

HR & JL, PH, D-

4/3/78

Your 3/30/78 "DeMohrenschildt's copy of LHO rifle picture" notes that McMillan takes the date 5/IV/63 to mean May 5 while Epstein takes it to mean April 5, 1963, neither explaining why.

I think it is impossible for this to have been May because as I recall the DeM's left Dallas at the beginning of their move to Haiti about 4/19/63.

They had been to Haiti and returned briefly. I think they were in Dallas for only a short time before returning to Haiti.

I note also that McMillan and Epstein use different direct quotes of the note on the back of the picture.

I have an invitation to go to Dallas again this summer. Tentatively I plan on some time after a 5/22 status call if that does not result in my not being able to leave.

Reported in the event someone thinks of something for me to do that might be more important than some of what I will plan to do. My major interests will be FOIA-suit oriented. I have in mind looking up some of the medical personnel and Pat Russell, over the book of Oswald's writings.

cc: HW, JL, DW, SM, PH

3/30/78

Memo from Howard Roffman
re: DeMohlrenschildt's copy of LHO rifle
picture.

The existence of this copy of one of the pictures came to light after DeM killed himself, when his lawyer, Pat Russell claimed to have the photo along with other documents and a manuscript written by DeM. Since then, it has been described by McMillan in Marina and Lee, and Epstein in Legend. The relevant pages from each are attached. Note the discrepancy in how each interprets the date, "5/IV/63." Sokolov, in his TIME review, chided McMillan for assuming that this meant May 4, 1963, because she does not explain why. Epstein assumes the opposite, also without explanation.

HR

in early June, they received something in the mail from Lee, and that it bore a New Orleans address.⁸

The De Mohrenschildts did not return to Dallas for more than three years. They came back in 1966, and when they got around to retrieving their possessions from storage, in early 1967, they had an enormous surprise. There, among all the boxes and bundles, they found one which they could not recall having received at all. It was wrapped in brown paper and contained a stack of records that they had loaned to Marina in an effort to help her learn English. They were unable subsequently to remember whether the bundle bore a postmark or not.

But the greatest surprise was still to come. It was not the bundle of records itself, but something that had been laid neatly and purposefully on top—a photograph of Lee with his guns and dressed in black, one of the two Marina had taken.⁹ The back of the photograph bore two inscriptions. Across the top, in Russian, were the words: "Hunter for the Fascists—ha-ha-ha!!!" Under the inscription, which was bold and clear, was a small sketch of a terrier, of the kind the De Mohrenschildts owned. Marina today, fourteen years later, has no recollection of having written it. But the writing and the sketch both appear to be hers. And in the lower left-hand corner, catty-corner and in English, was another message in handwriting that appears to be Lee's. It read: "For my friend George from Lee Oswald." Beneath the inscription was the date written, as Lee might have done it, in a combination of Latin and Arabic script: "5/IV/63." The date was probably supposed to be May 4, 1963, and Lee had, as nearly as can be guessed, mailed the records—and the photograph—from New Orleans.¹⁰

What happened, apparently, is that after George's lucky guess on April 13, Marina, half idly, and half as a warning to Lee that he must not go around shooting people or he would be found out, simply took one of the photographs and wrote on it, mocking Lee, "Hunter for the Fascists," a word she had heard both Lee and George use, and "ha-ha-ha," an expression that was characteristic both of her and of George. The sketch of a little dog links her inscription to George's remarkable guess. She must have done it, characteristically, to warn Lee and simultaneously to mock him, to laugh him out of further dangerous adventures.

Lee's choosing a copy of the photograph that had this inscription on it to send to George was itself a message that contained a whole

world of meaning. George, and George alone, had made a guess that it was Lee who tried to kill General Walker. Those who knew them both, notably Samuel Ballen, had observed "a mutuality," "an emotional complicity," between Lee and George, and of course Ballen was right.¹¹ Each of them, Lee and George, during that winter of 1962-1963, knew perfectly what the other was thinking politically. And Lee wanted to seal their understanding. As the days following the Walker episode passed without discovery and Lee realized that there was going to be no evidence, not even a clue, to link him to the attempted killing, he decided to let George know that his uncanny guess had been on the mark. It was to George that Lee made his confession.

Why should it have been the loudmouthed George to whom Lee chose, above all other men, to confess? The answer is simple. Lee had done the deed for George. George was the one friend he had, the one person whose respect, admiration, even affection, he coveted—and it was George whom he had wanted to impress. George had been Lee's "constituent" in the sense that Lee believed he had been acting as George himself might have wanted to do, and in a manner that would win George's approval.

