

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Oswald, Lee H., Russian Period

Other Individuals and Organizations
Involved or Interviewed

Date 2/28/64

Oswald, Marina - 1

The following information was furnished on February 26 and 27, 1964, by YURI IVANOVICH NOSENKO:

NOSENKO said he was Deputy Chief of the Tourist Department, Second Chief Directorate of the Committee for State Security (KGB) at the time of his defection February 4, 1964, at Geneva, Switzerland, and held the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He said the Second Directorate of the KGB is concerned with the internal security of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR).

NOSENKO advised he was familiar with the visit of LEE HARVEY OSWALD to the Soviet Union in the Fall of 1959 and supervised the handling of the KGB file on OSWALD in the Tourist Department.

NOSENKO stated that when OSWALD arrived as a tourist in the Soviet Union the KGB had no current interest in him and possessed no information that OSWALD was a member of the Communist Party, USA, elsewhere, or that he was a member of any pro-Soviet organization. NOSENKO advised that upon arrival in Moscow OSWALD contacted Intourist, the official Soviet travel agency. OSWALD informed representatives of the Intourist that he desired to remain in the Soviet Union. Thereafter, OSWALD's case was referred to the Seventh (Tourist) Department, Second Main Directorate, KGB.

NOSENKO related OSWALD was discouraged from remaining permanently in Russia. It was suggested to him that he complete his visit as a tourist and return to the United States. It was further suggested he could thereafter make application through routine channels at the Soviet Embassy in the United States for admission as an immigrant to the Soviet Union.

NOSENKO said OSWALD was not regarded by the KGB as being completely normal mentally nor was he considered to be very intelligent. He stated it was the desire of the KGB that OSWALD depart from Russia as early as convenient but no effort was made to curtail his visit or to inconvenience him during his stay in Russia. NOSENKO stated,

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by SAs MAURICE A. TAYLOR, DONALD E. WALTER, and ALEKSO POPTANICHKIS Date dictated 2/28/64

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however, that OSWALD was pointedly informed he could not remain in Russia permanently. Later OSWALD was scheduled to take a tour of Moscow but before the tour began he was again notified he could not remain in the Soviet Union. When he failed to appear for this tour a search was instituted for him and according to NOSENKO inquiry was made at the Berlin Hotel in Moscow where OSWALD was a guest. This inquiry disclosed OSWALD had locked himself in his room and when entry was made to his room OSWALD was found bleeding from self-inflicted wounds to his wrists. NOSENKO stated OSWALD was rushed to a hospital and NOSENKO expressed the opinion that if OSWALD had not received immediate medical assistance he would have died.

NOSENKO stated that upon OSWALD's release from the hospital OSWALD was again informed he could not remain in the Soviet Union, whereupon OSWALD declared if this were true he would commit suicide. NOSENKO said that at this point the Second Directorate of the KGB "washed its hands of OSWALD."

NOSENKO advised that OSWALD was, nevertheless, permitted to remain temporarily in Russia and it is NOSENKO's opinion this was accomplished through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or the Soviet Red Cross. NOSENKO said OSWALD was not granted Soviet citizenship nor was this ever considered. He said OSWALD was thereafter sent to Minsk in Byelorussia, northwest of Moscow where he was given a small apartment and a minor position in a plant, believed by NOSENKO to be engaged in the manufacture of radio receivers. NOSENKO said OSWALD received a small salary and this was supplemented by funds provided by the Soviet Red Cross.

NOSENKO said the KGB file on OSWALD was then transferred to the regional office of the KGB at Minsk and that office was instructed to maintain a discreet check on the activities of OSWALD. NOSENKO commented that the possibility that OSWALD might be a "sleeper agent" for American intelligence had been considered by the KGB but at this time the interest of KGB headquarters in OSWALD was practically nil.

