

but no one has ever said "A" 1962 01

# THE ASSASSINATION— AS THE PLOT UNFOLDS

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**Bit by bit, the story of President Kennedy's murder, and his murderer, is coming out.**

**But key pieces are missing.**

**Oswald's twisted life, his movements before the murder, police blunders, raise questions that may never be answered.**

Reported from

DALLAS, WASHINGTON, MEXICO CITY

Deep mystery continues to surround Lee Harvey Oswald, the accused assassin of President Kennedy.

In spite of revelations to date, the unanswered questions pile up.

What is the real reason Oswald visited Mexico City late in September, just as it was announced that President Kennedy would be visiting Fort Worth and Dallas within a month?

Was Oswald plotting the murder then, and charting his route of escape?

Did the man charged as the assassin get money from the Communist Party, with which he was corresponding?

Why was a passport for an extended trip abroad issued to Oswald last June 24 on one day's notice—in view of his record as a one-time defector to Russia?

**Planning and purpose.** Everything now points to the fact that the assassination of President Kennedy was carefully planned. Meticulous care was taken in preparing for the actual shooting.

Police believe the killing was carried out by a man in full possession of his mental powers.

The U. S. Marine Corps reports that Oswald, as a member of that Corps for nearly three years, passed all tests with no notation ever having been made that he had psychological problems. Others in recent contact with Oswald say that he gave no indication of being unbalanced mentally.

This is known, too, about Oswald: He was an active Communist, and a belligerent backer of Castro's Cuba.

Castro had warned in a speech on Sept. 7, 1963: "U. S. leaders should think that if they are aiding terrorist plans to eliminate Cuban leaders, they themselves will not be safe."

Also, Oswald held a personal grudge against Governor John Connally of Texas, who had been Secretary of the Navy when Oswald was given an "undesirable" discharge from the Marines. He probably held this same grudge against President Kennedy, who was Commander in Chief of the armed forces.

The record of Oswald's life, and what is known of his movements in the weeks just before the President's assassination, contain many revealing incidents—and some that will puzzle investigators perhaps forever.

**"A hothead."** On Oct. 24, 1956, at the age of 17, Oswald enlisted in the Marines at Dallas. By February, 1957, he was getting advanced training, including marksmanship, at Camp Pendleton, Calif. His section chief there said: "He was good with a rifle, but he was

such a hothead I was glad when he was finally shipped out for radar training."

Sent to Japan, Oswald was court-martialed twice, once for having an unregistered pistol and another time for cursing a noncommissioned officer. Fellow Marines remember him as a "loner" who had a hair-trigger temper but who always got the worst of it in fist fights.

By December, 1958, Oswald was transferred back to a base at El Toro, Calif. Within a few months he was applying for a hardship release on the ground he was needed to support his mother.

Records show that on Sept. 11, 1959, he was put on inactive-reserve status. One day earlier, in Los Angeles, he had been issued a passport to go to Russia. A man who knew him in this period said he had spent months studying Russian.

Oswald showed up at the U. S. Embassy in Moscow on Oct. 30, 1959, and said he had applied for Soviet citizenship. Three days later he wrote a statement as follows: "I affirm that my allegiance is to the Soviet Socialist Republic." On November 14, however, he said that Soviet officials had refused him Soviet citizenship. About this time he told an interviewer: "I'm a Marxist. . . Capitalism has passed its peak." He said he was against racial segregation and that he was "through" with the United States.

In July, 1960, he wrote to the Marine Corps asking to be discharged as a reservist so he could accept Soviet citizenship. A board of Marine officers recom-

mended he be given an undesirable discharge, which was dated Sept. 13, 1960.

In February, 1961, however, Oswald seemed disillusioned with his life as a Soviet factory worker in Minsk. He notified the Embassy in Moscow he wanted to return home. It was about this time that he married a Russian girl.

**Complaints to officials.** In January, 1962, Oswald wrote two letters to U. S. officials. One was to Senator John C. Tower of Texas: "I beseech you, Senator Tower, to rise [sic] the question of holding by the Soviet Union of a citizen of the United States against his will and expressed desires."

Another letter, complaining about his undesirable Marine discharge, was directed to Governor Connally, though the latter had left his post as Secretary of the Navy by then.

Oswald wrote: "I shall employ all means to right this gross mistake or injustice to a boni-fied [sic] U. S. citizen and ex-serviceman."

Senator Tower, in a formal statement after President Kennedy's assassination, said he forwarded Oswald's letter of January, 1962, to the State Department.

