

Oct. 16, 1959: I Want

OSWALD DIARY

Russian

EDITOR'S NOTE — From Oct. 16, 1959, until March 27, 1962, Lee Harvey Oswald kept a secret diary covering his stay in Russia. The diary, discovered among his effects since his death, gives some insight to the thoughts and personality of the presidential assassin. In this story and a subsequent one, details of the diary are disclosed to the public for the first time.

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By HUGH AYNESWORTH

When Intourist Guide Rimma Sherikova met Lee Harvey Oswald's train in Moscow, the first thing he told her was, "I want to apply for Russian citizenship."

Oswald, recently a U.S. Marine, had been led to Russia by the glittering promises of communism. He had made his way to Helsinki, Finland, and there boarded the train for Moscow.

His enthusiasm stunned even Rimma. Later in his diary — which he kept for more than two years—he scribbled, "She is flabbergasted, but agrees to help." Rimma telephoned her boss at Intourist headquarters, then helped Oswald address a written request to the Supreme Soviet.

"Meanwhile her boss telephones the Passport and Visa Office and notifies them about me," Oswald wrote in his until-now secret diary.

Oswald kept the diary—"Historic Diary" he labeled it—from Oct. 16, 1959, the day he met Moscow and Rimma, until March 27, 1962. A reading of it gives much insight into this man who was to become a presidential assassin.

But on that October day in 1959 everything was rosy. The day after he arrived Rimma came by the Hotel Berlin to accompany the young American—as was her job—on a sight-seeing tour of Moscow.

"She says we must continue with this although I am too nervous. She is 'sure' I will have an answer soon."

He thought Rimma skeptical.

She wanted to know why he wanted to do this.

"I explain I am a Communist," he wrote. "She is politely sympathetic, but uneasy now."

"She tries to be a friend to me. She feels sorry for me. I am something new."

(Note: Oswald's spelling was poor. For this story, it has been corrected.)

Sunday, Oct. 18, 1959, Oswald's

20th birthday:

"We visit exhibitions in the morning and in the afternoon the Lenin-Stalin tomb."

FOR HIS BIRTHDAY, Rimma gave Oswald a book, "Idiot," by Fyodor Dostoevsky — a story written in the 1860s about a man's desperate struggle for personal human dignity in a world that often denies it.

More tourism on the next day. Oswald wrote he is "anxious." "Still no word from the authorities about my request."

Oct. 20: Oswald was told by Rimma that Intourist has been notified that the Passport and Visa Department wants to see him.

"I am excited greatly by this news," Oswald wrote.

Oct. 21, 1959, thus began with hope for the slender American who felt he was temporarily a "man without a country."

That morning he met with a Russian official and later described him as "balding, stout, black suit, fairly good English." He asked Oswald (as if he didn't already know!) "What do you want?"

"Soviet citizenship," snapped Oswald.

"Why?" the Russian grunted.

"I give vague answers about 'great Soviet Union,'" Oswald said. He was shocked when the Russki told him, "U.S.S.R. only great in literature."

"I am stunned. I reiterate. He

Citizenship

says he will check and let me know whether my visa will be extended (it expires today)."

At 6 p.m., the Russian police telephoned Oswald in his room and told him he had two hours to get moving out of the country. His 5-day student's visa would run out at 8 p.m.

"I am shocked!! My dreams! I retire to my room. I have \$100 left. I have waited for two years to be accepted. My fondest dreams are shattered because of a petty official, because of bad planning. I planned so much!"

OSWALD WAS IN a dilemma. He had forsaken the United States long ago (not officially, but in his mind and heart) and now he cannot stay in the Utopia of his dreams, Russia. And he doesn't have enough money to get very far, which doubtless added to his mental anguish.

Suicide!

The diary says:

"7 p.m. I decide to end it. Soak wrist in cold water to numb

the pain. Then slash my left wrist. Then place into bathtub of hot water.

"I think 'When Rimma comes at 8 to find me dead, it will be a great shock.'

"Somewhere a violin plays, as I watch my life whirl away.

"I think to myself 'How easy to die' and 'a sweet death' (to violins)."

Rimma came about 8 p.m. and found Oswald unconscious by the bathtub — the floor and tub deeply stained by Oswald's blood.

Rimma summoned an ambulance, which took Oswald to a hospital where five stitches were taken in the wrist wound.

The Russian girl—described by Oswald in other notes as in her mid-20s — must have pitied the American. She stayed by his side at the hospital for many hours, in case he needed an interpreter, she said.