NOSENKO said no further word was received at the KGB headquarters concerning OSWALD until he appeared at the Soviet Embassy, Mexico City, Mexico, and sought to return to the Soviet Union. He stated the headquarters of the First Chief Directorate (Foreign Intelligence) at Moscow was advised of OSWALD's interest in returning to Russia. It was subsequently ascertained that OSWALD had been of interest previously to the Second Directorate and the Second Directorate promptly informed the First Directorate that OSWALD was of no interest to the Second Directorate. The Second Directorate said it wanted nothing to do with OSWALD and it recommended to the First Directorate that OSWALD not be granted permission to return to the Soviet Union.

NOSENKO related he next heard about OSWALD approximately two hours after the assassination of President JOHN F. KENNEDY when NOSENKO was summoned to the KGB center in Moscow and queried concerning his knowledge of OSWALD. NOSENKO said that since no file on OSWALD could be located at the center he was instructed by General OLEG M. GRIBANOV, Head of the Second Directorate, to telephone the KGB office at Minsk and obtain a dictated summary of information concerning OSWALD. NOSENKO said he contacted the KGB office at Minsk and obtained a summary wherein there appeared a phrase that the KGB at Minsk had endeavored "to influence OSWALD in the right direction." General GRIBANOV was greatly concerned about this phrase inasmuch as the KGB in Minsk had been instructed to take no action concerning OSWALD. General GRIBANOV ordered all records at Minsk pertaining to OSWALD be forwarded by warplane to Moscow with an explanation concerning attempts "to influence OSWALD in the right direction."

NOSENKO advised the KGB at Minsk reported no official action had been taken to direct OSWALD and explained that an uncle of MARINA OSWALD, wife of LEE HARVEY OSWALD, who was a lieutenant colonel in the local militia at Minsk, had voluntarily approached OSWALD and suggested OSWALD not be too critical of the Soviet Union when he returned to the United States. NOSENKO commented that when the KGB at Minsk was first requested to furnish a summary of the OSWALD file it was unaware of the international significance of OSWALD's

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activities and had included the statement reporting their endeavors to influence OSWALD as a self-serving effort to impress the KGB center.

NOSENKO advised that the OSWALD affair was a source of great concern to the KGB center and a large staff of KGB employees was called into service and records were reviewed in great detail to make certain the KGB had not utilized OSWALD as an agent.

With respect to MARINA OSWALD, NOSENKO advised that she was not employed as an agent of the KGB. He said she had been a member of the Komsomol (Communist Party Youth Organization) but had been dropped from the rolls on an unknown date for non-payment of dues over a long period of time. NOSENKO stated MARINA OSWALD was not regarded by the KGB as a very intelligent person. MARINA was permitted to depart Russia with her husband, but NOSENKO said this was of no significance since there was no objection from the KGB.

NOSENKO advised that since the death of STALIN it is possible under the law for a Russian wife of a foreign national to leave the USSR with her husband, although in practice this may be prevented as a matter of policy.

Date 3/5/64

On March 3, 1964, YURI IVANOVICH NOSENKO advised that at the time of OSWALD's arrival in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) in the Fall of 1959, he (NOSENKO) held the position of Deputy Chief, First Section, Seventh Department, Second Chief Directorate (counterintelligence), KGB (Committee for State Security). This particular Section, of which he was then Deputy Chief, handled the KGB investigations of tourists from the United States and British Commonwealth countries.

The First Section, at that time, and at present, contains fifteen or sixteen officers, holding ranks of Junior Case Officers, Case Officers and Senior Case Officers. At the time of President JOHN F. KENNEDY's assassination, NOSENKO stated he then held the position of Deputy Chief, Seventh Department, (Tourist Department), Second Chief Directorate, with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. The Seventh Department, consisting of approximately ninety Case Officers, is responsible for KGB investigations of tourists from all non-communist countries.

