will be taken up later, and therefore should be kept in mind while reading all the following portions of this memorandum. Where appropriate, we will bring up considerations of motive again.

II. INVOLVEMENT BY THE SOVIET UNION

A. The circumstances surrounding Oswald's entry into the Soviet Union in October 1959: Do they show that the Russians knew of his coming or that he received help in planning his defection?

1. Possible Communist contacts while Oswald was in the Marine Corps.

While still in the United States Marine Corps, Oswald on September 4, 1959, applied for a U. S. passport to travel abroad, which passport was issued on September 10, 1959. Oswald listed as the countries which he intended to visit, Cuba, Dominican Republic, England, France, Switzerland, Germany, Finland, and Russia. He also stated on the application that the purpose of his trip would be to attend the Albert Schweitzer College in Churivalden, Switzerland, and the Turku University in Finland.

We are not quite certain when Oswald first determined to go to Russia.[2] From his own statements, however, we can conclude that he probably began to lay plans in his own mind one or two years before he

---

2 / There is a statement attributed to Oswald's mother's doctor, Dr. Morton N. Goldberg, that the mother told him sometime between April 4, 1957, and January 30, 1959, that her son (unnamed) intended to defect to Russia. This is wholly at variance with her testimony, however, and is also inconsistent with Oswald's letters to her from the period before he entered Russia and just before he disappeared into the Soviet world, which letters indicate the affair had never been disclosed to her previously.

arrived in Russia. He had been a United States Marine and was stationed abroad in 1957 and 1958, in the Philippines, Japan and possibly Formosa. Thus there is the possibility that Oswald came into contact with Communist agents at that time. Japan especially, because the Communist party was open and active there, would seem a likely spot for a contact to have been made.

George deMohrenschildt, a Russian emigre' who left to escape the Communists, and a friend of Lee Oswald's, has testified that Oswald once told him that he had first got the idea of defecting when he was in Japan. Oswald's words, as remembered by deMohrenschildt, were, "I met some Communists in Japan and they got me excited and interested and that was one of my inducements in going to Soviet Russia, to see what goes on there." DeMohrenschildt's evidence on this point is at variance with Oswald's own statements, made after he had arrived in Russia in two interviews he granted with American newspaper reporters in his hotel room at Moscow. With both of these reporters he insited that he had "never met a live Communist" and that the intent to defect was his own and was derived entirely from his reading and thinking. There is no way of knowing which of Oswald's statements represented the true state of affairs. On the one hand, he may have been more inclined to tell the truth to his friend, deMohrenschildt, than to two newspaper reporters in Moscow. On the other hand, at the time he spoke to the reporters there would seem to have been no reason for him to hide the fact that he had met Communists previously, because he believed that he was being accepted by the Russians and was leaving the United States forever; and also, the statement to deMohrenschildt smacks of the fiction which Oswald tried to create after

he came back to the United States, which was that his residence in Russia had been something purely academic, "just to see what it was like over there." In any event, contacts with Communists in Japan and the Philippines were certainly available if Oswald wanted to make them. Whether such contacts, if they occurred, amounted to anything more than some older Communist advising Oswald, who was then only 18 or 19 years old, to go to Russia and see the Communist world, is unknown.

During the last six months to a year that he was in the Marine Corps Oswald engaged in arguments with other Marines in favor of Marxism and Socialism, at least on a few occasions. Some men who knew him claimed that he did not argue in this manner, others say that he did. He apparently was reluctant to argue too openly because he felt that he was being "persecuted" by his superiors for his pro-Communist views. One of his fellow Marines has testified that Oswald visited the Cuban Embassy in Los Angeles on one or two occasions and received mail from it during the spring or summer of 1959, just before he was discharged. In the early spring in 1959 Oswald wrote a letter to his brother which, inter alia, stated:

> "Well, pretty soon I will be getting out of the Corps and I know what I want to be and how I'm going to do it."

While in the Marine Corps Oswald managed to accumulate, according to his own statements, $1600, despite the fact that as a private first class he could never have earned more than about $100 per month. He spent about two years and ten months in the service and claimed that he saved this entire amount out of his salary. This is obviously an impressively

high amount of money to save from such a small monthly stipend, even when spread over almost three years, but it is not impossible. Evidence of his living habits and attitudes towards money which has been obtained since the assassination indicates that Oswald was extraordinarily frugal when he had a reason to be. There are only two periods when he is known to have spent money freely. One was for a few months after he was sent to Japan by the Marines and there kept a woman, apparently for the first time, when he went on a heavy drinking spree. A fellow Marine who knew him then believes Oswald "suddenly felt like a man." The other was during the approximately one year when he was a bachelor in Russia at which time he had no obligations other than to support himself, had no reason to save, held a high-paying job, was receiving a fat monthly subsidy from the Soviet Government and, again, was involved with women. After he returned to the United States he was frequently unemployed, and he then literally watched every penny. He frequently skipped breakfast except for coffee and ate only cold meat, bananas and bread and jelly for lunch. His trip to Mexico was financed --on a shoestring, but still financed-- at a time when the family was so destitute that Marina asked a friend, Ruth Paine, to take her into her home so that the Oswalds' expected child could receive adequate food and medical attention.

While in Atsugi, Japan, he studied the Russian language, probably for the most part by himself, but perhaps also with some help from one of the officers in his outfit who was interested in languages and used to practice Russian conversation with him occasionally. He took the Army

"S. A. T." test in Russian in January 1959 and rated "Poor." By the time he reached the Soviet Union in October of the same year he could speak the language well enough to get along in restaurants and similar places, in a rough manner. During the long period in Moscow while he was awaiting the decision of the Russian Government on whether to accept him, his Diary records that he forced himself to practice his Russian eight hours a day. Again, after he was sent to Minsk in early January 1960, he took lessons from an interpreter assigned to him for the purpose by the government. Marina says that by the time she met him in March 1961 he spoke the language well enough so that she at first thought he was from one of the Baltic areas of her country, because his accent was similar to that of persons from that section of the USSR. She says that his only defects were that his grammar was sometimes incorrect and that his writing ability was never very good. It could be argued that the foregoing evidence shows that he must have received Russian lessons from an expert while he was in the Marines, but in our opinion such a conclusion is not justified.

The question whether Oswald had contacts with Communists while he was in the Marine Corps leaves open the further question, What kind of contacts? Basically, there would seem to be two sorts of relationships which could have existed. The first is one in which Oswald, possibly in Japan, sought out some English-speaking Communists to carry on political and philosophical discussions with them, and also perhaps to talk about traveling to Russia or even defecting. This, we believe, is very possible, perhaps even likely, although we have no hard evidence that it occurred. The second sort of relationship that might have existed is a

closer one, one in which Oswald would have been urged to defect and given more or less detailed guidance on how best to do so. If he received help in learning the Russian language or in accumulating sufficient funds to travel to Russia, for example, the existence of this second sort of relationship could be inferred. Once it is postulated that Oswald may have received more or less detailed guidance from Soviet or Communist agents, however, the circumstances of his "hardship" discharge from the Marine Corps must be taken into account, and in our opinion they cut against the probability that his actions were the result of Soviet or Communist coaching. The facts of Oswald's "hardship" discharge from the Marine Corps are these:

In December 1958 his mother, who was a widow and her own only means of support, had an accident at work. From that time on she was incapacitated for gainful employment, but the insurance-company physicians concluded that her incapacitating symptoms had not been caused by the accident and her insurance benefits were therefore immediately terminated. This left her with no means of support and some high medical bills to pay. She turned to her son for help. He first worked through his commanding officer and the Red Cross, and he soon got her a monthly allotment, paid for partly out of his own salary, of about $130. He then, despite the fact that she advised him not to because she believed that the monthly allotment she was receiving would be sufficient, applied for a "hardship" discharge on the grounds that he ought to return home to Fort Worth, Texas, to take care of her. The Marine Corps granted him his discharge

on September 11, 1959, only a week or so after he applied for it, and he thereby got out of the service about three months before his enlistment would have terminated in the ordinary course. Once the Marines released him, he went directly home, left $100 with his mother, told her he was going to become a merchant seaman or get into the "import and export business" in New Orleans and send her lots of money, and then deserted her. The next she heard he was a passenger on a boat to Europe, and the next word after that was that he was in Russia. She learned he was in Russia only from the Fort Worth News. It later turned out that Oswald had applied for and received his passport even before he had obtained his "hardship discharge."

Under the circumstances, he undoubtedly obtained the discharge fraudulently. If the Russians were in fact coaching him at this time, it would seem unlikely that they would have advised him to obtain a discharge under these circumstances, merely in order to gain three months' time which, after all, was not particularly valuable to anyone. The fraudulent discharge not only got Oswald in deep trouble with the Marine Corps — he eventually received a dishonorable discharge from the Reserve -- but was also obviously morally offensive and potentially very unpopular in that he deserted his own mother when she was sick, unemployed and poverty-stricken. It could only detract from whatever usefulness he might have for the Russians after his defection, either as a propagandist or a secret agent.

2. Indications of Outside Help in His Travel and Entry into Russia

On March 14, 1959, Oswald applied for admission to the Albert Schweitzer College in Switzerland. He was accepted and was supposed to start the course on April 19, 1960, but he never attended.

He left New Orleans, Louisiana, for Europe on September 20, 1959, having been honorably discharged from the Marine Corps on September 11, 1959. Instead of going to Switzerland, he went directly to Helsinki, Finland, by way of Le Havre, France, and London, England, arriving at Helsinki on October 10, 1959. (The stops in LeHavre and London were only for several hours, though when he reached London he told the immigration officials he intended to stay for 7 days). Four days later, on October 14, 1959, he was issued Soviet Tourist Visa No. 403339. It was marked valid for entry at any point along the Viborg-Moscow border until October 20, 1959, and permitted a single 6-day sojourn in the Soviet Union. Oswald entered the Soviet Union at the Vainikkaln crossing point enroute to Moscow by train on October 15, 1959. He arrived in Moscow on October 16 and was met by an Intourist Representative, Rima Shirokova. She took him to the Hotel Berlin, where he showed his 6-day tourist visa and registered as a student.

There have been statements to the effect that Oswald's entry into Russia raises suspicion because of the ease with which it occurred. For example, John A. McVickar, an official at the Embassy in Moscow in November 1959, stated in a memorandum of November 27, 1963, that there

was a possibility that in coming to the Soviet Union and attempting to renounce his citizenship Oswald was "following a pattern of behavior in which he had been tutored by person or persons unknown." McVickar also states, in a follow-up memorandum dated April 7, 1964, that significance should be given to the fact that Oswald selected Helsinki, Finland, since Oswald would have to have known the not too obvious fact that Helsinki is a "usual and relatively uncomplicated point of entry to the Soviet Union (one that the Soviets might well choose for example if arranging the passage themselves.)" It should be pointed out by way of rebuttal that Oswald might well have obtained such travel information from the Cuban Embassy in Los Angeles -- with which he had contacts in the summer before he came to Russia. Also, probably any competent international travel agency could have supplied this information. McVickar also mentions that Oswald applied for the visa on October 14, 1959, and received it on October 16, 1959, only two days later. The Legal Adviser to the Department of State, Mr. Abram Chayes, in a letter dated April 24, 1964, has commented on this:

> "It appears, therefore, that he received the visa within a day or two. Usually it takes at least a week for Soviet authorities to process tourist applications, and so the speed with which Oswald received his tourist visa was unusual."

This is a far more serious matter than McVickar's previous observation, which amounts to no more than that Oswald picked the sensible route to Russia. If in fact Oswald obtained his visa markedly more quickly than other tourists, the conclusion is almost inescapable

that something behind the Iron Curtain had been put in motion in his behalf. Our investigation of this particular problem has come up with the following results:

In the first place, both Chayes and McVickar have their dates wrong. This does not reflect on their capabilities, because they are undoubtedly basing their conclusions upon State Department memoranda which were in turn based upon statements made at the time by Oswald himself, and subsequent investigation has shown that these were probably inaccurate. Oswald's American passport, which he of course had in his possession at the time he traveled to Russia, was subsequently surrendered to the Department of State, after he was repatriated, and has since been placed in the hands of the Commission. Stamps on this passport show that the Soviet Tourist Visa was issued (not applied for) in Helsinki on October 14.

Oswald arrived from London in Helsinki on October 10. Everything we know about his trip points to the fact that he proceeded to his destination, Moscow, as rapidly and as directly as his financial resources would permit. Despite statements made to fellow travelers along the way that he was "only a tourist" or "just a student on his way to college," he in fact wasted no time in sightseeing but made connections as rapidly as he reasonably could. Therefore, although we have no direct evidence indicating when he first applied for a visa, it seems highly probable that he applied for it as soon as he arrived in Helsinki, namely, on the 10th of October. Perhaps, however, his airplane arrived in Helsinki too late for him to have reached the Consulate before it closed that evening. Should this have

been the case, he probably had to wait until Monday, October 12, to apply for a visa, because the 10th was a Saturday and the Consulate presumably was not open for business on Sunday. One other fact may be significant: Oswald left Helsinki on a train destined for Moscow on the 15th, the day after he received his visa. This points towards the fact that he probably received the visa late on the 14th, else he could -- and therefore, given his haste, would -- have taken a train out the same day. So the final result of all these calculations is that Oswald probably received his visa 4 days after he applied for it, but that he may have received it only 2 days later.

