

Agency Information

AGENCY : HSCA
RECORD NUMBER : 180-10074-10330
RECORD SERIES : NUMBERED FILES
AGENCY FILE NUMBER : 007488

Document Information

ORIGINATOR : HSCA
FROM : SNYDER, RICHARD E.
TO :
TITLE :

DATE : 04/14/1978
PAGES : 8

SUBJECTS :
OSWALD, LEE; RUSSIAN PERIOD; RETURN TO U.S.
OSWALD, LEE HARVEY; RUSSIAN PERIOD; DEFECTION TO
RUSSIA

DOCUMENT TYPE : SUMMARY
CLASSIFICATION : Unclassified
RESTRICTIONS : 3
CURRENT STATUS : Redact
DATE OF LAST REVIEW : 10/16/1996

OPENING CRITERIA :

COMMENTS : Box 143.

JFK Routing Slip

007488

NO. _____

DATE 4-26-78

Document I.D. INVESTIGATIVE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Snyder/Beckard

INDEX

COPY TO

Snyder, Richard
Uto

Robert Blakey
Gary Cornwell
Kenneth Klein
Charlie Mathews
Jim Wolf

McKess, John

Tiny Hutton
Jackie Hess
Cliff Fenton

~~Beckard~~

McMullan, Braxilla

Mike Ewing
Team #1

Korengold, Bud

Team #2

Team #3

Team #4

Team #5

Special Instructions:

Form #2

9-23-78

007488

INVESTIGATION INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. Identifying Information:

Name Richard E. Snyder Date 4-14-78
 Address 7919 Bolling Drive Place SCA Office
 City/State Alexandria, Va. Telephone _____
 Date of Birth 12-10-19 M or S _____
 Social Security 153-03-2996 Spouse _____
 Children _____

2. Physical Description:

Height _____ Color Eyes _____ Hair _____
 Weight _____ Special Characteristics _____
 Ethnic Group _____

3. Personal History:

- a. Present Employment: Worked for CIA 1949-1950. Entered State Dept. Foreign Service in 1950, retired in 1970. In Military Intelligence and Military Intelligence Reserve since 1946.
 Address _____
 Telephone _____
- b. Criminal Record
 - 1. Arrests _____
 - 2. Convictions _____

4. Additional Personal Information:

- a. Relative(s): Name _____
 Address _____
- b. Area frequented: _____
- c. Remarks: _____

Investigator Robert Genzman, Harold Leap and Beth Lichtenfels

Date 4-14-78

Form #4-B

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ASSASSINATIONS

Name Richard E. Snyder Date 4-14-78 Time 11 am
 Address 7919 Bolling Drive Place SCA Office
Alexandria, Virginia

Interview: Robert Genzman, Harold Leap, and Beth Lichtenfels interviewed Richard E. Snyder, retired Foreign Service Officer, on April 14, 1978, at the Committee offices. The interview yielded the following information:

Snyder was born on December 10, 1919. He served in the Army from 1940 to 1946, and then attended Yale University, where he received a degree and completed a year of graduate work. He took the Foreign Service exam during his senior year of college, passed the exam, and was placed on the waiting list for Foreign Service assignments. He did not know anyone who took the Foreign Service exam when he did, and he did not know anyone else on the Foreign Service waiting list.

In October 1949, Snyder was contacted by the Central Intelligence Agency and was asked whether he desired employment with the Agency. He was told that the State Department had circulated its Foreign Service waiting list to the CIA. Although he thought he would be called for State Department employment within a year or so, and although he knew he would accept such

Interviewer Signature Robert Genzman

Typed Signature Robert Genzman, Harold Leap and Beth Lichtenfels

Date transcribed Rife 4-25-78

By: _____ Form #4-A

Interview with Richard E. Snyder
Page 2.

employment, he applied to the CIA primarily for financial reasons, was accepted, and served from 1949 to 1950. Most of his CIA service consisted of training; he did little substantive work for the Agency.

Snyder completely terminated his CIA employment and entered the Foreign Service in 1950. He cannot recall any contact with the CIA since 1950, aside from a letter which he sent to the Agency after he retired from the State Department circa 1970 to inquire about contract work possibilities. The CIA's response was negative.

Snyder has been in Military Intelligence and Military Intelligence Reserve since the time of his active Army duty (1940-1946), although there has never been any connection between his State Department employment and his military positions. He is currently in inactive Military Intelligence Reserve.

Snyder served as a consular officer at the American Embassy in Moscow from July 1959 to July 1961. When shown lists of State Department personnel in Moscow for the years 1959 and 1960, he said he could recognize no CIA personnel. He did not know who had been the when he served there. He said that the military attache people at the Embassy may have been CIA employees, and that the travel officer and the security officer named L'Angeli (phonetic) may have been CIA employees. L'Angeli was once approached by the

Soviets for defection.

