94TH CONGRESS 2d Session

SENATE

REPORT No. 94-755

THE INVESTIGATION OF THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY: PERFORMANCE OF THE INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES

BOOK V

FINAL REPORT

OF THE

SELECT COMMITTEE
TO STUDY GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS

WITH RESPECT TO

INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES
UNITED STATES SENATE



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## APPENDIX A

THE FBI AND THE OSWALD SECURITY CASE

## A. Oswald's Defection

On October 31, 1959, after learning that Lee Harvey Oswald had defected to the Soviet Union and informed officials at the American Embassy in Moscow that he intended to provide "radar secrets" to the Soviet Union, the FBI opened a "security case" with Oswald as the subject. As part of the investigation, the Bureau made inquiries of the Navy and discovered that Oswald did not have knowledge of strategic information that would benefit the Soviets. The FBI concluded that a stop should be placed against Oswald's fingerprints to prevent him from obtaining a passport and entering the United States under any name.2

About six months later, the Bureau interviewed Oswald's mother who believed that he had taken his birth certificate with him to the Soviet Union.<sup>3</sup> In a memorandum subsequently sent to the State Department, the FBI raised the possibility that an imposter might attempt to return to the United States using Oswald's identity.

## B. Oswald's Return to the United States

Despite this concern that an imposter might attempt to enter the United States using Oswald's identity, the FBI did not interview Oswald until almost three weeks after his return on June 13, 1962. There is no indication that any of the FBI agents assigned to the Oswald case were ever warned that an imposter might attempt to assume Oswahl's identity. In particular, Special Agent James Hosty, the FBI agent responsible for the Oswald case at the Dallas Field Office, testified that he had neither seen a copy of the June 3, 1960 memorandum, nor attempted to determine whether someone had assumed Oswald's identity.

On June 26, 1962, Special Agents John W. Fain and B. Tom Carter interviewed Oswald in Fort Worth, Texas. According to SA Fain's report, Oswald was cold, arrogant, and difficult to interview, Oswald denied that he told State Department officials at the American Embassy in Moscow that he was going:

- was going to renounce his American citizenship;
- 2) apply for Soviet citizenship; and
- (3) reveal radar secrets to the Soviets.

Memorandum from Belmont to Soviet Section Supervisor, 11/4/59.

Report from Dallas Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 5/12/60.

<sup>\*</sup>Memorandum from FBI Hendquarters to Department of State, 6/3/60.

\*Memorandum from New York Field Office to FBI Hendquarters, 6/26/62.

Oswald was interviewed at the dock by an Immigration and Naturalization Service Inspector on his return to the United States.

<sup>4</sup> Hosty, 12/12/75; p. 119.
The Committee has found no evidence that an imposter entered the United

States in Oswald's stead John W. Fuin testimony, Warren Report, Vol. IV, p. 418.

When Fain asked Oswald to take a polygraph test, Oswald refused to even be polygraphed on whether he had dealings with Soviet intelligence.

Oswald also denied he had traveled to the Soviet Union because "of a lack of sympathy for the institutions of the United States." A second interview on August 16, 1962, yielded similar denials. Despite Oswald's attitude and demonstrable lies, the Bureau closed the Oswald security case on August 20, 1962. It was not to be reopened until March 26, 1963,10

The only additional action taken by the Bureau before March 26, 1963, consisted of: reviews of the Oswald file at the Department of State, inquiries of two low-level Dallas Communist Party informants as to whether they knew of Oswald (with negative responses), and interviews with three of Oswald's relatives.11 Although wide-ranging interviews were a basic investigative technique commonly used by the Bureau to develop background information on subjects of security investigations, no neighborhood or employment sources were checked in Oswald's case, nor was his wife interviewed.12

The FBI did not interview Marina Oswald prior to the assassination. Although Marina Oswald was considered in June 1962 for a Bureau program which monitored the activities of Soviet immigrants and repatriates to detect possible foreign intelligence ties, the Dallas Field Office supervisor postponed consideration of her for the program on July 25, 1962, noting that "her activities could be sufficiently monitored in connection with the security case on Lee Harvey Oswald." 13 Hoover as noted above, the FBI security case on Lee Harvey Oswald was closed less than a month later.