In his attempt on General Walker, Lee had other constituents as well. He told Marina that he was sending a copy of his photograph to *The Militant*, to show that he was "ready for anything." In the picture, he was holding the issue of *The Militant* that contained the letter from him, signed "L.H." He had expected that by the time the editors received the photograph, Walker would be dead and the initials "L.H." would be famous. They would then see how right they had been to print his letter; they would see that their intrepid Dallas correspondent had indeed been "ready for anything."

De Mohrenschildt and *The Militant*, then, were Lee's two chief constituents when he fired at General Walker, with De Mohrenschildt, the flesh-and-blood friend whose approval he desired, far and away the more important. But Lee appears to have had still other inner, or emotional, constituents: the American Communist Party, whose newspaper, *The Worker*, he was also holding in the picture; and possibly the Soviet Embassy in Washington, whose help he desired for himself and Marina.

In the photograph, Lee was dressed in black, the color of death, and he was bristling with guns. If there was in the picture a message to George of boastfulness, love, and pride, there was a message of a

whether or not the relative knew of the crime either before or after it was committed. The atmosphere created by this and other laws appears to have affected Marina from the moment she learned of her husband's attempt on General Walker. Although she had neither known of his attempt in advance nor approved of it later, Marina appears to have felt that she was as guilty as he was. Her special feeling of guilt in the Walker affair lingered for months, even years, and it probably cannot be understood without knowledge of the Soviet laws of complicity which existed throughout almost the whole of her life in the U.S.S.R.

25-Legacies

Sources

Conversations with Marina Oswald Porter and her testimony in the Warren Commission Hearings, Vols. 1, 5, and 11; and conversations with Katherine Ford, Declan P. Ford, and Samuel B. Ballen.

- 1. Exhibits No. 1401, Vol. 22, pp. 756-757, and No. 2521, Vol. 25, p. 730.
- 2. Marina reports him as saying much the same (*ibid.*).
- 3. The Walker bullet was never traced definitely to Oswald's rifle, not even after the Kennedy assassination. (See Warren Commission Report, p. 562, and Exhibit No. 2001, Vol. 24, p. 39.)
- 4. Walker later denied the police theory that he moved his head at the last minute and accidentally saved his own life. Contrary to his own early testimony, he believes that Oswald fired a near-perfect shot. He was standing 120 feet away behind a stockade fence, but with a four-power sight, Walker appeared to be only 30 feet away, an easy target. Walker was not, however, sitting propped in the window. Rather, he was well inside the room, facing out, "a side shot with a frontal angle," he explains. Firing under night-time conditions, Oswald was at the mercy of the lighting, and the angles of light and shadow, distorted by the lenses of his sight, could have thrown off his aim. He appears, however, to have had a perfect bead on his target; but with light flooding the room outside as well as in, he was unable to see the window frame. Thus the bullet was flying straight at Walker when it hit strips of window casing and was deflected. Walker at first thought that a firecracker had exploded directly above his head. Then he saw the hole in the window frame, felt bits of wood and glass in his hair, and saw bits of copper casing in his arm. (Testimony of Major General Edwin A. Walker, Vol. 11, pp. 405-410; letter from General Walker to the

author, undated but postmarked May 15, 1974; and telephone conversation of General Walker and the author, August 19, 1975.) Although Marina was in no way culpable for keeping silent after her husband's attempt to kill Walker, advising him to destroy evidence might, under the Texas penal code of 1974, render her culpable on two counts: accessory to attempted murder; and accomplice to the crime of destroying evidence. The present code was not in effect in 1963, however, and, indeed, the code then in effect gave a spouse immunity from being convicted for a crime committed by his or her partner.

- 6. Testimony of George S. de Mohrenschildt, Vol. 9, p. 249.
- 7. *Ibid.*, p. 250.
- 8. Testimony of Jeanne de Mohrenschildt, Vol. 9, pp. 317-318.
- 9. A description of the bundle, the way the photograph was placed in it, and the inscription was given to the author by Pat S. Russell, Jr., De Mohrenschildt's attorney, in a telephone conversation on April 21, 1977, after De Mohrenschildt's death, and a copy of the photograph, with inscriptions, was subsequently sent to the author by Mr. Russell. Some persons have questioned the authenticity of De Mohrenschildt's "find," suggesting that he placed the inscriptions there himself. There appears to be no truth to this. De Mohrenschildt immediately told friends about his discovery. In a letter of April 17, 1967, George de Mohrenschildt wrote to George McMillan, husband of the author, that he had come into possession of some "very interesting information" about Oswald since his return to the United States; and on June 22, 1968, he invited George McMillan and the author to visit him in Dallas to discuss "some interesting material on Oswald plus a message [De Mohrenschildt's italics] from him we discovered in our luggage." On May 4, 1963, Oswald was in New Orleans and Marina was staying with Ruth Paine in Irving, Texas. Marina does not drive a car and has no recollection of returning a bundle to the De Mohrenschildts with or without Ruth. Indeed, the De Mohrenschildts were out of town. Oswald, however, had taken with him all the family's belongings to New Orleans, except for Marina's clothes and the baby's things. The package thus appears to have been mailed by Oswald from New Orleans.
- 10. Conversation with Samuel B. Ballen, November 28, 1964.
- 11. In a paper presented at the Midwestern meeting of the American Psychiatric Association in Chicago, November 15-17, 1968, Dr. James W. Hamilton, a psychiatrist at the Yale University Medical School, notes the partial overtones of the Walker attempt and points out that Walker's first name and initial, "Edwin A.," were the same as those of Oswald's stepfather, Edwin A. Eckdahl, whom

