

UNITED STATES SECRET SERVICE
TREASURY DEPARTMENT

345

0314

ORIGIN Field OFFICE New York - New York FILE NO. CO-2-34,030

TYPE OF CASE	STATUS	TITLE OR CAPTION
Protective Research	Investigation Continued	Lee Harvey Oswald -
INVESTIGATION MADE AT	PERIOD COVERED	Priscilla JOHNSON's
Locust Valley, New York	11/29/63 to 11/30/63	1959 interview
INVESTIGATION MADE BY		with OSWALD, including
Special Agent George J. Sershan		copies of handwritten

[Handwritten initials and scribbles]

SYNOPSIS

notes and resulting articles.

Priscilla Johnson, a journalist, interviewed Lee H. Oswald in 1959 after his defection to the Soviet Union.

DETAILS OF INVESTIGATION

This investigation is predicated on telephone call November 29, 1963 from ASAIC Sweeney, Boston to ASAIC Jukes advising of a request received from SAIC Bouck, Protective Research Section, to interview Miss Priscilla Johnson residing in Cambridge, Massachusetts. ASAIC Sweeney stated inquiry disclosed Miss Johnson was residing in New York, telephone OR 6-2620. ASAIC Jukes telephoned this number and ascertained Miss Johnson was residing on Feeks Lane in Locust Valley, New York.

(Miss) Johnson was interviewed on November 30, 1963 at her home in Locust Valley. She is presently attending the Russian Research Center at Harvard University studying Soviet Literature. In 1959 she was employed as a correspondent for the North American Newspaper Alliance, with offices in New York City, and was representing that firm in Moscow when she was given the assignment of interviewing Lee H. Oswald who had defected to the Soviet Union. She recalled interviewing Lee H. Oswald at the Hotel Metropole in Moscow advising she was aware Oswald's room had been wired. Accordingly, she exercised care in questioning him, especially since he informed her the Soviet authorities had instructed him not to permit any interviews by the American press and he was violating their "trust".

1 att h/w

DISTRIBUTION ✓ Chief New York Dallas	COPIES Orig & 3 cc's 2 cc's 1 cc.	REPORT MADE BY <i>George Sershan</i> SPECIAL AGENT	DATE 345 12/2/63
		APPROVED <i>[Signature]</i> SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE	DATE 12/2/63

Miss Johnson had retained the notes she took at the time of her interview with Oswald and exhibited copies of articles she wrote appearing in the Boston Sunday Globe of November 24, 1963 and the Christian Science Monitor of November 26, 1963 relating to her interview with Oswald. The articles are self-explanatory.

According to Miss Johnson, Oswald in her opinion was a "loner", a person who did not mix socially and kept to himself very much. He was a self-taught Marxist who stated he had read Marx's book, Das Capital, when he was only fifteen years of age. He taught himself to read and write Russian and his decision to defect arose out of his bitterness toward the United States, particularly the plight of the American negro and the exploitation of workers. He was reared in poverty and his mother, a widow, had worked extremely hard to bring up her family. He also expressed resentment at his treatment by the U. S. Marine Corps and accused the United States of military imperialism. He informed Miss Johnson that he had petitioned the Soviet Government for citizenship and stated he had no intention of ever returning to the United States.

Miss Johnson stated she questioned him about the manner in which he traveled to Russia suggesting that he must have been aided by other persons or organizations. He specifically stated he made the trip on his own initiative on monies he had saved while in the Marine Corps and that he positively did not receive assistance from any persons or organizations. She attempted to impress upon him the folly of his actions and in a roundabout manner tried to get him to change his mind about defecting but without success. She concluded that he was a fanatic and that further attempts to dissuade him from seeking Russian citizenship would be futile.

In her description of Oswald, Miss Johnson stated he was touching, likeable and quiet. She felt he was a malcontent who was unsure of himself and probably would be unhappy wherever he was. Although she considered him a fanatic, she did not think he would resort to violence. She does not know whether he had been questioned by the Soviet Secret Police but obviously he had received some instructions from a Soviet authority concerning his activities while in Russia. He stayed very close to the hotel and according to his own statement, he did not attempt to establish friendship with any Russians.