With respect to Oswald's marriage to Marina, and her return to the United States, the Warren Commission stated:

Oswald's marriage to Marina Prusakova on April 30, 1961, is itself a fact meriting consideration. A foreigner living in Russia cannot marry without the permission of the Soviet Government, It seems unlikely that the Soviet authorities would have permitted Oswald to marry and to take his wife with him to the United States if they were contemplating using him alone as an agent. The fact that he had a Russian

wife would be likely, in th ance under which he wou agencies, would make him neighbors as "an ex-Russi bility. A wife's presence constitute a continuing risk Marina Oswald's lack of E ignorance of the United scarcely recommend her to ber of an "agent team" to a difficult and dangerous for

In contrast, a retired Burea Committee that of greatest conc fact that the Soviets had allo States with Oswald. He felt tha shoulder and make use of him t would give them a great deal o "The Russians might try to exe tives or threats to her relative However, it should be emphasi he is not aware of any evidence fact used or attempted to contact C. The Continued Investigatio

On September 28, 1962, the Oswald subscribed to The Work "an east coast Communist Nev the Dallas Field Office, From scription to this newspaper cont he was "disenchanted with the S was noted in his field office sec not informed of the subscriptic only after it had requested inf office.18 Assistant Director Gale of the Bureau's handling of th defection, the case should have I Communist sympathy or activit

<sup>&</sup>quot;Memorandum from Dallas Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 7/10/62, The Warren Commission apparently was not provided with the administrative cover pages of SA Fain's report which discussed Oswald's refusal to be polygraphed. Nor did Fain report Oswald's refusal to be polygraphed when he testified before Nor did Filin report Oswilid's religian to be polygraphed when the Warren Commission on May 6, 1964, despite detailed questioning by Commission members Ford and Dulies as to the discrepancies in Oswild's statements and Fain's reaction to them. (Fain testimony, Warren Report, Vol. IV, p. 418.)

\*Memorandum from Dulias Field Office to FBI Hendquarters, 7/10/02.

\*Memorandum from Gale to Tolson, 12/10/03.

\*Memorandum from Gale to Tolson, 12/10/03.

<sup>&</sup>quot;Memorandum from Gale to Tolson, 12/10/63.

"Memorandum from Gale to determine whom Oswald in contact with or whether he had an intelligence assignment. Inspector feels this limited investigation inadequate. Dallas agent responsible for delinquencies now retired and no explanations obtained from

Memorandum from Dallas Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 7/25/62.

Warren Commission Report, p. 27
 Staff summary of interview w!
 1/16/76; FBI Hendquarters Supervi:
 The Committee has discovered no

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Memorandum from Dallas Field See, e.g., testimony of SA James P. recommended on March 25, 1963, tha of this contradiction.

<sup>14</sup> Memorandum from Dallas Field
15 Memorandum from Gale to Tole
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None of the Bureau's internal cri security case, or even the fact that known to the Warren Commission.

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wife would be likely, in their view, to increase any surveilance under which he would be kept by American security agencies, would make him even more conspicuous to his neighbors as "an ex-Russian", and would decrease his mobility. A wife's presence in the United States would also constitute a continuing risk of disclosure. On the other hand, Marina Oswald's lack of English training and her complete ignorance of the United States and its customs would scarcely recommend her to the Soviet authorities as one member of an "ngent team" to be sent to the United States on a difficult and dangerous foreign enterprise,14

