

Which, to me, is a fact.

So in the car, with your two Secret Service agents, one was Mr. Brown and one was—I am very bad about names—he said, “Mrs. Oswald, what makes you want to blame the Secret Service? The time to have blamed the Secret Service was when it happened.”

And I said, “I did blame the Secret Service when it happened. I made a report in Fort Worth, Tex., about that.”

And I said, “The question was asked me.” I answered him truthfully, “Yes, that the Secret Service have kept me from my daughter-in-law.”

So he said, “Well, has it occurred to you that your daughter-in-law doesn’t want to see you?”

And I said, “She made the statement in Washington, the first time I have known of that, from my daughter-in-law’s lips, that she did not want to see me.”

And Mr. Sorrels never told me.

Now, again, I don’t believe this Secret Service man had the right to quiz me like he did. I was very upset. Mr. Doyle can verify the fact. When he came to the hotel I was on the verge of tears, because of this quizzing.

The point I want to make—he said, “Isn’t it true that you have had complete protection by the Secret Service for the last 2 weeks, ever since the testifying began?”

I said, “No, sir; it is not true.”

Now, where does he get the idea I have been under surveillance for 2 weeks? I don’t understand these things.

Mr. DOYLE. Tell them about the defection.

Mrs. OSWALD. Would you please consider that I can’t go any more today? It is 4 o’clock. The defection is a very long and important story that leads into a story where a recruiting officer at age 16 tried to get Lee to enlist into the Marines. And it is a very important story, gentlemen. And I think you would be quite interested in it for the record.

The CHAIRMAN. We will recess now until tomorrow. Mr. Doyle, I understand in the morning you have a court appearance that you must make. But you will be available at 2 o’clock.

Mr. DOYLE. Two o’clock, Your Honor.

The CHAIRMAN. Very well, we will recess now until 2 o’clock tomorrow afternoon.

Mrs. OSWALD. I appreciate it, because I was up until late last night trying to get the papers for you. It wouldn’t do you any good if I break down.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, we don’t want to overdo the situation in any way. So we will adjourn until 2 o’clock tomorrow.

(Whereupon, at 4 p.m., the President’s Commission recessed.)

Tuesday, February 11, 1964

TESTIMONY OF MRS. MARGUERITE OSWALD RESUMED

The President’s Commission met at 2 p.m. on February 11, 1964, at 200 Maryland Avenue NE., Washington, D.C.

Present were Chief Justice Earl Warren, Chairman; Representative Hale Boggs, Representative Gerald R. Ford, and Allen W. Dulles, members.

Also present were J. Lee Rankin, general counsel; Wesley J. Liebeler, assistant counsel; John Doyle, attorney for Mrs. Marguerite Oswald; and Leon Jaworski, special counsel to the attorney general of Texas.

The CHAIRMAN. The Commission will come to order. Are we ready to proceed?

Mr. DOYLE. If it please Your Honor——

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Doyle.

Mr. DOYLE. Mr. Mark Lane is present as counsel, as I understand, for Mrs. Oswald. Although I have not talked to Mrs. Oswald about the matter, as I understand it Mr. Lane represented her from time to time, in one capacity or another in the past.

I do not know the particulars. Mrs. Oswald or Mr. Lane could better advise the Commission about the point.

Of course my designation was at the request of Mrs. Oswald to act in her behalf, since there was no counsel of her choice present at the time.

The CHAIRMAN. True.

Mr. DOYLE. In view of the appearance—I wonder if it might be straightened out—if Mr. Lane wishes to enter his appearance in the matter.

Of course I would immediately respectfully move for leave to withdraw.

The CHAIRMAN. Mrs. Oswald, what is your wish?

Mrs. OSWALD. Well, Mr. Lane is just here for a few hours, Chief Justice Warren. He flew in just for a few hours. He is catching a 4 o'clock plane out. And I thought—he had asked permission just to sit in for these few hours.

The CHAIRMAN. Either he represents you or he does not.

Mrs. OSWALD. No, sir, he does not represent me.

The CHAIRMAN. Then we will excuse Mr. Lane.

Mr. LANE. Mr. Chief Justice—

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Lane, now really—either you are here as the attorney for Mrs. Oswald or you are not entitled to be in this room—one of the two.

Mr. LANE. May I ask, Mr. Chief Justice, if it is permissible for me to function at Mrs. Oswald's request as her counsel together with Mr. Doyle, just for an hour or two, and then be excused.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Doyle has said that if you are her attorney he is not. And Mr. Doyle is doing this as a public service. We must respect his views in the matter.

Mr. LANE. I see. I did explain to Mr. Doyle before I came into the room exactly what the situation was. It was not until now that I understood his response.

Under those circumstances, I wonder if I might confer with Mrs. Oswald for just a minute or two.

The CHAIRMAN. If Mrs. Oswald wants to, she may.

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. All right.

You may take another room, if you wish.

(Brief recess.)

The CHAIRMAN. All right.

Mr. LANE. Under the circumstances, since I do have to leave and I will not be able to be here for the rest of the afternoon's session and for subsequent sessions—under those circumstances, since Mr. Doyle will not remain on jointly with me, I will at this time withdraw.

The CHAIRMAN. Very well. Now, we will continue. Mr. Rankin, you may continue with the hearing.

Mr. RANKIN. Mrs. Oswald, could you tell us first now, while you are fresh, about this conspiracy that you said that you knew about?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes—If you would like me to do it now. I was going to lead up to all the fundamentals, to my way of thinking. I have no proof, because naturally if I did I don't think we would be here.

But I feel like there is a lot of speculation about everything.

My way of thinking is because the involvement of myself at Six Flags and the way I was treated, as I have already put into the testimony, and as I stated yesterday, also, that I was supposed to be under protective custody, and I was not.

I wonder why I didn't have protective custody, why I am not important enough, with papers out of the vault, and appearing before the hearing, that Mr. Sorrels, head of the Secret Service, didn't give me protective custody, even though you, yourself, Mr. Rankin, required it.

These are the things I have to face that to me are very unusual.

Mr. RANKIN. Well, it is such a serious charge to say that these two Secret Service men and your son and—I didn't understand for sure whether you in-

cluded anyone else in your charge—were involved in a conspiracy to assassinate the President.

Mrs. OSWALD. No, no—

Mr. RANKIN. And your daughter-in-law.

Mrs. OSWALD. That is not my statement. I said I thought that we have a plot in our own government, and that there is a high official involved. And I am thinking that probably these Secret Service men are part of it.

Now, I didn't say in a conspiracy—make it as strong as you did. I have made it strong. But I am under the impression that possibly there is a leak in our own government. And when I come to these papers—and I specifically yesterday morning asked about Senator Tower.

Now, I am not throwing any reflection on Senator Tower. But he made the statement in the paper that he had a letter from the State Department saying that Lee had renounced his citizenship.

Now, you see, I don't have that paper with me. I had it yesterday morning. But his whole quotes—the dates and everything of the letter that he was supposed to have had is not in correspondence with the dates that I have from the State Department papers which you gentlemen know that I have all these papers from the State Department. Nothing corresponds with what I have.

So I wanted to know and see this letter that Senator Tower claims he has. It could have been that it was an error in newspaper reporting, and I will say in slang he could have shot his mouth off, because he said he would not help the boy when the boy wrote him the letter.

Representative FORD. Mr. Chairman, I saw the letter that Lee Harvey Oswald wrote to Senator Tower the day after the assassination. And I believe I also saw the response that he received from one of the agencies of the Federal Government. Senator Tower had the original of the letter. If it is not in our Commission files, I am sure it is available for the Commission files—along with whatever exchange of correspondence he had with the Department of State concerning the matter.

Mrs. OSWALD. Well, now, what is of utmost interest to me in this particular case is if there is such a letter, and it does not correspond with anything that I have, I would like to know who in the State Department wrote this particular letter.

Representative FORD. I would not know who in the State Department wrote the letter. I would suspect it was the Assistant Secretary for Congressional Affairs, Fred Dutton, I believe.

Mrs. OSWALD. I am not suspecting, because I have many, many letters from the State Department, and I also have something else that I will present that maybe would be another party involved. There is very conflicting testimony.

You must realize that I went to Washington in 1961 and was in conference with three officials. And this was another Administration.

Now, I don't know much about politics, gentlemen. But I do know a little from the news.

Lee's defection was in one Administration—right?

And now this is of another Administration, the Kennedy Administration. And there could be a leak in the State Department. That is not impossible.

So I have two instances that I, myself, am not satisfied.

Mr. RANKIN. A leak is so much different from a conspiracy to assassinate the President, though.

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, but this leak—this could be the party involved in the assassination of the President—the high officials I am speaking of. I cannot pin it down to one sentence, gentlemen.

Mr. RANKIN. Well, you named the Secret Service men, two of them.

Mrs. OSWALD. That is right.

Mr. RANKIN. Now, do you have anything that shows you that either of those men were involved in the conspiracy to assassinate President Kennedy?

Mrs. OSWALD. I will answer that emphatically no. What I have stated is the way they treated me, sir. I elaborated the way these two men treated me—correct? I did that testimony yesterday.

So I have to consider these two men. I will put it that way.

Mr. RANKIN. Let's consider Marina Oswald. Do you have anything that will

show that she was involved in any conspiracy to assassinate President Kennedy?

Mrs. OSWALD. I feel like Marina is involved and also Mrs. Paine, yes.

Mr. RANKIN. Now, what do you have in that regard?

Mrs. OSWALD. All right—because Marina—now this I have said to Mr. Jack Lengett, who is a New York Times newspaperman a long time ago. And I was ashamed to say it to anyone else. And I didn't tell it to him for a long time.

The story yesterday at the Six Flags, when I said to you Marina shrugged me off, and the second time she shrugged me off. The second time she said—and I would not say it now unless I had told Mr. Jack Lengett—she said, "You no have job."

In other words, since Marina was being offered a home, then you go to—"You don't have job."

Before she was satisfied to take \$863 and live with me. I was giving her my money and giving her my love. And then, "You no have job."

I am trying to show you the disposition of my daughter-in-law. I love her. But I am trying to show you that there is two sides. I told you how she hit the little girl with the comb. "Mama, I no need you, Mama. You don't have job."

Mr. RANKIN. Why does that show she was involved in any conspiracy?

Mrs. OSWALD. Because I am going to try to show there is discrepancies all along. She was not supposed to speak English.

I testified that I, myself, questioned her for an FBI agent. I acted as interpreter. So Marina did know English and understand English. So that is a question.

Mr. RANKIN. I thought you said she spoke broken English.

Mrs. OSWALD. Broken English. But she is not supposed to speak English at all, until now that she has learned English. That has been publicized over and over.

Mr. RANKIN. And you think she could understand English fluently?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, sir. I also told you when she lived with me that month in my home, how we conversed and talked. And yet the impression is that Marina came here and didn't speak English at all.

Mr. RANKIN. How does that show she conspired to assassinate the President?

Mrs. OSWALD. Because Marina now is not happy. Marina was very happy, I explained to you, the month she was with me in the beginning that they had rented this house. And then Marina made friends, very, very many friends. And Marina became discontented with Lee. Lee could not give her the things she wanted, what he told her about America. And Marina now has become discontented with me. I don't mean now—I mean at the Six Flags.

Mama always had a big heart. I quit a job to help these children, and that is perfectly all right. That is my nature.

But then, when she has somebody else, you are pushed aside.

I am trying to show this. And, as I go along—I cannot help but face this, gentlemen, it is a fact. I cannot help but face these things.

So I am under the impression—and this is speculation, like anything else—circumstantial evidence, let's say.

I am just a layman. That is what you have against my son. Nobody saw him with a rifle shoot the President. So you have mostly circumstantial evidence.

I have to think of all these things, who might be involved in this.

The Secret Service men, surely you will admit, did not guard our President properly.

Now, that was also stated in the newspaper by, I think it is, Secret Service Judge Baughman—am I saying that right? He is the one that—how Lee got out of the building, and why the President—there are many, many people that wonder. So I, too, am wondering.

