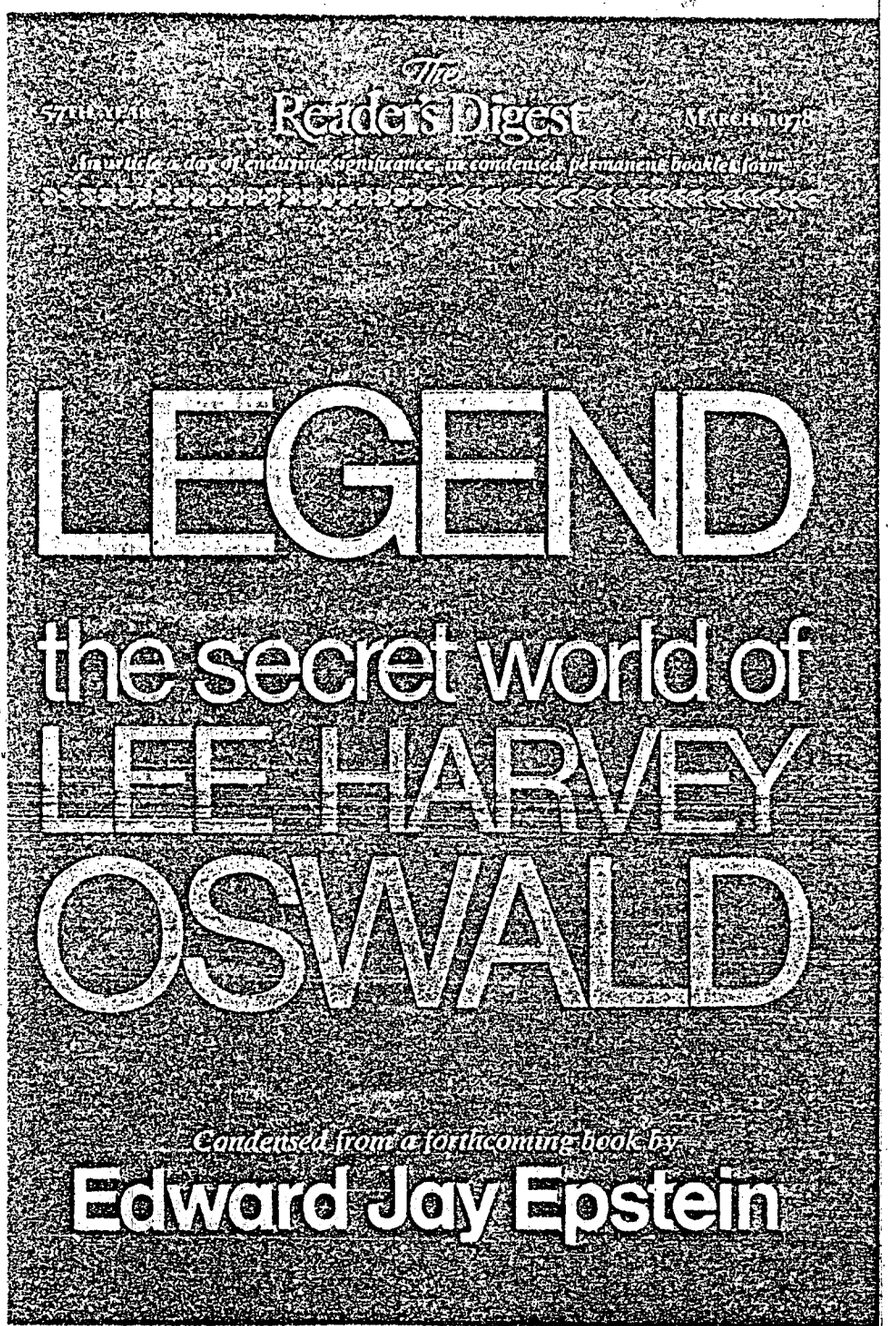

the FBI refuse to permit the questions to be asked?

• Why was the legend never investigated by the Warren Commission—or even by the section assigned to examine Oswald's life in the Soviet Union?

Because these and other questions have never been answered, the editors of Reader's Digest asked author Edward Jay Epstein (see "Behind the Lines," page 13) to undertake a major examination of the secret world through which Oswald moved during his final years. Epstein began this task, two years ago, by studying more than 10,000 pages of previously classified documents pertaining to Oswald, and conducting, with a staff of assistants, more than 400 interviews with those who had befriended Oswald or crossed his trail in the years before his death. The evidence thus uncovered leads the reader into a shadow world of spies, double agents and intelligence services—and to the startling conclusion that at one of the most perilous moments in world history the interests of the Russian KGB and the American FBI became strangely intertwined.

It is with these puzzling events that *Legend: The Secret World of Lee Harvey Oswald* begins. (This two-part condensation will conclude in the April Reader's Digest.)

the Swiss passport control with his diplomatic documents. Officially, he was a delegate to the 17-nation disarmament conference due to convene the next day.

After checking into the Rex Hotel in downtown Geneva, Nosenko took a walk. On a side street he stopped at a pay phone, dialed the telegraph service and dictated a coded message. A division within the United States Central Intelligence Agency had been waiting for this telegram for 19 months. During a previous disarmament conference in Geneva, in June 1962, Nosenko had

contacted the CIA and offered to act as a spy when he returned to Russia. Since that time he had not been heard from.

No one in the agency could have predicted the furor that his reappearance would bring about. Nosenko was about to present information that would cause deep divisions in U.S. intelligence services, alter the careers of several high-ranking intelligence officers and raise questions about U.S. security that have not been resolved to this day.

Only hours after Nosenko's message was received, a top-level CIA case officer was on a plane to Geneva. A member of the Soviet Russia Division, the area of the CIA responsible for espionage activities concerning the Soviet Union, he was chosen for the assignment because he had already met Nosenko, having opened the operational file on him in 1962.

This file revealed that Nosenko was born on October 30, 1927, in Nikolayev, Russia. In the 1950s, his father was an alternate member of the all-powerful Central Committee of the Communist Party. Nosenko himself, according to his own statements, had served in Soviet intelligence since the age of 22, first in Naval Intelligence, then, after 1953, in the State Security Agency, the unit which is known now by the initials KGB.

On January 23, in a quiet apartment in a suburb of Geneva, the CIA case officer waited. It was late afternoon when the doorbell finally rang. A moment later the case officer recognized Nosenko sauntering into the room. He was a powerfully built man, about six feet tall, with a massive jaw and brooding eyes set deep in their sockets.

After exchanging some pleasantries and small talk, the two men got down to a topic of importance. "Have you found Andrey yet?" Nosenko asked.

The case officer shook his head. In their last meeting, 19 months before, Nosenko had told him about an extraordinarily important American agent whom the Soviets had recruited. Yet from the clues that Nosenko had then provided, the CIA had not been able to identify this person.

Nosenko seemed disturbed that the agent had not been found, and he now told the case officer that in the 1950s Andrey had worked in the motor pool at the U.S. embassy in Moscow—a clue which made the man's identification inevitable.

Nosenko then proceeded to explain why he had sent the coded telegram. Not only was he willing to turn over important information to the CIA; he also wanted to defect.

The case officer was astonished. At their 1962 meeting, Nosenko had stated that, because he had a wife and children in Moscow, he could never leave Russia. What had happened to cause this complete turnabout? Rather than press Nosenko about his change of mind, the case officer temporized by asking, "What information have you brought?"

Nosenko discussed one or two

Soviet intelligence operations that had come to his attention and then dropped a completely unexpected bombshell. He had, he said, personally superintended the KGB file on Lee Harvey Oswald when he had defected to the Soviet Union in 1959 and could therefore completely describe Oswald's relationship with Soviet intelligence.

An Extraordinary Development

AT THIS TIME, just two months had passed since the assassination of President John F. Kennedy by Oswald and the subsequent murder of Oswald by Jack Ruby. The file that the CIA maintained on Oswald prior to the assassination revealed only that he was a 24-year-old native of New Orleans, who, after serving in the U.S. Marines, had received an early discharge and then defected to the Soviet Union, residing in the city of Minsk for about 2½ years. After marrying a Soviet citizen named Marina Prusakova, he had brought her back to the United States in June 1962. The last entry in his CIA file before his arrest following the assassination noted that the CIA station in Mexico had intercepted a telephone call made by Oswald from the Cuban embassy in Mexico City to the adjacent Soviet embassy.

Oswald's death had left a wide-open void in the case. Such key questions as why Oswald had defected in the first place, what (if any) relationship existed between Oswald and Soviet intelligence, and whether any legend, or cover story, was prepared by the KGB for Oswald's return to America were simply unanswerable. Consequently, rumors about the killings commanded ever-increasing columns of newsprint and commentary on radio and television—a bewildering drumbeat of allegations about left- and right-wing factions, the underworld, the FBI, the CIA and the KGB.