To date we do not know whether McVickar's and Chayes' statements that most tourists took at least a week to obtain a visa from the Soviet authorities are accurate and, if they are, whether there were so many deviations from the average waiting period that no particular significance should be attached to Oswald's, or whether, on the other hand, chance deviations from the normal waiting period were so infrequent that Oswald's has significance. This line of investigation is being carried on at the present time.

Finally, assuming that Oswald obtained a visa substantially sooner than the ordinary tourist would have obtained his, and that the Soviet procedures were sufficiently regular so that a quickly-granted visa would not have been simply the result of a chance variation in the normal workings of the bureaucracy, then what conclusions logically follow? It would seem that one of two inferences can be drawn. First, the Soviet authorities may have had advance warning of Oswald's arrival and been "ready and waiting" to handle him rapidly once he arrived.

Second, the Soviet authorities may have been entirely ignorant of Oswald's pending arrival, but when he did arrive he, Oswald, immediately made known his strong sympathy with the Communist cause, his intention to defect and possibly even the fact that he had been a radar operator in the United States Marine Corps and the "fact" (doubtful) that he possessed secret information related to this job which he was ready to disclose. If this is the way Oswald conducted himself at the Soviet Consulate at Helsinki, then indeed his application would have been handled with dispatch. American Embassies throughout the world would presumably do the same thing if they believed they had a potential defector who possessed valuable information. Oswald himself claimed that he said nothing out of the ordinary to the Russian Consulate in Helsinki; he told the officials at the American Embassy in Moscow on October 31, when he appeared there in an attempt to renounce his citizenship, that he had said nothing to the Russians about defecting until he arrived in Moscow. Likewise, Yuri Ivanovich Nosenko, the Soviet KGB agent who defected to the United States in February 1964 (and whose reliability has not yet been ascertained) claims that the KGB at least had no knowledge whatever of Oswald until he appeared in Moscow.

(Nosenko's testimony on this point cannot be taken with absolute assurance. Besides the obvious fact that whether he is sincere or whether he is a Soviet plant has not yet been determined, there is also the fact that to date the only report available to the Commission on what Nosenko has said about Oswald was obtained through the FBI, and the FBI interrogators did not have the detailed knowledge of Oswald's travels which we

now possess. Moreover, the sensitivity of this precise point had not been brought to the attention of the FBI interrogators. It is not inconceivable that when Nosenko says the first word the KGB received was when Oswald arrived in "Moscow" that he was speaking loosely and meant when Oswald arrived in "Russia" or "at the Russian border." Or what is even at least as likely, that Nosenko really does not remember the precise moment at which Oswald first made his intentions known to the Soviet Government.)

One other piece of evidence relating to the same point should be brought to the attention of the Commission. The following paragraph is an exact quote from a CIA report (Commission No. 698):

> "c. October 1959: Stockholm newspaper, Dagens Nyheter, of 25 November 1963 states Lee OSWALD passed through Sweden during October 1959. Article also adds that OSWALD was unsuccessful in obtaining visa to the USSR in Helsinki which resulted in his returning to Stockholm. Two days after he arrived in Stockholm OSWALD traveled directly to Moscow. Concluding sentence of article states 'This indicates that the Russian Embassy (Stockholm) gave him a visa.'
>
> it was difficult to explain how OSWALD might have received his visa in two days without going through normal channels. The only conclusion which can be drawn is that OSWALD must have received his visa directly from the Soviet Embassy in Stockholm which occasionally is done in special cases, but the source had no evidence to confirm this assumption."

The information contained in the foregoing paragraph is flatly at variance with the other CIA report, previously mentioned, to the effect that Oswald stayed in Helsinki after having arrived there on October 10, with the information obtained from Oswald's American passport, with his own statement to the American Embassy in Moscow on October 31, 1959, and with the documentary material given us by the Russian Government. All

of the latter could be lies or forgeries, however, including even the American passport, since it was in Oswald's possession for about two weeks before he came into the Embassy -- two weeks when he was in the hands of the KGB in the Hotel Berlin and in a hospital in Moscow. The CIA itself is apparently of the opinion that the information which places Oswald in Helsinki, rather than Stockholm, is more reliable. It certainly fits the other evidence we have of Oswald's travel better than does the "Stockholm" report.

The foregoing summarizes or sets out all the information available to us at this time on the problem of whether Oswald obtained his visa unusually quickly.

The final judgment which must be made on all this data is of course, what conclusion may legitimately be drawn if it is assumed first, that Oswald did get his visa unusually early, second, that the quick issuance of a visa was significant, and third, that its significance was that the Soviets had warning well ahead of time that Oswald was coming to Russia to defect? Even all this does not necessarily add up to a conclusion that Oswald was ever used as an agent by the Soviet Government. It could add up to the conclusion that they hoped to get him to Russia so that he could there be analyzed for possible use as an agent and then so used only if the examination of him resulted in a favorable conclusion. It could also mean something less serious, for example, that they knew or suspected that Oswald was going to defect and wanted to make it as easy as possible for him to get into Russia so that they would be sure to obtain the propaganda benefits of his defection before he had a chance

to get cold feet and turn back. And of course, the result could also have been much more serious: it could mean that the Russians knew he was coming and wanted to pave the way for him because he was already considered, in one way or another, "one of their own," and for some reason they wanted him safe in Moscow as soon as possible. One final thought on this last possibility might be worth noting. If Oswald was so closely tied in with the Soviet foreign network that they were already working together, it would seem unlikely that they would risk jeopardizing the possible secrecy of this relationship by so clumsy a device as cutting three or four days off the usual waiting period for a tourist visa. Surely, if the KGB wanted to bring a secret agent from the United States to Moscow, and it wanted to maintain the secrecy of the relationship, it would seem strange if it were to worry about letting him wait an extra few days on the border.

B. Did Oswald Receive Secret Soviet Instructions after He Arrived in Moscow and Made Known His Intentions to Defect?

Almost three months elapsed from the time when Lee Harvey Oswald arrived in Moscow until he left that city to take up residence in Minsk. We have attempted to reconstruct the events of those months, but a great deal of confusion exists. Oswald's diary, even assuming that it is an authentic document, is not a good guide to the details of what occurred. He must have filled in most of the Diary entries for this period at a later time, possibly much later, and he seems not to have worried about whether he was accurate or not on dates and even names.

Some light on what was happening behind the scenes has been shed by Yuri Ivanovich Nosenko, the recent Soviet defector, if we can assume that his statements are sincere. The rest of our information comes from the records of the American Embassy in Moscow, the memories of some of the officials there, and the notes of two newspaper reporters, Miss Aline Mosby and Miss Priscella Johnson, who interviewed Oswald in his hotel room during this period. The following is a capsule outline of the major events as we think they occurred:

Date	Event
October 16, 1959	Oswald arrives in Moscow from Helsinki. On this same day he told his Intourist guide, Rima Shirokova, that he wanted to become a Russian citizen. He did not notify the American Embassy in Moscow of his arrival.
October 22	When told by the Soviets that he could not become a citizen and must leave Moscow within two hours, Oswald slashed his wrists in an attempt to commit suicide.
October 22-29	Oswald was confined in a hospital in Moscow and treated for a self-inflicted wound on his left wrist.

Date	Event
October 31	Oswald appeared at the American Embassy in Moscow and announced that he wanted to give up his American citizenship and become a citizen of Soviet Russia. He is interviewed at some length and then told to come back later if he wants to carry out a formal renunciation of citizenship.
November 3	Oswald never reappeared at the Embassy, but he wrote them a letter on this date again stating that he wanted to renounce his American citizenship.
November 13 (or slightly earlier)	Oswald is interviewed by Miss Aline Mosby of the United Press International.
November 15	Oswald is interviewed by Miss Priscella Johnson of the North American Newspaper Alliance.
January 4, 1960	Oswald is finally informed by the Soviet authorities that he can live indefinitely in Russia and that he has been assigned to Minsk. He is also told that his application for citizenship has not been granted but that it may be sometime in the future.

Before getting into a detailed discussion of the events outlined above we will draw attention to two points we believe are important. First, it should be noted that the American government had no knowledge of Oswald's arrival in Russia or of his attempt to defect until October 31, sixteen days after he actually arrived in the city. In the meantime, he had allegedly attempted to commit suicide and was confined in a hospital for medical treatment. There is no doubt that during this 16-day period he had many contacts with the Soviet authorities and that these contacts included officials of the KGB. This raises the question of whether the alleged suicide attempt was only a cover for some sort of training or brainwashing. The second point to be noted is that although he told the Embassy on October 31 that he wanted to renounce his American citizenship and wrote them a letter three days later reaffirming this intention, he never reappeared at the Embassy to carry out his threat. Later, his failure to carry out the formal renunciation procedures was to mean that he had a right to return to the United States as a citizen of that country. We will now begin a more detailed discussion of the foregoing events.

On the same day (October 16, 1959) that Oswald reached Moscow he informed his Intourist guide, Rima Shirokova, that he wished to apply for Soviet citizenship. Virtually all such guides are KGB agents and therefore we can assume that in all her actions she was guided by KGB orders or at least by her training in KGB methods. On that day or the next day, with the help of his guide, Oswald prepared a letter to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR requesting citizenship. Exactly what happened

during the next few days is not clear, because the dates in Oswald's Diary around this time show a great deal of confusion. In general, however, it seems that the first reaction of the Soviet Government, expressed to Oswald through Rima Shirokova, was a "cautious welcome." He was not accepted with open arms, but he was given to believe that the officials who were handling his case were sympathetic and that probably everything would come out all right, though it would take time. He spent the waiting days seeing the sights of Moscow with his guide, Rima.

We have good reason to believe that the KGB used the opportunity provided by Oswald's waiting in Moscow to learn as much as they could about him, through Rima and through virtually everyone else at the Hotel Berlin where he was staying, in an attempt to assess his possible usefulness to the Soviet Union. For example, about two years later, when he was trying to return to the United States, Oswald told an Embassy official that he had been interviewed two or three days after his arrival by a "reporter from Radio Moscow" who told Oswald he was interested in his impressions of the city. Undoubtedly the "reporter" was one more person sent by the KGB to sound him out.

Finally, on October 22nd, the day upon which his 6-day visa was due to run out, he was called in and interviewed by an unidentified official. The interview consisted of questions as to why he wanted to become a citizen of Russia, what his past life was like, etc. According to Oswald's Diary the interview ended after he had answered all the questions, with no encouragement and no information on what might be done with his case.

He returned to his hotel and that evening was told curtly that his visa had expired, that he was not being granted permission to stay in Russia, and that he therefore had two hours in which to leave Moscow. If the version we have of these events is true, the news hit Oswald like a thunderbolt. The Diary he kept records that he slashed his wrist with a razor about an hour later and plunged it into warm water in a bath-tub, expecting to die. He was later found by his Intourist guide, who came looking for him when he did not show up for an evening appointment. He was taken to a hospital and remained there for 7 days.

Nosenko, the ex-KGB agent who defected to the United States, confirms the foregoing in its essentials. He says that the KGB had determined that Oswald was of no use to them because he was not mentally stable and not too intelligent and that they therefore sent down word that he was not to be accepted for permanent residence in the Soviet Union. Nosenko comments that the suicide attempt merely confirmed the correctness of his agency's conclusion.

According to Oswald's Diary he learned sometime not too long after he was released from the hospital that he could remain in the Soviet Union indefinitely, although the question of his citizenship was still open. The Diary kept by Oswald and the statements he made to newspaper reporters later, in early November, are somewhat inconsistent on this point. It is not clear whether he thought that he had been told definitely that he could stay or whether that he had been told only that he could remain temporarily while his permanent status was being considered.

Nosenko's version of the events subsequent to Oswald's confinements in the hospital is different from Oswald's. Nosenko says that when Oswald was released he was again told that he could not stay, at which point Oswald threatened that he would again try to commit suicide. Our information on what Nosenko says is somewhat vague on what then occurred, but apparently Oswald's threat to make a second attempt to kill himself fell on deaf ears as far as the KGB was concerned. It never waivered in its decision. Some other ministry of the Soviet State then, according to Nosenko, picked up the Oswald case and ultimately -- probably some time considerably later, even as late as early January 1960 -- determined that he could remain in the Soviet Union. Nosenko speculates that this other agency could either have been the Soviet Red Cross or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, presumably because these agencies were interested in Oswald not as a potential agent but simply because he offered material for good anti-American propaganda. Oswald's Diary records that the second series of interviews he had with Soviet officials, the series that began after his stay in the hospital, was with a different group from those he had seen before he went into the hospital, and he remarks that they did not seem to have had any contact with the first group, because they asked him many of the same questions over again. This observation of Oswald's, if sincere, i.e., if his Diary is not just a KGB fabrication, seems to confirm Nosenko's statements.

In any event, it was not until after the suicide attempt, on Saturday, October 31, that Oswald appeared at the American Embassy to renounce his citizenship. This was the first indication that the American

Government had that Oswald was in Russia. He had not reported to the Consulate in Moscow when he arrived, as a tourist ordinarily would.