Oswald promised to let her know if he was leaving the hotel. When she inquired at the hotel for him two days later she found he had disappeared and concluded the Soviet authorities had whisked him away having naturally learned of the interview. She has not seen him since.

Miss Johnson stated she was interviewed November 23, 1963 by FBI Agents Curry and Sullivan in Boston and that she gave them a deposition concerning her interview with Oswald. She is leaving New York on December 1st for Boston

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and on the following day, December 2 is flying to Washington where she has an appointment with Mr. Andrew Lowenfeld of the State Department. Mr. Lowenfeld works in the office of a Mr. Shea, a legal counsel for the State Department. While in Washington she will be staying with her brother, Stewart H. Johnson, Jr. at 2906 N. Street, N.W. and expects to remain there until the end of the week.

Verifax copies were made of the newspaper articles previously referred to, and the notes made by Miss Johnson at the time she interviewed Oswald and are being forwarded with this report.

ATTACHMENTS

Copies of 2 newspaper articles
Copies of Miss Johnson's notes

GJS/mm

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Oswald Interview in Moscow Recorded

By a Staff Writer of the Christian Science Monitor

Bitterness Detected in Long Talk

Year when they talked, and people generally were beginning to whisper at about that time that the Cuban leader was a Communist.

Of Preparation

She never saw him after Oswald was accepted for citizenship.

What kind of man was Lee Harvey Oswald?

Did this admission, Marxist aver, indicate he might be capable of shooting the president of the United States, as Dallas police say he assassinated John F. Kennedy last Friday—just two days before he was slung on a stretcher to the morgue?

Left the Soviet Union, he put the same single-mindedness for learning whatever he needed to learn for this act (the assassination).

"The first, every penny he earned in the Marines for the trip to Russia," she said, "and he wanted an early discharge so he could get there a little faster. Within two days of his discharge he was on a boat for the Soviet Union."

He was bitter, Miss Johnson said, against "capitalism" and "worker exploitation" in the United States—classic Communist as well as Marxist phrases.

But he never expressed any hatred of the presidency or of John F. Kennedy, then a young Massachusetts Senator. "He didn't speak about politics in a personal way."

After talking a good deal about Marxist philosophy as he understood it, he said at one point: "I have had practical experience in the world. I am not an idealist completely. I have had a chance to witness military imperialism in action," Miss Johnson recalled.

The present weakness in our laws that permit individuals to obtain citizenship here without the state of residence in order to circumvent the laws of Mr. O'Brien said Mr. O'Brien would "prohibit sale, rental, or lease of various states to non-citizens of that state who have" compelled with all the law, fines, and regulations of their state of residence, including to the acquisition of firearms.

Few people really seem to have known the 24-year-old New Orleans native well. Most describe him as a quiet sort of a person, one who did not mix well—a loner. He gave few the opportunity to really understand him.

But in a rare moment of extroversion, he gave one American staff reporter, she is Miss Patricia Johnson, said at the time she was being taken through a two-year stay in Moscow by a correspondent for the North American Newspaper Alliance.

"I just think this is the kind of person that might, he would have gone about it in a methodical way. He would have learned whatever he needed to know."

Reports Dovefall

This description dovetails with the FBI report that back on March 20 of this year Oswald, using an assumed name, ordered from a small-order firm the rifle with which President Kennedy was shot during a motorcade in Dallas.

He was bitter, Miss Johnson said, against "capitalism" and "worker exploitation" in the United States—classic Communist as well as Marxist phrases.

But he never expressed any hatred of the presidency or of John F. Kennedy, then a young Massachusetts Senator. "He didn't speak about politics in a personal way."

After five years of reading socialist literature, he told her, "observing treatment of labor groups (Communists, Negroes, and workers especially) watching the treatment of workers in New York and seeing how they're exploited—I'd read about it in socialist literature and thought the description was quite correct."

