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LEGEND
the secret world of LEE HARVEY OSWALD

Condensed from the book by

Edward Jay Epstein

For more than two years Edward Jay Epstein and a staff of researchers have painstakingly pieced together the life of Lee Harvey Oswald, President John F. Kennedy's assassin. Hitherto, astonishingly little had been known about this man, even by the Warren Commission. Indeed, it now appears that much of what has been accepted as the truth may in fact be a "legend"—a cover story—written by the KGB and skillfully fed to U.S. intelligence services.

It is known that after defecting to Russia in 1959, Oswald "disappeared" for a year. It is known that during his stay in the Soviet Union he met and hastily married a beautiful Russian woman. It is known that he returned to the United States, bringing his wife with him. It is known that he attempted to assassinate Maj. Gen. Edwin Walker. It is known that in September 1963 he visited the Cuban and Soviet embassies in Mexico. But each of these facts raises still further questions, suggests still further mysteries.

Part II of LEGEND: THE SECRET WORLD OF LEE HARVEY OSWALD sets out to unravel the enduring and startling puzzles about the President's assassin, a life which even now, 15 years later, continues to command newspaper headlines. Not all the questions can be answered, but some of the evidence cries out to be recognized as simple truth—often a shocking and unsettling truth.

Part I began with the defection of Yuri Nosenko, a KGB officer, who claimed that Oswald had never been approached by the KGB, had never even been debriefed after arriving in Moscow. Part II, after following Oswald through the fateful events of November 22, 1963, returns to this perplexing KGB agent, and leads the reader into the heart of one of the most sensational—and heretofore hidden—intelligence cases of modern times.

LEGEND
the secret world of LEE HARVEY OSWALD
Edward Jay Epstein

FRANCIS GARY POWERS, a 30-year-old pilot from Kentucky, watched with some apprehension from the cockpit of his U-2 plane as the sun rose over the Hindu Kush Mountains in Pakistan. He had been waiting for almost an hour for President Dwight D. Eisenhower to give the "go" signal, required for all U-2 flights over the Soviet Union.

At 6:20 a.m., May 1, 1960, Presidential authorization came through. In less than six minutes the plane had climbed almost 14 miles—higher than the official world altitude record for sustained flight.

As Powers crossed the Russian border he knew that Soviet radar would already be tracking him, as it had for most of the previous U-2 flights. But he doubted that it could pinpoint his exact height, and presumed that the Soviets were still targeting their missiles at a far lower altitude than that at which the U-2 actually flew. He also felt protected by the sophisticated equipment aboard, which emitted a beam designed to confuse Soviet height-finding radar.

At this time, the U-2 was used primarily for flying over the Soviet Union and China to photograph military and industrial targets. Taking off usually from Turkey and from Atsugi, Japan, U-2s were providing 90 percent of all hard information on Soviet military, ballistic and nuclear activities.

Watching the vapor trails of MIG fighters about 30,000 feet below him, Powers had no doubt that the Soviets were determined to put an end to the U-2 missions. His commanding officer had warned him that Soviet intelligence was mounting major efforts against the U-2 and had probably amassed a dossier on him and the 20 or so other pilots. Powers was not, however, told of the full extent of these intelligence operations.

Almost one year before this flight, Richard Helms, then deputy director of plans for the CIA, heard from Richard Bissell, who had devel-

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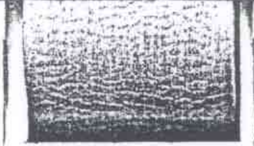

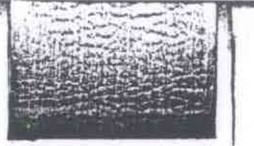

oped the U-2 program for the CIA, that one of their key agents planted in Soviet military intelligence, Col. Peter Semyonovich Popov, had passed information back indicating that the Soviets had definite knowledge of specifics of the U-2 program.

"It brought me right out of my seat," Helms recalled. "Bissell and I wondered where they could be getting their information."

The factor that had limited the effectiveness of Soviet anti-aircraft missiles was not rocketry—the Russians had already succeeded in orbiting a Sputnik satellite at a far higher altitude—but the lack of a guidance system capable of operating in the rarefied stratosphere in which the U-2 flew. If the Soviets succeeded in acquiring data about its cruising altitude, speed, load and other flight characteristics, they could design the necessary control system for their high-altitude rockets in much less time than had been anticipated. Then, in September 1959, Popov was arrested by Soviet counterintelligence. Thus, no further information on the nature of the Soviet intelligence he alluded to would be forthcoming.

Before this flight, Powers was aware that only one other U-2 flight had been made over the Soviet Union since October 9, 1959, but he did not know why the flights were being limited. He had not been told about a sabotage attempt made against his plane in Pakistan, on the eve of its departure, which was foiled by U.S. counterintelligence. Nor did he know that a trained Marine Corps radar operator with access to information about the U-2 and radar-measuring equipment at Atsugi had defected to the Soviet Union and offered, on October 31, 1959, to turn over to the Russians all data he possessed which might be of "special interest." This man was Lee Harvey Oswald.

Suddenly Powers felt a "dull thump" push him forward. The cockpit was illuminated by the orange flash of an explosion behind the U-2. Pulling back on the wheel, Powers realized that he had no control. The plane began slowly spinning downward, its nose pointed toward the sky. Powers opened the canopy and tried to crawl out. At about 30,000 feet the centrifugal force flung him into the air. A moment later he opened his parachute.

OSWALD was in Russia, and might have been in Moscow, at the time the U-2 was shot down. He could not have avoided reading about the U-2—which dominated the Soviet press for months afterward—but, curiously, a diary he kept makes no mention of the incident. Yet Oswald at the time was probably the only person in the Soviet Union who could have observed the U-2 up close and who had had access to its pilots and other personnel. He had the opportunity to become a hero in the U.S.S.R. by volunteering the pertinent information he had about the U-2. And this, of course, would have assured the continuation of the sub-

sidy he was then receiving from the Soviets.

The only comment Oswald ever made on the U-2 was in a letter to his brother in February 1962, after Powers had been exchanged for Soviet spy Rudolph Abel. Oswald wrote then: "Powers seemed to be a nice bright American-type fellow when I saw him in Moscow," never explaining the circumstances under which he was able to see him.

During his interrogation by Soviet intelligence, Powers was closely questioned about Atsugi in Japan. Powers insisted that he was never at that base. From the questions, however, he could tell that the Soviets were very knowledgeable about the U-2 flights from Atsugi. After his return to the United States, Powers himself suggested that it might have been Oswald who provided the Soviets with information about his flight.

Yuri Nosenko, a KGB officer who later defected to the United States, was one of the officials who rushed to the KGB center immediately after Powers was captured. After Nosenko's defection in 1964, he denied that Oswald's knowledge of the U-2 was used by the Soviets. In fact, he stated that Oswald was never asked for any information about the American military by either the KGB or Soviet military intelligence (GRU), and that he never volunteered such information. The American counterintelligence officers who questioned Nosenko found this assertion difficult to accept.

At the time of Nosenko's debriefing in 1964, the interrogation officers were not aware of Oswald's knowledge about the U-2 in Japan. They did not realize, for example, that, because of security lapses at the base where he was a radar operator, he could have ascertained the altitude capability of the U-2 and conceivably even deciphered some characteristics of its ultra-secret equipment for jamming enemy radar. Nor was the question ever resolved of whether Nosenko might be an agent of the KGB especially chosen to feed disinformation—false information—into U.S. intelligence services.*

The Missing Year

OSWALD, 20 years old, had now been in Russia for a little more than six months. Getting there had, obviously, taken a great deal of planning and care. He had shown an interest in communism from the time he was a teen-ager, and this continued after he joined the Marines, as many of his friends and acquaintances attest; he even began to learn Russian while stationed at Atsugi. Many people affirm that he was intelligent and learned quickly. Frequent, lone trips to Tokyo also suggest that he may have made his initial contacts with communists there, as the Communist Party was openly tolerated in the Japanese capital. Certainly they

*Details of both Oswald's and Nosenko's defections were revealed in Part I of "Legend: The Secret World of Lee Harvey Oswald," The Reader's Digest, March '78. See a chronology of these and other interlocking events on pages 159-161.

would have been interested in anyone stationed at Atsugi.

When his unit had returned to California, Oswald spoke of going to Castro's Cuba to help train troops, and made several trips to the Cuban consulate in Los Angeles. In September 1959 he received an early discharge, ostensibly to enable him to support his mother. Instead, he left immediately for Europe, declaring he would attend college in Switzerland. He docked at Southampton, flew from London to Helsinki, and on October 15 crossed the border into the U.S.S.R. Two weeks later he appeared at the U.S. embassy in Moscow and renounced his American citizenship. In December he wrote letters to his brother and his mother. He was not heard from again for more than a year.

During this time Oswald had no contact with anyone outside the Soviet Union, and there are no available witnesses to his activities there. The only account that exists is a packet of biographical notes, including a "Historic Diary" presumably prepared by Oswald—or at least found among his possessions in Dallas in 1963.

The chronicle begins in Moscow in October 1959. Oswald, brimming with enthusiasm about the potential for finding democracy in the Soviet Union, informed his Intourist guide, Rima Shirokova, that he was a "communist" and wanted to stay in the Soviet Union.

But several weeks passed, and finally a "police official" informed him that since his visa was due to expire, he must immediately leave the country.

> I am shocked. I retire to my room. I have waited two years to be accepted. My fondest dreams are shattered because of a petty official. I planned so much. 7 p.m. I decide to end it. Soak wrists in cold water to numb the pain. Then slash my left wrist. Then plunge wrist into bathtub of hot water. About 8, Rima finds me unconscious (bathtub a rich red color). She screams. Ambulance comes, am taken to hospital where five stitches are put in my wrist.

A week later, released from the hospital, he was taken to the Passport and Registration Office by Rima, and finally, on January 4, given a residence document. He noted:

> They are sending me to Minsk. I ask, "Is that in Siberia?" He [the official] only laughs. He also tells me that they have arranged for me to receive some money through the Red Cross to pay my expenses.

The next day he received the "huge sum" of 5000 rubles from the "Red Cross" and was told he would be paid 700 rubles a month in Minsk.

According to Oswald's diary, he arrived in Minsk, capital of Byelorussia, on January 7, 1960, and the next day was personally greeted by the mayor, who promised him a rent-free apartment. He began working at the Byelorussian radio and television factory. "Everyone is very friendly and kind. I meet many

(Text continues on page 162.)