In contrast, a retired Bureau Soviet Section Supervisor told the Committee that of greatest concern to him in the Oswald case was the fact that the Soviets had allowed Marina to return to the United States with Oswald. He felt that if they desired to "tap Oswald on the shoulder and make use of him at some future date, Marina's presence would give them a great deal of leverage." The supervisor explained, "The Russians might try to exert leverage, possibly through her relatives or threats to her relatives in Russia and that sort of thing.15 However, it should be emphasized that the Supervisor testified that he is not aware of any evidence which establishes that the Soviets in fact used or attempted to contact Oswald.18

C. The Continued Investigation: Dallas

On September 28, 1962, the New York Field Office learned that Oswald subscribed to The Worker, which the Bureau characterized as "an east coast Communist Newspaper," and subsequently informed the Dallas Field Office. From the FBPs perspective, Oswald's subscription to this newspaper contradicted his interview statements that he was "disenchanted with the Soviet Union." 17 Oswald's subscription was noted in his field office security file but FBI Headquarters was not informed of the subscription until September 10, 1963, and then only after it had requested information on Oswald from the Dallas office is Assistant Director Gale critically commented on this aspect of the Bureau's handling of the Oswald case; "In light of Oswald's defection, the case should have been reopened at the first indication of Communist sympathy or activity (i.e., September 1962)." 19

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> Warren Commission Report, p. 274.

Staff summary of Interview with former FBI Hendquarters Supervisor, 1/16/76; FBI Hendquarters Supervisor testimony, 3/15/76, p. 21. The Committee has discovered no such evidence

The Committee has discovered no such evidence.

Memorandum from Dallas Field Office to FB1 Headquarters, 9/10/63.

See, e.g., testimony of SA James P. Hosty, Jr., 12/13/75, p. 111, who previously recommended on March 25, 1963, that the Oswald case be reopened on the basis of this contradiction.

<sup>&</sup>quot;Memorandum from Dallas Field Office to FB1 Headquarters, 9/10/63.

"Memorandum from Gale to Tolson, 12/10/43.

Director Hoover noted on November 29, 1963, that, "In Oswald's case there was no indication of rependance but only one of openly avowed hostility, and contacts with subversive elements," (Memorandum from W. C. Sullivan to A. H. Belmont, 11/90/69.) Belmont, 11/29/63.)

None of the Bureau's internal criticism of its own handling of the Oswald security case, or even the fact that there was such criticism, was ever made known to the Warren Commission.

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In October 1962, SA Hosty was assigned the Marina Oswald security case, which was then in a "pending inactive" status. The file was reviewed by Hosty in March 1963, when he also located Marina Oswald, but he did not interview her because of her alleged marital difficulties.20 Hosty reviewed the Dallas security file on Oswald and, on the basis of Oswald's subscription to *The Worker*, requested approval to reopen the case.21 On March 26, 1963, Hosty received approval. Hosty stated that he did not interview Marina Oswald because he had developed information that Oswald had been drinking to excess and beating his wife, and the relevant FBI manual provision required that he allow a "cooling off" period.<sup>22</sup> FBI Director Hoover later commented on the December 10, 1963, Gale memorandum that "this was certainly an asinine excuse" and "I just don't understand such solicitude." Inspector Gale had written that:

this entire facet of the investigation was mishandled. Mrs. Oswald definitely should have been interviewed and the best time to get information from her would be after she was beaten up by her husband.

The Director added the following notation next to Gale's conclusion: "This certainly makes sense." 28

On April 21, 1963, the New York Field Office learned that Oswald had written a letter to the Fair Play for Cuban Committee. This was the first indication in Bureau files that Oswald had a relationship with this pro-Castro organization. 25a Oswald's letter stated that he had passed out FPCC literature in Dallas with a placard around his neck reading "Hands Off Cuba—Viva Fidel." This information was not reported to Dallas until June 27, 1963,24 and not reported to Headquarters until September 10, f963.25 Once again, Oswald's activities contradicted his interview statements.

