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TO : The Commission
J. Lee Rankin

FROM : William T. Coleman, Jr.
W. David Slawson

SUBJECT : Oswald's Foreign Activities: Summary of Evidence
Which Might be Said to Show that There was Foreign
Involvement in the Assassination of President Kennedy

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By nmg, NARS Date 5/1/12

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INTRODUCTION

One of the basic purposes of the Commission's investigation of the assassination of President Kennedy is to determine whether it was due in whole or in part to a foreign conspiracy. The investigation conducted by the section of the staff responsible for the foreign aspects of the Commission's work leads to the conclusion that there was no foreign involvement. Nevertheless, there is evidence which points toward a possible conclusion of foreign involvement which we think should be brought to the attention of the Commission for its independent evaluation.

The foreign countries most suspected in the public's mind are the Soviet Union and Cuba. The Chinese communists and even Madame Nhu's wing of Vietnam, however, might also be suggested.^{1/} Likewise, the possible involvement of expatriated anti-Castro Cubans, whether resident in the United States or in one of the South or Central American nations, is worth considering.

Firm evidence of a foreign conspiracy is obviously very hard to come by, since there naturally is the greatest attempt by the country involved to prevent discovery. Investigations that are dependent upon information voluntarily furnished by the foreign government involved, such as have already been undertaken with the Soviet Union and Cuba, are obviously not very helpful in uncovering evidence.

^{1/} Madame Nhu reportedly sent Mrs. Kennedy a very inconsiderate telegram shortly after the assassination and she has been reported in the public press as stating that the assassination of President Kennedy was only retribution for the killing of her husband, which she claimed was American inspired.

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of this type, because the foreign government will try to furnish only that evidence which it believes to be nonincriminating. Nevertheless, even this kind of evidence can be of some use in assessing whether a foreign conspiracy existed. This is because, first, the furnishing of the evidence, despite appearances, is not quite "voluntary." In a case of the magnitude of this one, and in which the widely known facts already disclose important links with the Soviet Union and Cuba, these governments are under considerable pressure to render reasonable cooperation to the Government of the United States. If they do not, they risk having public opinion swing strongly against them and conclude that they are afraid to cooperate because the evidence will indeed incriminate them. Second, once these governments conclude that they will furnish some evidence to the Commission, the difficulties of falsifying the evidence they give are considerable. They must realize that the Commission already possesses a great deal of data against which their new evidence will be tested, and that the CIA has additional facilities for this purpose which will be placed at the disposal of the Commission. Moreover, if even only a small part of the evidence furnished is found to have been fabricated, the entire body of new evidence will become suspect; and if this should happen, the adverse public opinion effects previously mentioned would again come into play. For these reasons, we have concluded that, on balance, it was worthwhile to ask the governments of the U.S.S.R. and Cuba to furnish the Commission with whatever evidence they could.

(It should also be pointed out that there is another reason why the governments of Russia and Cuba have been asked to furnish evidence.

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The Commission is primarily interested in ascertaining the truth, not just in "pinning the rap" on someone, and therefore the two foreign governments mentioned must be regarded not only as objects of investigation, but also as parties who have a right to be heard. They therefore should be given basically the same opportunity to present evidence as has been accorded to the hundreds of other individuals and institutions which have come into contact with Lee Harvey Oswald in one way or another.)

Obviously, despite the fact that voluntarily obtained evidence is not completely useless even in judging whether a foreign conspiracy is involved, the most valuable evidence for this purpose is that obtained through informers, ordinary witnesses, electronic and mechanical spying devices and other means available to American intelligence and investigatory agencies which are not dependent upon the consent of the government being investigated. The bulk of this memorandum will deal with this kind of evidence.

We think this separate memorandum for the Commission and the General Counsel appropriate because the material covered in the final report to the public will necessarily be somewhat more restricted. A good deal of the information contained herein is Secret or Top Secret and therefore cannot be disclosed to the American Public at this time. In most instances this is not because of the information itself but because of the necessity of protecting the method or source for obtaining it. In other words, in the final report we can set forth the facts, but we will not be able to demonstrate the reliability (or lack of reliability) of these facts by showing their source. Moreover, in some

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cases even the information itself must be withheld from the public.

Similarly,

even disclosing the information gained from certain wiretapping facilities would necessarily disclose the existence of the facilities, where the nature of the information is such that we could not have learned it except through these facilities.

I. SOME GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

A. "Foreign Involvement" Defined

We have intentionally chosen the words, "foreign involvement," to describe the problems with which we are concerned in this memorandum. The words were chosen because they are extremely broad, covering everything from a comparatively innocent arrangement for propaganda purposes, such as, for example, an agreement whereby Oswald might have served the propaganda purposes of the Castro Government in New Orleans and Dallas in exchange for that Government paying his printing expenses plus some small additional compensation, to the most serious kind of conspiratorial connection, as would be the case if a foreign power had ordered Lee Oswald to kill John F. Kennedy. By "foreign involvement," however, we do mean something more concrete than simply emotional or ideological influence. The Commission already possesses evidence, and indeed so does the general public, that Oswald considered himself a Marxist and that he sympathized wholeheartedly with the Castro regime: he openly spread pamphlets in its behalf on the streets of New Orleans and he took its side in radio

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and television debates. These facts have already been established, and they will be assumed, rather than discussed, in this memorandum. The question to be treated here is whether there was some reasonably close working relationship involving Oswald and a foreign power or at least a group of men based in a foreign country.

B. "Agent for What?"

The popular discussion of the foreign-conspiracy problem, current in America and especially common in the European press, deals most frequently with whether Lee Harvey Oswald was an "agent" of some foreign power or domestic conspiratorial group. Discussing the problem in this manner is misleading, because evidence that indicates that Oswald may have been one kind of agent is read by the public to mean that he could have been an agent for almost any purpose, including the assassination of the President, when in fact, upon closer analysis, such would not be the case at all. It should be kept in mind that to conclude that Oswald was or was not an "agent" is not enough; it should always be asked, "an agent for what?" For example, if it should be shown that Oswald was a paid Soviet Agent for the purpose of spreading Communist propaganda among workers wherever he lived, this would of course be something in which the Commission would be greatly interested, but it would not at all follow that the Soviet Government should then be blamed for the death of the President.

More importantly for our purposes, the question, "Agent for What?" should be kept in mind in order that the plausibility of our evidence can

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be tested. For example, an assertion that Oswald was the agent of the Castro Government for the purpose of obtaining intelligence-type information in the United States is, upon reflection, extremely unlikely. Oswald was a past defector from his country, lacked a completed high school education, was almost always confused in his own mind about all sorts of things, was usually unemployed and when he was employed, ordinarily worked as an unskilled laborer. Finally, he publicly espoused Castroism and propagandized in its behalf. Under these circumstances, the use of Oswald to obtain secret information for the Cubans, or indeed any information which was not readily available to everyone through television or newspapers, is preposterous. He could not conceivably have been permitted access to any such material, even under the loosest security arrangements. On the other hand, his circumstances and character do fit the criteria for an "agitator," propagandizer, or even an assassin, for the Cuban Government. It follows, therefore, that bits of evidence pointing towards his being an agent for one of the latter purposes must be taken seriously, whereas rumors to the effect that he was obtaining secret information for Castro should be given for less credence.

