

0-49f

Dear Jim,

5/11/75

Superficially the Dan Schorr p. 2 byliner, WxPost 5/11/75, "Oswald and the KGB," is excellent for WC critics. The content is has is. My concern is not with this but with the omissions, some known to CBS, all available to Schorr; and quite significant if the omissions are in the documents themselves or in what there should have been, comment on this file.

I think we should have copies of the entire declassified file immediately and that Hoch at least would want them. To this end, because I may want to reproduce in Agent Oswald, please ask for a set from the Archives, charge to my account for pickup when I/we are there for pictures, and ask when and when these papers were declassified and why they were not declassified sooner.

For one who knows the available background information the summary reflected in the head is the wrong angle. It should be Oswald and the CIA. There never was any reasonable basis for believing that Oswald was or could have been KGB.

But the omission from this story of the two transcripts and their nature and content, both in CBS possession through me, does raise reasonable questions. Schorr may or may not have know of either or both but the most casual check in CBS' own files had to disclose both. I think it unlikely he is not aware of the reporting of WW IV. This is not to suggest what need be a sinister interpretation because there are always considerations of space. However, in this case I think at least minimal reference, particularly in the context of the current situation re CIA and investigations, made some reference mandatory by normal journalistic standards.

The essence of this story is not new. It is in Nosenko's book, which I have and I am sure about which I have written and spoken to you.

The more significant voids have to do with Oswald's illegal departure(s) from Minsk when he was under surveillance and the whole story of his leaving Russia, especially permission for Marina to go with him. While the latter can be interpreted two ways, I believe it reflects the great Russian anxiety to be rid of him. That there could be no reference to these matters in the KGB file is incredible. That including it in what was given to the US by the Russians would seem to serve obvious Russian interests. Let I recall none of this in the original files I examined long ago. There is a separate file breakdown. They have this odd way of separating the Oswald history, pre-Russia, Russia and Post Russia.

It is my recollection that what the Russians delivered was given to the CIA for analysis.

It simply is not possible that the KGB had no Oswald records or interests from the time he went to Minsk until his September application for re-entry. Especially not when the KGB considered him a possible "intelligence agent temporarily forwent." Here a rereading of part of O in NO might be helpful.

Nor is the interpretation given to the words "influence Oswald in the right direction," attributed to the KGB, Minsk, only that of an inference to recruit him. This, in fact, seems to be an entirely unreasonable explanation. It does serve US spook interest and provides a seeming reasonableness to the thrust of the ~~xxxx~~ representations of the FBI about the interviews, particularly by Fain. Why would they expect Oswald to return to the US, the only way he could serve KGB interests? How else could he be "recruited?" and for what?

This leads to an addition to the requests: is anything else on this still withheld? (God if I could only get some help to take the elementary needs off me so I could return to that book. This can get out of hand, my fear about so much that is current.)

Unless there is something special about this declassification not indicated in Schorr's story, as would be normal, like a CBS/Schorr/other special request, that this is, as it appears to be, a sudden, out of the regular declassification seems to me to corroborate the suspicion I have long held, that the administration has decided that the official account is going to come apart and it wants to control how it does.

Focusing consideration of evidence of a conspiracy on this alone, which is what Schorr's story does, is consistent with my concern as with current official acts.

# Oswald and the KGB

## Soviet Security Vetoed His Return in '63

By Daniel Schorr

Special to The Washington Post

On Feb. 4, 1964, ten weeks after President Kennedy's assassination, Lt. Col. Yuri Ivanovich Nosenko of the KGB (Soviet state security) defeated to the United States in Geneva. He said, among other things, that he had handled the file on Lee Harvey Oswald since the ex-marine's arrival in Moscow in 1959.

Brought to the United States by the Central Intelligence Agency, Nosenko was turned over to the FBI on Feb. 26, 1964, for several days of interrogation about Oswald, who the Warren Commission said acted alone in assassinating Kennedy in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963. The interrogation report—part of the Warren Commission's secret file, but never cited in testimony or in conclusions—has been declassified. This account is taken from Nosenko's interrogation.