On May 27, 1963, Hosty returned to the Oswalds' Neely Street residence to interview Marina and was informed that the Oswalds had moved from the Dallas area without leaving a forwarding address. In response to an SAC memorandum issued by the Dallas office seeking information on the Oswalds' whereabouts, the New Orleans office informed Dallas on July 17, 1963, that the Oswalds were living in that city.34 The Bureau apparently learned of Oswald's presence in New Orleans from a letter he had written to The Worker on June 26, 1963. Oswald claimed in the letter to be a long-time subscriber and stated that he was forming an FPCC chapter in New Orleans. He enclosed honorary membership cards for "those

fighters for peace," Mr. munist Party, USA) an the Communist Party, U became the office for the O

D. The Continued Inves

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The New Orleans office participated in a radio pro and that "Cuba is the on today." 31 On August 23, by Headquarters to "subi the Bureau." \*2 On Septen the Bureau that the invedetailing the investigative gative report was subseque but it did not contain any in Oswald's Headquarter: formants in the New Orle neither had heard of him.1

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>80</sup> Hosty, 12/12/75, p. 119. <sup>81</sup> Hosty, 12/13/75, p. 111.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Hosty, 12/12/75, p. 119,

The Committee has verified that since such a manual provision was in effect, it appears that Hosty's decision to allow "a cooling off" period prior to interviewing Marina was entirely in accordance with FBI regulations. Neither the documents nor the testimony of knowledgeable FBI Officers provides any explanation for either Hoover or Gale's critical comments.

Memorandum from Gale to Tolson, 12/10/63.
 Memorandum from Dallas Field Office to FBI Hendquarters, 9/10/63.

<sup>\*\*</sup> Memorandum from Gale to Tolson, 12/10/63.

\*\* Memorandum from Dallas Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 9/10/63.

\*\* Memorandum from Dallas Field Office to FBI Headquarters and New Orleans. Field Office, 8/23/63.

<sup>\*7</sup> Memorandum from New O Memorandum from Dalla:
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that Oswald was in New Or. April 24, 1963. However, an I testified before the Committee Lee Harvey Oswald in a New 1. 1963, transfer out of New C whether Oswald was using t that Oswald was "claiming to wald to verify or disprove the wald said nor what language anything unusual about Oswal ascertained that Oswald was

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riers, 0/10/01 ters and New Orleans fighters for peace," Mr. Gus Hall (Secretary General of the Communist Party, USA) and Benjamin Davis (National Secretary of the Communist Party, USA).<sup>27</sup> On September 10, 1963 New Orleans became the office for the Oswald case.<sup>28</sup>

D. The Continued Investigation: New Orleans

Oswald was arrested on August 9, 1963, in New Orleans in connection with his FPCC activities and charged with "disturbing the peace by creating a scene," 29 On the morning of August 10, Oswald asked to see a Bureau agent, and he was interviewed at length by SA John L. Quigley. Oswald also repeatedly lied to this FBI agent. For example, he told Quigley that he had met and married his wife in Fort Worth, Texas.

The New Orleans office learned on August 22, 1963, that Oswald participated in a radio program where he stated that he was a Marxist and that "Cuba is the only real revolutionary country in the world today." In On August 23, 1963, the New Orleans office was instructed by Headquarters to "submit results of their Oswald investigation to the Bureau." 32 On September 24, 1963, the New Orleans office advised the Bureau that the investigation was continuing and that a report detailing the investigative findings would be furnished. 35 An investigative report was subsequently sent to the Bureau on October 31, 1963, but it did not contain any significant information that was not already in Oswald's Headquarters file. The report reveals that only two informants in the New Orleans area were asked about Oswald and that neither had heard of him."

On October 2, 1963, agents of the New Orleans office attempted to ascertain Oswald's residence and place of employment. They learned that the Oswalds had left New Orleans. Leads to locate Oswald were sent to Dallas, Fort Worth, and Malvern, Arkansas. 35

" Memorandum from New Orleans Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 10/31/63.

the staff was informed that there was no record of another Oswald arrest, and that the New Orleans Police Department, in fact, had no information on Oswald prior to August 9, 1963.