C. The Over-all Relevance of Political Motive

A third factor which should be kept in mind throughout this entire memorandum is the possible motives of the various governments and groups involved. This obviously ties in closely with the previous discussion on the various kinds of agent Oswald may have been. Here, too, examples will show what we mean. Khrushchev seems to have gotten along reasonably well with the late President and in general seems to be

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sophisticated enough to have realized that the death of President Kennedy and the succession to power of Vice President Johnson would not result in any significant change in American foreign policy towards the Soviet Union. Consequently, the Soviet use of Oswald as an agent to assassinate the President is relatively unlikely. The same conclusion does not follow for the Soviet use of Oswald as an assassination agent to kill other persons in the United States, however. Even as recently as the late 1950's the Soviet Government was using assassination as one of the methods to gain its political ends. Two Russian Ukrainian anti-Communist leaders were murdered in Western Europe by an agent of the KGB. This agent later got into trouble with his superiors and defected to the West; he told Western intelligence that before he got into trouble he was in line for training in the language and customs of the United States and the British Commonwealth countries, so that he could carry on his work there. It is conceivable therefore that the Soviet Government has agents in the United States at this time ready to kill when directed to do so by their Government. Once we accept this fact, the possibility that their network, if it exists, included Lee Harvey Oswald must be fully explored. An analysis of the possible motives of the Cuban Government is more difficult. The men who make up that Government are probably less coolheaded and rational than the Russians. Simple retaliation, for example, is a motive which must be thoroughly considered in dealing with Castro.

The foregoing discussion of motive is not meant to be exhaustive. We only mention it here because it is extremely important and because it cuts across all the other more specific and detailed evidence which

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will be taken up later, and therefore should be kept in mind while reading all the following portions of this memorandum. Where appropriate, we will bring up considerations of motive again.

II. INVOLVEMENT BY THE SOVIET UNION

- A. The circumstances surrounding Oswald's entry into the Soviet Union in October 1959: Do they show that the Russians knew of his coming or that he received help in planning his defection?

1. Possible Communist contacts while Oswald was in the Marine Corps.

While still in the United States Marine Corps, Oswald on September 4, 1959, applied for a U. S. passport to travel abroad, which passport was issued on September 10, 1959. Oswald listed as the countries which he intended to visit, Cuba, Dominican Republic, England, France, Switzerland, Germany, Finland, and Russia. He also stated on the application that the purpose of his trip would be to attend the Albert Schweitzer College in Churivalden, Switzerland, and the Turku University in Finland.

We are not quite certain when Oswald first determined to go to Russia.^{2/} From his own statements, however, we can conclude that he probably began to lay plans in his own mind one or two years before he

^{2/} There is a statement attributed to Oswald's mother's doctor, Dr. Morton N. Goldberg, that the mother told him sometime between April 4, 1957, and January 30, 1959, that her son (unnamed) intended to defect to Russia. This is wholly at variance with her testimony, however, and is also inconsistent with Oswald's letters to her from the period before he entered Russia and just before he disappeared into the Soviet world, which letters indicate the affair had never been disclosed to her previously.

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arrived in Russia. He had been a United States Marine and was stationed abroad in 1957 and 1958, in the Philippines, Japan and possibly Formosa. Thus there is the possibility that Oswald came into contact with Communist agents at that time. Japan especially, because the Communist party was open and active there, would seem a likely spot for a contact to have been made.

George deMohrenschildt, a Russian emigre' who left to escape the Communists, and a friend of Lee Oswald's, has testified that Oswald once told him that he had first got the idea of defecting when he was in Japan. Oswald's words, as remembered by deMohrenschildt, were, "I met some Communists in Japan and they got me excited and interested and that was one of my inducements in going to Soviet Russia, to see what goes on there." DeMohrenschildt's evidence on this point is at variance with Oswald's own statements, made after he had arrived in Russia in two interviews he granted with American newspaper reporters in his hotel room at Moscow. With both of these reporters he insisted that he had "never met a live Communist" and that the intent to defect was his own and was derived entirely from his reading and thinking. There is no way of knowing which of Oswald's statements represented the true state of affairs. On the one hand, he may have been more inclined to tell the truth to his friend, deMohrenschildt, than to two newspaper reporters in Moscow. On the other hand, at the time he spoke to the reporters there would seem to have been no reason for him to hide the fact that he had met Communists previously, because he believed that he was being accepted by the Russians and was leaving the United States forever; and also, the statement to deMohrenschildt smacks of the fiction which Oswald tried to create after

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he came back to the United States, which was that his residence in Russia had been something purely academic, "just to see what it was like over there." In any event, contacts with Communists in Japan and the Philippines were certainly available if Oswald wanted to make them. Whether such contacts, if they occurred, amounted to anything more than some older Communist advising Oswald, who was then only 18 or 19 years old, to go to Russia and see the Communist world, is unknown.

During the last six months to a year that he was in the Marine Corps Oswald engaged in arguments with other Marines in favor of Marxism and Socialism, at least on a few occasions. Some men who knew him claimed that he did not argue in this manner, others say that he did. He apparently was reluctant to argue too openly because he felt that he was being "persecuted" by his superiors for his pro-Communist views. One of his fellow Marines has testified that Oswald visited the Cuban Embassy in Los Angeles on one or two occasions and received mail from it during the spring or summer of 1959, just before he was discharged. In the early spring in 1959 Oswald wrote a letter to his brother which, inter alia, stated:

"Well, pretty soon I will be getting out of the Corps and I know what I want to be and how I'm going to do it."

While in the Marine Corps Oswald managed to accumulate, according to his own statements, \$1600, despite the fact that as a private first class he could never have earned more than about \$100 per month. He spent about two years and ten months in the service and claimed that he saved this entire amount out of his salary. This is obviously an impressively

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high amount of money to save from such a small monthly stipend, even when spread over almost three years, but it is not impossible. Evidence of his living habits and attitudes towards money which has been obtained since the assassination indicates that Oswald was extraordinarily frugal when he had a reason to be. There are only two periods when he is known to have spent money freely. One was for a few months after he was sent to Japan by the Marines and there kept a woman, apparently for the first time, when he went on a heavy drinking spree. A fellow Marine who knew him then believes Oswald "suddenly felt like a man." The other was during the approximately one year when he was a bachelor in Russia at which time he had no obligations other than to support himself, had no reason to save, held a high-paying job, was receiving a fat monthly subsidy from the Soviet Government and, again, was involved with women. After he returned to the United States he was frequently unemployed, and he then literally watched every penny. He frequently skipped breakfast except for coffee and ate only cold meat, bananas and bread and jelly for lunch. His trip to Mexico was financed --on a shoestring, but still financed-- at a time when the family was so destitute that Marina asked a friend, Ruth Paine, to take her into her home so that the Oswalds' expected child could receive adequate food and medical attention.

