

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

5 February 1964

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Recent Soviet Statements on
Lee Harvey Oswald

REFERENCE: 21 January Memorandum, Same Subject

1. The second installment of Soviet statements concerning Oswald generally covers the period from 26 December to 26 January. It also includes information on statements which were made in November and December but which were not available as of 21 January--the date of the first memorandum on the subject.

2. Additional reporting on the personal opinions of Soviet officials--and of the man in the street--contained no new themes and reflected Moscow's standard propaganda line that the President was the victim of the "ultra-right wing." In late November Khrushchey's son-in-law, Aleksey Adzhubey, (who is chief editor of Izvestia) stated in Bangkok that "fascists" had committed the murder, and buttressed this claim by saying that John Steinbeck had told him that "fascists were stirring up the internal political situation in the US." The Adzhubey-Steinbeck conversation presumably took place during the author's visit to the USSR last fall--just before the assassination. Also in late November, the noted Soviet nuclear physicist, Igor Tamm, told Americans visiting Moscow that he could not accept the fact that Oswald acted alone. Tamm felt that he must have been part of a conspiracy. Similar sentiments--and some genuine grief--were fairly widespread among the general populace. In one rather odd expression of semi-official reaction, the employees of a Soviet bank refused to cash travellers' checks from a Dallas bank for the Texans in a delegation of American educators.

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Name and title of person cancelling the check:

NAJ

Date 6/23/73

3. The satirical-humor magazine, Krokodil, had apparently begun a series of indirect commentaries on the assassination. Its issues of 20 and 30 December and 10 January carry cartoons attacking Texas and the KKK. A rifle with a telescopic sight is prominently featured in each.

4. The first official Soviet commentary of 1964 appeared in the January issue of International Affairs, the English-language journal which seems to be Moscow's answer to the Foreign Affairs quarterly published in this country. Although the full text of the article is not yet available, the American Embassy's summary suggests that the author was attempting to present his views as a sober and reasoned political analysis. He contended that "the assassination and the unsuccessful attempt to use it" against US "progressive forces" and against the USSR indicated a desire for revenge by the American right-wing. The ultras had failed to stop such Kennedy policies as the nuclear test ban and other signs of thaw in the cold war.

5. This article was, of course, intended primarily for foreign consumption. The Soviet home audience was treated to much more sensational fare. On 5 January, Izvestia featured a half-page story headlined "Is the Murderer of Kennedy Free?" The article was an abridgment of Mark Lane's defense of Oswald which appeared in the National Guardian for 19 December. In the same issue, Izvestia's weekly magazine supplement, Nedelya, carried what appears to be a complete transcript of Mr. Lane's article. The author's words evidently have not been altered in either version but the abridgment contains quotations cleverly chosen so as to cast the Dallas police and the FBI in a poor light and to leave the reader with the impression that the actual assassin is still at large. A translation of the abridged version is attached. The Cosa Nostra was implicated in the assassination a few days later. The popular magazine, Ogonyok, roughly the Soviet equivalent of Life or Look, carried an article on Al Capone (the "King of Murder") in its 8 January issue. Discussing the organized network of criminals in the US, the author asked if it were not possible that the fingers of Cosa Nostra extended to Dallas. Ruby, it was alleged in a brief paragraph, "was known in the underworld as 'the Dandy.'" Attributing the question to an article (undated) by the French journalist, Servan-Schriver, in Les Echos, the author then asked who could deny that the criminal society controlled Dallas.

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MMY

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7. Only two Soviet commentaries have been noted since the Izvestia articles. Both were Radio Moscow accounts--broadcast on 22 January--of Ruby's preliminary hearing.

Attachments

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Authority: Clearing 12/22/12

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