

RELEASED PER NARA 526(JFK ACT)
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Connally, Not Kennedy, the

Assassin's Target?

11/24/62
NY Herald Tribune

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file in morning register

see p-2

By a Staff Correspondent

DALLAS.

"This case is cinched," said Dallas homicide chief William Fritz yesterday.

"This man killed President Kennedy."

He meant Lee Harvey Oswald.

But even as the declaration was made, the possibility was raised that Texas Governor John B. Connally—and not President Kennedy—had been Oswald's target.

The possibility that President Kennedy's assassination was a macabre afterthought came up yesterday when it was revealed that Oswald had once written to John B. Connally and declared that he would "employ all means" to right his 1960 undesirable discharge from the Marines.

When he wrote the letter, Oswald believed that Gov. Connally was still Secretary of the Navy, the Pentagon said yesterday.

Shortly before 7 p. m. Dallas Police Chief Jesse Curry announced "The FBI has just informed us they have the order letter for the rifle we sent to the laboratory.

"It went to a mail order house in Chicago. We compared it with known handwriting samples of Oswald's and they are the same." The murder weapon cost \$12.78. President Kennedy was killed by a rifle shot.

Chief Curry also said the police had pictures of Oswald holding the rifle and the .38 cal Smith & Wesson police say he used to shoot Patrolman J. D. Tippitt.

Another man was ques-

tioned in the assassination early yesterday. Jose R. Molina, a 39-year-old credit manager of the textbook firm where Oswald worked, was released after telling police he knew Oswald but only as an employee of the firm.

Two other men, one a cab driver were questioned briefly and released as police attempted to pinpoint Oswald's movements around Dallas after the assassination.

Oswald looked slightly harried for the first time as he was led from the room through the corridor. A reporter shouted, "What did you have against Connally?" and Oswald turned.

"I have nothing against anybody. I have not committed an act of violence," he shouted. Then he vanished through the door on his way back to his cell.

The letter which Oswald sent to Gov. Connally apparently was incorrectly dated. It bore the date, Jan. 30, 1961, but appeared to have been postmarked from Fort Worth on Jan. 30, 1962.

In his letter, Oswald wrote: "I shall employ all means to right this gross mistake or injustice to a bona fide U. S. citizen and ex-serviceman." He added, "The U. S. government has no charges or complaints against me. I ask you to look into this case and take the necessary steps to repair the damage done to me and my family." He said his application for Soviet citizenship had "blown up into another turncoat sensation."

Gov. Connally received the

letter at Fort Worth and replied that he was no longer connected with the Navy Department. He referred the letter to his successor, Navy Secretary Fred Korth. Gov. Connally left his cabinet post, Dec. 30, 1961.

Oswald wrote from an address given as Kalinina St., 4-24, Minsk, U. S. S. R.

Witnesses say that the Governor was hit with the first shot.

The State Department said yesterday afternoon that they have no evidence indicating the involvement of any other foreign power in the President's assassination.

The State Department also said that Oswald had a record of Communist statements, had once lived in Russia and had

made speeches supporting Fidel Castro.

Chief Curry said Oswald "readily admitted he is a Communist," and "apparently is proud of it." He continued to deny any part in the killing of President Kennedy, Chief Curry said.

The Communist party in New York denied that Oswald was a party member.

Another man, who drove Oswald to work on Friday was also questioned and released by police.

Chief Curry said a paraffin test of Oswald's hands showed that the 24-year-old ex-Marine had fired a rifle. Had he only fired the pistol which killed Patrolman Tippitt, gunpowder traces would have appeared on only one hand. The

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- The Washington Daily News _____
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patrolman was killed by Oswald, police said, shortly after the President was shot.

The Dallas police chief made, then later withdrew, a statement that the Federal Bureau of Investigation had questioned Oswald a week before the assassination. He said "I do not want to accuse the FBI of withholding information." Someone, he said, told him the FBI had interviewed the charged man "but I do not know whether they did or not."

In Washington, an FBI spokesman said it was "incorrect" that the FBI had questioned Oswald or had him under surveillance at any time in recent months.

Oswald's Russian-born wife, Marina, and their two children did not live with him in his furnished room in Oak Cliff. It was Mrs. Oswald who told police early yesterday that her husband owned a rifle that was the same as the Italian 6.5 Mannlicher Carcano used to shoot the President.

She and Oswald's mother, Mrs. Marguerita Oswald, were questioned a second time yesterday. This was done as Oswald sat in another room eating breakfast—oatmeal, apricots, bread and coffee. Earlier he had refused to take a lie detector test.

"I don't have to take it and I don't want to," he said, according to Chief Curry.

The chief said police placed Oswald in the building at the time of the shooting and say that immediately after the shooting he fled down the stairs, jumped on a bus,

transferred to a cab, then ran the rest of the way to his furnished room, where he picked up his pistol.

Although Oswald has not been assigned legal counsel, he may be represented by John J. Abt. Police reported Oswald has requested the New York lawyer. He shouted into a radio microphone at headquarters, "I want Abt."

The man Oswald apparently was referring to is John J. Abt, a 59-year-old New York attorney associated with the American Communist movement since the early 1930s. He has been the party's chief counsel in New York for years.

He has repeatedly been identified as a member, and later leader, of the Harold Ware Communist cell in Washington, which included Alger Hiss in its ranks.

With his wife, Mrs. Jessica Smith Abt, an editor of extreme Leftist magazines and former wife of Harold Ware, Mr. Abt lives at 444 Central Park West. He was unavailable for comment yesterday.

TASS, the official Soviet News Agency, charged in Moscow last night that the Dallas police were trying to implicate the Communist party in President Kennedy's assassination. Tass insisted the crime was the work of "racists, the Ku Klux Klan and Birchists."

It called the crime, in a second article filed from New York, "a new link in the chain of crimes committed by Southern racists and extremists."

did he say yes?



PHOTOGRAPHY