While in Atsugi, Japan, he studied the Russian language, probably for the most part by himself, but perhaps also with some help from one of the officers in his outfit who was interested in languages and used to practice Russian conversation with him occasionally. He took the Army

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"S. A. T." test in Russian in January 1959 and rated "Poor." By the time he reached the Soviet Union in October of the same year he could speak the language well enough to get along in restaurants and similar places, in a rough manner. During the long period in Moscow while he was awaiting the decision of the Russian Government on whether to accept him, his Diary records that he forced himself to practice his Russian eight hours a day. Again, after he was sent to Minsk in early January 1960, he took lessons from an interpreter assigned to him for the purpose by the government. Marina says that by the time she met him in March 1961 he spoke the language well enough so that she at first thought he was from one of the Baltic areas of her country, because his accent was similar to that of persons from that section of the USSR. She says that his only defects were that his grammar was sometimes incorrect and that his writing ability was never very good. It could be argued that the foregoing evidence shows that he must have received Russian lessons from an expert while he was in the Marines, but in our opinion such a conclusion is not justified.

The question whether Oswald had contacts with Communists while he was in the Marine Corps leaves open the further question, What kind of contacts? Basically, there would seem to be two sorts of relationships which could have existed. The first is one in which Oswald, possibly in Japan, sought out some English-speaking Communists to carry on political and philosophical discussions with them, and also perhaps to talk about traveling to Russia or even defecting. This, we believe, is very possible, perhaps even likely, although we have no hard evidence that it occurred. The second sort of relationship that might have existed is a

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closer one, one in which Oswald would have been urged to defect and given more or less detailed guidance on how best to do so. If he received help in learning the Russian language or in accumulating sufficient funds to travel to Russia, for example, the existence of this second sort of relationship could be inferred. Once it is postulated that Oswald may have received more or less detailed guidance from Soviet or Communist agents, however, the circumstances of his "hardship" discharge from the Marine Corps must be taken into account, and in our opinion they cut against the probability that his actions were the result of Soviet or Communist coaching. The facts of Oswald's "hardship" discharge from the Marine Corps are these:

In December 1958 his mother, who was a widow and her own only means of support, had an accident at work. From that time on she was incapacitated for gainful employment, but the insurance-company physicians concluded that her incapacitating symptoms had not been caused by the accident and her insurance benefits were therefore immediately terminated. This left her with no means of support and some high medical bills to pay. She turned to her son for help. He first worked through his commanding officer and the Red Cross, and he soon got her a monthly allotment, paid partly out of his own salary, of about \$130. He then, despite the fact that she advised him not to because she believed that the monthly allotment she was receiving would be sufficient, applied for a "hardship" discharge on the grounds that he ought to return home to Fort Worth, Texas, to take care of her. The Marine Corps granted him his discharge

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on September 11, 1959, only a week or so after he applied for it, and he thereby got out of the service about three months before his enlistment would have terminated in the ordinary course. Once the Marines released him, he went directly home, left \$100 with his mother, told her he was going to become a merchant seaman or get into the "import and export business" in New Orleans and send her lots of money, and then deserted her. The next she heard he was a passenger on a boat to Europe, and the next word after that was that he was in Russia. She learned he was in Russia only from the Fort Worth News. It later turned out that Oswald had applied for and received his passport even before he had obtained his "hardship discharge."

Under the circumstances, he undoubtedly obtained the discharge fraudulently. If the Russians were in fact coaching him at this time, it would seem unlikely that they would have advised him to obtain a discharge under these circumstances, merely in order to gain three months' time which, after all, was not particularly valuable to anyone. The fraudulent discharge not only got Oswald in deep trouble with the Marine Corps -- he eventually received a dishonorable discharge from the Reserve -- but was also obviously morally offensive and potentially very unpopular in that he deserted his own mother when she was sick, unemployed and poverty-stricken. It could only detract from whatever usefulness he might have for the Russians after his defection, either as a propagandist or a secret agent.

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2. Indications of Outside Help in
His Travel and Entry into Russia

On March 14, 1959, Oswald applied for admission to the Albert Schweitzer College in Switzerland. He was accepted and was supposed to start the course on April 19, 1960, but he never attended.

He left New Orleans, Louisiana, for Europe on September 20, 1959, having been honorably discharged from the Marine Corps on September 11, 1959. Instead of going to Switzerland, he went directly to Helsinki, Finland, by way of Le Havre, France, and London, England, arriving at Helsinki on October 10, 1959. (The stops in LeHavre and London were only for several hours, though when he reached London he told the immigration officials he intended to stay for 7 days). Four days later, on October 14, 1959, he was issued Soviet Tourist Visa No. 403339. It was marked valid for entry at any point along the Viborg-Moscow border until October 20, 1959, and permitted a single 6-day sojourn in the Soviet Union. Oswald entered the Soviet Union at the Vainikkaln crossing point enroute to Moscow by train on October 15, 1959. He arrived in Moscow on October 16 and was met by an Intourist Representative, Rina Shirokova. She took him to the Hotel Berlin, where he showed his 6-day tourist visa and registered as a student.

There have been statements to the effect that Oswald's entry into Russia raises suspicion because of the ease with which it occurred. For example, John A. McVickar, an official at the Embassy in Moscow in November 1959, stated in a memorandum of November 27, 1963, that there

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was a possibility that in coming to the Soviet Union and attempting to renounce his citizenship Oswald was "following a pattern of behavior in which he had been tutored by person or persons unknown." McVickar also states, in a follow-up memorandum dated April 7, 1964, that significance should be given to the fact that Oswald selected Helsinki, Finland, since Oswald would have to have known the not too obvious fact that Helsinki is a "usual and relatively uncomplicated point of entry to the Soviet Union (one that the Soviets might well choose for example if arranging the passage themselves.)" It should be pointed out by way of rebuttal that Oswald might well have obtained such travel information from the Cuban Embassy in Los Angeles -- with which he had contacts in the summer before he came to Russia. Also, probably any competent international travel agency could have supplied this information. McVickar also mentions that Oswald applied for the visa on October 14, 1959, and received it on October 16, 1959, only two days later. The Legal Adviser to the Department of State, Mr. Abram Chayes, in a letter dated April 24, 1964, has commented on this:

"It appears, therefore, that he received the visa within a day or two. Usually it takes at least a week for Soviet authorities to process tourist applications, and so the speed with which Oswald received his tourist visa was unusual."