So I say that President Kennedy was improperly guarded. And I am not the only one that says that, sir. So I have to consider that. I have to consider the way I, myself, was treated at Six Flags for the three days.

When I came here today—I have these notes, something very important about that particular incident at Six Flags, to back up my story with a witness. You don't have to take my word for it.

Mr. RANKIN. What else is there now in regard to Marina that caused you to think she conspired to kill President Kennedy?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes—because everything is laid out in Mrs. Paine's home and Marina's home. The gun was in the garage.

Mr. RANKIN. Well, that doesn't make Marina do it, does it?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, but Marina told the police that the gun was there the night before. She saw the gun in the garage the night before. She didn't see Lee take it that morning. But she made a statement that she saw the gun the night before.

The pictures of Lee with the rifle came from that home. If Lee is going to assassinate the President or anybody else, is he going to have photographs laying all around with the gun? No, sir.

And there is too much evidence pointing to the assassination and my son being the guilty one in this particular house.

All through the testimony, sir, everything has come from this particular house. And so I am a thinking person, I have to think.

Mr. RANKIN. Why does that show that Marina had anything to do with the conspiracy?

Mrs. OSWALD. Well, we are speculating, let's say. Marina is not happy. Lee can't give her any money and things. And she has made friends with these Russian folks that have cars and homes. And they are not happy because this Russian girl doesn't have anything. They are not happy about that.

And I am trying to show the disposition of the girl.

I love my daughter-in-law even now. Believe me, it is a sore spot to have to say this. But I have to face these facts of what I know.

Mr. RANKIN. You realize it is a very serious charge.

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, sir. And it is also a serious charge that my son is the assassin of President Kennedy.

You see, we have two sides here. It is a very serious charge, because no one saw him shoot the President. And yet this is an international affair. And the conclusion has come to the conclusion that Lee Harvey Oswald has shot President Kennedy, and he alone. Lee Harvey Oswald, or Mr. J. Lee Rankin, or anyone in this room could not have been in that many places in 29 minutes time. It is utterly impossible.

And this has been gone over by hundreds of people. There are investigations. I have 1,500 letters, sir—not just letters of sympathy—people that are investigating this. And I don't read all thoroughly, and I am a layman. But he step by step has been taken, from what the reports said—that he was on the sixth floor, and then they saw him in the cafeteria drinking a Coca Cola, and the President came. Then he had to leave the building. He had so many blocks to walk before he caught a bus. He had to board the bus, he had to pay his fare, he had to get out of the bus, then he walked a few blocks, then he caught a taxicab, paid the taxi man, then he walked a few blocks, went to his home and got a coat. Then he walked a few more blocks and shot the policeman. Then he walked a few more blocks and he was in the theater.

In 29 minutes time it cannot be done.

So I am convinced my son, and my son alone, if he is involved—I am a human being, and I say my son could have shot the President, and he could have been involved. I am not the type mother to think that he is perfect and he could not do it. But I say he did not do it alone—if he did it. Because it is utterly impossible.

And I do not believe my son did it.

I think my son was framed because, gentlemen—would his rifle be in the sixth floor window of the depository—unless you want to say my son was completely out of his mind. And yet there has been no statement to that effect. Wade has publicly said on the television when it happened that he is sane, he is well reasoned, he knows what he did. And Lee never did break, with his black eyes. He kept saying he was innocent. And yet in 12 hours time he was proven guilty. That doesn't make sense to me, an ordinary layman. So I have to consider who is involved.

Now, I am telling you that this girl was not happy with her situation. She had turned against me twice.

You, yourself, yesterday said that she testified that I told her to tear up the picture. God give me the grace—I did no such thing. My testimony is true. So now she has lied there, I have found out.

And every evidence of any importance has come from this house. I have to face that.

Mr. RANKIN. What else do you have that shows that she had any part in the conspiracy to assassinate the President?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes. I am under the impression that probably she—I think Lee is an agent. I have always thought that, and I have as much circumstantial evidence that Lee is an agent, that the Dallas police has that he is a murderer, sir.

Mr. RANKIN. What do you base that on?

Mrs. OSWALD. Well, I am going to tell my story. I have it all there. That is what I base it on.

Mr. RANKIN. Can you tell us in summary?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, sir, I don't think I want to tell it to you that way, because I cannot, almost.

Mr. RANKIN. That is a very serious charge, that he was an agent, too.

Mrs. OSWALD. Well, fine. So all right.

If I feel that way, sir, don't I have the right, the American way, to speak up and to tell you what I feel? Isn't that my privilege?

Mr. RANKIN. Yes. But can't you tell us what you base it on?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, sir, I will, as I go along, sir.

Mr. RANKIN. Is that the only way you can tell it?

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't see how I can say to you I know he is an agent, and I have papers. I want to tell the whole story. I still have more papers. I have documents that I know you do not have, sir.

Mr. RANKIN. Have you told us all that you know that would bear on your claim that Marina Oswald was—

Mrs. OSWALD. Had a part in it.

Mr. RANKIN. Had a part in it or conspired to assassinate the President?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, sir—I cannot prove it. And I cannot prove Lee is an agent. I cannot prove these things.

But I have facts that may lead up to them. I cannot prove it, because if I did we would not be having this Commission, sir. I could say who shot President Kennedy.

Mr. RANKIN. So in both cases of the agent—Lee being an agent, your son, and Marina Oswald and the Secret Service agents or anybody else conspiring with him for the assassination of President Kennedy, that is just suspicions. You cannot prove it—is that right?

Mrs. OSWALD. I would not use the word suspicion, because I am not the type person to be suspicious and imagine things.

You may think so, because I am a woman. And this is my son. But my children were never tied to my apron strings.

And I can prove to you, in his defection in 1959, I made the statement that Lee, as an individual, had the right to think and do what he wanted to. They even said he was a Communist. If that is what he studied, and that is what he wanted to do, I accepted that, because that was his privilege as an individual. And that is public in 1959, my statement, which shows that I am not the sobbing mother kind because he has gone to Russia, and cry about it. I acknowledge that.

I have acknowledged that if the children, like Lee, went to Dallas, as I testified that yesterday, and didn't tell me he was going to Dallas—I don't grieve and lose my sleep over that. I have accepted that fact, because when Lee and Marina got ready to come to me that would be fine. In the meantime, I still have to live.

Mr. RANKIN. Are you telling the Commission that your son was part of a conspiracy to assassinate the President?

Mrs. OSWALD. I am saying that I realize that my son could possibly be part—yes—I realize he is a human being and he could possibly be in this, yes, sir.

Mr. RANKIN. Are you saying he was?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, I do not know. I am saying possibly he is involved.

Mr. RANKIN. And you are saying possibly Marina was involved?

Mrs. OSWALD. Well, exactly what I am trying to say. If I had proof, sir, I would give the proof in an affidavit and this case would be closed, like Mr. Wade said.

But I have as much right to my way of thinking as Mr. Wade has.

Mr. RANKIN. You are saying that possibly the Secret Service agents were involved, too? You don't have any proof of that?

Mrs. OSWALD. That is exactly what I have been trying to say. I have told you how I was treated, which has given me cause for this particular way of thinking—because I believe that my son is innocent. And I think that is the purpose of this Commission, is to hear all witnesses and arrive at a conclusion. Am I not right, gentlemen?

So this is my way of thinking. So grant me my way of thinking. If I am wrong, fine. But you may learn something.

Mr. RANKIN. What about the high official now. Can you tell us who that was?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, sir. I wish I did know. I have my own idea about that. I would rather not—because it is a high official—I would rather not give a name.

But I have my own very strong suspicions as to the official who he might be.

Mr. RANKIN. We would appreciate your telling us within this group what you think.

Mrs. OSWALD. Fine—and I expect to, Mr. Rankin. I am a person that is very outspoken, as you know by now, and I will certainly do that.

But will you grant me the privilege first of finding out the name of the man in the State Department that wrote the letter to Senator Tower, because it is an incorrect—it is incorrect—the whole testimony is incorrect.

Mr. RANKIN. We will get that correspondence for you.

Mrs. OSWALD. All right. I was going to go into something else, but while we are here, I will continue this.

And this, to me, will be in this line. And I think very important to you gentlemen. And you do not have a copy of what I am going to show you. I am the only person that has this copy.

I am sorry to take time, but these were not copied, sir. We sealed them up, and we were going to have them copied this afternoon. But I can get to this particular one. This is the defection. I have much more testimony than this. I have testimony, sir.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you think that you can tell us the name of the high official you spoke about?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, I think so. And I am going to tell you. But please do not ask me at this particular moment. I do not think this is the proper time for me to—it is just—I have no proof. Understand? As I said, it is my right to think and my analysis of the papers I have. I have papers where I can come to a conclusion, just like you gentlemen are going to have papers and witnesses and come to a conclusion.

Now, this particular instance—

Mr. DULLES. I wonder if we could not possibly explore that agent matter. I am very much interested in that. I cannot be here tomorrow. We laid all the groundwork for that.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Dulles would like to know her reasons for believing that he was an agent.

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, sir, I have two very long stories.

Mr. DULLES. I have to be absent, unfortunately, tomorrow, so I would like very much to have it.

Mr. RANKIN. If you could go into that question, Mrs. Oswald, because Mr. Dulles is not going to be here tomorrow.

Mrs. OSWALD. We have everything just so, and yet when we come here we don't have it. The International Rescue Committee is what I am looking for.

I have also the original application from the Albert Schweitzer coming that you gentlemen do not have.

The CHAIRMAN. Let's stay on one thing, please.

Mrs. OSWALD. All right. I am a little excited now, because I meant to go story by story.

Gentlemen, I have at least four more stories to tell—two I don't think there are some parts you possibly can know about.

Mr. RANKIN. Well, if you could tell about why you think your son was an agent, it will help to get that taken care of this afternoon while Mr. Dulles can be with us. That is why I asked you that.

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, sir. We have a special file. You see, gentlemen, all morning long I was in the backroom and we were copying things. We had everything just so. So now I don't know what condition they are in. Mr. Doyle and I worked on the papers again last night and we had them just so. And then when they were copied, evidently they were mixed up again.

Mr. RANKIN. We tried to have you present so that would not happen, Mrs. Oswald. I guess you didn't accomplish that.

Mrs. OSWALD. Well, they did take it into the other room, and we saw that they took it.

Well, I can be telling the story about it.

It is the International Rescue Committee, and a telegram.

I received a letter from Lee—this is going to be real short, Chief Justice Warren. It is going to continue this one story. And then I will go into the defection—is that right—because this will continue that.

A letter from Lee asking me to go to the Red Cross in Vernon—I was on a case there—and asking me to show the letter to the lady at the Red Cross. And this is from Moscow. This is the letter from Moscow. And telling her that all exit visas and everything had been documented and he is ready to come home, but he needs help financially to come home.

Evidently you have that information. That I know, sir.

Mr. RANKIN. Yes.

Mrs. OSWALD. So when I entered the Vernon Red Cross—now, this came with Lee's letter, Chief Justice Warren—the letter you have there direct from Moscow. That is why I have it, sir—because it was in Lee's letter asking me to go to the Red Cross in Vernon. So I have the original from Moscow.

I told the young lady, showed her the letter and showed her the paper. And I said, "Would you find out, please, the address of the International Rescue Committee? My son is in Russia and asked me to contact you."

She said, "What is your son doing in Russia?"

I said, "I don't know."

"You are his mother and you don't know what he is doing in Russia?"

I said, "Young lady, I said I do not know what he is doing in Russia."

"Well, I think anybody goes to Russia doesn't need any help to get back, they should stay over there."

So I said, "I am not interested in your personal opinion. I need help. Would you please contact, give me the address of the International Rescue Committee so I can continue to try to get money for my son to come home?"

She did not know of any address for the International Rescue Committee.

I asked her if she had a private line to Wichita Falls, which was approximately 40 miles away, which would be the next big city. She called Wichita Falls, and they did not know the address of the international committee.

So I called Robert and told Robert what I had and asked him to try to find out the address of the International Rescue Committee. However, he gave me no satisfaction.

