

or over, above, your initial somewhere around the correction so we know it is you who did it, and return it to us as promptly as possible.

It may be that the Secret Service will bring it out, but it will be delivered to you next week.

All right.

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### AFFIDAVIT OF EDWARD JOHN PIC, JR.

The following affidavit was executed by Edward John Pic, Jr., on June 16, 1964.

PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION  
ON THE ASSASSINATION OF  
PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY

AFFIDAVIT

STATE OF LOUISIANA,  
*Parish of Orleans, ss:*

Edward John Pic, Jr., 6 Jay Street, New Orleans, La., being duly sworn says:

1. I am the same Edward John Pic, Jr., who was deposed by Albert E. Jenner, Jr., member of the legal staff of the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy, on April 7, 1964. When Marguerite Clavier Pic and I separated after we had lived together a year, we resided in a house on Genois Street, south of Canal Street, in New Orleans. This was a rented house. The rent was either \$28 or \$30 per month. At no time prior to our separation did Marguerite work. During all of that period she was a housewife.

2. I neither refused nor failed to support her either during or after our marriage. There were personality and incompatibility difficulties between us commencing at an early stage of our marriage. We just couldn't get along, things kept getting worse and worse. Marguerite was aware of my earning capacity at the time we married. There were difficulties between us respecting money and household financial management, but this was only one of the sources of the difficulties. My financial situation did not worsen after our marriage.

3. Marguerite's pregnancy with my son John Edward Pic was not the cause of our separation. I had no objection to children. It was a coincidence that about that time we had reached the point that we could not make a go with each other any more. Our separation which was amicable and which was arranged through an attorney would have taken place irrespective of Marguerite's pregnancy with my son John Edward Pic.

4. As I testified in my deposition, Marguerite was a nice girl. I haven't anything whatsoever adverse to say against her, it is just that we couldn't get along. Our dispositions would not jell. I do not mean to imply that the fault, if any, lay with either of us. We just didn't get along.

5. My distinct recollection is that I had no difficulty maintaining the household and supporting my family though there was some difference between Marguerite and me as to the manner, style and the level on which our household should be maintained.

Signed the 16th day of June 1964.

(S) Edward John Pic, Jr.,  
EDWARD JOHN PIC, Jr.

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### TESTIMONY OF KERRY WENDELL THORNLEY

The testimony of Kerry Wendell Thornley was taken at 9:40 a.m., on May 18, 1964, at 200 Maryland Avenue NE., Washington, D.C., by Messrs. John Ely and Albert E. Jenner, Jr., assistant counsel of the President's Commission.

Mr. JENNER. Mr. Thornley, in the deposition you are about to give, do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

Mr. THORNLEY. I do.

Mr. JENNER. You are Kerry Wendell Thornley, spelled K-e-r-r-y W-e-n-d-e-l-l T-h-o-r-n-l-e-y?

Mr. THORNLEY. That is correct, sir.

Mr. JENNER. Mr. Thornley, where do you reside now?

Mr. THORNLEY. At 4201 South 31st Street in Arlington, Va.

Mr. JENNER. Did you at one time reside at 1824 Dauphine Street in New Orleans?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. What is your present occupation?

Mr. THORNLEY. I am a doorman at the building where I reside, Shirlington House.

Mr. JENNER. Doorman.

Mr. THORNLEY. At the building where I reside.

Mr. JENNER. What is the name of that building?

Mr. THORNLEY. Shirlington House. I also work on the switchboard there three nights a week.

Mr. JENNER. I see. By the way, Mr. Thornley, you received, did you not, a letter from Mr. Rankin, the general counsel of the Commission in which he enclosed—

Mr. THORNLEY. Confirming this appointment—

Mr. JENNER. Copies of the legislation, Senate Joint Resolution No. 137, authorizing the creation of the Commission and President Johnson's Order 11130, bringing the Commission into existence and fixing its powers and duties and responsibilities?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. And also a copy of the rules and regulations of the Commission for the taking of depositions?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. I take it you understand the basic obligation placed upon the Commission is to investigate the facts and circumstances surrounding and bearing upon the assassination of President Kennedy, and events collateral thereto.

In the course of doing that the Commission and its staff, and I, Albert E. Jenner, Jr., a member of the Commission legal staff, have been interviewing and taking the testimony of various persons who, among other things, came in contact with a man named Lee Harvey Oswald. We understand that you had some contact with him, fortuitous or otherwise as it might be. Are we correct in that?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. Would you tell us the—may I ask you this first. Were you born and reared in this country?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. Are you married or unmarried?

Mr. THORNLEY. Unmarried.

Mr. JENNER. Unmarried you said?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. What is your age?

Mr. THORNLEY. I am 26.

Mr. JENNER. When was your birthday?

Mr. THORNLEY. April 17, this last month.

Mr. JENNER. April 17 of this last month? I am poor in mathematics, what year was your birth?

Mr. THORNLEY. 1938.

Mr. JENNER. When did you first become acquainted with him?

Mr. THORNLEY. I was—it was around Easter of 1959, either shortly before or shortly after.

Mr. JENNER. Let's see. He was in the Marines at that time?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. I take it you also were?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. How long had you been in the Marines?

Mr. THORNLEY. At that time I had been in the Marines over half a year. I had been in the Reserve for many years. I had been on active duty for over half a year.

Mr. JENNER. You were then 21 years of age?

Mr. THORNLEY. About; yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. Tell me about what your occupation and activity had been up to the time you enlisted in the Marines.

Mr. THORNLEY. Well, the year before I was a student at the University of Southern California, and before that I was a student at California High School in Whittier, Calif.

Mr. JENNER. I take it then that you are a native Californian?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. Did you receive your degree?

Mr. THORNLEY. No. I was—I completed my freshman year and then I went on active duty to serve my 2-year obligation in the Marine Reserve.

Mr. JENNER. You did not return to college after you were mustered out of the Marines?

Mr. THORNLEY. No, sir.

Mr. JENNER. Was your discharge honorable?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. Where were you based when you first met Lee Harvey Oswald?

Mr. THORNLEY. At a subsidiary of El Toro Marine Base, referred to as LTA, Santa Ana, Calif., or just outside of Santa Ana.

Mr. JENNER. What was your rank at that time?

Mr. THORNLEY. At that time I was acting corporal.

Mr. JENNER. What was your assignment then?

Mr. THORNLEY. I was an aviation electronics operator. I was working in an aircraft control center reading radarscopes and keeping track of ingoing and outgoing flights.

Mr. JENNER. What was Lee Harvey Oswald's assignment and activity service-wise at that period?

Mr. THORNLEY. At that time his assignments and activities were primary janitorial. He was—he had lost his clearance previously, and if I remember, he was assigned to make the coffee, mow the lawn, swab down decks, and things of this nature.

Mr. JENNER. What were the circumstances as you learned of them, or knew of them at the time, as to how or why he lost his clearance as you put it.

Mr. THORNLEY. Well, I asked somebody, and I was told, and I don't remember who told me, it was a general rumor, general scuttlebutt at the time, that he had poured beer over a staff NCO's head in an enlisted club in Japan, and had been put in the brig for that, and having been put in the brig would automatically lose his clearance to work in the electronics control center.

Mr. JENNER. I was going to ask you what losing clearance meant. You have indicated that—or would you state it more specifically.

Mr. THORNLEY. Well, that meant in a practical sense, that meant that he was not permitted to enter certain areas wherein the equipment, in this case equipment, was kept; that we would not want other unauthorized persons to have knowledge of. And on occasion information, I imagine, would also come to the man who was cleared, in the process of his work, that he would be expected to keep to himself.

Mr. JENNER. I assume you had clearance?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, sir; I was, I think, cleared for confidential at the time.

Mr. JENNER. Cleared for confidential. I was about to ask you what level of clearance was involved.

Mr. THORNLEY. I believe it was just confidential to work there at El Toro on that particular equipment.

Mr. JENNER. That is the clearance about which you speak when you talk about Oswald having lost it?

Mr. THORNLEY. Oswald, I believe, had a higher clearance. This is also just based upon rumor. I believe he at one time worked in the security files, it is the S & C files, somewhere either at LTA or at El Toro.

Mr. JENNER. Did you ever work in the security files?

Mr. THORNLEY. No, sir.

Mr. JENNER. And that was a level of clearance—

Mr. THORNLEY. Probably a secret clearance would be required.

Mr. JENNER. It was at least higher than the clearance about which you first spoke?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. The clearance that you had in mind of which you first spoke was the clearance to operate radar detection devices?

Mr. THORNLEY. Right.

Mr. JENNER. And your knowledge of his loss of clearance was by hearsay or rumor. As I understand it the circumstances took place off base one day?

Mr. THORNLEY. No; this was on base as I understand it. It was in an enlisted club or staff sergeant's club, something of that nature.

Mr. JENNER. He had gotten into difficulty with a staff sergeant and had poured beer on the person of a staff sergeant and gotten into some kind of an altercation?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. As a result of that he was court-martialed and had been subjected to the loss of clearance?

Mr. THORNLEY. That is correct.

Mr. JENNER. Was that clearance of his restored?

Mr. THORNLEY. I doubt it very much, because 3 months afterwards, after I had left the outfit—I know it wasn't restored while I was in the outfit.

Mr. JENNER. When did you leave the outfit?

Mr. THORNLEY. I left in June and went overseas.

Mr. JENNER. Up to that time his clearance had not been restored?

Mr. THORNLEY. Definitely not. And shortly thereafter he got out of the service.

Mr. JENNER. So that as far as you have any personal knowledge Oswald never operated any radar equipment while he was at El Toro, did you say?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes; El Toro, LTA. As far as my personal knowledge goes, he didn't.

Mr. JENNER. Would you state the circumstances under which you became acquainted—let me put it this way first. What was the extent of your acquaintance with Lee Harvey Oswald, and here at the moment I am directing myself only to whether you were friends, were you merely on the base together? Indicate the level of friendship first or acquaintanceship.

Mr. THORNLEY. I would say we were close acquaintances in the sense that we weren't friends in that we didn't pull liberty together or seek each other out, yet when we were thrown together in an assignment or something, moving equipment, something of that nature, we spoke and when we were on the base and happened to be in the same area and were not required to be working, we would sometimes sit down and discuss things. That would be my statement there.

Mr. JENNER. So there was a degree of affinity in the sense that you were friendly in performing your military tasks together whenever you were thrown together in that respect. You felt friendly toward each other. You were never off base with him on liberty?

Mr. THORNLEY. No, sir.

Mr. JENNER. There were times when you were at liberty on the base, I assume, and you and he fraternized?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes.

Mr. JENNER. Now, did you live in the same quarters?

Mr. THORNLEY. Well, not actually. We lived in quonset huts there, and he lived in a different hut than I did. We did live in the same general area, however.

Mr. JENNER. This acquaintance arose in the spring of 1959, is that correct?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. Can you fix the time a little more definitely than merely the spring?

Mr. THORNLEY. I really can't, sir. I have been racking my brain on that one since November, and I can't fix the time. I do remember having taken some time off that year around Easter and going on a trip with some civilian friends of mine, who were out of school for Easter vacation, and I know I was in the outfit that Oswald was in at that time, and I know that either shortly

before that trip or shortly afterwards, I can remember from the books I was reading at the time and things like that, that I met him.

Mr. JENNER. Do you associate the books you were reading at that time with anything Oswald may have been reading?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes. Oswald was not reading but did advise me to read George Orwell's "1984" which I read at that time.

Mr. JENNER. Was he on the base when you came there?

Mr. THORNLEY. Well, I was on the base in a different outfit before I came into MACS 9, the outfit I was in.

Mr. JENNER. Marine Air Control Squadron.

Mr. THORNLEY. I was in MACS 4 which was right next door to MACS 9 or was at that time, on the base.

Mr. JENNER. Were you aware of his presence when you were in the other MACS?

Mr. THORNLEY. No; not until I came into his outfit. And only sometime after I came into that outfit did I become aware of his presence.