This is a far more serious matter than McVickar's previous observation, which amounts to no more than that Oswald picked the sensible route to Russia. If in fact Oswald obtained his visa markedly more quickly than other tourists, the conclusion is almost inescapable

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that something behind the Iron Curtain had been put in motion in his behalf. Our investigation of this particular problem has come up with the following results:

In the first place, both Chayes and McVicar have their dates wrong. This does not reflect on their capabilities, because they are undoubtedly basing their conclusions upon State Department memoranda which were in turn based upon statements made at the time by Oswald himself, and subsequent investigation has shown that these were probably inaccurate. Oswald's American passport, which he of course had in his possession at the time he traveled to Russia, was subsequently surrendered to the Department of State, after he was repatriated, and has since been placed in the hands of the Commission. Stamps on this passport show that the Soviet Tourist Visa was issued (not applied for) in Helsinki on October 14.

Everything we know about his trip points to the fact that he proceeded to his destination, Moscow, as rapidly and as directly as his financial resources would permit. Despite statements made to fellow travelers along the way that he was "only a tourist" or "just a student on his way to college," he in fact wasted no time in sightseeing but made connections as rapidly as he reasonably could. Therefore, although we have no direct evidence indicating when he first applied for a visa, it seems highly probable that he applied for it as soon as he arrived in Helsinki, namely, on the 10th of October. Perhaps, however, his airplane arrived in Helsinki too late for him to have reached the Consulate before it closed that evening. Should this have

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been the case, he probably had to wait until Monday, October 12, to apply for a visa, because the 10th was a Saturday and the Consulate presumably was not open for business on Sunday. One other fact may be significant: Oswald left Helsinki on a train destined for Moscow on the 15th, the day after he received his visa. This points towards the fact that he probably received the visa late on the 14th, else he could -- and therefore, given his haste, would -- have taken a train out the same day. So the final result of all these calculations is that Oswald probably received his visa 4 days after he applied for it, but that he may have received it only 2 days later.

To date we do not know whether McVickar's and Chayes' statements that most tourists took at least a week to obtain a visa from the Soviet authorities are accurate and, if they are, whether there were so many deviations from the average waiting period that no particular significance should be attached to Oswald's, or whether, on the other hand, chance deviations from the normal waiting period were so infrequent that Oswald's has significance. This line of investigation is being carried on at the present time.

Finally, assuming that Oswald obtained a visa substantially sooner than the ordinary tourist would have obtained his, and that the Soviet procedures were sufficiently regular so that a quickly-granted visa would not have been simply the result of a chance variation in the normal workings of the bureaucracy, then what conclusions logically follow? It would seem that one of two inferences can be drawn. First, the Soviet authorities may have had advance warning of Oswald's arrival and been "ready and waiting" to handle him rapidly once he arrived.

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Second, the Soviet authorities may have been entirely ignorant of Oswald's pending arrival, but when he did arrive he, Oswald, immediately made known his strong sympathy with the Communist cause, his intention to defect and possibly even the fact that he had been a radar operator in the United States Marine Corps and the "fact" (doubtful) that he possessed secret information related to this job which he was ready to disclose. If this is the way Oswald conducted himself at the Soviet Consulate at Helsinki, then indeed his application would have been handled with dispatch. American Embassies throughout the world would presumably do the same thing if they believed they had a potential defector who possessed valuable information. Oswald himself claimed that he said nothing out of the ordinary to the Russian Consulate in Helsinki; he told the officials at the American Embassy in Moscow on October 31, when he appeared there in an attempt to renounce his citizenship, that he had said nothing to the Russians about defecting until he arrived in Moscow. Likewise, Yuri Ivanovich Nosenko, the Soviet KGB agent who defected to the United States in February 1964 [REDACTED] claims that the KGB at least had no knowledge whatever of Oswald until he appeared in Moscow.

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One other piece of evidence relating to the same point should be brought to the attention of the Commission.

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of the latter could be lies or forgeries, however, including even the American passport, since it was in Oswald's possession for about two weeks before he came into the Embassy -- two weeks when he was in the hands of the KGB in the Hotel Berlin and in a hospital in Moscow. The CIA itself is apparently of the opinion that the information which places Oswald in Helsinki, rather than Stockholm, is more reliable. It certainly fits the other evidence we have of Oswald's travel better than does the "Stockholm" report.

The foregoing summarizes or sets out all the information available to us at this time on the problem of whether Oswald obtained his visa unusually quickly.

The final judgment which must be made on all this data is of course, what conclusion may legitimately be drawn if it is assumed first, that Oswald did get his visa unusually early, second, that the quick issuance of a visa was significant, and third, that its significance was that the Soviets had warning well ahead of time that Oswald was coming to Russia to defect? Even all this does not necessarily add up to a conclusion that Oswald was ever used as an agent by the Soviet Government. It could add up to the conclusion that they hoped to get him to Russia so that he could there be analyzed for possible use as an agent and then so used only if the examination of him resulted in a favorable conclusion. It could also mean something less serious, for example, that they knew or suspected that Oswald was going to defect and wanted to make it as easy as possible for him to get into Russia so that they would be sure to obtain the propaganda benefits of his defection before he had a chance

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to get cold feet and turn back. And of course, the result could also have been much more serious: it could mean that the Russians knew he was coming and wanted to pave the way for him because he was already considered, in one way or another, "one of their own," and for some reason they wanted him safe in Moscow as soon as possible. One final thought on this last possibility might be worth noting. If Oswald was so closely tied in with the Soviet foreign network that they were already working together, it would seem unlikely that they would risk jeopardizing the possible secrecy of this relationship by so clumsy a device as cutting three or four days off the usual waiting period for a tourist visa. Surely, if the KGB wanted to bring a secret agent from the United States to Moscow, and it wanted to maintain the secrecy of the relationship, it would seem strange if it were to worry about letting him wait an extra few days on the border.

B. Did Oswald Receive Secret Soviet Instructions after He Arrived in Moscow and Made Known His Intentions to Defect?

Almost three months elapsed from the time when Lee Harvey Oswald arrived in Moscow until he left that city to take up residence in Minsk. We have attempted to reconstruct the events of those months, but a great deal of confusion exists. Oswald's diary, even assuming that it is an authentic document, is not a good guide to the details of what occurred. He must have filled in most of the Diary entries for this period at a later time, possibly much later, and he seems not to have worried about whether he was accurate or not on dates and even names.

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Some light on what was happening behind the scenes has been shed by Yuri Ivanovich Nosenko, the recent Soviet defector, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] The rest of our information comes from the records of the American Embassy in Moscow, the memories of some of the officials there, and the notes of two newspaper reporters, Miss Aline Mosby and Miss Priscella Johnson, who interviewed Oswald in his hotel room during this period. The following is a capsule outline of the major events as we think they occurred:

Date

Event

October 16, 1959

Oswald arrives in Moscow from Helsinki. On this same day he told his Intourist guide, Rima Shirokova, that he wanted to become a Russian citizen. He did not notify the American Embassy in Moscow of his arrival.

