

Oct. 12, 1966

Dear Sylvia,

I just bought the October TMO and read your article. I am very impressed with this article which represents a terrific amount of research. I would, however, like to make some comments and ask a question or two.

1. ~~REXXXXXX~~ More than once, I have slowly gone through all the state dept material in volume 18. I was suprased~~ed~~ that certain quotes that I am aware of were not used by you in your article.

McVicker wrote a memorandum on NOV 27, 1963, well before any of the more informed "Oswald was an agent" speculation was published. (GE 941) It was then only 5 days after the assassination. Yet at that time, McVicker wrote:

"I recall thinking ~~at~~ that time that Oswald was behaving with a great deal of determination and purpose for such a young and relatively uneducated person. He was certainly very independent ~~MAN~~ and fearless in a rather blind way....there ~~X~~also seemed to be the possibility that he was following a pattern of behavior in which he had been tutored by persons or persons unknown. For example, in discussing Marxism and the legalities of renunciation he seemed to be using words which he had learned but did not fully understand...it seemed that it could also have been that he had been taught to say things which he did not really understand. In short, it seemed to me that there was a possibility that he had been in contact with others before or during his Marine Corps tour ~~XXXX~~ who had guided him and encouraged him in his actions."

McVicker, of course, is a trained state department officer~~X~~ who has had more than one defector to deal with. I think ~~X~~his observations on this case carry great weight, and would have greatly strengthened the point you are trying to make at the bottom of page 25, last column--TMO---where you use his testimony instead.

Furthermore, McVicker was then requested by State Dept. lawyer Ehrlich to elaborate on ~~XXXX~~ many of the details contained in this first document. This he did, and submitted an even more lengthy memorandum dated April 7, 1964 and written while he was in Bolivia. (GE 958). This document is loaded with useful quotes. For example, take McVicker's point (3):

"Oswald evidently knew something of the procedure for renunciation of citizenship when he came into the office. This seemed a bit unusual, since it was so soon after his first departure from the United States on his first trip abroad travelling as a private citizen."

Or McVicker's point (1):

"Since he (Oswald) arrived in Moscow in did-October, 1959 and was discharged from the Marine ~~CGGGS~~...in Sept. 1959... He would have to have made a direct and competently arranged trip. He would have to have known the not too obvious fact that Helsinki is a usual and relatively uncomplicated point of entry to the Soviet Union.."

I realize that when McVicker testifies, they make attempts to weaken what he has said in his memorandum. But on some counts his seems to stand up pretty well, and it isn't that one sided. It was amusing to ~~XXXX~~ see, for example, that until the actual testimony, McVicker was under the impression that Oswald had taken a boat straight from New Orleans to Helsinki! Counsel got him to admit that one under oath.

Mr. Dulles. Wasn't he traveling by boat, however?

Mr. McVickar. He traveled by boat to Helsinki.

Mr. Dulles. That is where the boat went?

Mr. McVickar. That is right.

Mr. Coleman. No; he traveled by boat to LeHavre, France

(V, 323)

Despite Coleman's attempt to use this ("...doesn't that change somewhat the thrust of your paragraph?") McVickar stands up quite well. And when McVicker ~~XXXXXX~~ presses on and brings up the other half of the mystery, (how did Oswald get his Soviet visa so fast, even though it was Helsinki), Ford changes the subject. Here's the exchange:

Mr. Dulles. Do they have authority, do you know, to do that without referring back to Moscow?

Mr. McVickar. Yes....But it still takes a little time ordinarily to arrange it.

(It takes mine)

Rep. Ford: On page 3 of your memorandum of April 7, 1964, paragraph 8, you say: "My impression was that in the USSR, such a privilege would not have been unusual. You are referring, of course, to the allegations made ~~XXX~~ that he had been a member of a rifle club and did target shooting?"

(V, 324)

Paragraph 8 reads: A last point not related to my contact with Oswald in 1959: Oswald's reported statement that he had been permitted to belong to a rifle club and practice target shooting while in Minsk seems odd to me. My impression was that in the Soviet Union such a privilege would not have been unusual. (XVIII, 334)

I don't see how Ford could have possibly misunderstood that paragraph of McVickar's memorandum, and I think he took that sentence out of context and feigned confusion in order to change the subject.