Lee Harvey Oswald on his arrival in Russia, from a photo taken for Moscow newspapers

IN A MATTER-OF-FACT TONE, Nosenko explained that the KGB had not heard of Oswald until he appeared in Moscow and told his Intourist guide that he intended to renounce his American citizenship and seek Soviet citizenship. Only then, Nosenko claimed, did the KGB decide "to look into Oswald's case to see which part of the

KGB might have use for him."

And what did the KGB finally decide about Oswald?

"It was decided that Oswald was of no interest whatsoever, so the KGB recommended that he go home to the United States."

Why then was he allowed to stay for 2½ years?

Nosenko explained that Oswald, on learning of his rejection, "made the dramatic gesture of cutting his wrists. Worried about the possibility that Oswald would do this again if refused asylum, the Soviets decided to give him a temporary-residence permit."

The interrogator persisted: But why was Oswald sent from Moscow to Minsk?

Nosenko replied, "Merely by chance. The KGB had not wanted Oswald to stay in Moscow, and Minsk was chosen arbitrarily."

Why had Oswald been allowed to marry a Soviet citizen at a time when he was already planning his redefection to America?

Nosenko shrugged and answered, "She already had anti-Soviet characteristics. She was not too smart anyway and not an educated person. The Soviets were glad to get rid of them both."

Nosenko stated with a great deal of assurance that neither Oswald nor Marina had ever been recruited or even approached by the KGB as possible agents. In fact, he added, Soviet intelligence did not bother to debrief Oswald when he came to Russia because he was deemed "unstable and of little importance."

The case officer immediately relayed Nosenko's story to CIA headquarters in Langley, Va. It was an extraordinary development. The President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy, headed by Chief Justice Earl Warren (and popularly known as the Warren Commission), was about to begin its hearings.

If Nosenko's account was true, the CIA realized, it could deliver a witness who could answer the vexing questions about Oswald's missing years in Russia. So the Soviet Russia Division immediately began sorting through Nosenko's story.

There were some troublesome omissions. To begin with, Nosenko had not provided any description of the investigation that the KGB would have routinely undertaken to check out various details in Oswald's story in 1959, when he first applied for Soviet residence. In other such cases, the CIA knew, the KGB conducted extensive searches to establish the subject's *bona fides,* or credibility.

Nosenko had claimed, moreover, that the First Chief Directorate of the KGB, responsible for all foreign operations and espionage, did not even have Oswald's name on file until Oswald telephoned the Soviet embassy in Mexico City in October 1963. Yet the CIA knew from FBI surveillance that on two separate occasions Oswald had contacted the Soviet embassy in Washington before his trip to Mexico. According to

the accounts of other defectors from Soviet intelligence services, the First Chief Directorate would have been routinely informed of these contacts (as they were in Mexico). Why had Nosenko failed to mention them?

Finally, Nosenko's claim that Oswald was never even debriefed ran directly counter to the CIA's expectation—based on earlier cases—of how a defector would be handled by the KGB.

Inside the CIA

THE REPORTS on Nosenko's debriefing were read with great interest by James Jesus Angleton, chief of counterintelligence in the CIA. Ghostly thin, with prematurely silver hair and a finely sculptured face, Angleton had edited the poetry magazine *Furioso* before joining the intelligence service, and had worked closely with such poets as Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot and e. e. cummings. His avocation was propagating his own hybrid orchids from seed, a process requiring seven years of patient waiting before results could be seen.

It was Angleton's responsibility to guard against any attempts by foreign intelligence services to affect the plans of the American government through the use of "disinformation"—a message or set of messages designed to mislead or manipulate a government. As far as Angleton and his staff were concerned, Nosenko's statements had to be viewed in the context of other Soviet intelligence operations. At the time of Nosenko's first appearance in Geneva 19 months before, the information he provided had been evaluated against other evidence, including some of the most secret and sensitive data the CIA possessed. The analysis, which concerned cases that had nothing to do with Oswald,

James Jesus Angleton

had raised some unsettling doubts.

One case involved the possible high-level penetration of U.S. intelligence by the KGB. Angleton's primary concern, as he read the transcripts, was whether the new information Nosenko had offered about the agent Andrey was correct, or whether it was an attempt to deflect the CIA's investigation of this case.

But in the weeks and months ahead, Angleton would also become concerned about Nosenko's account

of Oswald's life in the Soviet Union. It, too, presented problems. He would become particularly troubled by the claim that Oswald had never been debriefed by the Soviet intelligence apparatus.

NOSENKO'S OFFER TO DEFECT also troubled Richard M. Helms who, as Deputy Director of Plans, managed the entire covert side of the CIA. A tall, elegant man, with a quiet voice and piercing eyes, Helms had worked in intelligence for more than 25 years.

As he reviewed the startling development in Geneva, Helms realized that it presented a potentially explosive situation. If Nosenko's account of Oswald in Russia proved credible, it could solve a serious problem for the Warren Commission and the U.S. government. On the other hand, if Nosenko turned out to be a Soviet agent sent over to misinform the CIA and the Warren Commission, the sky could fall in on Soviet-American relations. At the very least, it would suggest that the Soviets were going to great lengths to contrive a legend about Oswald's residence in the Soviet Union.

Yet a KGB intelligence officer who claimed knowledge of a missing area in the Oswald case simply could not be ignored. Helms decided that, for the time being, Nosenko should be persuaded to serve as a defector in place—that is, to remain in his present position in the KGB but to work for the CIA. At a later date, if his information proved out, he would be allowed to enter the United States.

In Geneva, however, Nosenko rejected such a course. He claimed to have just received a recall telegram from his superiors at the KGB center requiring him to be on a plane to Moscow on February 4. In his opinion, such a telegram might mean that he was suspected of dealing with the Americans. If he returned, therefore, he risked being arrested, tortured, even executed. He had no choice, he told his CIA interrogators; he must escape on or before February 4.

The recall telegram left Helms no alternative. The CIA could not afford to lose a potentially valuable witness to Oswald's activities in the Soviet Union. He took the matter to John McCone, director of the CIA. McCone immediately authorized Helms to bring Nosenko out of Switzerland.

Skeleton in the FBI's Closet

NEXT, Helms called a meeting of the Inter-Agency Defector Committee, which included representatives from the State Department, Defense Intelligence Agency, FBI, Office of Naval Intelligence, G-2, National Security Agency and the CIA. These agencies constituted what was loosely called the intelligence community, and they had to be apprised of defectors.

The moment that J. Edgar Hoover, the FBI director, heard that a Soviet defector had knowledge of the Oswald case, he told his subordinates in the FBI that they must

"dominate the situation." The FBI, not the CIA, should control all parts of the debriefing pertinent to Oswald and to the Kennedy assassination. No questions about Oswald were to be put to Nosenko without prior FBI approval. Any report to the Warren Commission on Nosenko's revelations should be made by the FBI.

Even at this stage Hoover saw that if Nosenko provided information suggesting any sinister relation between Oswald and the Soviets, he could expose a very destructive skeleton in the FBI's closet: what Hoover's private investigation, ten days after the assassination, had characterized as the "gross incompetence" of the FBI's handling of Oswald on his return from Russia.

Immediately after the assassination, Hoover had wanted to know why Oswald was not on any of the FBI's security indices, which included more than 20,000 names of potentially disloyal individuals in the United States. It was known that Oswald had defected to the Soviet Union, offered military secrets, attempted to renounce his citizenship and, after his return, consistently told demonstrable lies to the FBI agents who had interviewed him.

Hoover had ordered assistant director J. H. Gale to make a full report of "investigative deficiencies in the Oswald case." On December 10, 1963, Gale reported that "Oswald should have been on the Security Index; his wife should have been interviewed before the assassination, and the investigation intensified—not held in abeyance—after Oswald contacted the Soviet embassy in Mexico."

The last point was especially telling. When Oswald visited the Cuban embassy in Mexico in October 1963, less than two months before the assassination, the CIA monitored a telephone call in which he made an appointment to see Valery Vladimirovich Kostikov, a "consular officer." This was reported to the FBI.

The FBI knew through a double agent that Kostikov wasn't merely a consular officer of the embassy; he was a high-level member of the 13th Department of the KGB, heavily involved in controlling saboteurs in Mexico and the United States.

Hoover responded to this report by secretly censuring five field agents, one field supervisor, three special agents, four headquarters supervisors, two headquarters section chiefs, one inspector and William Sullivan, assistant director of the FBI. When some of the censured FBI executives protested that Oswald had not met the criteria for the Security Index, Hoover wrote back a note stating: "Certainly no one in full possession of all his faculties can claim that Oswald didn't fall within this criteria." At one point he wrote that these delinquencies in the investigation of Oswald "have resulted in forever destroying the Bureau as the top-level investigative organization."

If the FBI was to survive, questions concerning Oswald's connec-

tions with the Soviet intelligence, even if totally unrelated to the assassination, could not be raised. As long as the public could be convinced that Oswald was a lone crackpot, uninvolved in any espionage or subversive activity, the FBI wouldn't be held accountable for not keeping him under surveillance. After all, the FBI was not responsible for crackpots.