October 22

When told by the Soviets that he could not become a citizen and must leave Moscow within two hours, Oswald slashed his wrists in an attempt to commit suicide.

October 22-29

Oswald was confined in a hospital in Moscow and treated for a self-inflicted wound on his left wrist.

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Date

Event

October 31

Oswald appeared at the American Embassy in Moscow and announced that he wanted to give up his American citizenship and become a citizen of Soviet Russia. He is interviewed at some length and then told to come back later if he wants to carry out a formal renunciation of citizenship.

November 3

Oswald never reappeared at the Embassy, but he wrote them a letter on this date again stating that he wanted to renounce his American citizenship.

November 13
(or slightly earlier)

Oswald is interviewed by Miss Aline Mosby of the United Press International.

November 15

Oswald is interviewed by Miss Priscella Johnson of the North American Newspaper Alliance.

January 4, 1960

Oswald is finally informed by the Soviet authorities that he can live indefinitely in Russia and that he has been assigned to Minsk. He is also told that his application for citizenship has not been granted but that it may be sometime in the future.

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Before getting into a detailed discussion of the events outlined above we will draw attention to two points we believe are important. First, it should be noted that the American government had no knowledge of Oswald's arrival in Russia or of his attempt to defect until October 31, sixteen days after he actually arrived in the city. In the meantime, he had allegedly attempted to commit suicide and was confined in a hospital for medical treatment. There is no doubt that during this 16-day period he had many contacts with the Soviet authorities and that these contacts included officials of the KGB. This raises the question of whether the alleged suicide attempt was only a cover for some sort of training or brainwashing. The second point to be noted is that although he told the Embassy on October 31 that he wanted to renounce his American citizenship and wrote them a letter three days later reaffirming this intention, he never reappeared at the Embassy to carry out his threat. Later, his failure to carry out the formal renunciation procedures was to mean that he had a right to return to the United States as a citizen of that country. We will now begin a more detailed discussion of the foregoing events.

On the same day (October 16, 1959) that Oswald reached Moscow he informed his Intourist guide, Rina Shirokova, that he wished to apply for Soviet citizenship. Virtually all such guides are KGB agents and therefore we can assume that in all her actions she was guided by KGB orders or at least by her training in KGB methods. On that day or the next day, with the help of his guide, Oswald prepared a letter to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR requesting citizenship. Exactly what happened

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during the next few days is not clear, because the dates in Oswald's Diary around this time show a great deal of confusion. In general, however, it seems that the first reaction of the Soviet Government, expressed to Oswald through Rima Shirokova, was a "cautious welcome." He was not accepted with open arms, but he was given to believe that the officials who were handling his case were sympathetic and that probably everything would come out all right, though it would take time. He spent the waiting days seeing the sights of Moscow with his guide, Rima.

We have good reason to believe that the KGB used the opportunity provided by Oswald's waiting in Moscow to learn as much as they could about him, through Rima and through virtually everyone else at the Hotel Berlin where he was staying, in an attempt to assess his possible usefulness to the Soviet Union. For example, about two years later, when he was trying to return to the United States, Oswald told an Embassy official that he had been interviewed two or three days after his arrival by a "reporter from Radio Moscow" who told Oswald he was interested in his impressions of the city. Undoubtedly the "reporter" was one more person sent by the KGB to sound him out.

Finally, on October 22nd, the day upon which his 6-day visa was due to run out, he was called in and interviewed by an unidentified official. The interview consisted of questions as to why he wanted to become a citizen of Russia, what his past life was like, etc. According to Oswald's Diary the interview ended after he had answered all the questions, with no encouragement and no information on what might be done with his case.

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He returned to his hotel and that evening was told curtly that his visa had expired, that he was not being granted permission to stay in Russia, and that he therefore had two hours in which to leave Moscow. If the version we have of these events is true, the news hit Oswald like a thunderbolt. The Diary he kept records that he slashed his wrist with a razor about an hour later and plunged it into warm water in a bathtub, expecting to die. He was later found by his Intourist guide, who came looking for him when he did not show up for an evening appointment. He was taken to a hospital and remained there for 7 days.

Nosenko, the ex-KGB agent who defected to the United States, confirms the foregoing in its essentials. He says that the KGB had determined that Oswald was of no use to them because he was not mentally stable and not too intelligent and that they therefore sent down word that he was not to be accepted for permanent residence in the Soviet Union. Nosenko comments that the suicide attempt merely confirmed the correctness of his agency's conclusion.

According to Oswald's Diary he learned sometime not too long after he was released from the hospital that he could remain in the Soviet Union indefinitely, although the question of his citizenship was still open. The Diary kept by Oswald and the statements he made to newspaper reporters later, in early November, are somewhat inconsistent on this point. It is not clear whether he thought that he had been told definitely that he could stay or whether that he had been told only that he could remain temporarily while his permanent status was being considered.

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Nosenko's version of the events subsequent to Oswald's confinements in the hospital is different from Oswald's. Nosenko says that when Oswald was released he was again told that he could not stay, at which point Oswald threatened that he would again try to commit suicide. Our information on what Nosenko says is somewhat vague on what then occurred, but apparently Oswald's threat to make a second attempt to kill himself fell on deaf ears as far as the KGB was concerned. It never waived in its decision. Some other ministry of the Soviet State then, according to Nosenko, picked up the Oswald case and ultimately -- probably some time considerably later, even as late as early January 1960 -- determined that he could remain in the Soviet Union. Nosenko speculates that this other agency could either have been the Soviet Red Cross or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, presumably because these agencies were interested in Oswald not as a potential agent but simply because he offered material for good anti-American propaganda. Oswald's Diary records that the second series of interviews he had with Soviet officials, the series that began after his stay in the hospital, was with a different group from those he had seen before he went into the hospital, and he remarks that they did not seem to have had any contact with the first group, because they asked him many of the same questions over again. This observation of Oswald's, if sincere, i.e., if his Diary is not just a KGB fabrication, seems to confirm Nosenko's statements.

In any event, it was not until after the suicide attempt, on Saturday, October 31, that Oswald appeared at the American Embassy to renounce his citizenship. This was the first indication that the American

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Government had that Oswald was in Russia. He had not reported to the Consulate in Moscow when he arrived, as a tourist ordinarily would.

Upon his arrival he was taken to the office of Richard E. Snyder, then Second Secretary of the Embassy. He handed his passport to Snyder and related that he wanted to renounce his American citizenship. Oswald informed Snyder that he had been a radar operator in the Marine Corps and that he had voluntarily stated to an unnamed Soviet official that he would make known to the Russian Government such information concerning the Marine Corps and his specialty therein as he possessed. He intimated that he might know something of special interest.