Mr. JENNER. Were you—I will withdraw that. Was Oswald as far as you knew on the base before you came over to his unit?

Mr. THORNLEY. I would assume so, but I wouldn't know for sure. I know he was recently back from Japan as were most of the men in Marine Control Squadron 9 when I came into it. How long he had been back I don't know. I certainly didn't know at that time. And thinking on what knowledge of him I have gained since then, I still couldn't say.

Mr. JENNER. Well, in any event you first became acquainted with or aware of his presence around Easter time in 1959?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. And you were transferred from that base when?

Mr. THORNLEY. June.

Mr. JENNER. In June. So likely it was that you knew him in April, May, and in June until you were transferred out?

Mr. THORNLEY. Right.

Mr. JENNER. When in June were you transferred out?

Mr. THORNLEY. Once again the exact date would be available in my military record, but offhand—

Mr. JENNER. Give it to me as best you recall it, forepart, latter part, middle?

Mr. THORNLEY. Let's see, it was toward the latter part. In fact, I can give you pretty close to the exact date. It was around June 25, because we arrived in Japan on July 4 and it took 11 days to get over there. It took us some time to get debarked or to get embarked, rather.

Mr. JENNER. All right. I take it from the remark you have made in your reflecting on this matter that you were—you devoted yourself to some fairly considerable extent to reading?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. And in what fields?

Mr. THORNLEY. Completely omniverous. Anything that I would happen to get a hold of I would read. At that time I was reading, well, at Oswald's advice I read "1984." At someone else's advice I was reading a book called "Humanism," by Corliss Lamont, as I remember, and I was reading either "The Brothers Karamazov" or the "Idiot" by Dostoevsky, I forget which, at that time.

Mr. JENNER. But your reading had some reasonable amount of organization or direction?

Mr. THORNLEY. None whatsoever; no, sir. It never has.

Mr. JENNER. I see. You weren't engaged in any organized reading at that time, were you?

Mr. THORNLEY. No.

Mr. JENNER. But there were areas which did draw your attention by and large?

Mr. THORNLEY. Definitely; yes.

Mr. JENNER. What were those areas?

Mr. THORNLEY. Philosophy, politics, religion.

Mr. JENNER. Did you find that Oswald had reasonably similar interests?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes; I would say.

Mr. JENNER. In his reading?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes; I would say particularly in politics and philosophy.  
Mr. JENNER. Was it those mutual interests that brought about your acquaintance with him or some other fashion?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, sir; it was those interests. My first memory of him is that one afternoon he was sitting on a bucket out in front of a hut, an inverted bucket, with some other Marines. They were discussing religion. I entered the discussion. It was known already in the outfit that I was an atheist. Immediately somebody pointed out to me that Oswald was also an atheist.

Mr. JENNER. Did they point that out to you in his presence?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes.

Mr. JENNER. What reaction did he have to that?

Mr. THORNLEY. He said, "What do you think of communism?" and I said—

Mr. JENNER. He didn't say anything about having been pointed out as being an atheist?

Mr. THORNLEY. No; he wasn't offended at this at all. He was—it was done in a friendly manner, anyway, and he just said to me—the first thing he said to me was with his little grin; he looked at me and he said, "What do you think of communism?" And I replied I didn't think too much of communism, in a favorable sense, and he said, "Well, I think the best religion is communism." And I got the impression at the time that he said this in order to shock. He was playing to the galleries, I felt.

Mr. JENNER. The boys who were sitting around?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. Engaged in scuttlebutt?

Mr. THORNLEY. Right. He was smirking as he said this and he said it very gently. He didn't seem to be a glass-eyed fanatic by any means.

Mr. JENNER. Did you have occasion to discuss the same subject thereafter?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. From time to time?

Mr. THORNLEY. From time to time.

Mr. JENNER. Was it reasonably frequent?

Mr. THORNLEY. I would say about a half dozen times in that time period.

Mr. JENNER. In those subsequent discussions were some of them private in the sense you were not gathered around with others?

Mr. THORNLEY. Well, I don't recall us ever having a private serious discussion. A couple of times we were working together. There would be others around, not on a constant basis anyway, but coming and going, and as I recall a couple of times we were thrown together. Working together, we weren't having a serious discussion; we were joking.

Mr. JENNER. Did you have occasion in those additional half dozen instances of discussions with him, the viewpoint you have just expressed, that is, that his initial raising of the issue was more by way of provoking or shocking those about him rather than any utterances on his part of sincerity in a belief that communism was itself a religion?

Mr. THORNLEY. It became obvious to me after a while, in talking to him, that definitely he thought that communism was the best—that the Marxist morality was the most rational morality to follow that he knew of. And that communism was the best system in the world.

I still certainly wouldn't—wouldn't have predicted, for example, his defection to the Soviet Union, because once again he seemed idle in his admiration for communism. He didn't seem to be an activist.

Mr. JENNER. Would you explain what you mean by idle in his admiration of the communistic system?

Mr. THORNLEY. Well, it seemed to be theoretical. It seemed strictly a dispassionate appraisal—I did know at the time that he was learning the Russian language. I knew he was subscribing to Pravda or a Russian newspaper of some kind from Moscow. All of this I took as a sign of his interest in the subject, and not as a sign of any active commitment to the Communist ends.

Mr. JENNER. You felt there was no devotion there. That it was somewhat of an intellectual interest, a curiosity. But I don't want to put words in your mouth, so tell me.

Mr. THORNLEY. I wouldn't put it quite that weakly. While I didn't feel there

was any rabid devotion there, I wouldn't call it a complete idle curiosity either. I would call it a definite interest.

Mr. JENNER. A definite interest.

Mr. THORNLEY. But not a fanatical devotion.

Mr. JENNER. You said you knew at that time that he was studying Russian. How did you become aware of that?

Mr. THORNLEY. Probably by hearsay once again. I do remember one time hearing the comment made by one man in the outfit that there was some other man in the outfit who was taking a Russian newspaper and who was a Communist and when I said, "Well, who is that?" he said, "Oswald," and I said, "Oh, well." That is probably where I learned it.

Mr. JENNER. How did you learn that he was a subscriber to Pravda and the other Russian publications you have mentioned?

Mr. THORNLEY. Well, I don't think—it was either Pravda or some other Russian publication.

Mr. JENNER. I see.

Mr. THORNLEY. The way I learned that was a story that I believe Bud Simco, a friend of mine in the same outfit, in the outfit at the same time, told me that one time a lieutenant, and I forget which lieutenant it was (I do remember at the time I did know who he was talking about) found out that Oswald, by—he happened to be in the mailroom or something, and saw a paper with Oswald's address on it.

Mr. JENNER. That is the officer happened to be in the mailroom?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes; and that it was written—he noticed this paper was written in Russian and at the time got very excited, attempted to draw this to the attention of Oswald's section chief, the commanding officer, and, of course, there was nothing these people could do about it, and at the time the story was related to me, I remember I thought it was rather humorous that this young, either second or first lieutenant should get so excited because Oswald happened to be subscribing to a Russian newspaper.

Mr. JENNER. Was this lieutenant's name Delprado?

Mr. THORNLEY. I will bet it was. That is very familiar. I think so.

Mr. JENNER. Have you ever subscribed to a Russian language newspaper or other publications?

Mr. THORNLEY. Other Russian publications?

Mr. JENNER. Yes, sir.

Mr. THORNLEY. No, sir.

Mr. JENNER. Have you ever subscribed to a publication that was printed in the Russian language?

Mr. THORNLEY. No, sir.

Mr. JENNER. Have you ever been a subscriber to any literature by way of news media or otherwise, published by any organization reputed to be communistic or pink or that sort of thing? I don't want to get it too broad.

Mr. THORNLEY. Only I. F. Stone's newsletter and that certainly——

Mr. JENNER. Whose?

Mr. THORNLEY. I. F. Stone's newsletter and I wouldn't say——

Mr. JENNER. Tell me about that.

Mr. THORNLEY. He is a Washington reporter who is a rather extreme leftist, but certainly within the bounds of what is accepted in this country as non-subversive.

Mr. JENNER. Describe yourself in that respect. Where are you, a middle-of-the-roader?

Mr. THORNLEY. I would say I am an extreme rightist. I call myself a libertarian, which is that I believe in the complete sovereignty of the individual, or at least as much individual liberty as is practical under any given system.

Mr. JENNER. You don't have to be an extreme rightist to believe in the sovereignty of the individual.

Mr. THORNLEY. Well, it is getting that way in this country today. At least most people who listen to me talk call me a rightist. I wouldn't say so either. I think the political spectrum was fine for France at the time of the revolution. I don't think it applies to the United States of America today in any respect

whatsoever. I don't think you can call a man an extreme leftist, rightist, or middle-of-the-roader and have him classified that simply.

Mr. JENNER. Do you have any brothers and sisters?

Mr. THORNLEY. I have two brothers.

Mr. JENNER. What do they do?

Mr. THORNLEY. They go to, one of them goes to junior college, I believe, and the other one goes to high school. They are in Whittier, Calif.

Mr. JENNER. Are your folks alive?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. What does your father do?

Mr. THORNLEY. He is a photoengraver.

Mr. JENNER. Let's get back to Oswald. Describe this individual to me. First describe him physically.

Mr. THORNLEY. Physically, I would say he was slightly below average height. Had, as I recall, gray or blue eyes. Always had, or almost always had a petulant expression on his face. Pursed-up lip expression, either a frown or a smile, depending on the circumstances. Was of average build, and his hair was brown, and tending to, like mine, tending to bald a little on each side.

Mr. JENNER. Above the temple. What would you say he weighed?

Mr. THORNLEY. I would say he weighed about 140 pounds, maybe 130.

Mr. JENNER. How tall was he?

Mr. THORNLEY. I would say he was about five-five maybe. I don't know.

Mr. JENNER. How tall are you?

Mr. THORNLEY. I am five-ten.

Mr. JENNER. Was he shorter than you?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes.

Mr. JENNER. What habits did he have with respect to his person—was he neat, clean?

Mr. THORNLEY. Extremely sloppy.

Mr. JENNER. Extremely sloppy?

Mr. THORNLEY. He was. This I think might not have been true of him in civilian life.

Mr. JENNER. You don't know one way or the other?

Mr. THORNLEY. No; but I do have reason to believe that it wasn't true of him in civilian life because it fitted into a general personality pattern of his: to do whatever was not wanted of him, a recalcitrant trend in his personality.

Mr. JENNER. You think it was deliberate?

Mr. THORNLEY. I think it tended to be deliberate; yes. It was a gesture of rebellion on his part.

Mr. JENNER. Did you ever discuss that matter with him, as dress.

Mr. THORNLEY. No.

Mr. JENNER. The attitude of rebellion?

Mr. THORNLEY. No; because this attitude of rebellion was a fairly common thing in the service.

Mr. JENNER. On the part of others as well as Oswald?

Mr. THORNLEY. As well as Oswald. Oswald did carry it to—was the most extreme example I can think of stateside. However, overseas, in the outfit he had been in before, as I discovered later, this was quite common.

Mr. JENNER. How much later?

Mr. THORNLEY. Three months—well, immediately, as soon as I left, as soon as I got overseas. I walked in to the barracks on the Fourth of July over there and saw beer bottles spread all over, and some character sitting in the back of the barracks with a broken beer bottle cutting his arm, for what reason I don't remember. They found beer cans in a trash can in MACS 9 and there was a drastic investigation; so there is an indication of a difference between stateside and overseas. Oswald was typical, very typical of the outfit he had just left overseas.

Mr. JENNER. So that it is your impression, you would say, I gather, that as of that particular time when you first knew him that he was still carrying some of his experience personal attentionwise from what he had experienced overseas?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes.



Mr. JENNER. And he was still following the habits he had acquired overseas?  
Mr. THORNLEY. Yes.

Mr. JENNER. Did you think it went beyond that, this unkemptness or this sloppiness?