Upon his arrival he was taken to the office of Richard E. Snyder, then Second Secretary of the Embassy. He handed his passport to Snyder and related that he wanted to renounce his American citizenship. Oswald informed Snyder that he had been a radar operator in the Marine Corps and that he had voluntarily stated to an unnamed Soviet official that he would make known to the Russian Government such information concerning the Marine Corps and his specialty therein as he possessed. He intimated that he might know something of special interest.

Oswald was told that he would have to file a formal renunciation. This he never did, although in a letter dated November 3, 1959, which he subsequently wrote to the Embassy he stated:

> "I, Lee Harvey Oswald, do hereby request that my present United States citizenship be revoked.
>
> "I appered in person, at the consulate office of the United States Embassy, Moscow, on Oct 31st, for the purpose of signing the formal papers to this effect. This legal right I was refused at that time.
>
> "I wish to protest against this action, and against the conduct of the official of the United States consuler service who acted on behalf of the United States government.
>
> "My application, requesting that I be considered for citizenship in the Soviet Union is now pending before the Supreme Soviet of the U. S. S. R.. In the event of acceptance, I will request my government to lodge a formal protest regarding this incident."

On November 27, 1963, John A. McVickar, a Foreign Service Officer, wrote a memorandum in which he described the October 31 meeting with Oswald. McVickar was one of the two secretaries in the Embassy

on October 1959, the other one being Snyder. McVickar was present in the room during Snyder's interview with Oswald, and confirms what Snyder said about the interview. He states in addition that Oswald talked in such a way that there was,

> "...a possibility that he was following a pattern of behavior in which he had been tutored by person or persons unknown. For example, in discussing Marxism and the legalities of renunciation, he seemed to be using words which he had learned but did not fully understand. His determined statements in rather long words were not entirely consistent and not in a fully logical sequence...in short, it seemed to me that there was a possibility that he had been in contact with others before or during his Marine Corps tour who had guided him and encouraged him in his actions."

The record shows that except for the visit to the Embassy on October 31, 1959, and the letter just quoted, Oswald, although he continued to speak out in an arrogant, belligerent, anti-American manner, did nothing further to renounce his United States citizenship.

Oswald never was granted Soviet citizenship. Instead, on January 4, 1960, he was given an "Identity Document for Stateless Persons" (Vid na Zhitelstvo v SSSR dlya lits bez grazhdanstva), Number 311479, good for one year and renewable on a yearly basis. On the same day Oswald was finally told that he could reside indefinitely in the Soviet Union. He was told also he was being sent to live in Minsk.

The fact that he did not go through with the renunciation of his American citizenship, together with the fact that the Soviet Union gave him only a "Stateless Person" document, raise a possible inference that Oswald and the Soviet Union planned that someday Oswald would return to

the United States. Moreover, the whole alleged suicide attempt is subject to some suspicion. It is of course unusual for anyone to attempt suicide, so quite apart from considerations of Oswald's character and the circumstances of this particular alleged attempt, we must look with special scrutiny at the authenticity of any records of such an incident. It should be noted that his alleged attempt occurred before he appeared at the American Embassy and before he made any public statements whatever, to newspaper reporters or otherwise, about his defection from the United States and desire to become a Soviet citizen.

It could be that Oswald's conduct and public statements after the alleged suicide attempt were the result of careful coaching by the Soviets. For the KGB could have used the period from October 16, the day Oswald arrived in Moscow, to October 31, when he came into the Embassy, to subject him to the most intensive kind of political and psychological analysis to determine whether he was "good agent material." If this was what happened, then the "suicide attempt" could be a fiction the purpose of which was to cover up the fact that for about two weeks Oswald was removed from contact with the Western world and subjected to whatever analysis and/or training the Soviets felt was appropriate. From what we now know of Communist methods of this type, it may well have been necessary to fabricate something as drastic as a suicide attempt in order to provide an explanation for any symptoms of the very severe and possibly even character-devastating treatments to which he had been exposed which might appear. In other words, if Oswald was subjected to some sort of

"brainwashing" procedure, he could very well have been badly "shaken up" by it, in which case the "suicide attempt" would provide an excellent excuse for his "nervous" or "exhausted" appearance.

In this connection, an observation made by Miss Aline Mosby, at that time a reporter for the United Press International, may be pertinent. She observed that Oswald was unique among American defectors to the Soviet Union during the years 1958 through 1959 or thereabouts because he alone, as far as she knew, claimed to be motivated solely on ideological grounds. Every other defector she ever came across, she says, spoke a little about how he liked Communism or the Soviet State but was for the most part motivated by some personal matter, for example, an unhappy marriage from which he was escaping, or perhaps a neurotic inability to adapt to his job or life in general. Oswald's overriding concern with ideology, which manifested itself usually in long "explanations" of how the Soviet system was better than the capitalist and destined to prevail, and expressed in long words "from the book" which he probably did not fully understand, could be evidence of the kind of brain-washing for which the Communists are known. Conversely, his overriding concern with ideology could have preexisted any such "coaching" and instead been the reason why the Soviets were attracted to Oswald in the first place and felt he was worth such coaching. For a man so imbued with Communist ideology might, if he were given further training, especially in the ability to express himself, become an extremely valuable propaganda spokesman. One can imagine the hopes that may have been in Soviet minds

that here was a man from a "working" family in America who, with only a little further training, could be paraded all over the world to renounce his native country and affirm his allegiance to Soviet Russia — it would be a strong counteraction to the bad publicity recently given by the numerous Soviet defectors from the ranks of their athletes and entertainers.

It should also be pointed out immediately, however, that it is also quite plausible that nothing at all like what has been speculated in the previous paragraph really occurred. It is certainly possible that Oswald was exactly what he purported to be, namely, a young, neurotically embittered and confused man who had found in Marxist theory an emotional outlet for all his frustrations and otherwise-undirected hatred. To such a person, it was probably better that he did not really understand all that he was saying; the important point for him was the emotional catharsis, not the logical details. Moreover, the fact that the Embassy officials and the newspaper reporters all observed that Oswald seemed to "speak from the book" without really understanding his words is probably even more consistent with his having read Communist writings on his own than with his having been coached. After all, a good "coach" probably would have tried to instill a more coherent set of statements into his pupil. Reading many books on his own, however, which were way beyond the depth of a boy who left high school while he was still in the tenth grade, is the kind of pseudo-intellectual experience that would more likely result in the manner of speaking which was in fact observed in Oswald.

Other evidence which tends to contradict the hypothesis that the suicide attempt was a fabrication and that his failure to complete steps to expatriate himself were the result of Soviet coaching and advice, includes the following:

1. Evidence that the suicide attempt was authentic.

The autopsy performed on Oswald after his death showed that he in fact did have a scar on his left wrist and that it was of the kind which could have been -- not necessarily was -- caused by a suicide attempt. Marina has testified to the Commission that she observed such a scar on her husband and asked him about it. The question made him "very angry," she says, and he avoided giving her a reply. She was never given the slightest hint that he had ever attempted suicide. Oswald's brother Robert says that he never observed the scar and that Lee never mentioned anything about suicide to him.

Oswald's character does not seem inconsistent with a suicide attempt. The letters he wrote to his brother and mother while he was still in the Western world, to some extent the statements he made to fellow Marines, and his action in fradulently obtaining a "hardship" discharge from the Marine Corps and departing immediately from New Orleans to the Soviet Union, all lend support to this conclusion. Lee Oswald at the age of 20, when all this occurred, was indeed the kind of tense, over-dramatic, confused person who was capable of putting all his eggs in the one basket of allegiance to the Communist cause and, when his hopes there were apparently dashed beyond saving, think that everything was hopeless and try to commit suicide.

Oswald's failure to mention the suicide attempt to his wife and brother, moreover, does not necessarily reflect adversely on its

authenticity. His character is also consistent with keeping the suicide attempt secret. Everyone who has ever known Oswald and who has testified to the Commission about him, has confirmed the observation that he was close-mouthed, had tendencies towards arrogance, and was not the kind of man who would readily admit weaknesses. In addition, once he decided to return to America, he had the additional reason to keep the attempt secret, that he did not want anyone to realize what a devout, totally-committed Communist he had once been. In sum, the few independent facts we have about the suicide and the observations on Oswald's character all point towards the fact that it could have been authentic.

2. The fact that we would not know about the suicide attempt if it were not for Oswald's Diary.

It is difficult, despite the apparent plausibility of the hypothesis that the suicide attempt was fabricated as a "cover" for some sort of brainwashing procedure, to fit the facts of the attempt into a coherent pattern of Soviet-inspired conduct. This is because the "fact" that Oswald attempted to commit suicide, if it was a fact, was not disclosed until four years later, when his diary was found among his effects after the assassination. If the KGB made up the incident in order to divert suspicion from their intensive coaching of Oswald, it would seem more likely that he would have been instructed to give at least some hint to the Embassy officials on October 31 that he had been confined in a hospital for a week, etc., or in some manner to let them

know that the sixteen days since he had come to Moscow had been spent doing something other than talking with Soviet officials. But the fact is that Snyder and McVickar, the officials at the Embassy who saw Oswald, received not the slightest hint that he had ever been given medical treatment of any kind. Moreover, they did not even get the impression that he was "shaky"; on the contrary, McVickar emphasizes that Oswald gave the appearance of confidence and determination.

The fact that Oswald's brother, Robert Oswald, was never told about the suicide attempt also seems to undercut the hypothesis that it was a Soviet-inspired fabrication. It would seem that if the KGB wanted to use the alleged suicide attempt to explain why Oswald took so long to appear at the American Embassy, it would have instructed Oswald to "confide" in his brother, in order to create, through his future testimony, more "evidence" that the suicide attempt was real, and to increase the chances that it would ultimately become known to American counter-intelligence. The same argument obviously can also be applied to Oswald's failure to confide in Marina.

3. Evidence that Oswald was not accepted by the Soviets for permanent residence in Russia unduly soon after he arrived there.

If Oswald was accepted for permanent residence in the Soviet Union unduly quickly after he arrived there, two different Soviet motives, both adverse to the ultimate conclusion that his conduct was not prearranged by them, might be inferred. First, if he was accepted

markedly more quickly than other defectors before him, we could infer that the Soviets knew he was coming, had already carried out their investigation of him and concluded that he would be a desirable addition to their ranks, and were therefore in a position to accept him quickly with very little further consideration, once he arrived in Moscow. The second inference ties in with our thinking about the possibility that the suicide attempt was only a fabrication, and is more complex. If we accept the hypothesis that the Soviets used the period from October 16 through October 31 to subject Oswald to some sort of intense indoctrination or analysis, and that the "suicide attempt" was designed to cover up the effects of this treatment, it would seem likely that the Soviets would avoid exposing their subject to Western eyes for too long a period thereafter. It would also seem to follow that they would avoid leaving him for too long in a place where, if he were to lose heart, he could easily re-defect to the United States. This additional thought applies to Oswald because we know that the two hotels where he resided in Moscow, the Hotel Berlin and the Hotel Metropole, were both only a short taxi-ride from the American Embassy. The reason we can reasonably infer that the Soviets, if they subjected Oswald to some sort of secret indoctrination or analysis, would not leave him in Moscow for too long afterwards is that if he did for some reason get discouraged and re-defect to his native country, he would be in an excellent position to disclose to Western intelligence all the techniques of indoctrination and/or analysis he had been subjected to.

It would be uncharacteristic of any intelligence system, and especially of a system of a police state such as the Soviet Union, to take such a serious risk of disclosing confidential procedures, and even if he never re-defected, it would seem unwise to leave him for too long in a place where Western observors, such as newspaper reporters, could question him and see him face to face, lest the effects of the treatment or indoctrination be accidentally disclosed. Therefore, with both of these points in mind, we will review the evidence in an attempt to determine whether Oswald's tenure in Moscow prior to being fully accepted by the Soviet State was suspiciously short.

Oswald's Historic Diary records that between October 16, 1959 and January 4, 1960 he was kept on tenterhooks as to whether he would be given permission to stay in the Soviet Union permanently. Marina's testimony is consistent with the Diary in this respect. Of course, Marina's statements here are subject to two reservations. First, she, herself, could be a Soviet agent and lying. Second, she did not know Oswald until more than a year after he came to Minsk and therefore her understanding of the circumstances of his coming to Russia could only have been based on what she learned from him and other people he had spoken to on the subject. The documents given to the Commission by the Russian Government bear out that Oswald came to Minsk on or about January 4, 1960. All of the foregoing evidence, however, is subject to the infirmity that if Oswald was an agent of the Soviet Union and they together made up a "legend" about these events, we have no way of independently checking the truth of the "legend."

We have some independent evidence of how long Oswald was detained in Moscow, but unfortunately it dates only from November or even earlier. Oswald was seen by at least one newspaper reporter, Miss Priscilla Johnson of the North American Newspaper Alliance, as late as November 17, 1959, about three weeks after he was allegedly released from the hospital and almost exactly one month after his arrival in Moscow. When she saw him he still, according to her observations, was uncertain about his ultimate fate in the Soviet Union. He told her that he had received assurances that he would not be forced to return to the United States, "pending clarification of his status," (whatever that meant) but he admitted that whether or not he obtained full citizenship from the Soviet Union might not be decided for "years." In other words, from what Miss Johnson could observe on November 17, Oswald was still by no means "accepted" by the Soviets. In addition, a letter bearing a date of November 26, 1959, was received in the United States by Oswald's brother, Robert, some time in December. The letter contains many statements of extreme bitterness against the United States and is written throughout on the consistent assumption that the writer, Oswald, will remain in the Soviet Union for the rest of his life. However, the letter says nothing about his having finally received any sort of unambiguous assurance from the Soviet officials that he could remain in Russia; so perhaps the apparent assurance of the letter was not a true reflection of Oswald's real feelings. It is simply impossible to know for sure. Anyway, the letter was written from the Hotel Metropole, so Oswald was apparently still in Moscow.