"The State Department informed my office shortly thereafter," said Senator Tower, "in February of 1962, that Mr. Oswald had sworn to an affidavit that he owed his allegiance to the Soviet Union and that he had renounced his American citizenship. . . I closed the case."

Yet, on May 24 of that same year, the

U. S. Embassy in Moscow, on instructions from the State Department in Washington, renewed Oswald's passport and amended it to include his Russian wife and daughter born on February 15.

This decision was based on a ruling that Oswald had not legally expatriated himself. This ruling will be one of the many angles explored by a presidential commission that is to make the over-all federal report on the assassination.

**The fare home.** Oswald was loaned \$435.71 by the Embassy to pay his family's way to the U. S. He arrived in New York on June 13, 1962. He told a social worker that he had been a member of the Marine Corps on duty with the U. S. Embassy in Moscow—one of many lies that pop up in Oswald's history.

Apparently, at this point, Oswald took his wife and child to New Orleans. The State Department says that between October, 1962, and January, 1963, Oswald repaid the travel loan given to him in Moscow.

By early 1963, according to friends of Mrs. Oswald, he was urging her to return to Soviet Russia because he could not support her. Mrs. Oswald asked the Soviet Embassy in Washington for a visa. When the Embassy replied with a request for more information she did not reply—because she didn't want to go back to Russia, according to a friend.

**Getting a gun.** In March, according to records turned up after the assas-

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ination of the President, Oswald sent in order to a mail-order house in Chicago for the Italian carbine that was used to kill Mr. Kennedy.

He ordered the gun under the assumed name of Hidell, giving as a return address a post-office box in Dallas.

When arrested, Oswald had an identification card in his billfold with the same name and post-office box number on it.

On May 9, 1963, the Oswald family, then expecting a second child, rented a one-bedroom apartment on Magazine Street in New Orleans.

The landlady said Oswald plastered the porch with pro-Castro propaganda on two occasions. Her husband said that Oswald apparently had a job for a few weeks, then appeared to quit work and spent his time reading armfuls of books brought home from the public library.

On June 24, Oswald applied for a new passport at the U. S. Passport Office in New Orleans.

On his application he said that he was a photographer and that he wanted to make a trip abroad for three months to a year, leaving between October and December. He listed as his proposed itinerary England, France, Germany, the Soviet Union, Finland, Italy and Poland.

Such a trip would have cost many thousands of dollars. At this time, to all appearances, Oswald was broke and living on unemployment compensation.

The passport was issued on June 25, which indicates Oswald must have replied "no" to questions as to whether he had been a member of a Communist organization or ever sought foreign nationality.

This raises another of the questions that investigators will pursue: Why was Oswald's application not given a more thorough check, in view of his past? Was any interest taken, officially, in the former defector's plans?

A few days later, in July, Oswald introduced himself to a Cuban—Carlos Bringuier—representing an anti-Castro student group. He told this man he wanted to fight Communism and that, as an ex-Marine, he could help train exiles for an invasion of Cuba.

Mr. Bringuier, suspicious, turned him down. A few days later he bumped into Oswald on Canal Street and found him passing out pro-Castro literature. They got into an argument and wound up in court, where Oswald paid a \$10 fine for disturbing the peace.

On August 21, Oswald showed up at an interview on a New Orleans radio sta-

tion, saying he was secretary of the New Orleans chapter of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee, and a Marxist, but not a Communist.

Just about that time, Oswald slipped his family away from their apartment on Magazine Street, owing 15 days' rent.

**South of the Border.** On September 17, Oswald went to the Mexican consulate in New Orleans and obtained a tourist card for Mexico.

On September 23, Mrs. Ruth Paine of Irving, Texas, a suburb of Dallas, drove to New Orleans and brought Mrs. Oswald and her child back to Mrs. Paine's home in Irving. She had met the Oswalds in Dallas in February and formed a friendship with them, partly out of an interest in Russia and its language.

Mrs. Paine said that Oswald told them at this time that he was going to Houston to see a friend about a job.

Actually, by September 26, Oswald was on his way to Mexico City. Also on September 26 the Dallas newspapers carried the announcement that President Kennedy planned to visit the city on a coming tour of the south.

Exactly where Oswald went, whom he saw, what he did in Mexico are still subjects of investigation.

On September 27, Oswald showed up at the Cuban consulate in Mexico City and applied for a visa to Havana. Cubans say he was told it would take at least 10 days to clear it. They report he left in a huff. The next day he appeared at the Soviet consulate. Told that his application for a visa would have to go to Moscow and might take three months, he showed great anger and left.