THE SPY WHO HAS NEVER BEEN FOUND

In the shadow-world of intelligence, little is ever completely black or white. The following chronology lists some of the major revelations in Edward Jay Epstein's book, including statements made by two spies, Anatoli M. Golitsin and Yuri Nosenko, both defectors from the KGB. It also illustrates the kind of data U.S. intelligence analysts must evaluate, not in isolation, but as seemingly unrelated skeins of fact that might be part of a single fabric of truth—or falsehood.

What the two defectors said caused a sensation, behind the scenes, in our government. The maze of information they offered—including many suspect coincidences in their stories—was assessed against other intelligence sources, and caused a rift between the CIA and the FBI. It set off a search for a spy suspected of having penetrated U.S. intelligence at a high level. And it led a number of U.S. intelligence officers to the conclusion that the Soviet Union had mounted a colossal effort of deception—which reached its peak just as the Warren Commission was preparing its final report.

1958

Lee Harvey Oswald, a U.S. Marine, is stationed at Atsugi, Japan, one of the major bases for U-2 flights. At this time, the U-2 is the top-priority target of the KGB. (Oswald later tells a friend that he met with Japanese communists during this period.)

1959

Pavel T. Voloshin, KGB officer, is attached to a Soviet dance company that performs in Los Angeles. Oswald, stationed in Santa Ana, Calif., requests an early discharge from the Marines.

Soviet Col. Peter S. Popov, the most important spy working for the United States in Russia, sends a message to the CIA indicating that the Soviets have learned specifics about the U-2 program.

In September, Popov is captured by the KGB and executed. The CIA must determine whether Popov was captured by Soviet surveillance or betrayed by someone in, or close to, U.S. intelligence.

In October, Oswald defects to the Soviet Union. At the U.S. embassy in Moscow, where he hands over his passport, he strongly hints that he has information that would be of special interest to Soviet intelligence.

1960

On May 1, Gary Powers, U-2 pilot, is shot down during a flight over the Soviet Union.

1961

In May, Oswald receives a letter, signed P. T. Voloshin, turning down his request to enroll in the Patrice Lumumba Friendship University in Moscow. Pavel T. Voloshin is an administrator at the university.

In December, KGB Maj. Anatoli M. Golitsin defects to the United States. He declares that the Soviet Union has planted an agent within the highest echelons of U.S. intelligence. He states that V. M. Kovshuk, chief of the American-embassy section of the KGB, made a trip under diplomatic cover to the United States in 1957 and may have contacted, or activated, a high-level KGB agent working within the CIA. Golitsin provides information about an unidentified spy in the British Admiralty which narrows the list of suspects to four men. He tells of another KGB agent—code-named Sascha—who is working in the CIA.

Golitsin predicts that the Soviets will soon send a fake defector, or defectors, to deflect the CIA from investigation of his information.

1962

In March, a Soviet intelligence officer, working under diplomatic cover at the United Nations, contacts the FBI and offers to act as a spy. He is given the code-name Fedora.

In June, Oswald returns to America with his Russian wife, Marina. On the way, he stops in Amsterdam. Pavel T. Voloshin is also in Amsterdam.

In the same month, Yuri Nosenko, a KGB officer, contacts the CIA in Switzerland, and offers to work as a spy. He claims that Popov was captured by Soviet surveillance. He states that the code-name of the KGB agent Kovshuk had contacted in the United States is Andrey. He provides information about the spy in the British Admiralty that narrows the list of suspects to one man. He says that Sascha is in the military, not the CIA.

1963

In October, Oswald enters the Soviet embassy in Mexico to meet Valery V. Kostikov, later identified as an officer in the KGB's Thirteenth Department, the organization that controls sabotage and assassinations abroad.

In the same month, a man named Cherepanov sends a package of

documents to the American embassy in Moscow. Among the documents is a paper that states that Popov was captured by Soviet surveillance.

On November 22, Oswald assassinates President John F. Kennedy.

1964

In January, Nosenko again contacts the CIA in Switzerland. He states that he has read the complete KGB file on Lee Harvey Oswald, and that he wants to defect to the United States. Oswald, he declares, was of no interest to the KGB. Nosenko has a travel document that lists his rank as lieutenant colonel. He explains that it was issued to him when he took p[illegible] in a "manhunt" for Cherepanov. He pinpoints a leak of NATO secrets by describing a spy ring operating at Orly Airport outside Paris. He provides new information that makes the discovery of Andrey inevitable.

When asked to continue working in Russia for the CIA, Nosenko states that he has received a recall telegram and fears he has been detected. He is brought to the United States and offers to testify before the Warren Commission.

J. Edgar Hoover demands that the FBI control the questioning of Nosenko in regard to Oswald's life in the Soviet Union and the assassination. He submits a report to the Warren Commission that contains Nosenko's claim that the KGB had no interest in Oswald.

The CIA, dissatisfied with Hoover's report, prepares a series of questions for Nosenko to answer about Oswald. Hoover refuses to let them be asked.

Fedora confirms that Nosenko is a KGB lieutenant colonel and that he received a recall telegram.

The CIA, after questioning Nosenko, discovers that he is not a KGB lieutenant colonel and never received a recall telegram.

Richard Helms, deputy director of plans for the CIA, requests a private interview with Chief Justice Warren and states that the CIA cannot confirm or deny the truth of what Nosenko has said about Oswald. Nosenko is put under "hostile interrogation."

Sascha is found. He had been employed by the CIA, not the military.

Andrey is found. A former sergeant in the motor pool of the American embassy in Moscow, he had never been recruited by the KGB.

The KGB agent, reportedly planted in the highest echelons of U.S. intelligence, has never been found.

young Russian workers my own age." Because of his subsidy from the "Red Cross," Oswald found his social life fuller than it had ever been before—"theater, movies or opera almost every day. I'm living big and am very satisfied."*

But in the spring of 1960 the diary switched from a tone of elation to one of disillusionment. The turning point came on May Day, 1960, the day Powers was shot down. Soon Oswald's diary was showing this kind of entry:

> As my Russian improves I become increasingly conscious of just what sort of society I live in. Mass gymnastics, compulsory after-work meeting; usually political information meeting. Compulsory attendance at lectures and the sending of the entire shop collective (except me) to pick potatoes on a Sunday.

From this point on, the diary effectively shows Oswald's progressive disillusionment over the strict party discipline in the factory and the lack of recreational diversions outside work. As such, it provides a convenient explanation for why an American defector who arrives in the Soviet Union fervently committed to Marxism might subsequently decide to return to the United States.

A microscopic examination of Oswald's handwriting in this diary indicates that the entire manuscript was written in one or two sessions. The misdating of a number of events shows that the writing took place at least one year after the events described. For example, in the October 31, 1959, entry Oswald discusses his visit to the U.S. embassy in Moscow that day and notes in passing that John McVickar had replaced Richard Snyder as "head consul." This change did not occur until August 1961, 21 months later.

Another anachronism appears in the entry supposedly written on January 5, 1960; he quotes the salary he is to receive at the Minsk factory in new rubles, although the ruble was not revalued until approximately one year later.

Such anachronisms strongly suggest that the diary was prepared to provide Oswald with a consistent cover story, or "legend," accounting for his decision to leave the U.S.S.R. That would also explain how he was able to take this material out of the Soviet Union.

During the period when Oswald complains about the dearth of recreation in Minsk, he was allowed to have a 16-mm. shotgun and seems to have spent weekends shooting small game in the countryside. He belonged to a hunting club. Subsequently, a Soviet defector revealed that some of his own KGB training in weaponry had been conducted under the cover of a "sporting club." And there is a KGB training center in Minsk.*

Other glimpses of Oswald's life in Minsk come from an album of snapshots found in Dallas in 1963. Far from depicting the drabness described in the diary, they show Oswald living a far richer life than he ever did in the United States. For the first time, he had his own apartment—with a separate living room gaily decorated with flowered wallpaper, tiled floors and modern furniture. It had a magnificent view of the bend of the Svisloch River, and two private balconies from which to observe the ships winding up the river.

He seems also to have had a sophisticated phonograph, records of classical music, shelves full of books, a 35-mm. camera and a wardrobe of European-style clothes. One picture, presumably taken in the lush park in front of Oswald's apartment, shows him wearing only his suit trousers, his head snuggled contentedly on the bare shoulder of Eleanora Ziger, daughter of his factory manager, Alexander Ziger. Other pictures in the album confirm an existence that does not mesh with the account in the diary.

"My Wife Is Russian"

During the "missing year," the FBI, the State Department and Lee's mother, Marguerite Oswald, made several vain attempts to learn his whereabouts. Finally, Marguerite decided to take matters into her own hands and went to Washington. On February 1, 1961, less than a week after her trip, the State Department sent in the diplomatic pouch to Moscow a "Welfare Whereabouts" memo on Oswald, requesting the embassy "to inform the [Soviet] Ministry of Foreign Affairs that Oswald's mother is worried as to his personal safety, and anxious to hear from him." This non-classified communication was routinely forwarded to the consular section. Consul Richard Snyder did not, however, take any action on the request. He didn't need to.

On February 13, Snyder found a letter from Oswald on his desk, postmarked Minsk, February 5. He was astonished to read that the young Marine, who had belligerently slammed his passport on the embassy desk 15 months before and categorically stated that he never wanted to live in the United States again, was now writing in a matter-of-fact tone: "I desire to return to the United States."

Snyder could not help being struck by the coincidence of dates. Why would Oswald, after all this time, suddenly write to the embassy a few days after it had received a request to locate him? Since such non-classified requests were available to Soviet nationals working for the embassy and discussed in areas vulnerable to Soviet eavesdropping

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*It seems inconsistent with American travelers' reports of Russian fear of contact with Westerners that Oswald's fellow workers would have received him so enthusiastically. A former engineer from Minsk, who knew several people employed at the radio and TV plant during the time Oswald worked there, defected to the United States in 1968. In an interview conducted for this book, he said that the workers went out of their way to avoid being seen with Oswald, sometimes going so far as to lie to him about where they were meeting for an outing so that he could not find them.

*In 1964, the CIA informed the Warren Commission that it had no firm evidence that a KGB training school existed in Minsk. The engineer from Minsk who defected in 1968 identified the center, which he said was well known because of its one-way windows and high wall.

ments and in her birth records were later to raise the possibility that new documents—perhaps even a new identity—were furnished to Marina after it was decided that she would accompany Oswald to the United States.

