

Wednesday, February 5, 1964

TESTIMONY OF MRS. LEE HARVEY OSWALD RESUMED

The President's Commission met at 10 a.m., on February 5, 1964, at 200 Maryland Avenue NE., Washington, D.C.

Present were Chief Justice Earl Warren, Chairman; Senator Richard B. Russell, Senator John Sherman Cooper, Representative Hale Boggs, Representative Gerald R. Ford, Allen W. Dulles, members.

Also present were J. Lee Rankin, general counsel; Norman Redlich, assistant counsel; Leon I. Gopadze and William D. Krimer, interpreters; John M. Thorne, attorney for Mrs. Lee Harvey Oswald; and Ruben Efron.

The CHAIRMAN. The Commission will be in order. We will continue with the examination. Mr. Rankin, you may proceed.

Mr. RANKIN. Mrs. Oswald, have you become familiar with the English language to some extent?

Mrs. OSWALD. I have never studied it, but simple language I do understand.

Mr. RANKIN. We had reports that you made some study at the Southern Methodist University. Is there anything to that?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. How about Mr. Gregory? Did you study English with him?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you have any formal aid or teaching of English by anyone?

Mrs. OSWALD. I had no formal instructions in it, but a Russian acquaintance, Mr. Bouhe, wrote down some Russian phrases, and I would try to translate them into English.

Mr. RANKIN. Now, since you have been living with the Martins, I assume you haven't had any Russian friends to try to translate English for you, is that right?

Mrs. OSWALD. If you do not count Mr. Gopadze and the FBI interpreter, I have not been in contact with any Russians.

Mr. RANKIN. And there were considerable periods during the time you have been living with the Martins when neither Mr. Gopadze or the FBI agent or translator were present, is that right?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. So have you been able to learn a little more English while you have been with the Martins than you had before, because of that experience?

Mrs. OSWALD. Only a little, I think.

At least it is very useful for me to live with an American family who do not speak Russian.

Mr. RANKIN. That has helped you to learn some English, more than when you were living with Mrs. Paine, who could speak Russian to you, I take it.

Mrs. OSWALD. Of course.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you know any French?

Mrs. OSWALD. No. Other than Russian, I don't know any other language.

Mr. RANKIN. Now, when you were with the Martins the Secret Service people were there, too, were they not?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, they helped me a great deal.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you object to the Secret Service people being there?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Did they treat you properly?

Mrs. OSWALD. Excellently—very well.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you object to their being around and looking out for you as they did?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. How did the Martins treat you during the time you have been with them?

Mrs. OSWALD. Better than I—could have been expected.

Mr. RANKIN. Have you been pleased with the way they have treated you?

Mrs. OSWALD. I am very pleased and I am very grateful to them.

Mr. RANKIN. Now, Mr. Thorne is your attorney. I understand that he told the Civil Liberties Union people of Dallas it was all right for the Secret Service

people to be there with you and that you liked that arrangement and did not want to be interfered with. Was that satisfactory to you?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, that is correct.

Mr. RANKIN. Was he speaking for you when he said that?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, because I received a letter from Mr. Olds, a leader of that union. In that letter he said that he sympathizes with my situation, that he supposed that the Secret Service treated me very badly and stopped me from doing something.

I answered him in a letter written in Russian which was later translated into English that all of this was not the truth.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you feel any restraint or that you were being forced to do anything there while you were at the Martins that was not satisfactory to you?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, I was not forced to do anything that I did not want to.

Mr. RANKIN. Anybody that tried to see you that you wanted to see during that time or from that time up to the present—I withdraw that.

Was anyone who you wanted to see or wanted to see you that you were willing to see kept from seeing you at that time or up to the present?

Mrs. OSWALD. Generally some people wanted to talk to me but they couldn't do so simply because I did not want to.

Mr. RANKIN. And was that always the case, whenever you didn't talk to someone during that period of time?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Everything depended only on me.

Mr. RANKIN. And whenever you did want to talk to someone or see someone, you were always able to do that, were you?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, I did meet with Katya Ford, my former Russian friend.

Mr. RANKIN. And you were always able to meet with anyone that you wanted to, is that right?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. Now, it has been claimed that Mrs. Ruth Paine tried to see you at various times and was unable to do so. Can you tell us about that?

Mrs. OSWALD. She is trying very hard to come to see me, but I have no desire to meet with her. I think that she is trying to do that for herself, rather than for me.

Mr. RANKIN. And whenever you have refused to see her when she tries to see you, that is because you didn't want to see her yourself, is that right?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. What about the newspaper and television and radio people? Have some of those tried to see you while you were at the Martins?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, they have tried.

Mr. RANKIN. And have you done anything about their efforts to see you?

Mrs. OSWALD. I never wanted to be popular in such a bad sense in which I am now, and therefore I didn't want to see them. But I did have a television interview in which I said that I am relatively satisfied with my situation, that I am not too worried and I thanked people for their attention towards me.

Mr. RANKIN. Will you describe to us your relationship with your mother-in-law now?

Mrs. OSWALD. After all of this happened I met with her at the police station. I was, of course, very sorry for her as Lee's mother. I was always sorry for her because Lee did not want to live with her.

I understood her motherly concern. But in view of the fact of everything that happened later, her appearances in the radio, in the press, I do not think that she is a very sound thinking woman, and I think that part of the guilt is hers. I do not accuse her, but I think that part of the guilt in connection with what happened with Lee lies with her because he did not perhaps receive the education he should have during his childhood, and he did not have any correct leadership on her part, guidance. If she were in contact with my children now, I do not want her to cripple them.

Mr. RANKIN. Has she tried to see you since the assassination?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, all the time.

Mr. RANKIN. And have you seen her since that time?

Mrs. OSWALD. Accidentally we met at the cemetery on a Sunday when I visited

there, but I didn't want to meet with her, and I left. She didn't understand that I didn't want to meet with her and she accused the Secret Service personnel of preventing her from seeing me.

Mr. RANKIN. Except for the time at the jail and at the cemetery, have you seen her since the assassination?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. At the time you did see your mother-in-law, did you observe any difference in her attitude towards you?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, of course.

Mr. RANKIN. Will you describe that difference that you observed?

Mrs. OSWALD. At first I said that I didn't see her any more. But after Lee was in jail I lived with her for some time at that inn.

Mr. RANKIN. The Six Flags?

Mrs. OSWALD. The Six Flags. And inasmuch as I lived with her and met with her every day I could see—I was able to see the change. At least if her relationship with me was good, it was not sincere. I think that she does not like me. I don't think that she simply is able to like me.

There were some violent scenes, she didn't want to listen to anyone, there were hysterics. Everyone was guilty of everything and no one understood her.

Perhaps my opinion is wrong, but at least I do not want to live with her and to listen to scandals every day.

Mr. RANKIN. Did she say anything to indicate that she blamed you in connection with the assassination?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, she did not accuse me of anything.

Mr. RANKIN. In your presence, at any time, did she accuse Ruth Paine of being involved in causing the assassination or being directly involved?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, she never accused Ruth Paine. She simply did not like her.

Mr. RANKIN. Did she tell you why she didn't like Ruth Paine?

Mrs. OSWALD. She told me but I didn't understand it because it was in English. She expresses more by rather stormy mimicry, thinking that that would get across and I would understand.

Mr. RANKIN. You said that you didn't want to see Ruth Paine because you thought she wanted to see you for her own interests. Will you tell us what you meant by that?

Mrs. OSWALD. I think that she wants to see me in her own selfish interests. She likes to be well known, popular, and I think that anything that I should write her, for example, would wind up in the press.

The reason that I think so is that the first time that we were in jail to see Lee, she was with me and with her children, and she was trying to get in front of the cameras, and to push her children and instructed her children to look this way and look that way. And the first photographs that appeared were of me with her children.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you recall that in the note your husband left about the Walker incident, that there was a reference to the Red Cross, and that you might get help there? Did you ever obtain any help from the Red Cross before that date?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, never.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you know any reason why your husband put that in the note?

Mrs. OSWALD. Well, because the Red Cross is an organization in all countries which helps people who need help, and in case I needed help, since I have no relatives here, I would be able to obtain it from this organization.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you know whether or not your husband received any help from the Red Cross in money payments while he was in Russia?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, I don't.

Mr. RANKIN. In that note you remember that there was a reference to an embassy—it didn't say which embassy. Do you know what embassy your husband was referring to?

Mrs. OSWALD. He had in mind the Soviet Embassy.

Mr. RANKIN. You told about the incident of De Mohrenschildt coming to the house and saying something about how your husband happened to miss, and your husband looked at you and looked at him, and seemed to think that you might have told. You have described that.

Now, did you have any cause to believe at that time that De Mohrenschildt knew anything about the Walker incident?

Mrs. OSWALD. De Mohrenschildt didn't know anything about it. Simply he thought that this was something that Lee was likely to do. He simply made a joke and the joke happened to hit the target.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you conclude that from what you knew about the situation or from something that De Mohrenschildt said at some time?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, I know this, myself. I know that Lee could not have told him. And, otherwise, how would he have known?

Mr. RANKIN. From your knowledge, were they close enough so that your husband would have made De Mohrenschildt a confidant about anything like that?

Mrs. OSWALD. No matter how close Lee might be to anyone, he would not have confided such things.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you recall the money that your husband borrowed from the Embassy in Moscow to come to this country? Do you know where he got the money to repay that amount?

Mrs. OSWALD. He worked and we paid out the debt. For six or seven months we were paying off this debt.

Mr. RANKIN. Some of the payments were rather large during that period. Do you remember that?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes. And no one will believe it—it may appear strange. But we lived very modestly. Perhaps for you it is hard to imagine how we existed.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you handle the finances—

Mrs. OSWALD. Of course we were economizing.

No, Lee always handled the money, but I bought groceries. He gave me money and I bought groceries, or more correctly, together.

Mr. RANKIN. You would usually go to the grocery store together to buy what you needed?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. And then did he give you any funds separately from that, for you to spend alone?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, he would give it to me, but I would not take it.

Mr. RANKIN. How much were those amounts?

Mrs. OSWALD. Excuse me, I want to add something.

You asked me yesterday to make a list of how much we spent during a month—I forgot. Excuse me—I will do it today.

For example, when we paid \$60 to \$65 rent per month, we would spend only about \$15 per week for groceries. As you see, I didn't die and I am not sick.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you buy clothing for yourself?

Mrs. OSWALD. Not everything. At first some of our Russian friends would occasionally give us some clothes. But Lee would also buy clothes for me. But in America this is no problem.

Mr. RANKIN. What do you mean by that?

Mrs. OSWALD. In my opinion life is not very expensive here. Everyone buys according to his financial status, and no one walks around undressed. You can buy for \$20 and at a sale you might buy for \$2, clothes for an entire season.

Mr. RANKIN. What about clothing for your child? Did you handle the buying of that?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. Returning to the—

Mrs. OSWALD. Excuse me. Some of the things for children were given to us by friends who had children. But I didn't like them and I bought some.

Mr. RANKIN. Returning to the date of November 11, 1963, did you recall that that was a holiday?

Mrs. OSWALD. November 11?

Mr. RANKIN. Yes.

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't remember that it was a holiday. We did not celebrate it. But something, I remember, was closed. Perhaps there were elections.

Mr. RANKIN. That is Veterans Day in this country, and it was a Monday—refreshing your memory in that regard.

Do you recall whether or not your husband went to work that day?

Mrs. OSWALD. No. I remember that he remained at the Paine's.

Mr. RANKIN. Can you tell us what he did during that day?

Mrs. OSWALD. As always, he played with June and he helped me a little with preparation of lunch, and he sat around, watched television.

Mr. RANKIN. Was he doing any reading at that time?

Mrs. OSWALD. He didn't read. It seems to me that on that day he was typing. I don't know.

Mr. RANKIN. And you don't know what he was typing?

Mrs. OSWALD. It seems to me it was the envelope——

Mr. RANKIN. Which you have identified?