If, however, the newly appointed Warren Commission suggested that Oswald had any involvement with Soviet or Cuban intelligence, no matter how irrelevant it was to the killing of the President, then there would be no way to keep secret the FBI's mishandling of the investigation of Oswald prior to the assassination, and FBI incompetence would be blamed for Kennedy's death. Thus, by an odd twist of fate, the FBI's interest lay in concealing rather than revealing any hint of Soviet involvement.

To this end, Hoover ordered the Investigative Division of the FBI to "leak" its conclusions that Oswald was a lone assassin to United Press International before the Warren Commission ever had a chance to meet. Hoover also took the precaution of transferring all the agents involved in the pre-assassination security case to other posts where they wouldn't be as readily available should embarrassing questions be asked.

Against this background, Hoover read reports of the CIA debriefing of Nosenko in Geneva with mounting interest. Nosenko's account supported the FBI's conclusion that Oswald was not involved in any sort of espionage, and indicated that the KGB believed he was "not normal," which fitted in well with Hoover's hypothesis. In fact, Nosenko's story exonerated not only the KGB, but also the FBI. The only remaining question was: Could Nosenko's story be accepted at face value?

Forty-Four Questions

TO FIND OUT, the FBI used a Soviet intelligence agent working under diplomatic cover in New York at the United Nations, who was code-named "Fedora." Fedora had contacted FBI officials in March 1962, and offered to supply the Bureau with information about Soviet espionage operations, secret data on Soviet missile capacity and nuclear-development plans. Not enough information about him was turned over to the CIA to enable it to evaluate his *bona fides,* but Hoover was so taken with his new source that he sent reports based on Fedora's information directly to the White House. In one report, which identified Fedora as "a source of unknown reliability," Hoover personally struck out the "un" from "unknown."

Soviet reaction to the announcement that Nosenko was in the United States had been far more vehement than the CIA had expected. Now Fedora corroborated this. He told the FBI that when Nosenko defected, the KGB center in Moscow was so concerned with the ramifications

that it ordered a termination of all operations in New York.

Fedora was also able to confirm two important parts of Nosenko's story. Nosenko was indeed a lieutenant colonel in the KGB, he said, with access to extraordinarily valuable information, and had indeed received a telegram from Moscow ordering him back on February 4. This information was passed along to the CIA.

On February 26, three FBI agents questioned Nosenko (who was under CIA protection in Virginia) about the Kennedy assassination and Oswald. Nosenko repeated his story with virtually no elaboration or change. Oswald had been allowed to stay in the Soviet Union against the wishes of the KGB, which had had no contacts with Oswald or interest in him whatsoever. The agents concluded in their report that Nosenko had no further information to provide and, on March 1, Hoover forwarded this assessment to the Warren Commission.

The FBI report on Nosenko, however, did not satisfy Angleton or the CIA's Soviet Russia Division, and by March 3 the division had formulated 44 of its own questions for Nosenko on the Oswald case. Each was designed to force Nosenko to broaden his basic statement about the KGB's relation with Oswald. For example:

"When and how did Oswald first come to KGB attention?"

"How were Oswald's *bona fides* established?"

"Did the KGB ever think that Oswald might be an agent of American intelligence?"

"When and by whom was it decided that the KGB had no interest in Oswald?"

"Did Oswald ever offer to give information on the U.S. Marine Corps or other matters to the Soviets? If the KGB did not try to get such information, why not?"

Almost a quarter of the questions dealt with Oswald's wife, Marina, about whom Nosenko had said very little. For example: "How did it happen that there were so few difficulties in the way of Marina's marriage to a foreigner and departure from the country with him? Have not similar situations in the past usually resulted in prolonged and often unsuccessful negotiations with the Soviet government?"

The 44 questions were hand-carried to the FBI for the approval Hoover required. To the dismay of the CIA, Hoover refused the request. The FBI liaison man stated flatly that the 44 questions "would not be asked." The CIA protested, and the FBI liaison reiterated that Hoover was adamant. The most he would suggest was that "eventually" the FBI might cover these areas.

At this very time the Warren Commission's staff was becoming increasingly concerned with problems and contradictions in the testimony of Marina Oswald. She had insisted that she did not know the name of her own father and provided only minimal information about her relatives. The uncle with

whom Marina lived in Minsk prior to her marriage to Oswald was a lieutenant colonel in the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD), which had responsibility for civil law enforcement in Russia. Yet Marina declared that he had not intervened on her or Oswald's behalf with Soviet authorities to facilitate either her marriage or her exit visa from Russia.

More seriously, it was now clear that she had lied to the FBI during its interrogation of her in a ten-week period following the assassination. She now admitted destroying, on the day after the assassination, a photograph of Oswald with his weapon. She had withheld evidence indicating that Oswald had attempted to assassinate Maj. Gen. Edwin Walker seven months before the Kennedy killing. She had falsely denied that she knew about Oswald's trip to Mexico in 1963.

Norman Redlich, the staff lawyer responsible for the preparation of the questioning of Oswald's widow for the Commission, summed up in a memorandum: "Marina Oswald has lied to the Secret Service, the FBI and this Commission repeatedly on matters which are of vital concern to the people of this country and the world."

Thus, by March, it was becoming clear to the Commission that Nosenko was the only available witness who could give any information of value on the KGB's involvement, or non-involvement, with the President's assassin. At this point, however, Commission members did not know that the CIA had serious doubts about Nosenko's authenticity.

Coincidences

EVER SINCE Nosenko's first approach to the CIA in June 1962, and the acceptance of his offer to act as a spy in Moscow, James Angleton and his staff had pondered the significance of the offer. The material Nosenko provided had been meticulously compared with the declarations of another KGB defector who had arrived in the United States in December 1961. This man was Anatoli M. Golitsin, a major in the First Chief Directorate of the KGB.

The information Golitsin provided in his debriefing had caused a sensation. He warned that the Soviet Union had already planted an agent within the highest echelons of U.S. intelligence as part of a major disinformation campaign against the United States. This penetration agent would be assisted by "outside" men—other Soviet-controlled agents masking themselves as defectors or double agents—who would supply pieces of disinformation to bolster an "inside" man's credibility. The "inside" agent, in turn, would be in a position to help confirm the authenticity of the "outside" agents.

During his debriefing sessions with Angleton, Golitsin had called particular attention to a trip made by V. M. Kovshuk to the United States in 1957, under diplomatic cover.

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LEGEND
the secret world of LEE HARVEY OSWALD

(Continued from page 92)

Golitsin identified Kovshuk as an executive in the KGB, and stressed that only an extremely important mission would account for his leaving his post in Moscow to come to the United States. He suggested that Kovshuk's mission might have involved contacting, or activating, a high-level penetration agent working within the CIA who had been recruited by the Soviets years before in Moscow.

The specter of a "mole," or enemy agent, burrowing his way into the heart of an American intelligence service caused such consternation in the CIA and FBI that a personal interview was arranged for Golitsin to brief Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy.

Golitsin had further cautioned that the KGB, realizing that he knew about Kovshuk's mission, would almost certainly attempt to discredit, or deflect the CIA from, the information he was providing. He warned Angleton that a Soviet disinformation agent, probably posing as a defector, would soon make contact with the CIA for this purpose.

Then, in June 1962, six months after Golitsin's defection, Nosenko had first approached the CIA in Geneva. Angleton found that Nosenko's information coincided very curiously with Golitsin's. Nosenko, for example, claimed to have been Kovshuk's deputy in the KGB, and therefore he was in a unique position to know about Kovshuk's trip to see an important agent in the United States.

But whereas Golitsin suggested that Kovshuk had gone to see a Soviet agent working in the CIA, Nosenko said that the agent—who had been given the code-name Andrey—had been recruited from American military personnel attached to the embassy in Moscow.

Now, almost two years later, Nosenko had added a vital clue that would undoubtedly lead to the discovery of Andrey. What concerned Angleton was the possibility that Andrey might be a red herring meant to deflect attention away from KGB penetration of the CIA.

Next, Angleton turned to what was known as the "Sascha" case, involving another Russian agent. The clue Golitsin had provided pointed to a CIA contract employe who was working in West Germany and had been recruited by the Soviets. Nosenko also mentioned Sascha,

but identified him as an army officer. For some time this bit of information threw the CIA off the trail of the true spy.

In two cases, Nosenko's information led to the identification and capture of enemy agents. The first concerned a KGB spy in the British Admiralty. Golitsin had told about this penetration in 1962, a few months before Nosenko contacted the CIA. An investigation pointed to the traitor as one of four people. Nosenko provided the information that enabled the British to apprehend the spy—John Vassall.

The second case involved a major KGB operation in France by means of which U.S. military secrets were being taken from a courier station at Orly airport outside Paris. U.S. military intelligence had, in 1963, received information which alleged that an Army sergeant, Robert Lee Johnson, was involved in Soviet intelligence. But, because of a bureaucratic error, the case had not been pursued.