The proposal would also to prohibit transfer of title of weapons.

Interview in Moscow

The first was early November, 1959. The place—the Hotel Metropole, Moscow's principal hotel for foreigners.

Oswald had arrived in the Soviet Union on Oct. 30 that year with the announced intention of seeking Soviet citizenship.

During their long conversation nothing he said indicated he favored using murder as a political weapon.

"But from our conversation, I could see that he was a man capable of a whole lot" because of his gnawing bitterness, she said.

"My mother," he told her, "has been a worker for her whole life. She had to produce a good example of what happens to workers in the United States."

He also told her that he had seen tremendous poverty in the United States, and he had been shocked by the plight of the Negro.

But again and again he returned to theoretical Marxism. "He said he'd become a Marxist at 15," Miss Johnson recalled.

After five years of reading socialist literature, he told her, "observing treatment of labor groups (Communists, Negroes, and workers especially) watching the treatment of workers in New York and seeing how they're exploited—I'd read about it in socialist literature and thought the description was quite correct."

She never saw him after Oswald was accepted for citizenship.

Ten days later Miss Johnson, now doing research at Harvard for a book, learned he was staying at the hotel and asked if he would give her an interview.

He said he would, and they talked quite freely for seven hours.

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The impression of Oswald that emerges from that meeting is one of a young man intensely bitter at the United States, who displayed absolute single-mindedness about whatever he was attempting to do—at that moment trying to obtain Soviet citizenship.

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Is this the sort of man who might have assassinated the President?

Starts Kindred Drive

"It struck me," Miss Johnson said in an interview this week,

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1
 Harvey Oswald - 20
 Fort Worth, Texas born in
 New Orleans
 up to US Embassy Oct 31
 dissolved my Am. citizenship
 as much as they wd let me
 the time - however I
 requested that my citizenship
 dissolved. Was not allowed
 swear on oath that he
 renounced - refused to allow
 me to take oath at that time.
 they said they would not allow
 me to act without confirmation
 by Sov citizenship.
 I am impressed passport
 they wd not act until
 citizenship confirmed -
 they want confirmed
 that I would not have
 leave SO, be forced to,
 even if Sov refuse
 & require for Sov citizenship.
 They have said they
 investigating possibility
 my continuing my
 education at Institute -

2
 Vol age 17, enlisted in Marine
 Corps, discharged in Sept -
 14 months in Japan +
 Philippines, Indonesia,
 France - radar operator
 finished high school educa -
 while in Marine Corps

Hair brown, gray eyes -
 5' 11", 150 lb -
 Oct 18, 1939 birth date
 Marines 2 yrs, 9 months, 3 days
 Overseas 1 yr, 2 months, 24 days
 3. in New Or., childhood in
 Louisiana + Texas -
 NY 2 yrs -
 Then Louisiana - enlisted
 in Dallas
 father died before born -
 I believe he was an
 insurance salesman
 Had 1 brother -
 Good Conduct medal from
 Marines
 Mother alive + living in Ft.
 Worth -

3.

his leaving Korea at
 age - along with my
 ex. wife parading -
 to be back myself to
 write from Berlin -
 have trouble speaking
 as a teacher -

in on I saved while in
 Marine Corps -

and give no statement
 if FBI had not released
 I wd never have said
 bump to any body
 I'd like to give my side
 story, give people an
 AS something to think
 about

was training been assured
 wd not have to return
 SO I assumed it wd
 sold for me to give
 or side of story -
 There was always
 sib my visa wd not
 extended -

for pm [unclear] [unclear] [unclear]
[unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear]
[unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear]
[unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear]
[unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear]
[unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear]

[unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear]
[unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear]
[unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear]
[unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear]
[unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear]

Started learning Russ a
year ago - since then a
small amount with the
aim of being able to
understand the [unclear]
[unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear]
[unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear]
[unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear] [unclear]