Robert Oswald received one more letter from his brother while he was still at the Metropole Hotel in Moscow, this last one bearing the date of December 17, 1959. In this one Oswald said that he would be moving from the Hotel and that his brother should therefore not write him there. In fact, the letter goes on to say that Robert should not write him at all anymore because he wants to cut all ties with his previous life. Again, Oswald does not clearly state that he has received final acceptance from the Soviets, but he must have been quite confident at this time that such acceptance was imminent or he would not have told his brother he could no longer be reached at the Metropole Hotel.

In this respect it should be noted that John A. McVickar, in his memorandum dated April 7, 1964, attached hereto, feels that one of the suspicious circumstances involved in the Oswald case was that he was accepted for permanent residence in the Soviet Union after only 7 days, a much shorter waiting period than was enforced toward other American defectors. The cover letter to the McVickar memo, by Mr. Abram Chayes, observes that McVickar is wrong in this respect and that it actually took six weeks for Oswald to be accepted by the Soviets. We would like to point out that even Mr. Chayes is probably incorrect on the short side. Oswald arrived in Moscow on October 16 and was probably not finally accepted by the Soviets and given his "Stateless Passport" until January 4, 1960, a waiting period of about 11 weeks. This length of time is entirely consistent with that involved with other defectors. Even if the January 4 date is disregarded because we have at this time very little independent check on it, we have fairly good evidence that he at least was still awaiting the Soviet decision as late as December 17, and firm evidence

that he was still waiting on November 17. Even if the November 17 date is taken -- and this certainly represents an absolute minimum -- the interval amounts to about one month, a longer period than was involved in one of other three known defector cases occuring around the same time.

When asked to comment on the length of time involved, the State Department replied:

QUESTION 2

The files of the Department of State reflect the fact that Oswald first applied for permission to remain in Russia permanently, or at least for a long period, when he arrived in Moscow, and that he obtained permission to remain within one or two months.

A. Is the fact that he obtained permission to stay within this period of time usual?

ANSWER - Our information indicates that a two months waiting period is not unusual. In the case of Robert Webster the Supreme Soviet decided within two months to give Soviet citizenship and he was thereafter, of course, permitted to stay.

B. Can you tell us what the normal procedures are under similar circumstances?

ANSWER - It is impossible for us to state any "normal" procedures. The Soviet Government never publicizes the proceedings in these cases or the reasons for its action. Furthermore, it is, of course, extremely unusual for an American citizen to defect.

4. Post-assassination statements by Soviet Officials.

On November 26, 1963, Walter J. Stoessel, Jr., of the Embassy in Moscow reported a conversation he had had with a higher Russian official as follows:

"As a sidelight, I might mention that when I saw Kudryavtseve of the American Section of the MFA at the airport Saturday night when we saw Mikoyan off, he referred to Oswald and said that he seemed to be an unstable character, On his own initiative, Kudryavtseve mentioned that Oswald had been in the Soviet Union, had married a Soviet girl and a child had been born in the Soviet Union of this marriage. Kudryavtsev said that Oswald had applied for Soviet citizenship but that, after considering the application, the Soviet authorities had decided not to approve this application since Oswald seemed to be so unstable. They had, however, permitted him and his family to leave."

Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin on December 11, 1963, gave the following oral statement which purports to set forth the Soviet Government's reply to Secretary of State Rusk's inquiry as to why the Soviet Union refused Oswald's application for citizenship: 2946

"The Constitution of the U.S.S.R. and Soviet legislation provide that Soviet citizens have certain rights and appropriate responsibilities. Considering an application for Soviet citizenship the competent of all the ability of the applicant to carry out responsibilities of a citizen of the U.S.S.R. and to make use of the rights granted to him. Due regard is paid also the motivations of one's application for admission to Soviet citizenship.

"The competent Soviet authorities that considered Oswald's application did not find convincing grounds which would allow to draw a conclusion that he complied with the requirements provided for Soviet citizens in the Constitution and legislations of the U.S.S.R.

"The motives which made Oswald file his application were also not clear. The fact that Oswald made critical remarks about the State the citizen of which he was, could not, of course, be decisive in considering his application.

"In view of the above-mentioned considerations Oswald's application for Soviet citizenship was rejected."

5. Opinion of CIA

We requested the CIA to advise us on whether it felt the treatment of Oswald was exceptional or unusual with respect to permission to remain in the Soviet Union. In a memorandum dated April 6, 1964, the CIA informed us that it saw nothing unusual. Other defectors were treated CE 2742 in about the same manner.

6. Other Actions that are not consistent with Oswald having been "coached."

If the Russians were coaching Oswald in his relationships with the American Embassy and American newspaper reporters, then certain things become hard to explain. The single statement which probably caused him the most future trouble — it resulted in his receiving a dishonorable discharge from the Marine Reserve, which he forever after was to resent — was his statement to Snyder at the Embassy that he had been in the Marine Corps, worked on radar and had already volunteered to a Soviet official that he would, if asked, tell the Russian Government what he knew about that job — all this, according to Snyder and McVickar, being said with the implication that he knew something highly secret. If the Russians wanted Oswald to be careful not to expatriate himself, so that he could eventually return to the United States as an agent, why would they have permitted him to make a statement like this? Even if it did not block his reentry into America, it would certainly forever after be used against him and lessen his effectiveness as a pro-Communist agitator or espionage agent, etc., and it might even have caused the American military officials in the Embassy to seize him on the spot, on the grounds that he was about to commit a criminal offense against his service and his nation.

Second, the hypothesis that he was coached to come very close to the expartriation line but not quite to expatriate himself, in order that he might eventually return to the United States, fails to explain why he was ever instructed to come close to the line in the first place. What possible gain would come from that? Certainly any propaganda value which could have been gained from his words and actions could have been fully obtained from all sorts of anti-American and "anti-capitalist" and pro-Russian and pro-Communist statements without his having to go so far along the road toward expatriation. That, after all, is a fairly technical matter which the general public is not aware of nearly so much as it is of statements bearing upon patriotism and loyalty. In fact, the way it actually worked out, Oswald's "on again, off again" actions in regard to renouncing his citizenship may have detracted from his propaganda impact. His vacillation on this issue was so obvious that it was observed by one of the newspaper reporters, Miss Priscella Johnson. (Whether she passed her impressions on to the public at the time is not known.)

In short, if Oswald was coached, he seems to have had a poor coach.

7. Nosenko's Statements.

The recent Soviet defector, Yuri Ivanovich Nosenko, has stated to the FBI that when Oswald arrived as a tourist in the Soviet Union the KGB had "no current interest" in Oswald and possessed no information that Oswald was a member of the Communist Party, U. S. A., or elsewhere. He also indicated that Oswald was discouraged from remaining

permenently in Russia, and said, "Oswald was not regarded by the KGB as being completely normal mentally nor was he considered to be very intelligent."

C. Special benefits granted to Oswald while he was in the Soviet Union: Do they show that he was being paid to receive training as a Soviet Agent?

Once he was accepted as a resident alien in the Soviet Union Oswald by no means lived "just like a Russian." On the contrary, he was given all sorts of special benefits which a Russian citizen in his position would not have obtained. The question is not whether he received special benefits, but whether his receiving them indicates that he was undergoing some sort of training as a future agent of the Soviet system, or at least that he was being indirectly bribed to become such an agent. We want to emphasize that the problem of interpretation here is not simply whether he was being "bribed," but whether he was being bribed for the specific purpose of setting him up as some sort of foreign agent. For there is no question but that the special treatment amounted to a bribe. Oswald recognized this fact himself in his Diary, and Marina and Nosenko both say that it is standard practice in the Soviet Union for Americans and other foreign defectors from countries with high standards of living to be

"subsidized" while they are in the Soviet Union. The Central Intelligence Agency has confirmed this fact. In other words, it is standard Soviet practice, once the decision has been made that it will serve the policies of the Soviet system to admit a foreign defector, to make his life easy and pleasant enough so that he will not become disillusioned and return to his native country, at least for materialistic reasons - i. e., to bribe him with subsidies and other special benefits. CE2721

It should also be noted at the outset that if it were not for Oswald's Diary we would at this time have no knowledge that he had ever received a large initial grant and monthly subsidies thereafter from the "Red Cross." This strikes us as significant, because if there was something invidious about his receiving them, then it is unlikely that the Russians would have permitted the fact to be disclosed through the Diary. In other words, if Oswald was really a secret agent and the Diary is a fabrication drawn up by him at the behest of the KGB, and if his receiving the "Red Cross" subsidy and other special treatment is evidence of his being used as a secret agent, then it makes no sense to fabricate the Diary in such a way that it discloses such evidence. In any event, we will here outline the ways in which he apparently received special benefits from the Soviet State.

The Historic Diary cites that after Oswald was informed on January 4, 1960, that he could remain in the Soviet Union and was being sent to Minsk, he was given 5000 rubles by the "Red Cross," "for expenses."

He used 2200 rubles to pay his hotel bill, which by this time had added up to a considerable sum, and another 150 rubles to purchase a train ticket to Minsk. Withe the balance of slightly over 2500 rubles, Oswald felt, according to the Diary, like a rich man. When he arrived in Minsk he was met at the train station by two attractive, intelligent women who said they were from the Red Cross. He was taken to his hotel by them and there assigned to a guide and interpreter from Intourist, the official Soviet Agency for handling tourists. He then met the "Mayor" of the city, Comrade Sharapov, and was officially welcomed. Comrade Sharapov told Oswald that he would soon receive a "rent-free apartment" and warned him against "uncultured persons" who might not be sympathetic to foreigners. The promised rent-free apartment never materialized but eventually, about a month and a half later, Oswald did receive a very pleasant (by Soviet standards) apartment for which he was required to pay only 60 rubles a month, which it can be seen by comparison with his salary, which was 700 rubles a month, was only a nominal amount. The Diary refers to it as "almost rent-free."

Oswald was given a job in the "Baylo-russian Radio and Television Factory," a large plant employing about 5000 persons and manufacturing electronic parts and radio and television sets of all types and sizes. He worked in the "experimental shop." It is unclear exactly what he did there, but at various times he referred to his job as that of a "checker," "adjuster, first class," or "metalworker." After he had returned to the United States he told an FBI representative that he was "a metalworker" and that he spent his time reading blueprints and translating their

instructions into the finished product. The pay was approximately 700 rubles a month or slightly better; the rate of pay depended upon the amount of work he personally and/or his shop generally turned out (we are not sure which), so an exact figure cannot be quoted. This rate of pay is very good. Marina, who had received specialized training and who seems to have held a more responsible job, was employed as a pharmacist and received a salary of 450 rubles per month. Moreover, Marina has testified to the Commission that she knew of medical doctors in the Soviet Union who received less than 700 rubles per month. Finally, on top of all this, Oswald regularly received from the "Red Cross" an additional 700 rubles per month, "to help." The Diary states that the Red Cross subsidy was terminated as soon as the Soviets learned that he was no longer happy in Russia and wanted to return to the United States, i.e., presumably as soon as he wrote the American Embassy in Moscow in February 1961 asking that he be permitted to return. Marina's testimony confirms this in that she says she never knew of the "Red Cross" subsidy. Since she met and married Oswald in March and April of 1961, respectively, she would not have known of the subsidy unless Oswald had told her about it, which he apparently did not. The very well paying job, the monthly subsidy, and the "almost rent-free" apartment combined to give Oswald all the money he needed. The Historic Diary reflects this fact. The only complaint he has is that there was "no place to spend the money." Apparently, luxuries as we know them in America simply were not available to members of the working class in the Soviet Union, even if they had the money to purchase them.

Marina testifies that Oswald's salary was genuinely that. She is emphatic in denying that he received anything more for his work than did others in the factory doing similar work. She explains the relatively high monthly compensation by saying that piecework rates throughout the Soviet Union have generally grown way out of line with compensation for other jobs, and that in particular, certain professional groups are getting considerably less than their training and responsibilities would ordinarily entitle them to. She said that Premier Khrushev had promised reforms along these lines but that such reforms had not materialized by the time she and Oswald departed. Marina's testimony makes sense, because the Russians could easily have used the "Red Cross" subsidy to give Oswald all the money he needed and therefore would probably have avoided creating resentment among his fellow workers by openly paying him a higher salary than his work would justify.

The Diary reflects that Oswald himself, before he left the Soviet Union, recognized that the "Red Cross" was only a front. He says that it was really the MVD.

