

1993 disclosure prove the CIA lied in saying his
and he never had. "His Mood Was Bad" 187

The official CIA position is that its cameras did not operate around the clock, and upon review, after the assassination, of all the photographs taken of people entering the two embassies, there was no photo of Oswald. Some claim the CIA did have photos or even sound tapes of Oswald. Supposedly, when the CIA station chief for Mexico, Winston Scott, died, his safe was cleaned out, including a right-profile photo of Oswald entering the Soviet embassy. Three former CIA employees told the House Select Committee they had seen such a photo.⁸³ James Angleton, who was responsible for Nosenko being branded as a KGB plant, personally flew to Mexico after Scott's death and cleaned out his desk and safe.⁸⁴ Angleton is now dead, and if there was such a photo, he was the last to know of its whereabouts. As the House Select Committee learned in its investigation, the CIA does not now have any photos of Oswald entering the embassies.

As for sound tapes, the Agency may have recorded as many as eight conversations it originally thought to be of Oswald, either on the telephone to the Soviet embassy or during his visits there. In 1976, according to *The Washington Post*, David Phillips, a former chief of CIA operations in Latin America, indicated there might be a transcript of an Oswald phone call to the Soviet embassy.⁸⁵ Phillips later denied the reported remarks. "The Agency had at one point a recording of Oswald asking to speak to whoever he was going to speak to at the Soviet embassy," Edwin Lopez, a House Select Committee investigator, told the author. "And the Agency had a husband-and-wife team [who were Russian] listen to the tape and transcribe it, and in parentheses, they wrote down—and I talked to both of them: 'This guy speaks English with a broken Russian accent.' Now you and I both know that Oswald did not speak in broken Russian. Well, this is amazing—they have a tape, they sent it up to Washington at one point after the assassination, I have seen the cable and all, and guess what happens to the tape—gone! So all we have left is our transcription, and our conversations with the husband-and-wife team."⁸⁶

However, the tape referred to by Lopez may not even have been a recording of Oswald. A retired Agency official familiar with the Oswald file spoke to the author on the condition he not be identified. "Even if there had been a sound recording, it would have been erased routinely a week after it was made. If we kept every-

the tape left
in Dallas
11/22/63
FBI did not
investigate it
then was
sent to
transcribe
it.

thing we recorded, you couldn't find enough warehouses to store them. So once something is transcribed, we don't need the tape, and it's reused. Keeping the tape might be more of an indication that there was a special interest in this fellow. However, since there isn't a tape, no one is sure that we recorded the right person. Just like we made an error in photographing the wrong man, there's a good chance that we might have recorded the same man we photographed, thinking the entire time we had surveillance on Oswald. We've really created our own problems on this one.**

Since there was no photo of Oswald entering the embassies, or a tape recording proving he was there, conspiracy buffs use the description in the CIA teletype of October 10, 1963, and the photo released of the wrong man to claim that Oswald was impersonated. Their argument is bolstered by Cuban consul Azcue, who testified before the House Select Committee that the man he argued with for fifteen minutes at the Cuban embassy does not look like the photographs of Lee Harvey Oswald.⁸⁷ He described the man at the embassy as ten years older, with dark blond hair, and thinner.** Finally, the Select Committee investigator on Mexico City, Edwin Lopez, wrote a 265-page report concluding that it was likely that an Oswald imposter visited the Cuban and Soviet embassies. However, Lopez's report was sealed by the Select Committee, fueling the debate over the issue.⁸⁸

But the evidence is overwhelming that the real Oswald visited both embassies. Except Azcue, the other employees at the Cuban

*No transcript of any sound tape has ever been released. The CIA is its own worst enemy on many of these issues. Because it is so protective of sources and its means of obtaining information, even years after the event, its lack of full disclosure is often interpreted as evidence of conspiracy. But the CIA's failure to be forthright is an inherent part of the intelligence trade, and is not unique to its handling of the Oswald case.

**Azcue admits to being one of the few people who believe Jim Garrison's theory of an imposter Oswald, and cannot say how much this belief colors his memory of the man he encountered at the embassy. The descriptions he gave to the House Select Committee were based on his recall of an event fifteen years earlier. But when told by the committee that the visa-application signatures had been verified as belonging to Oswald, Azcue wavered. "Under such circumstances I would have to accept that I was being influenced or seeing visions."

eml
tifi
nal
wri
two
pas
anc
Os
pic
wo
hir
on
tre
at
be
Ct
in
nc
ar

th
be
H
fi
O
te
ti
li

e
t
e
-

e
r
:
:
/