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was on and picked the bullet from under the blanket.

Sen. Russell: This isn't going to be something that would run you stark mad

Mr. Rankin: We have considerable material and we are going to go into the atmosphere, this hate material that was very common in that area in many regards. It was in the newspapers, it was in circulars of various kinds, it was in letters to the editor in the newspaper. It was also involved in sermons from the pulpit in some of those, in at least one of the leading churches of the city, was involved in financing various forms of hate literature in very large amounts from that particular area, and it may well be that it was a contributing factor in not just as was suggested by some as far as the extreme right is concerned, but also in stirring up various elements of the community who were expressing themselves in very extreme forms against anybody in power from the President on down from time to time. . . . The pamphlets were commonly circulated there, and I presume you are familiar with some of the H. L. Hunt's financing of various . . . And all kinds of things coming from out there in substantial amounts and it apparently was not only exacerbating the community in a number of ways, not only of the extreme right and the extreme left, but also the elements of the people more moderately inclined who didn't assert themselves in regard to that . . . and if you let those forces work long enough it will have an effect upon their approach to many problems, and it may be something that the country should well be aware of.

Sen. Russell: Do you think there is evidence of any connection between Oswald and any of those groups? The FBI is supposed to check that out pretty closely.

Mr. Rankin: We have no evidence that is clear that Oswald was connected with anybody but we also have very great problems.

Sen. Cooper: . . . I think we might talk about this hate element too much because . . . people will begin to get the idea, as some have already expressed, of going away from evidence and trying to build up some situation which is apart from the evidence

Mr. Rankin: Then in the period that they [The Oswalds] lived in Russia, there are manifold problems about the fact that the way he lived, the additional income he received under the name of the Red Cross . . . the question of when that income terminated. She said he had never been to Leningrad. He said he had, she went to Kharkov, and there is no explanation of any communications between the two of them during that period of time.

Rankin went on emphasizing the Commission's lack of knowledge about a whole variety of aspects of Oswald's life in the Soviet Union: why he was paid so much, why the Oswalds moved to a better apartment just as they tried to arrange to go to the US, why she was allowed to leave Russia, what did Oswald do in Moscow for a month before departing for the US, why he belonged to a Soviet gun club, and why, on the way to the US, the Oswalds took an apartment in Rotterdam. Rankin said: "That entire period is just full of possibilities for training, for working with the Soviets, and its agents"

Mr. Dulles: If she has any chance to tell the Russian Embassy, I don't know whether she will do it or not, she might after this

interview, she might get in touch in some way with the Russian Embassy, they would be very anxious to get in touch with her. I guess the guard is such that they couldn't do that.

Mr. Rankin: . . . The Secret Service has been with her constantly . . . I don't know how much longer after we would take her testimony you would want that to continue . . . It hasn't, it isn't going forward yet because we have to ask them about that, and the CIA is going to help us develop the questions, and they have been working

The next investigation area would be the life of Jack Ruby. Rankin drew a quick biography of Ruby, then went into his activities.

He has apparently all kinds of connections with the underworld, and he had a number of petty arrests, but the convictions were very unimportant. There weren't any — I can't even remember one that amounted to anything.

Mr. Dulles: He never got to jail, did he?

Mr. Rankin: No, he paid a small fine on one or two. There are stories about his being a homosexual, and those don't pan out as far as any real proof, but it seems to be very current. There are also all kinds of stories about his girls and striptease girls and that they — he spent time with them all the time, and there are some stories that he is a bisexual.

There isn't any question but what he planned to go down to Cuba, and he did, and the story was that it was in regard to armaments . . . My recollection is that one of the stories was that he was to try to sell guns and ammunition to Castro.

Chairman: And jeeps

Mr. Rankin: That is all denied, and that he was going down there to make the money on other kinds of sales but not anything that was munitions or armaments. There is no explanation of where he was there, what he did, or who his connections were. He had all kinds of connections with the minor underworld, I think you would call it, in Dallas and Chicago, but I don't — it isn't apparent that any of the important people in the underworld would have given him any consideration at all

Now, it would seem that he might have — he might be the kind of person they might try to use. He was a habitue apparently of the police department, and was able to go to any part of it at any time, and they knew him

Sen. Cooper: There hasn't anything been developed to show that they knew each other.

Mr. Rankin: There is no showing of connection, there is no showing that Oswald was the kind of person that would hang around the joints that Ruby had, either

The Commission apparently gave no credence to claims by a Dallas attorney who told the FBI that he overheard Oswald and Ruby discussing on October 4 (the day after Oswald returned from Mexico) plans to assassinate Gov. Connally of Texas. The attorney said the meeting was at Ruby's Dallas nightclub, the Carousel.

On January 29, Texas Attorney General Waggoner Carr wrote Rankin, suggesting that the Directors of the FBI and the CIA be asked to provide the names of all their agents who were in the Dallas area between August and December, 1963. This was in reference to the allegations that Oswald had served as an FBI undercover informer.

On February 4, Carr wrote another letter to Rankin, complaining that the Commission had broken its commitment to the Texas Court of Inquiry that it would let it participate in the Washington-based investigation. The Commission had taken Marina Oswald's testimony after its January 27 session but Texas representatives were not invited. Although this letter, too, is in the Archives, its existence became known only in September, 1975. Carr told The New Republic that the Commission had committed a serious error in ignoring his suggestion that all Dallas-based FBI and CIA agents be interviewed.

Meeting of the Commission on February 24, 1964

This was a 10-minute session with only Chief Justice Warren, Sen. Cooper, Rep. Ford, Allen Dulles and General Counsel Rankin in attendance. The Commission was meeting for the first time in four weeks. In the meantime it had taken Marina Oswald's testimony, but it was still unable to dispose of the allegations that Oswald had been an FBI undercover agent. Rankin informed the Commission that affidavits had been obtained from FBI Director Hoover and individual bureau agents as well as interviews with Dallas officials and newspaper reporters. But, Rankin said, all the reports "show negative." Rankin went on to explain the status of the investigation.

Mr. Rankin: ... As you recall, we informed you before that the address in the telephone number book of Lee Oswald had in it the name of [James] Hosty [the FBI agent], and his telephone number and his automobile license, and that it wasn't in the transcription of that information which was furnished to us by the FBI. And we have written to the FBI to ask them an official inquiry, how that could happen, and to furnish us all of the information concerning that occurrence. And we have not received a reply yet.

Chairman: ... Is there any ... action needed?

Mr. Rankin: No. We plan to follow upon this whole problem, as the Commission has indicated, of claims about undercover agents, and we are going to report to you.

Rep. Ford: There will be reports from other agencies aside from the FBI?

Mr. Rankin: Yes, the same inquiry addressed to them

- Before adjourning, the Commission held a brief off-the-record discussion, not recorded by the official reporter.

Meeting of the Commission on March 16, 1964

The Commission held a three-minute meeting to approve a resolution governing the questioning of witnesses by staff members. The Commission had existed for three-and-a-half months at the time of this action. The session, attended by Chief Justice Warren, Sen. Cooper, Rep. Ford, John J. McCloy and General Counsel J. Lee Rankin, was the first one since February 24.