1. Lee Harvey Oswald - 20
New Orleans
Went to US Embassy Oct 31
as much as they would be
at the time - however,
did request that my citizenship
be dissolved. Was not allowed
to swear on oath that he
renounced - refused to allow
me to take oath at that time.
They said they would not allow
me to act without citizenship.
They said citizenship.

reluctant passport
they would not act unless
for citizenship confirmed -
that I would not have
to leave. But he refused to
even if. So far refused.
my request for citizenship.
They have said they
are investigating possibility
of my combining my
education at work to -

p

There was Suij Ra m Ts in late Oct - no action - #5 not

Bevan warned that if 35 not my wife that of Sui officials, but overall Sui Polit. atmosphere that will deteriorate -

It may take years, my Sui citizenship

But I am safe in the future because that I can leave my passport stay.

Was had me about trouble, could get into: 1) as soon they tried to

discourage me 2) I asked to be allowed to take passport - they made excuses so as to refuse

passport - said I would come back, Pelly knew up / around self into Emb. as ticket. ~~pass~~ passport

3) At times I -> Sui citizens, thus "my gov't" in U.S. would be at their expense. Diplomats channels -

3. Bitter at refusal - I was there, Sat. Oct 31st

refused on passport consul official needed time to set papers together - I told them I wanted to make decisions then + there - I can't be too hard on them, but they are acting in an illegal way, but he is supposed to carry that responsibility through

Now, I wrote letter of protest to US (ambassador) received this letter back - (protested way Snyder had carried out his duties)

"It is a principle of the law gov't that the right of expatriation is a natural + inherent right of every person + that the manner prescribed by law for renunciation of citizenship is the exercise of that right. It is the diplomatic or consular officer of the U.S. or the embassy

For me #
 that you are open in (wired)
 that you may appear at the
 end of any time during
 normal business hours & require
 that the firm prepare the
 necessary documents for
 reevaluation of citizenship.

Just treating it like legal
 formality, don't encourage
 you & don't discourage
 you. They do of course
 know you, that it is not
 easy to be accepted as a
 citizen of SL - But even
 if I am not accepted, I
 would not consider returning
 to US.

Since I do go on 14 hours
 ranging standard room +
 food rate - I want to make
 it clear they are not
 sponsoring me
 in which has passed
 of my studying

9
 it does + have
 Did I Mess up get a
 1) financial
 2) you would be in
 3) partner - he was
 partner it seems & considered
 as that is considered
 laugh, seriously
 decision
 if nobody
 would you mind about friends
 ever family & know
 never know
 in my opinion about exactly
 in preparing about exactly
 my P&P - and exact
 2 yrs to do it - Not hard
 how it make refitting
 was it or with bar
 personal in favor of
 Had in favor of
 Had in favor of
 later -

Sept 19 (??) New Orleans
 Sept 19 (??) by ship -
 13 days to the Havre -
 booked Plus 24 to Helsinki
 got no vaccine - \$30
~~Sept~~ By train from
 Helsinki to Moscow -
 10 days on vouchers
 for the past 2 yrs I have
 been waiting to do this
 one thing - raised
 voice, 2 yrs, I was
 waiting to leave Marine
 Corps, make financial
 arrangements -
 I have had practical
 experience in world war
 not on idealism completely
 have had chance to
 make a military
 in real life in action
 because a Marxist
 at 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 had
 discovered Socialism in
 at that time, ~~was~~
~~at that time~~ 5 yrs of
 reading Soc. Lit., observing

fraternity of minority groups:
 Com. / negroes, + few
 makers in esp -
 waiting treatment of
 workers in NY - the
 fact that they are
 exploited -
 I'd read about it in
 Socialism 1, 11, + I saw that
 the descrip. was quite correct.
 Saw I would either a worker
 exploited for cap. prof. &
 an exploiter, or, since there
 are many in this category
 I'd be in the unemployed
 I'd be in the unemployed, not
 I'd be in the unemployed, not
 sparked by any fight in the
 wide since I have no wife -
 At 15, I was looking for
 something that would give
 me a key to my
 environment. I was born
 in a poor area. I was born
 a worker all. I was born
 a worker producer profit
 for capital - a good
 ex. of what happens to
 workers in US + declines