Mr. THORNLEY. It did go beyond that, because he seemed to be a person who would go out of his way to get into trouble, get some officer or staff sergeant mad at him. He would make wise remarks. He had a general bitter attitude toward the Corps. He used to pull his hat down over his eyes so he wouldn't have to look at anything around him and go walking around very Beetle Bailey style.

Mr. JENNER. What is Beetle Bailey?

Mr. THORNLEY. Beetle Bailey is a comic strip character who walks around with his hat over his eyes very much as Oswald did.

Mr. JENNER. You want to keep in mind, Mr. Thornley, I am an old man and there are things I don't pick up or get hep to.

Mr. THORNLEY. This is nothing recent. This is a comic strip that has been around quite a few years now.

Mr. JENNER. You go on and tell us about his personality.

Mr. THORNLEY. All right.

Mr. JENNER. Including any physical characteristics or habits.

Mr. THORNLEY. I think I have covered all physical characteristics. His shoes were always unshined. As I mentioned, he walked around with the bill of his cap down over his eyes and you got the impression that he was doing this so he wouldn't have to look at anything around him.

Mr. JENNER. And he was doing that so that he would not be assigned additional work or—

Mr. THORNLEY. No; he was just doing that—this was just an attempt, I think, on his part, to blot out the military so he wouldn't have to look at it; he wouldn't have to think about it. In fact, I think he made a comment to that effect at one time; that when he had his bill of his cap over his eyes so he would see as little as possible, because he didn't like what he had to look at.

He had, as I remember, he had a sense of humor, and I can only think of a couple of examples of it. I have only been able to think of a couple of examples of it over the past few months, but I have a strong general impression in my mind that there were more examples that I just don't remember.

Mr. JENNER. Well, you draw on your recollection as best you can and you just keep telling us now in your own words and I will try to not interrupt you too much.

Mr. THORNLEY. All right. One example was, that I remember—of course, it was well known in the outfit that, or popularly believed that Oswald had Communist sympathies—

Mr. JENNER. You didn't share that view?

Mr. THORNLEY. Not as much as some did, and while this was popularly believed, I mention this as kind of a framework for the significance of Oswald's comment: Master Sergeant Spar, our section chief, jumped up on the fender one day and said, "All right, everybody gather around," and Oswald said in a very thick Russian accent, "Ah ha, collective farm lecture," in a very delighted tone.

This brought him laughs at the time, and he had gotten me to read "1984," as I mentioned earlier, and this was one of his favorites—

Mr. JENNER. Tell me what "1984" was.

Mr. THORNLEY. This was a book about—it is a projection into the future, supposed to take place in 1984 in England under a complete police state. It is, I would say, an anti-utopian novel, by George Orwell, a criticism of English socialism and what it might lead to, based upon Orwell's experiences with communism and nazism, his observations about a society in which a mythical leader called Big Brother dominates everybody's life. Where there are television cameras on every individual at all times watching his every act, where sex is practically outlawed, where the world is perpetually at war, three big police states constantly at war with one another, and where thought police keep every, all of the citizens in line. Oswald would often compare the Marine Corps with the system of government outlined in "1984."

I remember one day we were loading equipment—

Mr. JENNER. By way of protest against the Marine Corps?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes; humorously, satirically. One day we were unloading, moving a radarscope off the truck and it slipped, and he said, "Be careful with Big Brother's equipment."

It was things like this. He did a lot of that.

I remember one day he—I was walking along with my hands in my pocket, which is something you don't do in the service if you are—certainly if you are in an infantry outfit you don't dare. Things were a little lax in our outfit, so we could get away with it once in a while, so I happened to be walking along with my hands in my pockets and suddenly I heard a voice: "Hey, Smith, Winston," and rattle off a serial number, "get your hands out of your pockets," which was a direct quote from the book "1984."

These are the only examples of Oswald's, that particular aspect of Oswald's character that I recall.

Mr. JENNER. I am stimulated to ask you this question by something you just said. Did he have a good memory?

Mr. THORNLEY. I think he must have had a good memory; yes. If he wanted to remember something, he could. I think he also had good ability to blot out unpleasant thoughts in his mind.

Mr. JENNER. What about his powers of assimilation of what he read, and his powers of critique?

Mr. THORNLEY. I certainly think he understood much more than many people in the press have seemed to feel. I don't think he was a man who was grasping onto his particular beliefs because he didn't understand them. I don't think he was just trying to know something over his head, by any means. I think he understood what he was talking about.

Sometimes I think there were gaps in his knowledge. I think there were many things he didn't know, and this came from a haphazard education.

Mr. JENNER. You became acquainted with the fact that he had had a somewhat haphazard education?

Mr. THORNLEY. It was obvious. I didn't become acquainted with it specifically until recently in the news. But—

Mr. JENNER. You had that impression at the time?

Mr. THORNLEY. I had that impression; yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. How did that impression arise? Because of the lack of analysis or real critique on his part of that which he was reading? Inability to assimilate the thrust of a work?

Mr. THORNLEY. No; I wouldn't say that. I would say he could analyze what he read very well, but it was a very subjective impression, and the idea I got was that there were a lot of things he didn't know, and just a lot of facts that he wasn't familiar with. I guess sometimes, probably in discussions, I would run into something. I would mention something and he would say, "What is that?"

I know we did have a couple of very hot arguments and I am sure we were throwing facts at one another, and he was certainly able to belt them out when he wanted to, facts that suited his purpose in arguing.

Mr. JENNER. What was your impression of his—the extent of his formal education and the extent of any private education of his; that is, reading—self-education.

Mr. THORNLEY. Self-education. I was certainly surprised that—when I read in the papers that he had not graduated, I think they said he had not graduated from high school.

Mr. JENNER. That is correct.

Mr. THORNLEY. I thought he had graduated from high school. I assumed that. I would say that his self-education certainly must have been—perhaps, in fact, he took USAFI courses, U.S. Armed Forces Institute courses, or something along that line, because he was one who gave the impression of having some education, certainly.

Mr. JENNER. Do you have an impression of his intellect?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes; I think he was—

Mr. JENNER. I am speaking in the abstract.

Mr. THORNLEY. I think he was extremely intelligent, with what information he had at hand he could always do very well and in an argument he was quick. He was quick to answer, and it was not a matter of just grabbing at something. It was a matter of coming back with a fairly precise answer to your question or to your objection to his argument.

Mr. JENNER. I take it then it was your impression—I will change my question because I don't want to ask a leading question here.

What was your impression as to whether his learning, in the sense we are talking about now, was superficial or was he able to master that which he read, and engage in personal self-critique of that which he read, discover its weaknesses, and apprehend its major thrust?

Mr. THORNLEY. Well, I would say as I have said before, he certainly understood what he read. How much he had read, I don't know, but I do know that when he got on a subject in which he was interested, he showed a grasp of it. This is true with the book "1984," for example. It is true with Marxism.

Mr. JENNER. Now that interests me also. You mentioned that before; that is, his espousal of or interest in Marxism as such. What was his ability, if he had any, and I am talking now idealistically only, to compare Marxism, communism, democracy?

Mr. THORNLEY. I understand. I think——

Mr. JENNER. And did he understand the distinctions?

Mr. THORNLEY. Well, I think he understood the distinctions as well as most reasonably educated people do. I think he certainly had a Marxist bias in how—where he drew the lines.

For example, he could look upon the Soviet system today as a democracy by, of course, giving a completely different definition to the word "democracy" than I, for example. He would give——

Mr. JENNER. Can you remember some discussions or incidents that explain that? Would he use objectivism?

Mr. THORNLEY. Well, I remember one in particular that always reminded me of his general outlook.

One day we got into an argument and I thought I was really going to pin him to the wall, I thought I was going to win this argument.

Mr. JENNER. On what subject?

Mr. THORNLEY. On Marxism. On the theory of history.

Mr. JENNER. Reconstruct the argument for me.

Mr. THORNLEY. Well, all right. Let me add this.

When I was in my freshman year in college, in my English class, I believe it was, perhaps it was a history class we had been required to read, it was a history workshop, we had been required to read the Communist manifesto which presents an outline of the theory of the Marx-Engels outlook on past and future history. The dialectical outlook. Oswald was also familiar with this outlook. As to what it constituted we both agreed. Oswald had argued previously that communism was a rational approach to life, a scientific approach to life, Marxism.

Mr. JENNER. This was in argumentation with you?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes.

Mr. JENNER. All right.

Mr. THORNLEY. With me. I challenged him to show me any shred of evidence to support the idea that history took place in the manner described by Engels and Marx (this was not just an arbitrary system looted as many suspect, from Hegel) and he, after some attempt to give me a satisfactory answer, which he was unable to do, became aware of that and he admitted that there was no justification, logically, for the Communist theory of history or the Marxist theory of history, but that Marxism was still, in his opinion, the best system for other reasons that there was——

Mr. JENNER. Best as against what?

Mr. THORNLEY. As against, well primarily as against religions. He did—that first comment of his always sticks in my mind, about communism being the best religion. He did think of communism as, not as a religion in the strict sense but as an overwhelming cultural outlook that, once applied to a country, would make it much better off than, say the Roman Catholic Church cultural outlook

or the Hindu cultural outlook or the Islamic cultural outlook, and he felt that, as I say, to get back to this argument, he felt that there were enough other things about communism that justified it that one could accept the theory of history on faith.

Mr. JENNER. What other things?

Mr. THORNLEY. Well, for one thing: the idea that he felt—as did Marx—that under capitalism workers are exploited, that in some way they are robbed of their full reward for their work by means of entrepreneurs' profits, and he felt that Marxism took his money but instead of taking it away from the worker spent it on the worker.

He felt that under a Soviet—under the present Soviet system, for example, that the money was spent for the benefit of the people rather than going to the individual who happened to be running the enterprise, and he thought this was a juster situation.

Mr. JENNER. Did you raise with him the price the individual had to pay for the material accommodation accorded the worker under the Communist system; for the substance or money, of which you speak, being returned to the worker? The price paid in terms of individual liberty as against the capitalistic or democratic system?

Mr. THORNLEY. You couldn't say this to him. Because he would say: "How do you know? How do you know what is going on there."

Mr. JENNER. First; did you raise it with him?

Mr. THORNLEY. I raised it with him.

Mr. JENNER. You being a libertarian as you say?

Mr. THORNLEY. Well, at that time I was—my ideas have changed since that time. At that time I was much to the left in my political thinking once again; well, I would say about in the same position that Mr. Stone who I spoke of earlier is now. I was on the "left-hand" side of the acceptable political spectrum in this country, and so, therefore, these issues, the issues I would now raise with him had I again the chance to speak to him, would be much different than the issues I raised with him at that time. I did not raise that issue particularly, I did not push it.

Mr. JENNER. Was there much, if any, discussion at the time on the issue of individual liberty?

Mr. THORNLEY. No; very little, because I wasn't too concerned about it at the time and neither was he. We were both concerned about what was the best for the greatest number of people. I don't think that concept was clear to either one of us.

Mr. JENNER. But, even having in mind the status of your political thinking at that moment, your political thinking did not square with his?

Mr. THORNLEY. No; I was opposed to the great trust that he put in, much greater than I suspected at that time, of course, trust that he put in the Soviet Government in the world today I felt they were misguided idealists. He felt they weren't misguided.

Mr. JENNER. Give us as best you can recall his comments and views with respect to capitalism of the variety then existing, or as he understood existed in this Nation.

Mr. THORNLEY. Well, I wouldn't say that we—I can't recall us having gone into any detail about anything so relevant to anything as capitalism in this Nation at the time.

Mr. JENNER. These discussions were broader. They were more abstract?

Mr. THORNLEY. Usually, yes. Whenever we got specific we usually discussed the Marine Corps.

Mr. JENNER. I see. You did not discuss the United States of America as such?

Mr. THORNLEY. No.

Mr. JENNER. And the Soviet Union as such, and compared the two countries?

Mr. THORNLEY. Well, as I say, you couldn't do this with Oswald because whenever you tried to make any statement about the Soviet Union he would challenge it on the grounds that we were probably propagandized in this country and we had no knowledge of what was going on over there.