Meeting of the Commission on April 30, 1964

This executive meeting of the Commission was more than five weeks after the previous session. Chief Justice Warren, John J. McCloy and Allen Dulles met with Counsel Rankin, for two hours and 15 minutes. Rep. Ford was away in Michigan, Rep. Boggs was in Louisiana, Sen. Russell was busy at the Senate and Sen. Cooper could spend only 30 minutes with the Commission because of pressing Senate business.

Although the Commission had been working for nearly five

months and its staff had already conducted 300 interviews of witnesses, the Commissioners were still disturbed about the gaps and contradictions in the material they had been studying. The question of whether Lee Harvey Oswald might have been an FBI or CIA undercover agent remained unresolved. More than three months had elapsed since this allegation was first brought before the Commission — on January 22 — but FBI Director Hoover and CIA Director John A. McCone had not yet testified under oath on this point. This was the black cloud hanging over the Commission. Allegations concerning Oswald's ties with US intelligence agencies were appearing in the world press. Despite a decision by the Commission on January 27 that Mr. Rankin should confront Hoover about the Oswald problem, Sen. Cooper found it necessary on April 30 to insist that "it would be proper to call the heads" of the FBI and the CIA to testify on the Oswald claim. The Commission, it seemed, still feared a confrontation with Hoover. Cooper also urged that Secretary of State Dean Rusk be called to testify on Oswald's stay in Russia between 1959 and 1962, a period that continued to mystify the Commission. Finally Cooper expressed his concern about contradictions between testimony from witnesses before the Commission and press reports on interviews with the same witnesses. Five months into the investigation, the Commissioners had not yet set foot in Dallas; now Cooper was suggesting that the time had really come to visit the assassination site. And, above all the Commission kept worrying about its credibility. It also wondered whether the Secret Service had improved its methods for the protection of the President.

Mr. Dulles: ... With regard to the State Department, I think we also ought to have some testimony from them as to the normal practice re American defectors to Russia, get some little background information ... I was interested in this case reported just yesterday about this Soviet couple — the Soviets would not let them leave. I think there are different circumstances in the Oswald case. But still I think we ought to get a little of that testimony.

We had a little question the other day, when the Secret Service were here, about the information with regard to the protection of the President. Certain of that is undoubtedly classified, and we don't want to put on the record where the disclosure of it would endanger the President. But it seems to me that maybe the Commission should hear that testimony — because it is very difficult for us to judge and pass upon whether the protection is adequate or not without knowing what measures are being taken

It was already clear that the Commission would not have its report completed on the secret June 1 target date. Rankin told the Commissioners that the transcripts of testimony, depositions and affidavits would be available to them in printed form around June 1. But the problem facing the Commission was how to mold all this material into a comprehensive report. The Commissioners were realizing that a report alone would not be enough, that actual testimony would have to be presented to the public as well.

Mr. Dulles: I suggest that we might want to consider sending a letter to the State Department, merely pressing them to get an answer, if they can, from the Soviet. I think that would be important for the record. The Soviet may not answer in time, anyway. But they always delay, and you never get an answer out of them if you don't keep pressing them.

Chairman: I have spoken twice within the last 10 days to the Secretary of State, and he has told me he is pressing them, and was going to speak to them personally on it several days

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Mr. McCloy: ... To come back on the Secret Service report — that part of our charge which relates to the protection of the President ... I was led to this belief more firmly after hearing from several of the Secret Service people that were testifying — even though there may be elements in that ... I think we clearly never want to publish, because it might affect the future security of the President or people next in line — but that we ought to go into that ... and then we can make up our mind what part of it ... could securely be put on the record, and what could be eliminated.

There is one Secret Service man that I think we probably should have testify, and that is Mr. Clinton Hill, who I understand is the man who endeavored to get on the car just after the shots. He was the closest next to Mrs. Kennedy. He was the closest one to the scene, as the pictures show. He could give us some information that might be of pertinence. And I think it would be improvident of us not to hear his testimony at first hand ...

Then you don't have down here ... any suggestion that we interview the President. I am not so sure it is necessary for us to inquire of the President, but I am inclined to think that maybe you or somebody — you, Mr. Chief Justice, could speak to him about it and see what he has to say. Maybe we don't have to put anything on the record — but maybe just to close that particular incident, with that particular piece of testimony.

McCloy appeared to be referring to the alleged ties between Oswald and the FBI.

Mr. McCloy: Then I am also conscious that you, Mr. Rankin, were anxious to get a little more information about Oswald's Mexican trip. There was a period there where there were some ...

Mr. Rankin: We got that. We sent a team down there. We have made a complete exploration of it. We are getting some additional material to follow up. But that will be very complete. Everything that we could possibly get, and I think that the CIA and the FBI did a remarkably good job down there for us.

Chairman: As I understand it, they had the cooperation of the Mexican authorities, too ...

Mr. Dulles: ... I am not entirely clear in my mind as to the scope of our responsibilities in a matter such as recommendations, as to whether any change should be made with regard to respective functions of the FBI and Secret Service in protecting the President ... The question of transmitting guns in interstate commerce, and boxes at post offices in false names and things of that kind. Are those all matters within our general jurisdiction, to what extent, and should we just point them up, or are we supposed to make recommendations? ...

Chairman: ... There is nothing set about us making any recommendations in this area. But I have an idea that there is something implicit in the establishment of the Commission that we ought to not let this chance go by without at least trying to do what we can to better protect the lives of our Presidents ...

Mr. Dulles: ... We were somewhat surprised, I think, to have the Secret Service testify that when they went down to Dallas, from their own files and records, they were not given a

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single name that should be investigated or watched or taken care of ...

The theme of credibility was weighing heavily on Warren's mind, leading him to the extraordinary suggestion to involve the heads of the two principal US news services in the investigation. Warren's idea seemed to be that in this fashion the Commission would protect its flank at least as far as the wire services were concerned.

Chairman: ... It might be a good thing if we were to ask to come down here the president of the Associated Press, and the president of United Press International, and tell them that we would like to have them examine their reports and files on the assassination, to confer with their people who are familiar with it, and then perhaps assign one of their top people who could come down here to see us and discuss on a confidential basis — not for publication — anything that may be in their minds as to what should be investigated.

I think that by doing that we could establish to them that we had investigated everything that they might have in their minds. And if there are any areas that are unexplored, we could explore them, and then at the end, perhaps, we could take the testimony of those two gentlemen and ask them — "Now, on the basis of all you have heard from your reporters and from your files and from everything that has been said and done, do you believe there is any area here that is unexplored, do you believe that there is any real conflict that should call for further investigation?" ... And I am just of the opinion that we could get a statement from them that would be of a confirmatory nature so far as our report is concerned. And overseas I would think that if those men with the means they have at hand to get these rumors, and to look into them, that if they were satisfied, it would have a lot to do with allaying some of these rumors.

Mr. McCloy: I think this is an important suggestion, because the extent and the variety and the quantity of this type of article which has appeared throughout Europe makes our report all the more important in order to clarify this situation, because, generally speaking, from the reports that come to me [from] all Europe, ... there is a deep-seated feeling that there is a deep conspiracy here, there are elements of suppression involved in it all ...