Memorandum from New Orleans Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 8/15/63. <sup>21</sup> Memorandum from New Orleans Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 10/31/63,

p. 11.

Memorandum from FBI Headquarters to New Orleans Field Office, 8/28/63.

Memorandum from FBI Headquarters to New Orleans Field Office, 8/28/63. Memorandum from New Orleans Field Office to FBI Hendquarters, 9/24/63. Memorandum from New Orleans Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 10/31/63.

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<sup>&</sup>quot;Memorandum from New Orleans Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 10/31/63.

"Memorandum from Dallas Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 9/10/63.

"There is no indication in FBI documents or the Warren Commission's record that Oswald was in New Orleans on any occasion between October 1959 and April 24, 1963. However, an Immigration and Naturalization Service Inspector testified before the Committee that he is absolutely certain that he interviewed Lac Harvey Oswald in a New Orleans Jail cell sometime shortly before his April 1, 1963, transfer out of New Orleans, Although the Inspector is not now certain whether Oswald was using that particular name at that time, he is certain whether Oswald was "chaiming to be a Cuban allen" and that he "interviewed Oswald said nor what language or languages he conversed in. He does not recall anything unusual about Oswald's dress or demeanor, and believes that he quickly ascerlained that Oswald was not a Cuban allen, at which time he would have left Oswald in his jail cell. (1&NS Inspector Testimony, 12/11/75.)

On January 6, 1976, the Committee staff telephonically contacted the New Orleans Police Department and requested that they review their Oswald arrest records to see if he land been arrested other than on August 9, 1963. On January 7, the staff was informed that there was no record of another Oswald arrest, and

The evidence indicates that Lee Harvey Oswald was in Mexico City from September 27, 1963, through October 2, 1963, On October 10, 1963, Bureau Headquarters was provided with a copy of a CIA cable which stated that "Lee Henry Oswald" (sic) had been in contact with the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City on September 28, 1963.36

It was not until October 22, 1963, that information pertaining to Oswald's Mexico City trip was provided to the New Orleans office. 87 SA Hosty in Dallas had by chance ascertained similar information from the local I&NS office and coincidentally, his report detailing this information was received in New Orleans on October 22, 1963.

Thus, despite the fact that both the Dallas and New Orleans field offices were aware that Oswald had been in contact with the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City, there is no evidence that either of these field offices intensified their "efforts" to locate and interview Oswald. Most surprising, however, is that the "Soviet experts" at FBI Headquarters did not intensify their efforts in the Oswald case after being informed that Oswald had met with Vice Consul Kostikov at the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City. Not only were these experts familiar with Soviet activities in general, but they knew that Kostikov was a member of the KGB. Further, the Bureau's Soviet experts had reason to believe he was an agent within the KGB's Department which carries out assassination and sabotage. They were also aware that American citizen contacts with the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City were extremely rare.41 Ironically, the teletype which informed the Bureau of Oswald's Mexico City activities was sitting on a pile of documents on a Headquarters supervisor's desk awaiting initial action on November 22, 1963, That portion of the Gale memorandum which discusses Oswald's Mexico City trip reads as follows:

The SOG [Seat of Government] supervisor failed to take any action on the teletypes, stating it did not appear to him any action was warranted. Inspector (i.e., Gale) feels . . . the field should have been instructed to intensify investigation . . . and Oswald placed on Security Index.42

E. Continued Investigation: Dallas

On October 26, 1963, the New Orleans Field Office advised the Dallas office that the Oswalds had left a forwarding address in Irving,

CIA Cable from Mexico Station to FBI Headquarters 10/10/63; memorandum from LEGAT, Mexico City to FBI Headquarters, 10/18/63.

