

Speculation On Oswald Discounted

It's improbable that the Russians would have trusted erratic Marxist Lee Harvey Oswald to act as an agent for them, said New York Times Russian expert Harrison Salisbury Tuesday.

He discounted rumors that portray turncoat Oswald as a Russian agent. "It's impossible to see how President Kennedy's death would have been to Russia's advantage," he said.

Khrushchev most assuredly regretted Kennedy's death, he said. "The assassination affected Khrushchev's own political situation in the Communist world. Khrushchev had based his whole theory of international politics on the idea of negotiation between Communist powers and the West.

"If President Lyndon Johnson proves to be a man who won't negotiate, then Khrushchev is in trouble at home."

Salisbury, 55, who spent years reporting from behind the Iron Curtain, is presently directing Times coverage of Dallas violence.

The writer was not in Dallas Tuesday as a correspondent, however. He was here to lecture on the Sino-Soviet ideological split in a Community Course talk at Southern Methodist University Tuesday night.

He told reporters in Braniff's 707 Room at Dallas Love Field that the Russian-Chinese rift goes beyond politics. He noted a deep-seated dislike between the two peoples—a racial dislike and a personal dislike.

Could Oswald have been an agent of the warlike Chinese?

"The Russian security forces assume automatically that anyone they're dealing with is likely to be a double agent. They are reluctant to utilize a foreigner beyond extracting any information he might have.

"The Chinese are similarly leery. They are very skeptical people. It's unlikely they would have trusted Oswald. And there's no evidence that he had any contact with the Chinese."

Could Oswald have worked for the Cubans?

"There, I don't know. They are very erratic themselves at times. However, I haven't seen any indication that the Cubans were any more interested in this man than anyone else.

"The unfriendly treatment he reportedly received at their hands in Mexico City may have been what set him off in his final frenzy.

"My guess is that the assassination was a 1-man operation."