The sergeant, however, had lost his access to military secrets at the courier station, and Soviet intelligence had every reason to believe that he was known to U.S. intelligence. Now, in 1964, Nosenko said that he had heard in Moscow of enormously important NATO secrets coming from a source near Paris. This further tip led to the arrest of Sergeant Johnson.

As Angleton saw it, Nosenko was revealing information that was "dated," meaning information that the Soviets would have presumed was already compromised. Angleton tried to assess whether Nosenko was providing such information by design, or whether he was disclosing original information that just happened to coincide with what Golitsin and other sources had revealed.

Angleton also considered it odd that two men from entirely different branches of the KGB would know so many of the same Soviet operations. Such an overlay raised the possibility that Nosenko's revelations in 1962 might have been designed by the Soviets to deflect attention from the leads Golitsin had provided.

Angleton was not inclined to believe in coincidences. Yet, as he received the new CIA reports, he saw that to believe Nosenko's story about Oswald one would have to accept a series of even more remarkable coincidences: the coincidence that Nosenko, the first agent the CIA ever had in the Second Chief Directorate, turned out to be the supervisor of the Oswald file; the coincidence that Nosenko had been chosen to conduct the post-assassination investigation into the KGB's relations with Oswald—which meant that he was picked to investigate his own handling of a case.

Indeed, Nosenko claimed to be in a position to know of every contact the KGB had—and did not have—with Oswald over a four-year period, and from this vantage point he could definitively exonerate the KGB from having any relationship with Oswald. Such coincidences Angleton

was not ready to accept at face value.

The Thirteenth Department

THROUGH thick, horn-rimmed glasses, Angleton studied the transcript of Nosenko's statements about Oswald and the Soviet Union. Nosenko declared that Oswald had never been debriefed by Soviet intelligence. To Newton S. Miler, chief of operations of Angleton's counterintelligence staff, this assertion was "particularly hard to swallow." Miler pointed out that, in 1959, the KGB was reorganizing its espionage apparatus in an effort to overcome the technological advantage the United States had over the U.S.S.R. Radar was a target, and Oswald had identified himself as a radar operator. "Not to debrief him . . . defies logic and known KGB history," Miler commented.

Moreover, Golitsin had explained in detail that in the case of a military defector or even one with military experience, the Thirteenth Department of the First Chief Directorate would have the primary responsibility for the debriefing. The Thirteenth Department was assigned the function of sabotage and assassination abroad, and therefore had a special interest in debriefing military defectors who might be capable of participating in such operations.

Oswald, who had served for nearly three years in the U.S. Marines with an Air Control Squadron in Japan, the Philippines, Taiwan and California—and who had repeatedly stated in Moscow that he was willing to provide the Soviets with American secrets—certainly would qualify as a military defector. In addition, the KGB had Oswald in the palm of its hand in Moscow. It was known that he had orally renounced his citizenship before the American Consul, severed his relations with his family in America and left himself penniless and completely at the mercy of the Soviets.

Why, Angleton wondered, wouldn't he have been debriefed for all he was worth?

Under the procedures Golitsin described, the Thirteenth Department would have had a hand in the debriefings, and Nosenko, if he was who he claimed to be, would have known of them. Why would Nosenko obscure such a procedure? Of course, in the light of the Kennedy assassination, Angleton had little doubt that if Oswald had any contact with the Thirteenth Department—even if it was only a brief interview—the KGB would go to great lengths to conceal it.

Now, with Nosenko in the United States, Angleton carefully considered the situation. Aside from breeding orchids, he was a superbly patient trout fisherman. He played defectors much like trout. He called the process elicitation: all defectors, whether fake or real, should be played for whatever information they possessed. In the contest between intelligence agencies, discovering the disinformation the enemy was attempting to plant was in many

ways as important as any real information which might be divulged.

Case of the Fake Colonel

IN MARCH, serious flaws began to show up in Nosenko's story. First, under intensive interrogation, Nosenko admitted that he had lied about his rank. He was not a lieutenant colonel, or even a major (as he had claimed in 1962). He was only a captain. He explained that he had lied about his rank to make himself more acceptable as a defector.

The interrogators knew that it was not uncommon for defectors to exaggerate their importance. But why would he have also lied in 1962, when he had said categorically that he would never defect? Nosenko could not explain.

There was a further irregularity. When Nosenko arrived in the United States, he had among his papers a Soviet travel document which authorized him to be in Gorki in November 1963. Nosenko had explained that he had been in Gorki because he was participating in a nationwide manhunt for a traitor named Cherepanov. This man, he said, had been caught, secretly tried and executed.

The name was well known to the CIA. A man called Cherepanov had unexpectedly sent a package of documents to the U.S. embassy in Moscow in October 1963, although he had never previously been in contact with the CIA. The papers had been photographed by the embassy staff. Then, because of some bureaucratic failing (or suspicion that a trap was being baited), the embassy returned the documents to the Soviet ministry.

Within the CIA, there was considerable doubt that the Cherepanov papers were authentic. By holding this travel document, Nosenko was in effect proving that they were—else why hunt the man down and execute him? But, oddly enough, Nosenko's rank was listed on the travel document as lieutenant colonel. Why, when in truth he was only a captain?

"Some clerk made a mistake," Nosenko answered.

To the experts at the Soviet Russia Division, such a mistake was difficult to accept. The possibility that the document was fabricated in order to provide evidence of Nosenko's importance had to be considered. And if the document was spurious, then the reason he gave for possessing it—the hunt for Cherepanov—also had to be questioned.

The second major crack in Nosenko's story appeared when a team of code breakers from the National Security Agency scrutinized the cable traffic between Geneva and Moscow during the period in which Nosenko claimed to have received a recall telegram from Moscow. They discovered that no telegram had been sent to the Soviet delegation in Geneva on the day Nosenko claimed it arrived. Confronted with this fact, Nosenko finally admitted that he had made up the story about the telegram, fearing that the CIA would insist he continue as a spy.

In itself, such dissembling did not

prove that he was not an authentic defector simply attempting to enhance his standing (with the false rank) and the urgency of his case (with the false telegram). In this instance, however, these admittedly untrue elements in Nosenko's story had been "verified" by Fedora, the Soviet intelligence agent in New York who was working as a double agent for the FBI.

The CIA began examining more closely Fedora's claim that the Nosenko defection carried such importance for the KGB that all operations had been suspended, even in New York. Curiously enough, a KGB operation known to Nosenko (and the CIA) was continuing in February and March in Switzerland. It seemed inconceivable to the CIA case officer that all Soviet espionage in New York, about which Nosenko had virtually no knowledge, would be suspended, while a case in Switzerland, where he had served, continued.

It appeared that Fedora, Hoover's highly prized source, might be trying to bolster Nosenko's credentials. This heightened suspicions among the counterintelligence staff about Fedora's own mission. Why would Fedora "verify" false facts about Nosenko unless he was being used as a "controlled channel" by the KGB to pass disinformation to the FBI?

Both Angleton and the CIA's Soviet Russia Division began independently to explore the possibility that the man called Nosenko was actually a Soviet agent dispatched by the KGB to pose as a defector.

"Hostile Interrogation"

NOSENKO was given a lie-detector test—and failed. Further questioning revealed great gaps in his knowledge of KGB operations. The interrogators were driven toward considering the baffling possibility that Nosenko was merely an empty receptacle into which KGB briefing officers had poured information—and disinformation—that they wanted him to carry to the West.

And if Nosenko was *not* sincere, it suggested that the Soviet government was building a legend meant to deceive the Warren Commission about Oswald. But in what way?

Neither Angleton nor the Soviet Russia Division believed that Oswald was acting under the control of Soviet intelligence when he assassinated President Kennedy. It seemed far more likely to both that the relationship Nosenko was attempting to protect might be a prior connection Oswald had had with the KGB.

Under this hypothesis, Nosenko would have been sent to reinforce the legend about Oswald's "instability"—a story first constructed about Oswald when he had been in the Soviet Union for other purposes—and to deny categorically that Oswald had been recruited before, during or after his defection to the Soviet Union in 1959. Nosenko would also deny any KGB connection with Marina. Nosenko would have been chosen to deliver the mes-

sage because the KGB had already established his credentials with the CIA in 1962.

The CIA decided that, given the right circumstances, there was a strong possibility that Nosenko might break and even unravel Oswald's tangled web before the Warren Commission put out its final report. Richard Helms called Nicholas Katzenbach, the Deputy Attorney General, to discuss the incarceration of Nosenko. For both the CIA and the Department of Justice, it was a totally unprecedented situation.

Given more time or other circumstances, Nosenko could have been questioned in a different atmosphere. But the Warren Commission was being pressed by President Johnson to publish its verdict in fewer than 120 days. Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy himself agreed that Nosenko should immediately be put under "hostile interrogation," an extraordinary procedure intended either to break or confirm his story.

Nosenko was confined to a single room at a CIA detention center, with only a bed, chair and wash basin. He was given only military fatigues to wear and treated as if he were a captured spy rather than a voluntary defector. He was forced to submit to unrelenting interrogation, and when his answers seemed false or misleading, he was openly challenged, or denounced as a liar.