All the information that the FBI had prior to November 22, 1963, on Oswald's activities in Mexico City came from the CIA. On October 3, 1963, the CIA Mexico Station reported to Headquarters that Oswald had been in contact with the Soviet Embassy. On October 10, 1963, CIA Headquarters passed this information with some background material to the Navy, the State Department, and the FBI. The Mexico Station made a similar distribution to FBI and State Department officials in Mexico. Since Oswald was an American citizen, and since FBI was the responsible agency, disseminating this information ended CIA's responsibility in this matter.

Memorandum from FBI Headquarters to LEGAT, Mexico City, 10/22/63, copy to New Orleans Field Office.

Memorandum from Dallas Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 10/22/63, copy

to New Orleans Field Office.

\*\*Memorandum from LEGAT, Mexico City to FBI Headquarters, 10/18/63. \*\*Memorandum from Lisgat, Mexico City to Fibi Heauquarters, 10/10/00.

\*\*Information regarding Vice Consul Kostikov was made available to the Warren Commission. (Letter from CIA to the Warren Commission, 1/22/64.)

\*\*Former FBI Mexico City Lemi Attache testimony, 2/4/76, p. 17.

44 Memorandum from Gale to Tolson, 12/10/63.

Texas. Dallas was asked 30, 1963, SA Hosty repo with the Paine family November 1, 1963, Hosty Oswald was residing." know where Oswald liv employed at the Texas I view, Marina Oswald c expressed fear of the Bi Paine translating, was a

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Finally, it should be not in October 1975,47 establi nation Lee Harvey Oswi left a note for Special A was subsequently destroy and destruction of the O:

<sup>49</sup> Memorandum from New (
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direction of Headquarters.

\*\* Hosty, 12/13/75, p. 54.

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Texas. Dallas was asked to verify the new residence,43 and on October 30, 1963, SA Hosty reported that although Oswald's family was living with the Paine family in Irving, Oswald was not living there. On November 1, 1963, Hosty went to the Paine residence to "find out where Oswald was residing." 44 Ruth Paine informed Hosty that she did not know where Oswald lived; however, she did state that Oswald was employed at the Texas Book Depository. Toward the end of the interview, Marina Oswald came into the room. According to Hosty, she expressed fear of the Bureau and their brief conversation, with Ruth Paine translating, was an attempt to re-assure her. 45

After the assassination, the Dallas office explained to FBI Headquarters that the investigation had been delayed to "be sure that it was in possession of all information from New Orleans." Inspector Gale commented on this explanation in his December 10, 1963,

memorandum:

Inspector definitely does not agree, New Orleans submitted sixteen-page report, 10/31/63, and only leads outstanding in New Orleans were to ascertain Oswald's whereabouts. No indication New Orleans had any further data. . . . Even if New Orleans had not reported all information in their possession, Dallas should have intensified investigation in light of Oswald's contact with Soviet Embassy in Mexico City and not held investigation in abeyance.46

Finally, it should be noted that facts publicly disclosed by the Bureau in October 1975,47 establish that some two weeks prior to the assassination Lee Harvey Oswald visited the FBI's Dallas Field Office and left a note for Special Agent James P. Hosty, Jr., and that the note was subsequently destroyed. The circumstances surrounding the receipt and destruction of the Oswald note are discussed in Appendix B.

direction of Hendquarters.

\*\* Hosty, 12/13/75, p. 54.

\*\* Memorandum from Gale to Tolson, 12/10/63.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> Memorandum from New Orleans Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 10/25/63, copy to Dallas Field Office.

<sup>45</sup> It should be noted that under the relevant FBI manual provisions then in the context of t effect, any contact such as Oswald's with the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City required that immediate investigative action at the appropriate field office be undertaken. However, it should be further noted that other provisions precluded the field office's interviewing Oswald without the express written approval or

Deputy Associate PB1 Director James B. Adams testimony, before the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights, 10/21/75.