes Posner some trouble. A number of writers have noted Raikin's significant association -- indeed, position. Garrison and Summers, two writers that Posner cites a good deal, notes Raikin's affiliation; Garrison notes that the AF-ABN is "a private anti-Communist operation with extensive intelligence connections." Posner objects that Garrison gives no citation, but Summers does; he cites an article by Peter Dale Scott in *Ramparts*, Nov. 1973, which discusses the AFABN and some of its sinister connections.<sup>73</sup> The truly curious will note that Scott gives no citation in his *Ramparts* article for where his information about Raikin comes from, but if we turn to a longer, unpublished but influential manuscript of Scott's,<sup>74</sup> we find that Scott notes that a "Taiwan publication of the Asian People's Anti-Communist League (APACL) reveals that Spas T. Raikin was Secretary-General of the American Friends of the Anti-Bolshevik Nations, Inc. (AF-ABN)." In the footnote at the end of that sentence, Scott cites *Free China and Asia* (Taipeh), August 1959, p. 28; cf. *Ukrainian Bulletin* (Apr.-May 1960), p. 6."

Discursus on the American Friends of the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations: Christopher Simpson offers some insight into the activities of the AFABN in his discussion of Edward O'Connor:

"The single most important American ABN activist was the National Security Council's Dr. Edward M. O'Connor. O'Connor... had been the U.S. displaced persons commissioner who had spearheaded the legal revisions that permitted Waffen SS veterans from Latvia, Lithuania, and

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<sup>71</sup>Posner 51.

<sup>72</sup>Report p. 713, cited by Scott in Dallas Conspiracy; check original.

<sup>73</sup>I myself find it difficult to accept Posner's error as innocent in origin. There is a considerable literature by now on the ABN, the APACL, and the mother of them all, WACL; one may see Anderson and Anderson, *Inside the League*.

<sup>74</sup>*The Dallas Conspiracy*, 1970-71 version.

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Estonia to enter the United States freely, beginning back in 1951. O'Connor moved that year to a post in the directorship of the NSC's Psychological Strategy Board and spent most of the remainder of the 1950s in a variety of NSC assignments concerned with the administration of clandestine operations in Eastern Europe. He was a specialist in the national security aspects of immigration policy and made no secret of his political affinity for the exiled anti Communist groups of the ABN. He eventually served as chairman of the private support group American Friends of the AntiBolshevik Bloc of Nations and as a founder of the National Captive Nations Committee. FN: Later Dr. O'Connor reemerged as a leading public spokesman on behalf of Ukrainian emigres in the United States accused of war crimes. O'Connor was announced as a featured speaker at a 1985 rally organized on behalf of Ivan Demjanjuk, for example, who was found by a U.S. federal court to have been a former Treblinka death camp guard responsible for loading prisoners into the gas chambers. O'Connor contended that the KGB had falsified the evidence against Demjanjuk. O'Connor's son Mark, as it turns out was Demjanjuk's defense attorney. Edward O'Connor died at age seventy-seven on November 24, 1985.<sup>75</sup>

[minority view on ABN however: John Costello on early ABN formation: Several of the groups forming the ABN were heavily supported by MI5 and the OSS after the war. It was MI5's job to check out the background of these ex-Nazis.

"When Philby arrived in Washington -- where his duties included liaising with Frank Wisner at OPC-- he participated in the strategy meetings for the Anglo-American covert operations to use Albanian emigres to overthrow the Communist governments."

Costello goes on to suggest that Bandera is a communist agent:

"Agents of the 'Cambridge network' were therefore remarkably well placed at the start of the Cold War to ensure that the MI5 and MI6 vetting slips carried the magic words 'no traces against' when it came to the penetration of the ABN by Moscow.]"<sup>76</sup>

Richard Helms: The FBI would certainly interview him for counterespionage purposes, and to try and find out whether the KGB had recruited him whether he was going to be somebody that they had to continue to watch, what his motives were, and it was the FBI's responsibilities, and if they interviewed him once or twice, that would seem to me to have been adequate."<sup>77</sup>

However, Frontline interviewed a CIA officer, Donald Denslia [phonetic] , who read a report on an Oswald debriefing in 1962. "I received across my desk a debriefing report. It was a debriefing of a Marine redefector. He was returning with his family from the Soviet Union and was back in the United States. The report was approximately four to five pages in length, it gave a lot of details about the organization of the Minsk Radio plant. It was signed off by a CIA officer by the name of Anderson."<sup>78</sup> John Newman, on the Frontline show, indicated that he had found a handwritten note in a margin of an Oswald file document referring to Andy Anderson in the Domestic Contact Division, the division that presumably would have had responsibility for debriefing Oswald. Frontline also contacted the head of Domestic Contact, who confirmed

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<sup>75</sup>Simpson, *Blowback*, p. 270.

<sup>76</sup>*Mask of Treason*, John Costello, p. 496-97.

<sup>77</sup>Frontline, fall 1993.

<sup>78</sup>Frontline, fall 1993.

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Denslia's story that the CIA had debriefed Oswald, adding that it was just a routine contact that his division had made.