"My Russian is still very bad," he wrote. "Far into the night I tell her 'go home' (my mood is bad) but she stays. She is my friend."

Oswald saw a certain amount of strength in the Soviet girl and he envied it. While in the hospital he noted, "She has a strong will. Only at this moment I notice she is pretty."

The next day (Oct. 22, 1959) he noted his surroundings: "I am in a small room with about 12 others (sick persons), 2 orderlies and a nurse. The room is very drab, as well as the breakfast."

He then watched the others and made a startling discovery: "Only after prolonged (two hours) observation of the other patients do I realize I am in the insanity ward. This realization disquiets me."

"She encourages me, then scolds me. She says she will help me get transferred to another section of the hospital (not for insane) where the food is good," Oswald scribbled.

The next day Oswald was taken to a regular ward, but he distrusted the nurses. "The nurses are suspicious of me," he wrote, then in parentheses "They know."

FOR THE NEXT four days Oswald didn't jot much in his diary. Rimma visited every day and on the 23d, he wrote that Rosa Agafonova, another Intourist worker at the Berlin, dropped

by to cheer him.

"Very beautiful, excellent English, very merry and kind," he wrote of Rosa. "She makes me very glad to be alive."

Oct. 27: "Stitches are taken out by doctor with 'dull' scissors."

Oswald was released on the 28th and Rimma, in an Intourist car, returned him to the Berlin. He checked out for some reason and moved the short distance to the Hotel Metropole.

As soon as Oswald was checked into the Metropole, Rimma (who must be a Russian diplomat by now) told him the Passport and Registration Office wanted to talk with him. "About my future," he wrote.

They exchanged formalities, asked how his arm was and then got to the point: "Do you want to go back to your homeland?"

"No, I want Soviet citizenship," Oswald replied quickly, adding that he had long planned for the day when he would live in Russia.

"We will see," one Russian said.

They then asked him about the other official to whom he had made his request. Oswald told them, then found out that the first Russian had not even passed along the request; had made no application for extension of his visa.

"I describe him. They take notes," Oswald wrote.

When asked for credentials, Oswald whipped out his U.S. Marine Corps discharge certificate—later to be amended from honorary to undesirable when his defection was announced.

"How long will it take?" Oswald asked.

"Not soon," one of the Russians replied curtly.

Then back to his hotel. Faithful Rimma came by to see how he was feeling. "I feel insulted and I insult her," the diary says.

THE FOLLOWING DAY Oswald wrote that he paced the floor in Room 214 awaiting an answer to his fate.

"I eat once, stay next to the phone, kept fully dressed," he wrote.

Writing from his hotel room Oct. 30, he added: "I have been in hotel three days. It seems like three years. I must have some sort of a showdown."

Oct. 31, 1959: "I make my decision." He hailed a taxi and told the driver, "To the American Embassy."

After some time Oswald was taken to see one of the embassy officials, John A. McVickers.

"I took out my American passport and lay it on the desk and said, 'I have come to dissolve my American citizenship.'"

Oswald said McVicker warned him not to do such a drastic thing without first making sure the Russians would accept him.

"He says I'm a fool," Oswald penned in the diary. "I state 'My mind is made up' and from this day forward I consider myself no citizen of the U.S.A."

Oswald talked for 40 minutes with Richard Snyder, a consul at the embassy, then said Snyder told him, "Unless you wish to expound on your Marxist beliefs you can go."

"In effect I leave the embassy elated at this showdown," Oswald wrote. He said he felt sure that the Russians would now see the light and welcome him . . . "after this sign of faith in them."

At 2 p.m.—less than an hour after he returned from his "showdown" with the American Embassy folks—reporters began to converge on Room 214 at the Metropole. Oswald turned them away for the time being.

"I feel nonplussed because of the attention," he wrote.

ON NOV. 1 Oswald wrote: "My mother and my brother have called three times. Now I feel slightly exhilarated, not so lonely."

From Nov. 2 to Nov. 15 the diary claims that he refused all incoming telephone calls. He called this period "days of utter loneliness."

During this time he mentioned pacing the floor, waiting, waiting, waiting. Most of his meals he ate close by the telephone.

He was ill for some days. He did not eat enough.

"I am racked with dysentery," he scribbled at one spot.

On Nov. 15 Oswald felt better and wanted to talk with somebody, perhaps anybody who would listen. He telephoned Miss Aline Mosby of United Press International, who had left her card when he refused her an interview.

He posed for pictures and told Miss Mosby of his intentions, his hopes.