Prior to OSWALD's arrival in the USSR he was completely unknown to the KGB, according to NOSENKO. In this connection he pointed out that immediately upon issuance of a visa to a person to visit the USSR, the Seventh Department (Tourist), Second Chief Directorate, KGB, is notified. At that time a preliminary evaluation is made of the individual and a determination made as to what action, if any, should be taken by the Tourist Department. OSWALD's background was not of sufficient importance for the Tourist Department to have any advance interest in him and NOSENKO stated that his first knowledge of the existence of OSWALD arose in about October, 1959, when KIM GEORGIEVICH KRUPNOV, a Case Officer in his section, reported to him information which KRUPNOV had received from an Intourist interpreter. It was to the effect that OSWALD, an American citizen who had entered the USSR on a temporary visa, desired to remain permanently in the USSR and to become a Soviet citizen. KRUPNOV at this time displayed to NOSENKO a memorandum prepared by KRUPNOV containing information which had been received by KRUPNOV from KGB informants at the Hotel Berlin (which administratively is part of the Hotel Metropole) concerning OSWALD's behavior patterns, an Intourist itinerary for OSWALD, and a two-page report prepared by the Intourist interpreter (a KGB informant) concerning his conversations with OSWALD and his impressions and evaluations of OSWALD. At that time a file was opened in NOSENKO's section incorporating all of the information which KRUPNOV had collected.

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by SAs ALEKSO POPTANICH and W. MARVIN GHEESLING; /jmm Date dictated 3/4/64

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NOSENKO and KRUPNOV, on basis of this information, concluded that OSWALD was of no interest to the KGB and both agreed that OSWALD appeared somewhat abnormal. NOSENKO could not specifically state what factors caused him to evaluate OSWALD as being abnormal, but on basis of all information available to him at the time there was no doubt in his mind that OSWALD was not "fully normal." At that time the KGB did not know of OSWALD's prior military service and NOSENKO stated that had such information been available to him, it would have been of no particular interest or significance to the KGB.

On the basis of NOSENKO's evaluation of OSWALD he instructed KRUPNOV to advise OSWALD, through the Intourist interpreter, that OSWALD would not be permitted to remain in the USSR permanently and that he would have to depart at the expiration of his visa and thereafter seek re-entry as a permanent resident through routine channels at the Soviet Embassy in the United States. NOSENKO's instructions were carried out and on the same date or the following day he learned that OSWALD failed to appear for a scheduled tour arranged by his Intourist guide. This prompted Intourist to initiate efforts to locate him and after a couple of hours, inquiry at the Berlin Hotel established that OSWALD's room key was missing, indicating that he was apparently in his room. Hotel employees then determined that OSWALD's room was secured from the inside and when he failed to respond to their request for him to open the door, they forced it open. OSWALD was found bleeding severely from self-inflicted wounds and was immediately taken by an ambulance to a hospital, believed by NOSENKO to be the Botkinskaya Hospital in Moscow. NOSENKO did not know specifically whether OSWALD was bleeding from wounds in his left or right wrist or whether from both wrists and he did not know what instrument was used to cause the wound or wounds. The information regarding OSWALD's wounds was received by NOSENKO from KRUPNOV who in turn received it from Intourist sources. NOSENKO did not know how long OSWALD remained in the hospital but stated it was for several days. OSWALD's attempted suicide was reported by NOSENKO to the Chief of the Seventh Department, Colonel KONSTANTIN NIKITOVICH DUBAS, and NOSENKO believed that DUBAS then reported it to the Office of the Chief of the Second Chief Directorate. NOSENKO's original decision that the KGB would not become involved with OSWALD was approved by the Chief of the Second Directorate, and it was further agreed that he should not be permitted to remain in the USSR.

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A report from the hospital was received which gave the circumstances of OSWALD's admittance to the hospital, treatment received including blood transfusion, and the report stated OSWALD had attempted suicide because he was not granted permission to remain in the USSR. The hospital record also included an evaluation that OSWALD's attempted suicide indicated mental instability. NOSENKO did not know whether this evaluation was based on a psychiatric examination or was merely an observation of the hospital medical staff. NOSENKO also learned that upon OSWALD's discharge from the hospital he was again informed by Intcurist that he could not reside in the USSR and OSWALD stated he would commit suicide.