Dulles thought that the Commission should obtain a copy of a book by the American writer Thomas Buchanan, published in London, raising the conspiracy theory. The book was available in every London bookstore, but Dulles offered to ask "my former associates" at the CIA to "arrange through the British services" to get a copy. This was a good example of how intelligence agencies do things the hard way. McCloy, also worried about opinion abroad, suggested that the State Department brief the Commission "so that we have a better concept of what the charges are and what our responsibilities are in connection with that." The Commission then held an off-the-record discussion, presumably on these subjects.

Cooper was concerned that the investigation was "weak" concerning Oswald's activities in the Soviet Union and the circumstances of his return to the United States in 1962. He wanted to know what the State Department had in its records on these points. He also wanted more information about George de Mohrenschildt, a Russian-born oil engineer who, along with his wife, was a member of the Russian-speaking community in Dallas. The couple had befriended Marina Oswald, and, curiously, they seemed to be the only people who had known well both the Oswalds

and President and Mrs. Kennedy. The deMohrenschildts were living in Haiti at the time of the assassination. There was a touch of mystery surrounding them, and after Warren told Copper that de Mohrenschildt had made a "full deposition," the Commission engaged in an off-the-record debate.

Next, the Commission worried for awhile about the cost of printing enough copies of the final report and accompanying volumes of testimony. Dulles agreed with Warren that most of the testimony (but not all) should be published "so nobody can say you have not tried to make the whole thing secret." Rankin commented that the Budget Bureau told him that "the Commission would get a lot of complaints from the public, and that the President would, too, if there wasn't the supporting materials ..." The Budget people, he said, thought that it would not be desirable just to print the report and place the other materials in the National Archives.

The Commission then turned to a discussion of Jack Ruby as a potential witness.

Mr. Rankin: The last thing that has happened on that ... is the question of his present competency to stand trial, and that issue, according to Texas law, is to be submitted to a jury ... I called (Henry) Wade, Prosecuting Counsel ... He said that this development had come up ... and we would probably not want to be taking any testimony until that question was resolved.

And I would recommend to you that we don't get involved in anything like that until that question is decided, because he might just use the Commission for an exhibit A as to his condition.

Mr. McCloy: I don't see how we can examine anybody whose competency to be examined is in question

[Jack Ruby was tried between February 17 and March 14, convicted of the murder, with malice, of Lee Harvey Oswald, and sentenced to death. His lawyers appealed the verdict on grounds of his incompetence.]

Mr. McCloy: You see, they have had the trial ... Now it is just this question — I suppose the allegation has frequently occurred — since the time of the trial, under sentence, this fellow has lost his competency, and you don't execute somebody who is incompetent.

Chairman: This, Allen, has absolutely no application legally to his sanity at the time of the commission of the crime. This has to do with his present sanity, and whether you can execute him in his present mental condition.

And if they find him insane, all it will do will be to suspend the power of the State to execute him until such time as they find he is no longer insane.

Mr. Dulles: Does he go to prison?

Mr. McCloy: He goes to a mental institution. It is perfectly clear we cannot examine him at this stage.

Chairman: ... I would think whether they find him sane or insane, if he is willing to talk to us, we should talk to him. Maybe we would not want to take his testimony. But if he is willing to talk to us, I think we ought to talk to him and take his story, and use it for the purpose of checking it out, if we can, and putting it into the record anyway ... But I would not do it at this stage.

Mr. McCloy: Whether he was sane or insane?

Chairman: Yes

The Commission turned again to the long-delayed question of some of its members traveling to Dallas to inspect the assassination site.

Mr. Rankin: Well, we have had several members that felt that there should be a visit by members of the Commission to Dallas before a report was made. I have had a number of the staff [who] felt that there probably would be criticism by the public if we didn't have someone from the Commission, maybe one member would be enough, to go down there and see the scene and come back and report to the rest of the members

Autopsy pictures of President Kennedy's body also seemed to pose a serious problem for the Commission as Rankin informed the panel. There were contradictions between the reports provided by Texas and National Naval Medical Center doctors, and Gov. John Connally's testimony concerning the trajectory of the assassin's bullets. The Commission appeared to be grappling with the same problems in this area as critics of the report were to do subsequently.

Mr. Rankin: ... We have a very serious problem in the record ... that the bullet ... probably passed through the President and then through Governor Connally. And we now have the testimony of Governor Connally that that couldn't have happened. He is certain it didn't happen. And that the bullet that struck him is one that did not hit the President.

We also have some drawings of President Kennedy which are reconstructions by the men that participated in the autopsy. And these men have not seen those pictures of the autopsy, but they had these drawings made, and we don't know whether those drawings conform to the pictures of the autopsy or not.

Now, I thought we could avoid having those pictures being a part of our record, because the family has a strong feeling about them, and I think we should respect it insofar as can possibly be done, and carry out the work of the Commission — because they don't want the President to be remembered in connection with those pictures

But I do feel that a doctor and some member of the Commission should examine them sufficiently so that they could report to the Commission that there is nothing inconsistent with the other findings in connection with the matter in those pictures. In that way we can avoid any question that we have passed anything up that the Commission should know or that we haven't tried to take advantage of information that should be available to us

Chairman: ... But without putting those pictures in our record. We don't want those in our record ... It would make it a morbid thing for all time to come

The Commissioners went back, once more, to their discussion of whether Hoover and McCone should testify before the group about the allegations that Oswald may have been an FBI or CIA undercover agent. They had been dealing with it, inconclusively, for over three months.

Chairman: ... I am inclined to think that we ought to take their testimony. And there is another reason I would like to take their testimony — because of statements both from the right and the left, that there has been a conspiracy. I would like to ask Edgar Hoover whether he has, as a result of the investigation of his bureau, any evidence indicating that there has been a conspiracy with anybody, governmental, individu-

al, or otherwise. And I think we also ought to ask John McCone the same thing, . . .

Mr. McCloy: Examine him as a brother, rather than as Attorney General.

Chairman: Yes, as brother. And if he was to testify that he had no information, I would think with any reasonable person it would have tremendous force . . .

Mr. Rankin: . . . I think that what you say about the Attorney General is very important, too, because I notice that the foreign press is sort of picking that up and saying . . . it is hardly believable that the brother of the President would stand by if there was some conspiracy in the United States to dispose of his brother. So I think that might be the most impressive thing we had, was the testimony of those three men . . .

The last item on the agenda of the April 30 meeting was Presidential protection. However, Rankin reminded the Commissioners that this was "the area that Congressman Ford said he wanted to participate in." Ford was not present at the meeting, and the Chairman agreed to postpone this discussion until the next session. On September 5, 1975, Gerald Ford, now President of the United States, was the target of an abortive assassination attempt in Sacramento, Calif.

Before adjourning, the Commissioners agreed on the necessity of including a biography of Lee Oswald in the final report. Rankin provided an intriguing explanation for this need, perhaps suggesting unconsciously what the Commission's verdict would be.

Mr. Rankin: Some of it will be necessary to tell the story and to show why it is reasonable to assume that he did what the Commission concludes that he did do.

Mr. Dulles: If we left out, for example, his stay in Russia and things of that kind from the main report, somebody might say we were burying that. I think that part ought to be in the main report, probably . . .