Oswald was told that he would have to file a formal renunciation. This he never did, although in a letter dated November 3, 1959, which he subsequently wrote to the Embassy he stated:

"I, Lee Harvey Oswald, do hereby request that my present United States citizenship be revoked.

"I appeared in person, at the consulate office of the United States Embassy, Moscow, on Oct 31st, for the purpose of signing the formal papers to this effect. This legal right I was refused at that time.

"I wish to protest against this action, and against the conduct of the official of the United States consular service who acted on behalf of the United States government.

"My application, requesting that I be considered for citizenship in the Soviet Union is now pending before the Supreme Soviet of the U. S. S. R.. In the event of acceptance, I will request my government to lodge a formal protest regarding this incident."

On November 27, 1963, John A. McVickar, a Foreign Service Officer, wrote a memorandum in which he described the October 31 meeting with Oswald. McVickar was one of the two secretaries in the Embassy

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on October 1959, the other one being Snyder. McVickar was present in the room during Snyder's interview with Oswald, and confirms what Snyder said about the interview. He states in addition that Oswald talked in such a way that there was,

"...a possibility that he was following a pattern of behavior in which he had been tutored by person or persons unknown. For example, in discussing Marxism and the legalities of renunciation, he seemed to be using words which he had learned but did not fully understand. His determined statements in rather long words were not entirely consistent and not in a fully logical sequence...in short, it seemed to me that there was a possibility that he had been in contact with others before or during his Marine Corps tour who had guided him and encouraged him in his actions."

The record shows that except for the visit to the Embassy on October 31, 1959, and the letter just-quoted, Oswald, although he continued to speak out in an arrogant, belligerent, anti-American manner, did nothing further to renounce his United States citizenship.

Oswald never was granted Soviet citizenship. Instead, on January 4, 1960, he was given an "Identity Document for Stateless Persons" (Vid na Zhitelstvo v SSSR dlya lits bez grazhdanstva), Number 311479, good for one year and renewable on a yearly basis. On the same day Oswald was finally told that he could reside indefinitely in the Soviet Union. He was told also he was being sent to live in Minsk.

The fact that he did not go through with the renunciation of his American citizenship, together with the fact that the Soviet Union gave him only a "Stateless Person" document, raise a possible inference that Oswald and the Soviet Union planned that someday Oswald would return to

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the United States. Moreover, the whole alleged suicide attempt is subject to some suspicion. It is of course unusual for anyone to attempt suicide, so quite apart from considerations of Oswald's character and the circumstances of this particular alleged attempt, we must look with special scrutiny at the authenticity of any records of such an incident. It should be noted that his alleged attempt occurred before he appeared at the American Embassy and before he made any public statements whatever, to newspaper reporters or otherwise, about his defection from the United States and desire to become a Soviet citizen.

It could be that Oswald's conduct and public statements after the alleged suicide attempt were the result of careful coaching by the Soviets. For the KGB could have used the period from October 16, the day Oswald arrived in Moscow, to October 31, when he came into the Embassy, to subject him to the most intensive kind of political and psychological analysis to determine whether he was "good agent material." If this was what happened, then the "suicide attempt" could be a fiction the purpose of which was to cover up the fact that for about two weeks Oswald was removed from contact with the Western world and subjected to whatever analysis and/or training the Soviets felt was appropriate. From what we now know of Communist methods of this type, it may well have been necessary to fabricate something as drastic as a suicide attempt in order to provide an explanation for any symptoms of the very severe and possibly even character-devastating treatments to which he had been exposed which might appear. In other words, if Oswald was subjected to some sort of

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"brainwashing" procedure, he could very well have been badly "shaken up" by it, in which case the "suicide attempt" would provide an excellent excuse for his "nervous" or "exhausted" appearance.

In this connection, an observation made by Miss Aline Mosby, at that time a reporter for the United Press International, may be pertinent. She observed that Oswald was unique among American defectors to the Soviet Union during the years 1958 through 1959 or thereabouts because he alone, as far as she knew, claimed to be motivated solely on ideological grounds. Every other defector she ever came across, she says, spoke a little about how he liked Communism or the Soviet State but was for the most part motivated by some personal matter, for example, an unhappy marriage from which he was escaping, or perhaps a neurotic inability to adapt to his job or life in general. Oswald's overriding concern with ideology, which manifested itself usually in long "explanations" of how the Soviet system was better than the capitalist and destined to prevail, and expressed in long words "from the book" which he probably did not fully understand, could be evidence of the kind of brain-washing for which the Communists are known. Conversely, his overriding concern with ideology could have preexisted any such "coaching" and instead been the reason why the Soviets were attracted to Oswald in the first place and felt he was worth such coaching. For a man so imbued with Communist ideology might, if he were given further training, especially in the ability to express himself, become an extremely valuable propaganda spokesman. One can imagine the hopes that may have been in Soviet minds

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that here was a man from a "working" family in America who, with only a little further training, could be paraded all over the world to renounce his native country and affirm his allegiance to Soviet Russia -- it would be a strong counteraction to the bad publicity recently given by the numerous Soviet defectors from the ranks of their athletes and entertainers.

It should also be pointed out immediately, however, that it is also quite plausible that nothing at all like what has been speculated in the previous paragraph really occurred. It is certainly possible that Oswald was exactly what he purported to be, namely, a young, neurotically embittered and confused man who had found in Marxist theory an emotional outlet for all his frustrations and otherwise-undirected hatred. To such a person, it was probably better that he did not really understand all that he was saying; the important point for him was the emotional catharsis, not the logical details. Moreover, the fact that the Embassy officials and the newspaper reporters all observed that Oswald seemed to "speak from the book" without really understanding his words is probably even more consistent with his having read Communist writings on his own than with his having been coached. After all, a good "coach" probably would have tried to instill a more coherent set of statements into his pupil. Reading many books on his own, however, which were way beyond the depth of a boy who left high school while he was still in the tenth grade, is the kind of pseudo-intellectual experience that would more likely result in the manner of speaking which was in fact observed in Oswald.

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Other evidence which tends to contradict the hypothesis that the suicide attempt was a fabrication and that his failure to complete steps to expatriate himself were the result of Soviet coaching and advice, includes the following:

1. Evidence that the suicide attempt was authentic.

The autopsy performed on Oswald after his death showed that he in fact did have a scar on his left wrist and that it was of the kind which could have been -- not necessarily was -- caused by a suicide attempt. Marina has testified to the Commission that she observed such a scar on her husband and asked him about it. The question made him "very angry," she says, and he avoided giving her a reply. She was never given the slightest hint that he had ever attempted suicide. Oswald's brother Robert says that he never observed the scar and that Lee never mentioned anything about suicide to him.

