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his acquaintances people belonging to foreign governments as well as to the American government who were members of the military or in political or quasi-political positions. . . ." As will become clear, de Mohrenschildt did indeed become involved in matters involving American military intelligence. His lawyer, Patrick Russell, confirms that his client "traveled abroad regularly, frequently without his wife. And each time upon his return to the States he would undergo debriefing. It has always seemed most plausible to me that he was an agent, that he did have an assignment, that his association with Lee Harvey Oswald went a little deeper than friendship." In 1979, an Assassinations Committee source, who had specialized in studying de Mohrenschildt, observed that — while his name is not on file as an agent — "he had contacts with intelligence again and again. We could certainly give him no clean slate as far as intelligence was concerned."

As I had heard
the FBI report
that Oswald

When Oswald and his Soviet wife came to Texas in 1962, Russian emigré de Mohrenschildt was in the area and available, an excellent candidate if someone was needed to pump Oswald on his Russian adventure. He and his wife have always claimed they encountered Oswald by chance, in autumn that year, following a casual introduction by friends in the Russian community. Over the years, however, the participants have differed as to how precisely it came about. One early version was that they were taken to see Oswald by a Dallas businessman of Russian descent, Colonel Lawrence Orlov. Orlov, though, told a recent interviewer that when that meeting took place it was obvious the Oswalds and the de Mohrenschildts had met before. De Mohrenschildt told the FBI after the assassination that they had been introduced by the doyen of the affluent Russian colony in Dallas, George Bouhe. Bouhe said it did not happen that way. Jeanne de Mohrenschildt says simply, "My husband and I heard from the Russian community of an American Marine that defected to Russia and returned bringing a young wife and daughter. . . . He needed a job and she needed help with the child. So we decided to take them under our wing." Under pressure, however, George de Mohrenschildt was to inject a quite different element into the story — that he was cleared to associate with Oswald by a CIA agent based in Dallas, after ^{the CIA had} J. Walton Moore.⁶⁸

fact, J. Walton Moore exists, he was the Domestic Contacts Division agent of the CIA, who
He was a member of the CIA, a Soviet, a Soviet agent, CIA was

who debriefed de Mohrenschildt after the Yugoslavia trip in 1957. His job, as defined in 1979 by Congress' Assassinations Committee, was "to contact persons traveling abroad for the purpose of eliciting information they might obtain." Moore's own correspondence with CIA headquarters reveals that, in the two years following the Yugoslavia debriefing, he saw de Mohrenschildt several times. They discussed their mutual interest in China, and in 1961 Moore viewed films made by de Mohrenschildt during his Central American travels.

Why we
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It was in the wake of the assassination that de Mohrenschildt first implied that CIA agent Moore had special knowledge of Oswald. He told the FBI that, after meeting Oswald, he asked Moore whether it was "safe" to associate with him. Moore, according to de Mohrenschildt, responded by saying, "Yes, he is okay. He is just a harmless lunatic." Jeanne de Mohrenschildt says she was present during the conversation and that "Moore seemed to be aware of Oswald. He knew who we were talking about. He said the CIA had absolutely no trace on him, that he was perfectly all right and clear. The CIA had nothing on him in the records." If the wife's version is accurate, George de Mohrenschildt's CIA friend was behaving very strangely. CIA files did contain material on Oswald and his activities in Russia. But an even more discordant note is struck by Jeanne's allegation that Moore was at once familiar with the Oswald case when the subject was brought up — as she claims — out of the blue, over dinner. If the CIA had nothing on Oswald, how was its Dallas representative qualified to comment on Oswald without even checking? And did de Mohrenschildt really consult his local CIA contact *after* meeting Oswald, or did he start to cultivate Oswald at the suggestion of the CIA?