To say what she does -
 as she did beyond years
 held out etc. that's usual
 kind of people in US.
 is, I claim to be
 an intellectual person -

It's a sort of experience -
 It is a sort of why they
 put up with what
 whom + under what
 system they work. It's
 a study of everyone to make -

books by league -

change of strategy -
 with shift, dark tie
 tax cashmere sweater -
 believe that sooner or
 later, Comm will replace
 capitalism - depressive

Comm = aggressive itself
 ideal. which implants itself
 in every system + which
 grows - cannot live in
 US, so I shall remain

"I know, if necessary, we republish
 articles - Expend -
 the standard and notes -
 One copy had notes -
 we would not make -
 New Series lists to be
 returned by anyone
 interested in shop.
 idiosyncrasy - Q. document
 No contact with New
 Comm - only this -
 (I read up bits + observing -
 did I can see a Comm)
 been for some, personally.
 brought up, like every
 fashion - buy, to take
 Negroes -
 then Socialism lit. -
 opened my eyes to econ-
 reasons for hitting Neg.
 can keep wages low.
 Japan + Phil -
 Am cater to really

13. Perhaps they don't have
 as many hot water heaters
 + meat grinders they with
 20 yrs. this an econ-
 system which is cheap
 US has believed -
any material - stuck -
any as not influence
to achieve -
It's the social system
not the success
that character me
At same time SD with
undoubtedly this part US -
have of out for out's order
have seen tourist attacking
people's houses - in both
city of Hoscom - in Quebec
city because every part
and by you it's all known
peacefully to all purpose
people here are so well off
they don't have any of
of people in Dublin
that's our thing
Still making poverty
not to be seen here

12. looked for mil. imperialism
in Japan you'd expect
it - but if you'd ever
been granted back out
the lipstick you'd know
what I mean -
by imperialism with
can do with them,
that's what of an
Am look upon all
foreign people as sources
to be exploited for profit
Philippines who are well
off are those who cooperate
with Am -
who part of Indonesia
invasion in March 1958 -
Comm - inspired social
turn over - Set up back
with ammunition - even
1958 - just since
were told we must have to go
to go part
I went into planned
to see we were poor to
it didn't want to be
to be seen on my face by

14. The less I meet you -
 practice, understanding -
 Ask me why I am very
 curious - understand
 when I speak of id cards -
 local reasons that have
 brought me here while an
 (on world + understand)
 (as labeled: in material
 situation of US workers
 Russian + treat me as
 ability -

Refers to Sov. Gov't
 repeated by as "my
 Gov't" -
 I've already asked
 them to prepare papers

I'm sure if I did not
 know they'd just give me
 the same runaround
 Hence = Sov citizenship
 labor-saving device
 dissolve citizenship

Prash's + labor-saving

15. Sov. people like US. set
 wage - B.A. the profit
 thing - produce is use
 be profit all the profit
 Turn based on credit
 speculation -