Oswald and his wife arrived at Love Field in Dallas on June 14, 1962. They stayed with Oswald's brother Robert for several weeks, and then with his mother for three more weeks. They were interviewed by FBI agents John Fain and R. Tom Carter, on June 26; he was apparently not interviewed by the CIA. On June 14, they moved in with Oswald's mother; three days later, Oswald got a job as a welder at the Leslie Welding Company. On August 14, they moved into an apartment of their own at 2703 Mercedes St., with Oswald working at the Leslie Welding Company.<sup>79</sup> Two days later, Oswald was interviewed again (this time, in a Bureau automobile) by the FBI; this time, by agents John Fain and Arnold Brown. Around this time, Oswald got a subscription to *The Worker*, put out by the CPUSA, and he also wrote to the Socialist Workers Party, a Trotskyite organization. {Posner suggests this is the result of a "funk" that the second interview with the FBI put Oswald into [p. 82].}

On August 25, at a dinner party, Oswald met Anna Meller and George Bouhe. Through George Bouhe, a network of Russian emigres began to look out for Marina and the family.

On October 8, Oswald quit his job to look for work in Dallas. Marina and their baby then went and stayed in Dallas with the De Mohrenschildts' daughter and son-in-law,<sup>80</sup> and then went back to Fort Worth, where they were put up by Elena Hall. Oswald got a job with Jaggars-Chiles-Stovall, apparently through a chain of events begun by a phone call from Oswald on October 9 to Anna Meller in the Russian community; Meller's husband, Teofil Meller, contacted someone from the Texas Employment Commission, who found Oswald the job.<sup>81</sup> He found the Jaggars-Chiles-Stovall job on October 12. However, George de Mohrenschildt and his wife testified to the Warren Commission that de Mohrenschildt was responsible for Oswald's getting the job at Jaggars-Chiles-Stovall.<sup>82</sup> A third story given in the literature is that a counselor in the Texas Employment Commission, Helen Cunningham, referred Oswald to Jaggars-Chiles-Stovall for a post as a photoprint trainee.<sup>83</sup> He began work on October 12.

Oswald was registered at the Dallas YMCA for the period October 15 to 19, but his whereabouts from October 8 to October 13, and from October 21 to November 2 are uncertain. At approximately this time, he opened Post Office Box 2915. He obtained an apartment for himself and his family on November 3 on Elsbeth St.

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<sup>79</sup>Blakey Billings 379

<sup>80</sup>Blakey Billings 379. This was Alexandra and Gary Taylor. Posner (89) states that they went directly to stay with Elena Hall's family, and that she confided deeply with Hall during the following week. (90).

<sup>81</sup>Blakey Billings 379.

<sup>82</sup>Russell, 270, who cites the Warren Commission Report, p. 719; Summers, *Conspiracy*, pp. 222-26. He notes that Epstein reports Oswald's mother as also being under the impression that de Mohrenschildt got the job at JCS for Lee (p. 189).

<sup>83</sup>Posner, 90, apparently citing Warren Report 719 (though it's not clear if this information is tied to that footnote).

## Chapter Two: Oswald

Some disagreement remains regarding whether JCS was engaged in significant classified activities for the Defense Department. Posner says that "Jaggar's work for the government was almost entirely unclassified,"<sup>84</sup> citing Robert Stovall's testimony to the Warren Commission (X:168); the classified work it did include (or perhaps consisted of) setting type for place names of photos of Cuba. The work that JCS did in this autumn of 1962 would appear now to involve the photos that were being taken of Cuba which documented the placement of offensive Soviet missiles in Cuba, the photos that led to the Cuban Missile Crisis the following October. [Check in Hurt's book, which Garrison cites in this respect.]

We will see that the Dallas Police reported a number of pieces of false identification in Oswald's possession at the time of his arrest, along with negatives used in their production, found in Oswald's garage possessions; on the assumption that Oswald really was in possession of that material, it is a reasonable conclusion that he was able to produce these materials while working at JCS, where he had access to the right photographic equipment, and where he was apparently able to get one or more of his coworkers to explain how to use the equipment. Appendix X of the Warren Commission report explains precisely how the falsified documents were produced. The Warren Commission experts<sup>85</sup> wrote that the forgeries "did not require great skill", but even a cursory reading of their account in Appendix X makes it clear that the operation was by no means trivial, and went beyond the abilities of this writer, for one.

November 2: Oswald got an apartment for the family at 604 Elspeth Street in Oak Cliff, a suburb in Dallas; the family moved in two days later. But Marina and Lee began fighting again immediately, and Lee was physically abusive; Marina moved to the Meller house, and then to the Katya and Declan Ford home, and then to the Frank and Valentina Ray home.<sup>86</sup> She eventually moved back in with Oswald, and perhaps out of frustration with Marina's willingness to submit again to his abusive treatment of her, most of the Russian emigres ended their contact with her at this point.