Mr. JENNER. Did he purport to know what was going on over there?

Mr. THORNLEY. No.

Mr. JENNER. Did he show any interest in what was going on over there?

Mr. THORNLEY. He definitely showed interest.

Mr. JENNER. Give us some examples and tell us.

Mr. THORNLEY. I would say he took an agnostical approach to this. It seemed that he didn't know whether to believe what he read in his Russian newspaper, not that he used those exact words, or what he heard in this country. He took the attitude that "Well, they may be right and we may be right but I suspect they are right." This, of course, once again, I always got the impression in any of these discussions that part of his slight bias toward the Communist way of life was an act of rebellion against the present circumstances.

Mr. JENNER. Do you think that bias, if any, was a mild bias?

Mr. THORNLEY. I thought so at the time.

Mr. JENNER. Did you have any impression at anytime that he was interested from an objective standpoint; that he might like to experience by way of personal investigation what was going on in Russia?

Mr. THORNLEY. It never dawned on me. It was the farthest thing from my mind. Although I certainly will say this: When he did go to Russia it seemed to me as a much more likely alternative for Oswald than say joining the Communist Party in the United States.

Mr. JENNER. Excuse me.

Mr. THORNLEY. It seemed to fit his personality.

Mr. JENNER. Would you read that? I lost the thought of it.

(The reporter read the answer.)

Mr. JENNER. Would you elaborate, please?

Mr. THORNLEY. Well, Oswald was not militant. At the time it didn't seem to me he was at all militant. That he was at all a fighter, the kind of person who would glory in thinking of himself as marching along in a great crusade of some kind. He would be the kind of person who would take a quiet, as quiet as possible, for him personally, approach to something. For example, going to the Soviet Union would be a way he could experience what he thought were the benefits of communism without committing himself to storming the Bastille, so to speak.

Mr. JENNER. Is it a fair statement that, in seeking to interpret or enlarge upon what you say, that you did not have the impression of him as being a person who thought in terms of seeking to implant in this country, for example, by force or violence or other leadership, communism or Marxism so as materially to affect or change the government here?

Mr. THORNLEY. No; I don't think he felt he had to do that. I think he felt that that would inevitably happen some day and he was just getting into the swing of things by doing things his way. I don't think he felt that he could do much to promote the Communist cause or hinder it.

Mr. JENNER. Did he ever lead you to believe or did you have the impression that he had any thought or desire or inclination to implant communism here or elsewhere.

Mr. THORNLEY. No; not any more than merely to with the argument. He certainly would have liked to have converted me or any other person who was willing to discuss it with him. He would have liked to have persuaded them that his ideas were correct. If he had done so, I have no idea what he would have done then. I don't think he did either.

Mr. JENNER. What about his relationships, camaraderie with others on base?

Mr. THORNLEY. Almost nil.

Mr. JENNER. Almost nil.

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, he got along—

Mr. JENNER. Enlarge on that please.

Mr. THORNLEY. He got along with very few people.

Mr. JENNER. Why was that, in your opinion?

Mr. THORNLEY. He was extremely unpredictable. He and I stopped speaking before I finally left the outfit. This will give you an example of—

Mr. JENNER. How did that arise?

Mr. THORNLEY. It was a Saturday morning. We had been called out to march in a parade for a man or some men—I believe they were staff NCO's—who were retiring from the Marine Corps. This was a common occurrence.

Every now and then we had to give up our Saturday morning liberty to go march in one of these parades and everybody, of course, having just gotten up, and having to stand out, to look forward to a morning of standing out in the hot sun and marching around, was irritable. So, we were involved at the moment in a "hurry-up and wait routine" which is common in large organizations like the military. We were waiting at the moment, in the parking lot by the parade ground, sitting. Oswald and I happened to be sitting next to each other on a log that was used to bank cars, in the parking lot. I had just finished "1984" a couple of days earlier, and I had not yet discussed it with Oswald, and I was—he said something and I said something; I don't recall what it was—I was definitely thinking of "1984" at the time and I was using terms from "1984." Oswald didn't seem to be particularly amused by what I was saying, and he was—he seemed to be kind of lost in his own thoughts, and so I stopped making any comments at all to him for awhile. Then he turned to me and said something about the stupidity of the parade, of the whole circumstance right at the moment, how angry it made him, and I said, I believe my words were, "Well, comes the revolution you will change all that."

At which time he looked at me like a betrayed Caesar and screamed, screamed definitely, "Not you, too, Thornley." And I remember his voice cracked as he said this. He was definitely disturbed at what I had said and I didn't really think I had said that much. He put his hands in his pockets and pulled his hat down over his eyes and walked away and went over and sat down someplace else alone, and I thought, well, you know, forget about it, and I never said anything to him again and he never said anything to me again.

Mr. JENNER. You mean you never spoke to each other from that time on?

Mr. THORNLEY. No; and shortly thereafter I left the outfit for overseas. I don't recall that we were ever in a situation where we would have spoken, but I know we never spoke after that. And this happened with many people, this reaction of Oswald's, and therefore he had few friends. He never seemed to have any one friend for a long length of time, one acquaintance. He seemed to guard against developing real close friendships.

Mr. JENNER. Did you ever—excuse me, you recall being interviewed by an agent of the FBI?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. This was in New Orleans on Monday the 25th of—

Mr. THORNLEY. This was on an afternoon. Does he have the time down?

Mr. JENNER. 25th of November.

Mr. THORNLEY. That was Secret Service, wasn't it? Let's see, the 22d, 23d, 24th.

Mr. JENNER. This was Special Agent Merwin Alderson and Special Agent Richard Farrell. It was the Monday following the assassination.

Mr. THORNLEY. What I believe happened is—I believe they arrived in Arnaud's Restaurant where I was working at the time about midnight Sunday night so it would actually be Monday, yes, sir, that they talked to me. I gathered at the time these gentlemen were from the Secret Service, but those are the gentlemen.

Mr. JENNER. Did you say to them in connection with this sudden termination of the relationship between yourself and Oswald "that you had made this comment to Oswald, that he was a Communist and that things would be different when the revolution came"?

Mr. THORNLEY. No; I didn't tell them he was a Communist; no. But Oswald, certainly that was his reason for his anger. There was an implied accusation of communism in my saying, "Comes the revolution you will change all that."

Mr. JENNER. Yes.

Mr. THORNLEY. You see, he wasn't understanding the comments I was making in relation to "1984" at all, our traditional meeting ground here. He was interpreting them in light of his alleged communism, and that is why he became angry. But no; I didn't say to him, "You are a Communist"—ever.

Mr. JENNER. It is your explanation.

Mr. THORNLEY. This was not my opinion.

Mr. JENNER. You are saying that he interpreted your comment to be that you accused him of being a Communist, and then he made the remark, "Not you, too."

Mr. THORNLEY. I am sure he interpreted that that way but I certainly didn't think he was a Communist and I certainly didn't tell him so.

Mr. JENNER. To what did you attribute this inability of his to maintain reasonably cordial or at least military-service family relations with his fellow marines?

Mr. THORNLEY. Well, at the time I just thought—well, the man is a nut—at the very moment it happened, I dismissed it without thinking about it.

Mr. JENNER. See if you can articulate a little more, when you say "a nut," a lot of people will interpret the expression "a nut" differently.

Mr. THORNLEY. I understand that. I was just trying to give you my first impression first; that he was some kind of a nut, and I stopped thinking about it.

Mr. JENNER. You mean a nut in the sense of an extremist, not an organized thinker?

Mr. THORNLEY. I didn't think about that enough to classify it. I just thought, "something is wrong with him, maybe something is bugging him today, maybe he is crazy, I don't know what," but I just wasn't at that moment—it wasn't that important to me, I didn't feel much better than he did that morning, I am sure, so I just shrugged it off.

Later, I did reflect on it, and that, combined with his general habits in relation to his superiors, and to the other men in the outfit, caused me to decide that he had a definite tendency toward irrationality at times, an emotional instability. Once again right away, I didn't know exactly what was the cause of this. A couple of years later I had good reason to think about it some more, at which time I noticed—

Mr. JENNER. Now when please? Before the assassination?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, while working on my book, "The Idle Warriors."

Mr. JENNER. About when was this?

Mr. THORNLEY. From the time he went to the Soviet Union until February of 1962.

Mr. JENNER. You learned that he had gone to the Soviet Union?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes; I was stationed at his former outfit, Marine Air Control Squadron 1, at the time he went to the Soviet Union.

Mr. JENNER. Where were you then stationed?

Mr. THORNLEY. That is where I was at the time.

Mr. JENNER. What country?

Mr. THORNLEY. At Atsugi, Japan.

Mr. JENNER. I see. And you learned about it through what source?

Mr. THORNLEY. The Stars and Stripes, the military newspaper in the Far East. It was on page 3, I believe, a little article about Lee Harvey Oswald having appeared in the American Embassy in Moscow, having plopped down his passport and requested Soviet citizenship. My first reaction was, "Good Lord, what is going on here?" And afterward, I, of course—it began to occur to me, his interest in communism, and I started kicking myself, thinking, well, you know, just for so misjudging a person. I just—

Mr. JENNER. Misjudging? What respect, please?

Mr. THORNLEY. As far as his sincerity went. I did not ever think he was so interested in communism to go to all the trouble to go to the Soviet Union and certainly to jeopardize his citizenship, and so forth. This was a great surprise to me. And right away I began to try to figure out the mechanism of his thinking.

Mr. JENNER. I see. Keep going and tell me what your rationalization and thinking was at that time.

Mr. THORNLEY. And what caused him to do this. This gets us back to the emotional instability and why did it occur. I do believe, to begin with, Oswald, how long ago he had acquired the idea I don't know, but I think in his mind it was almost a certainty that the world would end up under a totalitarian government or under totalitarian governments.

I think he accepted Orwell's premise in this that there was no fighting it. That sooner or later you were going to have to love Big Brother and I think this was the central, I think this was the central thing that disturbed him and caused many of his other reactions.

I think he wanted to be on the winning side for one thing, and, therefore,

the great interest in communism. I think he wanted—I think he felt he was under a totalitarian system while in the Marine Corps, and, therefore, the extreme reactions when someone would call him a Communist. I think he had a persecution complex, and I think he strove to maintain it. I could not go so far as to say why. Perhaps it was necessary to his self-esteem in some way. This was and is the general conclusion I now have as to his general motivations, his overall motivations, insofar as he has tended to be emotionally unstable.

Mr. JENNER. Do you think he was emotionally unstable?

Mr. THORNLEY. I think so.

Mr. JENNER. That is an opinion you gathered from your association with him in the Marines.

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes. Primarily once again from that last experience, that short exchange and just the complete unexpectedness of it. And then, of course, after that was when I learned some of the other things, such as the pouring the beer over the staff sergeant's head. These things, I don't know when I learned them, but I do definitely know I learned them afterwards because I——

Mr. JENNER. You mean you learned of that incident after you left the base at El Toro?

Mr. THORNLEY. I believe I learned it over in Japan, as a matter of fact, I believe soon after I got there somebody mentioned it in some connection or another, and that was because I remember, yes, I am sure it happened over there because I remember, then I said, "Oh, he was in this unit? He was in here in MACS 1?" and somebody said, "Yes." And that was another connection in my mind as far as Oswald was concerned.

And then when the defection occurred, I therefore felt that I—I had been thinking about writing a book on the Marine Corps. I had not decided exactly what it was going to concern, what it was going to be about as far as plot or theme went, the background would be the Marine Corps in Japan, because that was the first big, at that time to me, dramatic experience of my life suitable for a book, worth telling about.

So, when the defection occurred on that same day, I thought, "Well, this is it. I am in a perfect position to tell how this took place, why this happened." I was not so interested in explaining Lee Harvey Oswald to myself or anybody else, as I was in explaining that particular phenomenon of disillusionment with the United States after serving in the Marine Corps overseas in a peacetime capacity; thus the title: *The Idle Warriors*.

Since Oswald inspired the book, I did base a good deal of it as a matter of convenience on his personality and on his ideas.