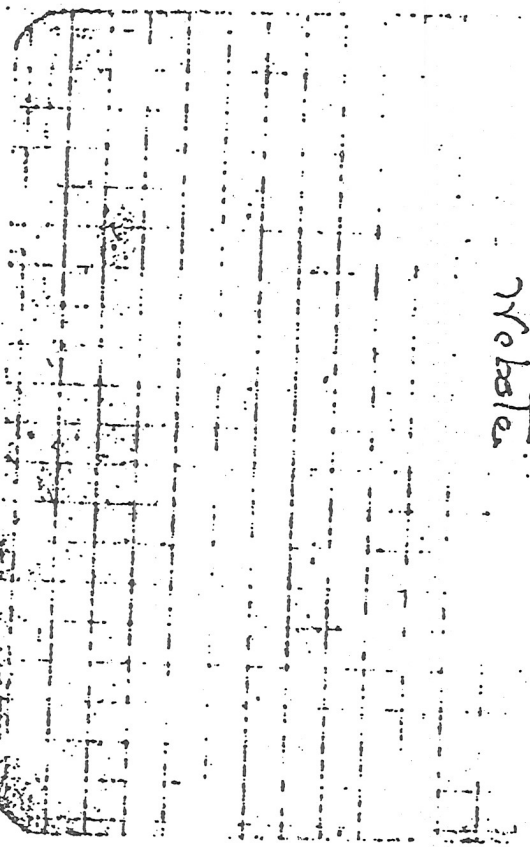
has a very primitive under
 ding of economies, that's
 as Marx is Das Kapital

18. I don't deny it to do it, but
under obligation to see his
friend -

So said we needed more
time get papers communcation
with Mustang
Law says we are under
oblig. To permit him to renounce
regulation says must be
gone by 5 of July 24 and is
not acting early - ~~extended~~

Nicholas Petrulli

Roberts



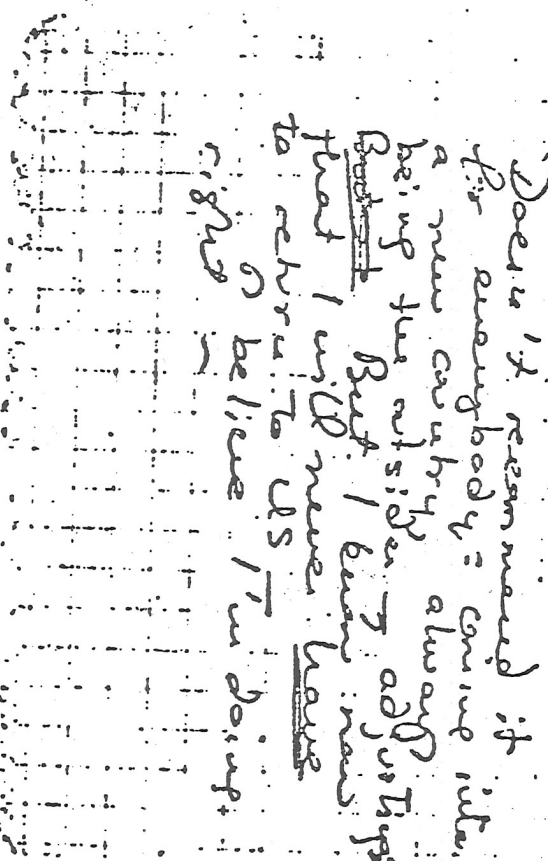
16. My reasons are very
sharp & good to me -

gave permission to US Emb -
along with verbal & written
statements

Light Sather & accord

Bite

Doesn't recommend it
for everybody - crime rate
a new category always
being the subject of
~~books~~ But I believe
that I will never have
to return to US in doing
right -



Interview With Suspect Oswald in Moscow in 1959

The Stuff of Which

The author was Moscow Correspondent for NANA in 1959. A few years before, in 1953, she had been research assistant on Viet Nam for John F. Kennedy, then a senator. She is perhaps the only person to have been good friends with both the late President and his suspected assassin. She is today a freelance writer on Soviet affairs.

By PRISCILLA JOHNSON

(Copyright, 1963, Boston Globe, North American Newspaper Alliance)
CAMBRIDGE, Mass.—“For two years now I have been waiting to do this one thing. To dissolve my American citizenship and become a citizen of the Soviet Union.”

The time was November, 1959. The place was my room on the third floor of Moscow's Hotel Metropol. The speaker was Lee Harvey Oswald, prime suspect in the assassination of John F. Kennedy.

With his suit of charcoal gray flannel, dark tie and tan cashmere sweater, Lee looked, and sounded like Joe College with a slight southern drawl. But his life hadn't been that of a typical college boy.