### *Encounter with White russian emigre groups; De Mohrenschildt and his background.*

The Warren Commission reports:

Somewhat of a nonconformist, De Mohrenschildt was a peripheral member of the so-called Russian community, with which Oswald made contact through Mr. Peter Gregory, a Russian-speaking petroleum engineer whom Oswald met as a result of his contact with the Texas Employment Commission office in Fort Worth." "In general, Oswald did not like the members of the Russian community. In fact, his relations with some of them, particularly George Bouhe, became quite hostile."<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>84</sup>Posner 90

<sup>85</sup>Posner 92, fn. \*; find original in Warren Commission report.

<sup>86</sup>Posner 94f.

<sup>87</sup>WRC p. 400

## Chapter Two: Oswald

Oswald met Peter Gregory, who taught part-time at the Fort Worth Public Library, and he asked him for some feedback on his memoirs and diary. Through Gregory, Oswald met others in the Russian emigre community: Katya Ford, Elena Hall, Anna Meller, George Bouhe. The group liked Marina, and felt particularly sorry for her; Oswald was treating her very badly during this period, beating her.<sup>88</sup>

### ◆ De Mohrenschildt.

Born in Minsk, Russia in 1911. His father was a baron; he served as a representative of the Nobel interests there. De Mohrenschildt was involved in the petroleum industry. He moved to the United States in 1938, at which time he became a close friend of Janet Auchincloss, Jacqueline Kennedy's mother. Russell reports that:

In 1941, de Mohrenschildt formed a documentary film partnership with Baron Konstantin Von Maydell. Maydell was a "distant cousin" who just happened to be the senior resident agent of the Abwehr -- Nazi Germany's Military Intelligence arm in the United States. The "Facts and Film" propaganda venture came to an end in September 1942, when Maydell was arrested as a "dangerous alien" and placed in a North Dakota internment camp for four years. U. S. authorities also determined that de Mohrenschildt was then corresponding with Germany through Saburo Matsukata, the son of a former Japanese prime minister who was believed to be the coordinator for German-Japanese spying on the United States...[de Mohrenschildt] appl[ied] for a job in the summer of 1942 with the CIA's wartime predecessor, the OSS. A CIA document notes that de Mohrenschildt "was not hired because he was alleged to be a Nazi espionage agent."<sup>89</sup>

...various other CIA contacts and connections...

...De Mohrenschildt told Epstein just before his death that J. Walton Moore from the Domestic Contact Service (CIA, Domestic Operations Division) that the CIA had an interest in an ex-Marine working at an electronics factory in Minsk.<sup>90</sup>

De Mohrenschildt told Edward Jay Epstein (March 29, 1977) that he was keeping tabs on Oswald for the CIA during their time in Dallas.<sup>91</sup> A friend of de Mohrenschildt's named Everett Glover reported in testimony to the Warren Commission that de Mohrenschildt had "checked with the FBI, and I remember he stated specifically in the letter, either in Fort Wroth or Dallas,

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<sup>88</sup>Posner reviews this treatment at length, in citations from Warren Commission interviews.

<sup>89</sup>Russell, p. 273. Russell's material on de Mohrenschildt (which is considerably more extensive than what I have indicated here) is based on a number of sources, including two interviews with de Mohrenschildt at de Mohrenschildt's home; CIA file No. 18-522, , declassified April 1976.

<sup>90</sup>Get *Legend*, Epstein reference.

<sup>91</sup>Epstein, get pages.

## Chapter Two: Oswald

about OSwald, and they told him that he was apparently all right, he was acceptable. They passed on him in some way."<sup>92</sup>

{Posner otherwise places considerable weight on the veracity of de Mohrenschildt's testimony, so he suggests that the fault here lies with *other* writers, who failed to note that de Mohrenschildt

was quite made by the time he gave his final interview. For nearly a year before his death, he was paranoid, fearful that the "FBI and Jewish mafia" were out to kill him. He twice tried to kill himself with drug overdoses, and another time cut his wrists and submerged himself in a bathtub. After he began waking in the middle of every night, screaming and beating himself, his wife finally committed him to the Parkland Hospital psychiatric unit, where he was diagnosed as psychotic and given two months of intensive shock therapy. After his treatment he said he had been with Oswald on the day of the assassination, though he was actually with dozens of guests at the Bulgarian embassy in Haiti the day JFK was killed. Despite de Mohrenschildt's imbalance, Epstein and others still quote the final interview as though it were an uncontested fact. (p. 119)

### ***Winter and spring, 1963; General Walker***

In January 1963, Oswald paid off his loans to the State Department and to his brother Robert; according to the Warren Commission he sent an order on January 27 for a Smith & Wesson .38 special revolver to Seaport Traders in Los Angeles, paying \$10 by cash in the mail, with the balance, \$19.95, to be collected C.O.D. at the post office on its arrival.

On February 13, the de Mohrenschildts invited them to a dinner party, where Oswald talked a good deal with a right-wing German geologist, Volkmar Schmidt.<sup>93</sup> Schmidt later said that at the time, Oswald was "obsessed with his anger towards Kennedy" because of the support (sic) of the Kennedy of the Bay of Pigs invasion. Schmidt brought up the case of Gen. Walker as someone who deserved the negative feelings. [Frontline 1993].

