

# Was Oswald Agent Of U.S. in Russia?

By HOKE MAY  
and ROSS YOCKEY

New Orleans sources who dispute the Warren Commission's picture of Lee Harvey Oswald as a confirmed Communist declared of him today:

"He was simply a revolutionary looking for a revolution—any revolution."

That was the reason, they contended, that the accused assassin of President John F. Kennedy apparently added his undercover help to Cuban organizations which wanted to seize their lost homeland from Fidel Castro in 1963.

**VIEWED IN THE** light of disclosures reported by the States-Item today that Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison is seeking to prove Oswald was not a Communist, the Warren Commission's report on Oswald's trip to Russia is clothed with renewed significance.

Was he a Communist or was he representing his country as an intelligence agent?

The commission, which said

Oswald acted alone in killing Kennedy at Dallas, disclosed that Oswald studied Russian while he was stationed in Japan. He became proficient

enough in the language to read Russian newspapers.

It concluded that the New Orleans-born youth, who was

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reared in the Irish Channel, made his decision to defect to the Soviet Union during his 1959 Japanese Marine service.

**HE WAS TRANSFERRED** to the Marine Corps Reserve during September, 1959, "ostensibly to care for his mother, who had injured her back."

But Oswald did not go home. Instead, the commission report says, he left for the Soviet Union "almost immediately after his discharge."

(New Orleans sources have suggested Oswald was in reality an operative trained in intelligence work at a special CIA instruction base on Japan's Atsugi Air Force Base.)

Oswald, the report said, told friends he saved \$1,500 to make the Russian journey, but the Warren Commission adds doubtfully that "it would have taken considerable discipline to save whatever amount was required to finance his defection out of the salary of a low ranking enlisted man."

Oswald arrived at Moscow within two to three weeks of his discharge. The report does not make the date entirely clear. But it says Oswald attempted suicide Oct. 28, 1959, when Soviet authorities told him he could not remain permanently in the country.

**THE COMMISSION** said his suicide attempt was "a striking indication of how much he desired to remain in the Soviet Union."

It quotes his diary, which is written in the romantically mournful style of Dostoevsky, as saying of the death try:

"I soaked wrist in cold water, then slash my left wrist . . . Somewhere, a violin plays as I watch my life whirl away . . . I think to myself, 'How easy to die,' and 'a sweet death' (to violins) . . ."

The suicide try was thwarted, although the commission summary does not say how, and Oswald was taken to a Moscow hospital Oct. 28, 1959.

Three days later, he went to the United States embassy and renounced his U.S. citizenship.

The second secretary, Richard E. Snyder "testified that Oswald was extremely sure of himself and seemed to know what his mission was."

**THE RESULT WAS** that Soviet authorities permitted him to remain and sent him to Minsk as a metal worker in a radio and television factory.

Oswald somehow began making a great deal of money in Russia, the Warren report reveals. Oswald, himself, said his wages and special state supplement approximated those of the director of the factory.

In Russia, Oswald met and married the woman who was to become famous as his widow in Texas. Marina Oswald was the niece of a colonel in the MVD, the Russian secret police.

Eighteen months after his defection, Oswald "opened negotiations with the embassy to return" to the United States.

**IN THE MONTHS** previous, Oswald had written letters to a brother in the United States, lavishing glowing praise on Russia and the Soviet system.

Almost unnecessarily, the Warren Commission concludes:

"In view of the intensity of his earlier commitment to the Soviet Union, a great change must have occurred in Oswald's thinking to induce him to return to the United States."

He was not yet 20 when he went to Russia, not yet 23 when he returned to the country where he was to die.