

UNITED STATES SECRET SERVICE
 TREASURY DEPARTMENT

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| ORIGIN Field | OFFICE New York - New York | FILE NO. CO-2-34,030 |
| TYPE OF CASE Protective Research | STATUS Investigation Continued | TITLE OR CAPTION Lee Harvey Oswald - |
| INVESTIGATION MADE AT Locust Valley, New York | PERIOD COVERED 11/29/63 to 11/30/63 | Priscilla JOHNSON's |
| INVESTIGATION MADE BY Special Agent George J. Sershen | | 1959 interview |
| DETAILS | SYNOPSIS notes and resulting articles. | |
| <p>Priscilla Johnson, a journalist, interviewed Lee H. Oswald in 1959 after his defection to the Soviet Union.</p> <p><u>DETAILS OF INVESTIGATION</u></p> <p>This investigation is predicated on telephone call November 29, 1963 from ASAC Sweeney, Boston to ASAC Jukes advising of a request received from SAIC Bouck, Protective Research Section, to interview Miss Priscilla Johnson residing in Cambridge, Massachusetts. ASAC Sweeney stated inquiry disclosed Miss Johnson was residing in New York, telephone OR 6-2620. ASAC Jukes telephoned this number and ascertained Miss Johnson was residing on Feeks Lane in Locust Valley, New York.</p> <p>(Miss) Johnson was interviewed on November 30, 1963 at her home in Locust Valley. She is presently attending the Russian Research Center at Harvard University studying Soviet Literature. In 1959 she was employed as a correspondent for the North American Newspaper Alliance, with offices in New York City, and was representing that firm in Moscow when she was given the assignment of interviewing Lee H. Oswald who had defected to the Soviet Union. She recalled interviewing Lee H. Oswald at the Hotel Metropole in Moscow advising she was aware Oswald's room had been wired. Accordingly, she exercised care in questioning him, especially since he informed her the Soviet authorities had instructed him not to permit any interviews by the American press and he was violating their "trust".</p> | | |
| DISTRIBUTION <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chief New York Dallas | COPIES Orig & 3 cc's 2 cc's 1 cc. | REPORT MADE BY <i>George Sershen</i> SPECIAL AGENT APPROVED <i>George Sershen</i> SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE |
| | | DATE 12/2/63 DATE 12/2/63 |

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Miss Johnson had retained the notes she took at the time of her interview with Oswald and exhibited copies of articles she wrote appearing in the Boston Sunday Globe of November 24, 1963 and the Christian Science Monitor of November 26, 1963 relating to her interview with Oswald. The articles are self-explanatory.

According to Miss Johnson, Oswald in her opinion was a "loner", a person who did not mix socially and kept to himself very much. He was a self-taught Marxist who stated he had read Marx's book, Das Capital, when he was only fifteen years of age. He taught himself to read and write Russian and his decision to defect arose out of his bitterness toward the United States, particularly the plight of the American negro and the exploitation of workers. He was reared in poverty and his mother, a widow, had worked extremely hard to bring up her family. He also expressed resentment at his treatment by the U. S. Marine Corps and accused the United States of military imperialism. He informed Miss Johnson that he had petitioned the Soviet Government for citizenship and stated he had no intention of ever returning to the United States.

Miss Johnson stated she questioned him about the manner in which he traveled to Russia suggesting that he must have been aided by other persons or organizations. He specifically stated he made the trip on his own initiative on monies he had saved while in the Marine Corps and that he positively did not receive assistance from any persons or organizations. She attempted to impress upon him the folly of his actions and in a roundabout manner tried to get him to change his mind about defecting but without success. She concluded that he was a fanatic and that further attempts to dissuade him from seeking Russian citizenship would be futile.

In her description of Oswald, Miss Johnson stated he was touching, likeable and quiet. She felt he was a malcontent who was unsure of himself and probably would be unhappy wherever he was. Although she considered him a fanatic, she did not think he would resort to violence. She does not know whether he had been questioned by the Soviet Secret Police but obviously he had received some instructions from a Soviet authority concerning his activities while in Russia. He stayed very close to the hotel and according to his own statement, he did not attempt to establish friendship with any Russians.

Oswald promised to let her know if he was leaving the hotel. When she inquired at the hotel for him two days later she found he had disappeared and concluded the Soviet authorities had whisked him away having naturally learned of the interview. She has not seen him since.

