

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : W. C. SULLIVAN *WCS*

DATE: 11-22-63

FROM : W. A. BRANIGAN *WAB*

SECRET

- 1 - Belmont
- 1 - Mohr
- 1 - DeLoach
- 1 - Evans
- 1 - Rosen
- 1 - Sullivan
- 1 - Turner
- 1 - DE Moore
- 1 - Branigan
- 1 - Wannall

Handwritten initials and routing marks

Tolson
DeLoach
Mohr
Bishop
Casper
Callahan
Conrad
Felt
Gale
Rosen
Sullivan
Tavel
Trotter
Tele. Room
Holmes
Gandy

SUBJECT: ASSASSINATION OF THE PRESIDENT

11-22-63

A memo from Mr. Belmont to Mr. Tolson 11-22-63 advised that the files were being reviewed concerning Lee Harvey Oswald, a suspect in captioned matter.

Oswald first came to our attention on 10-31-59 when a news clipping indicated that he had held a press conference in his room at the Metropole Hotel, Moscow, in which he advised he had applied to renounce his American citizenship and become a Soviet citizen. He was described as a 20-year-old former U.S. Marine and received considerable publicity. We checked with the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) and were advised that Oswald had entered the Marine Corps at Dallas, Texas, 10-24-55 to serve 3 years, was released to inactive duty on 9-11-59 but had obligated service until 12-8-62. We had an Identification Division record on his service fingerprints which showed no criminal arrests and placed a stop against the prints so that any subsequent arrest in the U.S. would be brought to our attention.

State Department advised 11-22-59 that Oswald had applied at the American Embassy 10-31-59 advising he wished to renounce his American citizenship and gave as the principal reason for his decision, "I am a Marxist." He stated that he had been a radar operator in the Marine Corps and had told Soviet officials that if he was granted Soviet citizenship, he would make known information concerning the Marine Corps which was in his possession. He again got publicity on 11-15-59 when the United Press reported that he had said that Soviet authorities would not grant him citizenship, although he could live in Russia as a resident alien.

ONI advised 11-15-60 that Oswald had been given an undesirable discharge from the Marine Corps Reserve on 8-17-60.

On 5-17-62 State Department advised that it had been determined that Oswald was still an American citizen, was married to

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6-26-62. He was very curt and short in answering many questions and gave the impression of being cold and arrogant. He advised that he was not willing to take a polygraph test. He declined to answer the question as to why he had made the trip to Russia and stated he did not care to relive the past, then added that he went to Russia to see the country. He said that he had been given a job as a sheet metal worker in a television factory and denied that he had gone to Russia because of admiration of the Russian system. He stated that he had read books by Karl Marx because of interest in his economic theories but denied that he had ever been a member of the Communist Party. He also denied that he had renounced his U.S. citizenship and stated that he did not seek Soviet citizenship. He advised that the Soviets never attempted to obtain information from him concerning the Marine Corps; that he was not recruited at any time by Soviet intelligence and made no deals with the Soviets to obtain permission to return to the U.S. He said that he had not given the Soviets any information which could be used against the U.S. He also denied that he had offered to reveal any information to the Soviets obtained as a result of being a radar operator in the Marines.

Oswald was reinterviewed on 8-16-62 and advised that he had made contact with the Soviet Embassy in Washington, D. C., to advise the Embassy of his wife's current address which was required by Soviet law. He said she would report subsequent changes of address to the Embassy. He stated that he had never enjoyed his service in the U.S. Marines but had not enjoyed his trip to the Soviet Union any more than his Marine service. He again denied requesting revocation of his U.S. citizenship and stated that he had never affirmed allegiance to the Soviet Union. He denied that he had made any deals with Soviet intelligence organizations and that he had been assured by the U.S. Embassy that Embassy officials were aware of no evidence which would warrant prosecution of him should he return to the U.S. He advised that he might have to return to the Soviet Union in about 5 years to take his wife to see her relatives. He declined to answer questions as to why he went to the Soviet Union and stated that he considered it "nobody's business." At the end of the interview he agreed to contact the FBI if any person ever contacted him in the U.S. under suspicious circumstances.