Meeting of the Commission on June 4, 1964

The Commission held a 40-minute meeting specifically devoted to Rep. Ford's angry denunciation of news reports that the Commissioners had already concluded that President Kennedy's assassination was the act of a lone individual and that there was no evidence that he was working as an agent of a foreign government. Such statements, Ford said, are "obviously false" because the Commission had not yet reached any conclusions. Ford's outburst was another example of the feeling in the Commission that outside forces were applying pressure to it to conclude that Lee Oswald had acted alone, and that, therefore, the case should be closed. Several months earlier — at the January 27 executive session of the Commission — several members had expressed their displeasure over the fact that the FBI had virtually decided for the Commission that, indeed, Oswald was a lone killer and that the presidential panel was simply expected to confirm it. However, John J. McCloy did indicate at the June 4 meeting that the press reports were not altogether wrong: "... in respect of the trend of the testimony that we have had, they probably are 80 or 85 percent accurate."

The June 4 meeting was attended only by Chief Justice Warren, Rep. Ford, McCloy, Allen Dulles, and General Counsel Rankin.

The Commission had held a meeting on May 19, but the Archives has kept the transcript secret because it related to "personal and medical files" and disclosure would "constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy."

Most of the Commission's time during May was devoted to the taking of sworn testimony. This included the testimony by FBI Director Hoover and CIA director McCone, received on May 14, dealing largely with allegations that Oswald had been a government undercover agent. Nearly four months had elapsed between the time the Commission first heard these allegations — at the secret session on January 22 — and Hoover's and McCone's testimony under oath before the Commission.

In his testimony (the full text appears in Volume V of the Commission's hearings, published in September, 1964, along with the report), Hoover said that "I can most emphatically say that at no time was he [Oswald] an employee of the Bureau in any capacity, either as an agent or as a special employee, or as an informant." Furthermore, Hoover testified that "I have been unable to find any scintilla of evidence showing any foreign conspiracy or any domestic conspiracy that culminated in the assassination of President Kennedy."

Although Allen Dulles, the former CIA director, had told the Commission during the January 27 executive session that Hoover would never admit Oswald's employment, even if it were true, he did not challenge Hoover's testimony at the May 14 hearing. Waggoner Carr, the Texas attorney general, who first reported this claim, was present. Hoover acknowledged that although Oswald had been a defector to the Soviet Union, the FBI did not consider it necessary to give his name to the Secret Service prior to President Kennedy's visit to Dallas. Hoover testified that FBI agents had interviewed Oswald three times after his return from the Soviet Union in 1962 to try to establish whether he had been recruited by Soviet intelligence — and that agents had interviewed Marina Oswald on separate occasions — but he failed to inform the Commission that Oswald had visited the FBI office in Dallas several days before the assassination to issue a written warning against further interviews of his wife by bureau agents.

The Warren report said that the last pre-assassination contact between the FBI and Oswald had been in August, 1963, when he was interviewed at a New Orleans jail after his arrest following a street scuffle. Oswald was involved in a fight with anti-Castro exiles while distributing leaflets in favor of Premier Castro. Only on August 31, 1975 — almost 12 years later — did the FBI acknowledge that Oswald had written such a threatening note to the Bureau and that the note was destroyed by unknown persons. FBI Director Clarence M. Kelley said that despite his note, Oswald was not placed under active surveillance.

Not even this threat led the FBI to supply Oswald's name to the Secret Service prior to President Kennedy's visit to Dallas. Kelley said that FBI agents in Dallas had inexplicably kept secret their knowledge of the Oswald note for "almost 12 years."

Furthermore, there is nothing in Hoover's testimony concerning an alleged request by the FBI to the Dallas police to retract a public statement made on the assassination day by a police lieutenant that the bureau had known beforehand that Oswald could be a threat to the President. According to information released in September, 1975, by the former Dallas police chief, J.E. Curry, an FBI agent identified as James Hosty had told police lieutenant Jack Revill that the Bureau knew that Oswald was a threat to Kennedy.

Revill reportedly transmitted this information to Chief Curry, who in turn relayed it to newsmen on November 22. In May, 1964, Curry sent Warren a registered letter advising him that after he made his statement to reporters, "I received a telephone call from Mr. Gordon Shanklin, special agent in charge of the Dallas office of the FBI, in which Mr. Shanklin stated that the Bureau was extremely desirous that I retract my statement to the press. I then appeared before the press and retracted my statement . . ."

Curry added in his letter to Warren that prior to the alleged remarks by FBI agent Hosty, the bureau had given no indications to the Dallas police that Oswald was in the city and that he might be dangerous. Curry did not explain why he waited five months to advise the Warren Commission of this episode. He claimed in a newspaper interview on September 1975, that the Commission failed to pay sufficient attention to his information.

Revill, who headed the Dallas police intelligence section, testified before the Warren Commission on May 13, 1964, that Hosty, the FBI agent, had told him that "Lee Oswald killed President Kennedy . . . He is in our Communist file . . . We knew he was here in Dallas . . . We had information that this man was capable of committing this assassination." The Commission's report mentions this episode, but says that Hosty denied in sworn testimony that he had ever made such comments to Revill. However, the report ignores Chief Curry's statement in his letter to Warren that the FBI had asked him to retract the statement to the press. This, then, is another mystery concerning the Commission's work. The subject was not discussed in the Commission's executive sessions for which transcripts are available. However, the transcript of the May 19 session—six days after Revill's testimony—is among the two still withheld by the National Archives.

By the time the Commission met on June 4 to receive Ford's complaints about news leaks, it had already failed to meet its own secret June 1 target date for issuing the report. And as Ford pointed out, the omission had not yet reached any final conclusions.

Rep. Ford: Mr. Chief Justice, and members of the Commission, my comments at this point concern a number of news stories that have recently appeared in the press throughout the country. The article in *The Christian Science Monitor* of a day or so ago is rather typical.

It says, in effect, and I quote—"Commission members have come to the conclusion that President Kennedy's assassination was the act of a lone individual. There is no evidence that he was working in any way as an agent of a foreign government."

Now, I would like to make at least one point.

First, any statement that Commission members have come to this or that conclusion is obviously false, because the Commission has not discussed these matters as a Commission, to my knowledge. The Commission as a whole, as far as I know, has made no final judgment. Now, the staff of the Commission, individually or collectively, may have come to certain conclusions such as this. However, the staff, individually or collectively, have no right to make such implications to the press, nor has any Federal agency, nor has any individual member of the Commission.

I regretfully say that if these news stories persist, I possibly have no other alternative than the obligation to express to the press . . . the views that I have stated here.

Chairman: Well, Congressman, may I say, so far as I am concerned, I share your feelings exactly. I personally cannot account for any of these stories . . . I have urged Mr. Rankin, and I am sure he has urged the staff, not to discuss them either. I am inclined to think that much of this comes from thin air and from speculation . . . I don't know how, however, we can let them bait us into making some statements that would deny it. That is my only problem. We don't get any place by denying that certain things are the facts.

Most of them (the newspapers) if not all, start out or contain in the substance of the article a Commission source, or a source close to the Commission . . .

Rep. Ford: By these kinds of articles, they are creating an atmosphere throughout the country that will, I think, create a predetermined public opinion of what we may or may not have come to . . . In my judgment, somebody somewhere is planting or leaking these stories. And I must go back to a letter that I think you received on behalf of the Commission early in December where, as I recall Mr. Katzenbach wrote and asked, among other things, one, if the Commission would release a statement to the effect that there was no foreign involvement, there was no conspiracy, or in the alternative that we as a Commission would authorize the Department of Justice to make such a release.