Now, I sent a telegram—and you know this part of it—to the State Department, asking—I told them I was in a small town, Vernon, Tex., and I had received a letter from Lee asking me to get the address and help from the International Rescue Committee. But being a small town I had no success—could they help me out?

So they sent a telegram back with the address of the International Rescue Committee. That you have.

And this is Lee's letter—that goes with the other part.

Now, this young lady was very, very regalish. She didn't want to help anybody going to Russia. So when I received the telegram from the State Department, it was on a Saturday. I called her that morning. I was delayed 4 or 5 days. And to me it was very important, since my son and daughter-in-

law had all documents finished with to get the money to come home, because I wanted that baby to be born here.

So I called her at her home and told her that I had the address from the State Department of the International Rescue Committee, and would she be so kind enough as to come to the office and write the letter for me.

She said, "Well, Mrs. Oswald, I don't have a key."

This is on a Saturday morning and she is in the courthouse.

I said, "Do you mean to tell me you are in charge of the Red Cross and you don't have a key?"

"No, I don't."

"Well, young lady, you have delayed me 4 days, and I don't like your attitude. I am going to ask you especially to make a point to come to the office and get this in the mail for me. It is very important."

So, reluctantly, after much persuasion, she came.

So she wrote the letter to the International Rescue Committee, and handed it to me, and I mailed that letter—I mailed the letter.

This is dated January 22, 1962.

So she called me—her name—Mrs. Harwell. She is the only woman in the Red Cross office in Vernon, Tex.

She called me and told me she had received word from the International Rescue Committee. She read me this letter. So I said to Mrs. Harwell, "Do you mind if I take the letter, because I am very forgetful?"

So she took a scissors, gentlemen, and she cut this part out, which was her title and her address—it was addressed to her. This lady wanted no part of anybody in Russia—understand? So she cut this out.

But on the back page was the name. But that is why this space is here—she cut it out.

Now, the letter reads: "Since we had a call from the State Department on Mr. Oswald's case, your communication of January 14th did not come as a surprise."

So this young lady has followed up with a letter of her own to the International Rescue Committee.

"Since we have had a call from the State Department, your letter does not come as a surprise."

I mailed the first letter, and it was just—so she followed up her feelings about a boy in Russia.

Now, why does the State Department dicker with me—that is not the word—and then see fit to put in a personal call to the International Rescue Committee?

I would like to know who from the State Department called the International Rescue Committee.

There is my information there that I requested. Why is a call necessary?

Mr. RANKIN. You think that shows there was a conspiracy?

Mrs. OSWALD. I am wondering and questioning why a call is necessary, a call, when they had contacted—and I am showing you what I have here. I don't see any necessity of the State Department to call the International Rescue Committee.

And, gentlemen, you have a copy of this—Lee will not be helped.

I would like to know who called the International Rescue Committee from the State Department—yes, sir, I would.

Mr. RANKIN. Yes, but you don't think that shows there is a conspiracy?

Mrs. OSWALD. Well, no—now, Mr. Rankin, don't pin me down everything I say to the word conspiracy. I am trying to analyze a whole condensed program of things that are not correct. I am telling you about this. It could be just a simple thing, that he called. But I would like to know who called when it wasn't necessary to make a call, and Lee was not going to get the money. Read the letter.

Mr. RANKIN. The reason I ask you about the conspiracy is because that is such a serious charge. And, as you say, if you could prove that, that would decide everything around here.

Mrs. OSWALD. That is right. And I am going to see if I cannot show you these things.

Mr. RANKIN. If you are speculating, which you have a right to do, that is something different.

Mrs. OSWALD. Well, I have explained that I am speculating, that I have all these documents, that some of them don't make sense. That is what I am trying to tell you. I mentioned that before.

Mr. RANKIN. You are not trying to say to the Commission that you have the proof that there was a conspiracy?

Mrs. OSWALD. I have emphatically stated that I do not have the proof, because if I had the proof I would have an affidavit and give you gentlemen the proof. I made that clear two or three times. I wish I did have the proof, sir.

I think I said yesterday—it doesn't surprise me that there may be someone in our State Department or some official who would have part in this. He is a human being just like we are. He may have a title, but that doesn't make him a man back of the title.

Mr. DULLES. What is this conspiracy now, Mr. Rankin? Is this the conspiracy to do away with the President, or is this a different conspiracy?

Mr. RANKIN. The conspiracy I was asking about was the conspiracy, she said, about the assassination of President Kennedy.

And she said that it involved the two Secret Service agents and her daughter-in-law and her son. That is the one I was asking about.

The CHAIRMAN. And Mrs. Paine.

Mrs. OSWALD. And Mrs. Paine. I feel like the facts have come from this particular source.

Mr. RANKIN. Now, as I understand she says now that she is speculating as to that being a possibility.

Mrs. OSWALD. Well, now, Mr. Rankin. I have not changed my testimony, if you are implying that. I may not have put it in a position you understood. Because as I say, I certainly did not mean to imply that I had proof, because if I had proof I would not be sitting here taking all my energy and trying to show you this little by little. I would have had an affidavit and show you the proof. So if you want to call it speculation, call it speculation. I don't care what you call it. But I am not satisfied in my mind that things are according to Hoyle. And I believe that my son is innocent. And I also realize that my son could be involved. But I have no way of knowing these things unless I analyze the papers that I have, sir.

Mr. RANKIN. The Commission would like to know what you base your assumption that your son was an agent on. Could you help us?

Mrs. OSWALD. Would you like me to go into this story—I will start with my son's life from the very beginning.

Mr. RANKIN. Can't we get down to—

Mrs. OSWALD. No, sir, we cannot. I am sorry. This is my life. I cannot survive in this world unless I know I have my American way of life and can start from the very beginning. I have to work into this. I cannot answer these questions like in a court, yes or no. And I will not answer yes or no. I want to tell you the story. And that is the only way you can get a true picture. I am the accused mother of this man, and I have family and grandchildren, and Marina, my daughter-in-law. And I am going to do everything I can to try and prove he is innocent.

Mr. RANKIN. Well, now, Mrs. Oswald, you are not claiming before this Commission that there was anything back at the beginning, at the early childhood of your son, in which you thought he was an agent?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, sir—at age 16.

Mr. RANKIN. Well, why don't you start with age 16, then.

Mrs. OSWALD. Well, aren't you gentlemen—I have a letter from you, Mr. Rankin. Aren't you gentlemen interested in my son's life from the very beginning? I think you should, because it has been exploited in all the magazines and papers. And this is not my son is what I am trying to say. He is not a perfect boy, and I am not a perfect woman. But I can show a different side of Lee Harvey Oswald, which I hope to do to this Commission.

Mr. RANKIN. Well, I plan to ask you about his early life and these other parts. But I thought it would be helpful if you would be willing to do it to

tell the Commission, while Mr. Dulles is here, what you base this claim upon that your son was an agent of the Government.

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, and I would be happy to do it.

Mr. RANKIN. If you have to go to when he was 16 years old as the first point, that will be fine.

But if you could cover that—then we will go on to the other things.

Mrs. OSWALD. All right. I have your word that you will let me have my life story from early childhood and Lee's life story from early childhood. Now, I will start from age 16. Is that satisfactory?

Mr. RANKIN. Would you do that?

Mrs. OSWALD. Thank you very much. We were in New Orleans, La., at this particular time. On or about October 5th or 7th—and you have this, gentlemen, as my proof, that I am telling a true story, and I will have witnesses that will be called—is a letter—

Mr. DULLES. What year, Mrs. Oswald?

Mrs. OSWALD. I said 1959—I am sorry. 1955. No, wait now. 1956—when we left New Orleans is 1956. Am I not correct? I am a little excited now, because of what happened before. The note—

Mr. RANKIN. He joined the Marines in 1956. Does that help you?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, sir. Wait. We have a note from the Beauregard School by me that I was going to San Diego. Do you have the note?

Mr. RANKIN. We do.

Mrs. OSWALD. May I see that note, please? And that is approximately October 5th or the 7th, I think it is, 1955.

Mr. DULLES. I think you moved to Fort Worth with Lee in September 1956.

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, sir. So it was in '55. I think that is correct. Let me see.

Mr. RANKIN. We are handing you this book that we received from the State of Louisiana that is Commission's Exhibit No. 365, and turn to page 11 and you will find the note you referred to.

Mrs. OSWALD. To the school. All right, gentlemen, this is a surprise. This is my note, isn't, to the school, that I am moving to San Diego. And it has been blasted in all the papers how I moved around, and I was going to San Diego.

Gentlemen, I had nothing to do with this note, nothing whatsoever.

Lee, my son, wrote the note—on or about October 5th or the 7th—October 7th. And now comes the story why he wrote the note.

If you will see here, this is Lee's handwriting, to the letters.

Mr. RANKIN. We offer in evidence that note on page 11.

(The document referred to was marked Commission Exhibit No. 199, and received in evidence.)

Mrs. OSWALD. I had nothing to do with this note.

Now, I am working at Kreeger's Specialty Shop, 800 and something Canal Street in New Orleans, La. I received a telephone call from the principal of the Beauregard School saying, "Mrs. Oswald, I understand you are going to leave town, and we are awfully sorry to lose Lee."

Of course now, gentlemen, I am working and this is news to me.

So I said—I kind of went along with it a little bit.

Lee came into this shop later on that day. Miss Lillian New, I think her name was, who is manager of Kreeger's Shop, and has been for years—she will witness this.

He said, "Mother, I have quit school."

Mr. RANKIN. You say when the school authorities asked you, you sort of went along with it. What do you mean by that?

Mrs. OSWALD. When the lady called me and said that, I understand you are leaving town, Mrs. Oswald."

Mr. RANKIN. What did you say?

Mrs. OSWALD. Well, because there was a switchboard, and my job was in jeopardy, I don't know the exact words, but I said—I had to be kind of vague about it and not discuss it. I knew I wasn't leaving town, sir.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you tell her you were not?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, I don't think I told her. But I had to be very—I would lose my job if they thought I was leaving town. It was news to me.

So Lee that afternoon, from school, came into Kreeger's Specialty Shop

where I was working and said, "Mother, I want to join the Marines, and I have quit school."

Now, Mr. Kreeger—and he may be leaving—Mr. Frank Kreeger who is owner of Kreeger's Specialty Shop, and all of the personnel there—this is a very small shop, and Miss Lillian, who was manager, knows of this. I became very excited and I started to cry. And they let me go home with Lee.

So Lee was determined at age 16—his birthday was going to be October 18th, right—and this was October 7th—was going to join the Marines. So what Lee wanted me to do was falsify his birth certificate, which I would not do. And he kept after me, like a boy.

Now, this is a normal boy, wanting to join the Marines.

"I don't see why you don't just put that I am 17 years old."

I said, "Lee, We cannot do that."

He said, "Everybody else"—

I said, "No, I am not going to do it."

For 2 or 3 days Lee and I bickered back and forth about me falsifying his age.

So I have a very good friend, Mr. Clem Sehrt, who is an attorney in New Orleans, La. I called him and told him I had a personal problem. I had not seen Mr. Sehrt since early childhood. I knew the family. That Lee was not of age and he wanted to join the Marines. And he quit the school and told them we were going out of town.

He said, "Marguerite, I cannot advise you. It would be unethical. But a lot of boys join the service at age 16."

So he could not advise me.

My sister, Mrs. Charles Murret, 757 French Street, knows of the complete story. And so does my brother-in-law, Mr. Charles Murret, who also said, "Let him join, let him go. If he wants to go so badly, let him join the Marines."

I, at that time, was living at 126 Exchange Place, which is the Vieux Carre section of the French Quarter of New Orleans.

And, by the way, the papers said we lived over a saloon at that particular address.

Gentlemen, if you have this information, that is just the French part of town. It looks like the devil. Of course I didn't have a fabulous apartment. But very wealthy people and very fine citizens live in that part of town, and there are hotels and saloons, and courtyards where the homes are.

So I was very upset.

There was a colonel on the street that I stopped—I didn't know him—I said, "Sir, I would like to talk with you." I told him about the boy wanting to join the Marines and I didn't know what to do. I was frantic. And he was insistent that I let him join the Marines at age 16.