Nosenko painted a picture of Soviet security officers so leery of Oswald, who they considered mentally unstable and possibly a "sleeper" American agent, that they tried to get him out of the country and vetoed his return when he applied in Mexico City in September, 1963.

The security officer said that an inspection of the Soviets' file after the Dallas murder started a Kremlin flap that reached as high as Premier Nikita S. Khrushchev when a notation was found indicating that a KGB officer in Minsk, in violation of instructions, might have tried to recruit Oswald before his return to the United States.

According to Nosenko, it was with relief that it was finally concluded that the entry was a self-serving lie by a bureaucrat, who was ignorant of the implications.

Nosenko's offer to testify in secret before the Warren Commission was declined. John McCone, then director of the CIA, told this reporter that his counterintelligence officers suspected Nosenko might be a plant to exonerate the Soviets of conspiracy.

When McCone appeared before the Warren Commission with his deputy, Richard Helms, in June, 1964,



LEE HARVEY OSWALD  
... considered unstable

they said that there was "no evidence" of a Soviet conspiracy in Kennedy's assassination. But they did not say they might have evidence to the contrary.

Rep. Gerald R. Ford, a member of the Warren Commission, asked, "Is the Central Intelligence Agency continuing any investigation into this area?"

McCone replied, "No, because at the present time we have no information in our files that we have not exhaustively investigated and disposed of to our satisfaction."

Today, McCone says that Nosenko's bona fides "subsequently were proven" and that "it is today the position of the CIA that the information given by Nosenko was correct." Within the agency, it is understood, that is still a subject of dispute.

Whether the Nosenko report would have affected the conclusions of the Warren Commission is hard to judge. Some former staff members said the conclusions that there was "no evidence" of a conspiracy might have been more strongly worded.

Not only did Nosenko deny any Soviet conspiracy, but he said he knew of "no Cuban involvement in the assassination."

The account contained in three interrogations of Nosenko by the FBI can be summarized as follows:

As deputy chief of a KGB counterintelligence section dealing with American and British tourists, Nosenko received a report from an Intourist guide, after Oswald's arrival in Moscow, saying Oswald wanted to stay permanently and become a Soviet citizen.

Deciding that Oswald was "of no interest to the KGB" and "somewhat abnormal,"

Nosenko had the Intourist guide advise Oswald that he would have to leave when his tourist visa expired.

After slashing his wrist in a Moscow hotel, Oswald was taken to a hospital, where an evaluation of "mental instability" was made. Despite Oswald's threat to try suicide again if he had to leave the country, the KGB advised his expulsion, but later learned that some other authority—the foreign ministry or the Red Cross—permitted him to stay in the Soviet Union and sent him to Minsk.

The KGB's file on Oswald was transferred to Minsk with a cover letter containing instructions that the KGB there "take no action concerning Oswald except to 'passively' observe his activities to make sure he was not a United States intelligence agent temporarily dormant."

The next time Nosenko heard of Oswald was in September, 1963, when Oswald applied for a re-entry visa at the Soviet embassy in Mexico City. An exchange of memos between the Foreign intelligence and domestic intelligence directorates of the KGB resulted in a decision that Oswald "not be granted permission to return to the Soviet Union."

Two hours after Kennedy's assassination, Nosenko was called into a KGB office

and asked about Oswald. He telephoned Minsk for a summary of Oswald's file. The summary contained a notation that the KGB in Minsk had tried to "influence Oswald in the right direction."

That stirred further investigation, and the entire file was flown to Moscow by military plane. Vladimir Demichastny, chairman of the KGB, was obliged to report to the party central committee and to Khrushchev.

The investigation concluded that the KGB "had no personal contact with Oswald and had not attempted to utilize him in any manner." The entry about trying to "influence Oswald" was attributed to the KGB in Minsk, "unaware of the international significance of Oswald's activities . . . reporting their endeavors to influence Oswald as a self-serving effort to impress the KGB center."

Nosenko said "the Oswald affair was a source of great concern for KGB headquarters, where a large staff was assembled and records were reviewed " to make certain that the KGB had not utilized Oswald as an agent."

*Scharr is a CBS News Correspondent.*