

as such, but of their agents or of groups related to them, directly or indirectly, made impossible the precise answer to whether or not Oswald was any kind of an agent.

The denials of the CIA and the FBI that Oswald was their agent were as predictable as they were meaningless (R327). Equally unworthy of serious consideration is the Report's statement that the Commission had access to the "complete files". The Commission had access only to what the agencies wanted it to see. This may, in fact, have been complete files or complete files as they then existed or ever existed. The case of the denial of the Gary Powers U-2 flight over the Soviet Union is fresh in history. Even when the plane was in Russian hands, and even when the prestige and integrity of both the country and the President were at stake, worthless denials were made. What did the Commission expect, that any agency with which the presumed assassin of the President had been associated was going to rush forth and claim credit for him or his terrible crime?

Besides, the denials by the agency heads could have been quite truthful and still have been meaningless and worthless. Only formal employees are carried on payroll and expense accounts. The agents of agents, the informants and contacts, are not payrolled. They cannot and should not be, for their security and that of the agency is too deeply involved and too important. Such people are remunerated from unvouchered funds of which there is no precise accounting. By their very nature they are not to be accounted for. If this were not an absolute necessity, there would be no justification for their existence in a democratic society. The people's money cannot be spent indiscriminately, except when absolutely essential, as in the case of intelligence.

If Lee Harvey Oswald had any non-payrolled relationship with the CIA, John McCone had no reason for knowing it. Nor could he with any certainty trace it down and learn it. The whole sad history of the Bay of Pigs and the partly revealed story of the American pilots who lost their lives in its prelude make clear the indirection with which the CIA works and has to work. The survivors of those pilots are not receiving and have not received compensation from the CIA. Their checks come from mysterious corporations. The mysterious boats and ships that are in and out of Florida and other ports on other than orthodox maritime business are not registered in the name of the CIA. They cannot and should not be. But no one doubts in whose interest they ply the Caribbean.

Having by its approach and method precluded any meaningful analysis of Oswald's politics, relationship with the government and his motives, if any, the Report then makes even more certain of the worthlessness of its conclusions by falling for the ploy of the police and engaging in semantics. It uses political words out of context and gives them a meaning diametrically opposed to reality. Throughout the Report are references to Oswald's "commitment to Communism". To most Americans this means the belief and philosophy of the American Communist Party and the Soviet Union. Above all, it connotes an attachment to the Soviet Union.

This was the opposite of the truth. The Commission knew it. All of its data prove that Oswald was not, either philosophically or by membership, connected with the Communist Party. He hated it and the government of the Soviet Union with passion and expressed his feelings with what for him was eloquence.

While seeking to mitigate this forthright misrepresentation with equally vague and undefined references to "Marxism", which most Americans equate with Communism, the Report leaves itself with as much intellectual integrity as the boy with his fingers crossed behind his back denying he was in the cookie jar.

Almost from the moment of his arrest, the police knew all about Oswald's background, for the FBI's Oswald expert, James P. Hosty, Jr., participated in the first interrogation. Oswald discussed what

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he considered his politics without inhibition. Insofar as he or they understood what he was talking about, it is, to the degree they desired, reflected in the reports of the interrogators. Appendix XI consists exclusively of these reports (R598ff.).

The moment the police heard Oswald had defected to the Soviet Union and heard from his own lips that he was a "Marxist", they ignored his frank statements about his disapproval of the Soviet Union, and the diversion and "Red scare" were launched. It received the widest dissemination. Editorial and headline writers needed no encouragement in their speculations and inherent accusations of a Communist plot to kill the President. From that moment on, Oswald was even more friendless, the trail of any conspiracy was brushed over, and the hounds were off in the wrong direction. To this day, even in the Report, the only really serious consideration given to any possibility of a conspiracy is restricted to the involvement of the Soviet Union or Castro Cuba.