So he advised me, "Well, if he doesn't want to go to school, let him join the Marines. It is done all the time."

Now, I was not too happy about this situation.

Now, a recruiting officer from the Marine Reserve in New Orleans, La., was in my home the next day when I arrived from work, with Lee, in uniform, in the home when I got into the home. He introduced me to him and he said, "Mrs. Oswald"—he didn't tell me what to do. He was very vague about the thing.

I said, "No, Lee is too young, age 16, to join the Marines. They are liable to send him overseas."

He said, "There is less delinquency in Japan and those places than we have here."

He saw nothing wrong with it.

What he was doing was telling me to falsify his birth certificate, but not in plain words. He was telling me it would be all right for the boy to join the Marines. He came to my home personally.

So I went to an attorney with Lee, because—here is the thing.

Lee's birth record is in New Orleans. And I knew that the Marine Corps could easily check on this child, age 16—his birth record. So in order to have a happy situation, so I could work, and to see Lee, I went to an attorney and paid \$5 and said that I lost Lee's birth certificate, and kind of motioned to the

attorney. I knew it would not stand up. I bought Lee a duffle bag and everything, and Lee went—we told him goodbye, and Lee was going to join the Marines.

I had to accept that, gentlemen. There was no other way I could do, but accept the fact to let him go.

Mr. RANKIN. Who was that attorney?

Mrs. OSWALD. Mr. Clem Sehrt.

Mr. BOGGS. What did Mr. Sehrt allegedly tell you?

Mrs. OSWALD. Pardon?

Mr. BOGGS. What did Mr. Sehrt tell you?

Mrs. OSWALD. Mr. Sehrt is a family friend.

Mr. BOGGS. I know Mr. Sehrt very well.

Mrs. OSWALD. He said according to attorney ethics that he would not be able to advise me. Before you came in, sir, I had stated that.

Now, when I get interrupted, I lose—this is a big thing for me. I am not making excuses. But, gentlemen, it is awfully hard to do this.

So Lee came home. And he said the captain said that he was too young.

Now, I don't question much. I don't know whether Lee changed his mind, or they sent Lee home. I do not know. I do not question that.

All right.

Lee, at age 16, read Robert's Marine manual back and forth. He knew it by heart. Robert had just gotten out of the Marines, and his manual was home. And Lee started to read communistic material along with that.

Mr. RANKIN. What communistic material did he read?

Mrs. OSWALD. It was a small book that he had gotten out of the library. And I knew he was reading it, Mr. Rankin.

Mr. RANKIN. Was it in Marxism, or what was it about?

Mrs. OSWALD. No—if you are saying the title is Marxism—no, sir, the title was not.

Mr. RANKIN. Was it about communism?

Mrs. OSWALD. It was more about communism. I knew he was reading it. But if we have this material in the public libraries, then certainly it is all right for us to read. And I think we should know about these things, and all of our scholars and educators and high school boys read subversive material, which we call subversive material. So I, as a mother, would not take the book away from him. That is fine. Lee is a reader. I have said from early childhood he liked histories and maps.

So that is fine.

What I am saying now—we are getting to this agent part.

He is with this recruiting officer and he is studying the Marine manual—he knew it back and forth. In fact, he would take the book and have me question some of the things. And he was reading communism.

Lee lived for the time that he would become 17 years old to join the Marines—that whole year.

Mr. RANKIN. What did he do during that time?

Mrs. OSWALD. Pardon?

Mr. RANKIN. What did he do during that year?

Mrs. OSWALD. What did he do during that year? He was working for—as a messenger for Tujaque and Son.

Mr. RANKIN. He had quite a few jobs, did he not?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes. I can explain that to you.

His first job was Tujaque and Son, who was steamship people, and he was a messenger. And then he had a lot of friends.

Now, they say Lee didn't have friends. There were boys of his age—while he was working he had an opportunity to make friends, coming to my home. And one of the young men knew of a better paying job, where they had coffee breaks and everything, so Lee took that job, which was with a dental laboratory—if you have that information, sir.

And I think that is the only two jobs—no, Lee worked after school for Dolly Shoe Co. I was working there, in charge of the hosiery department, and Lee worked on Friday afternoon and Saturday as a shoe salesman.

That was his first job—while he went to school he worked there.

And then when he left school, as I told you, at age 16—the first job was

Tujaque and Company, steamship, and then the dental laboratory. And that is the only jobs he had in New Orleans.

Mr. RANKIN. Were there not times he didn't have any job during that year?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, sir—because when we left New Orleans, Lee left this dental laboratory job—that is correct.

So I moved back to Fort Worth, Tex., because Robert did not want to live in New Orleans. Robert was raised in Texas, and has his girl friends and all his friends in Texas. So when Robert got out of the Marines, he wanted to live in Texas. So I know that Lee wants to join the Marines at age 17, so in the month of July 1956—and, gentlemen, I have always been broke, and I mean broke. About a week before rent time, we had it pretty hard in order to have that rent. Yet I take my furniture and ship it to New Orleans so Lee could be with his brother and we could be with the family—thinking maybe with Robert he would not join the Marines at age 17 and finish his schooling.

When Lee became age 17, October 18th, he joined the Marines.

The reason why he didn't go into the Marines until October 24th was the recruiting officer at the Marines could not understand his birth certificate, because his father had died 2 months before. So I had to send for an affidavit, even though I had the death notice from the paper and everything, and they could have—they could not understand that about that two months. I had to send to New Orleans for an affidavit of his father's death.

And so then Lee joined the Marines on October 24th.

From the 18th to the 24th every day Lee was leaving. We even laughed about it. Because he would leave in the morning and come home in the evening. And it was because he was born 2 months before his father—so he did join the Marines at age 18.

Now—that, Mr. Dulles, is the part you wanted to know. But, before, that has something to do with it. Lee—

Mr. RANKIN. Mr. Dulles wanted to know what you based this idea that he was an agent on?

Mrs. OSWALD. That is one part. That is the beginning of it, Mr. Dulles. I have much more. That is the beginning of it, sir.

Mr. DULLES. Did he join at 18 or 17?

Mrs. OSWALD. He joined at age 17. I signed the paper. You will please forgive me when I make mistakes, and if you will correct me.

Now, at age 15½ Lee was a member of the Civil Air Patrol.

Do you have that information, gentlemen?

I don't think you have.

Now, just a minute. I am sorry—this morning, when they were copying my papers, I put this in my bag.

I have a picture right here—this is Lee at age 15½ in the uniform of the Civil Air Patrol. This is before the recruiting officer. We are going back.

And this is what helped Lee to make up his mind to join the service.

The CHAIRMAN. Go right ahead, Mrs. Oswald.

Mrs. OSWALD. At age 15½ or so, Lee joined the Civil Air Patrol. He went on an airplane, on flights and everything. I got him the uniform, with Robert's help. This young man—now, I do not know his name. He is from New Orleans. And I am checking on these things. I have to do research on all of this, and do it alone.

This young man and Lee were very friendly. The young man that gave Lee the idea of—went to Beauregard School with him, and he and Lee joined the Civil Air Patrol together. That is the way I wish to state this. And he often came to the house. So there is a close friend of Lee. Lee is not supposed to have any friends.

Mr. RANKIN. Did he have any girl friends, too?

Mrs. OSWALD. No. Now, neither did Robert or John Edward. No, sir. Neither of my boys had girl friends until after about age 17.

Mr. RANKIN. Did he have other close friends, boy friends, besides these that you recall?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, sir, I would not say he had—unless during working—he was working at this time, and I was working during the day. But I mean at the

house this young man came to the house, and several of the other young men, as I told you before.

Now, we are at the Civil Air Patrol.

And that is why Lee went to the Marine Corps, is because of the Civil Air Patrol. He wasn't in the Civil Air Patrol long.

Mr. RANKIN. Now, up to this point, you haven't told us anything that caused you to think he was an agent, have you?

Mrs. OSWALD. Well, maybe, sir, I am not doing a very good job of what I am saying.

Mr. RANKIN. What do you think you have said that caused you to think—

Mrs. OSWALD. I have said that a Marine recruiting officer came to my home, and that Lee then continued reading Robert's manual by heart, and started reading communist literature. He is preparing himself to go into the Marine service—at age 17—this year before he actually joined the service. I am saying he is already preparing himself.

Mr. RANKIN. To become an agent?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, I think with the influence of this recruiting officer.

Mr. RANKIN. You think the recruiting officer inspired him—

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, sir, influenced this boy.

Mr. RANKIN. —to read the communist literature?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, sir—and Robert's Marine book.

Mr. RANKIN. Is there anything else you base that on, except what you have told us?

Mrs. OSWALD. About him being an agent?

Mr. RANKIN. Yes.

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, sir, when I get through the whole story.

Mr. RANKIN. I mean as far as the recruiting officer.

Mrs. OSWALD. No. Otherwise than Lee's attitude. Lee read this manual. He knew it by heart. I even said, "Boy, you are going to be a general, if you ever get in the Marines."

Mr. RANKIN. And you base the idea—

Mrs. OSWALD. He had the idea.

Mr. RANKIN. He was being prepared to become an agent, and inspired by this recruiting officer?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, sir.

Mr. RANKIN. By what you have told us about his reading the communist literature and this one pamphlet, and also the manual of the Marine Corps?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, sir. And then living to when he is age 17 to join the Marines, which I knew, and which he did at age 17 on his birthday.

Mr. RANKIN. Now, what else do you base your idea that he was—ever became an agent or was going to become an agent on?

Mrs. OSWALD. Many, many things. We always watched—it is "I Led Three Lives"—the program—Philbrick. We always watched that. And when Lee returned from the service and the Marines, the three days—that program was on, and he turned it off. He said, "Mother, don't watch that, that is a lot of propaganda."

It has been stated publicly that the FBI did not know—didn't have Lee on the subversive list—I am probably not saying this right, gentlemen—but the righting in Dallas. I don't know anything politically. The FBI and Secret Service had a list of names in Dallas of people that had to be watched, and Lee Harvey Oswald was not on that list. That would lead to believe there was some reason he was not on the list.

Mr. RANKIN. Who did you get that from?

Mrs. OSWALD. From the newspapers and all over. And there has been a lot of comment about this all through.

Now, I don't say it is correct. But what I have explained to you before—my way of thinking has to go with this, because I know the boy and the whole life, and you do not, sir.

Mr. RANKIN. Well, I want to try to find out all you know about it.

Mrs. OSWALD. Fine. And I want you to.

Also, Lee's letters—and I have them in the hotel—I didn't bring them, because

I thought we were through, and you have the copies—most every letter from Lee tells me something.

When Lee is coming back from Russia he says, "I plan to stop over in Washington a while."

Lee says in the letter, "Marina's uncle is a major in the Soviet Union."

"I am an American citizen and I will never take Soviet citizenship."

If you will read every letter—if you think he is an agent—every letter is telling his mother—"If something happens to me, Mother, these are facts."

I might be elaborating. But I think my son is an agent. And these things piece by piece are going together, as far as I am concerned.

Representative FORD. When did you first think he was an agent?

Mrs. OSWALD. When Lee defected. And I have always said a so-called defection, for this reason.

Now, we come to another letter. I am going to have to take some time now, because we are not going in sequence. The letter Lee wrote to me from New Orleans is what I need.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you have the letter in which he says he was going to Washington?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, sir, I gave you that copy yesterday. I don't have the letter with me. They are at the hotel.

Mr. RANKIN. You gave it to us yesterday?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, sir—that he would stop over in Washington.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you recall the date of that one?

Mrs. OSWALD. Well, now, he was supposed to arrive in New York on the 13th of June, 1962. And that is the letter. When he arrived, I do not know. And I do not know if he went to Washington.

As I stated yesterday, he went to Robert's house, and I was on a case. So I don't know when he arrived in New York.

Now, this is the letter. Lee is out of the Marines, and he stays home with me 3 days. And I have publicly stated—and this came out of my book this morning—Lee came home September 14, 1959. He stayed 3 days with me. Said he would like to travel on a ship working his way. Possibly export and import. He remarked he could make more money that way.

The next page is the letter he sent me, and then came the news of his being in Russia.