In July, Oswald and Marina had several interviews with U.S. embassy personnel in Moscow. Oswald depicted Marina as the victim of unrelenting Soviet harassment to dissuade her from leaving the Soviet Union, a story which, if believed by U.S. authorities, might serve to expedite favorable action in her case. In an October 4 letter he asked the U.S. embassy to institute official inquiries about the matter "since there have been systematic and concerted attempts to intimidate my wife into withdrawing her application for a visa. These incidents have resulted in my wife being hospitalized for a five-day period, on September 22, 1961, for nervous exhaustion."

Marina's persecution seems to have had little basis in fact. Hospital records do not show that Marina was confined or treated for "nervous exhaustion" during this period, and she herself denied in subsequent testimony that she had ever been hospitalized because of any harassment. (She did visit a hospital in August because she had become pregnant, and had a series of blood tests. She gave birth on February 15, 1962, to a girl, named, in the Russian style, June Lee Oswald.)

At last, in May 1962, the embassy notified the Oswalds that their documents were ready. Their route took them from Minsk to Moscow and then across Europe by train to Amsterdam. They boarded the *Maasdam* on June 4 to cross to the United States.

While Marina tended their daughter, Oswald went to the ship's library and scribbled out his political philosophy on 17 sheets of stationery. In these notes he attempted to develop a position for himself that would seem reasonable to Americans. Anticipating the questions he might be asked by authorities on his re-entry into the United States, he laboriously wrote out two sets of questions and answers—the first unguarded and the other an edited version. Both sets of handwritten notes were found among his effects in 1963.

For example, the reply to the query "Why did you go to the U.S.S.R.?" in the first version is: "I went as a mark of disgust and protest against American political policies, my personal sign of discontent and horror at the misguided line of reasoning of the U.S. government."

In answer to the same question in the sanitized version, he wrote: "I went as a citizen of the United States (as a tourist) residing in a foreign country, which I have a perfect right to do. I went there to see the land, the people and how their system works." In the first version he admits writing letters renouncing his allegiance to the United States, while in the subsequent version he flatly denies ever writing such letters. Similarly, he

acknowledges being a communist in the first version, but denies it in the second.

Both this questionnaire and the handwritten statement on his political philosophy show evidence of having been dictated to him. The way that words are phonetically scribbled down without regard for spelling suggests that he was using words unfamiliar to him and not copying them from a book or prepared text. But who could have been tutoring him on the *Maasdam?*

Marina did not speak English well enough at this point to have dictated a treatise on political philosophy. And he was not seen speaking to any other passengers on board.

Years later, Marina told her biographer, Priscilla Johnson McMillan, that there was a Russian-speaking waiter named Pieter Didenko who talked to them during the voyage. However, there is no available ship's record showing a person with such a name.

The Handler

THE OSWALDS disembarked in New York on June 13, 1962, and flew to Texas, where they moved in with Lee's brother Robert in Fort Worth. Oswald wasted no time in attempting to establish credentials for himself as an authority on the Soviet Union and as a translator, but nothing much came of these efforts. In July he took a job with the Leslie Welding Co. as a metal worker at $1.25 an hour. After a month he rented an apartment for his family.

During this period he was questioned twice by the FBI, but was unresponsive. He refused to take a lie-detector test. Members of the Fort Worth-Dallas Russian community found him equally uncommunicative. They were concerned, however, about the welfare of the Oswald family, whose situation approached dire poverty, and made attempts to help Marina.

As Oswald became more involved with these Russian-speaking emigrés, he saw less of his own family. He stopped seeing his brother and asked his mother not to come by his apartment or speak to Marina. Marguerite wondered what was behind his secretive behavior. She remembered asking him when he returned why he had decided to leave Russia; he answered then, "Not even Marina knows why I have returned to the United States."

ON OCTOBER 1, 1962, Marina Oswald sat in the back of a convertible driven by George De Mohrenschildt. She held her daughter, June, in her arms and, from time to time, spoke in Russian to De Mohrenschildt, a handsome man in his early 50s, and his wife, Jeanne. They were headed for the suburb of Farmers Branch, where a friend of the De Mohrenschildts, Adm. Henry C. Bruton, had a large house with a swimming pool.

De Mohrenschildt had met Marina and Lee that summer under circumstances that he would never fully disclose. And he was to devote a large part of the next seven months

devices, it seemed "quite probable" to Snyder that the KGB, alerted to Washington's renewed interest in Oswald, took advantage of the opportunity by having Oswald request repatriation.

There were initially some questions about taking Oswald back—questions about his sincerity, and about what part the KGB might be playing in the request. In the end, Oswald was allowed to return, though some 16 months would pass before his departure from Russia. In the meantime, he added an entirely new dimension to the problem by informing the embassy on May 16, "Since my last letter I have gotten married. My wife is Russian, born in Leningrad, she has no parents living and is quite willing to leave the Soviet Union with me and live in the United States. I would not leave here without my wife so arrangements would have to be made for her to leave at the same time I do."

Agencies of the U.S. government began checking into the woman's background, with no success. It was not until 1964, in Dallas, that she furnished federal investigators with any details of her life in the Soviet Union. The story she told then, and repeated to the Warren Commission, was of a poor, parentless girl falling in love with an American defector.

In this tale Marina Nikolaevna Prusakova was born out of wedlock on July 17, 1941, in the seaside town of Molotovsk in the arctic province of Arkhangelsk. Marina never knew her father.* Her mother, Klavdia Vasilyevna Prusakova, was unable to care for her, and left her with her grandparents in the city of Arkhangelsk. Marina did not rejoin her mother until she was seven. In the interim Klavdia had married an electrical worker, Alexander Ivanovich Medvedev.

In 1952 Medvedev and the family moved to Leningrad. At first, Marina attended the 374th Women's School. In 1955, she enrolled in the Pharmacy Teknikum, a school specializing in training pharmacists. While she was training, her mother died. Soon Marina began to find life unbearable in the home of her stepfather, where she felt like a stranger. Upon graduation in June 1959, she was assigned a job in a pharmaceutical warehouse, but after one day at work she quit.

Now, at 18, thin and delicate with thick dark eyelashes, she discovered herself to be extremely attractive to

(Continued on page 174)

*The Russians have a strict system which requires that the middle name identify a person's father; therefore, Marina Nikolaevna should have had a father named Nikolai. Yet Marina insisted that she did not know even the name of her father.

Years later, Marina told a very different story to her biographer, Priscilla Johnson McMillan. She said that the name she used until 1958 was Marina Alexandrovna Medvedeva. Until then she had assumed she was the daughter of Alexander Medvedev, her mother's husband. However, when she wrote away for her birth certificate, she found that she had been born illegitimate, and been given the name Marina Nikolaevna Prusakova. Medvedev then told her that her real father was Nicolai Didenko, a traitor who had been executed by the Soviets.

men. She frequently went to the Maryinsky Opera House, where she would go backstage in the hope of getting connected with the theatrical company. Toward the end of August, she felt the tensions at home increasing, and she decided to move to Minsk, where she was invited to live with her uncle, Lt. Col. Ilya Vasilyevich Prusakov. He was an engineer for the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD), which had responsibility for civil-law enforcement; his rank made him one of Minsk's more powerful citizens. Like most influential government officials, he was a member of the Communist Party.

By October, Marina was assigned a position in the pharmaceutical section of the Third Clinical Hospital, filling prescriptions for patients. Through the Prusakovs, she met students in the professional schools (medicine, architecture and engineering), who constituted a very elite group in Soviet society. She spent her spare time with her new friends at coffeehouses around Victory Square or at their dachas in the country.

In March 1961, at a dance in the Palace of Culture, she was introduced to a young man named Alik, who seemed instantly drawn to her. They danced, and she noticed he spoke Russian with a slight accent. She found to her surprise that he was an American named Lee Harvey Oswald, living in Minsk.

The next week, Marina met Oswald at another dance. She agreed to allow him to take her out the following Friday, but he developed an earache. On March 30, the day before his date with Marina, Oswald was admitted to the Fourth Clinical Hospital for an adenoid operation.

Although patients were ordinarily allowed to be visited only on Sundays, Marina saw Oswald almost every day while he was recuperating. In her white pharmacist's uniform, she could come and go as she liked. He had "a very sickly look about him," which made her feel sorry for him. When Oswald asked her to marry him from his hospital bed, she couldn't refuse. Although she "did not yet love Lee," she agreed to be his fiancée, and on April 30 they received official permission to be married.

Oddities

THE ENTIRE COURTSHIP, from the time Oswald first saw Marina to the time he proposed marriage, thus took place in less than one month. It also took place under very unusual circumstances. Up until this point they had not had even one formal date. Most of their "romance" would have to have taken place while Oswald was confined to a hospital bed, under medication. Moreover, the marriage of an American defector and the niece of an MVD colonel was unusual under any circumstances.

Soon after the marriage, Marina applied to Soviet officials in both Minsk and Moscow for permits to leave for the United States. With those in hand, she began filing the necessary applications with U.S. authorities. Discrepancies in her state-

to arranging—and rearranging—each of the Oswalds' lives.

It was only a few months earlier, at the beginning of the summer, that De Mohrenschildt had first appeared as a total stranger at Admiral Bruton's front door, to be met by Mrs. Bruton. He stood six feet, two inches tall, with windblown, dark-blond hair and the physique of a powerfully built athlete. He spoke with a cultivated continental accent.

De Mohrenschildt explained that he had been drawn to her house by memories of the good times he had had there when it was owned by a friend of his. He told how he had helped build the swimming pool and the brick barbecue. At the time it never occurred to Mrs. Bruton that De Mohrenschildt might be inventing this. Indeed, De Mohrenschildt spoke so convincingly about the former owner that Mrs. Bruton invited him in to see the renovations she and her husband had made.

De Mohrenschildt walked from wing to wing, lavishing praise on the changes. He told her that he was the son of a Russian marshal who had been killed by the communists in the revolution. He had fled Russia when he was still a child, gone to school in France and then, after emigrating to the United States, entered the oil business.

When they reached the Brutons' pool, De Mohrenschildt asked if he could show it to his wife. Mrs. Bruton invited him to use it whenever he liked, and for the rest of the summer the De Mohrenschildts drove to Farmers Branch almost every day.

Admiral Bruton accepted these visitors with more hesitation than did his wife. A submarine commander, he had risen to be director of Naval communications. In this capacity he had reorganized the top-secret global system that the Navy uses to communicate with, and control the movements of, all its ships, planes and missiles, and also to pinpoint the location of enemy vessels. In 1960 he retired from the Navy and joined Collins Radio in Richardson, Texas, where he continued to work on modernizing and refining the communications system.