I think the Commission used good judgment in denying both requests . . . And ever since that time, and in a growing intensity, and in growing volume now, there is this kind of newspaper propaganda with the same intent in mind.

I have some personal conclusions, but I cannot prove them, so I don't want to make any allegations.

But it disturbs me . . . I want no newspaperman nor some individual or Federal agency implying that I have made a decision or that the Commission has made a decision when the facts are I have come to no specific conclusion yet, and as far as I know the Commission itself has come to no such conclusion.

Chairman: . . . I saw two or three days ago a short article . . . which said that the Commission was split on the question of whether Oswald was the sole perpetrator of this crime or not. . . . If they are going to increase in tempo and in number, at least until we make a decision, they are inaccurate . . . I think the Commission ought to at least think about at this point making a statement to the effect that no decision has been made . . . And perhaps that is enough. At least that would nullify the guts of what most of these stories include. It would undercut the speculation which is rampant at this point. I am just wondering if that would give furtherance to the statement, though, that we are split on it.

Rep. Ford: That is a matter of judgment.

Mr. McCloy: I am absolutely astounded at this spate of articles, and where they come from. They must come from some place very close to the Commission . . . And then in respect of the trend of the testimony that we have had, they probably are 80 or 85 percent accurate. I don't know how many times I have been stopped in New York and people saying, "I see, Jack, what your Commission is going to come out with. The report has already been written for you, hasn't it?" I think the thing has gotten to a point where I believe the Commission should say we have come to no conclusions on this thing yet, that the articles to the effect that conclusions of the Commission have already been found are totally inaccurate; that we do hope to have a report within a relatively short period of time in which our conclusions will be stated, but they are now merely in the process of formulation.

Rep. Ford: I only brought it up because these stories . . . are, in effect, preempting what we may or may not say.

Chairman: . . . I can see that as the time gets shorter and it looks as though we are getting to the point where we are going to file a report, that these things, they are starting to speculate about them more and more as time goes on until it comes out . . .

Rep. Ford: . . . The trouble now, Mr. Chief Justice, is as we get

down to the wire, they, by their own initiative or otherwise, are putting the imprimatur of the Commission, when they say a source close to the Commission, or a spokesman for, or something else . . . Three months ago it was pure speculation. But now they are adding an unofficial stamp to what they are writing . . .

Chairman: . . . Suppose we made a statement to the effect that the taking of testimony is nearing an end, that the Commission is giving consideration now to the report that it hopes to write in the near future, that it has made no final conclusions as yet, in fact has not discussed final conclusions as a Commission.

Rep. Ford: That couldn't be better.

Chairman: If that is agreeable to everyone, we will put that out after this meeting.

Rep. Ford: I think it clears the air, and I think it is the kind of action that will, I hope, put to rest some of these speculative stories . . .

Mr. McCloy: Until you complete the testimony you cannot have a final conclusion . . .

Chairman: All right. We will see if this won't stop it. I hope so.

Meeting of Commission on June 23, 1964

The Commission held an executive session on June 23. However, the National Archives has refused to release the transcript because the CIA requested continuing secrecy. The meeting apparently dealt with CIA information concerning the period between 1959 and 1962 when Lee Oswald lived in the Soviet Union, and the Agency's efforts to obtain material on Oswald during his stay in Russia as well as his visit to Mexico City late in September and early in October, 1963. The New Republic requested Jane Smith, Director, Civil Archives Division of the National Archives, to set forth in writing the reasons for the denial of the June 23 transcript. Miss Smith's letter, dated September 5, 1975, said in part:

. . . The transcript of the executive session of June 23, 1964, is withheld from research under 5 USC (b) (1) as amended, "matters that are . . . specifically authorized under criteria established by an Executive Order to be kept secret in the interest of national defense or foreign policy and are in fact properly classified pursuant to such Executive Order." In response to a previous request for access, the transcript was reviewed by the Central Intelligence Agency because it relates to Yuri Nosenko, the Soviet defector. In response to our request for a review of the transcript the CIA asked that the request for access be denied "in order to protect sources and methods and other information related to our operational equities."

Meeting of Commission Members With Psychiatric Panel on July 9, 1964

Two members of the Warren Commission—McCloy and Dulles—and Commission staff members held a seven-hour meeting with three psychiatrists to develop a psychological profile of Oswald. The purpose of this meeting—Rankin described it as "an informal colloquy, interrogation and explanation by the doctors"—was to search for Oswald's possible motive in assassinating President Kennedy through a study of his personality.

The three doctors had studied most of the biographical material available on Oswald—based on numerous earlier interviews with

witnesses by the Commission, its staff, and the FBI but they cautioned the Commissioners that hard conclusions were impossible given the fact that Oswald could not be interviewed psychiatrically. The Commission appears to have used this material in a highly selective manner, incorporating some of the views of the doctors in the final report while rejecting others. For example, it ignored the medical hypothesis that Oswald probably did not have a killer instinct and, most importantly, that Oswald's rejection by Marina, his wife, on the eve of the assassination may have triggered, in an immediate sense, his decision to try to kill the President.

Comparing the transcript of the July 9 meeting with the final report, it appears that the Commission used the medical material both to construct Oswald's biography and, up to a point, to justify its conclusion that he had acted alone in the assassination. However, the report shied away from ascribing a clear motive to Oswald.

Although at least one of the doctors insisted that the Commission include a statement to the effect that it drew on the psychiatrists' panel in its investigation, the report failed to do so. The transcript of this meeting was part of the published hearings accompanying the report. It was classified for seven years following the publication of the report.

The transcript fills 245 pages. In addition to McCloy and Dulles, the session was attended by Rankin, his special assistant Norman Redlich, and staff members Wesley J. Liebeler, Albert E. Jenner, Jr., W. David Slawson, and Howard Willens. The doctors were Dr. Dale C. Cameron, then superintendent of St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington, D.C. (a hospital for mental patients); Dr. Howard P. Rome, then professor of psychiatry in the Mayo Foundation (connected with the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota) and president-elect of the American Psychiatric Association; and Dr. David A. Rothstein, then staff psychiatrist at the US Medical Center for Federal Prisoners in Springfield, Missouri.

Opening the discussion, staff members drew for the doctors Oswald's early history, his father's death and the feelings of his mother, Marguerite Oswald, that society treated poor widows harshly.

Dr. Rothstein: This is interesting because one of the things in several of these patients [persons who have threatened Presidents of the US] was they all had ideas that Russia would be better or communism would be better and there seems to be an underlying feeling that the government would be more of a mother figure, providing more of the dependent needs of the people . . . I think perhaps this might indicate that some of her [his mother's] talk early in the beginning would have directed him [Oswald] toward the idea that the government should meet these needs, because at least in these people that I saw, I think one outstanding thing was that it wasn't just the anger toward a father figure but the anger toward a mother who wasn't really meeting a person's needs for dependency.

The group discusses at some length Oswald's attitudes in school and outside, the blend of withdrawal and aggressiveness in his personality.