Mr. JENNER. You said you had the impression as you sat there in Japan that here was a man whom you felt wanted to be on the winning side.

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes.

Mr. JENNER. What impression did you have as to why? Did you, for example, have the impression that he felt that his life had been such that he had been deprived of the opportunity to be on a good side?

Mr. THORNLEY. No.

Mr. JENNER. That he conceived to be the leading side?

Mr. THORNLEY. No. I had a definite impression of why.

Mr. JENNER. All right.

Mr. THORNLEY. I think it is a mistake that many people make, and I think it is a mistake he shared, and that is: he looked upon, not only Marxists make this mistake, but he looked upon history as God. He looked upon the eyes of future people as some kind of tribunal, and he wanted to be on the winning side so that 10,000 years from now people would look in the history books and say, "Well, this man was ahead of his time. This man was"—he wanted to be looked back upon with honor by future generations. It was, I think, a substitute, in his case, for traditional religion.

The eyes of the future became what to another man would be the eyes of God, or perhaps to yet another man the eyes of his own conscience.

Mr. JENNER. So it wasn't in the prosaic sense of merely wanting to be on the "winning side."

Mr. THORNLEY. No.



Mr. JENNER. When things developed——

Mr. THORNLEY. No; I don't think he expected things to develop within his lifetime. I am sure that he didn't. He just wanted to be on the winning side for all eternity.

Mr. JENNER. You had the impression that that was in terms of selflessness? That he thought also in terms that Lee Harvey Oswald would be associated with this forward thinking?

Mr. THORNLEY. Right. He was concerned with his image in history and I do think that is why he chose once again, once again why he chose the particular method he chose and did it in the way he did. It got him in the newspapers. It did broadcast his name out. I think he probably expected the Russians to accept him on a much higher—in a much higher capacity than they did.

I think he expected them to, in his own dreams, to invite him to take a position in their government, possibly as a technician, and I think he then felt that he could go out into the world, into the Communist world and distinguish himself and work his way up into the party, perhaps. He was definitely——

Mr. JENNER. Did it have to be the Communist world or could it be any world that he saw projected into the future?

Mr. THORNLEY. Definitely.

Mr. JENNER. And as you put it this, in your opinion, had become a religion with him.

Mr. THORNLEY. Much more than he himself realized even though he called it his religion.

Mr. JENNER. Did you have the impression there was a personal selflessness, that is a—I will put it in terms of disregard or rather this way—that as far as his physical person was concerned, he wasn't concerned about life in the sense that he wanted to continue to maintain life in his body?

Mr. THORNLEY. No; I think he wanted physical happiness. I think this is why he didn't do something like just join the Communist Party. I believe he felt that was dangerous. I think he wanted to live comfortably. But I think if it came to a choice between the two, or to put it this way, more relevant to events that developed later, I think if it became to his mind impossible for him to have this degree of physical comfort that he expected or sought, I think he would then throw himself entirely on the other thing he also wanted, which was the image in history.

I don't think that—I think he wanted both if he could have them. If he didn't, he wanted to die with the knowledge that, or with the idea that he was somebody.

Mr. JENNER. Did you have the impression at any time that he, in turn, embraced a realization that he was lacking in ability to accomplish the former, that is, personal comfort and status, that is that he felt that there was a lack of ability, capacity, training, education on his part?

Mr. THORNLEY. When I knew him, I don't think he had the vaguest thought in that direction. I do definitely, of course, based solely upon what I have read in the newspapers, think he came to that moment, after returning to the United States from the Soviet Union. I think he was getting panicky.

Mr. JENNER. In our discussion you can see it is important to me to obtain your thinking, uninfluenced to the extent you can do it by subsequent events. Of course complete lack of influence is not possible, but I am seeking your views as to your state of mind prior to November 22.

Mr. THORNLEY. All right. I would say that prior to November 22, I felt that he had gradually become disillusioned with the United States for many reasons, at the bottom was also his conviction, well, in fact, his disillusionment with the United States in the Far East probably contributed to some extent to his conviction that the Communists would eventually prevail, the Communist culture would eventually prevail in the world, and I then had the feeling that he certainly—I thought he would probably stay in Russia, for example, forever.

I didn't know what he was doing there. I realized from what I read at that time that he was not—he did not have Russian citizenship. He was staying there as an immigrant. I expected him probably to adjust to Russian life and that would be the last that the Western World would ever hear of Oswald.

Everything Oswald has ever done has surprised me.

Mr. JENNER. Please elaborate on that.

Mr. THORNLEY. When I knew him and since I knew him, when I knew him I was surprised when he was offended at my statement about the coming of the revolution that Saturday morning. I was surprised when I read in the papers overseas that he had gone to the Soviet Union. I was surprised when he came back. And I was entirely caught unaware when it turned out that he was involved in the assassination, to such an extent that for some time afterwards, I thought he was innocent.

Mr. JENNER. Why were you surprised when he came back and tell us before you do that where were you and how did you find out about it.

Mr. THORNLEY. I was in New Orleans. My parents sent me an article from the Los Angeles Times about it. The reason I was surprised at his coming back was as I said before, I just expected that would be the last I would hear of him. I fully expected him to adjust to Soviet life. I thought what he—at that time I thought what he probably lacked in the Marine Corps was any sympathy for the overall purpose of the Marine Corps. Whereas he certainly had sympathy for the overall purpose of the Soviet Government, so I don't think he would mind the restrictions imposed on him, as he resented them in the Marine Corps.

I did not expect him to become disillusioned, certainly, with the Soviet Union. I am not, of course, sure that he did become disillusioned with it. It just seemed unlike him to come back to this country when he said he would never live in either as a capitalist or as a worker.

Mr. JENNER. When did he say that?

Mr. THORNLEY. He said that at a press conference in Moscow according to the papers.

Mr. JENNER. This was something you read in the Stars and Stripes?

Mr. THORNLEY. I don't know whether I read this in the Stars and Stripes or whether I read this—I certainly read it when he came back from Russia, I remember. It was in the article from the Times my folks sent me. Said when he had left for the Soviet Union he had said such-and-such, quote.

Mr. JENNER. You said you did not expect him to become disillusioned with Soviet Russia. Was it—your impression at any time, take the several stages, that he had a conviction with respect to any form of political philosophy or government?

Mr. THORNLEY. Well, he did definitely always before and after have a Marxist bias. From anything that has come to me, that has never—I have never reason—never had reason to doubt that.

Mr. JENNER. That, you think, was a conviction?

Mr. THORNLEY. I think that was an irrevocable conviction, you might say.

Mr. JENNER. You do not think it was not merely a theoretical concept which he used for argumentation?

Mr. THORNLEY. Let me put it this way. I think you could sit down and argue with him for a number of years in a great marathon argument and have piles of facts and I don't think you could have changed his mind on that unless you knew why he believed it in the first place. I certainly don't. I don't think with any kind of formal argument you could have shaken that conviction. And that is why I say irrevocable. It was just—never getting back to looking at things from any other way once he had become a Marxist, whenever that was.

Mr. JENNER. Was he able to articulate distinctions between Marxism, communism, capitalism, democracy?

Mr. THORNLEY. At the time I knew him and argued with him he didn't bother to articulate distinctions between Marxism and communism. At a latter time I understand he did.

Mr. JENNER. He attempted to.

Mr. THORNLEY. At the time I knew his communism was the modern, living vicar of Marxism, period.

Mr. JENNER. Were you in New Orleans when he was arrested for distributing Fair Play for Cuba Committee leaflets?

Mr. THORNLEY. I arrived in New Orleans in the early part of September. If I was in New Orleans—

Mr. JENNER. 1963?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes.

Mr. JENNER. This occurred in August of 1963.

Mr. THORNLEY. Then I wasn't there; no.

Mr. JENNER. Did you hear about it?

Mr. THORNLEY. No; I didn't. I didn't hear about it until after the assassination.

Mr. JENNER. Did you ever hear any of those tapes?

Mr. THORNLEY. I heard part of one of them after the assassination, once again.

Mr. JENNER. Did that part include his effort to distinguish between Marxism and democracy in response to a question put to him by either Mr. Stuckey or one of the other participants?

Mr. THORNLEY. That is exactly what he was talking about at the time. I happened to be standing in the television station in New Orleans and he was saying, and I just got a snatch of it, I was passing through the room or something; and he was saying, "Well, there are many Marxist countries in the world today."

Mr. JENNER. This was by way of his answering a question as to what was the distinction between Marxism and communism?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes; he was saying there are many non-Communist Marxist countries in the world today and he was definitely making a distinction between Marxism and communism.

Mr. JENNER. But all he did was to cite the countries. He didn't attempt to make the distinction.

Mr. THORNLEY. It was only a snatch of it.

Mr. JENNER. That was a fair representation of his utterances during those two radio broadcasts and one television broadcast. You mentioned also that you had a feeling on his part that he was laboring under a persecution complex?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes.

Mr. JENNER. That was not necessarily based alone on the incident you relate that occurred on that Saturday morning? Were there other incidents?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes; there were many comments on his part about the walls having ears, about—I think he felt the Marine Corps kept a pretty close watch on him because of his "subversive" activities and, for that reason in fact, I think he sought to keep himself convinced that he was being watched and being pushed a little harder than anyone else.

I don't think he was consciously, perhaps not consciously, aware of the fact that he went out of his way to get into trouble. I think it was kind of necessary to him to believe that he was being picked on. It wasn't anything extreme. I wouldn't go so far as to call it, call him a paranoid, but a definite tendency there was in that direction, I think.

Mr. JENNER. Would you put it in terms that he had the feeling that he was being unjustifiably put upon?

Mr. THORNLEY. Oh, always; yes. He was, in fact, you almost got the feeling that he was—this was happening because of his defense. I mean he was always speaking of the injustices which had been perpetrated against him.

Mr. JENNER. Of his injustices as to him personally, different from the treatment of others about him?

Mr. THORNLEY. To him personally; yes. Well, and it was the fact that he had lost his clearance, and had gone out of his way to get into some degree of trouble that went on to support this. For example, we would stand at muster in the morning, and Sergeant Spar would call the roll and he would say "Oswald" and Oswald would step out of the ranks and he would send him off to mow the lawn or something.

Oswald did get special treatment. As I say, he had brought it on himself but he made the most of it, too, as far as using it as a means of getting or attempting to get sympathy.

Mr. JENNER. Well, what was the sergeant's name?

Mr. THORNLEY. Sergeant Spar.

Mr. JENNER. Spar. In using his name, I don't wish to, I am not suggesting

anything personal as to Sergeant Spar, but I am going to use him as a faceless Marine sergeant.

Mr. THORNLEY. And a very good one.

Mr. JENNER. You marines, at least some of you, I assume, as had GI's and others, you buttered up sergeants, too, didn't you, in order to avoid being assigned too often to disagreeable tasks?

Mr. THORNLEY. No; you didn't have to. So long as you kept in line and obeyed orders, you didn't have to—you weren't assigned any disagreeable task in the kind of outfit I was in because there weren't that many. When there was a disagreeable task to be done, it was assigned to somebody who had stepped out of line and there were always enough people who had stepped out of line and it was no problem to find them. In fact, the problem was to find enough disagreeable tasks to go around. The only exception to this would be overseas; a typhoon would hit sometimes and then everybody would have to go out and we would have to all, much to our dismay, wade around at 2 o'clock in the morning and tear down tents and so on and so forth.

Mr. JENNER. That was a thing that was common to all of you.

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes.

Mr. JENNER. It was not a disagreeable task in the sense we are talking about.

Mr. THORNLEY. Right; and that was never necessary to have to butter up that I can ever think of to a superior of any kind in order to get exempted from anything.

Mr. JENNER. Well, do you think Oswald was aware that all he had to be was more tractable to the customs and practices of the Marine Corps in which he was then living and he would not be assigned disagreeable tasks more often than others?