This is the letter.

"Dear Mother"—

Mr. DULLES. Is that dated?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, sir. This is just dated September. He was released from the Marine Corps on September 14th—I believe I am correct, Mr. Rankin.

And he stayed with me 3 days.

And then this is—well, the date on the envelope is September 19th. He stayed with me 3 days.

"Dear Mother, well, I have booked passage on a ship to Europe. I would have had to sooner or later, and I think it is best to go now."

"I would have had to sooner or later, so I think it is best that I go now. Just remember above all else that my values are very different from Robert or us, and it is difficult to tell you how I feel. Just remember this is what I must do. I did not tell you about my plans because you could hardly be expected to understand. I did not see Lillian while I was here. I will write you again as soon as I land. Lee."

Mr. RANKIN. What do you think he meant by that?

Mrs. OSWALD. That is what I want to tell you. All of this speculation, gentlemen. And that is why I say the Warren Commission—unless they hear my story and the witnesses involved, cannot arrive at a true conclusion.

Now, what would you think about this?

A few days later you get headlines, "Fort Worth Boy Has Defected to Russia." And I made the letter public. This letter says to his mother he is defecting to Russia—right? That is the way you would read the letter.

It is easily read this way when you think a boy has defected to Russia. So you would read the letter that way.

Mr. DULLES. Mr. Rankin, do we have correspondence while he was in the Marines?

Mr. RANKIN. Mrs. Oswald, do you recall any letters you received from your son during the time he was in the Marines?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, sir. I have a special delivery letter. You see, gentlemen, that is why I have tried to explain to you before—if I could have gone from the story we would not all be so mixed up. This is a letter from the Marines saying he is going to contact the Red Cross—when I told him about my illness.

Mr. RANKIN. Well, that is the correspondence in regard to his getting out of the Marines because of your need of his help and support.

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, that is right.

Mr. RANKIN. Now, except for that correspondence, you don't have any other correspondence from him while he was in the Marines?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, sir, I did have several letters.

What has happened, Mr. Rankin—when Lee stayed with me the 3 days, he left his seabag with me. And that is why I have his discharge papers and things. And then, as you know, when the defection broke, I had no place to go. So the lady I was working for even threatened to call the police, because of the defection. I was working for \$5 a week, gentlemen, taking care of her son. But I was happy to have a home and food, because I had had this accident, and I could rest. But my salary was \$5 for the whole week. But when the news broke, she didn't want to be involved with anyone who had a son as a defector, so she asked me to leave. It was a very cold winter night. And I said I would.

But I didn't want to leave—didn't have any place to go.

She said, "You will leave now or I will call the police."

So I called Robert and he told me to come out to his home.

When I went out to his home, I brought Lee's seabag, Mr. Rankin, with me. And I stayed there just a short time. And Robert Oswald would not let me have Lee's seabag. And there were a few letters in there from Lee in the seabag.

And so I don't have the seabag.

You can read this letter, then, this way. That he is telling me he is defecting to Russia.

We all agree there.

Then this same letter could be read the way I read it, as a mother.

After three days he is leaving his mother. But we had a talk. When Lee arrived home—and I will go into this thoroughly. I was ashamed when he arrived home. I was in a one bedroom and bath and a small kitchen. And my son came in about 2 o'clock in the morning. I have never lived lavishly, but we have always had a nice clean little moderate house. And, remember, I was destitute. I had no money. You have the affidavits evidently from the Red Cross. If you don't, I have copies.

The first thing I said to him, "Honey, the first thing we will have to do is to move and find a decent place."

I had a studio couch, which has two parts. The top part I put on the floor for my son to sleep on that particular night, in the one room.

So he said, "We will talk about it in the morning, Mother."

So morning came.

I brought the subject up immediately. I said, "The first thing we will have to do is find a place. I am well enough that I can babysit or pick up a few dollars. And until I settle my claim, I think we will be able to manage, and you will get a job."

He said, "No, Mother, my mind is made up. I have thought this out thoroughly. I have no background. If I stay here, I will get a job for about \$35 a week, and we will both be in a position that you are in. I want to board a ship and work in the import and export business, where there is some real money."

Mr. RANKIN. He had quite a little money saved, didn't he, from the Marines?

Mrs. OSWALD. I will tell you about this—please, gentlemen, I will have to break if you don't. This is a very, very serious life that I have gone through. I didn't answer Lee.

This is the way I do the children.

The CHAIRMAN. We will take a 10 minute recess now.

(Brief recess.)

The CHAIRMAN. The Commission will be in order. Mr. Rankin, you may continue.

Mrs. OSWALD. Mr. Rankin, you mentioned about the \$1,600. Now, I don't know if you know for a fact that Lee had \$1,600. It was publicized in the paper that he had \$1,600, which is right here in 1959.

Mr. RANKIN. Did he tell you anything about that at the time?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, sir, he gave me \$100. And he and his brother Robert had arrived. And I am assuming it was over me, because Robert did not help me. And I have made that public in the Red Cross papers, that he had a family of their own, that they probably thought their duty was to their family. I had no help from the other two boys. And he gave me \$100, and I stayed in this little place a few weeks, and then I got the job for \$5 a week. And that is Lee's defection.

So here is my only contact with Lee in Russia, at the Metropole Hotel—this is dated December 18, 1959.

Now, I have settled with the insurance company, and I have a little money. So I sent a check to Lee for \$20. And this is his little note. The only contact I had with Lee from the time of his immediate defection until the State Department 2 years later informed me of my son's address. And this is his little note that he needs money.

So I would say that Lee didn't have \$1,600, according to this proof.

Now, we are speculating, as you will admit, because you thought the letter to the school was from me. And you will have to admit that I have given you new evidence. And so maybe Lee didn't have \$1,600, because he is asking for money there. That is when he is right in Moscow.

Mr. RANKIN. Of course, that is quite a while later.

Mrs. OSWALD. No, sir. He defected the end of November. This is December 1959.

Mr. RANKIN. But he—

Mrs. OSWALD. He had to make passage, and have some money. I don't know if it took \$1,600. I do not know, sir. But I am saying 5 weeks later he needs money. We haven't gotten to this file yet.

I will quote from a newspaper, the Star Telegram, 1959, his defection, by Mrs. Aline Mosby, who interviewed Lee in Moscow. It says here, "I saw my mother always as a worker, always with less than we could use, he said. He insisted his childhood was happy despite his poverty."

We had a very happy family. He insisted—this is the story in 1959. Lee had a normal childhood.

And now he is criticizing the United States. He says, "Many things bothered him in the United States. Race discrimination, harsh treatment of underdog, Communists and hate." Then on the other letter he is going to Russia to write a book. And there is another story and another story. And all kind of stories. So what are we to believe, gentlemen. Is he throwing us off the track because he is an agent. We are talking about speculation and newspaper papers, and so on. And we know when he came back that he did go to Mrs. Bates, a Fort Worth stenographer, and talked about the Soviet Union. She made it public. And he only had \$10. And he did not finish that story. And she said he was very nervous. And he did not say he was an agent. But she got the impression that he was an agent. This has been made public in the Star Telegram—if you do not have that, I do.

Mr. RANKIN. Mrs. Oswald, is this the photostatic copy of the letter about his booking passage?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, sir.

Mr. RANKIN. You read the original?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, sir.

Mr. RANKIN. And this material on the bottom is just your own writing?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes. This was in this book. That is my writing at the bottom.

Mr. RANKIN. The letter I was referring to is Exhibit 200.

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, sir, it is this letter.

Mr. RANKIN. We offer in evidence Exhibit 200.

The CHAIRMAN. Admitted.

(The document referred to was marked Commission Exhibit No. 200 and received in evidence.)

Mr. RANKIN. Now, this one starting, "Dear Mother, received your letter, and so forth"—that is the one about the Marines, when he was asking you about getting out of the service and your need, and so forth?

Mrs. OSWALD. This is the letter which shows the different character of the boy that the newspapers are making of him—when I wrote and told him I had sold my furniture, and that my compensation and medical was stopped, immediately my son sends a special delivery letter, and that is the letter "received your letter, was very unhappy. I have contacted the Red Cross, and they will contact you." This is a nice boy to do this immediately, when he finds his mother is in trouble. He is not a louse, like the papers have been making him out. He might have some bad points, but so do all of us.

Mr. RANKIN. We will ask the reporter to mark this.

(The document referred to was marked Commission Exhibit No. 201 for identification.)

Mr. RANKIN. Exhibit 201 is the letter you are just referring to?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, sir.

Mr. RANKIN. We offer in evidence Exhibit 201.

The CHAIRMAN. Admitted.

(The document referred to was marked Commission Exhibit No. 201 and received in evidence.)

Mr. RANKIN. Then, Mrs. Oswald, the other one that you received from Russia, with the check and the little note from your son Lee is the one I am showing you?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, sir.

Mr. RANKIN. Will you mark that as Exhibit 202?

(The document referred to was marked Commission Exhibit No. 202 for identification.)

Mr. RANKIN. We offer in evidence Exhibit 202 and ask leave to substitute a copy.

The CHAIRMAN. Admitted.

(The document referred to was marked Commission Exhibit No. 202 and received in evidence.)

Mrs. OSWALD. I have followed up that request and sent the \$20 bill in an envelope. And I have all of this. But I am not going to go through all this paper. You will have all of this.

Mr. DULLES. Did that get through—just as a matter of curiosity.

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, that is what I am going to tell you. So I put a \$20 bill immediately in an envelope and sent it to Lee. And then after I thought about it, I thought of a foreign money order. And gentlemen I have all this in black and white for you, and this gentleman will copy and have it—everything I am saying. So then I went to the bank and I got a foreign money order for \$25, and I sent it to Lee. It all went air mail. But it came back about 2 months later, Mr. Dulles—the \$20 bill I got back in cash and the Chase National Bank foreign money order, that check came back in cash. I will have that proof for you. I understand it comes back by boat, and that is why it took so long.

So I had no way of knowing that my contact with my son was successful. I didn't know until about 2 months later he had not received my money. And by that time—well, I didn't know where he was, because I came to Washington in January of 1961, had a conference with Mr. Boster—Mr. Stanfield—

Mr. RANKIN. Did you think he was a Russian agent at this time?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, sir; I did not think he was a Russian agent.

Representative FORD. I thought you answered in response to a question I asked, when you thought he was an agent, you said when he defected.

Mrs. OSWALD. I might have said defected to Russia. No, sir; I never thought Lee was a Russian agent.

Representative FORD. I meant an agent of the United States. It is my

recollection that you said when he defected to the Soviet Union, you then thought he was an American agent.

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, that is right. That is correct.

Mr. RANKIN. What else caused you to think he was an American agent?

Mrs. OSWALD. All right. I might be letting things out the way I am going. And I am very unhappy about this. Had I started with his childhood I could have worked up to age 15 very peacefully, and you would have gotten everything. I hope I am not forgetting anything important. But now we have letters from the State Department.

Well, my trip to Washington has to come before the letters to the State Department, sir. So I am in conference with the three men. I showed them the letter from the—the application from the Albert Schweitzer College, and Lee's mail had been coming to my home. I didn't know whether he was living or dead. I did not want to mail these papers. So I made a personal trip to Washington.

I arrived at Washington 8 o'clock in the morning. I took a train, and borrowed money on an insurance policy I have, which I have proof. I had a bank account of \$36, which I drew out and bought a pair of shoes. I have all that in proof, sir, the date that I left for the train. I was 3 nights and 2 days on the train, or 2 days and 3 nights. Anyhow, I took a coach and sat up.

I arrived at the station 8 o'clock in the morning and I called the White House. A Negro man was on the switchboard, and he said the offices were not open yet, they did not open until 9 o'clock. He asked if I would leave my number. I asked to speak to the President. And he said the offices were not open yet. I said, "Well, I have just arrived here from Fort Worth, Tex., and I will call back at 9 o'clock."