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leans in order to conceal the fact that he was currently employed at Jaggars-Chiles-Stovall—a fact which he never told Ballen.)

Oswald then walked with Ballen to the Republican National Bank, where Ballen had a business meeting. It was a warm day, and neither man wore an overcoat. As they chatted, Ballen got the impression that Oswald was too much of an "individualist" to fit in at his company. He decided not to employ him but thought of possibly having him and his wife over to dinner to meet some of his friends. When he left, Oswald told him that he was temporarily staying at the Y.

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

He made a number of copies of these photographs. He inscribed one to his daughter, June, and gave it to Marina for safekeeping. On another copy he scribbled, "Ready for Anything," and told Marina he was sending it to the *Militant*.¹² 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.¹³

The following Tuesday the Oswalds went to Irving, Texas, to have dinner with the Paines. It had been arranged the week before so that Oswald could meet Michael Paine, and Marina could discuss her future plans with Ruth.

Paine, who had been educated at Harvard and Swarthmore, had spent a good deal of his life in the company of intellectuals and was quite willing to listen to the ideas of this dour-looking man who had defected to Russia and returned. When asked about his job, Oswald made it clear that he resented the way workers were treated at the "print shop" by the bosses. He spoke of himself as a professional revolutionary and said that his present work was only a means to an end.

After dinner Oswald expounded further on his ideas for

political action. He suggested to Paine that violent revolution was necessary in America. How would he know the timing and objectives of this revolution? Oswald explained that he could get revolutionary direction "by reading between the lines of the *Militant*."

Paine, whose father had been heavily involved in the Trotskyite movement, was skeptical of this claim. He asked Oswald to show him how to interpret the revolutionary messages in the *Militant*. Oswald shook his head and let the subject drop.

Meanwhile, Ruth Paine discussed with Marina the possibility of her coming to live in her home for a while. Her Russian was too poor for her to be sure that Marina fully understood her offer, although she seemed interested.

When they returned home that evening, Oswald gave Marina a \$60 from his savings. He reckoned that it would be enough to support her for six weeks in case he had to go into hiding.

That 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." A moment later she saw him board a bus. He returned two hours later without the rifle.

The following Monday General Walker returned to Dallas from a coast-to-coast speaking tour which he designated "Operation Midnight Ride." When Robert Alan Surrey, a close supporter of Walker's, stopped over at his house that night, he noticed two men peering in the windows in a very suspicious way. They then got into a Ford sedan and drove away. Surrey tried to follow them to find out why they were reconnoitering the general's house but lost their car in traffic.

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 to: "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

Alexandra Taylor, George and Jeanne De Mohrenschildt, Alex Kleinlerer, Elena Hall, and Max Clark.

The section on Oswald's employment at Jaggars-Chiles-Stovall grew out of interviews with Louise Latham of the Texas Employment Commission and Oswald's fellow employees, including Jack Bowen, Dennis Ofstein, and Leonard Calverley. Additional material was taken from the testimony of John Graef and Robert Stovall (Volume X of the Warren Commission).