If those among his acquaintances who told the Commission of Oswald's political beliefs, such as the Paines and George de Mohrenschildt, understood correctly, Oswald did not understand Marxism. Not a single witness or fact showed him either a Communist or pro-Communist. Every scrap of evidence from his boyhood on proved him consistently anti-Communist. Ruth Paine told FBI Agent Hosty, when he interviewed her in early November, that Oswald described himself as a Trotskyite and that she "found this and similar statements illogical and somewhat amusing" (R439). De Mohrenschildt, at the time of the assassination occupied with a business relationship with the Haitian government, was apparently the only member of the Fort Worth Russian-speaking community for whom Oswald had any respect (R282). De Mohrenschildt was described by the Commission and some of its informants as provocative, non-conformist, eccentric, and "of the belief that some form of undemocratic government might be best for other peoples" (R283). He was an agent for French intelligence in the United States during World War II. The Commission's investigation "developed no sign of subversive or disloyal conduct" on the part of the De Mohrenschildts (R383).

Oswald is not known to have ever had any kind of a personal contact with any party or any official of any part of the left, except by correspondence, and then of his initiative and of no clear significance. The total absence of such contacts, in person or otherwise, is in itself persuasive evidence that, as a matter of real fact rather than conjecture, he had no political affiliation. The searches of the Commission appear thorough and the facilities and resources of the investigative agencies are extensive.

As a 16-year-old, Oswald wrote the Young People's Socialist League asking information (R681). This is an old and well known youth group whose anti-Communism has been almost religious in its fervor.

Thereafter he wrote the Socialist Workers' Party, seeking literature, including the writings of Leon Trotsky. The Commission prints 14 pages of this correspondence (19H567-80). Again, this is an anti-Communist party and Trotsky is perhaps the best known of the former Russian Communists who fought the Soviet regime. Some of Oswald's correspondence with this group and all of his correspondence with the Communist Party (20H257-75) and the Fair Play for Cuba Committee (20H511-33) make sense only when the possibility of Oswald's being somebody's agent is considered.

The Report finds "Oswald had dealings" with these groups (R287). He did, in the same sense that one who writes the White House and gets a reply has "dealings" with the President.

Referring to the Communist Party U.S.A. alone, the Report states, "in September 1963, Oswald inquired how he might contact the party when he relocated in the Baltimore-Washington area, as he said he planned to do in October, and Arnold Johnson suggested in a letter of September 19 that he 'get in touch with us here (New York)

and we will find some way of getting in touch with you in that city (Baltimore)!" (R288).

The Report is correct but incomplete, for on the same date Oswald made the same request of the Socialist Workers' Party (19H577). The Report's authors considered it expedient to ignore the letter to the SWP. The reason for this omission and the reason for similarly false letters from Oswald to both historically antagonistic groups are worthy of consideration. In omitting all reference to the SWP, the Report gives the false impression of a non-existing affiliation with the Communist Party, else why should Oswald want to get in touch with the Baltimore-Washington branch? There is no evidence he planned such a move. He planned to go to Mexico and he went there. But why should Oswald have wanted to be in touch with both parties, antagonistic as they are, especially because of his own clear antipathy toward the Communist Party? One of the obvious reasons is that he was trying to penetrate them as some kind of agent. He could not have found political sympathy in or from both. It is this possibility that completely escaped the consideration of the authors of the Report and it is the most obvious consideration. Especially when thought of in the light of Oswald's relations with Cuban refugee groups, detailed elsewhere in this book, could this line of reasoning have led to a meaningful analysis and conclusion.

There was "no plausible evidence that Lee Harvey Oswald had any other significant contacts" with any of these groups, the Report concludes, evaluating the Oswald-initiated correspondence and requests for literature as "significant".

But Oswald's real attitude toward the Communist Party and the Soviet Union were well known to the Commission. He made no secret of them, and the Russian-speaking community in Fort Worth reported his dislike. Oswald himself was well recorded in letters, drafts of speeches and notes and, in fact, in public speeches. A number of such documents appear in Volume 16. They are part of the Commission's record.

Toward the end of their stay in New Orleans, the Oswalds went to Battles Wharf, Alabama, to participate in a seminar. He unburdened himself of his anti-Soviet feelings. Marina got a thank-you note from Robert J. Fitzpatrick, of the Society of Jesus, in which she was asked to convey "thanks to your husband, too, for his good report to our seminar. Perhaps we do not agree with him regarding some of his conclusions but we all respect him for his idealism ..." (16H243).