Mr. THORNLEY. Well, that is hard to say. I don't know whether he was aware of that or not. I am not sure whether he permitted himself to be aware of it. Maybe he was aware of it and maybe he couldn't help. He had compulsions to do these things. Maybe he thought it was worth it and maybe he didn't feel that he was being treated unjustly at all. Maybe he just wanted everybody to think he felt he was being treated unjustly, if you follow me.

Mr. JENNER. I do.

Mr. THORNLEY. It could have been any of these things. This—I think it would take a good psychiatrist to find out which.

Mr. JENNER. You also used the expression that he strove to maintain the status or milieu in which he had brought himself.

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes; I think this was possibly so. I think perhaps the feeling of being persecuted was necessary to his self-esteem. This is, I understand, a common thing, and it certainly fits in with everything else I know about him.

Mr. JENNER. Did you have that impression that you have just expressed at the time that you were associated with him in the Marines?

Mr. THORNLEY. At the time I was associated with him, I didn't have that impression because I was too busy wondering just what it was. I used to—I would see him doing something stupid, maybe a wisecrack to an officer, for example, and I would say, "Well, doesn't the idiot know that if he does that he is going to have to do this" and yet he would resent his punishment.

Mr. JENNER. What would he do afterward?

Mr. THORNLEY. As if it had been thrust upon him for no reason whatsoever, out of the blue.

Mr. JENNER. Did you have a feeling that he was impulsive in that respect, in the sense that sometimes he did things?

Mr. THORNLEY. He was definitely impulsive.

Mr. JENNER. That he had no control?

Mr. THORNLEY. Well, I don't know whether he had no control or whether he would just do things without thinking. I think maybe he just let, relaxed his controls once in a while, and why, I don't know.

Mr. JENNER. Did you have the feeling he was impulsive?

Mr. THORNLEY. Oh, definitely.

Mr. JENNER. He acted on the spur of the moment?

Mr. THORNLEY. He was spontaneous, very much so. This was—I had this impression the whole time I knew him.

Mr. JENNER. You did have the impression and I think you have mentioned it several times, that he had an exaggerated, either mild or otherwise, self-esteem.

Mr. THORNLEY. No; I didn't mention that that I recall. I did say that I think maintaining the persecution complex was necessary for his self-esteem and he was concerned very much with his image in history but I don't think in the sense of being secure about his self-esteem; I don't think he was either conceited, for example, egotistical, or just plain confident. I don't think—I don't have any reason to believe that he in his own eyes, had any reason to be proud of himself beyond the average, at most.

Mr. JENNER. I wasn't thinking of self-esteem in that sense and I didn't gather from your remark that you were thinking of it in that sense either, but rather in the sense of self-esteem in his own eyes, not in the sense of accomplishment or egoism.

Mr. THORNLEY. Now, I don't know. Self-esteem in one's own eyes, it seems to me, would have to be justified by some means. Some people justify it by means of their attraction to the opposite sex or by means of their standing in some country club. I think Oswald justified it by means of his recalcitrance, kind of a reverse self-esteem.

By means of his unwillingness to do what he was ordered, for example.

Mr. JENNER. Did you have the feeling that he sought the esteem of others, not necessarily his officers, but the esteem of somebody or some group or some persons about him and in his life—

Mr. THORNLEY. I think he wanted this very much but I don't think he knew how to go about getting it. He wanted it, and yet he certainly didn't—I think he would have felt he was cheating himself if he had offered them anything in exchange for it. He wanted it but he wanted it to come to him for no reason. He didn't want to have to earn it. I got that impression. That is a very mild impression.

Mr. JENNER. We are dealing in a very delicate field here and I am pressing you very severely.

Mr. THORNLEY. These are sometimes very gray, thin lines we have to distinguish between.

Mr. JENNER. We are probing for motivation. Did you ever discuss with him the matter of education?

Mr. THORNLEY. No.

Mr. JENNER. His own; or education in the abstract; or the need for education in order to attain accomplishments; or any regard to whether his status in life, his personal comfort, his personal peace, could be advanced by further education?

Mr. THORNLEY. No.

Mr. JENNER. Did you ever have the feeling of any discomfort on his part or inferiority because of his limited education?

Mr. THORNLEY. No. First of all, in the Marine Corps there is a prevalence of this kind of feeling among many of the enlisted men, and Oswald was exempt from it.

Mr. JENNER. What do you mean "exempt from it"?

Mr. THORNLEY. Well, he didn't, for example, have the usual bitterness toward somebody who read, well, just merely because he did read.

Mr. JENNER. He may have felt superior because he did read, did you have that feeling?

Mr. THORNLEY. Oh, yes.

Mr. JENNER. That was a definite feeling?

Mr. THORNLEY. I wouldn't say anything in my experience with him caused me to particularly notice that he felt superior because he did read. But except, yes, there is one time a friend of his, I don't know who it was, I haven't been able to recall the name at present, one morning looked over at our commanding officer who was walking by, Colonel Poindexter, an air ace in Korea—

Mr. JENNER. A what?

Mr. THORNLEY. An ace pilot in Korea, and made the comment, "There goes a mental midgit" which drew glee from Oswald, as I remember. But aside from that one particular incident—well, in any case, when he was dealing with military superiors he always felt superior to them. You got that impression. But

dealing with the other marines who maybe did have an education or did not have an education, I didn't get any, ever get any impression one way or the other that he had a tendency to react to this.

Mr. JENNER. As between yourself and him, your association, what was your feeling? Did he regard himself as compatible with you and you with him?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes; definitely. I didn't get any idea that he was—I thought his education was about the same as my own which certainly isn't spectacular by any means. I thought he might have had a year of college. I knew he had—I figured he had graduated from high school. It never occurred to me to think any more about it. I did, as I mentioned before, notice once in a while that he had gaps in his knowledge, but many people do, in fact all of us do, I am sure, in some fields.

But in Oswald's case they perhaps had an unusual pattern to them or something that made me notice them, perhaps. Perhaps he was better read, for example, on Marxist economics than any other school of economics, things like this. But that was the extent of it.

Mr. JENNER. Was there in your kicking around with him in your discussions—was there ever any discussion of your past, of his past, his life?

Mr. THORNLEY. None whatsoever. This I am almost certain of. I had no idea, for example, that he was from Texas or where he was from. At that time I don't recall him having a Texas accent, either. I had no idea that his father had died when he was young. I had no idea about his family, anything along this line and I don't think I ever discussed my past with him.

Mr. JENNER. Was any mention ever made of his attendance at or even the name of the Albert Schweitzer College?

Mr. THORNLEY. No.

Mr. JENNER. No discussions about any plans of his or possibility of his seeking further education of any kind or character when he was mustered out of the Marines?

Mr. THORNLEY. None whatsoever. For one thing we were not close enough friends to have any personal interests in each other. I looked upon him as somebody to argue with, another atheist—therefore, without the problem of religion between us—and to argue philosophy and politics about, and I think he looked upon me in about the same light.

Mr. JENNER. What was your dexterity with Marine weapons?

Mr. THORNLEY. Mine?

Mr. JENNER. Yes.

Mr. THORNLEY. I was a sharpshooter.

Mr. JENNER. What was his?

Mr. THORNLEY. I believe—well, at that time I didn't know.

Mr. JENNER. You didn't know. I want your viewpoint as of that time. While you were based at El Toro, did the unit engage with any regularity in rifle practice?

Mr. THORNLEY. None whatsoever. At that time, the whole time I was there, we did not engage in rifle practice.

Mr. JENNER. As a matter of curiosity on my own part, why was that?

Mr. THORNLEY. Well, in the Marine Corps you are required once a year to go to the rifle range and qualify. I was not there an entire year. Point No. 2, this was the Marine air wing which has much less of an emphasis on, in general, on rifle practice because it is not going to be utilized in battle, and a much stronger emphasis, in the case of the outfit we were in, on our particular military occupational specialty.

Mr. JENNER. Which was?

Mr. THORNLEY. 6749 Aviation Electronic Operator.

Mr. JENNER. Was this true when you reached Japan?

Mr. THORNLEY. More so. When I reached Japan, however, we did go to the rifle range one time shortly after I got there, and qualify. I recall at that time that in Japan we weren't even having rifle inspections. There you could put your rifle away in your locker and forget about it, and take it out every couple of months and make sure it hadn't corroded away, and put it back again.

Mr. JENNER. But you didn't even have rifle inspection?

Mr. THORNLEY. Once in a while we would have one, but not with any frequency whatsoever.

Mr. JENNER. Were you forewarned so that you could clean your rifle?

Mr. THORNLEY. No; usually you were caught unawares, which was why you kept it clean in the locker.

Mr. JENNER. I see. What are the grades of marksmanship?

Mr. THORNLEY. Marksman, sharpshooter, and expert.

Mr. JENNER. Marksman, sharpshooter, and expert. Therefore, I gather from that that marksman was the basic grade.

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes.

Mr. JENNER. A grade that every marine was expected to, and had to, attain that grade?

Mr. THORNLEY. Not had to attain, some didn't, and there was no particular penalty involved, except maybe something a little extracurricular when you were in boot camp. Otherwise, you didn't wear a marksman's medal is all. You didn't have any qualification in the infantry; of course, it would be looked down upon in the case of promotion or something like that. In the air wing it had much slighter significance than that. Maybe if you were being considered for a meritorious promotion and you hadn't qualified you wouldn't get it, but day to day it had no significance.

Mr. JENNER. Were the standards applied in the air wing with respect to qualifications for these three classes as severe or as high as the standards applied, let us say, in the Marine infantry?

Mr. THORNLEY. Exactly the same; yes.

Mr. JENNER. Exactly the same. Would you please state for me your concept of the degree of marksmanship for (a) marksman, (b) sharpshooter, (c) expert?

Mr. THORNLEY. Well, a marksman is an average shooter. A man, I think, could pick up a rifle and with a little commonsense and a minimum knowledge of the basics of marksmanship qualify as a marksman. When a man doesn't qualify as a marksman it is usually either because he is nervous on the day of qualification or he is gun shy or some outside influence confuses him; maybe he gets his windage off, something like this.

Sharpshooter is just a little above average. It ranges over about—a pretty wide field. But it is a man who—a sharpshooter would be a man, the average man, with a good, maybe a week of training on how to use a rifle, and some practice.

Whereas an expert is the kind of man I would hate to have on the other side in a war. He is accurate with his rifle up to and including 500 yards in a number of different positions. Hits the bull's-eye or close to the bull's-eye an overwhelming percentage of the time.

Mr. JENNER. Is that the category in which we would place that to which we refer generally as the sniper?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes. Well, any man might be assigned as a sniper, I imagine. But an expert rifleman would perform much better.

Mr. JENNER. Maybe be a superior sniper.

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes. Definitely.

Mr. JENNER. And to attain the position of expert marksman must there be considerable practice and use of the weapon or is it more of natural ability?

Mr. THORNLEY. Now, you enter in once again to natural ability, just as not qualifying might be caused by a lack of natural ability of some kind. An expert rifleman probably would have a much calmer nervous system or, you might say, a much greater degree of control.

I would imagine training can make up for this. I know a couple of times I just missed expert by a few points. It seemed that I couldn't make expert. It seemed to me there was just something I didn't have in order to make expert. It was very frustrating.

Mr. JENNER. You tried?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes; it takes a great degree of control, primarily. Of course, the other things like good eyesight and so on and so forth.

Mr. JENNER. Oh, yes.

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes.

Mr. JENNER. Did you ever discuss with Oswald his degree of proficiency in the use of the rifle?

Mr. THORNLEY. Not to the best of my knowledge.

Mr. JENNER. Did you have any impressions that you gathered in that respect while you were with him at El Toro?

Mr. THORNLEY. None whatsoever. Had somebody asked me to guess about Oswald, I would have said, well, he probably didn't qualify, just because that was the type of guy he was, but that is all.

Mr. JENNER. You would never have expected him to have been a sharpshooter, for example?

Mr. THORNLEY. It wouldn't have greatly surprised me if he was and it wouldn't have greatly surprised me if he wasn't. This is something very difficult: to look at a man and tell, at least it is very difficult for me. I have seen some drill instructors who could do it. But to tell whether he is going to be an expert or a sharpshooter, marksman, I am not qualified.