On the 22nd, they went to a small dinner party given by Schmidt and his roommate, Everett Glover.<sup>94</sup> Present were the de Mohrenschildts and Ruth Paine, who spent much of the evening talking with Marina.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>92</sup>WC X 22.

<sup>93</sup>Posner 99.

<sup>94</sup>Posner 101.

<sup>95</sup>Oddly, Posner (p. 101) says that Paine was "trying to talk to Marina", "despite the language barriers." However, the Warren Commission testimony that he is basing his description on is

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The Oswalds moved on March 2 to a new apartment at 214 West Neely St. Marina and Ruth Paine began their friendship soon thereafter.

Other than a few basic facts described in the chapter and below, most questions about who Ruth Paine is remain unanswered. The most perplexing and perhaps disturbing fact known about her was revealed in a now declassified document. It stated that according to a "confidential informant" (which I imagine is a phone tap), in a conversation with Ruth Paine shortly after the assassination, a man that he did not believe Oswald was guilty, and that "we both know who is responsible." Ruth Paine has not shed any light on what that knowledge might mean.<sup>96</sup>

March 12: According to the Warren Commission, Oswald orders a Mannlicher-Carcano rifle in the name of Hiddell, to be sent to his post office box. The order was clipped from an add in the February issue of *American Rifleman*.<sup>97</sup> It arrived on March 25, and he brought it to work at JCS one day.

Disagreement over the capabilities of a Mannlicher-Carcano:

Positive: *Posner*: When the FBI ran Oswald's gun through a series of rigorous shooting tests, it concluded "it is a very accurate weapon." [III 411]. It had low kickback compared to other military rifles, which helped in rapid bolt-action firing. [ibid 414]. With a 4x scope, even an untrained shooter could fire at a target like a marksman. As the FBI firearms expert Robert Frazier said, "It requires no training at all to shoot a weapon with a telescopic sight," and that particular sight needed virtually no adjustment at less than 200 yards, the range of the eventual assassination shots. [ibid, 413] The Carcano is rated an effective battle weapon, good at killing people, and as accurate as the U.S. Army's M-14 rifle. [III 443f, and interview with Art Pence] (p. 104)

March 31: the day on which the backyard photos were taken, according to Marina.<sup>98</sup>

March 31: Oswald wrote to the FPCC headquarters, describing a street demonstration he had arranged the day before, and asking for 40 more copies of a pamphlet by Corliss Lamont.

April 1 (approx): Oswald was given notice by his supervisor, John Graef; he was fired.

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quite explicit in stating that Ruth Paine was understood to have a strong background in the Russian language, perhaps having majored in it in college (she was 31 at the time). Glover says "she talked to his wife [Marina] very much"; and she translated for her as well.

<sup>96</sup>Fonzi 1993, p. 10.

<sup>97</sup>WC XVII 120, cited in Posner.

<sup>98</sup>There has been considerable controversy regarding whether these photographs are genuine or are a composite. In support of their genuine character is the report cited by Russell (MWKTM, p. 312) that "two former *Militant* [the SWP newspaper] employees ...recently confirmed to an assassination researcher [Gus Russo] that [autographed copies of these photos, apparently sent by Oswald himself] did arrive sometime in April 1963."

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April 10: According to Marina Oswald, Oswald came home with his rifle saying that he used it to fire a shot at General Edwin Walker\*. He had left what was certainly an incriminating letter (divided into 11 points) for Marina in Russian, explaining what she should do -- in case he is "taken prisoner", or some other event should befall him. Marina told this story to the FBI only after the note was (allegedly) found among Oswald's effects. She says that he told her he had been planning it for two months, and had built up an "operations book", complete with a map and photographs.<sup>99</sup>

Posner: The bullet...was so badly managed that ballistics experts could not match it to Oswald's rifle to the exclusion of all others, but they did conclude, based on the visible markings, there was a good probability that it was fired from Oswald's Carcano. (p. 116)

If we go back to the Warren Commission report, we find that they say (p. 186) that the FBI reported that

the bullet could have been fired from the rifle on the basis of its land and groove impressions. The Commission itself goes on to say that

James D. Nicol, superintendent of the Illinois Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation, conducted an independent examination of this bullet and concluded "that there is a fair probability" that the bullet was fired from the rifle use in the assassination of President Kennedy...Nicol said, And for purposes of probative value, for whatever it might be worth, in the absence of very definite negative evidence, I think it is permissible to say that in an exhibit such as 573 there is enough on it to say that it could have come, and even perhaps a little stronger, to say that it probably came from this, without going so far as to say to the exclusion of all other guns. This I could not do.<sup>100</sup>

Evica:

The spectroscopic analysis of the Walker bullet indicated that "the Walker bullet did not match the alleged Kennedy/Connally ballistic materials." (58)

◆ The photo of Walker's home found among Oswald's effects

Among the Warren Commission exhibits are two photos, one a photo of the front of Walker's residence, and the other a photo of a desk drawer [check that] in which various items, including that Walker home picture, had just been found. The second is thus a photo of a photo, but it is perfectly clear, and shows that the original photo not only contained the image of an automobile in front of Walker's house, it shows the clear image of a license plate, though the image is not clear enough to read the letters or numbers on the plate. Astonishingly, in the reproduction of the actual photo itself in the Warren Commission documents, the license plate has been blacked out, and the conclusion is thoroughly inescapable that the photo was doctored by the legal authorities who were in possession of it after it was taken from the desk drawer. These two photos can be seen, for example, in Anthony Summers' *Conspiracy*, in photo set 9.