At one point his interrogators thought he might break. He had been unable to supply any details about a case he was supposedly monitoring for the KGB. His interrogators suggested finally that perhaps he had not in fact handled that case.

Nosenko sat back silently as the interrogator pointed out the contradictions. Why not admit he hadn't handled the case?

Nosenko answered, after long thought, that if he admitted this, he would have to admit that he was not even the person he claimed to be.

The interrogators paused to see whether Nosenko would make such an admission.

After a tense hesitation, Nosenko suddenly pulled himself together. He insisted that despite the contradictions his interrogators had pointed out, he had handled the case in question. He admitted that he "looked bad," even to himself, but had no explanation.

THERE WAS, however, one startling development at this time. It had to do not with Oswald, but rather with the security of U.S. intelligence. From the clues that Nosenko had provided, the FBI had no problem in locating Andrey. However, instead of being the high-level agent that Nosenko had originally suggested, Andrey turned out to be only a retired Army sergeant who had worked in the motor pool at the American embassy in Moscow in 1953-54. He did not even have access to classified information.

The man readily admitted to the FBI that he had met the Soviets while in Moscow, though he had no

information of value to give them. In 1957, Kovshuk had indeed spoken briefly with him, but it was clear he was not in a position to be of any use.

To the CIA, the discovery of Andrey only heightened the mystery. According to Golitsin, Kovshuk had made a special trip to Washington to see an agent of unique importance. By the reconstruction of dates, the CIA determined that the Army sergeant had not been contacted until many months after Kovshuk had arrived. Pressed on this contradiction, Nosenko explained that Kovshuk had had trouble locating the sergeant. Yet it turned out that his name and phone number were in the phone book.

It seemed impossible that a man as important as Kovshuk would travel to Washington only to see an ex-soldier who had no classified clearance. But if this sergeant was not the high-level penetration agent Golitsin had warned about, then who was? Could this mean that the Soviet Union had successfully penetrated U.S. intelligence—as it had both the British and West German intelligence services since World War II? The possibility of a serious scandal now threatened the CIA and the FBI.

Unanswered Questions

ON JUNE 24, 1964, Helms requested a private audience with Chief Justice Warren. They met in a conference room in the Veterans Building. It was agreed that no notes were to be taken, no witnesses were to be present. The subject, Helms suggested, had to remain a secret of state. The Chief Justice nodded his agreement.

Until this moment, Warren and the Commission had received only the FBI's evaluation of Nosenko.

Richard Helms

Now Helms explained that there were two schools of thought about Nosenko within the intelligence community. The first held that he was a legitimate defector and could be believed as far as Oswald was concerned. The second held that Nosenko was still a Soviet agent, under instructions from the KGB to misinform the Commission about Oswald's activities in the Soviet Union. He explained that the CIA could not say with certainty which view was correct, and might not resolve this question before

the Warren Report was published.

Warren looked up, visibly disturbed. He asked about the report received from Hoover, which raised none of these questions. Helms quietly answered that he could speak only for the CIA.

The men looked at each other in silence for a long moment. Then Warren, apparently tired and frayed by the additional duties imposed on him by the assassination, said that he would take what Helms told him under advisement. The interview was ended.

Later that same day, at the Chief Justice's request, the Commission met in executive session to discuss the vexing problem raised by Nosenko. (The minutes of this meeting are still classified as secret.) It was decided that Nosenko wouldn't testify or be interviewed by any members of the Commission. The FBI report on him would remain, but as part of the unpublished record of the Commission filed away in the National Archives.

Thus, for the critical "Russian" period in Oswald's life, the Commission would rely almost entirely on a diary that had been found among Oswald's effects and on official records tendered by the Soviet government. (This was decided despite the fact that if the Soviet government was suspected of going to great lengths to fake a defector, the records it supplied would also obviously have to be suspected of being fakes.)

President Johnson was demanding that the report be issued in September, well before the Presidential election in November, and it was already almost July. Final drafts had to be in within 30 days, Warren ordered. Faced with an unyielding deadline, the Commission staff was in a quandary over what to do about the Soviet section. It seemed to be an immense void for which there were no witnesses. (Oswald did not meet Marina until after he decided to redefect to the United States in 1961.)

For example, in investigating the origin of Oswald's defection to Russia, William Coleman, Jr., and W. David Slawson, who were to write this portion of the report, concluded that Oswald probably began to lay his plans while serving with the Marines in the Far East. "Thus," they noted, "there is the possibility that Oswald came into contact with communist agents at that time. Japan, especially because the Communist Party was open and active there, would seem a likely point for such a contact to have been made." If such a contact had been made and Oswald had indeed been induced by an intelligence service to defect, then his movements prior to the assassination would be cast in an extremely different light. Yet, to determine this, it would be necessary to reconstruct the experiences of Oswald's Marine unit in Japan to ascertain what information of intelligence value Oswald had had access to.

More than 100 men had served in Oswald's unit. Any of them might have held pieces in the jigsaw mys-

tery of Oswald's sudden defection. With only days left to finish writing the report, however, the Commission staff knew that there would not be time to track down and interview these missing witnesses. In fact, the Commission questioned only one Marine who had been in Oswald's radar unit in Japan—and his tour overlapped with Oswald's by only a few months.

Did Oswald have access to classified information in the Marines? Did he have contacts or arrangements with Soviet intelligence services prior to his defection? Had he received training during his years in the Soviet Union? Was he subsequently given any mission by the Soviets to perform upon his return to the United States? "How," asked Coleman and Slawson in a top-secret draft report, "are we to assess whether or not what we know of Oswald's 'real life' is not just a 'legend' designed by the KGB and lived out by Oswald thereafter?"

Nosenko was still confined and under interrogation on September 28, 1964, when the Warren Commission published its report, having failed to answer any of these central questions about Oswald's past.

"Race Car"

Atsugi, Japan: 1957. "Race Car to Coffee Mill, Race Car to Coffee Mill," the radio crackled. "Request winds aloft at 90 angels."

The men inside the darkened control room listened with bewilderment; some laughed nervously, as if the radio call were some kind of practical joke, designed to break the boredom of a four-hour watch. All knew from their Marine Corps radar training that no plane could fly at an altitude of "90 angels"—90,000 feet. The world record for altitude was still 65,889 feet, and the radar height-finding antenna read up to only 45,000 feet. Why, then, would any plane want to know the wind velocity at 90,000 feet?

"Coffee Mill" was the code name for Marine Air Control Squadron One, known as MACS-1, which monitored air traffic for the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing stationed at Atsugi air base, about 35 miles southwest of Tokyo. But what was "Race Car"?

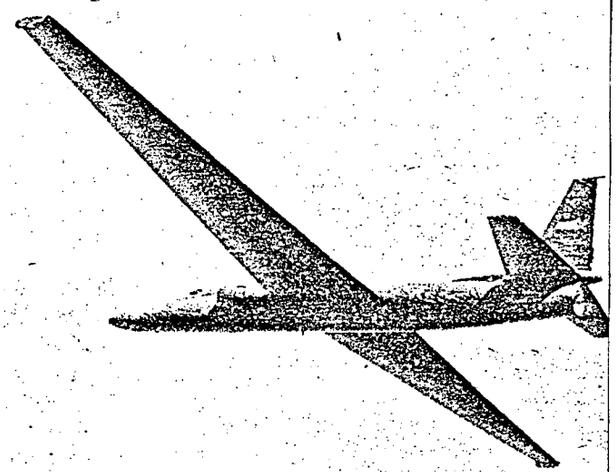
At daybreak a few days later, the men in Squadron One received another surprise. A long, thin, silver plane, with a needle nose, was wheeled out of a hangar that was guarded by American civilians with submachine guns. It looked like no plane any of the Marines in Coffee Mill had ever seen before. Its wings, which stretched out for 80 feet, were more than twice the length of its fuselage. The wing tips drooped to the ground and had to be supported by aluminum pods with small wheels under them. A pilot, clad in a heavy rubber suit and mask, arrived in an ambulance and climbed into the cockpit. The ground crew then removed five identifying numbers from the tail of the strange plane. As the engine warmed up, it emitted a high, shrill whine, which rapidly

increased as the plane began racing down the runway.

In a few seconds, using no more than 500 feet of the mile-long runway, the mystery plane shot into the air. The wheels under the wings fell off and the plane climbed at a 45-degree angle. Within a couple of minutes the Marines watching their radarscopes saw that the plane had vanished from the screen. Then, moments later, Race Car called.

Gradually the Marine Corps radar operators in Coffee Mill learned more about the so-called "utility plane." ("Whenever we heard that noise, some of us would run out of the hut to watch it take off," recalls Robert Royce Augg, now a policeman in Chillicothe, Ohio.) As the requests for winds at 70,000, 80,000 and 90,000 feet usually came soon after it disappeared from their radar, they deduced that the plane was, in fact, Race Car. And eventually, in their briefings on classified material, they were told that the utility plane (called the U-2 for short) was a highly secret reconnaissance craft which was not to be discussed with anyone outside the radar unit.