Mrs. OSWALD. You remember you had a letter which mentioned Mexico and Koston, it was that envelope.

Mr. RANKIN. Is this Exhibit 16 that you are referring to?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes. You see the date is the 12th. You see, I can't remember a specific date, but some event I can connect with it brings it back.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you remember whether your husband returned from Dallas to Irving at any time during that week?

Mrs. OSWALD. It seems he came on Saturday or Friday for the weekend.

Perhaps he didn't come. I am mixed up as to which weekends he did and didn't come.

Mr. RANKIN. We have a statement from a Mr. Hutchison of the supermarket that I referred to yesterday that you and your husband were in his supermarket on November 13. Do you recall anything like that?

Mrs. OSWALD. If the 12th was a Monday and the 13th a Tuesday, Lee was at work. He couldn't have been there.

Mr. RANKIN. In one of your statements that you have given the FBI and the Secret Service you indicated that this particular weekend your husband stayed in Dallas—that is the 15th through the 17th of November. Does that refresh your memory?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes—the 15th to the 17th he remained in Dallas. That is, he didn't come that weekend.

But on the 13th he was not in Irving.

Mr. RANKIN. That would be the weekend before the assassination, to refresh your memory again.

Mrs. OSWALD. You see, this is why I was not surprised that he didn't come—that he came, rather, he had not come on Friday and Saturday, and on Sunday I called him over the telephone and this is when he had a quarrel over the fictitious name.

By the way, he didn't come because I told him not to come. He had wanted to come, he had telephoned.

Mr. RANKIN. What did you tell him about not coming?

Mrs. OSWALD. That he shouldn't come every week, that perhaps it is not convenient for Ruth that the whole family be there, live there.

Mr. RANKIN. Did he say anything about that?

Mrs. OSWALD. He said, "As you wish. If you don't want me to come, I won't."

Mr. RANKIN. Were you quite angry with him about the use of the fictitious name?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes. And when he called me over the phone a second time I hung up and would not talk to him.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you tell him why you were so angry?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, of course.

Mr. RANKIN. What did you say?

Mrs. OSWALD. I said, "After all, when will all your foolishness come to an end? All of these comedies. First one thing then another. And now this fictitious name."

I didn't understand why. After all, it was nothing terrible if people were to find out that he had been in Russia.

Mr. RANKIN. What did he say when you said that?

Mrs. OSWALD. That I didn't understand anything.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you remember an incident when he said you were a Czechoslovakian rather than a Russian?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes. We lived on Elsbeth Street, and he had told the landlady that I was from Czechoslovakia. But I didn't know about it, and when the

landlady asked me, I told her I was from Russia. I told Lee about it that evening, and he scolded me for having said that.

Mr. RANKIN. What did you say to him then?

Mrs. OSWALD. That the landlady was very nice and she was very good to me and she was even pleased with the fact that I was from Russia.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you object to your husband saying that you were from some country other than Russia?

Mrs. OSWALD. Of course.

Mr. RANKIN. What did you say to him about that?

Mrs. OSWALD. I am not ashamed of the fact that I am from Russia. I can even be proud of the fact that I am Russian. And there is no need for me to hide it. Every person should be proud of his nationality and not be afraid or ashamed of it.

Mr. RANKIN. What did he say in response to that?

Mrs. OSWALD. Nothing.

Mr. RANKIN. When he gave the fictitious name, did he use the name Hidell?

Mrs. OSWALD. Where?

Mr. RANKIN. When you called him that time.

Mrs. OSWALD. Where?

Mr. RANKIN. On the weekend, when you called him, you said there was a fictitious name given.

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't know what name he had given. He said that he was under a fictitious name, but he didn't tell me which.

Mr. RANKIN. Have you ever heard that he used the fictitious name Hidell?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. When did you first learn that he used such a name?

Mrs. OSWALD. In New Orleans.

Mr. RANKIN. How did you learn that?

Mrs. OSWALD. When he was interviewed by some anti-Cubans, he used this name and spoke of an organization. I knew there was no such organization. And I know that Hidell is merely an altered Fidel, and I laughed at such foolishness. My imagination didn't work that way.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you say anything to him about it at that time?

Mrs. OSWALD. I said that it wasn't a nice thing to do and some day it would be discovered anyhow.

Mr. RANKIN. Now, the weekend of November 15th to 17th, which was the weekend before the assassination, do you know what your husband did or how he spent that weekend while he was in Dallas?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, I don't.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you know whether he took the rifle before he went into Dallas, that trip, for that weekend?

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't know. I think that he took the rifle on Thursday when he came the next time, but I didn't see him take it. I assume that. I cannot know it.

Mr. RANKIN. Except for the time in New Orleans that you described, and the time you called to Dallas to ask for your husband, do you know of any other time your husband was using an assumed name?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, no more.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you think he was using that assumed name in connection with this Fair Play for Cuba activity or something else?

Mrs. OSWALD. The name Hidell, which you pronounced Hidell, was in connection with his activity with the non-existing organization.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you and your husband live under the name Hidell in New Orleans?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. You were never identified as the Hidells, as far as you knew, while you were there?

Mrs. OSWALD. No. No one knew that Lee was Hidell.

Mr. RANKIN. How did you discover it, then?

Mrs. OSWALD. I already said that when I listened to the radio, they spoke of that name, and I asked him who, and he said that it was he.

Mr. RANKIN. Was that after the arrest?

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't remember when the interview took place, before the arrest or after.

Mr. RANKIN. But it was in regard to some interview for radio transmission, and he had identified himself as Hidell, rather than Oswald, is that right?

Mrs. OSWALD. No—he represented himself as Oswald, but he said that the organization which he supposedly represents is headed by Hidell.

Mr. RANKIN. He was using the name Hidell, then, to have a fictitious president or head of the organization which really was he himself, is that right?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. You have told us about his practicing with the rifle, the telescopic lens, on the back porch at New Orleans, and also his using the bolt action that you heard from time to time.

Will you describe that a little more fully to us, as best you remember?

Mrs. OSWALD. I cannot describe that in greater detail. I can only say that Lee would sit there with the rifle and open and close the bolt and clean it. No, he didn't clean it at that time.

Yes—twice he did clean it.

Mr. RANKIN. And did he seem to be practicing with the telescopic lens, too, and sighting the gun on different objects?

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't know. The rifle was always with this. I don't know exactly how he practiced, because I was in the house, I was busy. I just knew that he sits there with his rifle. I was not interested in it.

Mr. RANKIN. Was this during the light of the day or during the darkness?

Mrs. OSWALD. During darkness.

Mr. RANKIN. Was it so dark that neighbors could not see him on the porch there with the gun?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. Now, during the week of the assassination, did your husband call you at all by telephone?

Mrs. OSWALD. He telephoned me on Monday, after I had called him on Sunday, and he was not there.

Or, rather, he was there, but he wasn't called to the phone because he was known by another name.

On Monday he called several times, but after I hung up on him and didn't want to talk to him he did not call again. He then arrived on Thursday.

Mr. RANKIN. Did he tell you he was coming Thursday?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you learn that he was using the assumed name of Lee as his last name?

Mrs. OSWALD. I know it now, but I did not ever know it before.

Mr. RANKIN. Thursday was the 21st. Do you recall that?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. And the assassination was on the 22d.

Mrs. OSWALD. This is very hard to forget.

Mr. RANKIN. Did your husband give any reason for coming home on Thursday?

Mrs. OSWALD. He said that he was lonely because he hadn't come the preceding weekend, and he wanted to make his peace with me.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you say anything to him then?

Mrs. OSWALD. He tried to talk to me but I would not answer him, and he was very upset.

Mr. RANKIN. Were you upset with him?

Mrs. OSWALD. I was angry, of course. He was not angry—he was upset. I was angry. He tried very hard to please me. He spent quite a bit of time putting away diapers and played with the children on the street.

Mr. RANKIN. How did you indicate to him that you were angry with him?

Mrs. OSWALD. By not talking to him.

Mr. RANKIN. And how did he show that he was upset?

Mrs. OSWALD. He was upset over the fact that I would not answer him. He tried to start a conversation with me several times, but I would not answer. And he said that he didn't want me to be angry at him because this upsets him.

On that day, he suggested that we rent an apartment in Dallas. He said that

he was tired of living alone and perhaps the reason for my being so angry was the fact that we were not living together. That if I want to he would rent an apartment in Dallas tomorrow—that he didn't want me to remain with Ruth any longer, but wanted me to live with him in Dallas.

He repeated this not once but several times, but I refused. And he said that once again I was preferring my friends to him, and that I didn't need him.

Mr. RANKIN. What did you say to that?

Mrs. OSWALD. I said it would be better if I remained with Ruth until the holidays, he would come, and we would all meet together. That this was better because while he was living alone and I stayed with Ruth, we were spending less money. And I told him to buy me a washing machine, because two children it became too difficult to wash by hand.

Mr. RANKIN. What did he say to that?

Mrs. OSWALD. He said he would buy me a washing machine.

Mr. RANKIN. What did you say to that?

Mrs. OSWALD. Thank you. That it would be better if he bought something for himself—that I would manage.

Mr. RANKIN. Did this seem to make him more upset, when you suggested that he wait about getting an apartment for you to live in?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes. He then stopped talking and sat down and watched television and then went to bed. I went to bed later. It was about 9 o'clock when he went to sleep. I went to sleep about 11:30. But it seemed to me that he was not really asleep. But I didn't talk to him.

In the morning he got up, said goodbye, and left, and that I shouldn't get up—as always, I did not get up to prepare breakfast. This was quite usual.

And then after I fed Rachel, I took a look to see whether Lee was here, but he had already gone. This was already after the police had come. Ruth told me that in the evening she had worked in the garage and she knows that she had put out the light but that the light was on later—that the light was on in the morning. And she guessed that Lee was in the garage.

But I didn't see it.

Mr. RANKIN. Did she tell you when she thought your husband had been in the garage, what time of the day?

Mrs. OSWALD. She thought that it was during the evening, because the light remained on until morning.

Mr. RANKIN. Why did you stay awake until 11:30? Were you still angry with him?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, not for that reason, but because I had to wash dishes and be otherwise busy with the household—take a bath.

Mr. RANKIN. This is a good place for a recess, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. All right. We can take a recess now.

We will recess now for 10 minutes.

(Brief recess.)

The CHAIRMAN. The Commission will be in order.

Mr. Rankin?

Mr. RANKIN. Mrs. Oswald, why did the use of this false name by your husband make you so angry? Would you explain that a little bit?

Mrs. OSWALD. It would be unpleasant and incomprehensible to any wife if her husband used a fictitious name. And then, of course, I thought that if he would see that I don't like it and that I explained to him that this is not the smart thing to do, that he would stop doing it.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you feel that you were becoming more impatient with all of these things that your husband was doing, the Fair Play for Cuba and the Walker incident, and then this fictitious name business?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, of course. I was tired of it.

Every day I was waiting for some kind of a new surprise. I couldn't wait to find out what else would he think of.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you discuss that with your husband at all?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, of course.

Mr. RANKIN. What did you say about that?

Mrs. OSWALD. I said that no one needed anything like that, that for no

reason at all he was thinking that he was not like other people, that he was more important.

Mr. RANKIN. And what did he say?

Mrs. OSWALD. He would seem to agree, but then would continue again in two or three days.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you sense that he was not intending to carry out his agreement with you to not have another Walker incident or anything like that?

Mrs. OSWALD. I generally didn't think that Lee would repeat anything like that. Generally, I knew that the rifle was very tempting for him. But I didn't believe that he would repeat it. It was hard to believe.

Mr. RANKIN. I wasn't clear about when Mrs. Paine thought that your husband might have been in the garage and had the light on. Can you give us any help on the time of day that she had in mind?

Mrs. OSWALD. In the morning she thought about it. But she didn't attach any significance to it at that time. It was only after the police had come that this became more significant for her.

Mr. RANKIN. So she thought it was in the morning after he got up from his night's rest that he might have gone to the garage, turned on the light?