Miss Johnson stated she was interviewed November 23, 1963 by FBI Agents Curry and Sullivan in Boston and that she gave them a deposition concerning her interview with Oswald. She is leaving New York on December 1st for Boston

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and on the following day, December 2 is flying to Washington where she has an appointment with Mr. Andrew Lowenfeld of the State Department. Mr. Lowenfeld works in the office of a Mr. Shea, a legal counsel for the State Department. While in Washington she will be staying with her brother, Stewart H. Johnson, Jr. at 2906 N. Street, N.W. and expects to remain there until the end of the week.

Verifax copies were made of the newspaper articles previously referred to, and the notes made by Miss Johnson at the time she interviewed Oswald and are being forwarded with this report.

ATTACHMENTS

Copies of 2 newspaper articles
Copies of Miss Johnson's notes

GJS/mm

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Oswald Interview in Moscow Recalled

Riflemen Detected in Long Talk

The Communist Moscow correspondent, Harry Oswald, was interviewed by a Soviet official on the subject of the assassination of President Kennedy. Oswald said that he had been in Moscow in the summer of 1961, and that he had been interviewed by a Soviet official who had asked him about the assassination of President Kennedy. Oswald said that he had been in Moscow in the summer of 1961, and that he had been interviewed by a Soviet official who had asked him about the assassination of President Kennedy.

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NOT AVAILABLE FOR REPRODUCTION

1
 2. Harvey Oswald - 20
 Fort Worth, Texas born in
 New Orleans
 out to US Embassy Oct 31
 dissolved my Am. citizenship
 as much as they would let me
 the time - however I
 requested that my citizenship
 dissolved. Was not allowed
 swear an oath that we
 renounced - Refused to allow
 me to take oath at that time.
 They said they would not allow
 me to act without confirmation
 my Sov citizenship.
 I relinquished passport
 they would not act until
 citizenship confirmed -
 They have confirmed
 that I would not have
 leave SOB, be forced to,
 see if Sov, Sov refuses
 my request for Sov citizenship.
 They have said they
 are investigating possibility
 my continuing my
 education at Lehigh -

2.
 at age 17, enlisted in Marine
 Corps, discharged in Sept -
 14 months in Japan +
 Philippines, Indonesia,
 France - radar operator
 finished high school while
 while in Marine Corps

Hair brown, gray eyes -
 5' 11", 150 lb -
 Oct 18, 1939 birth date
 Marines 2 yrs, 9 months, 3 days
 Overseas 1 yr, 2 months, 24 days
 3. in New Or., childhood in
 Louisiana + Texas -
 NY 2 yrs -
 New Louisiana - enlisted
 in Dallas
 father died before born -
 I believe he was an
 insurance salesman.
 Has 1 brother -
 Good Conduct medal from
 Marines
 Mother alive + living in Ft.
 Worth -

3.

had bearing Rens on
 ago - along with my
 in. Jane Panabina -
 in to dance myself to
 writing from Bertie -
 time or while speaking
 as + teacher -
 in on Daved while in
 Marine Corps -
 and give no statement
 if fact had + released
 I would never have said
 bump. To any body
 old like to give my side
 story, give possible
 SS. Some thing to think
 about -
 was having been assured
 would not have to return
 CBS, I assumed it, would
 sell for me to give
 side of story -
 there was always
 with my vision would not
 extended -

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3. Started learning Russ a
 little in the early 80s -
 she is a very good speaker
 of English & has a good
 understanding of the Russian
 language. She has a very
 good sense of humor & is
 very intelligent.

She is very intelligent
 & has a very good sense of
 humor.

She is very intelligent
 & has a very good sense of
 humor.

She is very intelligent
 & has a very good sense of
 humor.

1. Lee Harvey Oswald - 20
 New Orleans, Texas
 was to US Embassy Oct 31
 as much as they would be
 at the time. However, he
 did request that my citizenship
 be dissolved. He was not allowed
 to swear on oath that he
 renounced - refused to allow
 me to take oath at that time.
 They said they would not allow
 me to swear without confirmation
 by the US Citizenship.

They would not add what
 my citizenship confirmed -
 they have confirmed -
 but that I would not have
 to leave. SO, he refused to
 enter it. Sup. See records.