At one point, Admiral Bruton was taken aback when De Mohrenschildt showed knowledge of the Navy Crosses that Bruton had won as a submarine commander in World War II. (Jeanne De Mohrenschildt later told me that she had come across these medals while searching through bureau drawers in the Bruton home and subsequently told her husband about them. She never explained what she had been looking for in the Brutons' personal quarters.)

The FBI, CIA, Office of Naval Intelligence and other government agencies had been investigating George De Mohrenschildt since 1941. The FBI investigation went on for more than seven years, but all that was known about him for certain was that he had arrived in the United States in May 1938, carrying a Polish passport, issued in Belgium, which

identified him as Jerzy Sergius von Mohrenschildt and stated that he had been born in Mozyr, Russia, in 1911. Some three years later, when he was briefly detained for sketching a Naval installation in Aransas Pass, Texas, an examination of his papers revealed two different biographical sketches. The first identified him as being "of Swedish origin, born April 17, 1911"; the second portrayed him as a "Greek Catholic," born in 1914.

The résumés indicated that he had been educated in Belgium and held either a business or philosophy degree. He claimed to have had such diverse occupations as insurance salesman, film producer, newspaper correspondent and textile salesman, although the FBI was able to establish that he was not actually earning money from any of these professions. Moreover, British mail intercepts in Bermuda at the start of World War II indicated that he was closely associated with intelligence agents working against the Allies.

The CIA became interested in De Mohrenschildt in 1957, when he was recommended as a geologist to be sent to Yugoslavia by the American government. A CIA summary of the De Mohrenschildt file states:

> De Mohrenschildt appears to be a dubious character. In 1942 he was considered a Nazi sympathizer and possible intelligence agent; he spent a good deal of time in Mexico, where he was suspected of possible subversive activities; and at the University of Texas, where he enrolled in 1944, he was said to have communist tendencies.

In the summer of 1960 De Mohrenschildt disappeared from sight for almost a year, telling friends in Dallas that he and Jeanne were going on an 11,000-mile walking trip along Indian trails from Mexico to South America. The De Mohrenschildts reemerged in April 1961 in Guatemala, just as CIA-trained Cubans were being marshaled for the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba. De Mohrenschildt had been in Guatemala for approximately four months, and his route took him within a few miles of the CIA training bases. After months of further travel, the De Mohrenschildts returned to Dallas and, in the summer of 1962, contacted Lee Harvey Oswald.

Toward the end of the summer, De Mohrenschildt told Admiral Bruton about a young ex-Marine who had defected to the Soviet Union, become disillusioned with communism and returned to the United States. He hoped that Bruton might become interested in Oswald and help place him in a job in the electronics field. According to De Mohrenschildt, Bruton abruptly changed the subject. It was obvious to him that Bruton would not help.

Arriving at the Brutons' home, De Mohrenschildt let himself in the rear gate and led Marina and Jeanne to the swimming pool. That October afternoon was the only time that the De Mohrenschildts had ever arrived with a guest. Admiral Bruton was

away in Europe on business, but Mrs. Bruton greeted them enthusiastically. De Mohrenschildt introduced Marina, and Mrs. Bruton was immediately struck with her beauty.

De Mohrenschildt explained to Mrs. Bruton some of Marina's background, adding that Marina and her baby had been cruelly deserted. Shaking his head sadly, he said that since Marina spoke no English she would have difficulty finding employment. She had no money and no place for her and her child to live. Temporarily, he and Jeanne were taking care of her, but they couldn't for long.

Mrs. Bruton was appalled by the woman's predicament, but even as they were discussing her situation a gaunt young man suddenly appeared at the gate—Marina's supposedly estranged husband, Lee Oswald. De Mohrenschildt stiffened and became silent; his glare made it obvious that Oswald was not supposed to be there. Jeanne took Marina into the house without a word to Oswald. A few tense moments followed. Then another guest, a captain in the Army, broke the ice by asking Oswald about his experiences in Russia. He found Oswald's responses far more articulate and intelligent than he had expected, given what he had been hearing about Oswald. As the poolside conversation progressed into the early evening, Marina joined her husband and sat at his side.

De Mohrenschildt remained uncharacteristically quiet. Clearly, Oswald was not acting like a man who had deserted his wife, and from the way he talked he still regarded Marina as his wife.

In fact, De Mohrenschildt knew that Marina and Oswald were *not* estranged, and were living together at their apartment in Fort Worth up to that morning. If his plan had been to facilitate their moving to separate quarters with the explanation that Oswald had cruelly abandoned Marina, then Oswald's blundering in had upset it. Certainly, under the circumstances, Mrs. Bruton was not about to take in Marina and her baby. (In the month ahead, De Mohrenschildt again told the story of Marina being mistreated and on two occasions tried to find another home for her.)

Now, De Mohrenschildt signaled that it was time to go, and Jeanne, Marina, June and Oswald drove off with him. Mrs. Bruton never saw the Oswalds again, and De Mohrenschildt never brought them up.*

Underground

SHORTLY AFTER this visit, De Mohrenschildt returned home to find that someone had apparently made a series of pencil marks on a long report he had written about his expedition through Central America. He assumed that such marks were used to focus in a camera and that someone had broken into his

*Following the assassination, neither Admiral nor Mrs. Bruton was questioned by the FBI, the Warren Commission or any other investigative agency.

apartment and copied his personal papers.

At the time he also had a manuscript that Lee Harvey Oswald had written about his stay in Minsk, and he realized that this document might also have been photographed. Concerned that the CIA was behind the break-in, he decided to call on J. Walter Moore, the CIA agent in Dallas who had debriefed him when he had returned from Yugoslavia.

De Mohrenschildt asked Moore whether his agency or any other government agency was behind the examination of his personal papers. Moore, taken aback by the accusation, flatly denied that the CIA was involved.

De Mohrenschildt asked whether he was under any sort of investigation because of Lee Harvey Oswald. According to De Mohrenschildt, Moore again answered no. He then pressed Moore to find out if Oswald was suspected of being dangerous in any way and, according to De Mohrenschildt's recollection, Moore said that Oswald was merely a "harmless lunatic" of no concern to his agency. If Moore had answered differently and suggested that Oswald was under some sort of suspicion, De Mohrenschildt was prepared, as he said, to "drop Oswald."

ON OCTOBER 7, 1962, De Mohrenschildt set up a meeting between the Oswalds and several members of the Russian community. Oswald had precipitated a crisis by saying that he had been fired from his job at Leslie

Welding. In fact, he not only was still employed but was looked on with favor at the company. According to one person present at the meeting, De Mohrenschildt was clearly the leader in planning a new move for Oswald.

The next evening Oswald made his way to Dallas. No one, not even Marina, was to know his precise whereabouts for a month. He was now, as he himself later wrote in a letter, "underground."

On Tuesday, October 9, Oswald went to the offices of the Texas Employment Commission in Dallas, and was first sent to a firm that had an opening for a messenger. He failed to get the job because he said he wanted something with an opportunity for advancement. Oswald was next sent, on October 11, to Jaggars-Chiles-Stovall, a large typesetting firm in Dallas.

When Oswald met John Graef, director of the company's photographic department, he looked clean-cut and eager. Asked about his last job, he explained that he had been a Marine.

"Honorably discharged, of course?" Graef said half-jokingly.

"Oh, yes," Oswald replied, although, as he knew, his discharge had been downgraded to "undesirable" after his defection to Russia.

Later that day, Oswald learned that he had a job, and the next morning he reported to work.

The main business of Jaggars-Chiles-Stovall was preparing print-

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ing mattes for newspapers, magazines, catalogues and advertising agencies. But the company also had a contract from the Army Map Service to set type for its maps. Although the maps themselves were not on the premises, this was nevertheless highly classified work. The maps were made from secret aerial photographs presumably taken from spy satellites, U-2 planes and other forms of clandestine reconnaissance. Thus, the lists of cities in the Soviet Union and China that were being set could provide clues to the targets of these missions.

Like all the other employes in the typesetting department, Oswald had complete access to the worktables on which the lists were kept. In theory, these were supposed to be "restricted areas," in which only employes with a security clearance from the FBI were allowed. In fact, however, little effort was made to enforce these restrictions.

The employes of Jaggars-Chiles-Stovall set the long lists of place-names on three-inch strips of paper. Some of the names were written in Cyrillic characters and identified Russian cities; others appeared to be Chinese names. And in the fresh batches of names that arrived almost daily some of the employes began to notice the appearance of Spanish names.

Missiles and Microdots

AT CIA HEADQUARTERS in Langley, Va., photo analysts were receiving a similar set of place-names on the latest group of U-2 photographs from Cuba. Throughout the first two weeks in October, intelligence reports had indicated that the Soviets were constructing concrete bunkers and installing electronic equipment at sites in Cuba under conditions of extraordinary secrecy. Then, on October 14, the U-2 planes focusing on the area around San Cristóbal in western Cuba photographed newly built structures which could be unmistakably identified as intermediate-range-missile launchers. Every

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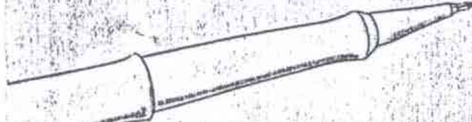

city within the eastern United States would be vulnerable to these missiles, when operational.

On receiving this ominous report, President John F. Kennedy summoned an emergency meeting of the National Security Council. The Cuban missile crisis had begun.

At Jaggars-Chiles-Stovall, Oswald learned to operate such specialized photographic equipment as distortion cameras, phototypesetters and Robertson vertical cameras. Soon he became proficient at such techniques as line modifications, blowups, reverses and miniaturizations.

Oswald used these skills to forge identification papers for himself at Jaggars-Chiles-Stovall under the alias A. J. Hidell, including a fake draft card and Certificate of Service in the Marines.

He found that his knowledge of Russian came in handy. He offered on at least one occasion to translate the Cyrillic symbols on a list that was being prepared for the Army Map Service and explained to the foreman of the section working on this classified material that these were Russian place-names. This exchange was observed by one of Oswald's fellow workers, Jack Bowen.

Once Oswald asked another employe, Dennis Hyman Ofstein, if he knew what the word "microdot" meant. Ofstein answered no.

Oswald then explained that it was a photographic technique in which a mass of documents could be reduced to a dot. Spies used such microdots for sending data.

In his personal address book, next to the entry for Jaggars-Chiles-Stovall, Oswald wrote the word "microdot," connecting the place where he worked with a basic technique of espionage.