Dr. Cameron: . . . It sounded as though he was withdrawn, and that as he tried to develop some masculine identity, then this kind of hostile belligerent business would come out. Then he got squelched again. Then he went into the Marines and there he was Oswald the Rabbit, until he began living with an Oriental girl at which time he again became quite belligerent toward his peers in terms of coming in late, making a racket at night and doing everything he could to annoy his peers at that

junction.

Then again he withdraws from this, and that is when he takes off for Russia.

Dr. Cameron: . . . It seems to me he has been a retiring kind of person in a sense, not alone because he wanted to be alone, but because he was so terribly rejected, and as he tries to come out he comes out in a hostile way, and then gets smacked down and comes out in a hostile way again, and then if this is true, and if indeed he did get rejected, in essence, by the Russians, and I don't know that, this would then become a trigger another hostile kind of outburst.

Mr. Liebler: . . . I don't want to put any thoughts in anybody's mind . . . but Oswald was discharged from a job on April 6, 1963 and on April 10, 1963 he apparently made his attempt on the life of General Walker. . . .

Mr. Jenner: . . . We have to remain skeptics, as lawyers act as devil's advocates to ourselves . . . One of the things that we are hoping we will obtain, we are already obtaining, is advice from you gentlemen as to what we should look for

Dr. Cameron: . . . I think he had a sort of pseudo-intellectual drive and some other personality problems that would have prompted him in this direction . . . His mother had a great drive to be recognized by important persons: She wanted to be an important person herself, that she was grasping, self-centered, selfish, and used her children for her own benefit. . . .

I think part of his interest, and to be in a commanding or controlling situation, I think part of his interest in communism may have grown out of the desire to be knowledgeable about something about which a lot of other people weren't knowledgeable, and also because the so-called capitalistic system in his view and in his mother's treated her rather badly, so I think he would have a natural interest in other kinds of systems

In Oswald's case, a man who would defect and go in these circumstances, shows that he is perfectly capable of acting on his beliefs, and that in retrospect would have been a big fat danger signal for this kind of boy

Mr. Liebler: So you would certainly watch defectors?

Dr. Cameron: Yes, I certainly would.

Mr. McCloy: He was an activist throughout. In the first place, he signed up for the Marine Corps. He went over to the Marine Corps. He went off to Moscow. He went off to Mexico. He got excited about the Cuban business. He printed the pamphlets and distributed them on the corner of the street. He shot at Walker. He shot at the President. . . .

Dr. Cameron: If he had shot Walker, the President probably would have been saved.

Dr. Cameron noted that Oswald did not mention associates in the Walker attempt. The fact that Oswald had made a written record of the Walker incident led to a discussion as to whether Oswald did not want to be caught in the Kennedy assassination. The point was raised why Oswald smuggled his rifle from the Paines' home in Irving to the Texas School Book Depository building in Dallas instead of procuring another weapon. A neighbor, who drove him from Irving to Dallas on November 22, saw Oswald carry the rifle wrapped in fabric.

Dr. Rothstein: I am wondering whether he really wanted to

have this hidden and not be caught, because one outstanding thing about almost every one of these people who threatens the President was for one thing they have made some suicidal attempt in the past, and in at least a lot of them there was an identification of this with suicide . . . Oswald may have really, at least unconsciously, had a need or this was an event equal to suicide in a sense

Mr. McCloy: . . . I already talked about what seems to be his killing instinct. He also talked about killing a good bit in his papers . . . when he talked about Russia being his own country, he considered it his own country and it was a war. He immediately said he would have to kill Americans, kill any American

Dr. Cameron: I would have a little trouble with the concept of a killer instinct. I think this was a violent hostile paranoid person, which is understandable in terms of his past history, and that in his hostility and violence he would kill, yes. But I wouldn't attribute this to any innate instinct in that sense of the word. I think it was more the product of his life experiences, plus his innate personality, whatever talents he was born with

Mr. Dulles: His disappointment in Russia too was due in part to the character of the state he found there. He didn't welcome that. He apparently rejected that.

Dr. Cameron: . . . This fits in with your mother concept in a sense, the state with its collectivism which would supply the creature needs, and so forth, and yet he found that there was too much authority going along with this to satisfy him . . . Is it fair for me to assume that there is no reason to believe that he was a tool of the Russians in his return in what he did?

Mr. Liebler: . . . We assume that he was not involved in a conspiracy, that he was not a Russian agent of any sort

Mr. Dulles: You can assume exactly what was said, he was not a tool. I think the evidence before the Commission pretty clearly brings that out. I think they looked him over, but rejected him . . . This is not the kind of man any intelligence service would want to pick up.

This was the first time that a Commission member stated flatly that available evidence indicated that Oswald was not a Soviet agent. The Commission had apparently accepted earlier the assurances by FBI director Hoover and CIA Director McCone that Oswald had not been an undercover agent in their employ. In this fashion, the Commission was gradually ruling out conspiracy theories.

Dr. Rome: . . . He comes back from Russia, and now it is a plague on both their houses. Neither of them have been able to really provide this kind of a satisfaction. Then there is this business of trying to get to Cuba.

Again, this frenetic kind of a search all around the periphery in an attempt to locate and establish himself

Dr. Rothstein: It may be stretching things, but I think if rejection by a woman and mother is important, the possibility of this having some effect may be present. One of these President threateners had written his threatening letters in relation to a woman who had left him who had rejected him some time later, but there was a direct connection between this, and it could be one factor.

Dr. Cameron: And whether [Marina] left [Oswald] of her own

volition or whether through the intervention of the Russian community [in Dallas], Lee Harvey Oswald was once again emasculated . . .

Dr. Rothstein: . . . I have some feeling maybe the birth of the second [child] had something to do with the assassination, but I just want to remark at this point that maybe some of this idea of wanting to go back to Russia also was related to that, because, after all, he came back to the United States after the birth of the first child . . . [Second child was born on October 20].

The group next analyzed the Oswalds' relationship when they moved together to New Orleans in May, 1963, when Marina was three months pregnant.

Mr. Liebler: [It] was my understanding, that their relationship during this period in New Orleans was not bad.

Mr. Redlich: Marina has said that there were no physical attacks on her . . . To get the full picture, I think Marina did say that Oswald seemed to deteriorate more in New Orleans. There was more fantasy, you know, about his hijacking a plane and getting to Cuba and talking about being the prime minister in 20 years . . .

Oswald returned to Dallas from Mexico on October 3, then went to Irving to see Marina on October 4. Next, he took a room in Dallas under an assumed name. The panel, after tracing Oswald's movements in September and October, went back to Lee's and Marina's relationship. The doctors felt increasingly that Marina was the key to Oswald's behavior at that juncture, a point the Commission did not bring out adequately in the Report.

Mr. Liebler: . . . Now after they got back Lee wouldn't let Marina smoke; wouldn't let her drink, wouldn't let her wear lipstick. He did not encourage her or help her to learn English, and in some people's views he positively opposed her learning the English language . . .

Dr. Rome: I would think that it was mostly again another aspect of her dependency relationship, to have her dependent upon him then as a mask for his dependence upon her, and still exercise his control of the situation.

Mr. Jenner: She was completely dependent on him, there is no question about it . . .