They have said they
 are in a "satisfying" position
 of my citizenship in my
 education and work.

There were says Re in Ts in late Oct - no action -

Reem wanted that if I had my opp's, but I would not do it. I almost had it with De la Riva -

my son alicia says, many take years,

But I am safe in the time because that I can have no long stay.

Was had me about trouble, I could get into it as first thing dried to

discourage me - I asked to be allowed to take out - they made excuse so as to refuse

out - Said I would come back, Pelly knew up /

as well as to find out about. ~~older part~~

3) At times I saw alicia, that my son's in it

landed at then served dip lanch's clean hole -

5. Bitter at refusal - I was there, Sat Oct 31, refused on grounds consular official needed time to set papers together -

to (I know want to make Re with them

1 hour - I can't be too hard on them, but they are acting in an illegal way, but he is supposed to deny that primarily through

Now - I wrote letter of protest to US Ambassador - received his letter back - (protest may be carried out his duties)

It is a principle of the law that the right of expatriation is a natural + inherent right of any person + that the manner prescribed by law for renunciation of one's citizenship is the exercise of a diplomatic or consular officer of the U.S. in the country

"For me" #
 that you may appear as the
 normal business hours & require
 necessary documents for
 renewal of citizenship "

"Just treating it like legal
 normally don't encourage
 you & don't discourage
 you. They do of course
 want to be accepted as a
 citizen of US - But they
 would not consider returning
 to US."
 "I need to drop on 1st tour
 paying standard rates to
 if clear thing are not
 sponsoring me
 of my siblings has possible

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Did it desert - yes
 1) I was in
 2) you would be in
 3) you would be in
 "I don't know if it's
 desert or not"
 "I don't know if it's
 desert or not"

"I don't know if it's
 desert or not"
 "I don't know if it's
 desert or not"

Left from New Orleans
 Sept 19 (??) Fri by ship -
 3 days to La Havre -
 booked Plis 24 to Helsinki
 got route - \$30
 after 34 days from
 Heising: 7 Moscow -
 10 days on vouchers -
 for the past 2 yrs I have
 been waiting to do this
 and this - raised
 voice, 2 yrs I was
 waiting to leave leaving
 Camp, make financial
 arrangements -
 I have had practical
 experience in world and
 how our ideal is completely
 lost and slaves to
 make. Am militarist
 in relation to action.
 Because a year visit
 at the ... of had
 discussed socialism in
 at least 5 yrs of
 reading. See Lidj, observation

highness of majority groups:
 Can't imagine, I feel
 workers in NY - the
 fact that they are
 exploited -
 I'd read about it in
 Socialism lit, + I saw that
 the doctrine was quite correct.
 Saw I wild → either a worker
 exploited for cap: just or
 an exploited, or, since there
 are many in this category
 I'd be in of the unemployed
 Decision unemotional, not
 sparked by any lit with
 wife since has no wife -
 At 15, I was looking for
 some thing that would give
 me a way to my
 environment. ...
 why mother has been
 a worker all her life
 has produced profit
 for capitalist - a good
 ex. of what happens to
 workers in US + decisions

To say a bit the boss -
 in 35 the old boy and years
 had not a lot that's new
 and of course in US
 150, 4 it -

1/11's end up experiment -
 and up the way they
 plan + under what
 system + under what
 duty of engineers to work -

books by League -
 changed that date he
 white still, date he
 for cashmere sweater
 believe that sweater
 later than will replace
 capitalism -

Gap = depressive
 Camm = aggressive
 ideal which implants itself
 in every system + will
 save the world
 US, so I shall receive

"but if we, we represents
 a lot - experts
 the standard water -
 One capitalist water -
 One capitalist water -

new series of 15 to be
 returned by a young
 in the states in a young
 people - a democrat
 playing up app.
 No capital work.