The fact that the "Red Cross" was used as a front for the monthly subsidies in Russia has significance in another connection. It is now fairly well established that Lee Oswald was the man who took a shot at General Edwin Walker in the spring of 1963, at the General's home in Dallas, Texas. Marina has testified to this effect, and other incriminating evidence, such as photographs of the Walker residence, has also been uncovered. There is an undated note (FBI Exhibit No. 32) which from internal evidence and from Marina's testimony we now believe to have been

left by Oswald for her at the time of the Walker assassination attempt, apparently in case he was apprehended or for some other reason unable to return directly from the scene of the shooting. The note advises her what steps to take in his absence. It is in Russian. Part of his advice to her, as translated, reads, "We have friends here (i.e., the United States). The Red Cross also will help you." Immediately after the second quoted sentence are the words, "Red Cross," written in English, presumably so that Marina could pronounce them and be understood by persons who did not speak Russian. When she was examined by the Commission on this point, Marina's only explanation was that her husband must have been telling her that the Red Cross had facilities for helping people in need, especially foreigners. She was unable to offer any suggestions on whether there was a connection, in Oswald's mind, between the American Red Cross and the "Red Cross" that subsidized his tenure in Russia and which he believed was the MVD.

D. Oswald's activities with his "hunting club" in Minsk: Were these a cover for some sort of secret training?

Oswald's writings about Russia, his statements to various persons after he returned to the United States, and Marina's testimony to the Commission all contain references to his being away from his apartment in Minsk occasionally for hunting trips or meetings with a "hunting club" or "gun club" allegedly sponsored by his factory "collective." Found among his effects after the assassination was a membership card in the gun club, a hunting license and a permit to own a shotgun. There have been allegations that this is a highly suspicious circumstance because no one in the Soviet

Union, it is alleged, is permitted to own a gun simply for pleasure. At least one Russian emigre', Ilya Mamantov, has so testified, and testimony from such a person is of course to be taken seriously. Marina has testified that she remembers her husband going hunting only on one occasion during the whole time of their marriage; however, Oswald apparently joined the gun club in the summer of 1960 and he did not marry Marina until April 30, 1961, so he could have been much more active while he was still a bachelor.

Oswald made no secret of his membership in the hunting club. He mentioned it on occasion to friends, has an entry on it in his Diary, discusses it at some length in his "Manifest," and kept his membership card, gun permit and hunting license with him until the day he was killed. It also formed one of the points of discussion in his speech to a Jesuit seminary in Alabama the summer after he returned to the United States. The subject of the hunting club came up there in connection with his remarks about peasant life in the Soviet Union, in which he said that the farm laborers lived extremely poorly and that they were in fact so destitute that he and his fellow hunters regularly left whatever game they were able to get, less what they ate during the trip, with them. He added that on one occasion he had even left with a poor farm family some of the food that he had brought with him from Minsk. In the same speech to the seminary students Oswald commented that pistols and rifles were forbidden to Soviet civilians but that shotguns were permitted.

It may be that Oswald's statement about shotguns being permitted by Soviet law is consistent with the statements of Russian emigre's to the effect that no guns of any kind were permitted to ordinary citizens, because the post-Stalin "thaw" involved, among other things, a loosening of this particular prohibition. The Russian emigre's who have testified on this point all left Russia many years ago. It is also possible that regulations of this type vary among regions in the Soviet Union. In the Ukraine, for example, where nationalistic anti-Communist groups have never been completely suppressed, it would seem natural that the restrictions on firearms might be extremely strict, whereas in other areas of less doubtful loyalty, shotguns might be permitted. In this connection it is our understanding that the Minsk area is one which is regarded by the Soviet Government as loyal; Oswald in his "Manifest" refers to it as one of the few areas in the U.S.S.R which is regarded as somewhat pro-Stalin even today, many years after the "cult of personality" has supposedly been stamped out.

Nosenko, the Soviet KGB defector, asserts that Oswald's hunting-club membership is reported in the KGB records and comments that some of the reports in Oswald's file are from fellow huntsmen, who observed that Oswald was such a poor shot that they often had to give him some of their game so that he would not return empty-handed.

CIA experts have gone over Oswald's gun permit and hunting license and given their opinion that they appear authentic. In other words, such things as whether the serial number of the gun is of the kind that would in fact refer to a shotgun, etc., check out.

R. p. 274

The fact remains that if Oswald was receiving any kind of instructions or training from the KGB or some other secret group while he was in Russia, the gun club might have been an effective means of covering such training. One possible way of checking on this would be to find out through Marina who the other members of the gun club were who took trips with her husband, and whether they had ever independently commented to her about what they did on their trips, etc. Unfortunately, her testimony shed no light in this connection and in fact, as has already been mentioned, she said that after their marriage he went on only a single trip. If Marina is telling the truth on this last point, however, it tends to rebut the hypothesis that the gun club was a "cover." For if it had been, it seems likely that the KGB would have used it more than once during the thirteen months between the time of Oswald's marriage and the time he left Russia.

E. Oswald's relationship with Marina: Might she have been chosen by the KGB to work with him as an agent, or could she even be an agent without Oswald's having known it?

Oswald met Marina on March 18, 1961, and married her six weeks later. Marina is reasonably well educated -- certainly more so than her husband -- and the uncle with whom she lived in Russia was a colonel or lieutenant colonel in the MVD, a prestigious position in the Soviet Union. Marina's aunt and uncle lived well by Soviet standards: they had a desirable apartment and a private telephone. Marina testified that they raised no objection to her marriage, saying that the decision was hers.

When Marina and Oswald were attempting to leave the Soviet Union, she was granted an interview at the MVD office in Minsk for the purpose of expediting their exit. She thinks the person she saw was a high MVD official, Colonel Nikola Asenov, and she believes that the interview was granted because she was the niece of MVD Colonel Ilya Prusakov. Oswald previously had tried to arrange such an interview for himself and had failed.

Marina was questioned by the Commission and by the press as to why she married Oswald. She told the Commission that she married him because she loved him and believed he would make a good family man, not because she wanted to come to the United States or because he had a high standard of living. She admits that she was impressed by his apartment in Russia, and some of the Russian emigre's in the United States who knew the Oswalds have testified that they think she was impressed by his privileges and relative prestige in Russia. However, her frankness in admitting her admiration for his apartment probably tends to diminish its importance as a real marriage motive. Russian emigre' friends of the Oswalds have described Marina's initial attraction to Oswald as a sort of "feeling sorry" for him, visiting him in the hospital, etc. Marina told the Commission that she was first attracted to Oswald because he was a foreigner and, as such, an interesting person. She admits dating someone else until the night before she agreed to marry Oswald. The Oswalds' relationship in the United States may not have been a happy one. Their friends' testimony conflicts on this, but some have said that Marina "drove," "goaded," or "brought out the worst" in her husband.

According to Oswald's Diary and Marina's testimony, soon after the two had met Oswald became sick with an ear infection and was confined to the hospital in Minsk for about a week. Marina, at his invitation, visited him there, and after the first visit came to see him every day. He proposed to her while he was still in the hospital, but she did not accept him until almost a month later. His Diary records that he married her to "get even" with Ella German, a fellow worker at the factory to whom he had proposed but who turned him down. The Diary goes on to say that after the marriage he grew to love Marina and to forget Ella, though he was still in love with Ella when he got married. It would seem that if Marina had been ordered by the KGB to marry Oswald if she could, that the illness would have presented an ideal opportunity. Anyone who is weak from disease is in an especially susceptible state.

There is no doubt that the fact that Oswald married a Russian created difficulties for him when he tried to return to the United States, at least from the point of view of the American Government. Marina's admission to the United States was as the wife of a citizen, under "non-quota immigrant" status. As such, she had to obtain a waiver of certain technical provisions in the immigration laws and, as it turned out, this took many extra months and was almost not obtained at all. It took special pleading by the State Department to convince the Immigration and Naturalization Service to reverse the initial decision of the latter to the effect that the provisions of the law would not be waived in Marina's case. Consequently, the hypothesis that the KGB or some other Russian group arranged the marriage

makes no sense if the intent was to facilitate Oswald's return to his native country. It does make sense, however, if Marina was so important to the contemplated use of Oswald that the additional difficulties in connection with repatriation which would be added by the marriage, were worthwhile. It also makes sense, of course, on the hypothesis that Marina herself, rather than Oswald, is the Russian agent. This latter conjecture, though perhaps somewhat startling at first, is probably at least as plausible as the conjecture that Marina and Oswald were agents together. All the questioning which Marina has undergone since the assassination has shown that she is an intelligent, coolheaded woman.

This is not necessarily evidence that she is not cooly calculating, however. The incident is equally explainable as a simple miscalculation on her part that it was either necessary or desirable from a survival viewpoint. Moreover, if the Russians were anxious to plant an agent in the United States, marrying her to a repatriating defector would be a comparatively easy means of transporting her here.

Facts tending against the speculations of the previous paragraph include the following: First, according to the statements of Marina herself and of her acquaintances, she learned practically no English as long as her husband was alive. This was supposed to be mainly because he was so jealous of her that he feared even this small degree of independence on her part, but also because she was so exclusively home and children oriented that she just did not care to make the effort to

learn the language. If, in fact, she is some kind of "dormant" agent who was to prepare herself for use at a later time, it would seem that one of her first orders of business would have been to learn the language and customs of her adopted country. Second, although Marina certainly is an intelligent woman, she has consistently maintained -- and the testimony of other witnesses seems to back this up -- that she is totally uninterested in politics and is amazingly ignorant of them, or at least was until after the assassination. Moreover, her entire character and conduct prior to the assassination seems to be that of a woman whose sole interest was her husband, herself, and her children.

Whether or not Marina is a "dormant" agent is by its nature a question almost impossible to answer. A dormant agent, by definition, does nothing whatever until he is contacted by his superiors, and such contacts may not occur until several years after the agent has been planted in the area of his future operations. In Marina's case, because of the publicity she has received, presumably the Russians would now have entirely written off any plans to use her in the future. Consequently, not only is there unlikely to be any evidence available at the present time that she is a dormant agent, if she in fact is, but probably no such evidence will ever be forthcoming.

F. The alleged ease with which Marina and her husband were able to leave Russia.

The charge could be made, and has been suggested already in the public press, that Lee Harvey Oswald's and Marina's departure from Russia and return to the United States was easier than it should have been, that

is, that if he (or she) were not agents of the Russian Communist conspiracy,, they would have found it much more difficult to leave Russia and, in fact, might never have been granted permission to go. We have reviewed the available facts on how the Oswalds obtained permission to leave Russia and return to the United States in the light of these possible charges and find that there are four separate points which bear analysis. These are: first, a possibly suspicious coincidence involving a communication from Oswald's mother, Mrs. Marguerite Oswald; second, the fact that Lee Oswald travelled from Minsk to Moscow without first obtaining the approval of the Soviet authorities, despite his own statements that he could not do so; third, the fact that the Oswalds, when they came to Moscow to confer with the American Embassy, again stayed in the MVD-Controlled Hotel Berlin; and fourth, the possibility that the time which elapsed between the Oswalds applying for permission to leave and their receiving such permission from the Soviet Government was unusually short. In order that each of these points can be viewed in perspective, they will be treated in the order in which they occurred and in the context of the story of the Oswalds' efforts to depart from the Soviet Union and return to the United States.

1. The coincidence between the timing of the request by Mrs. Marguerite Oswald that her son be notified that she was worried about him and Lee Harvey Oswald's first communication to the American Embassy in Moscow asking for permission to return to the United States.

On February 13, 1961, the American Embassy in Moscow received a letter from Oswald postmarked Minsk, February 5, the first it had heard

from him since early November 1959, when it had received his undated letter from the Hotel Metropole asking that his renunciation of citizenship be accepted. The new letter from Oswald was dated February 1, 1961, and asked that he be readmitted to his native country. The breaking of Oswald's 16-month silence at this time coincided exactly with a request sent by the Department of State in Washington to its Moscow Embassy on February 1, 1961, informing the Embassy that Oswald's mother was worried about him, inquiring as to his whereabouts and asking that he get in touch with her if possible. We had wondered whether the coincidence of these two events was accidental or whether it represented Soviet interception of the request by Oswald's mother, interpretation of that request as a possible softening of the attitude of the American Government toward Lee Oswald and their -- the Soviets' -- suggestion to Oswald that he therefore act immediately to seek readmission to the United States. We have been informed by the CIA that the request from Marguerite Oswald went from Washington to Moscow by diplomatic pouch, and thus the Russians should have had no opportunity to intercept it. However, this does not preclude the possibility of a leak in the Washington office from which the request came or a leak in the American Embassy in Moscow, where it was received. In order to have given the Russians time to act upon the leak, however, it would seem that it would have had to occur in Washington rather than Moscow.

2. Lee Harvey Oswald's travel from Minsk to Moscow without prior approval of the Soviet authorities.

Oswald, once he had reopened his lines of communication with the American Embassy in Moscow by his February 1 letter, continued to correspond with them more or less regularly until May 1962, when he and Marina finally left Russia for the United States. It was only about a month and a half after he first made known his intentions to return to the United States, on March 18, that he met Marina, and he married her on April 30, 1961. According to the Historic Diary and according to Marina's testimony to the Commission, Oswald never told her that he had made up his mind to try to return to the United States until after they were married. In fact, he not only did not disclose his intent, he affirmatively denied to her that he ever could return to the United States when she asked him about it during their courtship. The Diary records that when he did inform her, after their marriage, she was startled but immediately acceded to his wishes.