Mrs. OSWALD. In my opinion, she thought that it was at night, or during the evening that he had been in the garage and turned on the light. At least that is what she said to me. I don't know.

Mr. RANKIN. Did she indicate whether she thought it was before he went to bed at 9 o'clock?

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't know. At first it seems it wasn't nine, it was perhaps ten o'clock when Lee went to bed. And first, Ruth went to her room and then Lee went. He was there after her.

Mr. RANKIN. So he might have been in the garage sometime between 9 and 10? Was that what you thought?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes. But I think that he might have even been there in the morning and turned on the light.

Mr. RANKIN. On this evening when you were angry with him, had he come home with the young Mr. Frazier that day?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. When was the last time that you had noticed the rifle before that day?

Mrs. OSWALD. I said that I saw—for the first and last time I saw the rifle about a week after I had come to Mrs. Paine.

But, as I said, the rifle was wrapped in a blanket, and I was sure when the police had come that the rifle was still in the blanket, because it was all rolled together. And, therefore, when they took the blanket and the rifle was not in it, I was very much surprised.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you ever see the rifle in a paper cover?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Could you describe for the Commission the place in the garage where the rifle was located?

Mrs. OSWALD. When you enter the garage from the street it was in the front part, the left.

Mr. RANKIN. By the left you mean left of the door?

Mrs. OSWALD. It is an overhead door and the rifle was to the left, on the floor.

It was always in the same place.

Mr. RANKIN. Was there anything else close to the rifle that you recall?

Mrs. OSWALD. Next to it there were some—next to the rifle there were some suitcases and Ruth had some paper barrels in the garage where the kids used to play.

Mr. RANKIN. The way the rifle was wrapped with a blanket, could you tell whether or not the rifle had been removed and the blanket just left there at any time?

Mrs. OSWALD. It always had the appearance of having something inside of it. But I only looked at it really once, and I was always sure the rifle was in it. Therefore, it is very hard to determine when the rifle was taken. I only

assumed that it was on Thursday, because Lee had arrived so unexpectedly for some reason.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you believe that the reason for his coming out to see you Thursday was to make up?

Mrs. OSWALD. I think there were two reasons. One was to make up with me, and the other to take the rifle. This is—this, of course, is not irreconcilable.

Mr. RANKIN. But you think he came to take the rifle because of what you learned since. Is that it?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, of course.

Mr. RANKIN. Before this incident about the fictitious name, were you and your husband getting along quite well?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. Did he seem to like his job at the depository?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, because it was not dirty work.

Mr. RANKIN. Had he talked about getting any other job?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes. When he went to answer some ads, he preferred to get some work connected with photography rather than this work. He liked this work relatively speaking—he liked it. But, of course, he wanted to get something better.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you like the photographic work?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes. It was interesting for him. When he would see his work in the newspaper he would always point it out.

Mr. RANKIN. He had a reference in his notebook to the word "Microdot". Do you know what he meant by that?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. How did your husband get along with Mrs. Paine?

Mrs. OSWALD. He was polite to her, as an acquaintance would be, but he didn't like her. He told me that he detested her—a tall and stupid woman. She is, of course, not too smart, but most people aren't.

Mr. RANKIN. Did he ever say anything to indicate he thought Mrs. Paine was coming between him and you?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Did Mrs. Paine say anything about your husband?

Mrs. OSWALD. She didn't say anything bad. I don't know what she thought. But she didn't say anything bad.

Perhaps she didn't like something about him, but she didn't tell me. She didn't want to hurt me by saying anything.

Mr. RANKIN. I have understood from your testimony that you did not really care to go to Russia but your husband was the one that was urging that, and that is why you requested the visa, is that correct?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. And later he talked about not only you and your child going, but also his going with you, is that right?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you know what caused him to make that change?

Mrs. OSWALD. At one time—I don't remember whether he was working at that time or not—he was very sad and upset. He was sitting and writing something in his notebook. I asked him what he was writing and he said, "It would be better if I go with you."

Then he went into the kitchen and he sat there in the dark, and when I came in I saw that he was crying. I didn't know why. But, of course, when a man is crying it is not a very pleasant thing, and I didn't start to question him about why.

Mr. RANKIN. Did he say to you that he didn't want you to leave him alone?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you at that time say anything to him about your all staying in this country and getting along together?

Mrs. OSWALD. I told him, of course, that it would be better for us to stay here. But if it was very difficult for him and if he was always worried about tomorrow, then perhaps it would be better if we went.

Mr. RANKIN. On the evening of the 21st, was anything said about curtain rods or his taking curtain rods to town the following day?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, I didn't have any.

Mr. RANKIN. He didn't say anything like that?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you discuss the weekend that was coming up?

Mrs. OSWALD. He said that he probably would not come on Friday, and he didn't come—he was in jail.

Mr. RANKIN. Did the quarrel that you had at that time seem to cause him to be more disturbed than usual?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, not particularly. At least he didn't talk about that quarrel when he came. Usually he would remember about what happened. This time he didn't blame me for anything, didn't ask me any questions, just wanted to make up.

Mr. RANKIN. I understood that when you didn't make up he was quite disturbed and you were still angry, is that right?

Mrs. OSWALD. I wasn't really very angry. I, of course, wanted to make up with him. But I gave the appearance of being very angry. I was smiling inside, but I had a serious expression on my face.

Mr. RANKIN. And as a result of that, did he seem to be more disturbed than usual?

Mrs. OSWALD. As always, as usual. Perhaps a little more. At least when he went to bed he was very upset.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you think that had anything to do with the assassination the next day?

Mrs. OSWALD. Perhaps he was thinking about all of that. I don't think that he was asleep. Because, in the morning when the alarm clock went off he hadn't woken up as usual before the alarm went off, and I thought that he probably had fallen asleep very late. At least then I didn't think about it. Now I think so.

Mr. RANKIN. When he said he would not be home that Friday evening, did you ask him why?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. What did he say?

Mrs. OSWALD. He said that since he was home on Thursday, that it wouldn't make any sense to come again on Friday, that he would come for the weekend.

Mr. RANKIN. Did that cause you to think that he had any special plans to do anything?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you usually keep a wallet with money in it at the Paines?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, in my room at Ruth Paine's there was a black wallet in a wardrobe. Whenever Lee would come he would put money in there, but I never counted it.

Mr. RANKIN. On the evening of November 21st, do you know how much was in the wallet?

Mrs. OSWALD. No. One detail that I remember was that he had asked me whether I had bought some shoes for myself, and I said no, that I hadn't had any time. He asked me whether June needed anything and told me to buy everything that I needed for myself and for June—and for the children.

This was rather unusual for him, that he would mention that first.

Mr. RANKIN. Did he take the money from the wallet from time to time?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, he generally kept the amount that he needed and put the rest in the wallet.

I know that the money that was found there, that you think this was not Lee's money. But I know for sure that this was money that he had earned. He had some money left after his trip to Mexico. Then we received an unemployment compensation check for \$33. And then Lee paid only \$7 or \$8 for his room. And I know how he eats, very little.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you know what his ordinary lunch was?

Mrs. OSWALD. Peanut butter sandwich, cheese sandwich, some lettuce, and he would buy himself a hamburger, something else, a coke.

Mr. RANKIN. And what about his evening meal? Do you know what he ate in the evening meal?

Mrs. OSWALD. Usually meat, vegetables, fruit, dessert.

Mr. RANKIN. Where would he have that?

Mrs. OSWALD. He loved bananas. They were inexpensive.

The place where he rented a room, he could not cook there. He said that there was some sort of a cafe across the street and that he ate there.

Mr. RANKIN. Did he ever tell you what he paid for his evening meal?

Mrs. OSWALD. About a dollar, \$1.30.

Mr. RANKIN. What about his breakfast? Do you know what he had for breakfast ordinarily?

Mrs. OSWALD. He never had breakfast. He just drank coffee and that is all. Not because he was trying to economize. Simply he never liked to eat.

Mr. RANKIN. Mr. Reporter, will you note the presence of Mr. Ruben Efron in the hearing room. He also knows Russian.

On November 21, the day before the assassination that you were describing, was there any discussion between you and your husband about President Kennedy's trip or proposed trip to Texas, Dallas and the Fort Worth area?

Mrs. OSWALD. I asked Lee whether he knew where the President would speak, and told him that I would very much like to hear him and to see him. I asked him how this could be done.

But he said he didn't know how to do that, and didn't enlarge any further on that subject.

Mr. RANKIN. Had there ever been——

Mrs. OSWALD. This was also somewhat unusual—his lack of desire to talk about that subject any further.

Mr. RANKIN. Can you explain that to us?

Mrs. OSWALD. I think about it more now.

At that time, I didn't pay any attention.

Mr. RANKIN. How did you think it was unusual? Could you explain that?

Mrs. OSWALD. The fact that he didn't talk a lot about it. He merely gave me—said something as an answer, and did not have any further comments.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you mean by that usually he would discuss a matter of that kind and show considerable interest?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, of course, he would have told who would be there and where this would take place.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you say anything about his showing a lack of interest at that time?

Mrs. OSWALD. I merely shrugged my shoulders.

Mr. RANKIN. Now, prior to that time, had there been any discussion between you concerning the proposed trip of President Kennedy to Texas?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. While you were in New Orleans, was there any discussion or reference to President Kennedy's proposed trip to Texas?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Did your husband make any comments about President Kennedy on that evening, of the 21st?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Had your husband at any time that you can recall said anything against President Kennedy?

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't remember any—ever having said that. I don't know. He never told me that.

Mr. RANKIN. Did he ever say anything good about President Kennedy?

Mrs. OSWALD. Usually he would translate magazine articles. They were generally good. And he did not say that this contradicted his opinion. I just remembered that he talked about Kennedy's father, who made his fortune by a not very—in a not very good manner. Disposing of such funds, of course, it was easier for his sons to obtain an education and to obtain a government position, and it was easier to make a name for themselves.

Mr. RANKIN. What did he say about President Kennedy's father making his fortune?

Mrs. OSWALD. He said that he had speculated in wine. I don't know to what extent that is true.

Mr. RANKIN. When he read these articles to you, did he comment favorably upon President Kennedy?

Mrs. OSWALD. I have already said that he would translate articles which were good, but he would not comment on them.

Mr. RANKIN. Can you recall—

Mrs. OSWALD. Excuse me. At least when I found out that Lee had shot at the President, for me this was surprising. And I didn't believe it. I didn't believe for a long time that Lee had done that. That he had wanted to kill Kennedy—because perhaps Walker was there again, perhaps he wanted to kill him.

Mr. RANKIN. Why did you not believe this?

Mrs. OSWALD. Because I had never heard anything bad about Kennedy from Lee. And he never had anything against him.

Mr. RANKIN. But you also say that he never said anything about him.

Mrs. OSWALD. He read articles which were favorable.

Mr. RANKIN. Did he say he approved of those articles?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, he didn't say anything. Perhaps he did reach his own conclusions reading these articles, but he didn't tell me about them.

Mr. RANKIN. So apparently he didn't indicate any approval or disapproval as far as he was concerned, of President Kennedy?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, that is correct. The President is the President. In my opinion, he never wanted to overthrow him. At least he never showed me that. He never indicated that he didn't want that President.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you observe that his acts on November 21st the evening before the assassination, were anything like they were the evening before the Walker incident?

Mrs. OSWALD. Absolutely nothing in common.

Mr. RANKIN. Did he say anything at all that would indicate he was contemplating the assassination?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Did he discuss the television programs he saw that evening with you?

Mrs. OSWALD. He was looking at TV by himself. I was busy in the kitchen. At one time when we were—when I was together with him they showed some sort of war films, from World War II. And he watched them with interest.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you recall films that he saw called "Suddenly," and "We were Strangers" that involved assassinations?

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't remember the names of these films. If you would remind me of the contents, perhaps I would know.

Mr. RANKIN. Well, "Suddenly," was about the assassination of a president, and the other was about the assassination of a Cuban dictator.