Cam - only the
 reading list + observing
 did I conclude it would
 be for time, personally
 brought up liberally
 further - any, to take

Negroes -
 The Socialist list -
 opened my eyes to econ.
 reasons for setting Neg.
 Japan + Phil.
 Am called naturally

13. Difficult they don't have
 a 2. many hot water plants
 + means first they will in
 20 yrs, then an econ-
 system which is lauding
 US can be lived
 (very material stuff -
 on top of a world influence
 me to enforce -
 It's the social system,
 not the success,
 that affects me -
 Of course, since SU will
 undoubted by this part US -
 have got out. In fact, sales
 have seen tourists attacking
 people's homes - in 1961
 city of Moscow - in Prague
 only because every 1000
 people by gov't is all toward
 peacefully & all. Purpose of
 people here are so well up
 except for the to have a lot
 of large in future of
 this our in
 Still making partly
 not to be seen here

12. hated for will, imperialism
 in Japan you'd expect
 it - but if you'd even
 been granted data at
 the liberal you'd know
 what I mean -
 Sympathetic with
 Communist ideas,
 the liberal of Am.
 Am look upon all
 Foreign people as smothering
 to be exploited for profit.
 Only Filipinos who are well
 off are those who cooperate
 with Am.
 Whole part of Indonesia
 in union in March, 1953 -
 Communist inspired social
 turn over - inspired of poor
 with annihilation - enough
 1956 - see crisis
 we told me might have to go
 in top part
 I went into thousands
 to see we were poor &
 didn't want to be
 under any law by

14. The Russ / meet you -
 politics - understand -
 Ask me why I am very
 curious - understand
 when I speak of the 1's -
 deal - can't see that
 thought me here while
 you would + understand
 (I understand) in material
 situation of US where
 Russian + head me no
 celebrity -

Appears to be. you're
 repeated by as "my
 you're"

I've already asked
 them to prepare papers
 I'm sure if I did on the
 East they'd just give me
 the same rubbish
 Hence = Sov. situation
 labor - saving device
 dissolve citizenship

Pres high + labor-saving

15. Sov. people, Lib. US. see
 wage - B. A. the profit
 thing probably is use
 be used for all the paper
 Things have been sight
 not based on credit -
 speculation -

has a very primitive under
 ding of economies, that's
 at Hart's Das Kapital

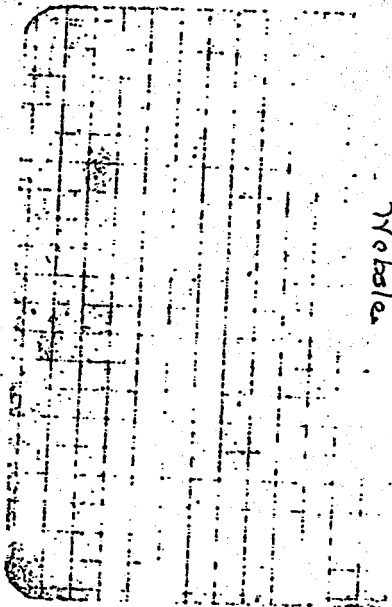
18

13. I want to discuss it to do it, but
would like obligation to see us give
Kermit.

To send we needed more
thing get people communication
with. Kermit.
Kermit says we are under
oblig. To permit him to renounce
regulate him says must be
gone he is of right mind & is
not acting rationally.

Nicholas Pakull:

Nebata



19

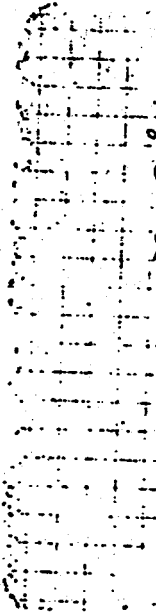
14. My reason's are very
strong - good to me

gave Kermit to US Emb.
along with we had a written
statement

Asst. Sec. - account

Bitte

Doesn't recommend it
for anybody - coming into
a new country always
being the subject of
advis. But I know now
that I will never leave
to return to US I'm doing
right



Interview With Suspect Oswald in Moscow in 1959

The Stuff of Which

The author was Moscow Correspondent for *NANA* in 1959. A few years before, in 1953, she had been research assistant on Viet Nam for John F. Kennedy, then a senator. She is perhaps the only person to have been good friends with both the late President and his suspected assassin. She is today a freelance writer on Soviet affairs.

By FRISCILLA JOHNSON

COPYRIGHT, 1960, DAVID G. GLAZ, North American Newspaper Alliance; CAMBRIDGE, Mass.—For two years now I have been waiting to do this one thing. To dissolve my American citizenship and become a citizen of the Soviet Union.

The time was November 1959. The place was my room on the third floor of Moscow's Hotel Metropol. The speaker was Lee Harvey Oswald, prime suspect in the assassination of John F. Kennedy.