NOSENKO did not know who made the decision to grant OSWALD permission to reside temporarily in the USSR, but he is sure it was not a KGB decision and he added that upon learning of this decision the KGB instructed that OSWALD not be permitted to reside in the Moscow area. NOSENKO suggested that either the Soviet Red Cross or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs made the decision to permit OSWALD to reside in the USSR and also made the decision to assign him to Minsk. NOSENKO attached no particular significance to the fact that OSWALD was settled in Minsk but offered the opinion that since Minsk is a capital city of one of the Republics and is an above-average Soviet city in cleanliness and modern facilities, it was selected in order to create a better impression on OSWALD, a foreigner.

After the KGB was advised of the decision to authorize OSWALD to reside in Minsk it was necessary for KRUPNOV to bring OSWALD's file up to date for purpose of transferring it to the KGB Office in Minsk. This was done and the file was forwarded to Minsk by a cover letter prepared by KRUPNOV. That cover letter briefly summarized OSWALD's case and specifically instructed that KGB, Minsk, take no action concerning OSWALD except to "passively" observe his activities to make sure he was not a United States intelligence agent temporarily dormant. KRUPNOV's letter was read by NOSENKO and signed by DUBAS.

NOSENKO stated that in view of instructions from KGB, Moscow, no active interest could be taken in OSWALD in Minsk without obtaining prior approval from KGB, Moscow. According to NOSENKO no such approval was ever requested or granted and based on his experience, he opined that the only coverage of OSWALD during his stay in Minsk consisted of periodic checks at his place of employment, inquiry of neighbors, associates and review of his mail.

The next time NOSENKO heard of OSWALD was in connection with OSWALD's application to the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City for a Soviet re-entry visa. NOSENKO did not know how Mexico City advised Moscow of subject's application. His knowledge resulted from an oral inquiry of NOSENKO's department by M. I. TURALIN, Service Number Two, (counterintelligence in foreign countries), First Chief Directorate. NOSENKO recalled that TURALIN had orally contacted VLADIMIR KUZMICH ALEKSEEV, Chief, Sixth Section of NOSENKO's Tourist Department, with respect to OSWALD. NOSENKO's Department had no interest in OSWALD and recommended that OSWALD's request for a re-entry visa be denied. NOSENKO could not recall when OSWALD visited Mexico City in connection with his visa application.

NOSENKO's next knowledge of OSWALD's activities arose as a result of President JOHN F. KENNEDY's assassination. NOSENKO recalled that about two hours after President KENNEDY had been shot he was telephonically advised at his home by the KGB Center of this fact. A short time later he was telephonically advised of the President's death. About two hours later NOSENKO was advised that OSWALD had been arrested, and NOSENKO and his staff were called to work for purpose of determining whether the KGB had any information concerning OSWALD. After establishing OSWALD's identity from KGB files and ascertaining that OSWALD's file was still in Minsk, NOSENKO, on instructions of General OLEG M. GRIBANOV, Chief of the Second Chief Directorate of the KGB, telephonically contacted the KGB Office in Minsk and had them dictate a summary of the OSWALD file. NOSENKO did not personally accept this summary, but it was taken down by an employee of his department. As reported by NOSENKO at the time of his interview on February 26, 1964, this summary concluded with a statement that the KGB at Minsk had endeavored "to influence OSWALD in the right direction." As reported by NOSENKO, this latter statement greatly disturbed GRIBANOV since the KGB Headquarters had instructed that no action be taken concerning OSWALD except to passively observe his activities. Accordingly, GRIBANOV ordered all records at Minsk pertaining to OSWALD be forwarded immediately to Moscow by military aircraft with an explanation concerning the meaning of the above-mentioned statement. NOSENKO read the file summary telephonically furnished by Minsk, the explanation from.