Mr. JENNER. While you were stationed with him at El Toro, did you ever go off base with him?

Mr. THORNLEY. No.

Mr. JENNER. Did you ever have any discussion of dates?

Mr. THORNLEY. No.

Mr. JENNER. His attitude toward women?

Mr. THORNLEY. No.

Mr. JENNER. Sex?

Mr. THORNLEY. None whatsoever.

Mr. JENNER. Was there any scuttlebutt around the camp in that regard with respect to him?

Mr. THORNLEY. Not to the best of my knowledge.

Mr. JENNER. Sex habits, propensities?

Mr. THORNLEY. No; you stand a risk in the Marine Corps, if you are at all quiet and tend to be introverted, of being suspected of being homosexual, but to the best of my knowledge there were never any comments made of this nature.

Mr. JENNER. Do you recall some other readings of his in addition to "1984"?

Mr. THORNLEY. I do recall having mentioned Dostoevsky to him and I know he had read something and I think it was "Crime and Punishment" but I am not sure. It was something I had not read by Dostoevsky when I had read about, I guess at that time, about three or four books.

Mr. JENNER. It is a great book.

Mr. THORNLEY. Someday I am going to get around to it.

Mr. JENNER. Have you not read it yet? It is a really great book.

Mr. THORNLEY. No; and I don't recall him mentioning any other books offhand. I don't—I can't think of a thing besides "1984" and some book by Dostoevsky.

Mr. JENNER. While you were based at El Toro did he engage, did you notice, in any officer baiting on his part with respect, in particular, to such matters as foreign affairs?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes; not on foreign affairs, no, but the same officer, Lieutenant Donovan, spoke of in a foreign affairs lecture in the newspapers, I do remember him baiting him on a couple of occasions.

Mr. JENNER. Oswald attempting to bait Lieutenant Donovan?

Mr. THORNLEY. I don't remember what it was. I know, I believe Lieutenant Donovan was also a lieutenant which I had had a couple of run-ins with if I remember correctly.

If not, it was Lieutenant Delprado. It was one of the two of them. Mine were completely accidental and I went to great length to keep away from one of them because it seemed like any time I was around him I happened to do something to irritate him. But Oswald, I don't recall exactly what he said, but he a couple or three times went out of his way to say something to one of these lieutenants that would cause them to be irritated and in this you can't really say that he was exceptional. It happened many times. In Oswald's case though, it was exceptionally—

Mr. JENNER. You mean it happened many times with respect to other noncoms in the Marines with respect to these officers?

Mr. THORNLEY. Right; but in Oswald's case it seemed a little more deliberate.



Some guys would get mad and they would say something, or sometimes they would do something by accident, and they would get themselves involved and then they would decide, "Well, what the hell," and push it all away. Oswald it seemed didn't have to have any reason. He just told an officer to get lost.

Mr. JENNER. He baited an officer for the pleasure of it?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes; I might mention that this was one means by which he won the admiration of others in the outfit in that the junior officers especially are usually disliked, or were in that outfit, and this made him on such occasions as he engaged with an officer in some kind of officer baiting, this won the respect, for at least a few minutes, of the men—who would kind of laugh about it, and chuckle over it and tell others about it. Perhaps this is why he did it.

Mr. JENNER. You mentioned some slovenliness on his part; what about his quarters, his barracks; did you have occasion to observe them?

Mr. THORNLEY. I don't think I was ever in his barracks. I do recall having been told that he had Russian books and that is all I—that is the only connection I can make now in my mind with his quarters. I don't think I ever saw them.

Mr. JENNER. You already have given us something of his view of the U.S. Marine Corps. Would you give us a summary of that? Give us your impression of his views with respect to the U.S. Marine Corps.

Mr. THORNLEY. Well, definitely the Marine Corps was not what he had expected it to be when he joined. Also he felt that the officers and the staff NCO's at the Marine Corps were incompetent to give him orders.

Mr. JENNER. Incompetent in what sense, they were below him intellectually?

Mr. THORNLEY. They were below him intellectually—and for various other reasons in each case, too. Maybe this officer was ignorant, as was brought out about foreign affairs, in Oswald's mind, knew less than Oswald did about it. I don't hold with the stand that Oswald would study up on foreign affairs simply in order to bait the officer. I think it just happened to be that Oswald would see that the officer was basing his foreign affairs maybe on Time magazine when Oswald had done a little more reading and I think he resented this Time magazine approach to foreign affairs.

Mr. JENNER. How did these discussions arise, Mr. Thornley, the discussion of foreign affairs by officers?

Mr. THORNLEY. Well, the officers, every so many weeks—this is mentioned somewhere in this pile of papers—every so many weeks a lieutenant is appointed to give a foreign affairs lecture or a current affairs lecture, pardon me, to the troops, at which time he explains the world situation in a half hour. I remember having one second lieutenant telling us about Dalai Lama or it was a first lieutenant and I forget what he told us, but it was something completely absurd. I think at that time the Dalai Lama had just disappeared or something, and one would get the impression, I think, that he thought the Dalai Lama was a leader in Pakistan or something.

Mr. JENNER. That is the impression the lieutenant tried to convey?

Mr. THORNLEY. Well, I think that was the impression the lieutenant had had when he had been assigned to give this lecture. The last minute, he got down and started going through the news magazines to get his information, got it somewhat inaccurately, and didn't particularly care whether it was accurate or not anyway. Stood up in front of the troops and reeled off the lecture, and, of course, most of the enlisted men didn't know enough to criticize him either because they weren't that interested, and that was it—with a couple of people laughing up their sleeves, and this happened later, this didn't happen at the time I knew Oswald.

However, in such a situation Oswald would have been careful I am sure to raise his hand and correct the lieutenant.

Mr. JENNER. I was going to get to that. During the course of these lectures did the troops as you called them engage in discussion with the instructor?

Mr. THORNLEY. They were permitted to ask questions, to raise their hands to ask questions. And Oswald would have probably asked a question which would have made light of the lieutenant's ignorance.

Mr. JENNER. Put the lieutenant at a disadvantage?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes.

Mr. JENNER. Were you present at any times when you were at El Toro when

the lectures occurred when, at that time Oswald raised his hand and engaged in dissertation?

Mr. THORNLEY. I might have been but I don't recall it if I was. I recall being present at several lectures at El Toro, and it just might have happened. It was the kind of thing Oswald would do and it wouldn't even have phased me. I probably wouldn't even have bothered to remember if it had happened. It would have been just part of the daily routine there so I would have——

Mr. JENNER. Did you ever engage in that sort of thing?

Mr. THORNLEY. No; I never had guts enough to stand up and tell an officer he didn't know what he was talking about. Behind his back I might tell somebody that such-and-such officer didn't know what he was talking about, but I was never quite that brash—in that particular respect, anyway.

Mr. JENNER. What were your impressions on Oswald being interested in music?

Mr. THORNLEY. Not being interested in music myself particularly——

Mr. JENNER. I take it you had none; that is, any impressions as to his interests?

Mr. THORNLEY. So, therefore, I had none; correct.

Mr. JENNER. Did you ever play chess with him?

Mr. THORNLEY. No.

Mr. JENNER. Did you ever see him playing chess with anyone else?

Mr. THORNLEY. Just now you mentioned the word "chess" as a definite association; I think he did play chess. I can't place the person. This—there were some other people in the outfit who played chess. There is one name I have been trying to remember for a long time, and I think it starts with "Win" something. "Winter" something. I'm probably way off base there. But a tall blond corporal, I believe, played chess and a couple of other men in the outfit played chess. At that time, I guess at that, I knew how to play chess. I have never been particularly interested, though, in the game so I don't—I am pretty sure I didn't play chess with him.

In fact, come to think of it I had just been cured of playing chess 3 months before that; somebody beat me in about six moves and I stopped playing for about a year. It wasn't me.

Mr. JENNER. While at El Toro did Oswald become engaged in any physical altercations with anybody?

Mr. THORNLEY. No; definitely not to my knowledge. Never got into any fights or even any hot personal argument over anything, that I know of.

Mr. JENNER. What was your impression, if you had one then, as to his disposition in that regard?

Mr. THORNLEY. I had the impression that he avoided violence.

Mr. JENNER. While you were at El Toro do you recall whether Oswald ever went off the base on liberty?

Mr. THORNLEY. As far as I know he didn't.

Mr. JENNER. Were there any discussions on the base as to what, if anything, Oswald did?

Mr. THORNLEY. Not in my presence.

Mr. JENNER. What, if anything, Oswald had done off the base on liberty?

Mr. THORNLEY. Not in my presence.

Mr. JENNER. Was there ever any discussion of Cuba and Castro and that problem?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. All right; tell us all about that.

Mr. THORNLEY. Well, at that time I and Oswald were both, and a couple of other men in the outfit, were quite sure that Castro was a great hero.

Mr. JENNER. Why?

Mr. THORNLEY. Well, he was liberating Cuba from Batista and, of course, we had heard all about Batista and what an evil man he was, which I am sure was true, and most of us had read some of the things written by Castro, some of Castro's promises—such as he would take no part in the government after the revolution, such things—so we had the definite impression—I remember there was one Puerto Rican boy, myself, Oswald, a couple of others who had quite an admiration for Castro, and thought the pro-Communist statements he was or might be making at the time, were made simply to guarantee a little more independence for his island because it was located so close to the United States.

In other words, I felt at the time he was playing both ends against the middle in order to go his own way, something like Charles de Gaulle is doing right now by recognizing Red China. I felt it was purely statesmanship, statecraft, power politics. I didn't feel that Castro was a dedicated Communist. Whether Oswald did or not I don't know. He admired Castro because of the social reforms Castro was introducing. So did I at that time.

Delgado, the Puerto Rican boy, as I recall it, was becoming worried at that time because he was beginning to think maybe Castro was communistic. I didn't think so. Oswald, as far as I know, didn't have anything to say on that matter. And that is about all I can tell you.

Mr. JENNER. Well, you say that you admired Castro and you knew Oswald admired Castro. Tell us on what you base that comment.

Mr. THORNLEY. Well, once again as I remember, there was one of these afternoon discussions once again, and somebody was saying something, worried about Castro, it might have been Delgado, it might have been somebody else, I don't think it was Delgado that day because I think he was defending Castro, somebody said something against Castro, and Oswald said that he didn't think Castro was so bad.

He thought Castro was good for Cuba, and they said why, and I took up the argument, which was the argument I just gave you, the naive idea I had at the time that he was playing for independence, and Oswald remained silent, shaking his head affirmatively a couple of times, and that was it.

Mr. JENNER. Shaking his head affirmatively with respect to the comments you were making?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes; to my argument, to my justification of Castro.

Mr. JENNER. But you recall no provocative remarks that he made in that connection?

Mr. THORNLEY. No.

Mr. JENNER. Did Oswald have a nickname?

Mr. THORNLEY. Not that I know of except Oz sometimes.

Mr. JENNER. Did you ever hear him referred to as "Ozzie Rabbit"?

Mr. THORNLEY. Well, yes; I didn't realize that anybody else referred to him as such but I always thought of him as such. He reminded me very much of a cartoon character at that time. It was kind of pathetic. There was something about this little smile of his, and his expression on his face and the shape of his head, just the general, his general appearance established a definite association in my mind with some Warner Bros. cartoon character, I believe Warner Bros. And I, very recently, in a discussion with someone, describing Oswald mentioned that he reminded you of—I said: "I think there is a character called Oswald Rabbit who appears in movie cartoons." And they shook their head.

Now, I know where I got that particular example so I probably heard him referred to as "Ozzie Rabbit," though I don't recall specifically.

Mr. JENNER. Did he occasionally have a nickname or a reference made to him attendant upon his interest in the study of the Russian language or his interest in communism or in Russia or Soviet—

Mr. THORNLEY. Only he was sometimes called the Communist and he would, sometimes I know—as far as his study of the Russian language went he made no attempt to hide this.

