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LEE HARVEY OSWALD

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CURRENT INTELLIGENCE

Analysis

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

J. Edgar Hoover
DIRECTOR

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COMMUNIST PARTY, USA

Propaganda Prevails

With typical cynicism, the Communist Party, USA (CPUSA), is exploiting the tragic assassination of former President John F. Kennedy in its all-out attack against the "ultraright." As late as November 17, 1963, General Secretary Gus Hall had stated that the CPUSA definitely would not support President Kennedy under any circumstances in the 1964 elections because of the stand he had taken on Cuba. Nevertheless, in commemoration of the assassination, the Party issued a special edition of "The Worker," east coast communist newspaper, which editorially expressed the Party's "immeasurable grief at the monstrous and shocking assassination." The President was hailed as a martyr, and the Party pledged to redouble its work "for the realization of all lofty democratic visions which President Kennedy articulated at various times."

Defeat the Ultraright

At the last meeting of the National Executive Committee, Hall had issued instructions for the 1964 election campaign. He ordered the Party to make immediate preparations to become involved in the campaign with Party candidates or "independent candidates" in order to defeat the ultraright movement whose center, he said, was the "Goldwater-Dixiecrat alliance." He emphasized that initiative, agitation, and propaganda were necessary in this campaign. It is not surprising, then, that the Party used this tragedy to point the finger of guilt beyond the assassin to "a criminal cabal of White Citizen Councilmen, Birch Society plotters, the National States Rights Party chieftains, American Nazi Party moguls, the National Renaissance Party, the Minute Men bandits and other para-military fascist-racist groups."

Attack the "Dixiecrats"

On the west coast, Albert (Mickey) Lima, Chairman of the Party's Northern California District, recorded his reaction to the assassination for a television station in San Francisco. Lima stated that he had a deep feeling of anger. He explained that he was angered by the thought that the "Dixiecrats" were so bold they now feel they can murder the President of the United States. In considering whether the new Administration would be vigorous in prosecuting

communists, Lima said it is possible that the "ultraright" will feel that President Johnson is not as great a block to their activities as was President Kennedy. Lima asserted that there have been bombings and murders all over the South, and that everyone knows the source of this violence in the South. He concluded that it was this situation which gave rise to the murder of President Kennedy.

"Right Wing Plot"

In the Midwest, Rose Tillotson Renaud, Secretary of the Minnesota-Dakotas District, instructed that Party members in that District should, in all their conversations and contacts with noncommunists, attempt to place the responsibility for the assassination on the ultraright movement. The Wisconsin District of the CPUSA issued a statement in which assassination was called "a weapon of either Fascists, demented persons or provocateurs...." James Lustig, Chairman of the Party's New Jersey District, told members in this District that the assassination was a "right wing plot." Lustig claimed that if Lee Harvey Oswald committed the assassination he was a dupe of the "right wing." In the opinion of Lustig, things look better than ever before for the CPUSA because the people recognize the assassination as a badly handled "right wing plot."

Party Apprehensive

The Party's frantic efforts to place blame on the "ultraright" can be attributed to its deep concern over possible adverse public reaction to the background of Lee Harvey Oswald, an admitted Marxist. Following active service in the U.S. Marine Corps, Oswald went to the Soviet Union in 1959 and attempted to obtain Soviet citizenship. While he was not successful in this effort, Oswald remained in the Soviet Union until June, 1962. While there, he worked in a factory in Minsk and married a Soviet girl, Marina Nikolaevna Prusakova. Disillusioned with life in the Soviet Union, Oswald returned to the United States and became active in the pro-Castro Fair Play for Cuba Committee and was in contact with both the CPUSA and the Trotskyite Socialist Workers Party. Following the example of the Soviet Union, which turned over what purported to be its consular file on Oswald to the United States Government, the CPUSA, in an unprecedented move, voluntarily furnished what purported to be its correspondence file on Oswald to the FBI.