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Oswald Met With KGB Agent, CIA Data Show

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WASHINGTON—Less than two months before President John F. Kennedy was shot to death, Lee Harvey Oswald conferred in Mexico City with an agent of the Soviet KGB's assassination department, newly declassified CIA documents indicate.

The CIA memo said that on Sept. 28, 1963, Oswald spoke with Soviet Consul Valery V. Kostikov, whom Oswald later referred to as "Comrade Kostin."

The memo said Kostikov, "who has functioned overtly as a consul in the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City since September, 1961, is also known to be a staff officer of the KGB. He is connected with the 13th, or 'liquid affairs' department, whose responsibilities include assassination and sabotage."

The reference to Kostikov as an officer of the assassination department was in a 63-page chronology of Oswald's meetings with Soviet citizens between June 13, 1962, and the day Kennedy was killed, Nov. 22, 1963.

Also declassified was a CIA historical analysis of the 13th Department of the KGB.

"It has long been known that the Soviet state security service (KGB) resorts to abduction and murder. . . . These techniques, frequently designated as 'executive action' and known within the KGB as 'liquid affairs', can be and are employed abroad as well as within the borders of the U.S.S.R.," the analysis said.

"Foreign political leaders are also potential targets of Soviet executive action operations. . . . There is, however

no evidence proving that any Western leader has been the victim of Soviet executive action," it said.

The memo on Kostikov and the paper on the 13th Department were given to the Warren Commission. Its published report did not indicate how much attention the matter was given by the commission.

The newly declassified documents show that the CIA considered an exotic array of conspiracies linking the assassination to Communist governments in China and Cuba as well as to the Soviet Union.

Five days after Kennedy was killed on Nov. 22, 1963, the CIA took a 3,000-word statement from a Soviet defector who speculated that the Soviet KGB had helped Lee Harvey Oswald return to the United States from Russia, knowing that he was a potential killer.

A week later, the CIA station in Stockholm received a report from a man who identified himself as a Chinese diplomat in the Swedish capital. In a cable to Washington, the Stockholm station said the diplomat reported:

"President assassinated direct orders People's Republic China. Chicoms established contact with Oswald when he in Soviet Union. When Oswald returned States he recontacted and threatened with exposure unless he agreed work for Chicoms. Chicoms thought U.S. would attack Cuba when it learned assassin was Cuba sympathizer. Soviets would attack U.S. Chicoms would ask for atomic weapons. Commies would win war. Chicoms would then assassinate Khrushchev and take over totally."

The CIA documents show that the agency—like the Warren commission—ultimately concluded that there was no conspiracy, that Oswald acted alone in killing Kennedy.

But on Nov. 27, 1963, five days after the assassination, the CIA appeared to take seriously the hypothesis of a Soviet defector who said that even if the KGB did not order Oswald to kill Kennedy, the Russian intelligence agency must have known he was the kind of person who eventually would cause some kind of damage.

This Russian informant—unlike another Soviet defector, Yuri Ivanovich Nosenko—never has been identified. His name was removed from the CIA documents before they were made public, which could indicate that he still is considered a reliable source of information.

The defector said that Soviet responsibility in the Kennedy assassination might be doubted by those who believe Oswald "was a nut and properly would not be entrusted with such an operation."

"However, the KGB properly knows that historically most assassins have been unbalanced maladjusted types," the defector said.

He speculated that before Oswald was permitted to return to the United States in 1962 after a three-year stay in the Soviet Union he was subjected to long lectures on the evils of "American millionaires, such as Rockefeller, Kennedy and others."

"Because to make a good agent takes a long time and because Oswald was impatient. . . . the KGB decided not to make of him a good agent, but did not break relations with him and decided to use him in a more or less open way," the defector theorized.

Although the Warren commission discounted the defector's theory, as late as June 14, 1964, it sought and received a CIA analysis of Soviet brainwashing techniques.

