

ZODIAC

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FOR ITEMS USED

(ZNS) NEWLY DECLASSIFIED U.S. GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS INDICATE

THAT THE SOVIET SECRET POLICE SUSPECTED THAT LEE HARVEY OSWALD MAY HAVE BEEN AN UNDERCOVER U.S. INTELLIGENCE AGENT WHEN HE DEFECTED TO THE SOVIET UNION IN 1959.

THE DOCUMENTS IN QUESTION HAVE BEEN DECLASSIFIED BY THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES IN WASHINGTON. THEY CONSIST OF F.B.I. INTERVIEWS WITH A FORMER LIEUTENANT COLONEL IN THE SOVIET K.G.B., YURI NOSENKO, WHO DEFECTED FROM RUSSIA TO THE UNITED STATES THREE MONTHS AFTER PRESIDENT KENNEDY'S ASSASSINATION.

THE DOCUMENTS, WHICH HAVE BEEN OBTAINED AND RELEASED BY ASSASSINATION RESEARCHER HAROLD WEISBERG, SHOW THAT THE SOVIET K.G.B. WAS VERY LEERY ABOUT OSWALD'S POSSIBLE ROLE AS AN UNDERCOVER AGENT FOR U.S. INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES.

NOSENKO IS QUOTED AS TELLING THE F.B.I. THAT MEMBERS OF THE K.G.B. HAD SUSPECTED OSWALD WAS A (QUOTE) "SLEEPER AGENT" WHO WAS ON SOME KIND OF INTELLIGENCE ASSIGNMENT INSIDE THE SOVIET UNION.

NOSENKO, ACCORDING TO THE DOCUMENTS, TOLD THE F.B.I. THAT, BECAUSE OF THESE SUSPICIONS, K.G.B. AGENTS KEPT TRACK OF OSWALD AND HIS ACTIVITIES WHILE HE RESIDED IN THE SOVIET UNION BY INTERVIEWING OSWALD'S EMPLOYERS, VISITING HIS NEIGHBORS AND OPENING ALL OF HIS MAIL.

THE DOCUMENTS INDICATE, HOWEVER, THAT THE SOVIETS, WHILE SUSPICIOUS ABOUT OSWALD'S MOTIVES, WERE NEVER ABLE TO LINK HIM WITH ANY U.S. SPYING ACTIVITY.

OSWALD RETURNED TO THE UNITED STATES 16 MONTHS BEFORE THE ASSASSINATION, AFTER SPENDING MORE THAN TWO-AND-A-HALF YEARS IN THE SOVIET UNION -- ZODIAC