Later he wrote in his diary that she "distorted" the story and he complained that she had

failed in her promise to let him read her story before she filed it. Following the interview, Oswald felt relieved. He had gained more attention. Best of all, perhaps, he had had somebody to talk with who wouldn't argue with him, who would be very, very interested in what he had to say.

That night he wrote, "I feel slightly better because of the attention."

THE VERY NEXT DAY—Nov. 16, 1959 — exactly one month after he arrived in Russia—a Soviet official came to him and told him he could stay until they decided what must be done in his unusual case.

"It is comforting news for me," he wrote.

Though he felt more secure, because he knew the wheels were turning, Oswald still had qualms through November and December when no word came.

He bought a couple of self-teaching Russian books and locked himself in his room and studied.

New Year's Eve of 1960, Oswald didn't feel much like celebrating.

He was worried about his finances. He owed for the entire month of December at the hotel; hadn't paid one kopek. He owed 2,200 rubles and had only \$28 left.

"I see no one from Nov. 17 to Dec. 30 except now and then Rimma who calls the Ministry about me . . . 'Have they forgotten?'"

Rimma, Oswald said, had told the hotel that though Oswald was rather slow in paying his bill, not to worry because he was to receive a big sum of money from America any day now.

So, on New Year's Eve he sat and talked at length with Rosa Agafonova. She gave him a small boratin (clown) as a present.

"She is very nice," Oswald wrote. "I found out only recently she is married and has a small son who was born crippled. That is why she is so strangely tender and compelling."

ON JAN. 4 he was told by the Russians that he could have a residence document, but not citizenship.

He was instructed to go to the Red Cross to get money to help him settle his bills and pay his train fare to Minsk, where he had been told he would be given a job in a factory.

(Minsk is 468 miles southwest of Moscow, closer to Warsaw. A city about the size of Dallas, it is the capital of Byelorussia.)

Oswald was elated. At last he was moving again on his road, which was to end not in Moscow, but in the Dallas city jail less than four turbulent years later.

The money Red Cross gave him especially pleases Oswald. He wrote:

"I receive 5,000 rubles, a huge sum!"

(This was more than he would receive for seven months work in Minsk, despite the fact he made more than the average Russian at his job.)

(The American Red Cross said in Washington it had never given any money to Oswald and has no record of correspondence between the American Red Cross and the U.S.S.R. Red Cross regarding the defector.)

Jan. 7, 1960: Oswald boarded a train for Minsk. Train fare: 150 rubles.

"I have a lot of money and hope," his diary says.

Two Red Cross workers met him at the Minsk station and took him to the Hotel Minsk, where two Intourist guides, Rosa

and Stellina, came by within the hour.

Stellina, wrote Oswald, was in her 40s, "nice, married, young child." Rosa: "about 23, blonde, attractive, unmarried, excellent English. We attract each other at once."

Jan. 8, 1960: "I meet the city mayor, Comrade Shrapof, who welcomes me to Minsk, promises a rent-free apartment 'soon' and warns me about 'uncultured persons' who sometimes insult foreigners."

Jan. 10: "The day to myself. I walk through city, very nice."

THE FOLLOWING DAY Oswald visited the Minsk Radio Factory, where he soon was to be given a good job—very good by Russian standards.

He found a man there he immediately liked and respected—one who was to play a big part in his decision to leave Russia and get back to his native land.

Even that day this man might have tried to warn Oswald of what he would encounter. Oswald wrote in his diary:

"There I meet Andrei Tovli, late 40s, mild mannered, like



—Dallas News Staff Photo.

Lee Harvey Oswald.

able. He seems to want to tell me something."

Oswald began his job Jan. 13 as a "checker" metal worker at 700 rubles a month. He didn't write much in his diary the next couple of months, except:

"Work very easy. I am learning Russian quickly now. Everyone is very friendly and kind. I meet many young Russian workers my own age, and they have varied personalities.

"All wish to know about me, even offer to hold a mass meeting so I can say.

"I refuse politely.

"At night I take Rosa to the theater, movie or opera almost every day.

"I'm living big and am very satisfied.

"I receive a check from the Red Cross every 5th of the month 'to help.' The check is 700 rubles. Therefore every month I make 1,400 rubles, about the same as the director of the factory!"

Oswald, known as a complainer in the Marine Corps, hadn't changed. He wrote:

"I don't like: picture of Lenin which watches from its place of honor and physical training at 11-11:10 each morning (compulsory) for all."