What they were not told, however, was that the U-2 was used primarily for flying over the Soviet Union and China in order to photograph military and industrial targets. Or that the U-2s, which used Atsugi as one of their two main bases, were



The U-2—called "the black lady of espionage" by the Soviets—as it looked on a reconnaissance flight

providing no less than *90 percent* of all hard information on Soviet military, ballistic and nuclear-bomb activities. For this reason it was currently the highest-priority target of Soviet intelligence, which was attempting to gain information to make it possible for Soviet rockets to shoot down one of the odd-looking planes.

One Marine inside the bubble seemed to go about his work with a good deal of silent efficiency. He was gaunt, with sparkling eyes and a smile that was often taken for a contemptuous smirk. Like the oth-

PHOTO: LOCKHEED

ers, he heard the radio calls from Race Car and, according to one officer, showed an extraordinary interest in the path of the plane. That Marine was Lee Harvey Oswald.

Lonely Boy

OSWALD WAS BORN on October 18, 1939, at the Old French Hospital in New Orleans. His father, Robert E. Lee Oswald, had died of a heart attack two months before. His mother, Marguerite Claverie Oswald, an attractive brunette of French and German extraction, managed the best she could under difficult circumstances. As a result, Lee's childhood was unsettled and difficult. For economic reasons, he spent nearly two years in an orphanage with two elder brothers. When he was five, his mother remarried, but was divorced little more than two years later. The family moved frequently, and by the time Lee was ten, and in fifth grade, he had attended six different schools.

In August 1952, with both her older sons enlisted in the military, Marguerite moved to New York City with Lee. The next spring, Lee was picked up at the Bronx Zoo for truancy and remanded to the New York City Youth House for a six-week observation period. The psychiatric report of Dr. Renatus Hartogs describes the 13-year-old Oswald as a "tense, withdrawn and evasive boy, who dislikes intensely talking about himself and his feelings." Oswald also seemed intelligent. Dr. Hartogs wrote: "Lee is a youngster with superior mental endowments, functioning presently in the bright-normal range of mental efficiency. His abstract thinking capacity and his vocabulary are well developed. No retardation in school subjects could be found despite truancy."

During his time in New York, Lee apparently also became interested in politics. He later claimed that his involvement with Marxism had begun with a pamphlet protesting the execution of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg for wartime espionage.

Oswald returned to P.S. 44 that September and made considerable progress. He was even elected president of his eighth-grade class. However, in October 1953 he was again reported to his probation officer for being "unruly"; apparently, he had refused to salute the American flag.

Marguerite took Lee back to New Orleans in early 1954, and in October 1955, when he turned 16, he signed his mother's name to a note informing his school that the family was moving to San Diego and dropped out of school. He then forged a document which stated that he was 17 and convinced Marguerite to sign it so that he could enlist in the Marines. The Marines, however, rejected his application and told him to return in a year.

For a few weeks in 1956 he worked as a messenger at Pfisterer Dental Laboratory, where he met Palmer E. McBride, a fellow messenger, who shared Oswald's interest in classical music. On his visits to

McBride's home, Lee quickly turned the discussion to politics.

Recalls McBride: "Lee Oswald was very serious about the virtues of communism and discussed these virtues at every opportunity. He would say that the capitalists were exploiting the working class, and his central theme seemed to be that the workers would one day rise up and throw off their chains."

When McBride took Oswald with him to the home of William Eugene Wulf, president of the Amateur Astronomy Association, Oswald enraged his host by "telling him of the glories of the Workers' State and saying that the United States was not telling the truth about Soviet Russia." The vocabulary of class warfare which Oswald bandied about suggested that the periodicals and books he was then reading were not the standard fare taught in New Orleans schools.

On October 24, 1956, Lee enlisted in the Marine Corps in Dallas. After enduring ten grueling weeks of boot camp, he was sent for further training to Camp Pendleton, Calif. One of the Marines in Oswald's eight-man squad, who also shared a tent with him, was Allen R. Felde, a native of Milwaukee. Felde remembers that even while Oswald was learning combat techniques, he was attacking American foreign policy. He railed against the American intervention in Korea, which he said resulted in "one million" useless deaths. (He blamed President Eisenhower.) He also persisted in depicting himself as a champion of the "cause of the workingman."

He was next assigned to the Naval Air Technical Training Center at Jacksonville, Fla., to be trained as a radar controller, a job the Marines gave only to men of higher-than-average intelligence. After that he went to Keesler Air Force Base in Mississippi, where he took an aircraft-control-and-warning operator course. Although Oswald tended to remain apart from the others in the class, Daniel Patrick Powers, a football player from the University of Minnesota, feeling sorry for him, attempted to be friends with him. But Oswald told him very little about himself, other than that his father was dead and his mother lived alone. Powers remembered that "Ozzie" used almost all his weekend passes to go to New Orleans, about 100 miles from the base, and Powers assumed he was visiting his mother. At this time, however, Marguerite was in Texas, and Oswald's relatives in New Orleans remember only a single call from him. Presumably he was seeing someone else.

During a battery of examinations in June, Oswald surprised his classmates with his proficiency, finishing seventh in the class. Officially designated an Aviation Electronics Operator, he was ordered to join MACS-1, then stationed in Atsugi, Japan.

On the eastern part of the base, about 400 yards from the Marine hangars, was a complex of some 20 buildings, identified on several signs

kins. When Oswald showed an interest in photography, Wilkins, himself a photography buff, spent some time teaching him how to use a 35-mm. camera. Oswald then bought his own camera and walked around the sprawling base taking pictures of various objects that apparently interested him—such as the radar height-finding antennas.

Godfrey "Gator" Daniels remembers: "He was simple folk, just like I was. We were a bunch of kids—never been away from home before—but Oswald came right out and admitted that he had never known a woman. It was real unusual that a fellow would admit that. Like me, he was naïve about a lot of things, but he never was ashamed to admit it." He also came to admire Oswald's innate intelligence. "He had a sort of intelligence where you could show him how to do something once and he'd know how to do it, even if it was pretty complicated."

Oswald now found at Atsugi a camaraderie with a group of men that he had never experienced before. They encouraged him to drink with them in the local bars around the base, and laughed with him when he would come back drunk, waking up his barracks mates by shouting, "Save your Confederate money, boys; the South will rise again!" And they cheered him on when he finally had his first sexual experience, with a Japanese bar girl.

There were times, however, when Oswald would disappear to Tokyo on a two-day leave and refuse to

March

as the "Joint Technical Advisory Group." It contained one of the CIA's main operational bases in Asia. For these reasons, Atsugi remained a "closed" base, which meant that personnel on the base had to have cards showing their security clearance.

Troubled Days

LIKE MOST of the other privates and corporals in the 117-man MACS-1 unit, Oswald lived in a wooden two-story barracks near the east gate of the base. His roommate was Cpl. Thomas Bagshaw, a career Marine. Bagshaw remembers Oswald when he arrived at Atsugi as "very thin, almost frail, shy and quiet." He also recalls feeling sorry for him when other Marines in the barracks began "picking on him." The rougher Marines, who generally preferred spending their liberties carousing in Japanese bars and finding women, considered Oswald (who spent his early liberties watching television) an object of derision. They called him Mrs. Oswald, threw him in the shower fully dressed and hassled him in other ways. Oswald would not fight back; he would just turn away from a provoker and ignore him.

Not all the Marines in the barracks approved of this razzing of Oswald. Zack Stout found Oswald one of the few men in the unit with whom he could hold an intelligent conversation and who read serious books.

Another Marine who befriended Oswald at Atsugi was George Wil-

discuss these trips with even his closest friends. Years later, in Dallas, he confided to a close associate that he had become involved with a small circle of Japanese communists in Tokyo while in the Marines. None of the Marines Oswald served with had any inkling of such a double life—if, indeed, it existed.

Zack Stout knew of only one possible piece in the puzzle of Oswald's absences: he seemed to have fallen in love with a Japanese girl. When Stout asked where she worked, Oswald told him that she was a hostess at the Queen Bee in Tokyo.

This in itself was extraordinary. The Queen Bee, known for its more than 100 strikingly beautiful hostesses, was then one of the three most expensive nightclubs in Tokyo. For an evening at the Queen Bee, a date could cost anywhere from $60 to $100. Yet Oswald, who was earning less than $85 a month take-home pay, regularly went out with this woman from the Queen Bee, even bringing her back to the base several times. "He was really crazy about her," observed Stout, who met the woman with Oswald on several occasions in bars near the base.

Stout and other men remember that these bars were frequented by officers, and that in them one could pick up useful bits of information about where the unit was headed next. It seemed to him that "you could always find out where you were going from a bar girl before you could on base." (According to one source, Navy intelligence was also interested in the possibility that hostesses from the Queen Bee were being used to gather intelligence, and that Oswald was receiving money from someone at the Queen Bee.)