Dr. Rome: I think his need to appear in every sense the man in the house, to wear the pants in a literal and figurative sense more and more, and I think we are working up to and what we are really going to find out is what kind of a man he was . . .

Mr. Liebler: Now, it is also interesting that Marina testified that Oswald did help her quite a bit in things around the house. Now, of course in that connection it is also I suppose it should be pointed out, that some of the witnesses testified that Marina was just an awful mother, that she didn't have any idea of modern techniques or American techniques on how to feed the child.

She gave the child sugar water to keep it quiet, and things like that, and picked up the pacifier off the floor and put it in her own mouth, which was at that time full of rotten teeth, and then to wipe it off on the floor and then stick it in the baby's mouth, and this upset some of the other people . . .

Now on a rather more personal subject, de Mohrenschildt reported that in the presence of Oswald Marina said, "He sleeps with me just once a month, and I never get any

satisfaction out of it. A rather crude and completely straightforward thing to say in front of relative strangers as we were. I didn't blame Lee for giving her a good whack in the eye. Once it was all right, but he also exaggerated." . . .

Dr. Rothstein: He might have been egged on by her to prove he was really masculine . . .

Mr. Liebler: On the weekend prior to the assassination, Lee called Marina and spoke to her about coming out to Paines over the week end, and because Mrs. Paine was going to have a birthday party for one of her children, Marina told Lee that he should not come to Irving that weekend because "It might not be convenient for Ruth." Oswald replied, according to Marina's testimony, "As you wish. If you don't want me to come I won't."

The panel went over material showing that Oswald came to see Marina the evening before the assassination and asked her to come live with him in Dallas. Nothing was settled and Oswald went to bed at the Paines' house two hours before Marina did. The next morning, November 22, he got up before Marina did, left his wedding ring on a dresser along with \$170, took the rifle from the garage, and had a friend drive him to Dallas.

Dr. Rome: Let me try this on you for size. Here is a man who in a variety of ways has been made a cuckold, and had his nose rubbed in his impotence, literally and figuratively.

He comes back. She is angry. He is rebuffed. All through this he does all of the kinds of somewhat ignominious things for him that he has not done previously in the way of playing with the children, offering to get the washing machine, now trying to fill the role of a dutiful husband and father.

I think it is extremely significant that with this situation now, and being confronted in a very probable way by his impotence, that he leaves his wedding ring. He gives as much money as he is able to give to her, and then he takes up the only evidence of masculinity that he has ever been able to demonstrate, his rifle, with him, and now he is going to demonstrate that he really is a man under these circumstances.

I think that we have today been able to build up to this point very definitely the kind of psychological background that would make then the subsequent behavior extremely consistent in a psychological sense.

Dr. Rothstein: I am not saying that he wasn't going to kill the President until after this argument, but I think this was a big factor in it . . .

At this point the doctors made virtually explicit the theory that Marina's rejection may have been the causal factor in Lee's decision to assassinate President Kennedy. They had been building their case in that direction all along.

Dr. Cameron: I would look at this last episode as simply a final fillip, if you will, in a sense this whole life with his mother, and I come back to her repeatedly, and the things we have talked about all day, and the fact that for him . . . to release his hostility in some way that would be noteworthy, and the assassination of a prominent person would satisfy this need. Now he, I think must have thought about it if he did kill the President . . . So I think what Marina had a chance to do unconsciously that night was to veto his plan without ever knowing of its existence, but she didn't. She really stamped it down hard. But that one incident would never, never have been enough.

Dr. Rothstein: He might very well have done something like that or the same thing at another time in the future.

Dr. Cameron: At another time. Of course he also had one chance in a lifetime actually of making this kind of contact with the President. Otherwise if he was really after the President, he would have to go to another city. His chances of coming back — that is why I think the prominent person was all he really was after, and perhaps this was "My God, how about that? I can get the President." . . .

Dr. Cameron: I think his primary purpose was to find a prominent public person, and to be able to couple that with the President, the head of the capitalistic system, is wonderful from his point of view.

But I think what he really was after was a prominent person in the public eye whose death would result in a real rhubarb . . .

Dr. Rome: . . . I think you have to see these as contrapuntal themes, and all along he has been involved, it is as though he is above these mundane, domestic kind of things, and in a sense he loses a battle but wins a war by this kind of an explosive act which, at the same time, recoups him not only in his own eyes but really makes him quite a man . . .

Mr. Dulles: Then that finishes him, of course. He is perfectly willing to be finished with it.

Dr. Rome: With this identification again. At least you have by virtue of your violence identified yourself with an extremely prominent person. This makes you prominent.

Dr. Cameron: Even if he gets caught and gets the chair, he is identified with being ahead of his time, in his warped way of thinking . . .

I think if Marina had accepted him, if she had been a loving wife that night, he might have slept late the next morning and he might not have got the President, but eventually it would have had to have been some way. It would have been a temporary reprieve . . .

Dr. Rothstein: I think his discomfort might have been relieved to the point he wouldn't have taken action on it.

Dr. Cameron: He would have done it later to somebody else.

Dr. Rothstein: She [Marina] is what the psychiatrists would often call a castrating woman . . . Who is building up her own importance, her own feeling of importance by depreciating him . . .

Dr. Cameron: I can say that he has decided that is it with her. That doesn't necessarily mean that this is the day he is going to kill the President. Now if he was going to kill the President, of course this is so with her because he is either dead himself or on the run, and he can't be bothered with her. But he has left her. That is what that says to me. It doesn't say positively that he is going to do something. . . .

You are troubled . . . by the notion that we seem to be saying she was a pretty unsavory character, and that you know a lot of women who may have comparable behavior without attributing to them such unsavory motives . . . But at any rate she was capable of fitting into his pathology, and I think it is his pathology that we are concerned with here, and she happened to fit in with it. . . .

Dr. Rothstein: I still would want to say I think to some extent the President at some level of his thinking was his wife and his mother.

Dr. Cameron: I think by choosing a prominent person, particularly one associated with government, he was perhaps unconsciously assassinating both his mother and the system.

Mr. Liebler: And his wife also?

Dr. Cameron: Possibly.

Mr. Liebler: And perhaps also the Soviet system?

Dr. Cameron: I don't know whether he is capable of this kind of thinking or not, but, if there could have been any linkage between this act and the Soviet system, it would have really been kind of tough on both systems. . . .

Some members of the Commission's staff indicated their opinion that the psychiatric analysis of Oswald's possible motives was inadequate and unconvincing. This may be one reason why, in the end, the Commission refused to speculate on the motive.

Mr. Redlich: . . . My objection to your analysis is that I think you are fitting this into a pretty tight mold based on one side of the story. . . .

I am prepared to argue that you have in my opinion, not having observed Marina Oswald personally, visually, not having visually observed Lee Harvey Oswald, not having observed Oswald's mother visually, I just cannot understand how professionally you gentlemen are able to say that somehow there is a similarity between Marina Oswald and Margaret Oswald, that Marina is this kind of a person that you say she is. . . .

Dr. Rome: Obviously these conjectures are highly speculative. There is no question that they are based on inference, incomplete information, conjecture.

Mr. Dulles: We have asked you gentlemen to make them. . . .

Mr. Redlich: . . . I think Mr. Dulles is quite right that we have asked for this, and that my comments are really directed on the use that we make of your speculations and conclusions based on the information that we have provided to you. . . . What in your opinion should we do with the type of analysis that you have provided us today? . . .