An article in "The Times Picayune" New Orleans, Louisiana, 8-13-63 indicated that Oswald had been sentenced to pay a fine of \$10 or serve 10 days on a charge of disturbing the peace as a result of distribution of a pamphlet for "Fair Play for Cuba." New Orleans by letter 8-21-63 was instructed to ascertain the facts concerning

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Oswald's distribution of the pamphlet and determine if he was engaged in subversive activities. U

Investigation in New Orleans disclosed that Oswald had been arrested as reported in the newspaper (it is noted that this is the only arrest disclosed in the Identification Division records). He claimed to be a member of the "Fair Play for Cuba Committee" (FPCC) and became involved in an argument with 3 Cuban emigrants while passing out circulars. He entered a plea of guilty and elected to pay the fine of \$10. The 3 other persons arrested with Oswald were discharged. The arrest took place on 8-9-63. U

Oswald was interviewed on 8-10-63 by agents of the New Orleans office and advised that he was unemployed and had come to New Orleans about 4 months previously. There he began to read literature distributed by the FPCC which he considered was not a communist or communist-controlled group. He had sent a letter to the headquarters of this Committee at 799 Broadway, New York City, with \$5 advising that he wished to join the Committee. During the latter part of May, 1963, he received through the mail a card made out in his name and signed by V. L. Lee which showed that he was a member of the national organization. A short time later he received a white card which made him a member of the New Orleans chapter. This card was dated 6-6-63 and was signed A. J. Hidell. He had not seen Hidell but talked to him on the phone and had attended meetings of the local committee but did not know any of the other persons who attended because they were known only by their first names. U

Investigation also disclosed that on 8-21-63 Oswald appeared on a radio program called "Conversation Carte Blanche" on radio station WDSU in New Orleans with Edward Scannell Butler, staff director of the Information Council of the Americas which organization specializes in distribution of anticommunist educational material to Latin American countries. During the program, Oswald stated that the FPCC is not communist-controlled and that he, Oswald, is a Marxist. U

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On 11-1-63 Mrs. Michael R. Paine, 2515 West Fifth Street, Irving, Texas, advised that Oswald was then employed by the Texas School Book Depository, 411 Elm Street, Dallas, Texas as a laborer, was rooming at an unknown address in Dallas and when he obtained enough money he would move his family to an apartment in Dallas. U

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OBSERVATIONS

Other than the connection with the FPCC investigation developed no subversive data regarding subject except that during September, 1962, a confidential informant advised that Oswald was a subscriber to "The Worker" an east coast communist newspaper. Another informant advised that in June, 1963, Oswald wrote a letter to "The Worker," 23 West 26th Street, New York City, claiming to be a long-time subscriber and advising that he was forming an FPCC in New Orleans. He requested some of "The Worker's" literature and forwarded honorary membership cards for "those fighters for peace, Mr. Gus Hall and Mr. B. Davis." Hall is general secretary of the Communist Party, USA, and Davis is the national secretary. U

The investigation disclosed no threats by Oswald against the President but did indicate that he drank to excess while residing in Ft. Worth, Texas, after his return from Russia and beat his wife. U

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"I have not violated; Section 1544, Title 18, U. S. code, therefore you have no legal or even moral right, to reverse my honourable discharge from the U.S.M.C. of Sept. 11, 1960, into a undiserable discharge. U

"You may consider this letter a request by me for a full review of my case in the light of these facts, since by the time you recive this letter I shall have returned to the U.S.A. with my family, and shall be prepared to appear in person at a reasonable time and place in my area, before a reviewing board of officers. U

"If you choose to convene a review board you my contact me through the below address in the United States after May 15th 1962. U

"LEE H. OSWALD
7313 Davanport St.
Fort Worth, Texas.

"Sincerely,
"/s/ LEE H. OSWALD"

BACKGROUND DATA

Background data developed during the investigation are summarized as follows: U

He was born 10-18-39, New Orleans, Louisiana. He was attending high school in Ft. Worth, Texas, when he enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in October, 1956. He had special training as an electronics operator and a radio operator while in the Marine Corps and was released to inactive duty 9-11-59. He married Marina Nikoleavna Prusakova at Minsk, Russia, 4-30-61 (she was born 7-17-41 in Russia). His daughter whose name was given during the 6-26-62 interview as June Lee Oswald was born February 15, 1962. Another daughter was born in October, 1963. U

Oswald was last issued American passport D-092526 at New Orleans, Louisiana, 6-25-63 for proposed travel of 3 months to one year as a tourist to England, France, Germany, Holland, USSR, Finland, Italy and Poland. In his application dated 6-24-63 he stated that he intended to depart New Orleans during the period October-December, 1963. U

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Relatives identified during the investigation were his mother, Mrs. Marguerite C. Oswald; brother, Robert Lee Oswald, who was formerly in the U.S. Air Force; and halfbrother, John Edward Pic, who in 1961 was a staff sergeant in the U.S. Air Force, Air Force number 11313239. U

OSWALD'S LETTER TO FPCC

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ACTION:

This is for information.

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