So I called back at 9 o'clock. Everybody was just gracious to me over the phone. Said that President Kennedy was in a conference, and they would be happy to take any message. I asked to speak to Secretary Rusk, and they connected me with that office. And his young lady said he was in a conference, but anything she could do for me. I said, "Yes, I have come to town about a son of mine who is lost in Russia. I do want to speak—I would like personally to speak to Secretary Rusk." So she got off the line a few minutes. Whether she gave him the message or what I do not know. She came back and said, "Mrs. Oswald, Mr. Rusk"—so evidently she handed him a note—and Mr. Boster was on the line—"that you talk to Mr. Boster, who is special officer in charge of Soviet Union affairs"—if I am correct. And Mr. Boster was on the line. I told him who I was. He said, "Yes, I am familiar with the case, Mrs. Oswald." He said, "Will an 11 o'clock appointment be all right with you?" This is 9 o'clock in the morning. So I said—this is quite an interesting story—I said, "Mr. Boster that would be fine. But I would rather not talk with you." I didn't know who Mr. Boster was. I said, "I would rather talk with Secretary of State Rusk. However, if I am unsuccessful in talking with him, then I will keep my appointment with you."

So I asked Mr. Boster—I said, "Mr. Boster, would you please recommend a hotel that would be reasonable?" He said, "I don't know how reasonable, Mrs. Oswald, but I recommend the Washington Hotel. It will be near the State Department and convenient to you."

So I went to the Washington Hotel. And as we know, gentlemen, there were nothing but men. They asked me if I had reservation. I said, "No, I didn't, but Mr. Boster of the State Department recommended that I come here." So they fixed me up with a room. I took a bath and dressed. I went to the appointment—because this is 9:30, I am on the phone, and I had to take a cab to the hotel. I arrived at Mr. Boster's office at 10:30.

But before arriving at Mr. Boster's office, I stopped at a telephone in the corridor, and I called Dean Rusk's office again, because I didn't want to see Mr. Boster, and I asked to speak to Dean Rusk. And the young lady said, "Mrs. Oswald, talk to Mr. Boster. At least it is a start."

So then I entered around the corridor into Mr. Boster's office. I have all the pictures of the State Department and everything to prove this story is true. I told the young lady, "I am Mrs. Oswald. I have an 11 o'clock appointment."

Mr. Boster came out and said, "Mrs. Oswald, I am awfully glad you came early, because we are going to have a terrible snow storm, and we have orders to leave early in order to get home."

So he called Mr. Stanfield—the arrangements had been made—now, the other man—I don't have that name here for you, Mr. Rankin.

Mr. RANKIN. Is it Mr. Hickey?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, Mr. Hickey. You are correct.

So then we were in conference. So I showed the papers, like I am showing here. And I said, "Now, I know you are not going to answer me, gentlemen, but I am under the impression that my son is an agent." "Do you mean a Russian agent?" I said, "No, working for our Government, a U.S. agent. And I want to say this: That if he is, I don't appreciate it too much, because I am destitute, and just getting over a sickness," on that order.

I had the audacity to say that. I had gone through all of this without medical, without money, without compensation. I am a desperate woman. So I said that.

Mr. RANKIN. What did they say to you?

Mrs. OSWALD. They did not answer that. I even said to them, "No, you won't tell me." So I didn't expect them to answer that.

The CHAIRMAN. Did you mean you were seeking money from them?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, sir. I didn't think that my son should have gone—in a foreign country, and me being alone. What I was saying was that I think my son should be home with me, is really what I implied.

The CHAIRMAN. Did you tell them that?

Mrs. OSWALD. In the words that I said before—I didn't come out and say I want my son home. But I implied that if he was an agent, that I thought that he needed to be home.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you say anything about believing that your son might know full well what he was doing in trying to defect to the Soviet Union, he might like it better there than he did here?

Mrs. OSWALD. I do not remember saying this. I know what I did say, and they agreed with me. I said—because I remember this distinctly. I said, "Now, he has been exploited all through the paper as a defector. If he is a defector"—because as we stated before, I don't know he is an agent, sir—and if he is a defector, that is his privilege, as an individual.

And they said, "Mrs. Oswald, we want you to know that we feel the same way about it." That was their answer.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you say anything about possibly he liked the Soviet way of life better than ours?

Mrs. OSWALD. I may have. I do not remember, sir. Honestly. I may have said that. I recall that they agreed with me, and they said, "We want him also to do what he wants to do."

So now this is January 2, 1961, is my trip to Washington. Approximately 8 weeks later, on March 22, 1961—which is 8 weeks—I received a letter from the State Department informing me of my son's address.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you recall that they assured you there was no evidence he was an agent?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, sir, there was no comment to that effect.

Mr. RANKIN. And they told you to dismiss any such ideas from your mind?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, sir.

Mr. RANKIN. You are sure they didn't tell you that?

Mrs. OSWALD. I am positive. I said to them, "Of course, I don't expect you to answer me." No, sir, there was nothing mentioned about the agent at all. And in fact, I would think, just as a layman, that the State Department would not even consider discussing that with me. But I mean it was not discussed. I am positive of that.

Mr. RANKIN. If they recorded in a memorandum as of that date that they did say that to you, that would be incorrect?

Mrs. OSWALD. That is incorrect, emphatically incorrect. That is incorrect. Because I said, "I don't expect you to tell me. But if he is an agent," I didn't think it was the thing to do.

Well, on January 21 was my trip to Washington, 1961. Approximately 8

weeks later, on March 22, 1961, I received a letter from the State Department informing me of my son's address, which you probably have, if you don't, sir, I have the copies. And also stating that my son wishes to return back to the United States—just 8 weeks after my trip to Washington.

Now, you want to know why I think my son is an agent. And I have been telling you all along.

Here is a very important thing why my son was an agent. On March 22 I receive a letter of his address and stating that my son wishes to return back to the United States. You have that, sir?

Mr. RANKIN. Yes.

Mrs. OSWALD. On April 30, 1961, he marries a Russian girl—approximately 5 weeks later.

Now, why does a man who wants to come back to the United States, 5 weeks later—here is the proof—April 30, 1961, is the wedding date—marry a Russian girl? Because I say—and I may be wrong—the U.S. Embassy has ordered him to marry this Russian girl. And a few weeks later, May 16, 1961, he is coming home with the Russian girl. And as we know, he does get out of the Soviet Union with the Russian girl, with money loaned to him by the U.S. Embassy. I may be wrong, gentlemen, but two on two in my books makes four.

I have many more things that can go to this, and that has been published. I will probably never know whether my son was an agent, because I do not expect to be told these facts. But isn't it peculiar that a boy is coming home, and the Embassy informs me of that—I have all this, Mr. Rankin, and you know I do. You will have the copies. And then 5 weeks later he marries a Russian girl. And the proof of it is that he does come home with the Russian girl in a short length of time. And Lee would have been home 1 year earlier. But because of the lack of money to come home.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you ever ask him whether he married the Russian girl because they ordered him to?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, sir. I have never asked Lee any questions of that kind. The only question I asked Lee was when they were living with me that 1 month, I said, "Lee, I want to know one thing. Why is it you came back to the United States when you had a job and you were married to a Russian girl," and they sent me lovely gifts and photographs and everything. So they seemed to be well off.

I have a beautiful scarf—they sent tea, boxes of candy, which the postage is terrific. He says, "not even Marina knows that." And that is the only question I have ever asked my son. This may be hard to believe. But I have explained to you over and over that I think we, as individuals, have a right to our own life.

Mr. RANKIN. You saw your daughter-in-law and your son living together with you, didn't you, for some time?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes. They lived with me 1 month.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you think they were in love with each other?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, they were definitely in love with each other. Yes, I think they were in love with each other.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you think at that time it was just because he was an agent and ordered to marry her that he married her?

Mrs. OSWALD. No. I would say this. This is purely speculation. He knew Marina, and he loved Marina. They met at a dance. So that was—he had a girl friend. We are saying if he is an agent—I have to say "if." Then he tells the Embassy that he is in love with a Russian girl. And so it is a good idea to bring the Russian girl to the United States. He will have contacts.

Now, when I was in Mrs. Paine's home, on the table was a lot of papers from Lee. The Daily Worker I happen to know about. And many, many subversive—now, I say if Lee is going to assassinate a President, or Lee is anything that he is otherwise than an agent, Lee would not have all these things, he would not have his finger in everything.

He would not be reading only communism and Marxism, that he would be a fanatic about that one thing and have a cause to assassinate the President.

But that is not the picture of Lee Harvey Oswald. Lee has his hand in everything.

Mr. RANKIN. What do you mean by everything?

Mrs. OSWALD. Well, Cuba—because we know in New Orleans he was arrested for Fair Play for Cuba. He read the Daily Worker. And the other ones I don't know. But it was in the paper. There is plenty of subversive material.

Mr. RANKIN. What about books? Did he read books much while he was living with you?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, he read continuously. He went immediately to the library upon coming to the United States. He read continuously. All kinds of books. I tried, when he defected—I went to the library to find out the kind of literature that Lee read. But they could not give me that information. They said the only way they could give that information was when a book was overdue, and was out. But otherwise they have no record.

Now, it has been stated in the paper—maybe New Orleans is different, I don't know, but I know in Fort Worth I could not get the information. Stated he had books—the assassination of Huey Long and things of that sort. They must have a different system. Because in Fort Worth, Tex., they do not have that system. The only way they can tell is if a book is out. But I know Lee read. And I have stated in 1959 all of this.

Anyway, from Vincent Peale on down to anything you want to mention. Lee read continuously.

Mr. RANKIN. Now, was there any time that Marina said anything to you to lead you to believe that she thought your son, Lee, married her because he was an agent?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, sir, no, sir. Not at any time at all.

Mr. RANKIN. You think she loved him?

Mrs. OSWALD. I believe that Marina loved him in a way. But I believe that Marina wanted to come to America. I believe that Lee had talked America to her, and she wanted to come to America. I say this for a lot of little things that happened—that Marina wanted to come to America. Maybe she loved him. I am sure she did, anyway. She said that she did.

Mr. RANKIN. I am not clear about this being ordered to marry her. You don't mean that your son didn't love her.

Mrs. OSWALD. Well, I could mean that—if he is an agent, and he has a girl friend, and it is to the benefit of the country that he marry this girl friend, and the Embassy helped him get this Russian girl out of Russia—let's face it, well, whether he loved her or not, he would take her to America, if that would give him contact with Russians, yes, sir.

Mr. RANKIN. Is that what you mean?

Mrs. OSWALD. I would say that.

Mr. RANKIN. And you don't think it was because your son loved her, then?

Mrs. OSWALD. I do not know whether my son loved her or not. But I am telling you why he would do this—in 5-weeks time. Now, you have a 5-week period in here.

Mr. RANKIN. I understand that. But I think it is a very serious thing to say about your son, that he would do a thing like that to a girl.

Mrs. OSWALD. No, sir, it is not a serious thing. I know a little about the CIA, and so on, the U-2, Powers, and things that have been made public. They go through any extreme for their country. I do not think that would be serious for him to marry a Russian girl and bring her here, so he would have contact. I think that is all part of an agent's duty.

Mr. RANKIN. You think your son was capable of doing that?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, sir, I think my son was an agent. I certainly do.

Mr. RANKIN. Have you got anything more that caused you to think he was an agent?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, I have things that have been coming out in the paper. And I am not the only one that thinks my son is an agent. There has been many, many publications questioning whether Lee was an agent or not because of circumstances, and so on, and so forth, through the newspapers.

Mr. RANKIN. That is newspaper accounts you are talking about now?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes. And as I said about the FBI.

Mr. RANKIN. What about your own knowledge?

Mrs. OSWALD. Well, that is why I wanted to go into the story. I wouldn't have become emotionally upset had I started in sequence.

I told you about him not wanting me to see that program. And then the letters. There is so much. About him being an agent—all of his correspondence with the Embassy in Moscow. I have the letters in the hotel. One of the letters states that the Russians cannot hold you—"the Russians cannot hold you. You are an American citizen. You are not a bona fide Russian resident." We have the letters. You have a copy of the letter, Mr. Rankin.

And "if you will show this letter to the Russians, they cannot hold you in Minsk."

Mr. RANKIN. They would say that about you if you were over there, or anyone.