Posner thoroughly misrepresents the facts of the matter here; he writes,

An issue was later created when the Warren Commission showed Marina one of the surviving five photographs Lee had taken of the Walker residence, and she said that a hole in the print,

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<sup>99</sup>I 17, cited in Posner 116.

<sup>100</sup>WRC 186-87.

## Chapter Two: Oswald

which more than obliterated the license plate on a car parked in front of Walker's house, had been added since Lee had shown it to her. But Marina may be mistaken. A photo of evidence taken from Oswald's flat after the assassination shows the hole was in the print at that time. [That's wrong!--JG] Also, the photo was taken from such a distance that the license plate of the car would not have been legible in any case, and it was later determined the car belonged to a Walker aide, Charles Klihr.<sup>101</sup>

The Warren Commission writes:

The Commission has concluded that on April 10, 1963, Oswald shot a Maj. Gen. Edwin A. Walker (Resigned, U.S. Army), demonstrating once again his propensity to act dramatically and, in this instance violently, in furtherance of his beliefs. The shooting occurred 2 weeks before Oswald moved to New Orleans and a few days after he had been discharged by the photographic firm. ...He also studied Dallas bus schedules to prepare for his later use of buses to travel to and from General Walker's house. Sometime after March 27k but according to Marina Oswald, prior to April 10, 1963, Oswald posed for two pictures with his recently acquired rifle and pistol, a copy of the March 24, 1963, issue of the *Worker*, and the March 11, 1963, issue of the *Militant*.<sup>102</sup>

Marina said she found a note explaining to her all the things she should know if he did not come home that night; she found it by disobeying his orders, and Oswald was very angry; she said he destroyed his book that he had prepared for the Walker attack.<sup>103</sup>

◆ Oswald-wants-to-shoot-Nixon story:

[not in the Warren Commission Report -- see their page 724.]

April 19 (approximately): George and Jeanne de Mohrenschildt left Dallas, heading for the East Coast.

April 24: Oswald left Dallas for New Orleans; he was given a lift to the bus station by Ruth Paine, and she offered to let Marina and June stay with her till he found a job and an apartment in New Orleans.

***New Orleans: Cuban émigré groups; Guy Banister, David Ferrie.***

In New Orleans, he went to the Murrets, and asked to stay with them while he looked for work.

9 May: Oswald finds a job with Reily Coffee Company, working as a maintenance man.<sup>104</sup> He rented a \$65/month apartment at 4907 Magazine Street.<sup>105</sup> The next day, Ruth Paine drove Marina and June to New Orleans, and Oswald began work at the Reily Coffee Co. On the 14th,

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<sup>101</sup>Posner, 117. This writer finds it difficult to believe that Posner's misrepresentation is due to carelessness.

<sup>102</sup>WRC 404

<sup>103</sup>WCR 405.

<sup>104</sup>Posner 124, citing WC VIII 136.

<sup>105</sup>WC VIII 58, cited in Posner

## Chapter Two: Oswald

Oswald wrote to the Fair Play for Cuba Committee with his new address, as he did a few days later with the Soviet embassy in Washington.

May 26: Oswald wrote to V.T.Lee, president of FPCC, requesting membership; he indicated he wished to establish a New Orleans branch office, and he asked for a picture of Castro. Without waiting for a reply, he had 1000 brochures printed up on May 29 encouraging people to keep their "HANDS OFF CUBA!", as well as membership applications, and membership cards. He put out over \$22 for this printing.

June 3: Oswald obtained a new post office box, giving Hidell as one of the names of people authorized to receive mail.<sup>106</sup>

Oswald frequented the Crescent City Garage during the time he worked at Reily Coffee. He was on friendly terms with Adrian Alba, who ran the garage.

- Several meetings during the summer with Dean Andrews, accompanied by Cubans, as testified by Andrews before the WC.

### *Summaries of Oswald's personality*

Blakey-Billings: "a devoted husband and father, a family man, who would beat his wife regularly and disappear from home for days, even weeks; an avowed Marxist, a follower of Fidel Castro of Cuba, whose fictional hero was Ian Fleming's James Bond, an anti-Communist British spy. Oswald was sullen and antisocial, often physically repulsive by choice, yet he craved approval and public recognition. Finally, he was a loner who was almost never alone."<sup>107</sup> Oswald's character traits included: "desire for fame and notoriety...alienation and antisociability and an inability to hold a job; a penchant for deception and intrigue; an adherence to a Marxist political philosophy; a willingness to resort to violence to achieve ends or to express feelings; and a tendency to be dependent on strong figures."<sup>108</sup>

Vladimir Semichastny was chairman of the KGB at the time when Oswald lived in the Soviet Union. "Would the FBI or CIA really use such a pathetic person to work against their arch-enemy? I had always respected the CIA and FBI, and we knew their work and what they were capable of. It<sup>109</sup> was clear Oswald was not an agent, couldn't be an agent, for the U.S. secret services, either the CIA or the FBI"

Katya Ford: "unstable...something was rather wrong with the man" "a mental case".<sup>110</sup>

George Bouhe: Oswald "had a mind of his own, and I think it was a diseased one."<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>106</sup>WC XIX 295, cited in Posner 130

<sup>107</sup>Blakey Billings 376-77.