Oswald's character does not seem inconsistent with a suicide attempt. The letters he wrote to his brother and mother while he was still in the Western world, to some extent the statements he made to fellow Marines, and his action in fraudulently obtaining a "hardship" discharge from the Marine Corps and departing immediately from New Orleans to the Soviet Union, all lend support to this conclusion. Lee Oswald at the age of 20, when all this occurred, was indeed the kind of tense, over-dramatic, confused person who was capable of putting all his eggs in the one basket of allegiance to the Communist cause and, when his hopes there were apparently dashed beyond saving, think that everything was hopeless and try to commit suicide.

Oswald's failure to mention the suicide attempt to his wife and brother, moreover, does not necessarily reflect adversely on its

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authenticity. His character is also consistent with keeping the suicide attempt secret. Everyone who has ever known Oswald and who has testified to the Commission about him, has confirmed the observation that he was close-mouthed, had tendencies towards arrogance, and was not the kind of man who would readily admit weaknesses. In addition, once he decided to return to America, he had the additional reason to keep the attempt secret, that he did not want anyone to realize what a devout, totally-committed Communist he had once been. In sum, the few independent facts we have about the suicide and the observations on Oswald's character all point towards the fact that it could have been authentic.

2. The fact that we would not know about the suicide attempt if it were not for Oswald's Diary.

It is difficult, despite the apparent plausibility of the hypothesis that the suicide attempt was fabricated as a "cover" for some sort of brainwashing procedure, to fit the facts of the attempt into a coherent pattern of Soviet-inspired conduct. This is because the "fact" that Oswald attempted to commit suicide, if it was a fact, was not disclosed until four years later, when his diary was found among his effects after the assassination. If the KGB made up the incident in order to divert suspicion from their intensive coaching of Oswald, it would seem more likely that he would have been instructed to give at least some hint to the Embassy officials on October 31 that he had been confined in a hospital for a week, etc., or in some manner to let them

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know that the sixteen days since he had come to Moscow had been spent doing something other than talking with Soviet officials. But the fact is that Snyder and McVickar, the officials at the Embassy who saw Oswald, received not the slightest hint that he had ever been given medical treatment of any kind. Moreover, they did not even get the impression that he was "shaky"; on the contrary, McVickar emphasizes that Oswald gave the appearance of confidence and determination.

The fact that Oswald's brother, Robert Oswald, was never told about the suicide attempt also seems to undercut the hypothesis that it was a Soviet-inspired fabrication. It would seem that if the KGB wanted to use the alleged suicide attempt to explain why Oswald took so long to appear at the American Embassy, it would have instructed Oswald to "confide" in his brother, in order to create, through his future testimony, more "evidence" that the suicide attempt was real, and to increase the chances that it would ultimately become known to American counter-intelligence. The same argument obviously can also be applied to Oswald's failure to confide in Marina.

3. Evidence that Oswald was not accepted by
the Soviets for permanent residence in
Russia unduly soon after he arrived there.

If Oswald was accepted for permanent residence in the Soviet Union unduly quickly after he arrived there, two different Soviet motives, both adverse to the ultimate conclusion that his conduct was not prearranged by them, might be inferred. First, if he was accepted

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markedly more quickly than other defectors before him, we could infer that the Soviets knew he was coming, had already carried out their investigation of him and concluded that he would be a desirable addition to their ranks, and were therefore in a position to accept him quickly with very little further consideration, once he arrived in Moscow. The second inference ties in with our thinking about the possibility that the suicide attempt was only a fabrication, and is more complex. If we accept the hypothesis that the Soviets used the period from October 16 through October 31 to subject Oswald to some sort of intense indoctrination or analysis, and that the "suicide attempt" was designed to cover up the effects of this treatment, it would seem likely that the Soviets would avoid exposing their subject to Western eyes for too long a period thereafter. It would also seem to follow that they would avoid leaving him for too long in a place where, if he were to lose heart, he could easily re-defect to the United States. This additional thought applies to Oswald because we know that the two hotels where he resided in Moscow, the Hotel Berlin and the Hotel Metropole, were both only a short taxi-ride from the American Embassy. The reason we can reasonably infer that the Soviets, if they subjected Oswald to some sort of secret indoctrination or analysis, would not leave him in Moscow for too long afterwards is that if he did for some reason get discouraged and re-defect to his native country, he would be in an excellent position to disclose to Western intelligence all the techniques of indoctrination and/or analysis he had been subjected to.

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It would be uncharacteristic of any intelligence system, and especially of a system of a police state such as the Soviet Union, to take such a serious risk of disclosing confidential procedures, and even if he never re-defected, it would seem unwise to leave him for too long in a place where Western observers, such as newspaper reporters, could question him and see him face to face, lest the effects of the treatment or indoctrination be accidentally disclosed. Therefore, with both of these points in mind, we will review the evidence in an attempt to determine whether Oswald's tenure in Moscow prior to being fully accepted by the Soviet State was suspiciously short.

Oswald's Historic Diary records that between October 16, 1959 and January 4, 1960 he was kept on tenterhooks as to whether he would be given permission to stay in the Soviet Union permanently. Marina's testimony is consistent with the Diary in this respect. Of course, Marina's statements here are subject to two reservations. First, she, herself, could be a Soviet agent and lying. Second, she did not know Oswald until more than a year after he came to Minsk and therefore her understanding of the circumstances of his coming to Russia could only have been based on what she learned from him and other people he had spoken to on the subject. The documents given to the Commission by the Russian Government bear out that Oswald came to Minsk on or about January 4, 1960. All of the foregoing evidence, however, is subject to the infirmity that if Oswald was an agent of the Soviet Union and they together made up a "legend" about these events, we have no way of independently checking the truth of the "legend."

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We have some independent evidence of how long Oswald was detained in Moscow, but unfortunately it dates only from November or even earlier. Oswald was seen by at least one newspaper reporter, Miss Priscilla Johnson of the North American Newspaper Alliance, as late as November 17, 1959, about three weeks after he was allegedly released from the hospital and almost exactly one month after his arrival in Moscow. When she saw him he still, according to her observations, was uncertain about his ultimate fate in the Soviet Union. He told her that he had received assurances that he would not be forced to return to the United States, "pending clarification of his status," (whatever that meant) but he admitted that whether or not he obtained full citizenship from the Soviet Union might not be decided for "years." In other words, from what Miss Johnson could observe on November 17, Oswald was still by no means "accepted" by the Soviets. In addition, a letter bearing a date of November 26, 1959, was received in the United States by Oswald's brother, Robert, some time in December. The letter contains many statements of extreme bitterness against the United States and is written throughout on the consistent assumption that the writer, Oswald, will remain in the Soviet Union for the rest of his life. However, the letter says nothing about his having finally received any sort of unambiguous assurance from the Soviet officials that he could remain in Russia; so perhaps the apparent assurance of the letter was not a true reflection of Oswald's real feelings. It is simply impossible to know for sure. Anyway, the letter was written from the Hotel Metropole, so Oswald was apparently still in Moscow.