Minsk concerning the meaning of the above-mentioned statement, and thoroughly reviewed OSWALD's file prior to making same available to SERGEI MIKHAILOVICH PEDOSEEV, Chief of the First Department, Second Chief Directorate, who prepared a two-page summary memorandum for GRIBANOV. That memorandum was furnished by GRIBANOV to VLADIMIR SEMICHASTNY, Chairman of KGB who in turn reported to the Central Committee of the Communist Party, USSR, and to NIKITA S. KHRUSHCHEV. According to NOSENKO, OSWALD's file, as received from Minsk, contained no information to indicate that the KGB at Minsk had taken any action with respect to OSWALD contrary to instructions from KGB Headquarters. It did contain information concerning OSWALD's marriage to MARINA OSWALD, background data on MARINA, including fact she had been a member of the Komsomol (Communist Party Youth Organization) but was dropped for nonpayment of dues and the fact that the OSWALDS had departed the USSR for the United States. His file also included a statement that OSWALD had been a poor worker. NOSENKO read PEDOSEEV's summary memorandum and he recalled that it contained the definite statement that from the date of OSWALD's arrival in the USSR until his departure from the USSR, the KGB had no personal contact with OSWALD and had not attempted to utilize him in any manner.

NOSENKO was questioned as to whether OSWALD could have been trained and furnished assignments by any other Soviet intelligence organization including the GRU (Soviet Military Intelligence) or the Thirteenth Department of the First Directorate of the KGB (which deals with sabotage, explosions, killings, terror). NOSENKO stated that he is absolutely certain that OSWALD received no such training or assignments. In this connection he explained that if any other department of KGB wanted to utilize OSWALD, they would have to contact the department which originally opened up the file on OSWALD (NOSENKO's department) and ask permission to utilize him. NOSENKO stated that this would also apply to GRU. NOSENKO further explained that in view of their evaluation that OSWALD appeared to be mentally unstable no Soviet Intelligence Agency, particularly the Thirteenth Department, would consider using him. NOSENKO also advised that further evidence that OSWALD was not of intelligence interest to the KGB is shown by the fact that the KGB Headquarters did not retain a control file concerning OSWALD following his settlement in Minsk. He elaborated by stating that had OSWALD been of any intelligence interest to KGB a control file would also have been maintained at.

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KGB Headquarters. This file would have been assigned to a Case Officer at Headquarters with responsibility to direct supervision of the case, including the making of periodic visits to Minsk by the Case Officer. In OSWALD's case the only record maintained at KGB Headquarters in Moscow was an index card bearing OSWALD's name and the identity of the department which originated the file concerning him.

NOSENKO advised that he ascertained from reading OSWALD's file that the Soviet Red Cross had made payments to OSWALD. He stated, however, that it is a normal practice for the Soviet Red Cross to make payments to emigres and defectors in order to assist them in enjoying a better standard of living than Soviet citizens engaged in similar occupations. He learned that OSWALD received the minimum payments from the Soviet Red Cross which he estimated to be approximately 50 rubles per month. He did not know when these payments began and did not know for how long they continued.

NOSENKO stated that there are no Soviet regulations which would have prevented OSWALD from traveling from Minsk to Moscow without police authority. He stated that Soviet citizens likewise are permitted to travel from place to place without having to receive special permission.

Following President KENNEDY's assassination, NOSENKO ascertained from OSWALD's file that he had had access to a gun which he used to hunt game with fellow employees in the USSR. He could not describe the gun used by OSWALD but did remember that it was used to shoot rabbits. NOSENKO stated that Western newspaper reports describe OSWALD as an expert shot; however, OSWALD's file contained statements from fellow hunters that OSWALD was an extremely poor shot and that it was necessary for persons who accompanied him on hunts to provide him with game.

NOSENKO stated that there is no KGB and no GRU training school in the vicinity of Minsk.

According to NOSENKO, no separate file was maintained by the KGB concerning MARINA OSWALD and all of KGB's information concerning her was kept in OSWALD's file. He said that no information

in that file indicated that the KGB had any interest in MARINA OSWALD either while she was in the Soviet Union or after she departed the Soviet Union. NOSENKO also advised that KGB had no plans to contact either OSWALD or MARINA in the United States.