ON MARCH 16 Oswald wrote of his new apartment. He observed that many coworkers have been

on the list for an apartment for five or six years. He called his flat, "a Russian's dream."

The one-room, kitchen-bath apartment was near his work. "Only 8 minutes walk," he wrote, and added, "It has a splendid view from two balconies of the river. Almost rent-free (60 rubles a month)."

Soon Oswald told of meeting Pavil Golovacha, a friendly young Russian about his age. "Very intelligent, an excellent radio technician." He noted that Pavil's father was the famed Gen. Golovacha, commander of Northwestern Siberia and a World War II hero.

Next entry was May Day (May 1, 1960). "I follow the American custom of marking a holiday by sleeping in the morning." He then described the "spectacular military parade" and the parade of all the workers — except him — waving flags and pictures of Khrushchev.

That night Oswald went to Tovli's home for a party with 40 people. "We dance, play around and drink until 2 a.m., when party breaks up."

Tovli finally came out with it, after trying in more subtle terms:

"Go back to the United States," he told Oswald.

Oswald was stunned. He wrote later:

"It's the first opposition I have heard. I respect Tovli. He has seen the world. He says many things and relates many things I don't know about the U.S.S.R.

"I begin to feel uneasy inside . . . it's true!"

The next two months Oswald spent considerable time with another coworker, an Argentine immigrant named Alexander Zeger. Zeger had two daughters Oswald enjoyed.

He wrote of Leonora, 26, and Anita, 20, Zeger's daughters. Anita is "very gay, not so attractive." Oswald said he and Anita "hit it off."

Of Leonora, a divorcee, Oswald wrote: "She has a beautiful Spanish figure, long black hair, like Anita. I never pay much attention to her. She's too old for me (he is 20 now). She seems to dislike my lack of attention for some reason. She is high strung."

OSWALD THEN TOLD of a dingy cafe where he usually ate his evening meal.

"The food is generally poor and always the same menus in any cafe at any point in the city. The food is cheap and I don't really care about quality after three years in the U.S.M.C."

In August and September of 1960—less than a year in Russia—Oswald decided he wanted out.

"As my Russian improves," he wrote, "I become increasingly conscious of just what sort of a society I live in. Mass gymnastics, compulsory afterwork meetings, usually political information meeting, compulsory attendance at lectures and the sending of the entire shop collective (except me) to pick potatoes on a Sunday at a State Collective farm: a 'patriotic duty' to bring in the harvest."

He added: "The opinions of the workers (unvoiced) are that it's a great pain in the neck. They don't seem to be especially enthusiastic about any of the 'collective duties,' a natural feeling.

"I am increasingly aware of the presence, in all things, of Le-bizen, shop party secretary, fat, fortyish and jovial on the outside. He is a no-nonsense party regular."

In October, 1960, Oswald wrote of the coming of the bitter Russian winter. His dread of the cold was "mellowed in splendid golds and reds of fall in Byelorussia."

HIS 21ST BIRTHDAY, Oct. 18,

1960, was his happiest in several years. Still living in splendid fashion, he invited Pavil, Rosa and a beautiful Jewish lass named Ella Germain to a party at his apartment.

He described Ella as "a very attractive Russian Jew I have been going walking with lately, works at the radio factory."

Ella was destined soon to play a big part in the twisted pathways traveled by Lee Harvey Oswald.

Oswald wrote in his diary in much the same manner he often expressed his other views; he felt he was the big cheese—the center of attraction. The same went for the birthday party.

"Rosa and Ella are jealous of each other," he wrote. "It brings a warm feeling to me. Both are at my place for the first time.

"Ella and Pavil both give me ash trays (I don't smoke). We have a laugh."

November brought the winter. Oswald felt it more than some.

"A growing loneliness overtakes me in spite of my conquest of Ennatchina, a girl from Riga studying at the music conservatory in Minsk," he wrote, adding, "And short (this then scratched out) After an affair which lasts a few weeks we part."

He looked elsewhere for attention.

Nov. 15, 1960: "I make the acquaintance of four girls rooming at the Foreign Language Dormitory in Room 212. Nell is very interesting, so is Tomka, Tomis and Alla.

"I usually go to the Institute dormitory with a friend of mine who speaks English very well, Erich Titov, 22, who is in the fourth year at the Medical Institute."

Oswald thought Titov "a very bright fellow." Later when he would plan his return to the U.S., Oswald could not tell Erich for fear he would somehow block his move.

OSWALD'S ONLY DECEMBER jotting was, "I am having a light affair with Nell Korobka."