<sup>108</sup>op cit, 378.

<sup>109</sup>Posner 56, citing "Inside the KGB," NBC, May 26, 1993.

<sup>110</sup>Cited in Posner, p. 84, citing WC II 308.

<sup>111</sup>Cited in Posner, p. 84, citing WC VIII:374.

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Francis Martello, the policeman who interviewed Oswald in the police station after he was arrested in New Orleans, saw Oswald as a non-violent person. Consider his dialog with Liebeler:

Martello: ...it appeared to me that he felt that Russia was the lesser of the two evils.

Liebeler: Did he express this idea with great forcefulness, or just sort of a "pox on both your houses" fashion, that really it was just too ridiculous, and that sort of thing?

M: With a nonchalant attitude. He was a very cool speaker. I don't know too much of his formal education. I read an account in the newspaper about it, but from the way he spoke, it was quite obvious that he had done a heck of a lot of reading in his lifetime, and his approach was academic, more or less theories but with no aggressiveness or emotional outbursts in any way, shape, or form. It was just a very calm conversation we had, and there was no emotion involved whatsoever.

L: Did he show any hesitancy about expressing these ideas to you as a member of the police department?

M: None whatsoever, sir....

...

L:...he in no way demonstrated any animosity or ill feelings toward President Kennedy?

M: No, sir; he did not. At no time during the interview with Oswald did he demonstrate any type of aggressiveness in any way, shape or form, other than his demonstration on Canal Street with the picket sign.

L: Did you consider whether Oswald was prone to violence or was a violent kind of person?

M: No, sir; I did not, for the simple reason that when he had made the friendship of the people with the anti-Castro groups in the city and offered them assistance, and when they saw him on Canal Street with pro-Castro signs they became insulting and abusive to the point of becoming violent toward him, and he never reacted to the action that was being directed toward him.

L: These anti-Castro characters attempted to provide Oswald into some kind of physical conflict, did they not, as a matter of fact?

M: That is correct, sir.

L: And he didn't respond?

M: That is correct, sir.<sup>112</sup>

...

L: When you subsequently heard that Oswald had been arrested in connection with the assassination, were you surprised?

M: Yes, sir; I was, I was very much surprised.

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<sup>112</sup>WC X 59-61.

L: Would you tell us--

M: Because he did not give me the impression of being a violent individual. He was a very passive type of an individual.

***Was Oswald trying to get Connally instead?***

387. When Oswald tried to get this changed Jan 30 1962, he wrote to Connally, but Connally had just resigned, and he wrote back to say he was sending the letter on to Korth [his successor]. "Probably his complaint was due to the fact that his discharge was not related to anything he had done while on active duty and also because he had not received any notice of the original discharge proceedings, since his whereabouts were not known." <sup>113</sup>

WC doesn't think he was trying to hit Connally, because if he were, he'd have been better off shooting while the car was coming towards him on Houston; after it turned to Elm, Kennedy was blocking Connally.

***Appendix: On Richard Case Nagell***

A recent book by Dick Russell has brought forward a good deal of information about a former intelligence agent named Richard Case Nagell. Nagell has given limited amounts of information to assassination researchers concerning his own knowledge of intelligence activities during the 1950s and 1960s that bear on the Kennedy assassination.

Two items of documentation provide prima facie confirmation of Nagell's involvement in some kind of intelligence activities. One is a document released through a FOIA action in 1986, dated May 2, 1969. This item was prepared Special Agent Thomas J. Hench of the 706th Military Intelligence Department, and concerns Richard Case Nagell. It notes, among other things, that:

"During the period from August 1962 to October 1963, SUBJECT was intermittently employed as an informant and/or investigator for the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). In April 1963, SUBJECT conducted inquiry concerning the marital status of Marina Oswald and her reported desire to return to the UXSSR. During July, August, September, and one occasion prior to this, SUBJECT conducted an inquiry into the activities of Lee Harvey Oswald, and the allegation that he had established a Fair Play for Cuba Committee in New Orleans, Louisiana." (Russell, p. 54 and p. 735)"

Another item is a military ID card that Nagell provided to Bud Fensterwald, his lawyer, apparently in his possession at the time of his arrest on September 20, 1963. It is military ID card in the name of Lee Harvey Oswald, bearing Oswald's military ID number and signature (though whether it is a real signature is perhaps open to question). It is very similar to military identity card that the Dallas Police say was found in Oswald's possession when he was arrested on November 22, 1963, but it differs in two striking respects. First, it contains a different picture of Oswald; the picture on the ID card that Nagell had contains a picture of Oswald that is identified

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<sup>113</sup>WRC p. 387.