(Some eight months after Oswald left Jaggars-Chiles-Stovall, the FBI conducted an investigation of his employment there. Agents showed a photograph of a strap and leather pouch that Oswald might have used to conceal a miniature camera, but no one recalled seeing Oswald with either the pouch or the camera. Leonard Calverly, who was questioned by the FBI about the photograph and asked never to discuss the interview with anyone, recalls finding, shortly after Oswald had left Jaggars-Chiles-Stovall, some false identification papers that Oswald had apparently reproduced.)

During his first month at Jaggars-Chiles-Stovall, Oswald saw very little of Marina, and De Mohrenschildt attempted to find a separate home for her in the Russian community. Oswald would visit on weekends.

Before seeing Marina on the weekend of October 27, Oswald stopped at De Mohrenschildt's home. Only days before, the United States and the Soviet Union had moved to the brink of war over the deployment of Soviet missiles in Cuba. But Khrushchev had finally backed down and agreed to remove the weapons. De Mohrenschildt expressed relief that war had been averted.

On Sunday, Oswald told Marina

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that he was making arrangements for her to come to Dallas and live with him and, the next week, he found an apartment on Elsbeth Street in the Oak Cliff section of Dallas. Marina moved on November 4. The next evening the landlady at Elsbeth Street received a telephone call from someone trying urgently to get in touch with Oswald. He spoke with an odd-sounding accent and asked her to have Oswald or his wife call "George." When Oswald got the message, he called George De Mohrenschildt. Both Oswald and Marina spoke to him in Russian. (Oswald told the landlady, whose phone they had used, that they were speaking Czech and that his wife was from Czechoslovakia.)

At about ten o'clock that night, Anna Meller, a friend in the Russian community, received a telephone call from Marina, asking whether she could stay at her apartment that evening. She said that she had just had a fight with Oswald. Mrs. Meller told her to come right over.

Subsequently, De Mohrenschildt told everyone in the Russian community that the problems between Marina and Oswald were irresolvable and that they were now separated for good. He went into great detail about Oswald's allegedly cruel treatment of Marina. Marina also told her Russian friends that she was being harshly, and sometimes brutally, treated. Despite this, on November 18, Marina suddenly agreed to move back in with Oswald on Elsbeth Street.

Out of Control

OSWALD BEGAN THE NEW YEAR with a flurry of requests for political literature. From Pioneer Publishers, a firm connected with the leftist *Militant* (to which he was a subscriber), he ordered three political tracts: "The Coming American Revolution," "The End of the Comintern" and "Manifesto of the Fourth International." He had already written to both the Socialist Workers Party and the Communist Party in New York City, offering to work for their publications.

In early February, De Mohrenschildt arranged for Oswald to meet a young friend of his named Volkmar Schmidt, who had come from West Germany to the United States about a year and a half earlier. De Mohrenschildt knew that Schmidt was fascinated with political ideology and assumed that he might be interested in meeting a self-styled revolutionary who had once defected to the Soviet Union.

Their conversation lasted more than three hours. Almost from the moment Oswald began talking about his experiences in the Soviet Union, Schmidt was impressed by his "burning dedication" to what he considered "political truth." Then the talk turned to the subject of the Kennedy Administration. Schmidt expected that Oswald would express liberal sentiments about the President's attempts at reform. Instead, Oswald launched into a violent attack on the President's foreign policy, citing

both the Bay of Pigs invasion and the Cuban missile crisis as examples of "imperialism" and "interventions."

In an intentionally melodramatic way, Schmidt brought up the subject of Maj. Gen. Edwin A. Walker, who had been forced to resign from the Army because of his support for the John Birch Society and other right-wing causes. He suggested that Walker's speeches at the University of Mississippi, which the federal government was then trying to desegregate, were directly responsible for the riots and bloodshed—including the deaths of two reporters—on that campus. He compared Walker with Hitler and said that both should be treated as murderers.

Oswald seized on the analogy between Hitler and Walker to argue that America was moving toward fascism. As he spoke, he seemed to grow more and more excited.

A WEEK OR SO LATER, Marina advised the Soviet embassy in Washington, D.C., that she wanted to return to the U.S.S.R. "where I again will feel myself a full-fledged citizen." She explained afterward that she had written this letter at the behest of Oswald, who "handed me the paper, a pencil, and said, 'Write.'"

In early March, Marina and Oswald moved from their apartment on Elsbeth Street to another two blocks away on West Neely Street. It was their eleventh move in fewer than five months. The apartment seemed to have no advantage over their former one, except to obscure their trail—for by now Oswald had involved himself in another project: stalking General Walker. On Sunday, March 10, he photographed the alley behind Walker's house in the wealthy Turtle Creek section of Dallas. According to Marina, he put the photographs and other information into a journal, which he kept in his study.

Two days after this he ordered a Mannlicher-Carcano rifle with a telescopic sight from Klein's Sporting Goods Store in Chicago. He used the alias "A. Hidell" and a post-office box in Dallas.

Meanwhile, things had not been going well for Oswald at Jaggars-Chiles-Stovall. Whether because of poor work or because the FBI had found out that he was employed by a firm that did secret work—as he told Marina—he had been put on notice that his job would end on April 5. Asked by a co-worker what he planned to do next, he said, smiling cryptically, "I might go back to Russia."

On March 31 he had Marina photograph him in their back yard. He was dressed entirely in black, with a .38-caliber revolver in a holster on his hip. In his right hand, he held high his newly acquired rifle. In his other hand, he had two newspapers: *The Worker* and the *Militant.*

He made a number of copies of these photographs. He inscribed one to his daughter, June. On another he scribbled, "Ready for Anything," and told Marina he was sending it to the *Militant.* On a third picture,

meant for George De Mohrenschildt, he wrote, "For George, Lee Harvey Oswald," and dated it "5-IV-63" (April 5, 1963). On the same copy Marina jotted down in Russian, "The Hunter of Fascism. Ha, Ha, Ha," and apparently forwarded it to De Mohrenschildt.

On Friday evening, April 5, Oswald wrapped his rifle in an old raincoat. Marina asked him where he was going with the weapon. Oswald answered, "Target practice." She saw him board a bus. He returned two hours later without the rifle.

On Wednesday, April 10, Oswald left a note telling Marina what to do in case he was apprehended by the police, killed or had to flee. He instructed her in Russian: "Send the information as to what happened to me to the embassy and include newspaper clippings (should there be anything about me in the newspapers)." He was clearly referring to the Soviet embassy, which he suggested "will come quickly to your assistance on learning everything."

At about nine that evening General Walker was seated at his desk in his study. Suddenly a bullet crashed through the window, whizzed by his head and embedded itself in the wall. Kirk Coleman, a 14-year-old neighbor, heard the shot and climbed a fence to see what was happening. He saw one man putting something in the trunk of a Ford sedan and, a few feet away, a second man getting into another car. Both cars then raced away.

Oswald came home at about 11:30 and told Marina that he had just attempted to shoot Walker. Why? According to Marina, Oswald had concluded that Walker was a dangerous fascist, like Hitler. He reasoned that if Hitler had been assassinated early in his career, fascism would not have come to Germany, and "millions of lives would have been saved."

Marina insisted that he destroy the notebook and photographs that he had put together as part of the assassination plan. She, however, kept the incriminating letter of instructions, and even after the Kennedy assassination did not turn it over to the police, Secret Service or FBI. Only when a friend found it in a cookbook, and gave it to the authorities, did Marina admit that she had known of Oswald's attempt on General Walker's life.

On Saturday evening the De Mohrenschildts stopped by the Oswalds' apartment. The first thing George said, according to Marina, was, "Lee, how did you miss General Walker?" For De Mohrenschildt, it was a "logical assumption" that Oswald might be the sniper, as he later explained before the Warren Commission.

Looking at Oswald, he could see that his remark had greatly disturbed him. Oswald appeared tense and uncomfortable—indeed, hardly able to get a grip on himself. If he *had* taken the shot at Walker, as De Mohrenschildt suspected, he was dangerously out of control.

Shortly after this meeting, the De

The Death of George De Mohrenschildt

OF THE MORE THAN 400 PEOPLE interviewed for this book, by far the most mysterious was George De Mohrenschildt. Long before the public release of classified reports that identified De Mohrenschildt as a suspected intelligence agent, Edward Jay Epstein had determined that this suave, Russian-born immigrant had taken an extraordinary interest in Lee Harvey Oswald. In April 1976, Epstein interviewed George and Jeanne De Mohrenschildt in Dallas. Early in 1977, Epstein contacted De Mohrenschildt again and arranged for a four-day interview with him in March.

Two weeks before the interview, De Mohrenschildt flew to Europe with Willem Oltmans, a Dutch journalist. A few days later he disappeared. Oltmans returned to the United States and made a sensational report to the House Committee on Assassinations: De Mohrenschildt, he declared, had stated that he had advance knowledge of the Kennedy assassination.

For days, De Mohrenschildt's whereabouts remained unknown. Then, on March 17, he called The Digest to say that he was in Florida and was still willing to meet with Epstein. The interview began in Palm Beach on March 28. In their first meeting, De Mohrenschildt denied to Epstein that he had ever told Oltmans that he had advance knowledge of the assassination. The following day, the two men met in the morning, and just before De Mohrenschildt left for lunch at the nearby home where he was staying, he told Epstein about the photograph of Oswald that was inscribed by Marina.

Two hours later, De Mohrenschildt was found shot to death in what appeared to be a suicide, leaving a gap in Oswald's secret world that will probably never be completely filled in.

—THE EDITORS

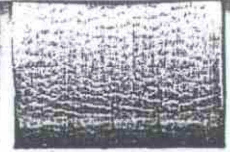
Mohrenschildts and Oswald parted company, never to see one another again.

Oswald's Game

ON APRIL 25, 1963, Oswald arrived in New Orleans with two duffel bags, which contained some hastily packed clothes, his personal papers and the dismantled Mannlicher-Carcano rifle. Marina was again living with a friend in Texas.

Oswald spent most of his days job hunting, and eventually found something with the William B. Reily Co., which roasted and sold coffee. He then called Marina and she came to New Orleans.

Marina still had not had a reply from the Soviet embassy on her request to return to Russia. She was almost five-months pregnant and realized that Oswald would soon have to make some concrete decisions about where they would live. Yet it was clear to Marina that Oswald was now seeking a new direction. And it seemed to be Cuba. As far as he was concerned, the Soviets were not revolutionary enough, and Khrushchev had clearly acquiesced to Kennedy's demand for the removal of the missiles from Cuba in October.



But getting to Cuba was a problem. Since it was illegal at the time for a U.S. citizen to travel to Cuba, Oswald would have to obtain his visa at a Cuban embassy outside the country, and to do that he would need credentials to prove support of the Cuban government. His game in New Orleans involved creating just such a record.