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, Lee saw those films.

Mr. RANKIN. Did he tell you that he had seen them?

Mrs. OSWALD. I was with him when he watched them.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you recall about when this was with reference to the date of the assassination?

Mrs. OSWALD. It seems that this was before Rachel's birth.

Mr. RANKIN. Weeks or months? Can you recall that?

Mrs. OSWALD. Several days. Some five days.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you discuss the films after you had seen them with your husband?

Mrs. OSWALD. One film about the assassination of the president in Cuba, which I had seen together with him, he said that this was a fictitious situation, but that the content of the film was similar to the actual situation which existed in Cuba, meaning the revolution in Cuba.

Mr. RANKIN. Did either of you comment on either film being like the attempt on Walker's life?

Mrs. OSWALD. No. I didn't watch the other film.

Mr. RANKIN. Was anything said by your husband about how easy an assassination could be committed like that?

Mrs. OSWALD. No. I only know that he watched the film with interest, but I didn't like it.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you recall anything else he said about either of these films?

Mrs. OSWALD. Nothing else. He didn't tell me anything else. He talked to Ruth a few words. Perhaps she knows more.

Mr. RANKIN. By Ruth, you mean Mrs. Paine?

Mrs. OSWALD. They spoke in English.

Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. And did Mrs. Paine tell you what he said to her at that time?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you recall your husband saying at any time after he saw the film about the Cuban assassination that this was the old-fashioned way of assassination?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you recall anything being said by your husband at any time about Governor Connally?

Mrs. OSWALD. Well, while we were still in Russia, and Connally at that time was Secretary of the Navy, Lee wrote him a letter in which he asked Connally to help him obtain a good character reference because at the end of his Army service he had a good characteristic—honorable discharge—but that it had been changed after it became known he had gone to Russia.

Mr. RANKIN. Had it been changed to undesirable discharge, as you understand it?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes. Then we received a letter from Connally in which he said that he had turned the matter over to the responsible authorities. That was all in Russia.

But here it seems he had written again to that organization with a request to review. But he said from time to time that these are bureaucrats, and he was dissatisfied.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you know when he wrote again?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Was that letter written from New Orleans?

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't know. I only know about the fact, but when and how, I don't know.

Mr. RANKIN. Did your husband say anything to you to indicate he had a dislike for Governor Connally?

Mrs. OSWALD. Here he didn't say anything.

But while we were in Russia he spoke well of him. It seems to me that Connally was running for Governor and Lee said that when he would return to the United States he would vote for him.

Mr. RANKIN. That is all that you remember that he said about Governor Connally then?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. With regard to the Walker incident, you said that your husband seemed disturbed for several weeks. Did you notice anything of that kind with regard to the day prior to the assassination?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. On November 22, the day of the assassination, you said your husband got up and got his breakfast. Did you get up at all before he left?

Mrs. OSWALD. No. I woke up before him, and I then went to the kitchen to see whether he had had breakfast or not—whether he had already left for work. But the coffee pot was cold and Lee was not there.

And when I met Ruth that morning, I asked her whether Lee had had coffee or not, and she said probably, perhaps he had made himself some instant coffee.

But probably he hadn't had any breakfast that morning.

Mr. RANKIN. Then did he say anything to you that morning at all, or did he get up and go without speaking to you?

Mrs. OSWALD. He told me to take as much money as I needed and to buy everything, and said goodbye, and that is all.

After the police had already come, I noticed that Lee had left his wedding ring.

Mr. RANKIN. You didn't observe that that morning when your husband had left, did you?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you know approximately what time your husband left that morning?

Mrs. OSWALD. I have written it there, but I have now forgotten whether it was seven or eight. But a quarter to eight—I don't know. I have now forgotten.

Mr. RANKIN. What time was he due for work?

Mrs. OSWALD. He was due at work at 8 or 8:30. At 7:15 he was already gone.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you know whether he rode with Wesley Frazier that morning?

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't know. I didn't hear him leave.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you ever see a paper bag or cover for the rifle at the Paine's residence or garage?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you ever see a bag at any time?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Where did your husband have his lunch? Did he take a sandwich to the depository, or did he go home to his rooming house for lunch? Do you know?

Mrs. OSWALD. He usually took sandwiches to lunch. But I don't know whether he would go home or not.

Mr. RANKIN. Had your husband ever left his wedding ring at home that way before?

Mrs. OSWALD. At one time while he was still at Fort Worth, it was inconvenient for him to work with his wedding ring on and he would remove it, but at work—he would not leave it at home. His wedding ring was rather wide, and it bothered him.

I don't know now. He would take it off at work.

Mr. RANKIN. Then this is the first time during your married life that he had ever left it at home where you live?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you know whether your husband carried any package with him when he left the house on November 22nd?

Mrs. OSWALD. I think that he had a package with his lunch. But a small package.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you know whether he had any package like a rifle in some container?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. What did you do the rest of the morning, after you got up on November 22d?

Mrs. OSWALD. When I got up the television set was on, and I knew that Kennedy was coming. Ruth had gone to the doctor with her children and she left the television set on for me. And I watched television all morning, even without having dressed. She was running around in her pajamas and watching television with me.

Mr. RANKIN. Before the assassination, did you ever see your husband examining the route of the parade as it was published in the paper?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you ever see him looking at a map of Dallas like he did in connection with the Walker shooting?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. How did you learn of the shooting of President Kennedy?

Mrs. OSWALD. I was watching television, and Ruth by that time was already with me, and she said someone had shot at the President.

Mr. RANKIN. What did you say?

Mrs. OSWALD. It was hard for me to say anything. We both turned pale. I went to my room and cried.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you think immediately that your husband might have been involved?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Did Mrs. Paine say anything about the possibility of your husband being involved?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, but she only said that "By the way, they fired from the building in which Lee is working."

My heart dropped. I then went to the garage to see whether the rifle was there, and I saw that the blanket was still there, and I said, "Thank God." I thought, "Can there really be such a stupid man in the world that could do something like that?" But I was already rather upset at that time—I don't know why. Perhaps my intuition.

I didn't know what I was doing.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you look in the blanket to see if the rifle was there?

Mrs. OSWALD. I didn't unroll the blanket. It was in its usual position, and it appeared to have something inside.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you at any time open the blanket to see if the rifle was there?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, only once.

Mr. RANKIN. You have told us about that.

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. And what about Mrs. Paine? Did she look in the blanket to see if the rifle was there?

Mrs. OSWALD. She didn't know about the rifle.

Perhaps she did know. But she never told me about it.

I don't know.

Mr. RANKIN. When did you learn that the rifle was not in the blanket?

Mrs. OSWALD. When the police arrived and asked whether my husband had a rifle, and I said "Yes."

Mr. RANKIN. Then what happened?

Mrs. OSWALD. They began to search the apartment. When they came to the garage and took the blanket, I thought, "Well, now, they will find it."

They opened the blanket but there was no rifle there.

Then, of course, I already knew that it was Lee. Because, before that, while I thought that the rifle was at home, I did not think that Lee had done that. I thought the police had simply come because he was always under suspicion.

Mr. RANKIN. What do you mean by that—he was always under suspicion?

Mrs. OSWALD. Well, the FBI would visit us.

Mr. RANKIN. Did they indicate what they suspected him of?

Mrs. OSWALD. They didn't tell me anything.

Mr. RANKIN. What did you say to the police when they came?

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't remember now. I was so upset that I don't remember what I said.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you tell them about your husband leaving his wedding ring that morning?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, because I didn't know it.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you tell them that you had looked for the gun you thought was in the blanket?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, it seems to me I didn't say that. They didn't ask me.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you watch the police open the blanket to see if the rifle was there?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. Did Mrs. Paine also watch them?

Mrs. OSWALD. It seems to me, as far as I remember.

Mr. RANKIN. When the police came, did Mrs. Paine act as an interpreter for you?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes. She told me about what they had said. But I was not being questioned so that she would interpret. She told me herself. She very much loved to talk and she welcomed the occasion.

Mr. RANKIN. You mean by that that she answered questions of the police and then told you what she had said?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. And what did she tell you that she had said to the police?

Mrs. OSWALD. She talked to them in the usual manner, in English, when they were addressing her.

But when they addressed me, she was interpreting.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you recall the exact time of the day that you discovered the wedding ring there at the house?

Mrs. OSWALD. About 2 o'clock, I think. I don't remember. Then everything got mixed up, all time.

Mr. RANKIN. Did the police spend considerable time there?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you remember the names of any of the officers?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, I don't.

Mr. RANKIN. How did they treat you?

Mrs. OSWALD. Rather gruff, not very polite. They kept on following me. I wanted to change clothes because I was dressed in a manner fitting to the house. And they would not even let me go into the dressing room to change.

Mr. RANKIN. What did you say about that?

Mrs. OSWALD. Well, what could I tell them?

I asked them, but they didn't want to. They were rather rough. They kept on saying, hurry up.

Mr. RANKIN. Did they want you to go with them?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you leave the house with them right soon after they came?

Mrs. OSWALD. About an hour, I think.

Mr. RANKIN. And what were they doing during that hour?

Mrs. OSWALD. They searched the entire house.

Mr. RANKIN. Did they take anything with them?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes—everything, even some tapes—Ruth's tapes from a tape recorder, her things. I don't know what.

Mr. RANKIN. Did they take many of your belongings?

Mrs. OSWALD. I didn't watch at that time. After all, it is not my business. If they need it, let them take it.

Mr. RANKIN. Did they give you an inventory of what they took?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. You have never received an inventory?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you now know what they took?

Mrs. OSWALD. No. I know that I am missing my documents, that I am missing Lee's documents, Lee's wedding ring.

Mr. RANKIN. What about clothing?

Mrs. OSWALD. Robert had some of Lee's clothing. I don't know what was left of Lee's things, but I hope they will return it. No one needs it.

Mr. RANKIN. What documents do you refer to that you are missing?

Mrs. OSWALD. My foreign passport, my immigration card, my birth certificate, my wedding certificate—marriage certificate, June's and Rachel's birth certificates. Then various letters, my letters from friends. Perhaps something that has some bearing—photographs, whatever has some reference—whatever refers to the business at hand, let it remain.

Then my diploma. I don't remember everything now.

Mr. RANKIN. What documents of your husband's do you recall that they took?

Mrs. OSWALD. I didn't see what they took. At least at the present time I have none of Lee's documents.

Mr. RANKIN. The documents of his that you refer to that you don't have are similar to your own that you described?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes. He also had a passport, several work books, labor cards. I don't know what men here—what sort of documents men here carry.

Mr. RANKIN. Mr. Chairman, it is now 12:30.

The CHAIRMAN. I think we will recess now for lunch.

(Whereupon, at 12:30 p.m., the Commission recessed.)

Afternoon Session

TESTIMONY OF MRS. LEE HARVEY OSWALD RESUMED

The President's Commission reconvened at 2 p.m.

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

Mr. RANKIN. Mrs. Oswald, we will hand you Exhibit 19, which purports to be an envelope from the Soviet Embassy at Washington, dated November 4, 1963, and ask you if you recall seeing the original or a copy of that.

Mrs. OSWALD. I had not seen this envelope before, but Lee had told me that a letter had been received in my name from the Soviet Embassy with congratulations on the October Revolution—on the date of the October Revolution.

Mr. RANKIN. And you think that that came in that Exhibit 19, do you?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, because the date coincides, and I didn't get any other letters.

Mr. RANKIN. We offer in evidence Exhibit 19.

The CHAIRMAN. It may be in the record and given the next number.

(The document referred to was marked Commission Exhibit No. 19, and received in evidence.)

Mr. RANKIN. In some newspaper accounts your mother-in-law has intimated that your husband might have been an agent for some government, and that she might have—did have information in that regard.

Do you know anything about that?