NOSENKO opined that after OSWALD departed the USSR he would not have been permitted to re-enter that country under any circumstances. He expressed the opinion that MARINA and her children would have been granted permission to return alone had President KENNEDY not been assassinated.

Since the assassination of President Kennedy he does not know what decision would be made with respect to MARINA OSWALD and her children.

NOSENKO had no information that the Soviet Government ever received any contact from the Cubans concerning OSWALD, and he knew of no Cuban involvement in the assassination.

NOSENKO stated that he had no knowledge that OSWALD had made application to re-enter the Soviet Union other than through his contact with the Soviet Embassy at Mexico City. He pointed out in this connection, that had OSWALD applied at the Soviet Embassy in Washington, D. C., or elsewhere, the KGB would not have ever been apprised of the visa request if the visa issuing officer at the Embassy decided on his own authority to reject the visa application.

NOSENKO noted that all mail addressed to the American Embassy in Moscow, emanating abroad or from the USSR itself, is first reviewed by the KGB in Moscow. NOSENKO added that on occasions mail from "significant" persons is not even permitted by KGB to reach the American Embassy. In the case of OSWALD, NOSENKO stated that since he was of no significance or particular interest to the KGB, correspondence from OSWALD would be permitted to reach the Embassy, even though critical. However, NOSENKO had no knowledge that OSWALD ever directed a communication of any type to the American Embassy in Moscow.

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NOSENKO stated that no publicity appeared in the Soviet Press or over the radio regarding OSWALD's arrival or departure from the USSR and no publicity resulted from his attempted suicide. Soviet newspapers and radio have carried numerous statements concerning President KENNEDY's assassination which quoted from Western newspaper stories concerning OSWALD's alleged involvement, including the fact that OSWALD had previously visited the USSR.

NOSENKO advised he saw nothing unusual in the fact that OSWALD was permitted to marry a Soviet citizen and later permitted to depart the USSR with her. He noted that Soviet law specifically provides that a Soviet citizen may marry a foreign national in the USSR and depart from the USSR with spouse, provided; of course, the Soviet citizen had not had access to sensitive information.

It was his opinion that President KENNEDY was held in high esteem by the Soviet Government and that President KENNEDY had been evaluated by the Soviet Government as a person interested in maintaining peace. He stated that following the assassination, the Soviet guards were removed from around the American Embassy in Moscow and the Soviet people were permitted without interference to visit the American Embassy to express their condolences. According to NOSENKO, this is the only occasion he can recall where such action had been taken. He said that the orders to remove the guards came from "above." He added that his department provided approximately 20 men who spoke the English language for assignment in the immediate vicinity of the American Embassy in Moscow to insure that no disrespect was shown during this period.

On March 4, 1964, NOSENKO stated that he did not want any publicity in connection with this information but stated that he would be willing to testify to this information before the Presidential Commission, provided such testimony is given in secret and absolutely no publicity is given either to his appearance before the Commission or to the information itself.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

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Date 3/9/64

Other Individuals and Organizations
Involved: of Interviewed _____

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On March 6, 1964, YURI IVANOVICH NOSENKO inquired if the material he furnished on March 4, 1964, regarding LEE HARVEY OSWALD was given to the appropriate authorities with his request that no publicity be granted the information he furnished. He was advised that this was done.

NOSENKO was asked if an alien residing in the Soviet Union could own a rifle or shotgun. He replied that an alien can own a shotgun, but it must be registered with the Militsia. He added that an alien can buy a rifle for hunting only with the permission of the Militsia prior to the purchase, and it must be registered with the Militsia. He stated that at no time can an alien buy or carry a pistol or a military rifle.

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By Ray NARS Date 3/9/83

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by SAs MAURICE A. TAYLOR, DONALD E. WALTER and ALEKSO POPTANICH AP:lkc Date dictated 3/9/64

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