On May 26 he wrote a letter to the Fair Play for Cuba Committee, which backed U.S. recognition of the Castro regime, and proposed "renting a small office at my own expense for the purpose of forming a F.P.C.C. branch here in New Orleans." He requested membership for himself, application blanks for others, a charter for his chapter and a "picture of Fidel suitable for framing."

Three days later, without bothering to wait for a reply, Oswald ordered 1000 copies of a handbill from the Jones Printing Co. It read: "Join the Fair Play for Cuba Committee, New Orleans Charter Member Branch, Free Literature, Lectures, Everyone Welcome!" His purpose was not to build a functioning Fair Play chapter, but to create a dossier of letters, documents and news clippings that would get him to Cuba. All his activities that summer, Marina later explained, were "window dressing."

Since he deemed it impractical to take his family to Cuba, Oswald had to make other arrangements for them. One possibility was for Marina and June to return to Russia. At the beginning of July he had Marina write another letter to the Soviet embassy in Washington. She asked permission for both her and Oswald to return immediately to Russia and reside in Leningrad. Oswald added a handwritten note, imploring the embassy to *"rush* the entrance visa for the return of Soviet citizen Marina N. Oswald" and to consider his own request for an entrance visa *"separately."* (Emphasis is in the original letter.) If the Soviet embassy granted them separate visas, he could use his to obtain a transit visa to Cuba, while Marina and June went to Russia.

On Friday, August 9, Oswald staged a pro-Castro demonstration (his second in New Orleans) on Canal Street. He was arrested; a judge fined him $10, which he promptly paid. On the way out of the courtroom Oswald was filmed by a local television crew, and that night he appeared on WDSU-TV.

Within a few short months Oswald had established an impressive record for himself as one of Castro's leading supporters in the southeastern United States. He had appeared on four radio and television programs on behalf of Cuba. He had been arrested and jailed for his activities—he had a record to prove it. He had formed the only Fair Play for Cuba Committee in Louisiana. He had spent his own money on propaganda material and had a file of receipts. Oswald was now ready to apply for his Cuban visa.

He prepared a résumé of these

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activities for the Cuban embassy late that summer and included a fairly detailed autobiographical sketch. In September the FBI intercepted letters from Oswald to leftist publications in New York stating that he and his family would be "relocating in your area in a few weeks." By writing these letters, Oswald effectively ghosted a false trail for himself.

Actually, Oswald was headed in the opposite direction—Mexico. There he intended to brief the Cuban embassy on his political activities and obtain the necessary documentation to get to Cuba. After Marina made arrangements for a friend to pick up her and June in New Orleans and take them back to Texas, Oswald went to the Mexican consulate and applied for a tourist card to visit Mexico.

He told Marina that she might never see him again—at least not in America.

The Cuban Connection

THAT SAME SEPTEMBER, in a safe house in São Paulo, Brazil, CIA case officers met with Dr. Rolando Cubella, a minister without portfolio in the Cuban government and close personal friend of Fidel Castro's. Some two years earlier, Cubella had said he was disillusioned with Castro and offered to defect to the United States. The CIA persuaded him to stay in place in Cuba as an agent.

Now, for the first time since that meeting in 1961, Cubella had made contact with the CIA. He came right to the point. He was interested in

seeing the overthrow of the regime in Cuba, and the first step, as far as he was concerned, had to be the assassination of Castro. He said that he would be willing to undertake this "inside job" if he could be sure he would have the support of the United States.

This extraordinary offer was relayed to CIA headquarters on September 7, and sent directly to the Special Affairs Staff. The SAS, headed by Desmond Fitzgerald, was the division within the CIA with responsibility for all covert activities against Cuba.

On the same day, in Havana, Fidel Castro went to the Brazilian embassy for a reception, and granted a private interview to a reporter from the Associated Press. "United States leaders," he said, "should think that if they are aiding terrorist plans to eliminate Cuban leaders, they themselves will not be safe." He specifically pointed to the CIA as being involved in such plans.

The CIA counterintelligence staff was struck by the coincidence of Castro's choosing the Brazilian embassy as the place to issue his warning at the very time that the CIA officers in Brazil were discussing eliminating Cuban leaders with Cubella. Indeed, it raised the distinct possibility that Cubella was a double agent sent over to test the intentions of the Kennedy Administration toward Castro. Even if Cubella was not under the control of Cuban intelligence, Castro's remarks suggested that Cubella was

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"insecure," in the sense that Cuban intelligence might know about his discussions with the CIA.

The SAS had its own counterintelligence section, and its chief warned Fitzgerald that Cubella's *bona fides* were "subject to question." He therefore strongly disapproved of the entire operation.

The CIA's covert activities against Cuba were then under the direct supervision of a Special Group in the National Security Council, augmented by Attorney General Robert Kennedy and Gen. Maxwell Taylor, a special adviser to President Kennedy. This Special Group designated a committee composed of Fitzgerald and a representative of both the Attorney General and the Secretary of State to weigh the risks involved in proceeding with covert actions against Cuba.

The committee met at 2:30 p.m. at the Department of State on September 12, and concluded that although "there was a strong likelihood that Castro would retaliate in some way," it would probably be at "a low level." The specific possibility of "attacks against U.S. officials" was assumed to be "unlikely."

Shortly after this review, Fitzgerald ordered the SAS case officers to tell Cubella that his proposal for eliminating Castro was under consideration at the "highest levels."

ON SEPTEMBER 26, Oswald crossed the border into Mexico on a Continental Trailways bus. He reached Mexico City the next morning and registered at the Hotel Comercio under the alias O. H. Lee.

First, he went to the Soviet embassy to see if it could facilitate the paperwork for a visa, as he later explained to Marina. Then he walked over to the Cuban embassy, only a block away, where he was interviewed by Silvia Tirado de Duran. Oswald explained that he wanted to stop in Cuba on his way to the Soviet Union, where he planned to resettle permanently with his wife. He was, he insisted, "a friend of the Cuban revolution" and presented his documentary evidence.

His visa could not be processed, Señora Duran explained, without his first having an entry visa to the Soviet Union. She called the Soviet embassy, then informed him that the Russian visa might take months.

Oswald returned the next day, even though it was Saturday and the Cuban embassy was officially closed. After a brief session with officials there, he went back to the Soviet embassy and suggested that the Soviet embassy in Washington might be able to resolve the impasse. After Oswald left, the embassy cabled the KGB center in Moscow, requesting guidance on granting an immediate visa.

For the next three days Oswald waited in Mexico City for the reply. On Tuesday he came back to the Cuban embassy for a final attempt to get his transit visa. At his request Señora Duran again called the Soviet embassy and handed the receiver to Oswald. He spoke in rapid Russian

to a Soviet guard, Ivan Obyedkov, who asked to whom Oswald had spoken at the embassy. Oswald explained that he had seen "Comrade Kostikov" on September 28. The guard suggested that he again speak in person to Kostikov. "I'll be right over," Oswald said, and hung up.

The next morning Oswald caught a bus for Texas.

Even as Oswald was leaving Mexico, the CIA's interest in his contacts there intensified. Its station in Mexico City had been electronically intercepting the phone traffic between the Cuban and Soviet embassies and had therefore monitored, and taped, the calls concerning Oswald.

Valery Vladimirovich Kostikov, listed merely as "attaché, consular office" on the embassy roster, had been identified for some time as an intelligence officer for the KGB, who specialized in handling Soviet undercover agents operating in the United States. He was also suspected of being part of the Thirteenth Department of the KGB, which was involved with planning sabotage and assassinations abroad.*

On October 10, CIA headquarters in Washington notified the FBI, the Department of State and the Navy about Oswald's contact with the Soviet embassy. Since the CIA is not supposed to investigate U.S. citizens abroad without a "special request," it "did nothing further on the case."

According to a not yet fully declas-

*As of 1968, the CIA categorically declared that Kostikov was an officer in the KGB's Thirteenth Department.

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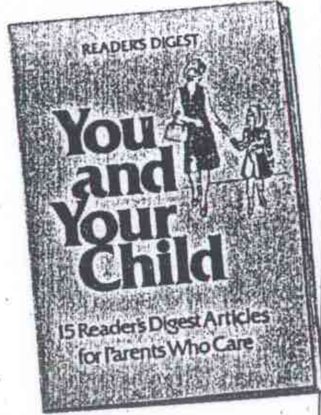

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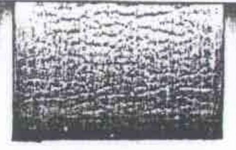

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sified FBI report, based on statements attributed to Fidel Castro, Oswald made wild claims at the Cuban embassy about what he might do for the Cuban revolution, including even possible assassinations of U.S. leaders.

Back in Dallas, Oswald spent a night in the YMCA, moved to a rooming house on North Marsalis Street in the Oak Cliff section, and a week later changed his residence again—this time to a rooming house at North Beckley Street. He registered here under the alias O. H. Lee and forbade Marina, who was living with a friend named Ruth Paine in Irving, Texas, to tell anyone where he was. After several futile attempts to find a job, he heard through Mrs. Paine of an opening at the Texas School Book Depository, where he was hired to fill orders for textbooks at $1.25 an hour.

TOWARD THE END OF OCTOBER, Cubella made an extraordinary demand of the CIA. Before he would go ahead with the plan to eliminate Castro, he wanted some sort of "signal" from Attorney General Kennedy that the Kennedy Administration would actively support him in this endeavor.

Overruling objections by his own SAS counterintelligence chief, Desmond Fitzgerald decided to meet with Cubella himself, as a "personal representative" of Kennedy's. The meeting took place on October 29, 1963. Fitzgerald assured Cubella

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that once Castro had been removed from power the Kennedy Administration would be fully prepared to aid a new government. Cubella asked for a rifle with telescopic sights, and a means of delivering a poison injection without detection, but Fitzgerald refused to discuss such specifics.

About two weeks later, Fitzgerald arranged a further "signal" for Cubella in a section of the speech President Kennedy delivered in Miami on November 18. It described the Castro government as a "small band of conspirators" whose removal would ensure U.S. assistance to Cuba.

Then Fitzgerald ordered the case officer to arrange another meeting with Cubella—wherein specifics would be discussed. Cubella, in France, agreed to postpone his scheduled return to Cuba if the meeting could be held that week in Paris. The date agreed on was November 22.