The CIA was and remains embarrassed by de Mohrenschildt's revelations about the Agency man in Dallas. De Mohrenschildt claimed that an FBI agent who visited him after the assassination, James Wood, tried to pressure him into withdrawing the story of the Moore meeting. The documentary record reflects that pressure and de Mohrenschildt's humiliating (and implausible) recantation. Moore himself, who still lives in Dallas, fobbed off one reporter in 1976 by claiming airily, "To the best of my recollection, I hadn't seen de Mohrenschildt for a couple of years

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before the assassination. I don't know where George got the idea that I cleared Oswald for him. I never met Oswald. I never heard his name before the assassination." On the matter of when he had last seen de Mohrenschildt, Moore was more careful about his "best recollection" when questioned by the Assassinations Committee. Its report says that — while still denying he ever discussed Oswald — Moore indicated that from 1957 on he "had 'periodic' contact with de Mohrenschildt for 'debriefing' purposes over the years. . . ." Jeanne de Mohrenschildt responds to even that statement with rather credible feminine scorn. She says that at the relevant period, Moore was so close an associate that he and his wife were dining once a fortnight with the de Mohrenschildts.

As Dallas representative of the CIA's Domestic Contacts Division, and given his established rapport with de Mohrenschildt, Moore was well placed to arrange a discreet debriefing of Oswald on his return from the Soviet Union. In his last interview on the subject, in 1977, a weary George de Mohrenschildt came up with what may well have been the truth. He said that CIA agent Moore encouraged him to see Oswald, that he would not have seen Oswald at all without Moore's encouragement. There can now be little doubt that whether he knew it or not, Oswald was monitored by the Central Intelligence Agency as soon as he returned to the United States. There is no doubt at all that George de Mohrenschildt had a direct effect on Oswald's life.

George swiftly established a man-to-man relationship with Lee, and they made a strange pair. De Mohrenschildt was thirty years older than Oswald, swashbuckling and sophisticated, a hanger-on of a well-to-do social group which Gerald Ford, a former member of the Warren Commission, had described as "conservative, anti-Communist." Oswald, in contrast, seemed introverted, consumed with idealistic notions, and grudgingly poor. Yet just as in the war George de Mohrenschildt may have played the Germanophile, infuriating friends with "Heil Hitler" salutes while privately working for the Allies, so now he was well equipped to cultivate Oswald. De Mohrenschildt was a maverick among his Dallas friends, an articulate champion of minority causes and a liberal who loved to flout convention. He had no trouble building a bridge to Lee Harvey Oswald and seems genuinely to have liked him. Years later de Mohrenschildt would

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w/ Moore*

*W/ Moore
1967*

say, "Lee Harvey Oswald was a delightful guy. They make a moron out of him, but he was smart as hell. Ahead of his time really, a kind of hippie of those days. . . ." Apart from the Soviet episode, the Baron and the "hippie" covered a lot of ground together. In a rough manuscript written after the assassination, de Mohrenschildt portrays Oswald as a young man with ideas which today would raise few eyebrows. For example, he shared with de Mohrenschildt a sense of outrage over racial discrimination in the United States and spoke admiringly of Martin Luther King. Most poignant of all today are Lee-Oswald's statements about President Kennedy. As reported by de Mohrenschildt, Oswald repeatedly praised the President for his efforts to improve the racial situation and to reach an understanding with the Communist world. De Mohrenschildt quotes Oswald, who within a year would be accused of killing John Kennedy, as saying of the President, "How handsome he looks, what open and sincere features he has! How different he looks from the other politicians! . . . If he succeeds he will be the greatest President in the history of this country."