The Embassy's response to Oswald's first letter was to invite him to come personally to the Embassy to discuss the matter, pointing out that some rather complex questions were involved and that his presence would be required for the effort to iron them out. Oswald objected to the invitation, stating that it was against Soviet law for him to travel from Minsk to Moscow without first obtaining permission from the "authorities" and that he had been informed that such permission, if granted, would be "a long-drawn affair" which the authorities were "reluctant even to start." He also was loathe to undertake the expense of the trip.

The question of his coming to Moscow in person was bound up with the related question of how his American passport, which he had turned in to the Embassy in a defiant manner on October 31, 1959 and which the Embassy agreed that he needed in order to facilitate the securing of Soviet permission to leave the country, could be returned to him. The Embassy was reluctant to send the document through the mails in Russia, but Oswald was reluctant to come to Moscow to get it. In addition, as the Embassy was at pains to point out to Oswald, the issue of whether he had lost his American citizenship and with it, his right to an American passport, had to be thrashed out and decided before he could be given back his passport, either in person or through the mails. From Oswald's first letter until late in June, he and the Department of State were at loggerheads on whether he should travel to Moscow or not. While the Department of State was clarifying its position on this matter (the position, once clarified, though never communicated to Oswald, was that the passport would under no conditions be mailed) Oswald became impatient with not receiving a prompt reply to one of his letters, and appeared at the Embassy without prior warning on Saturday, July 8, 1961.

How did he do it, despite the legal difficulties he himself had anticipated? The Historic Diary simply records that he went, without getting permission. We have asked the State Department to comment upon this. Its answers, along with our specific questions, are as follows:

B. Could resident foreigners normally travel in this manner without first obtaining such permission?

ANSWER - There are only a few Western nationals now living in the Soviet Union. They include an American Roman Catholic priest, an American Protestant minister, a number of correspondents, some students and technical advisers to Soviet businesses. We know that the priest, the minister, the correspondents and the students must obtain permission from Soviet authorities before taking any trips. The technical advisers notify officials of their project before they travel and these officials personally inform the militia.

C. If travel of this type was not freely permitted, do you believe that Oswald normally would have been apprehended during the attempt or punished after the fact for traveling without permission?

ANSWER - Based on the information we have, we believe that if Oswald went to Moscow without permission, and this was known to the Soviet authorities, he would have been fined or reprimanded. Oswald was not, of course, an average foreign resident. He was a defector from a foreign country and the bearer of a Soviet internal "stateless" passport (vid na zhitelstvo dlya litsa bez grazhdanstva) during the time when he was contemplating the visit to Moscow to come to the Embassy. (On January 4, 1962 he was issued a passport for foreigners -- vid na zhitelstvo dlya Inostrantsa.)

The Soviet authorities probably knew about Oswald's trip even if he did not obtain advance permission, since in most instances the Soviet militia guards at the Embassy ask for the documents of unidentified persons entering the Embassy grounds. By Oswald's own statement, the foremen at his wife's place of employment were notified that they had visited the Embassy while they were still in Moscow. The usual "enemy of the people" meetings were held, his wife condemned for her action and friends warned against speaking to her.

An American citizen who, with her American citizen husband, went to the Soviet Union to live permanently and is now trying to obtain permission to leave, informed the Embassy that she had been fined for not getting permission to go from Odessa to Moscow on a recent trip to visit the Embassy.

D. Even if such travel did not have to be authorized, do you have any information or observations regarding the practicality of such travel by Soviet citizens or persons in Oswald's status?

ANSWER - It is impossible to generalize in this area. We understand from interrogations of former residents in the Soviet Union who were considered "stateless" by Soviet authorities that they were not permitted to leave the town where they resided without permission of the police. In requesting such permission they were required to fill out a questionnaire giving the reason for travel, length of stay, addresses of individuals to be visited, etc.

Notwithstanding these requirements, we know that at least one "stateless" person often traveled without permission of the authorities and stated that police stationed at railroad stations usually spotchecked the identification papers of every tenth traveler, but that it was an easy matter to avoid such checks. Finally, she stated that persons who were caught evading the registration requirements were returned to their home towns by the police and sentenced to short jail terms and fined. These sentences were more severe for repeated violations.

Soviet Passport Regulations

Citizens arriving for permanent or temporary sojourn or changing their place of living in localities where the passport system has been introduced must within 24 hours produce their passports for the house administration, directors of hostels, or other persons responsible for registration in order to register them with militia authorities. A citizen who has received a new passport must also produce it for the house administration or call in person at the passport bureau for registration. After that the new passport must be produced at the place of work for the cadre department or personnel office, where it will be stamped to show that its owner has been accepted for work.

> When receiving a new passport one must see that the information about the bearer and his children below 16 years of age has been properly entered, as well as the marriage data and stamp. It should be borne in mind that all citizens from 16 to 40 years of age receive passports valid for a limited period of time. When the validity of the passport expires, the citizen should apply to the passport office for a new passport. It should be born in mind that living without a passport or registration book, an invalid passport, or acceptance for work without a passport or registration book, constitutes violation of passport regulations. Persons guilty of such violations of the passport regulations are liable to prosecution.

When asked to comment on the point by representatives of the FBI, Nosenko simply replied that there was no law in the Soviet Union which would have prohibited Oswald's travel. Unfortunately, as has so frequently occurred in connection with Nosenko, the questioners were not sufficiently schooled in the intricacies of the situation to pose their question exactly. We now have reason to believe that while there are no laws in the Soviet Union prohibiting an ordinary citizen from traveling, resident foreigners, such as Oswald, are at least theoretically so prohibited. Anyway, we have also posed this question to the CIA, and its response is as follows:

> 1. OSWALD'S travel from Minsk to Moscow and return in July 1961 would normally have required prior authorization. Bearers of a Soviet "passport for foreigners" (vid na zhitelstvo v SSSR dlya innostrantsa) are required to obtain travel authorization from the Visa and Registration Department (OVIR) (or Passport Registration Department (PRO) in smaller towns) if they desire to leave the city (or oblast) where they are domiciled. This same requirement is believed to apply to persons, such as OSWALD, holding Soviet "stateless passports" (vid na zhitelstvo v SSR dlya lits bez grazhdanstva).

2. The practicality of even "unauthorized" travel was demonstrated by events related by Bruce DAVIS, a United States citizen who defected from his US Army unit in Germany on 19 August 1960, and subsequently was sent to Kiev to study. After his repatriation in 1963, DAVIS told US authorities that he had made a total of seven unauthorized trips from Kiev during the 1961-1963 period. One of these trips was a flight to Moscow on 1 May 1961, only two months before OSWALD'S flight. DAVIS was apprehended on two of his seven trips, and was returned to Kiev each time, the second time under escort. On both occasions he was merely reprimanded by the deputy chief of the institute at which he was studying. Since Marina had a Soviet citizen's internal passport, there would have been no restrictions against her making the trip to Moscow.

Oswald's arrival at the American Embassy was on a Saturday, according to the Historic Diary, the place was closed for business but after some inquiry he was able to reach Mr. Richard E. Snyder, the Consul, on the telephone. Oswald notes in the Diary that the consular officials lived in the same building as they worked, so presumably he and Snyder spoke over some sort of house telephone. Again according to the Diary, Snyder came down immediately, shook his hand, and spoke briefly with him. The upshot of the conversation was that Oswald should return on Monday, July 10. This he did, but in the meantime, apparently because of something said by Snyder, although we have no clear evidence that this was the case, Oswald telephoned Marina long distance and asked her to fly to Moscow the next day, Sunday, which she did.

3. The Oswalds staying at the Hotel Berlin

While they were in Moscow, Oswald and Marina stayed at the Hotel Berlin, the same place Oswald stayed when he entered the country in 1959. The CIA has informed us that the Hotel Berlin and its "sister

hotel," the Metropole (where Oswald also stayed in 1959), which are under the same administration, are the regular foreign-tourist hotels in Moscow. Presumably, therefore, they are heavily infiltrated, if not controlled, by the MVD.

Marina says that she and Oswald got a room at the Hotel Berlin because rooms in Moscow were at a premium, there being a film festival going on at the time, and Oswald was remembered at the Berlin and therefore able to get a room despite the difficulties. The CIA has confirmed that an international film festival was in fact occuring in Moscow during July 1961.

4. The alleged unusual rapidity with which the Oswalds were able to obtain permission from the Soviet Government to leave Russia.

Despite the fact that Marina had come to Moscow, when Oswald appeared at the Embassy on Monday she waited outside instead of coming in with him. However, on Tuesday she had a conference with John McVickar on her aspects of the contemplated return to the United States, i.e., the problems and procedures connected with her entry into the United States as a "nonquota immigrant." It is interesting, and apparently purely coincidental, that the same two men who dealt with Oswald when he defected to Russia were the ones who dealt with him and Marina when he sought to reenter the United States.

Primarily on the basis of the Monday interview, the American Embassy concluded that Oswald had not expatriated himself despite his attempts to do so in the fall of 1959 and his actions thereafter, and wrote a memorandum to this effect to the Washington Department of State.

On the basis of this tentative decision, but on the warning expressly given that the decision was only tentative, Oswald was given back his passport. By its own terms the document was due to expire in September 1961, and he was informed that whether it could be renewed would depend upon the ultimate decision on his expatriation.

The ultimate decision on the expatriation issue was favorable to Oswald. His new passport was not issued in September, however, because he did not need it then, but was issued instead in May 1962, just before he and his family departed for the United States. Essentially, although there were some serious problems ahead for Marina's application to be admitted as a nonquota immigrant, the big American hurdle, the expatriation issue, was for all practical purposes overcome on July 10, 1961. From then on, it was up to the Soviet authorities.

The greatest difficulty with the Russian authorities was probably whether Marina could accompany her husband, although we can only guess that this was so. As it actually worked out, Marina was called to the Soviet passport office in Minsk on December 25, 1961, and told that authority had been received to issue both her and her husband's exit visas. Thus, permission for both of them came down at exactly the same time, so we have no way of actually knowing that it was Marina, more than her husband, whose departure troubled the Soviet Government. The Historic Diary and correspondence with the American Embassy at this time reflects that the Oswalds did not pick up their exit visas immediately, despite having been told that they could do so. Their thinking was that since

Oswald's visa would be good for only 45 days once it had been issued, he would not ask that it be issued until he had cleared away every other obstacle to his return to the United States and was ready to leave. Marina, being a Soviet national, however, would get an exit visa of longer than 45 days' duration. Consequently, on January 12, 1962, she picked up her exit visa. It was marked valid until December 1, 1962.

Obtaining the permission of the Soviet Government to leave may have been facilitated by a conference which Marina had, at her own request, with a high MVD official, probably a Colonel Asenov, sometime in late 1961. She has testified that she applied for the conference and believes that it was granted her because her uncle with whom she had lived in Minsk before her marriage, Colonel Prusakov, was a high MVD official. She has commented also that Oswald tried to arrange such a conference himself and was turned down.

The Oswalds did not finally leave Russia until May 1962. The six-month delay was caused primarily by two facts. First, Marina's application for an American visa ran into difficulties when the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) at first refused to waive the provisions of Section 243(g) of the Immigration and Naturalization Act in her case. Ultimately, at the behest of the Department of State, the INS reversed its decision on this point and consented to waive the provisions. Second, the Oswalds' child, June Lee, was born on February 15, and the Oswalds wanted to wait until the baby had gained a little weight before taking it on such a long trip. There was also some difficulty about obtaining an affidavit from a propertied person in the United States to

the effect that Marina, if admitted, would not become a ward of the state, and some additional difficulties in obtaining financing for the Oswalds' travels. The financing was ultimately provided by a repatriation loan of slightly under $500 from the Department of State.

Two questions are raised by the foregoing narrative. First, it can be argued that the Soviet permission for both Marina and her husband to leave was granted in a suspiciously short time. Second, it can be argued that the fact that Marina was ever permitted to leave the Soviet Union simply because she had married an American national, is extraordinary and therefore suspicious. The questions raised are obviously interrelated: if it is extraordinary for a wife ever to be given permission to accompany her husband out of the country, then any time at all within which this permission is granted is "suspiciously short." Nosenko in commenting on this point said that Soviet law since the death of Stalin has permitted a wife to emigrate freely with her husband, provided only that she has not had access to information which would endanger the security of the State. Oswald told the FBI in July 1962, just after he returned to the United States, that he had been interviewed by the MVD only twice, once when he first came to Russia and once just before he departed. If true, this tends to confirm what Nosenko states; the outgoing interview may have been part of the attempt to ascertain whether Marina had had any kind of access to "classified" information. We have asked the CIA to comment upon this point, and its response is as follows:

"6. So far as we are able to determine, there is no Soviet law which would prevent a Soviet citizen married to a foreign national from accompanying his or her spouse from the USSR. This situation is also believed to have existed at the time of the OSWALDS' departure from the Soviet Union in 1962. In practice, however, permission for a Soviet wife to accompany her foreign national husband abroad is rarely given. In almost every case available for our review, the foreign national was obliged to depart the USSR alone and either return to escort his wife out, or arrange for her exit while he was still abroad. In some cases, the wife was never granted permission to leave. The majority of cases reviewed involve foreign students, exchange teachers, and other relatively transient persons, and while a number of cases have certain points in common, they bear little similarity to the OSWALD case; none involved a defector who married prior to repatriating.