Just about the time that Oswald celebrated his 18th birthday, plans were made for the entire unit to ship out to the Philippines. On October 27, 1957, the moment for departure drew near. At about 8:30 p.m., Oswald grazed his upper left arm with a .22-caliber bullet, which he fired from a derringer he had somehow obtained in Japan. Wilkins rushed into the barracks at the sound of the explosion and saw Oswald quietly sitting on the lower bunk of his double-decker, still holding the pistol in his right hand. Robert Augg, whose bed Oswald was sitting on, came in later, just as a Navy corpsman was tying a tourniquet on Oswald's arm. From the other Marines in the barracks, Augg gathered that Oswald had deliberately shot himself "to get himself transferred" before the unit departed from Japan. The incident was duly reported, and he now faced military discipline. Nonetheless, Oswald was discharged from medical treatment just in time to rejoin his unit before it left for the Philippines.

The outfit spent three arduous months there and on Corregidor, during which period Oswald was on continuous mess duty. Then the unit returned to Atsugi, where Oswald was brought up on charges for having had an unregistered weapon—

the derringer with which he had shot himself. A court-martial found him guilty as charged on April 11, and he was sentenced to 20 days at hard labor, forfeiture of $50 in pay and reduction to the rank of private (he had just passed his examination for corporal). His confinement was suspended for six months, with the provision that it would be canceled if he kept out of trouble. Even though his officers supported his request to be returned to radar duty, he was inexplicably kept on mess duty.

Oswald (center, in profile) with a group of fellow Marines in the Philippines

Oswald now put in for a hardship discharge. Apparently he hoped to be discharged in Japan, where he had made friends; but this request also was turned down. Stout remembers that Oswald became increasingly bitter and began to argue that he was being singled out for mistreatment by the Marine Corps. There followed a minor incident at the Bluebird Café, a local hangout for the Marines in Coffee Mill, in which Oswald spilled a drink on the man who had reassigned him to mess duty, and attempted to provoke a fight. Oswald was again court-martialed and sentenced to 28 days in the brig.

Life in the Marine brig was designed to be punishing. Prisoners were not allowed to say a single word to one another. Except for sleeping and eating periods, they were made to stand at rigid attention during

every moment they were not performing menial duties. The guards and turnkeys were especially brutal. When a prisoner had to use the toilet, he had to toe up to a red line and scream his request over and over again, until the turnkey was satisfied and granted permission. One fellow Marine, who was in the brig at the same time as Oswald, described the brig as a horror—"far worse than anything in civilian prisons."

Joseph D. Macedo, a radar operator in Coffee Mill, remembers meeting Oswald soon after he was released from the brig. He found him "a completely changed person from the naïve and innocent boy" who had joined the unit in Japan less than a year earlier. "Oswald was a nondrinker and virgin when he came overseas;" later on, at the six- to seven-o'clock "happy hours," Oswald began drinking "mixed drinks with the men and became more extroverted and moderately humorous." Now Macedo found him to be cold, withdrawn and bitter. "I've seen enough of a democratic society here in MACS-1," Oswald said. "When I get out I'm going to try something else."

"You Americans"

OSWALD seemed to associate more than ever with his Japanese friends and less with Marines. He frequently went to Tokyo or otherwise disappeared on his passes.

In September 1958, Coffee Mill was ordered to Taiwan. When not on radar duty, the Marines helped the Nationalist Chinese troops build artillery emplacements. This, to Oswald, was further evidence of American "imperialism." He told an American reporter 13 months later about his indignation at "helping drag up guns for the Chinese, watching American technicians show the Chinese how to use them." He added, "It's one thing to talk against communism and another thing to drag a gun up a mountainside."

One night, soon after they had arrived, Oswald was on guard duty at about midnight when Lt. Charles R. Rhodes, the officer of the guard, suddenly heard "four or five" shots from the position Oswald was guarding. Drawing his .45-caliber pistol, he ran toward the clump of trees from which the gunfire seemingly emanated. There he found Oswald slumped against a tree, holding his M-1 rifle across his lap. "When I got to him, he was shaking and crying," Rhodes later recounted. "He said he had seen men in the woods and that he challenged them and then started shooting." Rhodes put his arm around Oswald's shoulder and slowly walked him back to his tent.

Rhodes reported the incident to his commanding officer, and almost immediately after that Oswald was returned to Japan. Rhodes believed then, as he does today, that Oswald planned the shooting incident as a ploy to get himself sent back to Japan. "Oswald liked Japan and wanted to stay. I think he fired off his gun to get out. There

was nothing dumb about Oswald."

Oswald was reassigned to a Marine squadron at Iwakuni, an air base some 430 miles southwest of Tokyo. Owen Dejanovich, a tall, lanky native of Chicago who went on to play professional football, recognized him as someone he had met in radar school at Keesler Air Base and tried to renew the acquaintance. He quickly found that Oswald had grown enormously bitter since he had last known him. "He kept referring to the Marines at the center as 'You Americans,' as if he were some sort of foreigner simply observing what we were doing," says Dejanovich. He spoke in slogans about American "imperialism" and "exploitation," which made Dejanovich think at the time that Oswald—whom he called Bugs—was merely being perverse for the sake of shocking the other Marines at the center.

In the evenings, Dejanovich would occasionally see Oswald speaking to an attractive Eurasian woman. "She was much too good-looking for Bugs," he recalls thinking, and he wondered why such an attractive "roundeye," obviously not a common bar girl, would waste her time with a Marine private. Another Marine in the unit, Dan Powers, got the impression from Oswald that this Eurasian was half-Russian and was teaching Oswald the Russian language. Unknown to his fellow Marines, Oswald was during this period making careful plans and preparations to defect to the Soviet Union—at least, that is what he told reporters

questions put to him with a *da* or a *nyet.*

By summer 1959, Oswald had become so well known as a Russophile within the unit that one Marine asked him to have dinner with his aunt, Rosaleen Quinn, an attractive airline stewardess from New Orleans, because she was studying Russian in preparation for the State Department's foreign-language examination. She met Oswald in a cafeteria in Santa Ana, and they spoke in Russian for about two hours. Although she had been studying Russian with a Berlitz tutor for more than a year, she found that Oswald had a far more confident command of the language than she did.

That summer Oswald also confided in Cpl. Nelson Delgado. They shared an interest in Fidel Castro, who had in the beginning of that year assumed power in Cuba. Delgado remembers that when he first voiced some sympathy for Castro's revolution, Oswald's ears "perked up." In the course of their discussions Oswald told him that he wanted desperately to go to Cuba and help train Castro's army.

Apparently believing that Delgado had some local means of getting in touch with Cubans, Oswald pressed him for someone to contact. Delgado recalls that while they were on radar duty, he scribbled a note to Oswald saying he should write "The Cuban Embassy, Washington, D.C." While Oswald had up to that point received very few letters, Delgado noticed that he now began getting mail several times a week. He also learned, while looking through Oswald's locker for a tie to borrow, that at least some of these letters came from the Cuban consulate. "The seal," he recalls, "was unmistakable."

The moment Oswald began receiving his correspondence from the Cubans, he began "putting on a coat

(Continued on page 252)

when he arrived in Moscow one year later.

"Comrade Oswaldskovich"

TOWARD THE END of 1958, Oswald returned to the United States, spent a 30-day leave in Fort Worth, Texas, with his mother, and just before Christmas reported to his new unit, MACS-9, in Santa Ana, Calif.

On February 25, 1959, Oswald arranged to take a Marine Corps proficiency examination in Russian. In reading, he achieved a score of plus four, which meant that he had got four more answers right than wrong. In writing, he scored plus three; in comprehending spoken Russian, he was weaker, scoring minus five. While his overall score was considered "poor" when compared with the scores of those studying Russian at language schools, it showed that he had learned the rudiments of a very difficult language—and none of his barracks mates in Japan remember Oswald using a Linguaphone or records to learn Russian; this suggests that he had some more private means.

Less than a month after taking his Russian examination, Oswald took and passed tests which gave him the equivalency of a high-school diploma and made it possible for him to apply to college. Meanwhile, he worked at improving his Russian. The Marines who shared a cubicle with Oswald in one of the Quonset huts nicknamed him Oswaldskovich, and he played along by calling them "Comrade" and answering

and tie" and going with Delgado into Los Angeles, about an hour and a half away by bus. Oswald told him his purpose was "to visit the Cuban consulate." Late one night, while Delgado was on duty with Oswald, "I got a call from the MP guard shack that Oswald had a visitor at the front gate. This man had to be a civilian; otherwise, they would have let him in. I had to find somebody to relieve Oswald."

About an hour later Delgado happened to pass the main gate and saw Oswald in a heated discussion with a man in a topcoat. It seemed odd to Delgado that anyone would wear a coat on a hot California night. Although Oswald didn't tell Delgado who the stranger was, he formed the impression at the time that he was in some way connected with "the Cuba business." Shortly afterward, he asked Oswald if he was still planning to go to Cuba after his discharge. He recalls that Oswald screwed his face into a squint, as if he had not heard Delgado correctly, and then replied without further elaboration, "When I get out, I'm going to school in Switzerland."