If de Mohrenschildt's main purpose was to extract information about the Russian episode, Oswald was a walkover. The two new friends talked hour after hour about Oswald's experiences in the Soviet Union, and de Mohrenschildt received one unexpected bonus. When Oswald arrived in the United States he had started collecting notes and comments on his stay in Russia and spoke briefly of getting them published. Then he seems to have had second thoughts, for he did not respond at all when a persistent local reporter tried to discuss them with him. Now, though, Oswald handed over his detailed notes to de Mohrenschildt and respectfully asked for his opinion. Possibly the papers were promptly copied and passed to de Mohrenschildt's friend in the local CIA, Jim Moore. De Mohrenschildt's son-in-law, Gary Taylor, was to tell the Warren Commission that Oswald became putty in de Mohrenschildt's hands. "Whatever his suggestions were, Lee grabbed them and took them, whether it was what time to go to bed or where to stay." In October 1962 Oswald followed his older friend's advice in a way that changed the direction of his life.

On October 7 a group of Russians, including the de Mohrenschildts with their daughter and son-in-law, visited the

*two who
came
out
with
him*

Oswalds at their rundown apartment in Fort Worth. Oswald announced that he had lost his job at a nearby metal factory, a claim that was not true, and thus sparked a discussion as to what he should do next. It was George de Mohrenschildt who volunteered what seemed a ready-made plan. He suggested that Oswald would have a better chance of finding work in Dallas, thirty miles away, and that Marina would be better off staying awhile with one of the emigré families. Everyone present had been aware of tension between Oswald and Marina, and some believed Oswald had been beating his wife. De Mohrenschildt's proposals seemed reasonable and were accepted. Much later, some of those present would remember that George de Mohrenschildt was overdoing things a bit, that he seemed strangely clear about Oswald's job prospects in Dallas. He even gave the impression that he was personally supplying Oswald with funds. Perhaps significantly, Oswald — for all his apparent poverty — had just finished repaying the \$200 his brother had lent him to help with the travel from New York. The day after the meeting at his apartment, Oswald followed de Mohrenschildt's advice to the letter. He walked out of his perfectly good job in Fort Worth, without notice or explanation, and traveled to Dallas. A part from a few days at the city YMCA, it is not known where Oswald stayed for the best part of the next month.

He rented a post-office box, a system which — assuming no official surveillance — ensured the receipt of mail with absolute privacy. Oswald used a post-office box wherever he went from now on. Four days after arriving in Dallas he also secured a new job — one which paid, within a few cents, exactly the same as his old job in Fort Worth. Although technically the work was found for Oswald by the Texas Employment Commission, George de Mohrenschildt's wife and daughter both say de Mohrenschildt organized it. Instead of factory chores the job involved photography, a skill Oswald was keen to learn. It was to be an odd setting for a young man who had sullied his name by defecting to the Soviet Union and offering to give away military secrets.

Oswald's new employment was with a graphics-arts company called Jaggars-Chiles-Stovall. The firm not only prepared advertisements for newspapers and trade catalogue but also handled contracts for the U.S. Army Map Service. Much of the Army work

These photos are missing the what? Nicholson says and doing anything for the CIA. It just plain lies

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THE MAN WHO WAS PERFECTLY ALL RIGHT 231
largely mentioned from a marine gun do of. One of us
involved material obtained by the very U-2 planes Oswald had used
once watched in Japan, and only employees with a special security
clearance were supposed to see it. In practice everybody — includ
ing Oswald — worked in cramped conditions which made secrecy
impossible. He worked side by side with a young man named
Dennis Ofstein who had previously worked in the Army Security
Agency. Oswald was closemouthed about his background, but
loosened up a little when he found Ofstein knew some Russian.
Ofstein later recalled the curiously professional way his new col-
league discussed matters of military interest he had observed in
the Soviet Union. Oswald mentioned "the dispersment of milit-
ary units, saying they didn't intermingle their armored divisions
and infantry divisions and various units the way we do in the
United States, and they would have all of their aircraft in one
geographical location and their infantry in another. . . ." Once,
when Ofstein helped Oswald enlarge a picture, he said it had been
taken in Russia and showed "some military headquarters and that
the guards stationed there were armed with weapons and ammuni-
tion and had orders to shoot any trespassers." Over a period of six
months at Jaggars-Chiles-Stovall, Oswald became acquainted
with sophisticated camera techniques. He also acquired items of
photographic equipment which seemed unlikely possessions for a
youngster living on a pittance. When police seized Oswald's
effects in November 1963, after the assassination, they found a
Minox camera — the sort usually referred to as a "spy camera."
This fact remained obscure until very recently.*