I fully realize that some of McVickar's quotes are speculation, but in any event, by quoting this material, the reader hears the speculation coming out of the mouth of a trained state dept. official and its not all that bad.

But I think the quote from CE 941, and especially considering the date, is excellent for use in "agent" arguments.

(2) Page 24, 2nd column, top. You are making the point that none of several security agencies requested the filing of a lookout card (or "set in motion procedure under which they would be informed if Oswald planned to leave the U.S. again")

Then you write:

"...despite the fact that Oswald had affirmed his allegiance to the Soviet Union, had proudly declared himself to be a Marxist, and had even offered classified radar data to the Soviet authorities..."

And you ~~XXXXXXXX~~ argue well that this is absurd in view of current State Dept. practices in other areas.

BUT, there is a second "despite" point that I think should be dramatically and forcefully made at this point so that as little of your argument as possible rests on your reader's political sophistication, or on his accepting of your inference. Specifically, the reader at this point is asked to assume that the CIA "must have known" about Oswald. Especially since "copy sents" of that first telegram (CE 917) were sent to several intelligence agencies as you point out. (Page 26 first column middle); and, as you point out, replies from ONI with "copy sents" were sent back.

Now turn to page 369 of Volume XVII. I think this document should be photographed and included in any argument about Oswald and his agent status. (CE 972) This "Reference Slip", dated 10/5/61, clearly shows that on 10/5/61 "Miss Geneva Shiflet, CIA, Room GH0909 Langley Virginia" specifically called up the State ~~XXXX~~ Dept. and requested information from the Oswald file, and at least document A-173, (on the opposite page).

Nothing is left to the imagination here. We now have not only the state department knowing about Oswald's background and not filing a lookout card (but the public image of State is that of "feggy bottem" and sometimes their "bureaucratic bungling" argument suffices) but also CIA not only knowing about Oswald but specifically requesting more information.

Now there may be readers who think the State ~~XXXX~~ Dept. is loaded with bureaucratic bunglers and ~~XXXX~~ humanitarians who accidentally didn't make out the lookout card. But there are very few people who think this about the CIA; and this "reference slip" makes it possible to apply many of your arguments directly to the CIA, as an agency which knew but didn't request action.

also

In addition to the reference slip addressed specifically to the CIA, the Office of Naval Intelligence did reply to that ~~XXXX~~ Naval message (CE 917) it received giving information on Oswald.

This is the document called CE 918; you quote some of it, but not all. The last few lines read:

"Request developments in view of continuing interest of HQ, Marine Corps and US S. Intelligence agencies.

~~XXXXXX~~"INTELLIGENCE MATTER"

"

You didn't quote the last line, which adds lots of oomph to this. And once again, copies were sent to many agencies, including the CIA.

~~XXX~~ I always like to make the point that the Office of Naval Intelligence specifically calls this an "intelligence matter" (Capital letters

and quotes theirs). Why didn't the CIA, ~~the~~ act that way, and itself request the filing of a lookout card? ^{strong enough}

(3) The points to be made here are probably not ~~XXXXXX~~ for published argument, but are useful to corroborate those made in (2).

By July, 1960, Oswald was just a defector whose activities in that context had been written about in published articles in the U.S.

Yet at this point, the reference slip on page 359 shows that someone calls asking for the two state dept memorandums (see page 128 and 129 where they appear with their dates).

The woman taking the message (initials BW presumably mean Bernice Waterman) scribbles:

"Miss (or MR?) M _____ (unclear)---for conf case"

And in the "message portion":

"Lee Harvey Oswald

conf case"

I am sure "conf" means confidential. This supports the thesis that there was something "confidential" about the Oswald case then even though the mere fact that he defected was public information. (17/60)

~~XXX~~ James Exhibit 5 (XX,242) has to do with the effort being made to get Marina her passport. There the pencilled notation appears:

"5/8/62) Miss James called to inquire about case.

Call made to Mr. Levine re (BLANKOUT) status. He called back to say letter had been signed by Commission agreeing to waiver of sanction. Miss James Notified. J.E.C."

What adjective modifying the word "status" did Marina or Lee Oswald or this case in general have which caused a letter of waiver to be sent, and which was struck from the published record of the Commission?