Mrs. OSWALD. The point I am trying to bring there is Lee has always been an American citizen—according to all of my papers from the State Department.

Mr. RANKIN. Yes.

Mrs. OSWALD. And they would say that about anyone—all right, I will grant you that. You are probably right.

Mr. RANKIN. So that doesn't prove he is an agent, that I can see.

Now, how do you feel it shows he was an agent?

Mrs. OSWALD. Because he has the sanction of the American Embassy all through this affair.

Mr. RANKIN. They would give that to any of us.

Mrs. OSWALD. All right—so you are telling me that. But this man is married to a Russian girl, and does come back within a short time, and could have come back sooner. It was the lack of money. And that is another thing.

The State Department repeatedly kept writing me, and I have the letters, for the money. I have copies of my letters also. I could not raise the money. I said I had a '54 Buick car, and all I could get a loan on was \$250. They wrote back and said could you ask some friends, or do you have any relatives—800 and some odd dollars they needed. And I went to 12 very prominent people in Vernon, Tex.—one who is a very respected citizen that they recommended me to go, who has a citizen award. And I felt very confident maybe he would help me. I told him that my son, who was a very young man, who was an American citizen, is trying to get back to the United States, but there is lack of money, and if he knew of any way possible he could help me.

He said "You mean he is a defector?" I said, "Possibly so. The paper has said he was a defector." And he said, "Well, I am sorry, Mrs. Oswald, but these boys that are in the service and defect, I don't have any use for."

And I said, "Do you go to church, sir?" He said, "Yes, I do". And I said, "Probably you go to church to put your hat on. Because here is a boy. Let's say he has made a mistake. He has gone to Russia. But let's say he realizes now he has made a mistake, and he wants to come back. Are you telling me you won't help him?"

"That is what I am telling you, Mrs. Oswald. I don't have any use for anybody". Which Senator Tower said that he would not help Lee—made it public. These are nice people saying this. I say the ones who are down and out are the ones that need the help. This boy was a young boy. Let's say he is not an agent. Let's say he defected to Russia. Yet he wants to come back. He deserved a helping hand. I went to 12 people. I did not beg. But I presented my case. And not a one offered to help.

Mr. RANKIN. Didn't you understand that the State Department had to try to find out if they could—or you or your son could get the money from other sources before they could advance the money?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, sir, I understand that. I am trying to tell you that I tried awfully hard, but with no success.

Mr. RANKIN. So they were just trying to do their duty in that regard, were they not?

Mrs. OSWALD. It could be, yes. It could be.

Mr. RANKIN. You don't think that makes him an agent, just because they asked you—

Mrs. OSWALD. I think—well, as you say, they would probably help anyone. And then again, because he is married to a Russian girl, and because all these

documents and everything are handled through the U.S. Embassy. And because of my trip to Washington—which was red carpet treatment. Let's say, gentlemen, if a woman gets on the phone at 9 o'clock and has an appointment at 11 o'clock with three big men, that is wonderful treatment.

Now, they probably would do that to anybody. I don't know.

Mr. RANKIN. They might have done that—

Mrs. OSWALD. I haven't been that fortunate before.

Mr. RANKIN. Well, that shouldn't be held against them that they treated you nicely.

Mrs. OSWALD. No, I have told you, Mr. Rankin, they were most gracious to me. The Administration was most gracious to me.

Mr. RANKIN. I don't see why you should think that because they treated you nicely, that was any sign he was an agent.

Mrs. OSWALD. Well, maybe you don't see why. But this is my son. And this is the way I think, because I happen to know all of the other things that you don't know—the life and everything. I happen to think this. And this is my privilege to think this way. And I can almost back it up with these things.

This is a stranger to you folks. But this is a boy I have known from a child.

Mr. RANKIN. How much money do you think he received for being an agent?

Mrs. OSWALD. That I do not know.

Mr. RANKIN. You have no idea?

Mrs. OSWALD. But I do know this, and I have stated this. I have approximately 900 and some odd dollars. And I lost my job. That can be proven. I was a nurse on the 3 to 11 shift, working in a rest home, for a very wealthy woman. And it would have been at least a year, a year and a half case. She is not that bad off. She is just an invalid. She is going to live quite a while.

When I returned home from the Six Flags on Thanksgiving Day, the Deputy Sheriff at Fort Worth, Tex. went to get my pay. And the nurse, the 7 to 3:30 o'clock nurse—I went 3 to 11—and my patient cried and said that they were awfully sorry, but they could not have me back on the case. That the woman at the rest home refused to have me.

Now, I was not working for the rest home. I was doing private duty. But I understand that this is her place of business, and my presence there might have been—hurt her money part. But this is our Christian way of life. The boy was accused of killing the President, with no proof. And then the mother loses her job.

Now, that is my position. You asked me the question. But Marina has \$35,000 publicly. What she has, I do not know.

Now, gentlemen, \$35,000 is a lot of money in donation dribs and drabs—is a very large sum of money. I question where does that money come from. Yes, some of it could be coming from Lee's back pay. And she might have more than that. That was the amount made public—\$35,000. And here is a mother without a job. And everybody knows I have no money. And my contributions are 900 and some odd dollars.

Mr. RANKIN. Now, when you say that money that Marina has might come from your son's back pay, what do you base that on? Just speculation?

Mrs. OSWALD. I am basing all of this on speculation. Sir, if I had proof, I would not be taking my energy and my emotional capacity to bring all this out—if I had proof he was an agent.

Mr. RANKIN. When they asked you to contribute some money to help bring him home from Russia, did it occur to you that if he is an agent the government could just pay his way?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes. But they don't want the public to know he is an agent. They want me to have all of this. They don't want the public to know. I am going around to people—you brought up a very good point. I am going around trying to get money for this boy to come home, so the public knows. Sure, they could have given him the money to come home.

Mr. RANKIN. Are you trying to get money now? I don't understand what you mean by that?

Mrs. OSWALD. I think, Mr. Rankin, you asked me the question that if he was

an agent, that the Government would have given him the money to come home without any trouble. I say just the opposite. That it was a very good point. If he was an agent, it would make it hard for him to get the money to come home.

Remember, I am under the impression he is coming home with this Russian girl in order to continue his work. So he cannot be given the money immediately to come home, because his mother might tell the story to someone. Lee was almost a year coming home for lack of money. So then they have an excuse to loan him the money.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you ever learn that he was getting money from the Red Cross in addition to his pay—that is the Russian or Soviet Red Cross, when he was over there?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, sir.

Mr. RANKIN. You don't know what he did with that?

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't know anything about that. The Red Cross from here?

Mr. RANKIN. The Soviet Red Cross.

Mrs. OSWALD. No, sir, I know nothing about that.

Mr. RANKIN. You didn't know he was supposed to have gotten an amount equal to the pay he received from his job. He got that from the Red Cross.

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't follow you. I do not know. I don't understand.

Mr. RANKIN. He got so much a month from his job in the electronics factory. You understood that.

Mrs. OSWALD. In Russia?

Mr. RANKIN. Yes.

Mrs. OSWALD. He was not in an electronics factory. I thought he was working in a radio factory. All right, fine.

Mr. RANKIN. And then he got an equal amount, we understand, from the Red Cross of the Soviet Union. Did you know that?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, sir. Now, explain to me—when you say the Red Cross of the Soviet Union. Is that our American Red Cross in the Soviet Union, or this is part of the Russian Red Cross?

Mr. RANKIN. This is part of the Russian Red Cross.

Mrs. OSWALD. I do not know that.

Mr. RANKIN. It is not any part of the American Red Cross.

Mrs. OSWALD. No, I do not know that.

Mr. RANKIN. Their Red Cross is somewhat different than ours, I understand, because the Government has so much to do with activity there that the Red Cross is closely associated with the Government itself, while in this country, as you know, it is generally supported by the public.

Mrs. OSWALD. No, I did not know that.

Now, one other thing pertaining to this. When Marina and Lee returned from Russia, and they were at my daughter-in-law's home, Robert's home, and I came in from the job in the country to see them, I said—up until this time, gentlemen, I thought Russians were peasant-looking people, like the public. And I said, "Lee, she doesn't look Russian at all. She looks American." He said, "Of course, mother, that is why I married her, is because she looks American." In front of my daughter-in-law and Robert. He bragged that she looked like an American girl. And there is all little things of that sort.

As I say, I cannot remember everything in my life, because I am going—this is way back—in a few hours time, Mr. Rankin. But there is many, many things that come up.

Mr. RANKIN. How does that show that he was an agent at that time. I don't understand that.

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't either. But I am telling you the expressions. He is making a point. And what I was going to make a point—Lee loved his work, and Lee loved the Marines. Lee loved the Marines, Mr. Rankin. Even coming back—he was a military man. And that has also been stated in the paper, that he had a military manner about him. I think District Attorney Wade remarked something of that order. People have noticed that.

Mr. RANKIN. What made you think he loved the Marines? Was there something he did when he came back?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes. He loved the Marines because his brother was a Marine,

for one thing. And John Edward—that is his career—14 years. My brother was in the Navy. His father was a veteran. We are a servicemen family. And I know Lee loved the Marines. I told you how he read the manual before he left. And on leaves, coming home, Lee would brag. He even said when he came home from Japan, "mother, my stay in Japan, just the trip alone would have cost about \$2,000."

Now, Lee, I know also, was in the Air Force of the Marines, and he went to Biloxi, Miss., for schooling. Lee has had quite a bit of schooling. And Lee spoke Russian equivalent to 1 year when he defected to Russia. I have that on his application from the Albert Schweitzer College. And Lee spoke and wrote Russian fluently when he went to Russia. So Lee learns Russian in the Marines.

Mr. RANKIN. Did he ever talk about reenlisting into the Marines after he returned?

Mrs. OSWALD. Well, when Lee returned he was with me 3 days, and then, of course, he went over to visit Robert's house. So actually we didn't talk. I was trying to find a home. And I didn't think he would go. I was hoping that Lee would not go on the ship and work. I was hoping he would stay home. We were interrupted before. When he said to me about, that he wanted to work on a ship in the import and export business, I started to tell you I agreed with him. And this is how you have to do—particularly when you are a woman. A father could tell the man, "You are not going to do this." But I went along with that. And then the next day I said, "Lee, why don't you stay", and I went into that—"until I settle my claim, and I can babysit and we can get along." He said, "No, my mind is made up. If I stay, we will both be in these circumstances." So on the third day—I knew he wanted to do this, but I didn't think he was going to do it for a month or two. But on the third day he came with his suitcase in the room and he said, "Mother, I am off." So since his mind was made up, I told him goodby.

Mr. RANKIN. He said nothing about reenlisting in the Marines?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, the three days he was home. That was the conversation, about him going on a ship. I saw his passport. And his passport was stamped "import and export" on his passport.

Mr. RANKIN. Did it say anything about Soviet Russia on it?

Mrs. OSWALD. No. What I am saying is that I saw the passport with big writing "export and import." I think it was blue. I did not read the passport, because Lee was there, but I happened to see the passport, "export and import" stamped.

Whether he had another passport, I do not know. I didn't ask. I am saying this—and God knows I am telling you the truth. I am just this type person. It is because of my life.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you know that he spoke Russian at that time, when he had this passport?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, sir; I did not know. The only time I knew that he spoke Russian is what came out in the news. But when I really knew was Lee's application for the Albert Schweitzer College. Shall we go into that—the application?

Mr. RANKIN. Yes.

Mrs. OSWALD. Now, the first that I knew—no, I am wrong. It is not the first I knew. I had received a letter from Lee while in the Marines before he knew of my trouble, stating that he was accepted by the Albert Schweitzer College. And that letter was in the sea bag that I told you about, that I do not have.

Mr. DULLES. Would you give us the date of that letter?

Mrs. OSWALD. The other letter would have been—let's see. Lee was told in July about my trouble. And the other letter I would say would be about May or June. This is March 22. I received this in care of Lee. And you see, sir, I have a lot of addresses, because I am now living in these homes.

Mr. DULLES. '57 or '58?

Mrs. OSWALD. 1960.

Let's see now. Then I heard from the State Department in 1961.

