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11 December 1963

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, Sino-Soviet Bloc Area

THROUGH : Chief, Soviet Internal Affairs Branch
 : Chief, Soviet Division

FROM : SRI - Neil Buntley

SUBJECT : Additional Notes and Comments on the Oswald Case - Summary of Reasons for Not Concluding Soviet Involvement with Oswald

CLASSIFICATION REVIEW
 CONDUCTED ON 25 MAY 1976
 E-IMPDET CL BY 0122 G.P.

Document Number 376-154

for FOIA Review on MAY 1976

1. According to the New York Times for 10 December, the FBI report on the assassination of President Kennedy categorically states that Lee Harvey Oswald was the assassin, that he acted alone, and that there is no evidence to indicate that he was the agent of any foreign government. These disclosures presumably eliminate the possibility of further confrontations with Mr. Robert Slusser. In the event that Mr. Slusser continues to insist that the President was murdered by the Soviet secret police, the following additional negative indications and observations may be of some value.

2. Long standing KGB practice generally forbids agents serving outside the USSR to have any contact with domestic communist parties or with Soviet embassies or consulates. This prohibition, designed to reduce the possibilities of compromise to a minimum, is probably most stringently applied to agents on extremely sensitive missions. Yet Oswald blazed a trail to the Soviets which was a mile wide. He corresponded with the national headquarters of the Communist Party USA--apparently with some regularity--and visited the Soviet Consulate in Mexico City. In addition to his well-known leftist political activities,

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he also subscribed to the Daily Worker and a Trotskyite publication, allegedly received newspapers from the Soviet Union, and asked last June that his passport be re-validated for travel to the USSR.

3. Certain facets of Oswald's activities in the USSR also argue strongly that the KGB would never have recruited him for a mission of any kind. First, there is no doubt that Oswald was debriefed by the secret police shortly after his arrival in Moscow. They were interested in him not only because he was a political defector, but also because he boasted publicly--in the Embassy on 31 October 1959--that he intended to tell the Soviets "everything he knew" about Marine Corps radar installations on the West Coast. According to Oswald's former commanding officer, this included the locations of all radar units and their secret call signs, authentication codes and radio frequencies--all of which knowledge was grist for the Soviet intelligence mill. Given the KGB penchant for keeping its "illegals" under the deepest possible cover, however, it is extremely unlikely that Oswald--with his Russian wife--was even seriously considered for subsequent repatriation to the United States as a KGB asset. As a re-defector from the USSR he would immediately be suspect and thus under surveillance by the FBI. Furthermore, any indication that he had made good on his boast about the radars could easily lead to arrest and indictment on a charge of treason.

4. Secondly, Soviet "executive action" agents (assassins, saboteurs and terrorists) are carefully selected by the KGB and specifically trained for their missions. Oswald very probably ruled himself out of any consideration for this kind of operation. On 14 November 1959, Moscow refused his request for Soviet citizenship.; Shortly thereafter, he became despondent and reportedly attempted to kill himself by slashing his wrists. Even if the KGB had not earlier noted signs of mental aberrations, the suicide try presumably furnished convincing evidence that Oswald was not agent material.

5. Oswald's activities on a Dallas rifle range on 17 November are of some interest both as circumstantial evidence of prior planning to assassinate the President and as one more negative indication of KGB involvement.

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Oswald was firing at a range of 100 yards. He was assigned to target number 8, but according to witnesses, was actually firing at targets 7, 8, and 9. He was thus firing through an arc of approximately 15 degrees and obviously seems to have been simulating fire at a moving target. It is, of course, most unlikely that a KGB agent on an executive action mission would be permitted (or would permit himself) to practice firing under such obvious and public circumstances.

6. The evidence presently available to us seems fairly conclusively to rule out any Soviet involvement in the President's assassination. There are, however, several rather fascinating inconsistencies, loose ends and unanswered questions about Oswald. Some, if not all, may be treated in the FBI report. Pending its publication, they are listed below for whatever they may be worth.

a) In an interview last August, Oswald stated that his father-in-law was a Soviet army colonel who taught him to drink vodka when he came to court Marina. After the assassination, however, Mrs. Ruth Paine (some-time Oswald friend and landlady) stated that Marina's father, a colonel, had died when Marina was an infant.

b) To the tune of some \$437, the US picked up the tab for Oswald's return to this country. This loan was repaid between October 1962 and January 1963. During this period, Oswald was earning \$50 per week. Thus, over half of his total earnings went to the government and he supported himself, his wife and child on somewhat less than \$25 weekly. His rent at that time was \$59 per month. The possibility that he received outside help in repaying the government apparently has not been raised in the press.

c) In contrast to the letters Oswald wrote to his mother, Governor Connally and Senator Tower, his letters to the Fair Play for Cuba Committee are rather surprisingly literate. They do not appear to contain his frequent misspellings and ungrammatical language. There have been no suggestions that he received help in framing the letters, and he told the FPCC that he was financing his activities on its behalf out of his own pocket.