Mrs. OSWALD. The first time that I hear anything about this.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you ever know—

Mrs. OSWALD. That is all untrue, of course.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you ever know that your husband was at any time an agent of the Soviet Union?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you ever know that your husband was an agent of the Cuban government at any time?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you ever know that your husband was an agent of any agency of the United States Government?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you ever know that your husband was an agent of any government?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you have any idea of the motive which induced your husband to kill the President?

Mrs. OSWALD. From everything that I know about my husband, and of the events that transpired, I can conclude that he wanted in any way, whether good or bad, to do something that would make him outstanding, that he would be known in history.

Mr. RANKIN. And is it then your belief that he assassinated the President, for this purpose?

Mrs. OSWALD. That is my opinion. I don't know how true that is.

Mr. RANKIN. And what about his shooting at General Walker? Do you think he had the same motive or purpose in doing that?

Mrs. OSWALD. I think that, yes.

Mr. RANKIN. After the assassination, were you coerced or abused in any way by the police or anyone else in connection with the inquiry about the assassination?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you see or speak to your husband on November 22d, following his arrest?

Mrs. OSWALD. On the 22d I did not see him.

On the 23d I met with him.

Mr. RANKIN. And when you met with him on the 23d, was it at your request or his?

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't know whether he requested it, but I know that I wanted to see him.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you request the right to see your husband on the 22d, after his arrest?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. And what answer were you given at that time?

Mrs. OSWALD. I was not permitted to.

Mr. RANKIN. Who gave you that answer?

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't know. The police.

Mr. RANKIN. You don't know what officer of the police?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Where did you spend the evening on the night of the assassination?

Mrs. OSWALD. On the day of the assassination, on the 22d, after returning from questioning by the police, I spent the night with Mrs. Paine, together with Lee's mother.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you receive any threats from anyone at this time?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Did any law enforcement agency offer you protection at that time?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. When you saw your husband on November 23d, the day after the assassination, did you have a conversation with him?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. And where did this occur?

Mrs. OSWALD. In the police department.

Mr. RANKIN. Were just the two of you together at that time?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, the mother was there together with me.

Mr. RANKIN. At that time what did you say to him and what did he say to you?

Mrs. OSWALD. You probably know better than I do what I told him.

Mr. RANKIN. Well, I need your best recollection, if you can give it to us, Mrs. Oswald.

Mrs. OSWALD. Of course he tried to console me that I should not worry, that everything would turn out well. He asked about how the children were. He spoke of some friends who supposedly would help him. I don't know who he had in mind. That he had written to someone in New York before that. I was so upset that of course I didn't understand anything of that. It was simply talk.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you say anything to him then?

Mrs. OSWALD. I told him that the police had been there and that a search had been conducted, that they had asked me whether we had a rifle, and I had answered yes.

And he said that if there would be a trial, and that if I am questioned it would be my right to answer or to refuse to answer.

Mr. GOPADZE. She asked me if she talked about that thing, the first evening when I talked to her with the FBI agents, she asked me if she didn't have to tell me if she didn't want to. And warning her of her constitutional rights, telling her she didn't have to tell me anything she didn't want to—at that time, she told me she knew about that, that she didn't have to tell me if she didn't want to.

Mrs. OSWALD. And he then asked me, "Who told you you had that right?" And then I understood that he knew about it.

Mr. GOPADZE. At that time I did not know.

Mrs. OSWALD. I thought you had been told about it because the conversation had certainly been written down. I am sure that while I was talking to Lee—after all, this was not some sort of a trial of a theft, but a rather important matter, and I am sure that everything was recorded.

Mr. RANKIN. Let me see if I can clarify what you were saying.

As I understand it, Mr. Gopadze had talked to you with the FBI agents after the assassination, and they had cautioned you that you didn't have to talk, in accordance with your constitutional rights, is that correct?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, that is right.

Mr. RANKIN. And you told Mr. Gopadze you already knew that?

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't remember what I told him.

Mr. GOPADZE. Mrs. Oswald, on her own accord, asked me, or told me that she didn't have to tell us anything she didn't want to.

I said, "That is right."

Mrs. OSWALD. I disliked him immediately, because he introduced himself as being from the FBI. I was at that time very angry at the FBI because I thought perhaps Lee is not guilty, and they have merely tricked him.

Mr. GOPADZE. Mr. Rankin, may I, for the benefit of the Commission—I would like to mention that I didn't represent myself as being an FBI agent. I just said that I was a government agent, with the FBI. And I introduced both agents to Mrs. Oswald.

Mr. RANKIN. And, Mrs. Oswald, you thought he was connected with the FBI in some way, did you?

Mrs. OSWALD. He had come with them, and I decided he must have been.

Mr. RANKIN. And your ill feeling towards the FBI was——

Mrs. OSWALD. He did not tell me that he was with the FBI, but he was with them.

Mr. RANKIN. Your ill feeling towards the FBI was due to the fact that you thought they were trying to obtain evidence to show your husband was guilty in regard to the assassination?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. But you have said since the assassination that you didn't want to believe it, but you had to believe that your husband had killed President Kennedy, is that right?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes. There were some facts, but not too many, and I didn't know too much about it at that time yet. After all, there are in life some accidental concurrences of circumstances. And it is very difficult to believe in that.

Mr. RANKIN. But from what you have learned since that time, you arrived at this conclusion, did you, that your husband had killed the President?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes. Unfortunately, yes.

Mr. RANKIN. And you related those facts that you learned to what you already knew about your life with him and what you knew he had done and appeared to be doing in order to come to that conclusion?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. When you saw your husband on November 23d, at the police station, did you ask him if he had killed President Kennedy?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you ask him at that time if he had killed Officer Tippit?

Mrs. OSWALD. No. I said, "I don't believe that you did that, and everything will turn out well."

After all, I couldn't accuse him—after all, he was my husband.

Mr. RANKIN. And what did he say to that?

Mrs. OSWALD. He said that I should not worry, that everything would turn out well. But I could see by his eyes that he was guilty. Rather, he tried to appear to be brave. However, by his eyes I could tell that he was afraid.

This was just a feeling. It is hard to describe.

Mr. RANKIN. Would you help us a little bit by telling us what you saw in his eyes that caused you to think that?

Mrs. OSWALD. He said goodbye to me with his eyes. I knew that. He said that everything would turn out well, but he did not believe it himself.

Mr. RANKIN. How could you tell that?

Mrs. OSWALD. I saw it in his eyes.

Mr. RANKIN. Did your husband ever at any time say to you that he was responsible or had anything to do with the killing of President Kennedy?

Mrs. OSWALD. After Kennedy—I only saw him once, and he didn't tell me anything, and I didn't see him again.

Mr. RANKIN. And did he at any time tell you that he had anything to do with the shooting of Officer Tippit?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you ever ask your husband why he ran away or tried to escape after the assassination?

Mrs. OSWALD. I didn't ask him about that.

Mr. RANKIN. On either November 22d, or Saturday, November 23d, did anyone contact you and advise you that your husband was going to be shot?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Where did you spend the evening of November 23d?

Mrs. OSWALD. After seeing Lee, we went with some reporters of Life Magazine who had rented a room, but it turned out to be—in a hotel—but it turned out to be inconvenient because there were many people there and we went to another place. We were in a hotel in Dallas, but I don't know the name.

Mr. RANKIN. Who was with you at that time?

Mrs. OSWALD. Lee's mother.

Mr. RANKIN. Anyone else?

Mrs. OSWALD. No—June and Rachel.

Mr. RANKIN. Was Robert with you at all?

Mrs. OSWALD. I saw Robert in the police—at the police station, but he did not stay with us at the hotel.

Mr. RANKIN. Now, the evening of November 22d, were you at Ruth Paine's house?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. At that time did the reporters come there and the Life reporters, and ask you and your mother-in-law and Mrs. Paine about what had happened?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. We have a report that there was quite a scene between Mrs. Paine and your mother-in-law at that time. Was there such an event?

Mrs. OSWALD. I did not understand English too well, and I did not know what they were quarreling about. I know that the reporters wanted to talk to me, but his mother made a scene and went into hysterics, and said I should not talk and that she would not talk.

Mr. RANKIN. Did she say why she would not talk?

Mrs. OSWALD. Perhaps she said it in English. I didn't understand. She talked to the reporters.

Mr. RANKIN. Did she say anything about being paid if she was going to tell any story?

Mrs. OSWALD. She has a mania—only money, money, money.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you understand that she was quarreling with Ruth Paine about something concerning the interview?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes. It appeared to be a quarrel, but what they quarreled about, I don't know.

Mr. RANKIN. And after the quarrel, did you leave there?

Mrs. OSWALD. I went to my room. But then I showed Lee's mother the photograph, where he is photographed with a rifle, and told her he had shot at Walker and it appeared he might have been shooting at the President. She said that I should hide that photograph and not show it to anyone.

On the next day I destroyed one photograph which I had. I think I had two small ones. When we were in the hotel I burned it.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you say anything to her about the destruction of the photographs when she suggested that?

Mrs. OSWALD. She saw it, while I was destroying them.

Mr. RANKIN. After the assassination, did the police and FBI and the Secret Service ask you many questions?

Mrs. OSWALD. In the police station there was a routine regular questioning, as always happens. And then after I was with the agents of the Secret Service and the FBI, they asked me many questions, of course—many questions. Sometimes the FBI agents asked me questions which had no bearing or relationship, and if I didn't want to answer they told me that if I wanted to live in this country, I would have to help in this matter, even though they were often irrelevant. That is the FBI.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you know who said that to you?

Mrs. OSWALD. Mr. Heitman and Bogoslav, who was an interpreter for the FBI.

Mr. RANKIN. You understand that you do not have to tell this Commission in order to stay in this country, don't you, now?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. You are not under any compulsion to tell the Commission here in order to be able to stay in the country.

Mrs. OSWALD. I understand that.

Mr. RANKIN. And you have come here because you want to tell us what you could about this matter, is that right?

Mrs. OSWALD. This is my voluntary wish, and no one forced me to do this.

Mr. RANKIN. Did these various people from the police and the Secret Service and the FBI treat you courteously when they asked you about the matters that they did, concerning the assassination and things leading up to it?

Mrs. OSWALD. I have a very good opinion about the Secret Service, and the people in the police department treated me very well. But the FBI agents were somehow polite and gruff. Sometimes they would mask a gruff question in a polite form.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you see anyone from the Immigration Service during this period of time?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you know who that was?

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't remember the name. I think he is the chairman of that office. At least he was a representative of that office.

Mr. RANKIN. By "that office" you mean the one at Dallas?

Mrs. OSWALD. I was told that he had especially come from New York, it seems to me.

Mr. RANKIN. What did he say to you?

Mrs. OSWALD. That if I was not guilty of anything, if I had not committed any crime against this Government, then I had every right to live in this country. This was a type of introduction before the questioning by the FBI. He even said that it would be better for me if I were to help them.

Mr. RANKIN. Did he explain to you what he meant by being better for you?

Mrs. OSWALD. In the sense that I would have more rights in this country. I understood it that way.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you understand that you were being threatened with deportation if you didn't answer these questions?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, I did not understand it that way.

You see, it was presented in such a delicate form, but there was a clear implication that it would be better if I were to help.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you—

Mrs. OSWALD. This was only felt. It wasn't said in actual words.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you feel that it was a threat?

Mrs. OSWALD. This was not quite a threat—it was not a threat. But it was their great desire that I be in contact, in touch with the FBI. I sensed that.

Mr. RANKIN. But you did not consider it to be a threat to you?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Did anyone indicate that it would affect your ability to work in this country if you cooperated?

Mrs. OSWALD. Excuse me. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Is there anything else about your treatment by law enforcement officials during this period that you would like to tell the Commission about?

Mrs. OSWALD. I think that the FBI agents knew that I was afraid that after everything that had happened I could not remain to live in this country, and they somewhat exploited that for their own purposes, in a very polite form, so that you could not say anything after that. They cannot be accused of anything. They approached it in a very clever, contrived way.

Mr. RANKIN. Was there anyone else of the law enforcement officials that you felt treated you in that manner?

