

THAT long-in-the-works biography of Marina and Lee Harvey Oswald by Priscilla McMillan has finally been completed. Mrs. McMillan, a Russian scholar and journalist who translated Svetlana Alliluyeva's first book, entered into an agreement with Marina Oswald for the exclusive rights to her story back in 1964 and has been working on the book off and on ever since. Part of the delay has been due to personal matters, but Mrs. McMillan writes in her foreword of the difficulties of tracking down aspects of Lee Harvey Oswald's life, in contrast to the easier task of obtaining facts from and about Marina Oswald.

By sheer chance, Mrs. McMillan was involved with both Kennedy and Oswald before the 1963 assassination. After graduation from college in the 1950's, she worked for then Senator John F. Kennedy as a researcher and later became friendly with him. In 1959, when she was in Moscow working for a small translation service and as a stringer for the North American Newspaper Alliance, she interviewed Oswald, who had arrived in the country as a self-proclaimed defector. Her exclusive arrangement with Marina Oswald evolved out of her fluency in Russian but also because Mrs. Oswald was intrigued by Mrs. McMillan's prior acquaintance with both her husband and John F. Kennedy, whom she admired.

Mrs. McMillan and her husband, George, are anathema to believers in a conspiracy theory of the assassinations of both President Kennedy and Martin Luther King because of articles defending the Warren Commission's findings and Mr. McMillan's 1976 book, "The Making of an Assassin," a study of James Earl Ray that concluded he had acted alone in the murder of Dr. King. In "Code Name 'Zorro,'" a new book about the King assassination by Mark Lane and Dick Gregory, Mr. Lane charges that Mrs. McMillan was secretly in the employ of the State Department when she met Oswald in Moscow; Mrs. McMillan has denied this and says the State Department has repudiated the charge.

In her new book, which Harper & Row will publish in October under the title of "Marina and Lee," Mrs. McMillan gives "a thorough psychological portrait of Oswald as having many strange qualities and obsessions and perfectly capable of doing the deed alone without assistance," according to her editor, M. S. Wyeth Jr. Mr. Wyeth said the book offers "many new details," such as Marina's discovery of Oswald's attempted assassination of Gen. Edwin Walker.

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