## Chapter Two: Oswald

as item XXX in the Warren Commission report. Second, the Nagell card does not contain any trace of two overprinted stamps that appear on the ID card found on Oswald by the Dallas police. The simplest hypothesis is that somehow, Nagell had access to an Oswald ID -- similar to, but not identical to, Oswald's own -- before September 20, 1963, in a context in which photographic manipulation of identification cards was available.

In addition, journalist Russell interviewed a number of people (whose own role was supported by documentation) who supported various parts of Nagell's account. William Bishop, a leader of the No Name Key militia, identified Nagell as having served as Rolando Masferrer's bodyguard;<sup>114</sup> Bishop also said that Masferrer's group was suspicious of Nagell, thinking that he might be an infiltrator sent by someone. Bishop also said, "Later, I began realizing that this guy was with intelligence, under CIA contract. Bu you see, Rolando Masferrer was deeplyh involved with Alpha 66. So it is safe to assume that your man was also involved with Alpha 66."<sup>115</sup>

The most striking overt fact known about Nagell is that he walked into a bank in El Paso, Texas, on September 20, 1963, and fired two shots into the wall, and walked out, waiting to be arrested -- which he was. He was eventually tried, convicted, and sent to prison for several years. Nagell was apparently attempting to be arrested because he believed that he was becoming inextricably drawn into an assassination attempt on President Kennedy's life, one which he thought was going to take place at the end of September of 1963. It appears that Nagell was (or at least believed that he was) working for the CIA at that point, and was involved in an operation by which he had been picked up by the KGD as a disgruntled former American agent, though he would have been working all along, in his own view, for the United States. His inability to raise contact with his own CIA controller in 1963 led him to question whether he was in fact working for the KGB at that point, or whether he was -- so to speak -- being hung out to dry in the wind. As the Pentagon report cited above notes, Nagell had been on assignment to keep track of certain aspects of Lee Harvey Oswald's activities, and Nagell was apparently aware of an imminent assassination attempt involving Oswald. He may have feared that he would be simply used as someone who could be conveniently pointed to as Oswald's KGB controller.<sup>116</sup> William Bishop supports this view: "[a]nd there were rumors that he'd [Nagell] stumbled onto the fact that there was an assassination seriously planned. Because of that knowlledge, he was in jeopardy. So the deal in El Paso, in my opinion, was a means for him to get picked up and protected."<sup>117</sup>

Nagell asserts that during the fall of 1962, he worked for the CIA in Mexico City, and was operating as a double agent, acting as a disgruntled former intelligence officer and then being recruited by the KGB (in September 1962). He was involved in a "disinformation" project against the Soviets, and this in turn led to "later indirect involvement in a conspiracy to assassinate President Kennedy and other highly placed government officials in September

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<sup>114</sup>Russell, 509.

<sup>115</sup>Russell, 510.

<sup>116</sup>This observation I owe to Jon Arnold.

<sup>117</sup>Russell, 511.

## Chapter Two: Oswald

1963.<sup>118</sup> His CIA contact was code-named "Bob", and Nagell later came to suspect that Bob was working closely with the KGB instead of, or in addition to, the CIA.<sup>119</sup>

Various documents and letters, some of which seem to have been written primarily to document his activities at a given moment in ways that require some background to understand -- support Nagell's claim of involvement in clandestine operations during the 1950s and 1960s. In an interview. In a letter to Dick Russell, Nagell noted: "I was really involved heavy [check that grammar] with the so-called Cuban Missile Crisis. The onset of it was back in July [1962]. In my opinion the first Soviet IRBMs [intermediate-range ballistic missiles] (or at least their launching mechanisms) were delivered in late June or early July 1962. Before the crisis, the chief Soviet concern (KGB's EEI) was to determine whether or not the U.S.A. would 'act out' or actually conduct a naval blockade, and if so, whether any attempt would be made to board a Soviet ship, any ship, of course including those transporting missiles." (Russell, p. 243) Russell did not know until he asked a military intelligence officer what an EEI was, though it was apparently part of Nagell's everyday working vocabulary: essential elements of information.

Another instance that supports Nagell's bona fides was that he reported to Dick Russell in 1978 that during the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, the Soviets had an official go-between in Washington who effected communication between President Kennedy and Khrushchev. That this was in fact the case was not publicly known in this country until 1978, when Arthur Schlesinger's book, *Robert Kennedy and His Times*, revealed that Georgi Bolshakov played precisely this role.

- Edward Jay Epstein

Epstein has a short treatment of Nagell in *Counterplot* which, in retrospect, shows poor judgment on Epstein's part (and I will offer a case that his work demonstrates poor judgment in a wide range of cases below). Epstein is either unaware of, or chooses not to cite, Nagell's extensive involvement in intelligence over the years leading up to the assassination; he merely identifies Nagell as an inmate "confined in the psychiatric section of the Medical Center for Federal Prisoners in Springfield, Missouri." Garrison sent William R. Martin to interview Nagell in prison, and Nagell later claimed that Martin was a CIA agent.<sup>120</sup>

### ***Kerry Thornley***

- ◆ some quotations from *Conspiracies, Cover-ups and Crimes*, by Jonathan Vankin.