Oswald's hatred of the Communist Party and the Soviet Union exude from 150 consecutive pages of his notes in the same volume, as well as from other exhibits (16H283-434). For example, in Exhibit 97 (pp.422-3) he raged, "The Communist Party of the United States has betrayed itself! It has turned itself into the traditional lever of a foreign power to overthrow the government of the United States, not in the name of freedom or high ideals, but in servile conformity to the wishes of the Soviet Union ... (the leaders) have shown themselves to be willing, gullible messengers of the Kremlin's Internationalist propaganda ... The Soviets have committed crimes unsurpassed ... imprisonment of their own peoples ... mass extermination ... individual suppression and regimentation ... deportations ... the murder of history, the prostitution of art and culture. The communist movement in the U.S., personalized by the Communist Party, U.S.A., has turned itself into a 'valuable gold coin' of the Kremlin. It has failed to denounce any actions of the Soviet Government when similar actions of the U.S. Government bring pious protest." (Spelling improved.)

The Report quotes some of this as well as "... I hate the U.S.S.R. and Socialist system ..." (R399).

He also described himself as one with "many personal reasons to know and therefore hate and mistrust Communism ..." (16H442).

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Even his oft-mentioned notes on Russia, widely discussed but unquoted in the press, are a narrative full of the kind of information intelligence agencies, including our own, seek about other countries, especially the Soviet Union. It includes such items as the location of an airport, the layout of a city, and all sorts of intimate details of the electronics factory in which he worked, including what it produced, its rate of production, the number of employees engaged in various pursuits and other such non-travelogue data.

It is abundantly clear that the Report distorts and misrepresents the Commission's information on Oswald's politics. It both says and implies the opposite of the truth. It pretends a man whose hatred of the Soviet Union boiled in his guts was a protagonist of that political system and perpetuates a lie foisted off on an innocent public by the police. In such a Report, by such a Commission, dealing with such a tragedy, this is unpardonable. Can there be any reason for this except a desire to "fool the public"? How many more people, here and abroad, were willing to accept what might have otherwise been unacceptable conclusions, how many were less critical than they might have been of the Commission, because of this pretense that Oswald had a "commitment to Communism", that he somehow was an agent of a hated political force? The Report concludes that he was serving no foreign government and that he was the agent of none (R21-2). But the Report repeats the false representation of Oswald's politics. The Commission instead should have inquired into who created and broadcast this deception and with what motives. As a result, the Commission's own motives are suspect.

Oswald's Marine Corps Service and First Passport

Only in the light of what Oswald's politics really were might any sense be made of his relations with various agencies of the U.S. Government, his trip to Russia, his defection, and his defection from his defection.

With but 43 days of his Marine Corps enlistment remaining, or three months if the penalties of the courts martial had been imposed (19H725), Oswald received a "hardship discharge" (19H676). This was a clear fraud about which neither the Marine Corps nor any other government agency ever did anything. Why?

There are 112 pages of photocopies of Oswald's Marine Corps record reproduced at one point in the 26 volumes of hearings and exhibits (19H656-768), but that record is incomplete in at least one major respect.

This series of documents shows Oswald enlisted on October 24, 1956. He was twice court-martialed, once for the dream offense of many ex-servicemen and once for an even more unusual departure from regulations. The second breach, in non-military language, consisted of swearing at a non-commissioned officer and assaulting him "by pouring a drink on him on or about 20 June 1958 at the Bluebird Cafe, Yamato, Japan". He was sentenced to a \$55.00 fine and four weeks at hard labor, the second part waived on condition of good behavior. Less than six months earlier he had been court-martialed for accidentally shooting himself with his own loaded .22-caliber pistol, possession of which was prohibited. The generous Marines found this injury "was incurred in line of duty and not related to misconduct". His sentence was 20 days at hard labor, a \$50.00 fine, reduction in rank to private, with the confinement at hard labor suspended for six months unless sooner vacated (19H663-4, 682-4, 692, -707-8, 747-52).

Of Oswald's personal activity in the Marines, the Report states: "He studied the Russian language, read a Russian-language newspaper and seemed interested in what was going on in the Soviet Union." In the unit with which he served upon his return from the Far East, Oswald was referred to as "comrade" and "Oswaldskovitch" (R388). But his clearance to handle classified information was not