"Due to a number of circumstances, we found ourselves forced to make a slight change in the arrival and departure dates of the third term. The first

lecture will be held on Tuesday afternoon 16.00 o'clock, April 19, instead of taking place on the 21st with the arrival day on the 20th. It will mean that the students arrive either on the evening of Monday, the 18th, or before noon on April 19th. This change, however, makes it possible to end the term on the weekend of July 2. We hope that you will still be able to fit this change of dates into your travel plan. Should it not be possible for you to arrive on the earlier date we, of course, understand the difficulty. In the latter case, please drop us a line."

So that is how I knew that Lee—I opened his mail. I didn't know whether my son was living or dead, sir. And that is how I knew—I won't go into all this. He made a deposit. I have all of this for you.

He made a deposit. And this is my copies to them.

Now, one thing I have forgotten.

While at the State Department, the State Department told me that Lee had gone to Finland before Russia. And I did not know that.

Now, Lee had applied at a college in Finland, evidently, because on the application it states such a fact. I did not know, because the paper just said he arrived in Russia—until I went to the State Department.

So what I am trying to say—I may be forgetting a lot of important things, because I am just now remembering what the State Department told me.

I don't think I am forgetting too much.

But, after all, I am going through a whole life, and it is very hard.

This is Lee's original application, that you cannot possibly have had. This is the only application there is. So this is something new for you gentlemen. I am not going to go through it all, because you have a copy. But I am going to show you the thinking of this young man.

"Special interests: Religious, vocational, literary, sports, and hobbies. Philosophy, psychology, ideology, football, baseball, tennis, stamp collecting"—Lee had a stamp collecting book. "Nature of private reading: Jack London, Darwin, Norman Vincent Peale, scientific books, philosophy, and so on."

Representative FORN. That is an application to where?

Mrs. OSWALD. This is an original application for the Albert Schweitzer School.

"Active part taken in organizations. Student body movement in school for control of juvenile delinquency, member YMCA, and AYA association."

I don't know what that is.

Mr. RANKIN. Where did you get this copy?

Mrs. OSWALD. I had contacted Congressman Jim Wright, that has helped me—helped me to locate Lee through the State Department. But Mr. Jim Wright was not successful.

I was successful because of my trip to Washington, as you know.

And from the trip to Washington, I went to the building where Mr. Jim Wright worked, and I went in to tell the secretary about the trip to Washington. And that I had heard from Lee.

Well, I had information here that Lee had paid a deposit. So I had written the school and asked if we were entitled to the return of the deposit, since he didn't show up. But I did not get an answer.

So Mr. Wright's secretary said that, "Mrs. Oswald, I will write and see what we can do.

So she wrote, and then they sent the application and everything back to Jim Wright's office. And that is how I got the application.

Mr. DOYLE. They may be interested in knowing where the college is.

Mrs. OSWALD. It is in Switzerland. Albert Schweitzer College, Chur Walden, Graubuenen, Switzerland. "Application Form. High School. Completed high school by correspondence."

I have that. His original correspondence in the service—completed high school.

Mr. RANKIN. Is that part of his Marine work—he finished high school that way?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, sir.

January '58, Passing 65 on scale of 100 B plus. College: None."

And then I read his books.

Now, we go down to here.

"Vocational Interests if decided upon: To be a short story writer on contemporary American life."

Now, "General statement regarding reasons for wishing to attend the Albert Schweitzer College: In order to acquire a fuller understanding of that subject which interests me most, philosophy, to meet with Europeans who can broaden my scope of understanding, to receive formal education by institutes of high standing and character, to broaden my knowledge of German, and to live in a healthy climate and good moral atmosphere."

This is very good thinking, gentlemen. We are getting a picture now of the boy which has been not told in the paper.

I have read this one particular statement at three press conferences. The first press conference was about 80 members there, from foreign lands and everything. Nothing was printed. Then I had a second press conference with 16 men and I said, "Now, I am tired of the things that are being said about my family, myself, and Lee. We are not perfect. But I know there is some good things. And I have read a particular statement that has not been printed. Let's see if one of you has the courage to print it."

There was 16 there. That did not come out. I had a third conference, and I said the same thing and quoted this. That was not made public in the paper.

I hold a lot of these answers, gentlemen, as you know by now.

Mr. RANKIN. You notice the next paragraph, about his plans?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, "Plans to be pursued after the period at Albert Schweitzer College: To attend the short summer course of the University of Turku, Turku, Finland."

Now, I have a brochure. This I cannot understand—from this college, dated 1960. I have this for you, Mr. Rankin—dated 1960.

Lee is in Russia.

And the men in the State Department told me he went to Finland before Russia. But this is dated 1960. I have it for you.

But I don't understand that.

"Then to return to America and pursue my chosen vocation."

Mr. RANKIN. I want to ask you about that. Do you think he meant this at the time?

Mrs. OSWALD. I do not know. I am saying—and I am going to stick to my story—that Lee is an agent, then a lot of this is a lot of baloney. I cannot make it any stronger. I don't know, sir. The boy is gone, and I didn't hear from his own lips.

Mr. RANKIN. You think that he decided to defect after this application, then?

Mrs. OSWALD. I do not know, sir, because I have not had this from the boy. I am speculating. But I have a lot of documents to sustain my speculation.

Mr. RANKIN. Now, this, you cannot tell one way or another about whether he is an agent by this.

Mrs. OSWALD. I cannot tell by anything he is an agent, if you want proof. I am becoming a little discouraged about this, because I keep telling you—I did not have proof, sir. But I am giving you documents leading to it.

Mr. RANKIN. All I am trying to find out is what you have. You are giving us that. I am also trying to find out whatever proof you have about these various things that we can rely on.

Mrs. OSWALD. Well, I am going to state once and for all, because it upsets me very much emotionally. And I have stated before, I do not have proof, sir. I do not have proof of an agent. I do not have proof my son is innocent. I do not have proof.

Mr. RANKIN. You don't have any proof of a conspiracy?

Mrs. OSWALD. Of anything. It is just as I feel, like the Dallas police do not have proof my son shot President Kennedy. If they have anything, it is circumstantial evidence. I have as much circumstantial evidence here that Lee was an agent as the Dallas police have that he shot President Kennedy.

"Familiarity with foreign languages, if any. Russian equal in fluency to about 1 year's education or schooling. I also speak a very little German. General condition of health: Good. Have you ever had any serious illness or nervous disturbances: No."

Mr. RANKIN. Is that correct?

Mrs. OSWALD. That is correct.

I want to get to that psychiatric. There will be a story there.

"Does such a condition still exist: No."

I don't understand this—do you?

"General condition of health: Good. Have you had a serious illness or nervous disturbance, no. If so, explain."

Then he has a dash.

"Are you at present receiving medical or psychiatric care? No."

And then he gives as references—you have this, so I won't go into it.

A chaplain—would you like me to go into all these names for the record?

Mr. RANKIN. No, we can offer this.

Did you know any of those people that he showed as references?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, sir. I do not. And that is dated the 3d, 4th, '59. And this is another application form from the Albert Schweitzer College.

"I hereby apply to attend the student course from April 12, 1960 to June 27, 1960. Surname: Oswald. Christian name: Lee Harvey. Mr. Age, 20. Mother tongue: English. Other language you know: Russian. Equal in fluency to 1 year of schooling. Occupation: Student. Nationality: American. Exact address: MCAF, MACS-9, Santa Ana, California, USA. Remarks: Please inform me of the amount of the deposit if required so I can forward it and confirm my reservation and show my sincerity of purpose. Thank you. Lee Harvey Oswald."

Well, he did, and I have this here, make a deposit of \$25, which the school informed me that they would not be able to refund, because it would take care of any incidentals that had occurred for him not appearing.

Gentlemen, it is 10 minutes to five, I believe I had a full day. I worked last night on the papers. I came early to have copies made.

This was a complete story, I believe, and I have at least three other complete stories. And I have a story of my life that I believe from newspaper accounts that you will be very surprised also to know the type person I am. But according to the newspaper—of course, really nothing bad has been said about me, otherwise than one particular instance. That I can prove and have witnesses that it is not the case.

The CHAIRMAN. Mrs. Oswald, you said you had three more stories. Just name them. Name what stories they are, so we will know what they are.

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, sir.

It would be Lee's life, sir, from early childhood, and the psychiatric treatment in New York, that I want to tell you about.

The CHAIRMAN. Up to 16?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, sir, because we have finished that, because we went into that.

And then my life, from early childhood, which you have asked, Mr. Rankin, in a letter.

The third was Lee as an agent, which I have gone into.

The CHAIRMAN. Lee what?

Mrs. OSWALD. Lee being an agent.

But I have really gone into that.

The CHAIRMAN. So really, there are only two more?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, sir, my life and Lee's life.

Now, I would like you to have this picture—if you have not seen it. And I will not comment on it. I want you to study it thoroughly, use a magnifying glass, if possible, and if you care to, we will discuss it.

Now, this is out of the Post Magazine.

There is another picture that I would like the Commission to get which is in the Memorial Issue of President Kennedy—I think it is the Post. I will get that information for you.

Mr. DOYLE. Would you like to advise the Commission generally what you believe they will find out from this?

Mrs. OSWALD. I would rather not comment on that at this particular moment. I submit it to them for them to look over all the people, to study it. I have two. You may have that one for the record.

Mr. DULLES. What does this purport to be of?

Mrs. OSWALD. That is a picture of the book depository the day of the assassination of President Kennedy. And there are people in the picture.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, is there anything you want us to see in the picture?

Mrs. OSWALD. Well, I would rather you see it yourself. I see what I see.

The CHAIRMAN. What do you see?

Mrs. OSWALD. Well, all right.

I see Marina and the child—the girl and the baby, it could be Marina.

The CHAIRMAN. Will you show us, please?

Mrs. OSWALD. And, again, I am saying—I cannot be sure this is the picture. But this right here. This girl with this baby could possibly be Marina and June.

Mr. RANKIN. And that is the girl—

Mrs. OSWALD. This girl holding the baby.

Mr. RANKIN. Right next to the door?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, sir, right next to the door. In back of her is the hat of a man. I have started this. I will continue.

(The document referred to was marked Commission Exhibit No. 203, for identification.)

Mr. RANKIN. Mr. Chairman, may I offer this?

The CHAIRMAN. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. I offer in evidence Exhibit 203.

And that is the photograph that you were just referring to, Mrs. Oswald?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, sir, that is the photograph the day of the assassination.

Mr. RANKIN. And you pointed out the girl on the left column—

Mrs. OSWALD. Of the entrance to the book depository, holding a child.

(The document heretofore marked for identification as Commission Exhibit No. 203 was received in evidence.)

Mr. DULLES. Do we know the time this was taken?

Mr. RANKIN. Can you tell about the time this was taken?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes. This, I understand, was when President Kennedy was shot. He is supposed to be holding his throat here. And this is the car. This is right after he passed the book depository, when he is supposed to have been shot.

The CHAIRMAN. Very well. We will adjourn until tomorrow at 10 o'clock.

(Whereupon, at 4:55 p.m., the President's Commission recessed.)

Wednesday, February 12, 1964

TESTIMONY OF MRS. MARGUERITE OSWALD RESUMED

The President's Commission met at 10 a.m. on February 12, 1964, at 200 Maryland Avenue NE., Washington, D.C.

Present were Chief Justice Earl Warren, Chairman; Representative Hale Boggs and Representative Gerald R. Ford, members.

Also present were J. Lee Rankin, general counsel; Wesley J. Liebeler, assistant counsel; and John F. Doyle, attorney for Mrs. Marguerite Oswald.

The CHAIRMAN. The Commission will be in order.

We will proceed to the hearing.

The CHAIRMAN. Mrs. Oswald, did you have anything you wanted to say to us this morning before we start the questioning?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, I meant to yesterday morning. I have two or three things that are worrying me.

Mr. Rankin, on Monday, when I testified that I had not been questioned officially, you told me that I had. And if I remember correctly, sir, you said that there was 28 pages of testimony, or was it 8 pages?

Mr. RANKIN. Twenty-eight, I think.