With his suit of charcoal gray flannel, dark tie and tan cashmere sweater, Lee looked, and sounded like Joe College with a slight southern drawl. But his life hadn't been that of a typical college boy.

His father, an insurance salesman, died before he was just one floor below mine at birth. Raised in Texas and the Metropolis, Louisiana, the boy spent two friends in Russia and he didn't early teens. At 17, he enlisted in the U.S. Marines. "I did it," he said, "because dad's store one block from ours. We were poor and I didn't want hotel. Had to come there, he later. He spent 14 months as told me proudly.

As we sat in my hotel room in September, 1959, his three-year hitch nearly done, the Marines gave Lee a dependency discharge. Just one month later, after an exhausting trip by land, sea and air, he arrived in Moscow to join the highest legislative body in the U.S.S.R. for Soviet citizenship.

Even though Russian officials warned him Soviet citizenship is not easy to obtain, Lee was for days. Oswald had been already referring to the Soviet in

Government as "my government." "But," said Lee, "even if I am not accepted, on no account will I go back to the United States. I shall remain here, if necessary, as a resident alien."

All Soviet officials would promise at the time was that Lee could stay on in Russia, whether or not he became a citizen. Meanwhile, they were investigating the possibility of sending him to a Soviet higher technical institute.

At an age when angry young rebels all over the world find release in aping the beatniks, what brought this serious, soft-spoken southern boy to Moscow with no other ambition but to spend the rest of his life as a Soviet citizen? Evidently, it was a combination of poverty, the plight of the U. S. Negro, and the U. S. Marines.

"My mother," said Lee, "has been a worker all her life. She's a good example," he added, "of what happens to workers in the United States." He declined to elaborate.

"At the age of 15," he added, "after watching the way workers are treated in New York, and Negroes in the South, I was looking for a key to my environment. Then I discovered Socialist literature."

Lee was struck in particular by Mary's "Das Kapital." He concluded that, as an American, "I would become either a worker exploited for capitalist profit, or an ex-capitalist, or since there are many in this category, I'd be one of the unemployed." Lee became a Marxist.

Later, as a Marine private in Japan and the Philippines, he had a chance to watch American militarist imperialism in action.

Year's Planning

Fully a year before, Lee began getting ready to go to Russia. Using a Berlitz grammar, he taught himself to read and write Russian. Never, Lee, a nice-looking young man, he taught himself to read with gray eyes and brown hair, did he consider deserting the Marine Corps.

Did it occur to Lee that Soviet officials might be embarrassed by his efforts to become a citizen of their country at a moment when Russia was cultivating good relations with the United States? he said, "I don't encourage and don't discourage me." They warned, however, that neither Lee's name whether his citizenship application was to be accepted.

They said it depended on the over-all political atmosphere at the moment. Meanwhile, they offered Lee the security of a prolonged stay in the U.S.S.R.

As for officials at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow, they were torn between their desire to give Lee time to think it over, and their legal obligation to hear his oath renouncing American citizenship if he insisted.

Lee was bitter at U.S. Consul Richard Snyder, who, he charged, stifled him when he asked to take the oath on the spot. The only time Lee had been at the Embassy, as a result, Lee wouldn't go back there. He would handle the legal details when, and if, he became a citizen.

Fanatics Are Made'

son of the Soviet Union, shortcoming in Moscow, Lee answered when I knocked he would never go at his door and why, a few days later, he handed over his passport to the American Embassy. "I'm not a fanatical Communist," he said, "I'm just a man who wants to see the world."

I asked Lee if the ordinary Russian he met expressed surprise at his desire to defect, new country, always being the "Well," he said, "they're very curious and they ask me why, just But materialist Muscovites," he added, "understand when I speak of the idealistic reasons; that was why Lee wouldn't just brought me here. And answer the phone when his mother was calling from the United States."

Never Go Back!

Regardless of any material can correspondents, just why, before closing the door, that know,

As he was leaving I asked him to come see me again. The Russians Oswald told me, had refused to speak to any American. But he promised, Oswald, I was sure, awaited him.

As our conversation drew to a close, we ate nothing, the and had been sipping cold tea. I had a terrible feeling of futility. Illusion, I was sure, awaited him.

Two seconds later, the elevator opened. Oswald, I know, I'd who