Jan. 1, 1961, the love bug got hold of Oswald.

"New Year's Day I spend at the home of Ella Germain, I think I'm in love with her. She has refused my more dishonorable advances. We drink and eat in the presence of her family in a very hospitable atmosphere.

"Later I go home drunk and happy. Passing the river homeward. I decide to propose to Ella."

Jan. 2: "After a pleasant hand-in-hand walk to the local cinema we came home. Standing on the doorstep I propose. She hesitates, then refuses.

"My love is real but she has none for me.

"Her reason besides lack of love: I am an American and someday might be arrested simply because of that. Example, Polish intervention in the '20s led to the arrest of all people in the Soviet Union of Polish origin."

"You understand the world situation," he quoted Ейла, "There is too much against you and you don't even know it."

Oswald was shocked. He tripped over his own feet as he turned to leave.

"She snickers at my awkwardness in turning to go, (I am too stunned to think).

"I realize," he wrote, "she was never serious with me but only exploited my being an American to get the envy of the other girls who consider me different from the Russian boys."

He closed that day's entry:

"I am miserable!"

The next day was another low one. "I am miserable about Ella. I love her but what can I do?"

JAN. 4, 1961, one year after Oswald was granted his residence document: "I am called in by the Passport office and asked if I want citizenship (Russian). I say 'No, simply extend my residential passport.'" This was granted.

The rest of January Oswald penned only four lines in his diary, but they tell a story:

"I am starting to reconsider my desire about staying. The work is drab. The money I get has nowhere to be spent. No nightclubs or bowling alleys, no places of recreation except the trade union dances.

"I have had enough."

Feb. 1, 1961: Oswald wrote the U.S. embassy in Moscow. "I state 'I would like to go back to U.S.'"

Feb. 28: "I receive letter from embassy. Richard E. Snyder stated I could come in for an interview any time I wanted."

For two weeks Oswald wondered how he was going to get the 468 miles to Moscow to handle the next step of his amended "plan."

"I now live in a state of expectation about going back to the

U.S. I confided in Tovli. He supports my judgment but warns not to tell any Russians about my desire to return.

"I understand now why."

MARCH 17, 1961: Another detour appeared in Oswald's maze-like life. That night he and Erich went to a dance at the Trade Union.

"Boring," he wrote later, "but at the last hour I am introduced to a girl with a French hairdo and red dress with white slippers.

"I dance with her, then ask to show her home.

"I do, along with five other admirers. Her name is Marina. We like each other right away. She gives me her phone number and departs home with a not-so-new friend in a taxi. I walk home."

March 18-31: "We walk. I talk a little about myself, she talks a lot about herself. Her name is Marina N."

April 1-30: The diary got skimpy as Oswald was busy courting. "We are going steady and I decide I must have her. She puts me off, so on April 15, I propose. She accepts."

April 31 (sic): "After a 7-day delay at the Marriage Bureau because of my unusual passport, they allow us to register as man and wife. Two of Marina's girl friends act as bridesmaids, we are married.

"At her aunt's home we have a dinner reception for about 20 friends and neighbors who wish us happiness (in spite of my origin and accent)."

He described an evening of merriment, drinking and eating, and added, "Uncle Vasily started a fight and the fuse blew on an overloaded circuit." After all that, they walked the 15 minutes to their home.

"At midnight we were home," he recalled.

May of 1961 and Oswald wrote: "In spite of fact I married Marina to hurt Ella I found myself in love with Marina."

In late May, he added: "The transition of changing the full love from Ella to Marina was very painful, especially as I saw Ella almost every day at the factory, but as the days and weeks went by I adjusted more and more.

"I still haven't told my wife of my desire to return to the U.S.

"She is madly in love with me from the very start. Boat

rides on Lake Minsk, walks through the parks, evening at home or at Aunt Valia's place mark May."

IN JUNE, 1961, he wrote: "A continuance of May, except that we draw closer and closer and I think very little now of Ella."

In late June, Lee told Marina he wanted to go home.

"My wife is slightly startled," he wrote, "but then she encourages me to do what I wish to do."

In July Oswald decided to take his two-week vacation from the radio factory and fly to Moscow to see if the American embassy could help him get back to his homeland.

July 8, 1961: Oswald boarded an Ilushin-20 jet, got to Moscow 2 hours and 20 minutes later. He took a bus from the airport to mid-Moscow.

As he arrived at the U.S. embassy it was closed. It was 3 p.m. on Saturday. He telephoned Snyder ("since all embassy personnel live in the same building").