Mrs. OSWALD. No. As for the rest, I was quite content. Everyone was very attentive towards me.

Mr. RANKIN. Where were you on the morning of November 24th when your husband was killed?

Mrs. OSWALD. The night from the 23d to the 24th I spent at a hotel in Dallas, together with the mother. She wanted to make sure that the Life reporters who had taken this room would pay for it, as they had promised. But they disappeared. Then she telephoned Robert, it seems to me, and Gregory—no, Mr. Gregory. And I know that he came with Robert, and Robert paid for the room. And, after that, after we left the hotel, we met with the Secret Service agents. I wanted to see Lee, and we were supposed to go to the police station to see him.

Mr. RANKIN. That was on November 24th, on Sunday?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. And then what happened?

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't remember whether we went to Ruth to take my things or perhaps—in general, I remember that en route, in the car, Mike Howard or Charley Kunkel said that Lee had been shot today.

At first he said that it wasn't serious—perhaps just not to frighten me. I was told that he had been taken to a hospital, and then I was told that he had been seriously wounded.

Then they had to telephone somewhere. They stopped at the house of the chief of police, Curry. From there, I telephone Ruth to tell her that I wanted to take several things which I needed with me, and asked her to prepare them. And that there was a wallet with money and Lee's ring.

Soon after that—Robert was no longer with me, but Gregory was there, and the mother, and the Secret Service agents. They said that Lee had died.

After that, we went to the Motel Inn, the Six Flags Inn, where I stayed for several days—perhaps two weeks—I don't know.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you recall what time of the day you heard that your husband had been shot?

Mrs. OSWALD. Two o'clock in the afternoon, I think.

Mr. RANKIN. And where were you at that time?

Mrs. OSWALD. I was in a car.

Mr. RANKIN. Just riding around, or at some particular place?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, not at two o'clock—earlier. Lee was shot at 11 o'clock. It was probably close to 12 o'clock. He died at one.

Mr. RANKIN. And where was the car that you were in at that time?

Mrs. OSWALD. We were on the way to Chief Curry, en route from the hotel.

Mr. RANKIN. What did you do after you went to the motel?

Mrs. OSWALD. I left with Robert and we prepared for the funeral.

Then Ruth Paine sent my things to me via the agent.

Mr. GOPADZE. She would like a recess for a little while. She has a headache.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes, we will recess.

(Brief recess)

The CHAIRMAN. The Commission will be in order. Do you feel refreshed now, Mrs. Oswald, ready to proceed?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Very well.

Mr. Rankin?

Mr. RANKIN. Mrs. Oswald, I asked you if you asked your husband about his efforts to escape, why he did that. I will ask you now whether in light of what you said about his seeking notoriety in connection with the assassination, in your opinion how you explain his efforts to escape, which would presumably not give him that notoriety.

Mrs. OSWALD. When he did that, he probably did it with the intention of becoming notorious. But after that, it is probably a normal reaction of a man to try and escape.

Mr. RANKIN. You will recall that in the interviews, after the assassination, you first said that you thought your husband didn't do it, do you?

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't remember it, but quite possibly I did say that.

You must understand that now I only speak the truth.

Mr. RANKIN. Recently you said that you thought your husband did kill President Kennedy.

Mrs. OSWALD. I now have enough facts to say that.

Mr. RANKIN. Can you give us or the Commission an idea generally about when you came to this latter conclusion, that he did kill President Kennedy?

Mrs. OSWALD. Perhaps a week after it all happened, perhaps a little more. The more facts came out, the more convinced I was.

Mr. RANKIN. You have stated in some of your interviews that your husband would get on his knees and cry and say that he was lost. Do you recall when this happened?

Mrs. OSWALD. That was in New Orleans.

Mr. RANKIN. Was it more than one occasion?

Mrs. OSWALD. When he said that, that was only once.

Mr. RANKIN. And do you know what caused him to say that?

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't know.

Mr. RANKIN. You don't know whether there was some occasion or some happening that caused it?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Did your mother-in-law ever indicate that she had some particular evidence, either oral or documentary, that would decide this case?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, she always said that she has a pile of papers and many acquaintances.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you ever ask her to tell you what it was that would be so decisive about the case?

Mrs. OSWALD. I would have liked to ask her, but I didn't speak any English. And then I didn't believe her. What documents could she have when she had not seen Lee for one year, and she didn't even know we lived in New Orleans?

I think that is just simply idle talk, that she didn't have anything.

Perhaps she does have something.

But I think that it is only she who considers that she has something that might reveal, uncover this.

Mr. RANKIN. Has there been any time that you wanted to see your mother-in-law that you have been prevented from doing so?

Mrs. OSWALD. Never.

I don't want to see her, I didn't want to.

Mr. RANKIN. Mrs. Oswald, I am going to ask you about differences between you and your mother-in-law, not for the purpose of embarrassing you in any way, but since we are going to ask her to testify it might be helpful to the Commission to know that background.

I hope you will bear with us.

Have you had some differences with your mother-in-law?

Mrs. OSWALD. I am sorry that you will devote your time to questioning her, because you will only be tired and very sick after talking to her. I am very much ashamed to have this kind of relationship to my mother-in-law. I would like to be closer to her and to be on better terms with her. But when you get to know her, you will understand why. I don't think that she can help you.

But if it is a formality, then, of course.

Mr. RANKIN. Mrs. Oswald, can you describe for the Commission your differences so the Commission will be able to evaluate those differences?

Mrs. OSWALD. Well, she asserts, for example, that I don't know anything, that I am being forced to say that Lee is guilty in everything, that she knows more.

This is what our differences are.

Mr. RANKIN. And have you responded to her when she said those things?

Mrs. OSWALD. She said this by means of newspapers and television.

I haven't seen her.

I would like to tell her that, but it is impossible to tell her that, because she would scratch my eyes out.

Mr. RANKIN. Are there any other differences between you and your mother-in-law that you have not described?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, there are no more.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you know of any time that your husband had money in excess of what he obtained from the jobs he was working on?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. He had his unemployment insurance when he was out of work. Is that right?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. And then he had the earnings from his jobs, is that right?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. Now, beyond those amounts, do you know of any sum of money that he had from any source?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you know whether he was ever acting as an undercover agent for the FBI.

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you believe that he was at any time?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you know whether or not he was acting as an agent for the CIA at any time?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you believe that he was?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you know Jack Ruby, the man that killed your husband?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Before the murder of your husband by Jack Ruby, had you ever known of him?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, never.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you know whether your husband knew Jack Ruby before the killing?

Mrs. OSWALD. He was not acquainted with him. Lee did not frequent night-clubs, as the papers said.

Mr. RANKIN. How do you know that?

Mrs. OSWALD. He was always with me. He doesn't like other women. He didn't drink. Why should he then go?

Mr. RANKIN. Do you know any reason why Jack Ruby killed your husband?

Mrs. OSWALD. About that, Jack Ruby should be questioned.

Mr. RANKIN. I have to ask you, Mrs. Oswald.

Mrs. OSWALD. He didn't tell me.

Mr. RANKIN. And do you know any reason why he should?

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't know, but it seems to me that he was a sick person at that time, perhaps. At least when I see his picture in the paper now, it is an abnormal face.

Mr. RANKIN. Has your husband ever mentioned the name Jack Ruby to you?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. He never at any time said anything about Jack Ruby that you can recall?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, never. I heard that name for the first time after he killed Lee.

I would like to consult with Mr. Thorne and Mr. Gopadze.

The CHAIRMAN. You may.

(Brief recess)

The CHAIRMAN. All right.

Mr. RANKIN. Mrs. Oswald, would you like to add something to your testimony?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes. This is in connection with why I left the room. I will tell you why I left the room.

I consulted with my attorney, whether I should bring this up. This is not a secret. The thing is that I have written a letter, even though I have not mailed it yet, to the attorney—to the prosecuting attorney who will prosecute Jack Ruby. I wrote in that letter that even—that if Jack Ruby killed my husband, and I felt that I have a right as the widow of the man he killed to say that, that if he killed him he should be punished for it. But that in accordance with the laws here, the capital punishment, the death penalty is imposed for such a crime, and that I do not want him to be subjected to that kind of a penalty. I do not want another human life to be taken. And I don't want it to be believed because of this letter that I had been acquainted with Ruby, and that I wanted to protect him.

It is simply that it is pity to—I feel sorry for another human life. Because this will not return—bring back to life Kennedy or the others who were killed. But they have their laws, and, of course, I do not have the right to change them. That is only my opinion, and perhaps they will pay some attention to it.

That is all.

Mr. RANKIN. Had you ever been in the Carousel Nightclub?

Mrs. OSWALD. I have never been in nightclubs.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you know where it was located before your husband was killed by Jack Ruby?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, I don't know it now either.

Mr. RANKIN. Can you tell us whether your husband was right handed or left handed?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, he was right handed.

His brother writes with his left hand and so does—his brother and mother both write with their left hand.

And since I mentioned Jack Ruby, the mother and Robert want Ruby to be subjected to a death penalty. And in that we differ.

Mr. RANKIN. Have they told you the reason why they wanted the death penalty imposed?

Mrs. OSWALD. In their view, a killing has to be repaid by a killing.

In my opinion, it is not so.

Mr. RANKIN. Is there anything more about the assassination of President Kennedy that you know that you have not told the Commission?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, I don't know anything.

Mr. RANKIN. Is there anything that your husband ever told you about proposing to assassinate President Kennedy that you haven't told the Commission?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, I don't know that.

Mr. RANKIN. Now, Mrs. Oswald, we will turn to some period in Russia, and ask you about that for a little while.

Can you tell us the time and place of your birth?

Mrs. OSWALD. I was born on July 17, 1941, in Severo Dvinsk, in the Arkhangelskaya Region.

Mr. RANKIN. Who were your parents?

Mrs. OSWALD. Names?

Mr. RANKIN. Yes, please.

Mrs. OSWALD. My mother was Clogia Vasilyevna Proosakova. She was a laboratory assistant.

Mr. RANKIN. And your father?

Mrs. OSWALD. And I had a stepfather. I had no father. I never knew him.

Mr. RANKIN. Who did you live with as a child?

Mrs. OSWALD. With my stepfather, with my mother, and sometimes with my grandmother—grandmother on my mother's side.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you live with your grandparents before you went back to live with your mother and your stepfather?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, I lived with my grandmother until I was approximately five years old.

Mr. RANKIN. And then you moved to live with your mother and your stepfather, did you?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. And was that in Leningrad?

Mrs. OSWALD. After the war, we lived in Moldavia for some time. After the war it was easier to live there, better to live there. And then we returned to Leningrad where we lived with my stepfather's mother—also with my half brother and half sister.

Mr. RANKIN. What was your stepfather's business?

Mrs. OSWALD. He was an electrician in a power station in Leningrad.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you have brothers and sisters?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. How many?

Mrs. OSWALD. One brother, one sister—from my mother's second marriage.

Mr. RANKIN. How old were they?

Mrs. OSWALD. How old are they, or were they?

Mr. RANKIN. Are they—I mean in comparison with your age. Were they three or four years older than you?

Mr. OSWALD. My brother is 5 years younger than I am. My sister is probably 9 years younger than I am. About four years between brother and sister.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you know whether your stepfather was a member of the Communist Party?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. That is, you don't know, or you know he was not?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, I know that he was not a member.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you live for a period with your mother alone?

Mrs. OSWALD. No. After my mother's death, I continued to live with my stepfather, and later went to live in Minsk, with my uncle—my mother's brother.

Mr. RANKIN. What was your stepfather's name?

Mrs. OSWALD. Alexandr Ivanovich Medvedev.

Mr. RANKIN. When did you leave the home of your stepfather?

Mrs. OSWALD. In 1961. No—1959.

Mr. RANKIN. What was your grandfather's occupation?

Mrs. OSWALD. On my mother's side?

Mr. RANKIN. Yes.

Mrs. OSWALD. He was a ship's captain.

Mr. RANKIN. Was he a member of the Communist Party?