Oswald had planned this stage in his journey with consummate care. He applied in March 1959 for admission to the spring 1960 term at the Albert Schweitzer College, a new liberal-arts college in Churwalden, Switzerland. He then filed papers with the Red Cross in July intended to help him get an early discharge from the Marine Corps. He explained in a special-delivery letter to his mother that Red Cross representatives would call on her to ascertain that he was needed at home to support her. "Just inform them that I have been your only source of income," he wrote. He wanted an early discharge, he added, "in order to help you." Marguerite Oswald fully coöperated with her son, and on September 3, to the surprise of his crewmates, Oswald was detached from duty to be processed out of the Marines.

Oswald left Santa Ana on September 11 for Fort Worth, where he arrived at his mother's house at 2 a.m. on September 14. When he arose the following morning, Marguerite was rudely surprised by her son's announcement that he planned to "board a ship and work in the export-import business."

He withdrew $203 from the West Side State Bank, his only known bank account, and on September 16 left for New Orleans after giving Marguerite $100. The next day he booked passage on the freighter *Marion Lykes,* due to sail the following day from New Orleans bound for Europe, paying $220.75 for the one-way ticket. Although the freighter had accommodations for 12 passengers, on this trip it carried only four: George B. Church, Jr., a retired lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army; his wife; Billy Joe Lord, a 17-year-old student; and Oswald, Lord's roommate for the 16-day voyage.

In the evenings the four passengers ate at a common table, and

Oswald sat diagonally across from Colonel Church. Oswald usually ate quickly and silently. The one time Church tried to draw him into conversation, Oswald gave him a description of the Depression of the 1930s, which he seemed to see as a failure of capitalism. Bitterly, he dwelt on his impoverished family. After a few days at sea, Oswald began to spend most of his time in his cabin and even to miss meals. Church assumed he was seasick.

According to British passport-control records, Oswald arrived in Southampton on Friday, October 9, declaring to customs officials that he had $700 with him and intended to spend one week in England before proceeding to college in Switzerland. These were the last witnesses to identify Oswald before he appeared in Moscow one week later.

The stamps on his passport show that he left Heathrow airport in London that same day on an international flight and landed later that evening in Helsinki, Finland, where he spent six days. Swedish intelligence has found evidence that Oswald traveled to Stockholm during this period, apparently to consult the Soviet embassy. Sometime that same week Oswald visited the Soviet consulate in Helsinki and obtained visa No. 403339, valid for a six-day trip to the Soviet Union. He also bought $300 worth of tourist vouchers for the Soviet Union, although it is not clear where he got these funds. On the evening of October 15, Oswald left Helsinki by train and crossed the

Finnish-Soviet border at Vainikkala, bound for Moscow.

"I, Lee Harvey Oswald"

ON SATURDAY MORNING, October 31, two weeks after his arrival in Moscow, Oswald emerged from a taxi in front of the U.S. embassy and strode past the Marine guards into the consular section. Richard E. Snyder recalls that Oswald banged his passport down on Snyder's desk. Snyder could see the tension in his pallid face: "He was wound up like six watch springs."

Oswald stated coldly, "I've come to give up my American passport and renounce my citizenship." He then handed the veteran intelligence officer a signed but undated handwritten note saying:

> I, Lee Harvey Oswald, do hereby request that my present citizenship in the United States of America be revoked.
>
> I have entered the Soviet Union for the express purpose of applying for citizenship in the Soviet Union, through the means of naturalization. My request for citizenship is now pending before the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. I take these steps for political reasons. My request for the revoking of my American citizenship is made only after the longest and most serious consideration. I affirm that my allegience [sic] is to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Snyder could see that Oswald's defection had been carefully prepared. Oswald's note showed a firm understanding of the legal subtleties governing the revocation of citizenship and, despite Oswald's obvious edginess, Snyder assessed him as "intelligent and quite articulate."

Snyder asked if he was prepared to serve the Soviet state. Oswald spontaneously answered that he had been a radar operator in the Marine Corps and that he had already agreed to furnish the Soviet Union "with such knowledge as he had acquired while in the Marine Corps concerning his specialty." Oswald strongly hinted that he knew something that would be of "special interest" to Soviet intelligence.

At the time there was little Snyder could do to deter Oswald from his planned course. He thus asked him to return the following Monday on the pretext that the consulate could not process his application on a Saturday.

On Monday, however, Oswald did not return, and Snyder drafted a telegram to the State Department in Washington stating, "The embassy proposes to delay action on Oswald's request to execute an oath of renunciation to the extent dictated by developments." The delay went on for more than three weeks. In this period Oswald granted two interviews to Western correspondents, the first to Aline Mosby of UPI.

Like others at the consulate who felt Oswald might have been "tutored," Mosby noted that Oswald used propaganda phrases, such as

who the investigators were, and the official record of the investigation remains missing or at least unavailable. The FBI, the Marine Corps, the Office of Naval Intelligence, the Naval Investigative Services, the CIA and the Air Force Office of Special Investigations (which was responsible for base security at Atsugi) deny having it in their files or participating in any such investigation.

Through his experiences as a radar controller in Japan, Taiwan, the Philippines and California, Oswald could have had access to classified information pertaining to almost all aspects of the Air Defense Identification Zone in the Pacific, including knowledge about the height limitations of American radar, the blind spots caused by ground traffic or atmospheric disturbances in various areas, secret radio frequencies, call signs and authentication codes used for identifying incoming aircraft.

He also could have had access to all the security procedures for changing codes and frequencies, the modes and angles for intercepting enemy aircraft (from which performance data about different air-to-air missiles could be deduced), and the location and effective range of the American and Allied aircraft stationed in the Pacific.

At Atsugi, Oswald also could have witnessed repeated takeoffs of Race Car, the still-supersecret U-2, and, from visual, radar and radio observation, could have established its rate of climb, performance characteristics and cruising altitude. With the prop-

March

"capitalist lackeys" and "imperialist running dogs," with which he was not entirely comfortable. "It sounded as if it were all being given by rote, as if he had memorized *Pravda.*" To the second reporter, Priscilla Johnson, of the North American Newspaper Alliance, Oswald made a point of attributing his decision to defect to his experiences in Asia with the Marine Corps. "I am not an idealist completely," he told Johnson. "I have had a chance to watch American imperialism in action . . . if you've ever seen the Naval base at Subic Bay in the Philippines you'd know what I mean. Americans look upon all foreign peoples as something to be exploited for profit."

Meanwhile, back in the United States, the shock waves from Oswald's defection and his offer to give classified information to the Soviets reverberated through his former radar unit in California. Delgado vividly remembers a group of civilians in dark suits arriving in November with stenographers and literally taking over their headquarters company to question Marines about Oswald.

When his turn came, Delgado recalls, one of the civilians shot quick questions at him concerning his job in the radar bubble, his knowledge of Oswald's activities and his opinion of the sorts of classified information to which Oswald had had access. A number of other Marines in the unit remember being asked the same questions as a stenographer took down the answers. None was told

er guidance, he might have been able to decipher elements of its radar-jamming equipment.

The frequencies, codes and other general data, now compromised, could be changed. But the information Oswald might have amassed on Race Car presented a more difficult problem.

From Moscow, on November 26, Oswald sent his brother a long and particularly well-written letter explaining, "why I and my fellow workers and communists would like to see the capitalist government of the United States overthrown.

". . . Workers must form unions against their employers in the U.S. because the government supports an economic system which exploits all the workers, a system based upon credit which gives rise to the never-ending cycle of depression, inflation, unlimited speculation and war."

He continued: "I want you to understand what I say now, I do not say lightly, or unknowingly, since I've been in the military as you know, and I know what war is like. In the event of war I would kill any American who put a uniform on in defense of the American Government—any American."

This letter appeared in Washington, D.C., among the letters from Moscow routinely turned over to a CIA operations sector working under Angleton in counterintelligence. It was evident from the letter that Oswald had put himself firmly under the control of his hosts. He had defected, renounced his citizenship, compromised military secrets, and denounced his country and family. His fate now rested entirely with the Soviets, on whom he was dependent for legal status, financial support and protection. He was, as James Angleton later put it, "in the palm of their hand—and they could squeeze at any time."

His brother received one brief letter from Oswald a few weeks later, stating that he was moving from the Metropole Hotel. Oswald also sent his mother, Marguerite, a brief note.

He was not heard from again for more than a year.

(To be concluded next month)

Tip-Offs

POETS hail the first robin as a sign of spring. But housewives and classified-ad takers know that a more reliable indicator is the notice which reads: "Garage Sale, Saturday, 10-4." —Marion M. Markham in *Ford Times*

YOU'VE LEARNED to live with yourself when you can drive around the block alone without turning your car radio on. —Sheldon Biber in *Parade*

A WOMAN says she thinks her daughter's marriage, about which she's had some concern, is going to last: "They've planted some asparagus."

—Dorothy Dent in *Mountainwest Magazine*