CE 2762

"7. The time lapse involved in Soviet processing of the OSWALDs' departure documentation appears to be normal. Marina began assembling the documents necessary for an exit visa in May 1961, and both OSWALDs actually applied on 20 August 1961, according to Marina's statement and OSWALS's diary. Marina's exit visa was issued at the time her new passport was issued, 11 January 1962, although she had been informed by Soviet authorities about 1 January 1962 that the visa would be issued. Lee OSWALD's exit visa was not issued until 22 May 1962, although he, too, apparently had been told in early January 1962 that the visa would be granted. The time lapse between actual application and notice of approval was over four months. By way of comparison, some Soviet wives have been held in the USSR for years, while in two specific cases involving Swedish national husbands, the Soviet wives were processed out in less than four months.

CE 2762

The Department of State 's comments on this issue are:

A. At the time that Lee Harvey Oswald and Marina Oswald left Russia for the United States was it legal and normal under Soviet law and practice for a Russian national married to an American to be able to accompany him back to his homeland?

ANSWER - The Department knows of many marriages in the Soviet Union between American citizens and Soviet citizens. Most of these involved an American citizen husband and a Soviet citizen wife. Such marriages since World War II have mostly involved American newspaper correspondents, American businessmen and tourists, and, in a few instances, employees of the American Government. In practically all of these cases the husband remained in the Soviet Union until his Soviet wife was given permission to accompany him to the United States.

In the immediate post-war period there were about fifteen marriages in which the wife had been waiting for many years for a Soviet exit permit. After the death of Stalin the Soviet Government showed a disposition to settle these cases. In the summer of 1953 permission was given for all of this group of Soviet citizen wives to accompany their American citizen husbands to the United States

Since this group was given permission to leave the Soviet Union, there have been from time to time marriages in the Soviet Union of American citizens and Soviet citizens. With one exception, it is our understanding that all of the Soviet citizens involved have been given permission to emigrate to the United States after waiting periods which were, in some cases, from three to six months and in others much longer.

B. Was the rapidity with which Lee Harvey Oswald was able to accomplish his return and Marina's return to the United States in any way unusual?

ANSWER - It does not appear to us that Mrs. Oswald's Soviet exit visa application was acted upon with unusual rapidity. On July 15, 1961 Oswald and his wife applied for Soviet exit visas. On October 4, 1961 Oswald informed the Embassy that he still had not gotten exit visas and requested Ambassador Thompson's intervention on his behalf. He related that there had been continuing attempts to intimidate his wife, apparently with the idea of forcing her to give up her plans to go to the United States. On November 1, 1961 Oswald told the Embassy that he had gone repeatedly to the Minsk officials but still had not been granted exit visas for himself and his wife. In January 1962, practically six months after the date of application (July 15, 1961), Oswald and his wife were granted Soviet exit visas.

It is difficult to generalize on the length of time required for Soviet action in such cases. There is no discernible pattern which we can find in the Soviet Government's handling of exit visa cases. The issuance of such visas is apparently subject to rather arbitrary official action. In some periods it has seemed related to the political climate between the Soviet Union and the foreign spouse's country, although this has not always been the case. In our view, for example, the issuance of exit visas in 1953 to the group of wives of American citizens mentioned above was undoubtedly part of an effort by the Soviet Government to create a favorable atmosphere between our two governments.

In the most recent case of this type a Soviet woman married an American citizen in December 1963 and received an exit visa about two months later. Such marriages cannot take place in the Soviet Union without permission of the Soviet Government. It seems probable that permission to marry in such cases is almost always tantamount to a favorable future decision to grant an exit visa since the American citizen is required to state his intention to bring his Soviet spouse back to the United States.

Since Oswald came to the Soviet Union as a defector, however, he was in a somewhat different situation. It is our judgment that the Soviet Government's granting of permission to his wife to leave the country was not considered a routine matter. We do have detailed information concerning another American defector, Robert Edward Webster. His case is somewhat different since he actually obtained Soviet citizenship and was not, therefore, classified as "stateless."

Robert Edward Webster was an employee of the Rand Development Corporation assigned to work as a plastics engineer at the American National Exhibit in Moscow in the summer of 1959. He informed the Embassy on September 30, 1959, that he had decided to stay in the USSR and work. When interviewed in the presence of a Soviet official on October 17, 1959 he said he had applied for Soviet citizenship about July, 1959 and had been notified officially that Soviet citizenship had been granted by Decree of the Supreme Soviet. He received a Soviet internal citizen's passport on September 21, 1959 and the Embassy submitted to the Department a Certificate of Loss of Citizenship covering Webster's status.

On March 3, 1960 Webster informed his father he would like to return home and that he had written to the Embassy about this but has received no reply. Webster called at the Embassy on May 4, 1960 and thereafter returned to his residence in Leningrad. He applied for an exit visa on August 5, 1960 and was informed on October 24, 1960 that his application had been refused, but that he could reapply after one year.

On March 9, 1962 the Embassy received a Soviet foreign passport (i.e., Soviet citizen's passport for travel abroad) together with an exit visa for Webster. A delay ensued while Webster's U. S. visa application was being processed. He was in communication with the Embassy by telephone but after the visit on May 4, 1960 he did not visit the Embassy until May 8, 1962, when he came to get his final papers. He told the Embassy during the interview that "he was not left alone" after he had informed his family by letter about his desire to return home. He left the Soviet Union May 15, 1962.

In comparison to Oswald, it took Robert Webster a year and nine months to get permission to leave the Soviet Union. His case differs in that he had been granted Soviet citizenship and was employed in an industry, plastics, for which his skills were particularly desired by the Soviet authorities. His case was also complicated by the fact that he had deserted his American wife and two children to live with a divorced Soviet woman who bore his child before his return to the U. S.

C. If possible we would appreciate a memorandum from you on the normal Soviet procedures in similar cases and the usual time periods involved, covering both emigration from Russia to the United States and emigration from Russia generally.

ANSWER - The Soviet Government is generally opposed to emigration of its citizens to foreign countries. Apparently the Soviet Government gives consideration to granting exit permits for the purpose of emigration to the United States only when the applicants wish to join members of their family.

For many years it has been extremely difficult for Soviet citizens to obtain permission to leave the Soviet Union to join relatives in the United States. In the 1930's a few such cases received favorable consideration, but it was only in the latter part of 1959 that the Soviet Union began issuing a number of exit visas in such cases. Since 1959 approximately 800 Soviet relatives of American citizens have received exit visas. This number, of course, is quite small compared to the number of those Soviet citizens who wish to come to the United States to join their relatives here.

Those who have been successful in obtaining exit visas were usually subjected to long delays before any action was taken on their applications, unlike those cases of American citizens who marry Soviet citizens while temporarily residing in the USSR.

In regard to emigration from Russia to other countries, we know that Soviet exit visas have been issued to persons desiring to join relatives in France, England, and other European countries, but we have very little information concerning the details of such emigration.

G. The Oswalds' contacts with the Soviet Embassy in Washington, D. C., after they took up residence in the United States.

Soon after the Oswalds reached the United States in June 1962 they made contact with the Soviet Embassy in Washington. Soviet law required Marina, as a Soviet citizen living abroad, to contact her nation's Embassy and file with it certain forms. Later, the contact was continued when the Oswalds sought permission to return to the Soviet Union. The first such request was a letter written by Marina on February 17, 1963. She wrote that she wished to return to Russia, but that her husband would stay because "He is an American by nationality." She was informed on March 8, 1963 that it would take from 5 to 6 months to process the application. Later, Oswald made application to return with her.

On April 10, 1963, somebody fired a rifle at General Edwin B. Walker in his home in Dallas. We now have fairly good evidence that the man who fired the rifle was Lee Harvey Oswald. An undated note was found after the assassination which, according to Marina, was left for her by her husband at the time he shot at Walker. A translation of that note has been attached to this memorandum. The purpose of the note seems to have been to serve as a guide to Marina as to what to do and where to look for help if Oswald was caught in the assassination attempt. The second paragraph of the note mentions the "Embassy," and since this presumably means that the Soviet Embassy in Washington, D. C., that paragraph is here quoted:

"Send the information as to what has happened to me to the Embassy and include newspaper clippings (should there be anything about me in the newspapers). I believe that the Embassy will come quickly to your assistance on learning everything."

The Soviet Union has made available to us what purports to be all of the communications between the Oswalds and the Russian Embassy in the United States. This material has been checked for codes and none has been detected. Except for the last letter which Oswald wrote to the Soviet Embassy, which will be discussed below, there is no material which gives any reason for suspicion. On April 13, 1963, the Soviet Union did ask Marina for her reason for wanting to return to the Soviet Union and suggested she visit the Embassy in Washington to discuss the matter. It is arguable that this request was strange, since she was a Soviet citizen and her passport was limited in time; however, there were certainly some reasonable grounds for requesting a face-to-face discussion, for example, whether her husband and children would be permitted to accompany her.

As will be discussed in more detail later, Oswald was in Mexico from September 26, 1963 until October 3, 1963, and while in Mexico City he made several visits to the Cuban and Soviet Embassies. Marina has testified that Oswald told her that the purpose of the trip was to try to reach Cuba by way of Mexico, thereby evading the American legal prohibitions against such travel. He was very concerned that both the trip itself and his purpose in going be kept strictly secret and cautioned Marina accordingly. Marina never admitted she had prior knowledge of the trip until almost three months after the assassination,

when she testified to the Commission that, as just related, Oswald had told her that he was going and why. The few witensses we have who spoke with Oswald while he was on a bus going to Mexico City confirm what Marina has stated, that Oswald's intent was to evade the travel ban by reaching Cuba by way of Mexico.

The Mexican law-enforcement authorities and the CIA and FBI have all carried on extensive investigations within Mexico of Lee Harvey Oswald's activities there. These three groups have produced evidence which appears quite firm that when Oswald appeared at the Cuban and Soviet Embassies he told them that his destination was Russia, not Cuba, and that he only wanted an "in-transit" visa for Cuba in order that he might visit that country on his way to the Soviet Union. When he visited these embassies he carried with him newspaper clippings, letters and various documents (some forged by himself) purporting to show that he was a "friend of Cuba." With these papers, and with his proven record of previous residence in the Soviet Union and marriage to a Soviet national, he tried to curry favor with both embassies, but the attempt seemingly failed.

and Marina has testified that when she first saw him after his return to the United States he was discouraged and convinced that he would never reach Cuba.

When questioned on the discrepancy between his telling her that he wanted to get to Cuba and his telling the Cuban and Russian Embassies that his ultimate destination was Russia, Marina answered

that his statements to the embassies were deccptions, and she added that he had told her after he returned something about his attempts to fool the officials in Mexico City. Apparently, his real intent was that if he could reach Cuba "on the way to Russia" he would simply stop there, prove his "friendship" for the Castro regime and then go through substantially the same kind of defection and shift of allegiance to a foreign power he had performed in Moscow in 1959. Marina's testimony on this point is somewhat confused, however. She is not clear on details.

In any event, among the documents turned over to the United States by the Soviet Union after the assassination of the President, included in the file purporting to be the entire correspondence between the Oswalds and the Soviet Embassy in Washington, D. C., was the following letter dated November 9, 1963:

"Dear sirs;

"This is to inform you of recent events sincem my meetings with comrade Kostin in the Embassy Of the Soviet Union, Mexico City, Mexico.

"I was unable to remain in Mexico indefinily because of my mexican visa restrictions which was for 15 days only. I could not take a chance on requesting a new visa unless I used my real name, so I retured to the United States.

"I had not planned to contact the Soviet embassy in Mexico so they were unprepared, had I been able to reach the Soviet Embassy in Havana as planned,the embassy there would have had time to complete our business.

"Of corse the Soviet embassy was not at fault,they were,as I say unprepared,the Cuban consulate was guilty of a gross breach of regulations, I am glad he has since been replaced.

"The Federal Burou of Investigation is not now interested in my activities in the progressive organization 'Fair Play For Cuba Committee', of which I was secretary in New Orleans(state Louisiana) since I no longer reside in that state. However, the F.B.I. has visted us here in Dallas, Texas, on November Ist. Agent James P. Hasty warned me that if I engaged in F.P.C.C. activities in Texas the F.B.I. will again take an 'interrest' in me.

"This agent also 'suggested' to Marina Nichilayeva that she could remain the the United States under F. B. I. 'protection', that is, she could defect from the Soviet Union, of course, I and my wife strongly protested these tactics by the notorious F.B.I..

"Please inform us of the arrival of our Soviet entrance visas's as soon as they come.

"also, this is to inform you of the birth on October 20, 1963 of a DAUGHTER, AUDREY MARINA OSWALD in DALLAS;TEXAS., to my wife.

Respecfully;
/s/ Lee H. Oswald"

The envelope bears a postmark which seems to be November 12. Marina has testified that Oswald made many drafts of this letter before it was finally sent. A piece of paper which was probably one of these drafts was found among Oswald's effects and reads as follows: (Words crossed out by Oswald have been put in parentheses.)

"Draft

"Dear Sirs

"This is too inform you of (re) events since my interviews with comrade Kostine in the Embassy of the Soviet Union Mexico City, Mexico.

"I was unable to remain in Mexico City (because I considered useless) indefinity because of my (visa) Mexican visa restrictions which was for 15 days only. (I had a) I could not/take a chance applying for an extension (si) unlessI used my real name so I returned to the U. S.