FOOTNOTES

1. This letter was to the Central Committee of the Communist Party, USA, dated August 28, 1963. He asked, "Whether in your opinion, I can compete with anti-progressive forces above ground, or whether I should always remain in the background, i.e. underground."
2. The exact chain that led Oswald to his job is not clear. Jeanne De Mohrenschildt insists that her husband helped him get his job, and Alexandra De Mohrenschildt Taylor remembers that her father was involved in arranging Oswald's job in Dallas. Anna Meller, however, who prevailed on her husband to call Mrs. Cunningham, recalls that Oswald asked her for help.
3. The lack of security is corroborated by other former employees, including Dennis Ofstein and Jack Bowen. Robert Stovall, the president of the company, testified before the Warren Commission that the security procedures were enforced, and implied that Oswald would not have had access to the classified materials. However, all the employees who were interviewed insisted that the security procedures were not enforced. Calverley further claims that the employees were instructed after the assassination not to discuss with anyone Oswald's access to classified material, presumably because it could endanger the firm's contracts with the government.
4. "Jack Bowen," as he was known at Jaggars-Chiles-Stovall, was actually an alias. Bowen's real name was John Caesar Grossl, but since he had been convicted of bank robbery and served time in prison, he frequently changed his name.
5. Oswald seemed purposely to use the term "White Russian" ambiguously. Most commonly, it refers to an anti-Communist Russian (as opposed to a "Red" Russian). Also, however, Minsk is in the Republic of Byelorussia, which means literally "White Russia." Martina, strictly speaking, was from Arkhangelsk and Leningrad, neither of which is in Byelorussia.
6. Leonard Calverley, who was questioned by the FBI about the leather pouch 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.
7. During the month of October Gary Taylor presumed that Oswald was living at the YMCA since he often dropped him off there. However, Oswald was registered at the YMCA on only four days—October 15-18, leaving his residency during the rest of the month an unsolved mystery.
8. The October 27 meeting between De Mohrenschildt and Oswald took place after De Mohrenschildt had dinner with Dabney Austin and his wife. Mr. and Mrs. Austin met Oswald, then went with him and De Mohrenschildt to see

the film that De Mohrenschildt had made of his travels the year before in Mexico and Central America.

Chapter XII, Out of Control

SOURCE NOTES

The Christmas party at Declan Ford's house was described for me by Lev Aronson, Yaeiko Okui, and the De Mohrenschildts. Additional details were taken from the testimony of George Boube and Katya and Declan Ford. Oswald's political activities in early 1963, including his correspondence and reading material, is documented in numerous Warren Commission exhibits.

The gatherings at De Mohrenschildt's and Everett Glover's were described for me by those present, including Betty MacDonald, Norman and Elke Fredicksen, Volkmar Schmidt, Richard Pierce, and Ruth Paine.

Information on the backgrounds of Ruth and Michael Paine comes from FBI reports obtained from the National Archives.

The photograph of Oswald with his rifle gained wide publicity in 1963. It was not known at the time, however, that Oswald and Martha had made copies or had written on any of them. This fact was revealed to me by George De Mohrenschildt in 1977. De Mohrenschildt gave me permission to see his copy of the picture with the inscriptions that Oswald and Martha had written on it. Oswald's attempt to assassinate General Walker is well documented in the Warren Commission's Report.

FOOTNOTES

1. When interviewed in Tokyo in 1976, Okui said that she did not remember the subject of her conversation with Oswald, but that the one brief contact with him had "ruined her life." She would not elaborate further.
2. One of these books, *The Shark and the Sardine*, is a long tendentious and unrelenting attack on U.S. policy toward Cuba, accusing the Kennedy administration of everything from political assassination to economic sabotage.
3. From June 1, 1962, until January 28, 1963, Oswald earned a total net salary of \$1,403 and received gifts of \$10 from his mother, \$5 from George Boube and \$35 from Paul Gregory (for Russian lessons). Added to the \$63 he had brought back with him from Russia, this makes a total of \$1,516 for this period. Out of this amount, he paid \$377.13 toward rent, utilities and a post office box; \$226.21 for his transportation from New York to Fort Worth (and

hotel accommodation in New York); \$22.47 for magazine subscriptions; \$10 for typing; \$9.60 for travel between Fort Worth and Dallas; and \$9 on the typing course. This makes a total of \$654.41 in known expenses, which left him with \$861.59. Out of this amount, he repaid the State Department \$435, leaving only \$476.59 for all other expenses during this eight-month period, or about \$53.32 a month for the support of his family (not including rent on his unknown rooms in October and November). Out of \$53.32 a month then, Oswald would have had to have bought food, clothing, bus fares, postage, drugs and incidental supplies for a family of three.

4. The opinions that Oswald voiced to Schmidt seemed to echo what he was reading in the *Militant*, to which he subscribed. The January 21 *Militant*, for example, reprinted portions of a speech by Fidel Castro in which he denounced President Kennedy as a "vulgar pirate chieftain" guilty of murder and sabotage. The January 7 *Militant* headline was KENNEDY FLAUNTS ANTI-CUBA CRIME.

5. Kuetermeyer had been experimenting, according to Schmidt, on a group of schizoids during World War II. The experiments had been interrupted in 1944, when Kuetermeyer had become involved in the plot to assassinate Hitler and had been forced into hiding from the Nazis.