(4) The Naval telegram (CE 917) has the following sentence structure.

Attention invite to document A ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ dated Nov. 2
and document B dated Oct. 26
regarding Lee Harvey Oswald Former Marine and (BLANKOUT, 31 letters)
former Navy.

"Document A" in the above analogy in "Moscow Dispatch 234"

"Document B" in the above analogy is Moscow Dispatch 224 .

If the blankout merely contains another man's name, then the sentence structure would indicate that document B (Moscow dispatch 224) is related to this man's case, whereas document A is related to ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ Oswald's case.

If this assumption is true,

The question is: can we relate document B (dispatch 224) to another man? The answer is yes. See the first line of CE 914:

"The Webster case (our Despatch No. 224) has pointed up..."

Do you, Sylvia, know Webster's first and middle name?

I am preparing an innocuous letter to the State Dept. to find out. If you know it, please let me know. I am still suspicious of the blankout because he will have to have an awfully long first and middle name to use up 31 letters. But if he was in the Navy, maybe they have something like "Lieutenant (JG)" preceding the name.

I am attaching a Xerox copy of the ~~XXXX~~ version without ~~XXXXXXXX~~ "former navy" blanked out. It is document 55, from State Dept. file IV, of CD 1114 at the National Archives. This was sent to me this past week by Paul Heck, along with the clue contained in the first line of CE 914, which I have gone into at great length above.

If this is really all there is to it, you may be in error on the interpretation you seem to be placing on Snyder's action in sending his letter of Oct. 28, 1959 to the State Dept. in Washington; you imply he is anticipating a defection. The above documents may clearly show he was merely writing about ~~XXXXXXXX~~ previous cases (even though, as you pointed out, they were settled by that time!)

In closing, I want you to know that I was somewhat leery of writing about your article to you because I know you have been through these documents so many more times than I have that I am sure you have very good reasons for what you decide to include and what you do not. But a buddy of mine who came to my apartment with his TMO, and who has been following all this "agent" business had the reaction that the ~~XXX~~ CIA reference slip and the McVicker quote about "had been tutored by others" ~~XXX~~ are both strong ammunition which you did not include.

I just got my London Sunday Times and am firing off a letter to that Professor in London attempting to get in writing a more softened position. I'm quite sure those control photos were taken indoors; when done in that manner, it can be quite confusing because it creates the impression that the shadow conflict could be resolved. When done outdoors, with the point light source (the sun) at the terrific distance it is, the rays of light fall PARALLEL to one another, NOT DIVERGENT as they do with an indoor light source which is a measureable few feet or yards away in the room. The contradiction then is absolutely optically irreconcilable. There is only ONE sun in the sky. If I get a reply, I'll make sure I distribute it around.

I was most chagrined to read what they printed about this fellow, because it is simply inaccurate and incomplete. Yet you can be sure that it will be used by the other side to knock down arguments (or at least mitigate them) in their area.

I'm afraid Mark Lane is going to get badly trounced here. He announced before 1000 people or so:

"This Sunday, the Times will publish the result of their attempt to duplicate this picture, ~~XXXX~~..." I forget the exact language he used. The implication, however, was clear; the Times would conclude that the picture was a phony. (I think his exact language was more guarded, but the impression was there).

(Please be absolutely assured, without any doubts in your mind, that I do not intend to go running off to WJL with either the London Times or with this argument. I fully ~~XXXX~~ well understood what you had to say on the phone.) In this regard, I ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ have arranged to be notified by KFFK when that tape arrives and they may let me have a preview of it. I am most interested in hearing the whole thing.

I spoke to Lane for a little while about the possibility of seeing Zapruder frames by maintaining some limited line of communication with WJL. I very much liked his attitude, since he responded as if he knew that ~~XX~~ one can be sensible and not get caught in some sort of uncontrollable situation. He carefully showed me what would happen if I released to WJL prematurely details about the sign experiment, and how its possible to start building up a defence case. I'll keep you informed of what happens (absolutely nothing has yet) and, honestly, I am sensitive about being "Liebeler-baited" (to coin a term).

You'll be hearing more from me.

Regards,

David
David

Attachments under

separate cover, including

letter to + 10 copies of...