"I and Marina Nicholeyeva are now living in Dallas, Texas, (you already ha)

"The FBI is not now interested in my actives in the progressive organization FPCC of which I was secretary in (New Orleans,Lon) New Orleans (La) Louisiana since (mn) no longer (connected with) live in that State.

(However the however) the FBI has visited us here in Texas on Nov. 1st, agent of the FBI James P. Hasty warned me that if I attempt to engage in FPCC activities in Texas the FBI will again take an "Interest" in me. This agent also 'suggested' that my wife could 'remain in the U. S. under FBI protection," that is, she could defect from the (refuse to return to the) Soviet Union. Of course I and my wife strongly protested these tactics by the notorious F.B.I.

"(It was unfortun that the Soviet Embassy was unable to aid me in Mexico City but) I had not planned to contact the Mexican City Embassy at all so of course they were unprepared for me. Had I been able to reach Havana as planned (I could have contacted the Soviet Embassy there for the completion of rapid have been able to help me get the neceary documents I required assist me.) would have had time to assist me but of course the (stuip) stuip Cuban Consule was at fault here, I'm glad he had since been replaced by another."

Information produced for the Commission by the CIA is to the effect that the person referred to by Oswald as "comrade Kostin" was probably a man named "Kostikov" employed ostensibly as a member of the Consular staff of the Soviet Union in Mexico City. He is actually a KGB agent, however, as are many of such employees. We have also identified the Cuban Consul referred to in Oswald's letter as probably Senor Eusebio Asque. This man was in fact replaced. We asked the CIA to look into this and their response reads:

"We surmise that the references in Oswald's 9 November letter to a man who had since been replaced must refer to Cuban Consul Eusibio Azque, who left Mexico for Cuba on permanent transfer on 18 November 1963, four days before the assassination. Azque had been in Mexico for 18 years and it was known to us as early as September 1963 that Azque was to be replaced. His replacement did arrive in September. Azque was scheduled to leave in October but did not leave until 18 November.

"We do not know who might have told Oswald that Azque or any other Cuban had been or was to be replaced, but we speculate that Silvia Duran or some Soviet official might have mentioned it if Oswald complained about Azque's altercation with him."

Yuri Ivanovich Nosenko, the recent Soviet defector from the KGB, has stated that the first word which the Moscow KGB had of Oswald's actions or whereabouts after he left the Soviet Union was when the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City telegramed that Oswald has appeared there and requested a visa to the Soviet Union. Nosenko did not so testify, but probably such a telegram would have gone from Mexico City to Washington, D. C., and from there to Moscow. Oswald himself mentioned several times that the Soviet Embassy had promised to send a telegram containing his request for a visa, so this checks out. When Nosenko was asked why the KGB had received no notice of Oswald's and Marina's prior contacts with the Soviet Embassy in Washington, he answered that he did not actually know, but from his knowledge of the routine followed in such cases he suggested that the Soviet Embassy itself may simply have turned down the Oswalds' visa application and not bothered Moscow with questions about the matter. Presumably, therefore, the Mexican Embassy sent a wire to Washington because it did not have the file on Oswald, as did Washington, and so did not have a basis for immediately turning his application down or, what could also be possible, the Mexican Embassy was subservient in these matters to the Washington Embassy and therefore would routinely have asked for the decision of the latter on such a point. Possibly also, Oswald's personal appearance was deemed a matter of some importance and therefore worthy of being communicated to Moscow,

whereas his and Marina's simply writing letters to Washington was considered routine. Nosenko also opined that Oswald would never have been readmitted to the Soviet Union, no matter how long he had persisted in trying. He said that prior to the assassination, Marina and her children probably would have been permitted to come back alone; the assassination, of course, has made this less clear.

The principal question raised by all this is, of course, What is the meaning of Oswald's apparently garbled letter to the Embassy of November 9, 1963? Marina was asked to explain the letter and, after a few attempts, gave up with the remark that it was "crazy." Some light on its possible meaning can perhaps be shed by comparing it with the early draft. To the extent that the draft differs from the final document, and especially when crossed-out words are taken into account, one gets the impression that Oswald was intentionally obfuscating the true state of affairs in order to make his trip to Mexico sound as mysterious and important as possible. For example, the first sentence in the second paragraph of the letter itself reads,

> "I was unable to remain in Mexico indefinily because of my mexican visa restrictions which was for 15 days only."

The same sentence in the draft begins, before the words were crossed out,

> "I was unable to remain in Mexico City because I considered useless ..."

As already mentioned, we have fairly good evidence that Oswald's trip to Mexico was indeed "useless" and that he returned to Texas with the

conviction that it had been so. Similarly, in the last paragraph Oswald says that an FBI agent suggested to Marina that she "could defect from the Soviet Union." In the draft, this was first written that the agent suggested that she could "refuse to return to the Soviet Union." The word, "defect," was probably inserted to give emotional impact.

It might be argued that the Russians would not have turned this letter over to us voluntarily if they had any reason to believe that it could be used as evidence against them. However, we have Nosenko's own testimony that in Russia it is standard procedure for the secret police to intercept all mail addressed to the American Embassy, and it therefore does not seem unlikely that the Soviets assumed the same thing was being done in the United States. With this in mind, they probably believed that the FBI had already read this letter when it was sent, and so they gave it to us "voluntarily" to earn whatever credit they could for having done so. We believe that the letter should be judged without reference to the fact that it was "voluntarily" turned over to the Commission.

The letter undoubtedly constitutes a disturbing bit of evidence and will probably never be fully explained. In our opinion, based upon what we have learned of Oswald's character in general and, in particular, upon what we believe to have been his mounting desperation to escape the complexities of life in the United States by going to Cuba or, failing that, back to Russia, we think that the letter constitutes no more than a desperate, somewhat illiterate and deranged attempt to facilitate his family's return to the Soviet Russia.

He seems to have written it in the hope that by inferring that he had somehow been "in on" some secret and mysterious dealings involving the Soviet Embassy in Mexico, some benefit, however small, could be salvaged from the otherwise total failure of that trip.

H. Yuri Ivanovich Nosenko

In February 1964, Yuri Ivanovich Nosenko asked for asylum in the United States. His position in the Soviet Union was that of a high official with the KGB, and he was attending a conference in Geneva at the time of his escape. In the course of his interrogation by the CIA, it turned out that he had knowledge of Oswald. His testimony in respect to Oswald was given to representatives of the FBI and passed on by the Bureau to us. A copy of the Bureau's final report on Nosenko is attached to this memorandum. Nosenko's reference to Oswald's Intourist guide and "his" impressions and evaluations of Oswald should probably be to "her" impressions and evaluations, since we know from other sources that the guide was probably a woman, Rima Shirokova.

The FBI summary of the statements of Nosenko, if true, would certainly go a long way towards showing that the Soviet Union had no part in the assassination. However, one cannot but be struck by the rare coincidence between the sudden notoriety of Lee Harvey Oswald and the fact that a Soviet official who defects turns out to be a man with primary knowledge about Oswald. If, after the CIA opinion has been formed, doubts still exist with respect to the authenticity and sincerity of Nosenko, then the Commission must face the vexing question of why the Soviet Union chose this method to place this "information" in the hands of the United States. In our opinion, Nosenko should be asked to testify to the Commission as soon as the CIA has completed its evaluation of him.

I. Documentation furnished by the Soviet Government at our request

In the latter part of March the Department of State, at our request, handed Ambassador Dobrynin a letter from Mr. Chief Justice Earl Warren to Secretary of State Dean Rusk requesting that the Soviet Union furnish the Commission with "further details of his /Oswald's/ activities during his residence in the Soviet Union, including copies of any official records which the Soviet authorities may find it possible to supply." The letter went on to describe seven areas of particular interest to the Commission. A copy of the letter has been attached to this memorandum so that the description of the areas of particular interest can be read in detail if this is felt to be desirable.

The response of the Soviet Government has been received. It is difficult to assess the extent to which it has complied in good faith. Some records which might have been given to us have not been, but in some cases this could very well be because they are no longer in existence. For example, no application for a tourist visa made in Helsinki, Finland, on or about October 14, 1959 was forwarded to us despite the fact that we specifically requested documents of this type; but it is entirely possible that in the more than four years which elapsed between the time when Oswald filled out this very routine document and the time of the assassination, it was destroyed in the ordinary course. There are other deficiencies in the Soviet response which are not so easily explained. The very last paragraph of the letter from Mr. Chief Justice Earl Warren asks for copies of any statements, before or since the assassination of President Kennedy, volunteered by Soviet citizens who knew Lee Harvey Oswald during his

residency in the Soviet Union which related to one of the aforementioned seven areas of particular interest or which "might otherwise be of interest to the Commission." No such volunteer statements were forwarded to us by the Soviet Government. A second possibly suspicious circumstance we have observed is that a very high percentage of the signatures other than Oswald's on the documents are stated by our translators to be illegible or missing.

This kind of verification has been rendered impossible, either accidentally or on purpose, in the documents given to us. We have asked the CIA's opinion on this point, but so far have not received it.

J. An Overall Assessment of the Likelihood of Soviet Involvement

The Commission has been able to gather an impressively large amount of material on Lee Harvey Oswald's life in Russia and in the United States after he returned from Russia, and a considerable amount of material on Marina as well. Much of this has been examined in this memorandum, and over the last few months virtually all of it has been analyzed in detail by members of the staff of the Commission or by one or more of the various investigatory or intelligence agencies of the

Federal government. Our conclusion, as already stated, is that all the "Russian" evidence is consistent with Lee Harvey Oswald's having been substantially what he purported to be and no more, that is, it is consistent with his not being an agent of the Russian government.

The fact that the evidence on Oswald's life in Russia is consistent with the conclusion just stated is of course highly important; however, this alone is not sufficient reason to conclude that Oswald was in fact not a Russian agent. A high proportion of all the evidence on Lee Harvey Oswald which relates to his travel to and life in Russia derives from sources that could have been fabricated or otherwise falsified. The main sources of such evidence are his own statements after he returned to the United States, the letters he wrote from Russia to members of his family, Marina's statements to friends after she came to America and her testimony to the Commission, and all sorts of writings and documents dating from the Russian period or shortly thereafter. All of these sources could have been put together by the KGB or be the result of its careful "coaching."

The question therefore rises, How are we to access whether or not what we know as Oswald's "real life" is not just a "legend" designed by the KGB and consistently lived out by Oswald thereafter? Yuri Ivanovich Nosenko, if he is sincere, would provide a conclusive answer; namely, that what we know is the truth and not a legend. Unfortunately, the CIA cannot give us quite the assurance of Nosenko's reliability that we would need to rely solely upon his testimony. We are therefore forced to fall back upon Oswald himself, and ask, from all we have learned about him -- literally from his infancy until the day of his death -- whether he was

the kind of man who could successfully have lived out such a legend. Our conclusion is that in all probability he could not.

The picture of Oswald that emerges from all of the evidence the staff has gathered is that of a man of average or possibly better than average intelligence, but with a mind that was confused, dogmatic, and unused to the discipline of logical thought. For example, his political writings, when read closely, are seen to be little more than a series of vague assertions that something or other "must" be done in this way or that way. The spelling and grammar are uniformly bad. Some of Oswald's employers found him to be an adequate worker; these seem to have been those who used him for very unskilled work. On more responsible jobs he did not fare as well. When he worked for the William B. Reilly Company as a mechanic he was very unsatisfactory. The instructions he wrote out for his own guidance on the job are almost totally un-understandable, and the employer has stated that Oswald's reports were just as bad. He seems to have been overly resentful of orders or corrections given him by his supervisors on the job. This last characteristic also manifested itself during his service in the Marine Corps. (On one relatively skilled job, however, he seems to have performed reasonably well. In the early part of 1963 he worked in the photographic Department for the Jaguars-Childs-Stovall Company and got along relatively well. He was discharged after a few months because the company found it necessary to let some of its workers go and chose Oswald rather than other men they had taken on at about the same time because he did not get along with his fellow workers very well.)

His sense of the practical seems to have been deficient. For example, he always fashioned himself a potential leader and resented the fact that circumstances compelled him to do menial work. Yet he never took the necessary steps to complete his high school education and obtain a diploma, so that he might be hired for a better job and utilize the normal skills possessed by a high school graduate. Likewise, he never made any serious attempts to acquire any kind of post-high school education. He made one or two tries at setting himself up as a Russian interpreter or translator but apparently never pursued the matter very far. So far as we know he never earned a penny in either capacity. For several weeks in the late summer of 1963 he occupied himself with an elaborate scheme for hijacking an airplane to Cuba, and at one time he was trying to work Marina and the baby into the plan as well. Some time during 1963 he told Marina he would one day be the "Premier" of Cuba and became angry when she chided him for such an impractical ambition.

In sum, we believe that Oswald did not have any subtleness of mind, that he lacked a good understanding of human nature and that he had an unstable and neurotic character. We do not believe that such a man could have lived out a "legend" so successfully that the combined resources of the Commission, the Secret Service, CIA and the FBI could not have uncovered major discrepancies in it.

III. Involvement by Cuba.

Our Suspicion that the Cuban government might have been involved in the assassination is based upon four facts. First, Lee harvey Oswald publicly identified himself with the Fair Play For Cuba Committee and was an avowed admirer of the Castro government. Second, shortly before the