The Assassin

OSWALD AROSE EARLY on November 22, 1963. The evening before, he had hitched a ride to Irving with Buell Wesley Frazier, a fellow worker at the book depository who was a neighbor of Ruth Paine's. Now, to be back in Dallas in time for work, he had to meet Frazier shortly after seven. He slipped off his wedding ring and left it, along with $170 of his savings, for Marina in a dresser drawer. He walked off down the block, carrying with him an oblong

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When Frazier had asked Oswald the day before why he wanted a ride to Irving, since he had never before visited his wife in midweek, Oswald explained that he needed to pick up some "curtain rods" for his room in Dallas. When Frazier saw Oswald approaching with a package, he assumed it contained those rods.

Air Force One landed at Love Field in Dallas that morning at 11:40. As the waiting crowd cheered, the President helped Mrs. Kennedy into their limousine. Gov. John Connally and his wife maneuvered their way into the jump seats in front of the President and his wife. It was a clear day, and the President decided against using the transparent bubble-top for the motorcade through Dallas.

In Paris at about noon that day (Paris time), the CIA case officer kept his appointment with Cubella. As he had been instructed by Fitzgerald, he referred Cubella to the "signal" in the speech President Kennedy had made four days earlier. He then took out a pen which the CIA laboratory had fashioned only days before and demonstrated how an almost invisible needle shot out from the otherwise innocent-looking ball-point pen. He recommended that Cubella use Black Leaf-40 poison, which was both lethal and commercially available. He also assured Cubella that a high-powered rifle fitted with telescopic sights would be provided.

In Dallas, employes of the book depository were breaking for lunch. The Presidential motorcade was scheduled to pass through the grassy plaza directly in front of the building in the next half hour, and many of the workers waited outside for a glimpse of the President.

Oswald remained on the sixth floor, alone. Moving a few cartons forward, he erected a waist-high barrier by the easternmost window. From this vantage point, he could see the three main streets of Dallas—Elm, Main and Commerce—converge in the plaza below.

At 12:30 the President's car passed the book depository, moving slowly down Elm Street. A moment later a rifle shot echoed through the plaza. The President clutched at his throat with both hands. A second shot hit Governor Connally, and the limousine came to an almost complete halt. A third shot exploded the President's head. At exactly 1 p.m., John F. Kennedy was pronounced dead at Parkland Memorial Hospital.

Sixteen minutes later, in Oak Cliff, Dallas police officer J. D. Tippit was found bleeding to death near his radio car. Witnesses at the scene said he had been shot repeatedly by a man in a gray jacket.

At the book depository, police officers found on the sixth floor three empty cartridge cases and a Mannlicher-Carcano rifle. Checking among the employes, Roy Truly, the manager of the depository, quickly identified Lee Harvey Oswald as "a man missing."

At 1:50, in Oak Cliff, 16 police officers moved into the darkened Texas Theater, where a suspect in the Tippit shooting had been reported hiding. Oswald was seated alone and didn't seem concerned until the policemen approached him. Suddenly, he flailed out at the police with his fist and drew his snub-nosed .38 revolver. It took only a minute to overpower him.

At FBI headquarters in Dallas that afternoon, James Hosty heard from his superior, Gordon Shanklin, that the prime suspect in the Kennedy assassination was Lee Harvey Oswald. The name stunned him. For more than two months he had personally superintended the Oswald file. Only three weeks before, he had spoken to Oswald's wife and learned that Oswald was working at the Texas School Book Depository. Then Oswald had come to the FBI offices and left a threatening note which began, "Let this be a warning." Hosty had recently received word that the FBI had intercepted a letter that Oswald had written to the Soviet embassy suggesting that he had business with the Soviets in Havana and had been traveling in Mexico under a false name. And Hosty knew from a CIA report that Oswald had had contact with Soviet agent Kostikov.

Concealed Information

THE CIA counterintelligence staff in Washington, under James Jesus Angleton, began the next morning to consider the implications of these contacts. Reviewing Oswald's activities in Mexico in a memorandum—especially his contact with Kostikov—Angleton's staff suggested that the connection might not be totally innocent.

At 10:30 a.m. the FBI was informed through its liaison with the CIA of these possibly "sinister implications." Although J. Edgar Hoover sent President Lyndon Johnson that very day a "background" report on Oswald, he omitted any mention of the FBI having had an open security case pending on Oswald at the time of the assassination.

At about 11 on November 24, Capt. John Will Fritz of the Dallas Homicide Division began making the final preparations to transfer Oswald from police headquarters to the county jail. Fritz had not obtained the admission of guilt he sought. The prisoner had lied methodically about every piece of incriminating evidence. The plan now called for Oswald to be taken to the basement, where he would be put into an unmarked police car. An armored car would serve as a "decoy" to distract attention.

"Here he comes," someone shouted as the prisoner emerged from the elevator and was led toward a ramp. But Oswald never reached it. A short man with beady eyes stepped out of the crowd and fired a single bullet into Oswald's abdomen. Captain Fritz identified the killer as Jack Ruby, a Dallas bar owner who was well known to the police.

That afternoon Agent Hosty was

summoned to FBI headquarters in Dallas. According to Hosty's sworn testimony before a Senate committee years later, his superior, Gordon Shanklin, ordered him to destroy both the note that Oswald had delivered to the FBI shortly before the assassination and the memorandum Hosty had prepared about the incident. Returning to his office, Hosty followed orders and destroyed this evidence.

AT CIA HEADQUARTERS on November 25, the day Kennedy was buried, a list of names of "all known contacts" of Valery Vladimirovich Kostikov was being traced through the CIA's voluminous files by members of Angleton's counterintelligence staff. Each CIA division was asked to coöperate by supplying whatever relevant information it had. One name on the list was Rolando Cubella.

When the case officers in the SAS division were notified that Angleton's staff had put out a trace on Cubella only days after Kennedy was killed, there was immediate alarm. Fitzgerald decided against providing the Cubella file to Angleton.

In addition, Fitzgerald ordered the case officer who had met with Cubella on November 22 to omit from his report any mention of the poison pen. Subsequently, Fitzgerald's own division would determine that the Cubella operation had been "insecure." None of this would be known to Kennedy-assassination investigators.

Meanwhile, at 2 Dzerzhinsky Square in Moscow, a man already known to the CIA as Yuri Ivanovich Nosenko arrived at KGB headquarters. He proceeded to a room where a number of other KGB officers were discussing the Kennedy assassination. Some seven weeks later, he would offer to defect to the United States, saying he had full knowledge of the KGB's file on Lee Harvey Oswald.

Inside Out

BY 1967, pressures were building within the CIA to resolve the fate of Yuri Nosenko. Because so many of his statements had raised doubts and suspicions (or had proved to be false), for nearly three years this defector had been imprisoned in a windowless room in a CIA "detention center" just a few miles from downtown Washington.

When Nosenko was first imprisoned in the spring of 1964, it was hoped that he might admit to being a false agent, a messenger from Moscow. But, as the weeks dragged on, CIA interrogators realized that Nosenko was not a man who would easily crack. He had stuck steadfastly to his story that Oswald was not connected with the KGB, even when it meant revising some of his earlier assertions. In fact, the more the CIA agents pressed Nosenko about Oswald's relations with KGB personnel, the more adamantly he denied even the possibility of such contacts.

Gradually the CIA's Soviet Russia Division compiled its final report on Nosenko. This document, which ran

to more than 900 pages, evaluated all the information Nosenko had provided the CIA since his first contact in 1962. Point by point, it analyzed the contradictions and omissions in the story. The report concluded that only one explanation fitted the established facts: Nosenko was a Soviet intelligence agent dispatched by the KGB expressly for the purpose of delivering disinformation to the CIA, FBI and Warren Commission.

The division's report was forwarded to the head of the counterintelligence staff, James Angleton, who ordered his chief of operations, Newton S. Miler, to fully reinvestigate the Nosenko case. As far as Miler was concerned, the case for or against Nosenko depended on an assessment of whether or not he had provided information of great value on cases not involving Oswald. From his preliminary review, it became abundantly clear that most of Nosenko's revelations involved either worthless information or data about agents who had already been compromised. The only seemingly valuable lead that Nosenko had provided concerned the theft of secret documents from the courier center at Orly Airport by American Sgt. Robert Lee Johnson.

FBI defenders of Nosenko had long argued that the Soviets would never have given away an agent as important as Johnson just to establish Nosenko as a disinformation agent. Miler thus instituted a full investigation into the Johnson case. He found that, years before Nosenko provided the information that identified the sergeant, Johnson had been arrested by military authorities for selling pornographic films, at which time microfilm of classified secrets was found in his possession. Moreover, on several occasions his wife had told military authorities of his espionage activities.

Miler concluded that the Soviets had every reason to assume that Johnson had been compromised well before Nosenko provided his information on the case. Consulting his two senior researchers, Miler found that both independently had come to the same conclusion.

Apprised of the evaluation of Nosenko, J. Edgar Hoover realized that unless the verdict was immediately reversed, it could have very serious ramifications for his bureau. For one thing, it would completely destroy the credibility of the FBI's agent in the KGB, code-named Fedora. For more than six years Fedora, officially a Soviet diplomat with the United Nations in New York, had been supplying the FBI with information about Soviet espionage activities. Indeed, a large part of the bureau's counterespionage effort had been built on Fedora's tips.

To enable Fedora to convince his superiors in the KGB that he was an effective spy (so he would be allowed to return to New York), the FBI provided him with a large number of U.S. secrets. All the classified documents that were used to "feed" Fedora had to be cleared by the Department of Defense, CIA, Air

Force, Army, National Security Agency and other concerned agencies, and elaborate records had to be kept of the information provided to Moscow.

Fedora, however, had confirmed elements of Nosenko's story which the CIA had found to be untrue. If Nosenko was now ruled a fraud, then Fedora would seem to be part of the same Soviet deception.*

The collapse of Nosenko's story could, moreover, force a reopening of the investigation into Oswald's relations with Soviet intelligence prior to the assassination. Hoover himself had written in a memorandum to senior FBI officials: "There is no question in my mind but that we failed in carrying through some of the most salient aspects of the Oswald investigation." Now, if the CIA pressed for a reinvestigation, all the FBI's omissions and failures in the original security case involving Oswald would be dredged up again. Thus, Hoover had moved very quickly after Oswald's death to contain speculation about the assassin.

Within the CIA there was also bitter opposition to officially labeling Nosenko's story a KGB fabrication. Ever since a KGB defector named Anatoli Golitsin had declared that the Soviet Union had planted an agent in the highest echelons of U.S. intelligence, and had provided information about a trip made by V. M. Kovshuk to Washington, D.C. (see pages 160 and 161), Angleton and his counterintelligence staff had sought to find this "mole," or Soviet penetration agent.