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Robert Oswald received one more letter from his brother while he was still at the Metropole Hotel in Moscow, this last one bearing the date of December 17, 1959. In this one Oswald said that he would be moving from the Hotel and that his brother should therefore not write him there. In fact, the letter goes on to say that Robert should not write him at all anymore because he wants to cut all ties with his previous life. Again, Oswald does not clearly state that he has received final acceptance from the Soviets, but he must have been quite confident at this time that such acceptance was imminent or he would not have told his brother he could no longer be reached at the Metropole Hotel.

In this respect it should be noted that John A. McVickar, in his memorandum dated April 7, 1964, attached hereto, feels that one of the suspicious circumstances involved in the Oswald case was that he was accepted for permanent residence in the Soviet Union after only 7 days, a much shorter waiting period than was enforced toward other American defectors. The cover letter to the McVickar memo, by Mr. Abram Chayes, observes that McVickar is wrong in this respect and that it actually took six weeks for Oswald to be accepted by the Soviets. We would like to point out that even Mr. Chayes is probably incorrect on the short side. Oswald arrived in Moscow on October 16 and was probably not finally accepted by the Soviets and given his "Stateless Passport" until January 4, 1960, a waiting period of about 11 weeks. This length of time is entirely consistent with that involved with other defectors. Even if the January 4 date is disregarded because we have at this time very little independent check on it, we have fairly good evidence that he at least was still awaiting the Soviet decision as late as December 17, and firm evidence

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that he was still waiting on November 17. Even if the November 17 date is taken -- and this certainly represents an absolute minimum -- the interval amounts to about one month, a longer period than was involved in one of other three known defector cases occurring around the same time.

When asked to comment on the length of time involved, the State Department replied:

QUESTION 2

The files of the Department of State reflect the fact that Oswald first applied for permission to remain in Russia permanently, or at least for a long period, when he arrived in Moscow, and that he obtained permission to remain within one or two months.

A. Is the fact that he obtained permission to stay within this period of time usual?

ANSWER - Our information indicates that a two months waiting period is not unusual. In the case of [redacted] the Supreme Soviet decided within two months to give Soviet citizenship and he was thereafter, of course, permitted to stay.

B. Can you tell us what the normal procedures are under similar circumstances?

ANSWER - It is impossible for us to state any "normal" procedures. The Soviet Government never publicizes the proceedings in these cases or the reasons for its action. Furthermore, it is, of course, extremely unusual for an American citizen to defect.

4. Post-assassination statements by Soviet Officials.

On November 26, 1963, Walter J. Stoessel, Jr., of the Embassy in Moscow reported a conversation he had had with a higher Russian official as follows: CO2 94

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"As a sidelight, I might mention that when I saw Kudryavtseve of the American Section of the MFA at the airport Saturday night when we saw Mikoyan off, he referred to Oswald and said that he seemed to be an unstable character. On his own initiative, Kudryavtseve mentioned that Oswald had been in the Soviet Union, had married a Soviet girl and a child had been born in the Soviet Union of this marriage. Kudryavtsev said that Oswald had applied for Soviet citizenship but that, after considering the application, the Soviet authorities had decided not to approve this application since Oswald seemed to be so unstable. They had, however, permitted him and his family to leave."

Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin on December 11, 1963, gave the following oral statement which purports to set forth the Soviet Government's reply to Secretary of State Rusk's inquiry as to why the Soviet Union refused Oswald's application for citizenship: 2946

"The Constitution of the U.S.S.R. and Soviet legislation provide that Soviet citizens have certain rights and appropriate responsibilities. Considering an application for Soviet citizenship the competent of all the ability of the applicant to carry out responsibilities of a citizen of the U.S.S.R. and to make use of the rights granted to him. Due regard is paid also the motivations of one's application for admission to Soviet citizenship.

"The competent Soviet authorities that considered Oswald's application did not find convincing grounds which would allow to draw a conclusion that he complied with the requirements provided for Soviet citizens in the Constitution and legislations of the U.S.S.R.

"The motives which made Oswald file his application were also not clear. The fact that Oswald made critical remarks about the State the citizen of which he was, could not, of course, be decisive in considering his application.

"In view of the above-mentioned considerations Oswald's application for Soviet citizenship was rejected."

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5. Opinion of CIA

We requested the CIA to advise us on whether it felt the treatment of Oswald was exceptional or unusual with respect to permission to remain in the Soviet Union. In a memorandum dated April 6, 1964, the CIA informed us that it saw nothing unusual. Other defectors were treated CE 2742 in about the same manner.

6. Other Actions that are not consistent
with Oswald having been "coached."

If the Russians were coaching Oswald in his relationships with the American Embassy and American newspaper reporters, then certain things become hard to explain. The single statement which probably caused him the most future trouble -- it resulted in his receiving a dishonorable discharge from the Marine Reserve, which he forever after was to resent -- was his statement to Snyder at the Embassy that he had been in the Marine Corps, worked on radar and had already volunteered to a Soviet official that he would, if asked, tell the Russian Government what he knew about that job -- all this, according to Snyder and McVickar, being said with the implication that he knew something highly secret. If the Russians wanted Oswald to be careful not to expatriate himself, so that he could eventually return to the United States as an agent, why would they have permitted him to make a statement like this? Even if it did not block his reentry into America, it would certainly forever after be used against him and lessen his effectiveness as a pro-Communist agitator or espionage agent, etc., and it might even have caused the American military officials in the Embassy to seize him on the spot, on the grounds that he was about to commit a criminal offense against his service and his nation.

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Second, the hypothesis that he was coached to come very close to the expatriation line but not quite to expatriate himself, in order that he might eventually return to the United States, fails to explain why he was ever instructed to come close to the line in the first place. What possible gain would come from that? Certainly any propaganda value which could have been gained from his words and actions could have been fully obtained from all sorts of anti-American and "anti-capitalist" and pro-Russian and pro-Communist statements without his having to go so far along the road toward expatriation. That, after all, is a fairly technical matter which the general public is not aware of nearly so much as it is of statements bearing upon patriotism and loyalty. In fact, the way it actually worked out, Oswald's "on again, off again" actions in regard to renouncing his citizenship may have detracted from his propaganda impact. His vacillation on this issue was so obvious that it was observed by one of the newspaper reporters, Miss Priscella Johnson. (Whether she passed her impressions on to the public at the time is not known.)

In short, if Oswald was coached, he seems to have had a poor coach.

7. Nosenko's Statements.

The recent Soviet defector, Yuri Ivanovich Nosenko, has stated to the FBI that when Oswald arrived as a tourist in the Soviet Union the KGB had "no current interest" in Oswald and possessed no information that Oswald was a member of the Communist Party, U. S. A., or elsewhere. He also indicated that Oswald was discouraged from remaining

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