Dr. Rome: As far as I am concerned, this is highly conjectural. It is purely speculative. I see it as being of no use to anyone beyond a staff level to help perhaps clarify your approach to the record.

I should think it would be most unrealistic to use this in any way. I think you would be laughed right out by the public with this high spun fantasy kind of inferences based on second- and third-hand hearsay information.

I have thought that this was solely for the purpose of again establishing some testable hypothesis in which you could or could not fit the evidence that you have. That there will be great gaps and deficiencies, yes. I think this is so.

But to try to account for Lee Oswald's behavior by now retrospectively, after his death, trying to devise some sort of psychological history I think would be a specious exercise. . . .

Dr. Cameron: Now, if the Commission decides that he [Oswald] did in fact do it and then you are interested in the question of motive, and you are unable to find any motive of a

political or other nature, then you are in effect asking us, can we find anything here that seems to fit some kind of a psychological motive. As far as I am concerned, the answer is "Yes."

Now, whether or not you make this public or should make it public I think is highly questionable. One, Mrs. Margaret Oswald is still in existence, and so is Marina, and there would be little purpose served I think in trying to damn her or Marina for this testimony, if my hypothesis of how a lot of this, particularly the mother, came about, I see little point in this.

I think you would probably say yes, he did it, and there was no, if this is true, international involvement, and he seems to have done it as a loner for reasons peculiar to himself, and just drop it there. . . .

Dr. Rothstein: The only thing I would add, I think it would not be entirely unreasonable to say that you have consulted with psychiatrists as to whether this was possible. I don't know whether you would agree with that, but it seems to me that would be reasonable.

Dr. Cameron: I don't think it is necessary. I think the Commission will have to decide that question. . . .

Mr. Liebler: Now, are we going to be in a position where, assuming we can't find any credible political motive, what would the American public think if we just said well, he did it for reasons peculiar to himself, and we dropped it at that? Now we do have hypotheses. . . . And then the American public wouldn't have the benefit of the thought that these men have given, and still can give, with additional information that we can provide them, the thought that we have given to the question which has certainly made it believable to me that Oswald could have done this for purely psychological motivations, even though it may not be 100 percent precise, it seems to me that we are in a position and we do have information enough to suggest enough or lay forth enough hypotheses and fact to make it believable that this is why he did it.

If we don't do this, the American public isn't going to have this background to make this judgment, and they are just going to say, "Well, what the heck."

Dr. Rome: They have already made whatever judgment they are going to make, believe me.

Mr. Liebler: If that is true, we might as well fold up our papers and go home.

Mr. Redlich: . . . We should stop short of presenting a psychological thesis, because I think that it would tend to give the impression that we are really trying to, in effect, prove the absence of conspiratorial motive, by presenting a psychological thesis, and that psychological thesis might be punched so full of holes by people of a different psychiatric school of thought from you three gentlemen that it would endanger the other side of the coin, namely the absence of the rational conspiratorial motive. . . .

Dr. Cameron: . . . I think it is perfectly fair to say if this is your conclusion that he did it, that "We found no evidence to implicate any other persons," if that is true "or any other country" if that is true "and this is what was said at the testimony, and based on this we find it believable that Lee Harvey Oswald could have done it and we think he did."

Mr. Liebler: And you would leave out entirely any suggestive relationships between these various events? Because you see you really are applying a standard of selection . . . when you put in the report itself certain of the testimony. . . .

Mr. Dulles: Selecting on our idea on the basis of accuracy, not any other consideration. . . .

Mr. Redlich: But stopping short of using some of the language which I was very glad that you gentlemen used today. . . .

Dr. Rome: Don't you suspect the total mass of data that is going to be made public is going to be self-evident?

Mr. Dulles: But nobody reads. Don't believe people read in this country. There will be a few professors that will read the record. . . .

Mr. Jenner: And a few newspaper reporters who will read parts of it.

Mr. Dulles: The public will read very little. . . .

Dr. Rothstein: I think the other two doctors feel that it shouldn't even be mentioned that there was any psychiatric consideration. Maybe I am overenthused with psychiatry getting into things, but I feel that it is a relevant thing to say.

Mr. Dulles: I think we ought to state we consulted psychiatrists, somewhere. . . . If we hadn't done that we would have missed an important area of the study. . . .

The Report, however, made no reference to the Commission's consulting the panel of psychiatrists. On the other hand, many passages in the report reflected some aspects of the psychiatric analysis. Other aspects were rejected; the report said the Commission did not believe that Oswald's relations with his wife caused him to assassinate Kennedy. Listing Oswald's difficulty in establishing human relationships, his discontent with the world, his hatred of American society, his search for a place in history, his commitment to Marxism and Communism, and his capacity to act without regard to the consequences, the Warren Commission offered this conclusion: "Out of these and many other factors which may have molded the character of Lee Harvey Oswald there emerged a man capable of assassinating President Kennedy."

Commission Meeting Of September 18, 1964

This was the Commission's final session in preparation for the completion of its report. It was the first executive session since June 23. In the interval Commissioners and staff had been taking additional testimony, and staff members were drafting the final version of the report.

The Commission was unable to meet its original target date of June 1; the report would be issued on September 27, 1964—nearly ten months after the Warren Commission was constituted.

No actual transcript of the September 18 session is known to exist. According to the National Archives, only the minutes of the meeting are available. However, the minutes do throw additional light on the Commission's last-minute concerns. For example, the general counsel was instructed "to use care that the proposed conclusions" concerning Chapter III ("The Shots From The Texas School Book Depository") and Chapter IV ("The Assassin") not contain any conflict with the conclusions set forth in Chapter I ("Summary and Conclusions").

A Motion was made . . . that the General Counsel be authorized to proceed to make arrangements, subject to the

approval of the Chairman, to return to interested parties who have furnished documentary and other evidence to the Commission all of such materials when their retention is no longer necessary to adequately protect the Report of the Commission or when duplicate or other conformed copies will be fully adequate. That in taking such action the General Counsel consult with the Federal Bureau of Investigation and other interested persons and agencies whenever necessary and proper.

The importance of the transcripts lies in what they reveal of the frame of mind of the seven Commissioners as they labored to find the truth, evaluate the evidence, establish their conclusions and write a final report. Their innermost thoughts and doubts are bared. So many of the doubts apparently were not resolved that the impression emerges from these private discussions among the Commissioners that, in the end, the report was the only possible compromise they could produce—in terms of their knowledge and their conscience. Likewise the transcripts call into question the competence of the

Warren Commission.

The characters of these men come alive as in a dramatic play. Senator Russell and John McCloy are the doubters, the outspoken and impatient sceptics and questioners. They come across as strong men in the drama. Chief Justice Warren is surprisingly passive, often hesitant, always conscious of the historic burden. His concern is credibility. Allen Dulles is the businesslike figure, proud of his insights into the affairs of nations and the craft of intelligence. Senator Cooper and Representative Boggs choose to remain in the background most of the time. And Gerald Ford, except for his sudden sense of outrage over efforts to ascribe to the Commission conclusions it had not yet reached, appears willing to go along with his peers.

They played their roles in history. Now history will judge them.

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