His father, an insurance salesman, died before he was born. Raised in Texas and Louisiana, the boy spent two years in New York during his early teens. At 17, he was listed in the U.S. Marines. “I did it,” he said, “because we were poor and I didn't want to be a burden on my mother.” Later, he spent 14 months as a licensed radar operator in the Far East.

In September, 1959, his three-year hitch nearly done, the Marines gave Lee a pendency discharge. Just one month later, after an exhausting trip by land, sea and air, he arrived in Moscow to petition the Supreme Soviet.

Even though Russian officials warned him Soviet citizenship is not easy to obtain, Lee saw Fanatic. Oswald had been already referring to the Soviet in days.

Government as “my government.” “But,” said Lee, “Even if I am not accepted, on no account will I go back to the United States. I shall remain here, if necessary, as a resident alien.”

All Soviet officials would promise at the time was that Lee could stay on in Russia whether or not he became a citizen. Meanwhile, they were “investigating the possibility of sending him to a Soviet higher technical institute.”

At an age when angry young rebels all over the world find release in aping the beatniks, what brought this serious, soft-spoken southern boy to Moscow with no other ambition but to spend the rest of his life as a Soviet citizen? Evidently, it was a combination of poverty, the plight of the U. S. Negro, and the U. S. Marines.

“My mother,” said Lee, “has been a worker all her life. She's a good example,” he added, “of what happens to workers in the United States.” He declined to elaborate.

“At the age of 15,” he added, “after watching the way workers are treated in New York and Negroes in the South, I was looking for a key to my environment. Then I discovered Socialist literature.” Lee was struck, in particular, by Marx's “Das Kapital.” He concluded that, as an American, “I would become either a worker exploited for capitalist profit; or an exploiter or, since there are many in this category, I'd be one of the unemployed.”

Lee was bitter at U.S. Consul Richard Snyder, who he charged, stalled him when he asked to take the oath on Oct. 31, the only time Lee had been at the Embassy. As a result, Lee wouldn't go back there. He would let the Soviet government handle legal details when, and if, he became a cit-

Year's Planning

Fully a year before, Lee began getting ready to go to Russia. Using a Berlitz grammar, he taught himself to read and write Russian. Never, Lee, a nice-looking young man with gray eyes and brown hair, did he consider deserting the Marine Corps.

Did it occur to Lee that Soviet officials might be embarrassed by his efforts to become a citizen of their country at a moment when Russia was cultivating good relations with the United States?

Russian officials, he said, “don't encourage and don't discourage me.” They warned, however, that neither Lee's wish, nor theirs, would determine whether his citizenship application was to be accepted.

They said it depended on the “over-all political atmosphere at the moment.” Meanwhile, they offered Lee the sanctuary of a prolonged stay in USSR.

As for officials at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow, they were torn between their desire to give Lee time to think it over, and their legal obligation to hear his oath renouncing American citizenship if he insisted.

Fanatics Are Made'

men of the Soviet Union, shortcoming in Moscow, Lee answered when I knocked he would never go at his door and why, a few hours later, he came to see me in my room, I never learned.

I asked Lee if the ordinary Russians he met expressed surprise at his desire to defect. "Well," he said, "they're very curious and they ask me why. But materialist Muscovites," he added, "understand when I speak of the idealistic reasons that brought me here. And they ask me many questions about conditions of workers in the United States."

'Never Go Back!'

Regardless of any material

can correspondents, just why before closing the door, that know.

As he was leaving I asked him to come see me again. The

mother was calling from Ft. Worth, trying to plead with Russians, Oswald told me, had

him to return home. He had warned that he mustn't talk to

refused to speak to any Amer-

Americans. But he promised to

pened to

I'd wo

know

second

the won

elevator

of each roo

I was

sure, awaited him.

As our conversation drew

to a close--we ate nothing,

and had been sipping only tea

--I had a terrible feeling of

frustration. I was

sure, awaited him.

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