Snyder said Minister Counselor Edward L. Freers (deceased) was not a CIA employee. He did not know whether John A. McVickar, his colleague in the consular office, was a CIA employee. McVickar, who arrived in Moscow before Snyder and departed after Snyder, worked with Snyder throughout his two-year tour of duty in Moscow. Like L'Angeli, McVickar was once approached by the Soviets for defection. Snyder said he never told McVickar, whom he first met in 1959, that he (Snyder) had once been a CIA employee. Snyder said that when asked by Dan Rather of CBS if he (Snyder) had been with the CIA, he replied that in the Soviet Union he had been nothing other than what he claimed to be.

Snyder said that when he testified before the Warren Commission, he was not asked whether he had ever been a CIA employee. After he testified, he told Allen Dulles that he had once worked for the Agency. Dulles did not show much interest.

Snyder remembers that during his tour of duty in Moscow, there came to his attention three defector cases--Robert Edward Webster, Nicholas Petrulli, and then Lee Harvey Oswald. On October 28, 1959, just before Oswald defected, Snyder sent a letter (C.E. 914) to the State Department requesting advice on handling cases of defection. Snyder said that this request was not directed at any particular case.

Snyder first became aware of Lee Harvey Oswald when Oswald came to the embassy on October 31, 1959, to renounce his American

citizenship. He recalls that he and Oswald talked alone, although McVickar was in an adjoining office with the door open. Snyder said that McVickar's claim that he was in the same room may be correct, but that he (Snyder) cannot remember for certain. Oswald appeared to be determined and "uptight," and he declined to sit, although he probably did sit later. He gave Snyder a note stating that he wanted to renounce his American citizenship. He either gave Snyder his passport or Snyder asked for it. Oswald said that he had been a radar operator in the Marine Corps, and that he intended to give information he possessed to the Soviets. Snyder's response was to attempt to delay any action by Oswald and to get more information from Oswald. Oswald was not talkative, but "humorless," and this meeting did not last long--possibly one hour or so.

Snyder recalls that during this meeting Oswald did not mention the specific military information which he possessed, nor did he mention John F. Kennedy, political assassination, the President of the United States, or Cuba. Oswald did talk about the imperialism of the United States, his disloyalty to the United States, his loyalty to the Soviet Union, and the fact that he was a Marxist.

When asked to explain why he wanted to delay Oswald's denunciation "in view of the Petrulli case and other considerations" (W.R. 748; C.E. 908), Snyder stated that Nicholas Petrulli had earlier defected, that Petrulli's defection was nullified

by a determination that he was mentally incompetent, that Snyder wanted to avoid a repetition of this incident, and that "other considerations" meant common sense and prudence.

After this meeting with Oswald, Snyder did not talk with McVickar and he did not contact any intelligence officers; instead, he drafted a cable to be sent to Washington. Since this cable contained all of the information Snyder obtained from Oswald, and since it would be sent through the appropriate persons at the embassy, he saw no need to contact anyone. He may have talked to Freers before he sent the cable, but he did not talk to anyone else. No one in the embassy approached him to discuss this cable.

Several days later Oswald sent Snyder a letter protesting his treatment at the embassy. Snyder cabled this information to Washington.

McVickar may have tipped journalist Priscilla Johnson McMillan concerning Oswald's visit to the embassy. McVickar never told Snyder about any information on Oswald which McVickar may have obtained from McMillan. Snyder knows of no other journalists who were tipped about Oswald's defection.

Regarding contacts with American journalists in Moscow, Snyder stated that he knew Priscilla Johnson McMillan personally, knew of A. I. Goldberg, had an official contact with Aline Mosby concerning a Soviet provocation, and had two or three official contacts with R. J. (Bud) Korengold concerning consular issues which could not be followed up at the embassy. In recent years

Interview with Richard E. Snyder
Page 6.

Snyder has had contact with McMillan concerning her book Marina and Lee as it pertains to Snyder.

Snyder remembers that some time after Oswald's visit to the embassy Oswald sent two letters to the embassy from Minsk.

Snyder had two meetings with Oswald upon his return from Minsk in 1961. Snyder has no independent recollection of the first of these meetings, but he said that records show that such a meeting occurred on a Saturday. The meeting must have been brief. Oswald probably said that he wanted to return to the United States, and Snyder probably told Oswald to come back to the embassy later. McVickar and Snyder's secretary Verna Deane Brown probably had contact with Oswald during this visit and during Oswald's subsequent visit.

When Oswald returned to the embassy he seemed "meek." He probably admitted that he had "learned a hard lesson the hard way," and he expressed a concern that he might be prosecuted. Snyder asked him about his various activities in the Soviet Union. Oswald stated that he had not given any information to the Soviets.

Snyder did not expedite Oswald's actual return to the United States, which transpired after Snyder had left the Soviet Union. Snyder did not expedite Oswald's application to renew his passport; instead, he gave it "no great priority" as a "petty way of getting even" with Oswald, whom he did not like.

Interview with Richard E. Snyder
Page 7.

McVickar handled Marina Oswald's visa application. Snyder does not recall ever meeting Marina Oswald, and he was not aware that her uncle was a Soviet MVD officer.

Snyder did not know why two applications for passport renewal (C.E. 938; C.E. 947) were made out for Oswald. When asked why one application (C.E. 938) had been marked, "I have been naturalized as a citizen of a foreign state," etc., Snyder thought this was a typographical error.