

Oswald Report

State Dept. Angry at FBI

Washington

The State Department believes it has been hit below the belt by FBI director J. Edgar Hoover's contention that it had concluded that Lee Harvey Oswald was "a thoroughly safe risk."

State Department officials said that they could find no reports or documents to support that statement by the FBI Chief.

The Department did make available to newsmen a 1961 and a 1962 document on Oswald.

One document, from the American embassy in Moscow, appears to be the one which Hoover referred when he testified before the Warren Commission last May 14. But the document says nothing that indicates that Oswald was "A thoroughly safe risk," or a "Loyal man," nor does it give him "A clean bill," as Hoover said a State Department report concluded.

DISPUTE

One State Department source said it was "undignified" for two departments of Government to be thrown into public dispute in the way they were when Hoover's accusation was prematurely made public on Friday.

A widespread view in official Washington yesterday was that Hoover authorized advance disclosure of his testimony before the Warren Commission, to try to offset criticism of the FBI.

The Commission report said that the FBI had taken "an unduly restrictive view of its role in preventive intelligence work" prior to the President's assassination.

The Embassy report to the State Department, to which Hoover seemed to be referring, was a 2½-page document dated July 11, 1961. It was signed by Boris H. Klossen, American counselor for political affairs in Moscow. It said in part:

"Twenty months of the realities of life in the Soviet Union have clearly had a maturing effect on Oswald. He stated frankly that he had learned a hard lesson the hard way and that he had been completely relieved of his illusions about the Soviet Union at the same time that he acquired a new understanding and appreciation of the United States and the meaning of freedom.

ARROGANCE

"Much of the arrogance and bravado which characterized him on his first visit to the embassy appears to have left him."

Oswald had come to the embassy, asking help to return to the U.S. In 1959, soon after he arrived in the Soviet Union, he went to the American embassy and said he wanted to renounce his citizenship. The embassy, under its normal cautionary procedure, suggested he think over his intention. Oswald never followed through on the renunciation.

In his recent testimony, Hoover said he personally feels that such people should be able to renounce their citizenship "at once."

DOCUMENT

A state department document from Washington dated March 16, 1962, said the office of Soviet Affairs believed it was in the interest of the United States to give Oswald, his wife, and their child, opportunity to return to the U.S.

To refuse to do so, the memorandum said, could "weaken" efforts by the U.S. to get the Soviets to allow Russian relatives of American citizens to leave the Soviet Union. That report, however, far from a "clearing" Oswald in any way, referred to him as "an unstable character, whose actions are entirely unpredictable."