Sometime around Easter 1959, a young marine named Kerry Wendell Thornley struck a friendship with his company's resident misfit. The misfit was sometimes called "comrade" by the other marines at El Toro Annex just outside Santa Ana, California, because he was unreserved in his admiration for Karl Marx and communism. His real name was Lee Harvey Oswald.

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<sup>118</sup>Russell, *The Man Who Knew Too Much*, 241, based on a Nagell filing with the U.S. Court of Claims, July 14, 1969.

<sup>119</sup>At the time, "Bob" would have been in his middle to late 30s, and he spoke Japanese.

<sup>120</sup>Epstein, *Chronicles*, p. 221.

## Chapter Two: Oswald

Oswald openly subscribed to communist newspapers. On a Marine base, that was more than enough to make him an outcast. His introverted personality and penchant for cracking jokes in an exaggerated Russian accent secured his position as what Thornley called "the outfit eightball...what in the Army they called a yard bird and in the Marine Corps a shit bird." He had no true friends, but among his acquaintances on the base Thornley was one of the steadiest. ... Thornley's association with the president's alleged assassin has long ceased to seem a coincidence to him, or particularly good fortune (though it did get him a commission to write a nonfiction book called Oswald, which was published in 1965). He has come to believe that he was, against his will and without his knowledge, part of the conspiracy that killed Kennedy. And not only that. The plot, or rather the master plot of which the assassination was but one result, was hatched before he was born. He has been a coerced conspirator since his prenatal days.

Thornley and Oswald, too. this plot still continues. In 1981, Thornley wrote another book -- as yet unpublished--about what he believes was his part in the conspiracy. At the time he wrote it, Thornley thought that the conspirators first began to manipulate him when he became friendly with Oswald. He now believes that this association was a part, not the start, of the operation. "Since then, I've realized that I'm the product of a German breeding experiment. My mother and father were spies for Japan during the war. I learned enough about intelligence community cant and so forth that I can decipher what was going on in my early environment," Thornley said to me, once I had tracked him down by phone.

"What I think they were trying to do was create a monarchy in this country. I think they came over here originally with that purpose."

A breeding experiment?

"Oswald was, too," Thornley says. "We both were."

...

"Was Thornley an agent of the intelligence community?" Garrison asks in his most recent book. "Had he impersonated Oswald or coached others to do so?"

That was what Thornley was up against when he encountered Jim Garrison. At first, Thornley thought he would be helping Garrison. when he refused to admit meeting Oswald in New Orleans, Garrison indicted him for perjury. It was not exactly a secret indictment. Garrison spared nothing in smearing Thornley well before any trial. He sent forth a press release on February 21, 1968, stating flatly that "Kerry Thornley and Lee Oswald were both part of the covert federal operation operating in New Orleans." He note that Thornley was one of a number of young men who have been identified as CIA employees."

"I can tell you this flatly: I'm not a CIA agent," said Thornley when he was arrested at his home (then in Tampa) the next day. "Why does he think I am ? One of the reasons is that I went to Arlington, Virginia, after leaving New Orleans. Another is that I have the education to hold white collar jobs, but don't."

...

Though Thornley denies meeting Oswald in New Orleans, it was undeniable that they were there at the same time in late 1963. This baffled Kerry. Oswald had made headlines that summer, when Thornley was out of the city. Oswald was passing out leaflets for the "Fair Play for Cuba Committee," a real organization of which he was the only New Orleans, member. It is now widely believed, and was by Garrison, that Oswald's New Orleans chapter was a front -- some sort of government operation with Oswald as its agent.

Whatever Oswald's real motives, he had been in a street corner brawl with an anti-Communist Cuban. In retrospect, it's likely that this incident was staged. Again whatever its real reason, it

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put Oswald in the news and made him briefly a local celebrity, appearing on local newscasts as a spokesman for Marxism.

Yet when Thornley returned to New Orleans in September, no one thought to mention to him, "That marine buddy of yours who you're writing a book about is in town," though most of his friends knew the gist of his work in progress. This was all the more strange because Thornley, from news reports of Oswald's return from the Soviet Union, knew he'd gone to Dallas and was considering a trip there to see him. Thornley hoped to elicit some details that would flesh out the ending of the Idle Warriors.

Another convergence: While Thornley was out of New Orleans, after visiting his parents in Whittier, California, he traveled to Mexico City. He returned from Mexico, he told the Warren Commission, on September 3 or 4, 1963. About three weeks later, in Mexico City, Lee Harvey Oswald, or someone claiming to be him, appeared at the Cuban consulate and threw a very conspicuous tantrum. He wanted to travel to Cuba, and he wanted a visa right away. When he couldn't get it, he had a fit.

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- ◆ Material from Chris Holmes' interview with Kerry Thornley (11-93):