

While Oswald was at Atsugi Air Force Base, he was considered to be somewhat of a loner but was praised by his officer as being competent, intelligent, and a person who could be trusted to catch on quickly and do a job well. Oswald worked in the radar room at Atsugi that monitored the spy flights of the U-2 aircraft over the Soviet Union; he had first-hand access to flight information.

The first indication we have of his spy activity was when he began studying the Russian language, presumably on his own, and when he was wandering around the base at Atsugi with a camera, taking pictures. He then started going off on two-day trips to Tokyo where he began having an affair with a beautiful Japanese nightclub hostess who worked at one of the smartest clubs in the city (the Queen Bee), catering to American officers—not enlisted men like Oswald. The girls were expensive, costing more than a month's salary for one night.

Later, while Oswald was stationed at El Toro Base in Santa Ana, California, he revealed what happened at Atsugi: He confided to a fellow Marine, David Bucknell, about the incident. Oswald told Bucknell that after he was first approached at this bar he reported the incident to his superior officer and was debriefed by a man in civilian clothes. He said he was told to go back and give false information to the woman, who was a known KGB agent. We might reasonably speculate from this that it was Oswald's first introduction to spy work and the beginning of a short career that would end in his death in the basement of a Dallas jail; he could have started his spy career as a double agent in Atsugi.

As Oswald continued his stay at Atsugi, he began to develop a reputation for being a troublemaker. He was accused of deliberately pouring a drink over a sergeant but was later acquitted in a court martial. Found guilty of using "provoking words," he had to spend eighteen days in the brig. Also, according to the record, he accidentally shot himself in the arm, inflicting a minor wound, before his unit was due to leave Atsugi. He did this with a pistol that he kept in his locker, which was against service regulations. For this action he was fined and sentenced to twenty days' hard labor. According to his friends, Oswald began to speak bitterly against the Marine Corps and avoid Marine acquaintances. He was again seen with Japanese acquaintances, both male and female. Some researchers believe that this whole pattern could have been a set-up to create the false impression that Oswald was a malcontent and beginning to turn Communist.

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Epstein

Final report
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Oswald was then transferred to the Marine Corps Air Station in Santa Ana, California. He was again found to be very competent, bright, and dependable. It was in Santa Ana that Oswald exhibited an intensified interest in learning the Russian language. He applied to take a Marine proficiency examination in written and spoken Russian. Although he failed, he did show a knowledge of the basics of the language. In the weeks following, he was observed studying Russian books and a Russian language periodical for hours.

Around the barracks, Oswald constantly talked with his Marine friends about Communist ideology and world affairs. He subscribed to *The People's World*, a socialist newspaper. He ~~began to~~ openly profess Marxist doctrine, claiming it was the best political system in the world. Next he wrote to the Cuban embassy in Washington and began to receive letters with the Cuban official seal. He confided to his friend, Nelson Delgado from Puerto Rico, that he had visited the Cuban embassy in Los Angeles. Delgado said later that he once saw Oswald in a conversation outside the base with a man wearing an overcoat and concluded the man was a Cuban. He said Oswald and the man talked for about two hours. All of this could have been staged to build a case that Oswald was converting to communism, and led up to the time when he applied for discharge from the Marines, using a fake story that his mother was ill.

Shortly thereafter, on the pretense that he was going to Europe to study philosophy at the Albert Schweitzer College in Switzerland, Oswald went to New Orleans and boarded a ship bound for Europe. He disembarked at the British Port of South Hampton on October 9, 1959. By midnight the next day he was checking into a hotel in Helsinki, Finland.* Within two days, after no known

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