

The Houston Post, Wednesday, January 1, 1964

OSWALD RUMORED AS INFORMANT FOR U.S.

Federal Agent Approached Son, Mother Quoted as Saying  
By LONNIE HUDKINS, Post Staff Correspondent

DALLAS - Was Lee Harvey Oswald a stool pigeon for a federal government agency? That's the question being asked by many people in responsible positions here.

If the answer is "yes," then the 24-year-old accused as the slayer of President Kennedy pulled one of the biggest and certainly the most embarrassing double-crosses in the nation's history.

AND IF THE answer is "no," it will go down as just another one of the fantastic rumors floating around in official and unofficial circles in Dallas.

Here are some of the facts and some of the opinions and the sources from which they came.

Oswald, who was later shot to death by night club operator Jack Ruby, did know of Joe Hosty, the FBI agent who handles subversive matters in the Dallas FBI office.

"He had Hosty's home phone, office phone and car license number," said Bill Alexander, assistant district attorney to Henry Wade and one of the state's most able prosecutors.

ALEXANDER was one of the men who got a chance to listen in on the grilling of Oswald on Nov 22, the day the President was killed, and Nov 23, the day before Oswald's life also came to an end.

Mrs Marguerite Oswald, mother of Oswald, had a terse "no comment" when asked if her son had told her he was or had at least been asked to be an informant in antisubversive work. She did not deny it.

However, she was quoted in the Philadelphia Inquirer as saying her son had been approached by a government agent to be an informant and then had informed her about it.

INAS UCH 48 she had no direct contact with her son after September of 1962, the contact, if made, would have been before she went to work for a Fort Worth matron in the same month and indicated to her employer that "Lee was doing important work."

The social matron said she got the impression from Mrs Oswald, a practical nurse, that Lee Oswald was doing some sort of work for the federal government. She described Mrs Oswald as "a very good nurse."

One thing the FBI cannot brush aside is the fact its agents knew Oswald was in Dallas before the slaying of President Kennedy and the wounding of Gov John Connally.

"THEY (MEANING the FBI) asked me where he (Oswald) worked and I told them," said Mrs Ruth Paine, the Irving housewife with whom Oswald's Russian-born wife and two children made their home in Irving, a Dallas County suburban town.

Mrs Paine recalled that FBI agents came to her home on two occasions to inform Oswald's wife that it was the FBI's custom, or policy, to contact immigrants from behind the Iron Curtain after they had been in this country for a year and that they (the immigrants) could, if they wanted to do so, disclose any pressure that might be on them from relatives or governments left behind.

The Irving housewife, a Quaker who speaks Russian, recalled that the FBI's first visit was "in late September or early October" of this year and that the agents returned a week later.

SHE SAID she told them neither she nor Oswald's wife knew where Oswald was living (in an Oak Cliff boarding house) but did tell them where he was working, at the Texas Book Depository (from which rifle bullets were fired into President Kennedy and Gov Connally during a motorcade).

Reporters on hand to interview Police Chief Jesse Curry on Nov 22 recall that he first revealed that the FBI knew that Oswald was in Dallas but had not given his name to check to police or other law enforcement agencies involved in the President's protection.

Chief Curry later retracted the statement.

But informed sources in Dallas tell of seeing a report forwarded to the Commission investigating President Kennedy's death that states that "at 3:30 PM Friday, Nov. 22," an FBI agent told Dallas police that the FBI knew of Oswald and had conducted some surveillance of him.

IF THIS IS true, veteran police and sheriff's investigators ask, their watch on

Oswald must not have been too good or they would have known about his rifle, reportedly the one used to kill the President and wound Connally, and his pistol, reportedly the one used to slay Policeman J. D. Tippit, and would have noticed the possible significance of his working in a building on the route of the motorcade.

It is this point that has lead to speculation by police and sheriff's deputies in Dallas that Oswald might have been an informant because, as one put it, "you just wouldn't think to check out one of your own stoolies."

And it should also be pointed out that most of the people involved in the initial investigation of the case are reluctant to say much now that the case's subsequent developments are now in the hands of federal investigation. (sic)

BUT DISTRICT Atty Henry Wade, a former FBI agent himself and therefore a man who would know how such an agency would operate, does not discount the possibility that Oswald may have been an informant.

"It may be true," he said, "but I don't think it will ever be made public if it is."

Another point of confusion involves Oswald's trip to Mexico City Sept 26 to Oct 3. Reliable sources in Dallas say he passed through Houston on Sept 26 en route to Mexico. One agency in Washington has "leaked that Oswald ~~was~~ accompanied by two women and a man." But this has been discounted by other investigators who say "he went alone" to Mexico although he talked to people on the bus which might have left the impression he was with them. [in 25]

THE CIA HAS reportedly stated that he tried to get a visa at the Cuban Embassy in Mexico City. This brings the CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) into the picture. If an informant for the CIA ever gets involved in anything, it's virtually impossible for it to ever come to light, according to people who have been in and out of the business of playing the international game of spying.

Meanwhile, it is generally agreed upon, both in Dallas and Washington, that Oswald, whatever he did, acted on his own and <sup>had</sup> no help nor was part of any conspiracy.

It is also conceded that Ruby had no connection with Oswald other than shooting him in the basement of the police station on the Sunday morning of Nov 24 as millions watched on television.

MRS PAINE, the woman with whom Oswald's wife made her home, has cleared up several other points to the best of her ability.

She discounts reports that the widow's father is a colonel in Soviet military intelligence on duty in the Minsk region of Russia.

"She (Mrs Oswald) told me her father died when she was a little girl and that she did not remember him. She said he mother remarried and that her mother and stepfather lived in Leningrad," explained Mrs Paine.

MRS PAINE said it was not hard for her to understand how Oswald could have accumulated a little money (\$150 that was reportedly found in Oswald's possessions) or that he had an estimated \$3,560 income during the 14 months after he had returned from Russia. [Leningrad" in article]

"He (Oswald) did not give his wife much money and they lived very frugally," Mrs Paine said.

Oswald's mother said, "As far as I know, she doesn't have a father living."

But a big question in the minds of Dallas and some federal lawmen -- from the newest beat patrolmen to those in top position -- is if the government -- any agency -- knew about Oswald and had watched, why wasn't his name on the list of people for Dallas police to check before the President arrived?

And if Oswald was a government informant and therefore ignored, why?

Retyped by F. Hoch, Nov. 9, 1973. I have only a barely legible negative photostatic copy, made from the Texas microfilm. This article was attached to Jaworski's letter of May 8, 1964 to Rankin, which is in the Texas Correspondence File.