Dallas police detective Gus Rose says he found the Minox camera in Oswald's old Marine seabag. It was listed with other confiscated possessions in Dallas police headquarters and kept there until the FBI took over the inquiry and carried off all evidence, including the camera, to Washington. Two months later the FBI contacted the Dallas police and tried unsuccessfully to have the manifest of Oswald's possessions changed. They now claimed that the equipment found had not been a camera at all, but a Minox light meter. The police declined to change the manifest, and today Detective Rose remains adamant that it was indeed a Minox camera he found. He is emphatically supported by Assistant District Attorney Bill Alexander, who saw the Minox camera just after its seizure. He scoffs at FBI attempts to say the

*Call be-
Lynch
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Parker*
*Probably he was a right
wing extremist Oswald*
CONSPIRACY

camera never existed, recalling that he personally worked the mechanism on Oswald's Minox. As a professional investigator, Alexander is familiar with the workings of the Minox camera and owns one to this day. He regards the FBI behavior over the camera as further indication that before the assassination, Oswald had some connection with a government agency. Warren deBruyts, the FBI agent who took Oswald's possessions to Washington and monitored his activities during part of 1963, today says he "cannot remember" the Minox camera. Now retired from the Bureau, deBruyts adds, however, that there are "limitations as to what I can say. . . . I have signed the secrecy agreement before leaving the Bureau." In the recent proceedings of Congress' Assassinations Committee, a staff lawyer made it clear that the item seized was indeed a Minox camera.

Along with the camera, police confiscated a whole array of other equipment after the assassination, including rolls of exposed Minox film. In 1978, after a legal suit under the Freedom of Information Act, the FBI released twenty-five pictures developed from the Minox cassettes. The majority show scenes shot in Europe, and five show military scenes apparently photographed in Asia or Latin America. Apart from the Minox material, the police also seized three other cameras, a 15-power telescope, two pairs of fieldglasses, a compass, and even a pedometer. None of those who knew Oswald in the two years before the assassination have remembered him as a cross-country hiking enthusiast. The total cost of all this equipment must have been hundreds of dollars.

Oswald's address book, also confiscated after the assassination, contained the words "micro dots," written alongside the entry for the firm of Jaggars-Chiles-Stovall.⁴³ The microdot technique is used to store and transmit intelligence information. By a system of photographic reduction a mass of written material can be transferred to a tiny spot like a punctuation mark and then concealed in an apparently innocent document, such as a letter. It is a technique that has little use outside espionage. Taken together, Oswald's activities, possessions, and associations all far with his public image of a hard-up workingman. There is no avoiding the strong suspicion that he was, in reality, something else.

In the weeks before Christmas 1962, Lee and Marina appeared to lurch from crisis to crisis in their married life. For a while they were separated again — and the Russian exile colony buzzed with rumors of Lee's cruelty toward his wife. Oswald, for his part, complained that Marina had her faults — not least a weakness for gossiping to others about their sex life. Many of the local Russians, who had at first befriended the Oswalds, swiftly backed away from the marital strife. George de Mohrenschildt, however, did not. He continued to spend time with Oswald, talking politics with him — largely in English, a language Marina still had trouble following.

As the fateful year of 1963 began, Oswald moved into a new phase. Ostensibly he plunged once again into a lonely obsession with left-wing causes, this time with a tragic spiral into violence. The conventional wisdom for a long time was that Oswald was now set on a course which would lead him — and him alone — to Dealey Plaza, as the assassin of President Kennedy. Today, with the Assassinations Committee finding that at least two gunmen were involved, the signposts point in new directions. So far as the role of triggerman is concerned, Oswald may even have been the fall guy he claimed to be.