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d) There is increasing evidence that Oswald and his wife were not happily married. She was well-liked and he was unpopular. She seemed genuinely fond of the United States, did not share his anti-American views and sometimes spoke of the hard life in the Soviet Union. Oswald resented her friends and beat her up on at least one occasion. Since he could not have planned the assassination of the President prior to 26 September--when the Dallas trip was announced--could it be that his application for a passport (without one for Marina) on 24 June, his application for a Mexican visa on 17 September and his trip to Mexico City on 26 September simply indicate that he planned to desert his wife and seek refuge in the Soviet Union?

e) Despite Mrs. Paine's testimony that Oswald could not drive, witnesses said he drove himself to the Dallas rifle range on one of his visits. He was driven there by an unidentified man on his other trip. One witness also claims that two men were involved in the attempt--evidently by Oswald--to shoot General Walker last April.

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MEMO FOR THE RECORD:

Corrections to Record

SUBJECT: DCI Testimony before the Warren Commission

1. C/SR called me in re matter of correcting record of DCI's testimony before the Warren Commission. On page 6582 of transcript, Mr. Allen DULLES asked one of the key questions in the inquiry. Unfortunately, the question was badly phrased and contained an inaccurate statement. It was suggested that the following modification be made for the final record:

D: Does your answer, Mr. McCONE, include a negation of any belief that OSWALD was working for or on behalf of the Soviet intelligence services (originally phrased: on behalf of the Soviet Union) at any time?

This would require a slight change in Mr. McCONE's testimony in which the words "intelligence services" would be substituted for "Union".

2. In response to C/SR's request: I provided him with a brief statement to the effect that other defectors to the USSR had received subsidies or salary supplements vis the MVD. The Statement also included information concerning the role of the MVD in 1959 - 61. (Copy attached)

/s/
Lee H. Wigren
C/SR/CI/R

Note: I was advised by telephone that C/SR used this on 18 May 1964.

/s/

Document Number **698-303**
for FOIA Review on **JUN 1976**

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1. According to his own statements, Lee Harvey OSWALD received a lump sum of 5000 old rubles and a monthly salary supplemented by 700 old rubles. These funds were provided to him through the Soviet Red Cross, but OSWALD indicated his belief that these funds actually came from the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD).

2. Several other Americans are known to have received salary supplements while resident in the USSR. In two cases the Soviet Red Cross reportedly supported the defector and his family for as long as six months prior to resettlement. In other cases it was not specified where the aid came from, other than Soviet Government or Soviet authorities. This aid included payment of expenses until resettlement, medical care, above-average salary for job done, and lump-sum payments in varying amounts.

3. Until January 1960, the All-Union Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) of the USSR was responsible for civil police functions (crime detection, traffic controls, etc.), administration of internal document controls, fire fighting and civil defense. In January 1960, the All-Union MVD was abolished and its functions were transferred to the MVD's of the fifteen republics of the USSR. The republic MVDs were renamed Ministeries for Maintenance of Public Order (MOOP) in mid 1962.

Prepared for and delivered to
C/SR on 18 May 1964 (AM).

Notified by phone that
C/SR used this on 18 May.

/s/ L. W.

See Sanitized File ~~6~~
Number ~~301~~
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SR/CI Memo
23 November 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR: Assistant Deputy Director, Plans

FROM: Acting Chief, SR Division

SUBJECT: Contact of Lee OSWALD with a member of Soviet KGB
Assassination Department

1. According to an intercepted phone call in Mexico City, Lee OSWALD was at the Soviet Embassy there on 28 September 1963 and spoke with the Consul, Valeriy Vladimirovich KOSTIKOV. This was learned when OSWALD called the Soviet Embassy on 1 October, identifying himself by name and speaking broken Russian, stating the above and asking the guard who answered the phone whether there was "anything new concerning the telegram to Washington." The guard checked and then told OSWALD that a request had been sent, but nothing had as yet been received. (MEMO 6453, 9 October 1963) The FBI liaison officer, Mr. Pappich, told me on 23 November that the Bureau has reason to believe that OSWALD's visit was to get Soviet support for a U.S. passport or visa matter [perhaps the new passport mentioned in the press articles].

2. KOSTIKOV is an identified KGB officer. He was a case officer in an operation which is evidently sponsored by the KGB's 13th Department (responsible for sabotage and assassination). This operation, which is controlled by the FBI under the cryptonym TUMBLEWEED, involved a German-national resident of [redacted] who was recruited in Europe, and met this year with KOSTIKOV in Mexico City and shortly thereafter with a known 13th Department officer, Oleg BRYKIN, in New York. The instructions given TUMBLEWEED by the two officers, (pinpointing objectives for sabotage) and the circumstances of their involvement in the case, left no doubt that both of them were working for the same KGB component, the 13th.

3. Of course it is not usual for a KGB agent on a sensitive mission to have such overt contact with a Soviet Embassy. However, we have top secret Soviet intelligence documents, describing Military Intelligence doctrine, which show that very important agents can be met in official installations using as cover for their presence there some sort of open business: Vice Admiral

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