Mrs. OSWALD. No. He died shortly after the war.

Mr. RANKIN. Which war?

Mrs. OSWALD. Second.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you get along well with your grandparents?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, I was their favorite.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you get along with your stepfather?

Mrs. OSWALD. No. I was not a good child. I was too fresh with him.

Mr. RANKIN. Did your mother and your stepfather move to Zguritsa?

Mrs. OSWALD. That is in Moldavia, where we lived. That is after the war. It was a very good life there. They still had some kulaks, a lot of food, and we lived very well.

After the war, people lived there pretty well, but they were dekulakized subsequently.

By the way, I don't understand all of that, because these people worked with their own hands all their lives. I was very sorry when I heard that everything had been taken away from them and they had been sent somewhere to Siberia where after living in the south it would be very cold.

Mr. RANKIN. Did your mother have any occupation?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, laboratory assistant—I said that.

Mr. RANKIN. Was she a member of the Communist Party?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you recall when your mother died?

Mrs. OSWALD. In 1957.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you receive a pension after your mother's death?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. How much was it?

Mrs. OSWALD. All children received pensions.

We received for it 3520 rubles, the old rubles.

Mr. RANKIN. Was that called a children's pension?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes. It was paid up to majority, up to the age of 18.

Mr. RANKIN. And was it paid to you directly or to your stepfather?

Mrs. OSWALD. It was paid to me directly.

Mr. RANKIN. Did your brother and sister get a similar pension?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. Did your stepfather adopt you?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, I was not adopted.

Mr. RANKIN. What was your relationship with your half brother? Did you get along with him?

Mrs. OSWALD. I loved them very much, and they loved me.

Mr. RANKIN. And your half sister, too?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes. They are very good children. Not like me.

Mr. RANKIN. Will you tell us what schools you went to?

Mrs. OSWALD. At first I went to school in Moldavia, and later in Leningrad, in a girl's school and then after finishing school I studied in a pharmaceutical institute—pharmaceutical school, rather than institute.

Mr. RANKIN. Where was the pharmaceutical school?

Mrs. OSWALD. In Leningrad.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you go through high school before you went to the pharmaceutical school?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you recall the names of any of your teachers?

Mrs. OSWALD. Dmitry Rossovsky. I remember the director of the school, Nadelman Matvey Akimovich. It is hard to remember now. I have already forgotten. I have had good teachers. They treated me very well, they helped me after my mother died. Knowing my difficult nature, they approached me very pedagogically. But now I would have changed that nature.

Mr. RANKIN. Were you a good student?

Mrs. OSWALD. I was capable but lazy. I never spent much time studying. You know, everything came to me very easily. Sometimes my ability saved me. My language, you know—I talk a lot, and get a good grade.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you work part-time while you were going to school?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes. The money which I received on the pension was not enough, and therefore I had to work as well as study.

Mr. RANKIN. And what did you do in working?

Mrs. OSWALD. At first I worked in a school cafeteria, school lunchroom. This was good for me, because I also got enough to eat that way.

And then I felt the work was not for me, that it was too restricted, and then I worked in a pharmacy. Then when I graduated I worked in a pharmacy as a full-fledged pharmacist—as a pharmacist's assistant.

Mr. RANKIN. Before you graduated, how much were you paid for your work?

Mrs. OSWALD. I think I received 36 per month—this is new rubles—at that time it was still 360 old rubles. But I could eat there three times a day. And then this was a lunchroom that was part of a large restaurant where everyone liked me and I always was treated to all sorts of tidbits and candy. I remember they had some busboys there who always saved something for me.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you save any money while you were working before you graduated?

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't know how to save money. I like to make presents.

Mr. RANKIN. Where did you work after you graduated?

Mrs. OSWALD. I was assigned to work in Leningrad, but my stepfather didn't want me to remain with him because he thought perhaps he would marry again, and, therefore, I left.

But he hasn't married up until now.

Mr. RANKIN. I hand you Exhibit 20, and ask you if you know what that is.

Mrs. OSWALD. This is my diploma. My goodness, what did they do with my diploma?

I can't work with it. The government seal is missing. Who will give me a new diploma?

Mr. RANKIN. Mrs. Oswald, I want to explain to you—the Commission hasn't done anything to your diploma. We are informed that—

Mrs. OSWALD. They should have treated it a little more carefully, though.

Mr. RANKIN. The process was trying to determine fingerprints. It wasn't our action.

Mrs. OSWALD. There must be many fingerprints on there. All of my teachers and everybody that ever looked at it. I am sorry—it is a pity for my diploma.

Mr. RANKIN. We offer in evidence Exhibit 20.

The CHAIRMAN. It may be marked.

(The document referred to was marked Commission Exhibit No. 20, and received in evidence.)

Mr. RANKIN. Do you know why on Exhibit 20 there is no date of admission to the school?

Mrs. OSWALD. There is no entrance date on it, but it does show the date of issue and the date of graduation.

Mr. RANKIN. Isn't there a place for admission, though?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, there is a place for it.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you know when you were admitted to the school?

Mrs. OSWALD. In 1955.

Mr. KRIMER. I might mention the place here is for the year only, not for a full date.

Mr. DULLES. 1955, did you say?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, 1955.

Mr. RANKIN. In this job that you obtained after you left the school, what were your duties?

Mrs. OSWALD. When I worked in the pharmacy?

Mr. RANKIN. Yes.

Mrs. OSWALD. I worked in a hospital pharmacy. I prepared prescriptions. After the rounds every day, the doctors prescribed prescriptions, and the nurses of each department of the hospital enter that in a book, and turn it over to the pharmacy for preparation, where we again transcribed it from the nurses' book as a prescription and prepared it.

Mr. RANKIN. Were you assigned to a particular job or did you go out and get the job? How was that arranged?

Mrs. OSWALD. Generally upon graduation there is an assignment. I was sent to work to a drug warehouse in Leningrad. But this work was not very interesting, because everything was in packages. It is more of a warehousing job. And, therefore, if I had wanted to change I could have changed to any pharmacy. This assignment is only performed in order to guarantee that the graduate has a job. But the graduate can go to work somewhere else.

Mr. RANKIN. How long did you stay in this first job?

Mrs. OSWALD. I was there for three days, which is a probationary period, intended to have the employee familiarize himself with his duties. I didn't like that work, and I went to Minsk, and worked there. I worked there in my own specialty with pleasure. But the reference which I received after I was going to the United States was not very good, because they were very dissatisfied with the fact that I was going to the United States. They could not understand how could it be that a good worker could leave.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you select Minsk as a place to go and work yourself?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. You were not assigned there, then?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Could you have selected other places that you wished to go to and work?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, but the registration is very difficult. In Russia you cannot settle in a large city if you are not registered.

Mr. RANKIN. What do you mean by that?

Mrs. OSWALD. If I lived in Leningrad, I had the right to work there. But if someone would come there from a village he would not have the right to work, because he was not registered and he would not be permitted to. But to move from a larger city to a smaller one, then they may register, such as Minsk.

Mr. RANKIN. By register, do you mean that if you want to go to a place like Leningrad, you had to be recorded some way in the city?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, that is, registered in the police department.

Mr. RANKIN. And if you were not registered, they would not give you a job, is that what you mean?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

No, you would not get a job. There are people who want to come to Leningrad. The housing problem has not been solved.

Mr. RANKIN. Can you tell us how you get registered if you would like to be registered in Leningrad from some other point?

Mrs. OSWALD. First you must have relatives who might have some spare living

space for a person. Sometimes people who have money buy that. You know money does a great deal everywhere.

Mr. RANKIN. And then after you have shown that you have a place to live, do they register you as a matter of course, or do you have to have something else?

Mrs. OSWALD. Not always. One has to have connections, acquaintances.

Mr. RANKIN. Were you registered in Leningrad before you left there?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, of course. But if I had spent one year not living in Leningrad, and were to return, I would not be registered.

Mr. RANKIN. But since you were registered there, you could have found a position in some pharmacy or pharmaceutical work there, could you?

Mrs. OSWALD. Oh, yes, of course.

Mr. RANKIN. Then, can you tell us how you decided to go to Minsk instead of staying in Leningrad?

Mrs. OSWALD. I was very sorry to leave Leningrad, but there were family circumstances.

What can one do?

It is not very pleasant to be a step in the eye of a stepfather.

Mr. RANKIN. So it is because you liked to leave your stepfather's home that you sought some other city in which to work?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes. I had no other place to live in Leningrad, and I did not have enough money to pay for an apartment.

I received 45 and I would have had to pay 30 for an apartment.

Mr. RANKIN. Could you have gotten a job in Leningrad if you stayed there that would pay you so you could have an apartment?

Mrs. OSWALD. Pharmaceutical workers received comparatively little, which is quite undeserved, because they have to study so long, and it is responsible work. Teachers and doctors also receive very little.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you conclude that you could not get a job that would pay you enough to live in your own apartment in Leningrad, then?

Mrs. OSWALD. If I had an apartment in Leningrad. I would have had to work overtime hours in order to be able to pay for it, because the normal workday is only 6½ hours, because they consider that to be hazardous work.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you have a social life while you were in Leningrad?

Mrs. OSWALD. What do you mean by social life?

Mr. RANKIN. Did you have friends that you went out with in the evening, pleasant times?

Mrs. OSWALD. An awful lot.

Mr. RANKIN. So that except for the problem of your stepfather, you enjoyed it there?

Mrs. OSWALD. Oh, yes, of course.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you have any vacations while you were in Leningrad?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes. After working in Minsk for one year I received a vacation and went to a rest home near Leningrad.

Mr. RANKIN. How long did you stay there on vacation?

Mrs. OSWALD. Three weeks. Three weeks in the rest home, and one week I spent in Leningrad with some friends.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you recall the name of the rest home?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you have to ask anyone in Leningrad in order to be able to leave there to go to Minsk, or you just go to Minsk and ask the people there to register you?

Mrs. OSWALD. I simply bought a ticket and went to Minsk, to my uncle.

Mr. RANKIN. And were you registered there then?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. What kind of pay did you get when you worked in Minsk?

Mrs. OSWALD. Forty-five, as everywhere.

Mr. RANKIN. Was that per week?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, that is a month. That is not America.

Mr. RANKIN. Is that 45 rubles?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. Per month?

Mr. DULLES. Old rubles or new rubles?

Mr. RANKIN. Is that old rubles?

Mrs. OSWALD. New rubles.

Mr. RANKIN. What were your hours in this work?

Mrs. OSWALD. 10 a.m., to 4:30 p.m.

Mr. RANKIN. When you said this same pay was paid all over, did you mean to say that you got the same amount regardless of whether you were in a big city or a small city?

Mrs. OSWALD. This is the pharmacists rate everywhere. Unless you work in a specialized sort of an institution, such as a military hospital—there the pay is higher.

Mr. RANKIN. What was the nature of your work?

Mrs. OSWALD. Preparation of prescriptions.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you supervise the preparation of the prescriptions, or did you just put them up yourself?

Mrs. OSWALD. I prepared them myself.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you have a supervisor?

Mrs. OSWALD. I was in charge of myself. If I was working at a table, I was responsible for it.

Of course every institution is in charge of a supervisor who does not prepare medications—he is only an administrator.

Mr. RANKIN. How many days of the week did you work on this job?

Mrs. OSWALD. Six days. Except if a holiday falls upon a weekday. Then I didn't work.

Mr. RANKIN. Were these prescriptions prepared only for patients in the hospital?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes. Sometimes we prepared something for ourselves or for friends, or somebody would ask us.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you pay anything to your uncle and aunt for staying there?

Mrs. OSWALD. No. They had—they were well provided for, and my uncle wanted that I spend the money on myself.

Mr. RANKIN. What was the name of this uncle?

Mrs. OSWALD. Ilva Vasilyevich Proosakov.

Mr. RANKIN. What was the nature of his work?

Mrs. OSWALD. He works in the Ministry of the Interior of the Byelorussian SSR.