Nosenko, however, had provided an answer to the puzzle of Kovshuk's visit. He claimed that Kovshuk had been his immediate superior in the KGB, and therefore he knew that he had come over to recruit a former Army motor mechanic to work for the KGB. According to Nosenko, that was all: there was no mole. If Nosenko's explanation was accepted, it would serve to end the suspicion of a high-level penetration of the CIA and allow the Soviet Russia Division once again to concentrate its efforts on gathering data about the Soviets.

There was also disagreement within the Soviet Russia Division on how the Nosenko case should be handled. Leonard McCoy, an officer in the Reports Section, protested the confinement and mistreatment of Nosenko and the suppression of the information he had provided.

Richard Helms, who had become director of Central Intelligence in June 1966, believed the whole affair could be "explosive," and late that summer he had ordered his new deputy director, Adm. Rufus Taylor, to take personal charge of it. In the months that followed, a series of sudden decisions turned the case inside out. The reversal began in September 1967, when Nosenko was abruptly transferred from the custody of the CIA's Soviet Russia Division to that of its Office of Security, which normally took care of routine security precautions.

*Later, in 1971, Fedora told the FBI that the secret Pentagon Papers that Daniel Ellsberg, a Defense Department consultant, had made copies of had been provided to Soviet intelligence agents and forwarded to Moscow. When Hoover gave this information—or disinformation—to the White House, it provoked President Nixon into a series of rash and unnecessary actions, such as the formation of his own investigative unit.

The "Purge"

NOSENKO'S NEW HANDLER was Bruce Solie. Solie adopted a considerably friendlier mode of interrogation than had been used in the past. Rather than confront Nosenko with contradictions, he reviewed with him the main points of his story that had been controverted and allowed him to work out explanations and revisions. In this review he was assisted by FBI agents assigned by J. Edgar Hoover.

While this revision was taking place, the decision was made to transfer some of the CIA officers responsible for the indictment of Nosenko out of Washington to overseas assignments. The head of the Soviet Russia Division, a Russian specialist for more than a decade, and the division's deputy chief, an expert in Soviet counterespionage who had had a major role in interrogating Nosenko, were reassigned to Europe. Then, for reasons that may or may not have been related to the case, other Soviet specialists—known within the CIA as Slavs—who had helped prepare the case against Nosenko were dispatched to new positions. It was, as one counterintelligence officer put it, "the great purge of the Slavs."

Finally, to settle what issues remained on the case, Admiral Taylor appointed Gordon Stewart as "adjudicator." Stewart was a highly respected officer on the CIA's Board of National Estimates. Reading through the original 900-page report on Nosenko, he found its organization like a prosecutor's brief, "long and tendentious." It seemed to assume right from the beginning that Nosenko was unquestionably a Soviet agent and then interpreted every discrepancy in his story as further evidence of this thesis.

As far as Stewart was concerned, the evidence itself did not ineluctably compel such a categorical conclusion. Recognizing that many of Nosenko's assertions were blatantly false, Stewart saw no reason to conclude that he was an agent dispatched by the Soviets. He reasoned that it was possible for Nosenko to have lied about a whole range of subjects and nevertheless be a legitimate defector who simply wanted to escape from Russia. The omission of details in his story might be accounted for by a faulty memory. The fact that Fedora had confirmed some of the false elements in Nosenko's story might be no more than a curious coincidence. He argued that the Soviet Russia Division had not proved its case against Nosenko, and even if his defection had been arranged by Soviet intelligence he was now a "burnt-out case"—useless to Moscow.

Meanwhile, the Office of Security, now in full charge of the case,

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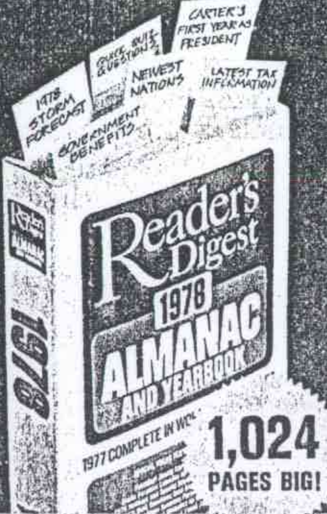

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received an abridged version of the Soviet Russia Division's report. Through heavy editing, it had been cut by about 500 pages. With assistance from the FBI, Solie wrote his own report, rebutting what was left of the original indictment and completely exonerating Nosenko.

The research section of Angleton's counterintelligence staff found the Solie report totally lacking in logic. As the head of research subsequently explained, "It glossed over all the real counterintelligence problems, and fallaciously assumed that just because something could have happened it did happen." Miler put it even more bluntly. He found the Solie report "a whitewash."

The former deputy chief of the Soviet Russia Division also read the Solie report. Although he submitted a point-by-point rebuttal, it was never evaluated.

Finally, in October 1968, Gordon Stewart, now the inspector general of the CIA, held a meeting of all the people still involved in the Nosenko case. Included were Helms, Taylor, Solie and others from the Office of Security, the new head of the Soviet Russia Division and members of Angleton's counterintelligence staff. The inspector general found that the case against Nosenko had not been proved and indeed may have been seriously mishandled. He then proposed that Nosenko be released and resettled somewhere in the United States.

Shortly thereafter the Office of Security made arrangements to buy

Nosenko a house in North Carolina. He was given an allowance of about $30,000 a year; he would be granted U.S. citizenship. In return, he agreed that his experiences with the CIA were to be a closely held secret.

Travesty

THE YEARS PASSED, but Angleton continued to be intrigued by one aspect of the Nosenko case. In his ongoing interviews with the FBI, Nosenko brought up certain cases that he had not mentioned previously. One concerned a KGB officer who had tried to defect to the Americans in the summer of 1959 but failed. In the position that Nosenko claimed to have had in the KGB, he should have been intimately familiar with the details of this particular case, yet he had not mentioned it during his initial debriefings.

What made this omission seem to Angleton both significant and sinister was that the blank had been filled in by Nosenko only in 1967, after the Russians had reason to believe that the CIA would have learned about this incident from another source. This suggested the possibility that some Soviet-controlled source was still supplying Nosenko with the answers he was supposed to have to keep his story current.

In December 1974, the long tenure of James Angleton in counterintelligence came to an abrupt end. The proximate cause of his resignation was a front-page story in the New York *Times* by Seymour Hersh that exposed illicit domestic activities

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of the CIA in the 1960s and cited Angleton, whose name had never before appeared in connection with the CIA, as one of those deeply involved.

On December 20, William Colby, the new director of the CIA, asked Hersh to come to his office. Hersh had been concerned, up to that point, with dossiers the CIA had been preparing on Americans as part of a domestic surveillance program investigating links between Americans and subversive groups in Europe and Southeast Asia. Colby assured Hersh that there was nothing illegal in this program. However, he directed Hersh's attention to the CIA's program of opening mail from the Soviet Union, which he admitted was illegal and which had been supervised by Angleton. Hersh now had an explosive peg for his story.

Colby had opposed the role of the counterintelligence staff for some years. By routinely questioning the validity of information supplied to the CIA by double agents and continually suspecting that the data might be disinformation, Angleton had tended to inhibit the collection of information from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

After Hersh left his office, Colby called in Angleton and his chief assistants, including Miler, and told them that the New York *Times* would be exposing their mail-opening program. All accommodated him by resigning.

Among those "purged," as Angleton put it, were the authors of the counterintelligence reviews and evaluations of the Nosenko case. Leonard McCoy, who had become one of Nosenko's champions, was appointed the new research head of counterintelligence. Nosenko himself was then appointed a consultant to this newly constituted counterintelligence staff.

A year later John L. Hart, a retired CIA officer, was given the task of writing a final report on the Nosenko case. In July 1976, he called on the former deputy chief of the Soviet Russia Division, who had left the CIA four years earlier and lived in Europe. The former deputy chief, who had devoted a large part of his career to the Nosenko case, asked Hart if in his re-examination he had read the division's 900-page report.

"No," Hart answered. He had not had the time.

"How much time will you be spending on the investigation?"

"They want my report in six weeks."

The former deputy chief did not believe that it was possible for anyone to review tapes of years of interrogation sessions with Nosenko, and thousands of pages of analysis, in only six weeks. Nevertheless, he explained that he would be willing to change his opinion about Nosenko if there were some new evidence confirming his story, such as a more recent defector. Hart said that there had been no new evidence.

Then what was his reinvestigation based on?

The "prevailing wisdom" was still the Solie report, Hart replied.

At this point the former deputy chief realized that this was merely another attempt to seal the case shut once and for all. Hart, who had not even read the 900-page indictment against Nosenko, now wanted an impromptu statement from the ex-deputy chief on the case. "Why do you have to speak to me?" he said. "You already know what you are going to write in your report—Nosenko is innocent. Do what you have to do, but don't count on me to help."

Hart returned to the United States and wrote his report. It concluded that Nosenko had been a genuine defector and that, therefore, the information he had provided about Lee Harvey Oswald's not being involved with Soviet intelligence was valid. In the winter of 1976, 12 years after his defection, Nosenko's *bona fides* were thus assumed to be established.

Last year I spoke to Miler, who had just heard that his handwritten notes on Fedora and Nosenko had been destroyed after he left his office. Although retired, Miler still evidenced deep concern over the acceptance of Nosenko as a legitimate defector. He explained: "The net result is a travesty. It is an indictment of the CIA and, if the FBI subscribes to it, that bureau. The ramifications for the U.S. intelligence community, and particularly the CIA, are tragic. Acceptance of Nosenko's information as accurate and of him as a reliable and knowledgeable consultant about Soviet intelligence and general affairs will surely cause innumerable problems for incumbent and future estimators, intelligence collectors and, especially, any remaining counterintelligence officers. Acceptance of his information inevitably will cause the acceptance of other suspect sources whose information has dovetailed and supported even Nosenko's proven lies and misinformation. Acceptance of Nosenko throws the entire perspective about Soviet intelligence out of focus."

Finally, I discussed this assessment with the CIA officer who had originally developed the case against Nosenko. He found it "grotesque" that a man who had been judged a Soviet disinformation agent in 1967 would now be a CIA consultant. With Nosenko accredited and the counterintelligence staff purged, the CIA had truly been turned inside out.

Touch of Spring

There are dozens of exotic new kinds of flu but there is only one kind of spring fever. That's the paralysis that sets in after you've rushed outdoors to get away from everything that needs doing indoors and then rushed indoors to get away from everything that needs doing outdoors.

—Peg Bracken in *Family Circle*