6. This party apparently took place in late January or early February. The other guests included Chaim Richmond, a Dallas nuclear physicist, and Samuel Ballen, the man from whom Oswald had earlier sought employment. Glover also suggests, though his memory is admittedly hazy, that Schmidt was present at that gathering, but Schmidt categorically denies it.

7. The Oswalds' moves are as follows: (1) On October 8, they both moved from Mercedes Street in Fort Worth, Marina to the Taylors and (2) Oswald to an unknown address, (3) Marina then moved to Elena Hall's in Fort Worth, (4) George De Mohrenschildt's in Dallas, (5) Anna Meller's, (6) Declan Ford's, and (7) Anna Ray's—all in October and November 1962. (8) Oswald then moved to the YMCA between October 15 and 19 and (9) to another unknown residence from October 20 to November 4. (10) Both Oswald and Marina moved to Elsbeth Street on November 4, though Marina left again almost immediately, not to return until November 18.

8. Taylor's conversation with Marina in the spring of 1963 raises a question about Marina's proficiency in English. Marguerite Oswald claimed that Marina had some understanding of English at the time she arrived from the Soviet Union, but all of Marina's friends in the Russian community in Dallas insisted that she understood only Russian.

Lydia Dymitrak, a Russian-speaking emigre, once drove the Oswalds to a hospital in November 1962 when their daughter June was ill. According to Dymitrak, Oswald told a nurse (in English) a false story about being unemployed, and Marina instantly called him a liar in Russian, which indicates that she understood at least that one exchange.

In the spring of 1963, after Marina's conversation with Gary Taylor, she and Oswald dined at the home of Oswald's aunt, Lillian Murrett. Again, Murrett's impression was that Marina was able to understand what her husband was saying, yet Ruth Palmer, with whom Marina had lived just prior to this, says that she and Marina could communicate only in Russian.

9. The FBI was later able to determine precisely the date of the photographs taken by Oswald's camera by dating the construction work shown in the background.

10. Before he testified before the Warren Commission in 1964, George De Mohrenschildt told a friend in Houston, Jim Savage, that he had inadvertently given Marina the money Oswald used to buy the rifle. Marina said to him that "Remember the twenty-five dollars you gave me? Well, that fool husband of mine used it to buy a rifle."

11. When Ballen testified before the Warren Commission he was unsure of the exact date of his meeting with Oswald, and said only that it might be late 1962 or early 1963. In an earlier FBI report, however, he had stated that he had seen Oswald only a few days after he had been at De Mohrenschildt's house with Regnar Kearton and his wife Chris, who was De Mohrenschildt's step-daughter. (According to Ballen, he also saw a young foreigner at De Mohrenschildt's house that day, and assumed he was Oswald. This person was subsequently identified by Kearton as Rudy Bukovsky, a refugee from East Germany.) In 1977, Kearton reviewed his records and found that he could only have been in Dallas during the last two weeks of March or early in April 1963. The meeting between Ballen and Oswald must have occurred during the last week in March (when Oswald found out he was to be dismissed from Jaggars-Chiles-Stovall) or the first two weeks in April. This would explain why he did not tell Ballen about his previous job and lied about where he had acquired the photographic skills he claimed to have.

12. This, at least, was what he told Marina. The *Militant* was not able to find a copy of the photograph in its files after the assassination.

13. Marina never mentioned the existence of this photograph to the FBI, Secret Service, Dallas police, Warren Commission or any other investigative agency. Both Jeanne and George De Mohrenschildt confirm, however, that it was Marina who wrote on it, and a handwriting analysis supports that conclusion.

George De Mohrenschildt brought up the subject of this photograph in an interview with me only a few hours before he committed suicide. At that time he claimed that he had found the photograph after the assassination. However, it seems unlikely that Marina would have sent such an incriminating photograph to De Mohrenschildt after her husband had shot at General Walker on April 10, 1963. At that point it was no longer a joke and could not be circulated.

14. Oswald wrote this note on the "Red Cross" on the ship coming back from Russia in June 1962. See Note 7, Chapter IV.

15. When questioned about that statement by the Warren Commission staff in April 1964, De Mohrenschildt said that he recollected saying jokingly, "Did you take the potshot at Walker?" In discussing the matter with me in March 1977, he said that he knew Oswald had taken the shot through some sort of ESP (extrasensory perception) which he had with Oswald.

16. It is not clear, however, how he knew that the rifle had telescopic sights. In his testimony he said he never actually saw the rifle, but his wife had told him about it. His wife, however, testified that she knew little about rifles and could not have discerned telescopic sights.