

An interpretation of the Navy teletogram (CE 917) based on an assumed parallel sentence structure, and a portion of a scribbled ***** ellipsis (Abbreviations are written out, punctuation added) *****

Text:

Attention invited to American Embassy, Moscow dispatches		
234 dated <u>November 2</u>	and	224 dated <u>October 26</u>
concerning		
the renunciation of US citizenship and request for Soviet citizenship by <u>Lee Harvey Oswald</u> former Marine	and	(the case of) _____ ** (Richard H. Webster) → #224 former Navy. See 2a
Oswald stated he was radar operator in Marine Corps and has offered to furnish Soviets information he possesses on US Radar.		

(Note: material in parenthesis is speculative but fits blackout.)

** Webster's first name is Richard, according to the memory of Priscilla Johnson (XI,448). Middle initial "H" is a purely arbitrary choice on my part.

What IS important here is to note that some of the 31 unknown letters preceding the words "former Navy" may be devoted to some sort of descriptive phrase corresponding to the one for Oswald: "the renunciation of US citizenship...etc". That is, all 31 letters do not have to be devoted to the unknown name.

On the version of this teletogram fetched from the archives by Paul Hoch, note that the word Oswald is circled. (This is not true on CE 917 in volume 18, which in addition, has "former Navy" blanked out.) Just before the words, "FORMER NAVY", note that the top portion of an arc is showing through the white, horizontal, censor's swath. The only other thing explicitly circled on this message is the last name of Lee Harvey Oswald. The location of this piece of arc would then indicate that the word preceding FORMER is the last name of another person.

Assuming this type of parallel sentence structure, let us see how much of the information contained in the document is internally consistent or otherwise verified by what we know.

1. The parallel sentence structure assumption links 234, Nov 2, and the Oswald case.
 - a) According to the Warren Report, Oswald appeared at the Embassy on Oct. 31, 1959
 - b) This is consistent with his case being the subject of a dispatch dated Nov. 2 (number 234).
 - c) It is inconsistent with his case (then not yet even actualized) being the subject of a dispatch dated Oct. 26 (numbered 224)
2. The parallel sentence structure assumption links 224, Oct. 26, and some person who was once in the Navy.
 - a) There IS a link between dispatch 224 and another man's name; and it is a defection case, too.

The first line of CE 914 states: "The Webster case (our despatch 224)..."

This links 224 with the name Webster.
 - b) Oct. 26, by the sentence structure assumption, is then simply the date dispatch 224 concerning Webster was sent out.
 - c) A very important piece of corroboration which is still to be found out: Was Webster in the Navy?

Friscilla Johnson Exhibit 2 (XX,288) says: "Embassy officials admit they are a bit gun shy. It's their third case of attempted defection this fall. The first, Nicholas Petrulli (no background given).... The second, Webster, an employee of the Rand Co...."

The question, at present, remains unanswered.