The defector's statement was included in a stack of documents the CIA declassified at the request of David Belin, a Des Moines, Iowa, attorney. Belin was on the staff of the Warren Commission and was staff director of the Rockefeller commission, which last year investigated illegal domestic activities of the CIA.

In a telephone interview, Belin said he was convinced that release of the material "will reinforce the conclusion (of the Warren Commission) that Lee Harvey Oswald was the sole gunman who killed President Kennedy."

He said he sought the files because "there has been such a ripoff of the intellectual community by people making false charges so far as the question of whether or not Oswald did it."

Belin said he asked that all CIA documents relating to the Kennedy assassination be made public. However, the agency withheld many papers and heavily censored many of those that were released.

Meanwhile, a Senate intelligence subcommittee headed by Sen. Richard S. Schweiker (R-Pa.) is preparing to issue a report on its investigation of relationships among the CIA, the FBI and the Warren Commission.

Schweiker, who said last year that if Oswald were alive "he would be entitled to a new trial," refused to be interviewed recently on grounds, according to an aide, that his report was nearing its final stages and he did not want to discuss its contents.

Schweiker said earlier that he was investigating the possibility that Oswald had ties to the CIA, FBI or military intelligence. He said also that he was trying to find out if Oswald's often-expressed Marxism was a cover for a relationship with anti-Castro Cuban refugees.

The newly released CIA documents contain no indication that the agency considered conspiracies other than those involving Communists.

Belin said the Warren Commission did not find any evidence of a Communist conspiracy. But he added that the commission was not aware of CIA-backed plots against the life of Cuban Premier Fidel Castro that have come to light recently.

"I question that at this time there would be any proof that would show a conspiracy," Belin said.

The newly released documents indicate that the Rockefeller commission relied heavily on information supplied by the CIA in reaching the conclusion that Oswald and Jack Ruby, Oswald's killer, had no links with the agency.

A CIA memorandum dated April 15, 1975, shows that Robert Olsen, the Rockefeller commission staff member assigned to investigate the CIA's relations with the Warren Commission, contacted an agency official for advice on how to proceed.

"I explained that much of the detail surrounding this topic is 12 years old and there are few around with detailed knowledge," the official, whose name was withheld, wrote. "We do have the files of what we have provided the Warren Commission and there may be other material which will be of assistance."

Belin told The Times that the commission "investigated CIA files to see if there was any evidence at all of any CIA involvement with Jack Ruby or Oswald." He said the files contained no such evidence.

The April 15 CIA memo was written in response to an analysis of the CIA and the Warren Commission written by Paul L. Hoch, a UC-Berkeley physicist who has made a study of the Kennedy assassination.

The memo called Hoch's document "very scholarly" and said Rockefeller commission member Edgar Shannon "believes that the treatise is worthy of examination."

However, the Rockefeller commission's report ignored most of the points raised in Hoch's paper, while concentrating on sensational charges by comedian Dick Gregory that Watergate conspirators E. Howard Hunt Jr. and Frank Sturgis were the Kennedy assassins.

Belin said, however, that although the report concentrated on the Gregory charges, the commission considered points that were not mentioned in the report.

"Proving a negative is extremely difficult," he said.

CIA USES NAZI DOCUMENT AGAINST GERMAN AUTHOR

From a Times Staff Writer

WASHINGTON—Ever since the Warren Commission issued its report on the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, the FBI and the CIA have been critical of books challenging the commission's finding that Lee Harvey Oswald was the lone assassin.

A recently released CIA memo shows that in at least one case the agency used a captured Nazi document as the source for derogatory information on Joachim Joesten, German author of a book titled, "Oswald: Assassin or Fall Guy?"

"You will note that the attention of the German security organs was directed at Joesten as early as 1936," the CIA memo said. "At that time the Communist Party had been outlawed in Germany . . ."

The memo said that in 1937 the Gestapo had accused Joesten of being a Communist.