Oswald talked with Snyder, who told him to come back Monday morning and they would help him. Oswald telephoned Marina in Minsk and had her fly up the following day.

They both returned to Minsk July 15, and Marina returned to work to find that all her bosses and coworkers knew where she had been.

"They were called at her place of work from some official in Moscow," Oswald wrote. "The bosses hold a meeting and give her a strong browbeating, the first of many such indoctrinations."

The next six weeks were spent in getting the necessary blanks and applications filled out. "They number about 20," Oswald scribbled.

Aug. 20, 1961: "We give the papers out. They say it will be 3½ months before we know whether they'll let us go or not.

"In the meantime, Marina has had to stand four different meetings at the place of work held by her bosses at the direction of 'someone' by phone.

"The Young Communist League headquarters also called about her and she had to go see them for 1½ hours.

"The purpose (expressed) is to dissuade her from going to the U.S.A. Net effect: Make her more stubborn about wanting to go."

HE WROTE for the first time in mid-August about Marina being pregnant. He added, "We

only hope the visas come through soon!"

Aug. 21-Sept. 1: "I make repeated trips to the Passport and Visa office, also to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Minsk, also the Ministry of Internal Affairs, all of which have a say in the granting of a visa. I expected promises of quick attention to us."

Sept. 1-Oct. 18: "No word from Ministry ('They'll call us!'). Marina left Minsk by train on vacation to the city of Kharkov in the Urals to visit an aunt for four weeks.

"During this time I am lonely, but I and Erich go to the dances and public places for entertainment. I haven't done this in quite a few months now.

"I spend my birthday alone at the opera, watching my favorite, 'Queen of Spades.' I am 22 years old."

Nov. 12, 1961: "Marina arrives back radiant, with several jars of preserves for me from her aunt in Kharkov."

November-December. — "Now we are becoming annoyed by the delay. Marina is beginning to waver about going to the U.S., probably from the strain and her being pregnant.

"Still we quarrel and so things are not so bright, especially with the approach of the hard Russian winter."

The Oswalds had a nice surprise for Christmas. That afternoon Marina was called to the Passport and Visa office and told they had been granted Soviet exit visas.

"She fills out the completing blank and then comes home with the news," he wrote in his diary. "It's great (I think?)."

NEW YEAR'S DAY of 1962 the Oswalds attended a dinner party with six others at Alexander Zeger's house.

Jan. 4: Oswald traded in his resident document and was given a special pass, good until July 5, 1962.

"Since they have given us permission to leave, they know we shall," he scribbled later.

Oswald wrote but two lines in the Jan. 4 to Feb. 15 period: "Days of cold Russian winter but we feel fine. Marina is supposed to have baby on March 1."

At dawn on Feb. 15 Marina awakened Lee (Alek, she called

him) and told him she felt the time was close.

"It's her time," he penned. "At 9 a.m. we arrive at the hospital. I leave her in care of the nurses and leave to go to work."

At 10 a.m. Marina gave birth to a baby girl.

"When I visit the hospital at 5 p.m. after work, I am given news.

"We both wanted a boy. Marina feels well, baby girl, OK."

Feb. 23: "Marina leaves hospital. I see June for first time."

Feb 28: "I go to register (as prescribed by law) the baby. I want her name to be June Marina Oswald. But these bureaucrats say her middle name must be the same as my first, a Russian custom supported by law.

"I refuse to have her name written as June Lee. They promise to call the city ministry (city hall) and find out in this case — since I do have a U.S. passport."

The next day Oswald learned he must follow the Russian law. He wrote simply: "Name: June Lee."

March, 1962: "The last communiques are exchanged between myself and the embassy. Letters are always arriving from my mother and brother in the U.S.

"I still have not told Erich, who is my oldest existing acquaintance, that we are going to the States. He's OK, but I am afraid he is too good a Young Communist League member, so I'll wait until last minute."

March 24: "Marina quits her job in the formal fashion."

March 25: "I receive a letter from Immigration and Naturalization Service at San Antonio, Texas, that Marina has had her visa petition (approved!!). The last document. Now we only have to wait for the U.S. embassy to receive their copy of the approval so they can officially give the go-ahead."

March 27, 1962: "I receive a letter from a Mr. Philles, an employer of my mother, pledging to support my wife in case of need."

That was the last diary entry. Within a few days the Oswalds were on a Dutch steamer heading for New York and a destiny few, if any, would have believed possible.

SUNDAY: More writings by Lee Harvey Oswald shed light on his life in Russia.