This is what has been officially reported. The complete details of what secret police of both the U. S. and Mexico were able to find on Oswald's movements, if anything, may never be told.

It is noted that there are those in the Mexican Government who would prefer not to have their country involved in any way with the assassination or its planning, and who might therefore try to cover up any possible connection between it and Oswald's Mexican trip.

**The money problem.** Oswald showed up again in Dallas on October 5. He came to the Paines' home and told them he was broke except for unemployment compensation he was drawing.

This is another point where the question arises: How did Oswald finance his frequent trips, including his stay in Mexico, unless he was being supplied with money by somebody?

About this time, according to Mrs. Paine, a neighbor mentioned that there

was a job opening at the Texas School Book Depository in Dallas.

Oswald applied, and was hired on October 15 as a warehouseman at \$1.25 an hour. He was required to give no character references because, his supervisor said, "Since he was only an extra we felt we didn't need recommendations." On his application Oswald stated he had been a Marine but left out the facts that he had an undesirable discharge and had sought to obtain Russian citizenship. The depository supervisor said Mrs. Paine described Oswald as "a fine young man."

The day before he was hired, Oswald had registered at a rooming house on North Beckley Street in Dallas under the name of O. H. Lee—his own name, reversed. The house is in a quiet residential working-class neighborhood. He took a small room, paying \$8 a week.

On October 20, Oswald's second child was born.

**A portent ignored.** It was about this time, on October 24, that United Nations Ambassador Adlai Stevenson came to Dallas to address a United Nations Day rally. He was roughed up, spat upon and jeered.

Mr. Stevenson says that, fearing for the President's safety, he called the White House after this trip and urged that the President's Dallas visit be canceled. But three days later, Mr. Stevenson reports, he called back and requested that his advice be withdrawn.

Nevertheless, his warning was one of many signs that, in retrospect, should have resulted in extra precautions for the President's safety, in the opinion of many people. Yet apparently no special steps were taken in regard to Dallas people with suspicious backgrounds, such as Oswald's.

Both the Secret Service and the FBI have offices in Dallas. Mrs. Paine is quoted as saying that officers from both organizations queried her about Oswald in the autumn of 1963, shortly before the assassination, but this has been officially denied in Dallas.

All through November, up to November 21, the eve of the assassination, Oswald worked quietly at his job, and spent his week-ends with his family at the Paine home in Irving.

Dallas police say that the exact parade route to be used by the President on his Dallas trip was not determined until a few days in advance, so that Oswald had only a day or two of advance information on that score.

When he went to work at the depository, he could not have known how per-

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fectly a window in the building would serve as a sniper's nest, officials say.

On the other hand, it is noted, to a man who had studied assassinations—or had been trained as an assassin—advantages of getting such a location along the likely parade route would be obvious.

**The final hours.** On Thursday, November 21, the night before the assassination, Oswald spent the night with his wife at the Paine home.

From the evidence, it is plain that he took the murder gun from a storage place in the Paine garage. The next morning he carried it to work, wrapped up as "window shades." Arriving at the building about 8 a.m., he went inside and, perhaps, hid his gun in the sixth-floor room where it was found later.

As noon approached, a fellow worker asked him to come down and watch the President pass. He refused.

At 12:30, the fatal shots rang out. The supervisor of the depository, who was watching the presidential parade, has given this account of what came next:

"I rushed into the building with a policeman. He thought the shooting came from the roof and we ran up the stairway. On the second floor he stuck his head into a snack bar we have and saw Oswald sitting at one of the tables.

"Does this man work here?" the policeman asked. I said, 'Yes, he does.' We continued up the stairs. That was when Oswald apparently left the building."

Other witnesses, according to Dallas police, saw a man fitting Oswald's description in the sixth-floor window from which the assassin's shots came.

**Eternal riddles?** An hour and a half later, Oswald was captured after he killed a Dallas policeman. Then, 48 hours after the President was assassinated, Oswald himself was killed.

With him went any chance to get the accused assassin's own account of the strange murder of a President.

He died still protesting that he knew nothing of the President's shooting. He refused to take a lie-detector test.

In his room, police found letters addressed to Oswald, by his full name, from Communist Party officials.

But what authorities did not find, and may never get, are the final answers to such questions as:

Was Oswald insane? Was he a trained assassin? Did he have accomplices at any stage? Where did he get his money? What did he do in Mexico? Did the odd pattern of events happen by chance?

President Johnson acted on November 29 to get the answers. He named a special commission—headed by Chief Justice Earl Warren—to make a full inquiry, then report to the nation.