Mr. RANKIN. Did he have something to do with lumbering?

Mrs. OSWALD. He is an engineer. He is a graduate of a forestry institute. Technical institute.

Mr. RANKIN. Is he an officer?

Mrs. OSWALD. He was a colonel—a lieutenant colonel or colonel, I think.

Mr. RANKIN. Did he have a nice apartment compared with the others?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, very nice.

Mr. RANKIN. Did he have a telephone in the apartment?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. Were you supporting yourself during this period except for the fact you didn't pay anything for your room and board?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you save money?

Mrs. OSWALD. No. I would receive my pay and I would spend everything in one day—three days tops.

Mr. RANKIN. What would you spend it for?

Mrs. OSWALD. First all the necessary things which I had to buy—shoes, an overcoat for winter. It is cold there, and, therefore, you have to wear warm clothes.

Mr. RANKIN. Was your uncle a member of the Communist Party?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, he is a Communist.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you belong to any organizations during this period in Minsk?

Mrs. OSWALD. First I was a member of the Trade Union. Then I joined the Comsomol, but I was discharged after one year.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you know why you were discharged?

Mrs. OSWALD. I paid my membership dues regularly, and at first they didn't

know who I was or what I was, but after they found out that I had married an American and was getting ready to go to the United States, I was discharged from the Comsomol. They said that I had anti-Soviet views, even though I had no anti-Soviet views of any kind.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you think that they thought you had anti-Soviet views because you married an American?

Mrs. OSWALD. They didn't say that.

Mr. RANKIN. Did they give any reason, other than the fact that you had them?

Mrs. OSWALD. They never gave that as a direct reason, because the Soviet Government was not against marrying an American. But every small official wants to keep his place, and he is afraid of any troubles. I think it was sort of insurance.

Mr. RANKIN. Was there any kind of a hearing about your being let out of the Comsomol?

Mrs. OSWALD. Oh, yes.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you attend?

Mrs. OSWALD. I didn't go there, and they discharged me without me—I was very glad. There was even a reporter there from Comsomol paper, Comsomol Pravda, I think. He tried to shame me quite strongly—for what, I don't know. And he said that he would write about this in the paper, and I told him "Go ahead and write."

But he didn't write anything, because, after all, what could he write?

Mr. RANKIN. Did you make any objection to being removed from the Comsomol?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you belong to any social clubs there?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you belong to any culture groups?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you go out with groups of students in the evening?

Mrs. OSWALD. Of course.

Mr. RANKIN. After you came to the United States, did you correspond with some of these friends?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, but these were not the same friends. They were generally some girl friends before I was married and some friends we made later.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you have a social life there at Minsk?

Mrs. OSWALD. Of course.

Mr. RANKIN. What did that social life consist of? Did you go to parties or to the opera or theater, or what?

Mrs. OSWALD. Sometimes we met at the home of some friends. Of course we went to the opera, to the theater, to concerts, to the circus. To a restaurant.

Mr. RANKIN. When did you first meet Lee Oswald?

Mrs. OSWALD. The first time when I went to a dance, to a party. And there I met Lee.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you recall the date?

Mrs. OSWALD. On March 4th.

Mr. RANKIN. What year?

Mrs. OSWALD. 1961.

Mr. RANKIN. Where did you meet him?

Mrs. OSWALD. In Minsk.

Mr. RANKIN. Yes—but can you tell us the place?

Mrs. OSWALD. In the Palace of Trade Unions.

Mr. RANKIN. What kind of a place is that? Is that where there are public meetings?

Mrs. OSWALD. Sometimes they do have meetings there. Sometimes it is also rented by some institutes who do not have their own halls for parties.

Mr. RANKIN. They have dances?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes. Every Saturday and Sunday.

Mr. RANKIN. Did someone introduce you to him?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. Who introduced you?

Mrs. OSWALD. I had gone there with my friends from the medical institute, and one of them introduced me to Lee.

Mr. RANKIN. What was his name?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yuri Mereginisky.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you know by what name Lee Oswald was introduced to you?

Mrs. OSWALD. Everyone there called him Alec, at his place of work, because Lee is an unusual, cumbersome name. For Russians it was easier—this was easier.

Mr. RANKIN. Is Alec a name close to Lee, as far as the Russian language is concerned?

Mrs. OSWALD. A little. Somewhat similar.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you know that Lee Oswald was an American when you first met him?

Mrs. OSWALD. I found that out at the end of that party, towards the end of that party, when I was first introduced to him, I didn't know that.

Mr. RANKIN. Did that make any difference?

Mrs. OSWALD. It was more interesting, of course. You don't meet Americans very often.

Mr. RANKIN. After this first meeting, did you meet him a number of times?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. Can you describe just briefly how you met him and saw him?

Mrs. OSWALD. After the first meeting he asked me where he could meet me again. I said that perhaps some day I will come back here again, to the Palace. About a week later I came there again with my girl friend, and he was there.

Mr. RANKIN. And did he have a period that he was in the hospital there?

Mrs. OSWALD. I had arranged to meet with him again. I had already given him a telephone number. But he went to a hospital and he called me from there. We had arranged to meet on a Friday, and he called from the hospital and said he couldn't because he was in the hospital and I should come there, if I could.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you learn what was wrong with him then?

Mrs. OSWALD. He was near the ear, nose and throat section and it seems that he had something wrong with his ears and also the glands or polyps.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you visit him regularly for some period of time?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, quite frequently, because I felt sorry for him being there alone.

Mr. RANKIN. And did you observe a scar on his left arm?

Mrs. OSWALD. He had a scar, but I found that out only after we were married.

Mr. RANKIN. What did you find out about that scar?

Mrs. OSWALD. When I asked him about it, he became very angry and asked me never to ask about that again.

Mr. RANKIN. Did he ever explain to you what caused the scar?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you ever learn what caused the scar?

Mrs. OSWALD. I found out here, now, recently.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you learn that he had tried to commit suicide at some time?

Mrs. OSWALD. I found that out now.

Mr. RANKIN. During the time Lee Oswald was courting you, did he talk about America at all?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, of course.

Mr. RANKIN. What do you recall that he said about it?

Mrs. OSWALD. At that time, of course, he was homesick, and perhaps he was sorry for having come to Russia. He said many good things. He said that his home was warmer and that people lived better.

Mr. RANKIN. Did he talk about returning?

Mrs. OSWALD. Then? No.

Mr. RANKIN. Did he describe the life in America as being very attractive?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes. At least in front of others he always defended it.

Mr. RANKIN. Did he—

Mrs. OSWALD. It is strange to reconcile this. When he was there he was saying good things about America.

Mr. RANKIN. And when he was talking only to you, did he do that, too?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. Before you were married, did you find out anything about his plans to return to America?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you learn anything before you were married about the fact that there might be some doubt whether he could return to the United States?

Mrs. OSWALD. Once before we were married we had a talk and I asked him whether he could return to the United States if he wanted to, and he said no, he could not.

Mr. RANKIN. Did he tell you why?

Mrs. OSWALD. No. At that time, he didn't. He said that when he had arrived, he had thrown his passport on a table and said that he would not return any more to the United States. He thought that they would not forgive him such an act.

Mr. RANKIN. Before you were married, did you ever say to him you would like to go to the United States?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Can you tell us what attracted you to him?

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't know. First, the fact that he was—he didn't look like others. You could see he was an American. He was very neat, very polite, not the way he was here, not as you know him here. And it seemed that he would be a good family man. And he was good.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you talk about many things when you were together, when he was courting you?

Mrs. OSWALD. We talked about everything, about the moon and the weather.

Mr. RANKIN. Where was he living at that time?

Mrs. OSWALD. In Minsk. By the way, on the same street where I lived.

Mr. RANKIN. Did he have an apartment?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes. By the way, this was the same apartment where I had dreamed to live. I didn't know about it yet. It had a very beautiful balcony, terrace. I would look at that building sometimes and say it would be good to visit in that building, visit someone there, but I never thought that I would wind up living there.

Mr. RANKIN. Can you describe the number of rooms there were in his apartment?

Mrs. OSWALD. We had a small room—one room, kitchen, foyer, and bathroom. A large terrace, balcony.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you know what he paid for rent?

Mrs. OSWALD. For two it was quite sufficient. Seven and a-half rubles per month.

Mr. RANKIN. Wasn't that pretty cheap for such a nice apartment?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, it was cheap.

Mr. RANKIN. Was this apartment nicer than most in this city?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, in that city they have good apartments because the houses are new. That is, on a Russian scale, of course. You cannot compare it to private houses people live in here.

Mr. RANKIN. Did he have an automobile?

Mrs. OSWALD. Oh, no. In Russia this is a problem. In Russia it is difficult to have an automobile.

Mr. RANKIN. Did he have a television set?

Mrs. OSWALD. No. Only a radio receiver, a record player.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you have a telephone?

Mrs. OSWALD. No—I don't like television.

Mr. RANKIN. Why?

Mrs. OSWALD. The programs are not always interesting, and you can get into a stupor just watching television. It is better to go to the movies.

Mr. RANKIN. What was his occupation at this time?

Mrs. OSWALD. He worked in a radio plant in Minsk.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you know what his work was?

Mrs. OSWALD. As an ordinary laborer—metal worker. From that point of view, he was nothing special. I had a greater choice in the sense that many of my friends were engineers and doctors. But that is not the main thing.

Mr. RANKIN. Did others with a similar job have similar apartments?

Mrs. OSWALD. The house in which we lived belonged to the factory in which Lee worked. But, of course, no one had a separate apartment for only two persons. I think that Lee had been given better living conditions, better than others, because he was an American. If Lee had been Russian, and we would have had two children, we could not have obtained a larger apartment. But since he was an American, we would have obtained the larger one. It seems to me that in Russia they treat foreigners better than they should. It would be better if they treated Russians better. Not all foreigners are better than the Russians.

Mr. RANKIN. Did he say whether he liked this job?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, he didn't like it.

Mr. RANKIN. What did he say about it?

Mrs. OSWALD. First of all, he was being ordered around by someone. He didn't like that.

Mr. RANKIN. Anything else?

Mrs. OSWALD. And the fact that it was comparatively dirty work.

Mr. RANKIN. Did he say anything about the Russian system, whether he liked it or not?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes. He didn't like it. Not everything, but some things.

Mr. RANKIN. Did he say anything about Communists and whether he liked that?

Mrs. OSWALD. He didn't like Russian Communists. He said that they joined the party not because of the ideas, but in order to obtain better living conditions and to get the benefit of them.

Mr. RANKIN. Did it appear to you that he had become disenchanted with the Soviet system?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, he had expected much more when he first arrived.

Mr. RANKIN. Did he ever tell you why he came to Russia?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes. He said he had read a great deal about Russia, he was interested in seeing the country, which was the first in the Socialist camp about which much had been said, and he wanted to see it with his own eyes. And, therefore, he wanted to be not merely a tourist, who is being shown only the things that are good, but he wanted to live among the masses and see.

But when he actually did, it turned out to be quite difficult.

The CHAIRMAN. I think we better adjourn now for the day.

(Whereupon, at 4:30 p.m., the President's Commission recessed.)

Thursday, February 6, 1964

TESTIMONY OF MRS. LEE HARVEY OSWALD RESUMED

The President's Commission met at 10 a.m. on February 6, 1964, at 200 Maryland Avenue NE., Washington, D.C.

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

Also present were J. Lee Rankin, general counsel; Melvin Aron Eisenberg, assistant counsel; Norman Redlich, assistant counsel; William D. Krimer, and Leon I. Gopadze, interpreters; and John M. Thorne, attorney for Mrs. Lee Harvey Oswald.

The CHAIRMAN. The Commission will be in order. We will proceed again. Mr. Rankin?

Mr. RANKIN. Mrs. Oswald, if I may return a moment with you to the time that you told us about your husband practicing with the rifle at Love Field. As I recall your testimony, you said that he told you that he had taken the rifle and practiced with it there, is that right?