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ITALIAN REPORTER RECALLS OSWALD MARXIST BOAST

MILAN, Italy (AP) -- The Moscow correspondent of the Milan newspaper, Corriere Della Sera, reported Monday he had met Lee Harvey Oswald in Moscow and heard him boast: "I am the youngest Marxist in all the United States."

The correspondent, Vero Roberti, said he met Oswald in November, 1959.

"I realize capitalism is fading," Roberti quoted Oswald as telling him. "I realized it a few years ago. Now I am determined to stay here for good."

"I asked him if some personal misadventure had driven him to this decision," Roberti said. "But Oswald replied: 'No, I am a Marxist. I am the youngest Marxist in all the United States.'"

Oswald was wearing a khaki colored coat and Roberti asked if it was a memento of his life in the Army. He said Oswald replied:

"No, I bought it before my departure (from the United States). My service in the army is full of ugly recollections. They treated me in the worst way."

Actually Oswald served in the U.S. Marine Corps, which court martialed him twice in Japan. He once said the corps was "like a prison."

[Retyped from a faint original - PLH 7/20/82]

SIGNET PAPERBACK (1981) TRUMAN CAPOTE -

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Conversational Portraits

TC: Sort of. He's lonesome. He wants to mix with the other prisoners, join the general population.

RB: He don't know what's good for him. Outside, somebody'd snuff him for sure.

TC: Why?

RB: For the same reason he snuffed Kennedy. Recognition. Half the people who snuff people, that's what they want: recognition. Get their picture in the paper.

TC: That's not why you killed Gary Hinman.

RB: (Silence)

TC: That was because you and Manson wanted Hinman to give you money and his car, and when he wouldn't--well...

RB: (Silence)

TC: I was thinking. I know Sirhan, and I knew Robert Kennedy. I knew Lee Harvey Oswald, and I knew Jack Kennedy. The odds against that--one person knowing all four of those men--must be astounding.

RB: Oswald? You knew Oswald? Really?

TC: I met him in Moscow just after he defected. One night I was having dinner with a friend, an Italian newspaper correspondent, and when he came by to pick me up he asked me if I'd mind going with him first to talk to a young American defector, one Lee Harvey Oswald. Oswald was staying at the Metropole, an old Czarist hotel just off Kremlin Square. The Metropole has a big gloomy lobby full of shadows and dead palm trees. And there he was, sitting in the dark under a dead palm tree. Thin and pale, thin-lipped, starved-looking. He was wearing chinos and tennis shoes and a lumberjack shirt. And right away he was angry--he was grinding his teeth, and his eyes were jumping every which way. He was boiling over about everything: the American ambassador; the Russians--he was mad at them because they wouldn't let him stay in Moscow. We talked to him for

RB = ROBERT BEAU SOLEIL (MANSON GANG)

'MUSIC FOR CHAMELEONS'

Then It All Came Down

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about half an hour, and my Italian friend didn't think the guy was worth filing a story about. Just another paranoid hysteric; the Moscow woods were rampant with those. I never thought about him again, not until many years later. Not until after the assassination when I saw his picture flashed on television.

RB: Does that make you the only one that knew both of them, Oswald and Kennedy?

TC: No. There was an American girl, Priscilla Johnson. She worked for U.P. in Moscow. She knew Kennedy, and she met Oswald around the same time I did. But I can tell you something else almost as curious. About some of those people your friends murdered.

RB: (Silence)

TC: I knew them. At least, out of the five people killed in the Tate house that night, I knew four of them. I'd met Sharon Tate at the Cannes Film Festival. Jay Sebring cut my hair a couple of times. I'd had lunch once in San Francisco with Abigail Folger and her boyfriend, Frykowski. In other words, I'd known them independently of each other. And yet one night there they were, all gathered together in the same house waiting for your friends to arrive. Quite a coincidence.

RB: (lights a cigarette; smiles): Know what I'd say? I'd say you're not such a lucky guy to know. Shit. Listen to that. Moan, moan. I'm cold. You cold?

TC: Why don't you put on your shirt?

RB: (Silence)

TC: It's odd about tattoos. I've talked to several hundred men convicted of homicide--multiple homicide, in most cases. The only common denominator I could find among them was tattoos. A good eighty percent of them were heavily tattooed. Richard Speck. York and Latham. Smith and Hickock.

RB: I'll put on my sweater.

NONFICTION