In fact, he made—would make attempts to show it off by speaking a little Russian.

Mr. JENNER. He was proud of that, was he?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes; there was someone else in the outfit who spoke Russian, don't ask me who, they used to exchange a few comments in the morning at muster and say hello to each other or something, and he also would make jokes in Russian, not in Russian, but in English, in a thick Russian accent many times; this was very typical of him.

Mr. JENNER. He resorted to that area and use of satire?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes; until I had made the comment that implied he was a Communist, I had no idea—

Mr. JENNER. That he was sensitive?

Mr. THORNLEY. That he was sensitive about it because he didn't seem to be.

Mr. JENNER. Did he have any visitors?

Mr. THORNLEY. Not that I recall.

Mr. JENNER. Was there any discussion at anytime about the possibility of his going to Russia?

Mr. THORNLEY. No.

Mr. JENNER. This was a complete surprise to you when you saw it in Stars and Stripes?

Mr. THORNLEY. Somebody would say to him, "Why don't you go and live in Russia," in the middle of an argument.

Mr. JENNER. I didn't mean that in that sense but did he volunteer a statement on his part about his going to Russia?

Mr. THORNLEY. Never anything; no.

Mr. JENNER. I take it you was your opinion he was not a Communist at the time he was assigned to El Toro?

Mr. THORNLEY. That was my opinion.

Mr. JENNER. I take it you have never seen or talked with Oswald subsequent to the time he left or you left for Japan, from El Toro?

Mr. THORNLEY. No.

Mr. JENNER. That is, my statement is correct.

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. It follows, I take it, that you were never aware that he was in New Orleans when you were there?

Mr. THORNLEY. No; I wasn't.

Mr. JENNER. You were not aware of his comings and goings other than the newspaper report that your folks sent you?

Mr. THORNLEY. I was aware that he had come back from the Soviet Union and gone to Dallas, and I know I at that time did think about going to see him in Dallas for the book, to find out just why he did go to Russia, to check it with my own theory.

Mr. JENNER. I am going to get to that in due course.

Mr. THORNLEY. But aside from knowing that he came back and went to live in Dallas with a Russian wife and a child I had no idea of his comings or goings.

Mr. JENNER. At the time you had some notion of going to Dallas to see him or Fort Worth, as the case might be, it was with respect to the book you have talked about you were then in the process of writing or fulminating about?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes; it was practically—well, it was finished by that time but I was thinking about, I was definitely planning to rewrite it. I didn't know how soon, and I thought before I did rewrite it I would go talk to him and see what he could tell me about. There were a lot of gaps in the book, and in the book I was not able to explain how he got from the United States to Russia and things like that. A lot of things I wanted to check out and I thought if I could get him to cooperate with me, perhaps not even in telling him I was writing the book, I could get the information I wanted.

Mr. JENNER. And this was the state of mind you had after you had heard that he returned to the United States?

Mr. THORNLEY. Right.

Mr. JENNER. Which was June of 1962, when he returned?

Mr. THORNLEY. Right, and I had finished the book in February.

Mr. JENNER. Of 1963?

Mr. THORNLEY. 1962.

Mr. JENNER. 1962. You were in Mexico and Mexico City in 1963?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes.

Mr. JENNER. Cover that for us. What was the motivation, the length of the trip?

Mr. THORNLEY. I will have to begin at the beginning on that. On April 17, my parents sent me a gift of \$100 on the condition that I spend it for a bus ticket to visit them that summer. Which I did, and I left around—well, I arrived in California on May 5. I remember going along the border and seeing fireworks on the other side of the border.

Mr. JENNER. What border?

Mr. THORNLEY. From Yuma to San Diego.

Mr. JENNER. Mexican border?

Mr. THORNLEY. That is Cinco De Mayo. I arrived in California on May 5 and I stayed there until late August. Now, I think in one of these reports that I gave to the FBI the information might be different. Since then I have checked with notebooks that I kept of my activity, and I was on my way back to New Orleans in late August. I went by way of Mexico City because I have taken 5 years of Spanish in school and I never had the opportunity to live in an environment where I would have to use it, depend on it solely, and I wanted to see how I would do. I have always wanted to visit Mexico, to see Mexico City. I checked into the prices. I had found out I had enough money that I would be able to go down to Mexico City and stay a short while.

So I went down there for about a week, actually it was 6 days I spent within Mexico, from Tijuana to Mexico City, on a Mexican bus, and then when my money began to run out from Mexico City to Matamoros or Brownsville, Tex., on a Mexican bus.

At this time, on my way up on a bus to Matamoros, it was September 2, because I had that in my notes, I have some notes about the bus ride and the date September 2.

And I went from Brownsville to New Orleans by way of either Greyhound or Continental.

Mr. JENNER. When did you arrive in New Orleans?

Mr. THORNLEY. I went directly to New Orleans, so I imagine I arrived in New Orleans on September 3, possibly September 4.

Mr. JENNER. So that between approximately May 1, 1963, and September 4 and 5—

Mr. THORNLEY. Say May 3 to September 4.

Mr. JENNER. You were not in New Orleans?

Mr. THORNLEY. Right.

Mr. JENNER. You were returning to your home in California? You stayed there for approximately a month or so?

Mr. THORNLEY. Longer than that.

Mr. JENNER. Longer than that. You then went to Mexico, Mexico City, and you then returned directly to New Orleans?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. During none of that period of time did you have any contact with or hear anything about Oswald?

Mr. THORNLEY. Definitely not.

Mr. JENNER. You at one time at least were acquainted with a lady by the name of Sylvia Bortin?

Mr. THORNLEY. Sylvia Bortin?

Mr. JENNER. B-o-r-t-i-n.

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes; this young lady, by the way—

Mr. JENNER. Where did she reside?

Mr. THORNLEY. In Whittier, Calif., or at least last summer she did, I don't know where she resides now. This young lady, by the way, was mentioned in—her mention in this whole matter came out of a misunderstanding on my part of a question asked by the FBI agents.

Mr. JENNER. All right. Would you explain that, please?

Mr. THORNLEY. I don't recall what the question was—oh, yes, he had asked me something about, I believe it was the First Unitarian Church in Los Angeles. I had mentioned earlier at the time I was talking to Oswald, and knew Oswald, I had been going to the First Unitarian Church in Los Angeles. This is a group of quite far to the left people politically for the most part, and mentioned in order to explain my political relationship with Oswald, at that moment, and he began to ask me questions about the First Unitarian Church and I answered, and then he realized or understood or asked what Oswald's connection with the First Unitarian Church was and I explained to him that there was none. Miss Bortin never knew Oswald and vice versa, and these people were two different parts of my life. There was this civilian compartment and the military compartment, and I never intermingled them.

Mr. JENNER. This young lady married and her husband is now in Havana, Cuba?

Mr. THORNLEY. That is what she told me last summer; yes. He was going to school in Cuba.

Mr. JENNER. I take it this had nothing to do with yourself and Oswald's views with respect to Castro that you told us about.

Mr. THORNLEY. No; this happened, I think, later, in fact I am sure it happened later. At that time Miss Bortin, she was then unmarried, did not know Robert Uname, I believe. I met him, I believe, September a year later.

Mr. JENNER. Had you finished that?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes.

Mr. JENNER. I take it that Oswald had no close personal friends at least that you observed?

Mr. THORNLEY. That is correct. And the name of his closest friends I do not know. I do remember he had a close acquaintance that he seemed to get along with pretty well.

Mr. JENNER. In the unit?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes; but I don't recall this man's name. If it was mentioned to me, I probably could, but—

Mr. JENNER. You were groping for it when you were interviewed. You suggested it might be Charles—

Mr. THORNLEY. I mentioned a Charles.

Mr. JENNER. Weis.

Mr. THORNLEY. Weir, but that was not the man. This was a friend of a friend of the friend or a man who could give them that information perhaps that I couldn't.

At this time perhaps, also, I was thinking of a possibility it might have been Weir and since then I have remembered definitely who Weir was.

Mr. JENNER. Who was he?

Mr. THORNLEY. I don't remember whether his first name was Charles but I remember who he was.

Mr. JENNER. He was a noncom?

Mr. THORNLEY. There was a man named Cooley. There was somebody else, and these are my associations, but who it was who used to talk Russian in the ranks with Oswald in the morning I don't know, but that is who it was.

Mr. JENNER. Is this particular man you now mentioned the man who occasionally talked Russian with Oswald in the ranks, is he the man who you had in mind?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes.

Mr. JENNER. As having been a friend of Oswald's?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes; in that in the same respect that I was a friend of Oswald's. Once, again, the exact terminology I would use would be close acquaintance.

Mr. JENNER. Yes; I would say from your description of the relationship with Oswald that it was more an acquaintanceship than a friendship.

Mr. THORNLEY. I think it was probably the same with this person from what I recall, to my knowledge.

Mr. JENNER. In other words, when you say friend, he wasn't a buddy of Oswald?

Mr. THORNLEY. No; Oswald was not the type of person who had, as it has been emphasized on all parts, I think, and it confirms my own impression, was not the type of person who made close friends or who stuck with close friends.

Mr. JENNER. You saw no instance in which Oswald evidenced affection for anybody, I mean in the nice sense of the word?

Mr. THORNLEY. No; none whatsoever.

Mr. JENNER. Or anybody evidenced any affection in the nice sense of the word for him?

Mr. THORNLEY. No.

Mr. JENNER. I take it your trip to Mexico City was purely one of general interest as you have described and had nothing to do with any interest on your part in going to Cuba or attempting to go to Cuba?

Mr. THORNLEY. Believe me, no. I have no desire to go to Cuba unless I am going to take a rifle and be on an invasion force or something.

Mr. JENNER. Did you hear of anybody in the Marine Corps, whose last name was Hidell?

Mr. THORNLEY. At the time this name was mentioned to me that was—that person, whoever it was that Oswald used to speak to in the ranks in the morning came to my mind. But I can't say that that was the name, and I am—of course, now, I am very leery that that—very uncertain as to ever having heard the name Hidell, and I doubt it very much.

Mr. JENNER. Shortly after the unfortunate occurrence of November 22, 1963, you were interviewed by Secret Service agents, were you not?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes. Now, this is what I had mentioned earlier. This was the Monday interview, of November 25, actually it was midnight Sunday night as I recall. It seemed to me a couple of days later before I spoke to the FBI. I believe there was a Mr. Rice—was one of the men.

Mr. JENNER. This was the evening of the 23d of November?

Mr. THORNLEY. Was it the 23d?

Mr. JENNER. It probably ran over.

Mr. THORNLEY. It must have been Saturday evening then. I had thought it was Sunday evening.

Mr. JENNER. In any event you were then interviewed by some newspaper reporters?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes; that was quite some time afterward.

Mr. JENNER. Well, it was before November 27, 1963, was it not?

Mr. THORNLEY. It was after the 25th, I think. It was after I had finished talking to the FBI, as I remember.

Mr. JENNER. I will mark as Thornley's Exhibit No. 1 what purports to be a Xerox reprint of a newspaper article.

(The document referred to was marked Thornley Exhibit No. 1 for identification.)

Mr. JENNER. Are you acquainted with that?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. What newspaper was this from?

Mr. THORNLEY. The States-Item of New Orleans.

Mr. JENNER. And that article was a result of the newspaperman's interview with you?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. Did you see it upon its publication?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. You are familiar with it?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. Does it substantially accurately reflect at least portions of, in reasonable context, the interview you had with the newspaper reporter?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes; to a surprising degree for a newspaper, on the basis of my past experience in dealings with them.

Mr. JENNER. Is there anything in that article that you regard as reasonably seriously erroneous?

Mr. THORNLEY. Not when I read it the last time.

Mr. JENNER. Insofar as it attributes anything to you?

Mr. THORNLEY. May I reread it?

Mr. JENNER. Yes.

Mr. THORNLEY. I would say this is accurate in everything it attributes to me.

Mr. JENNER. All right. I offer Thornley Exhibit No. 1 in evidence.

Now, it appears from that article and from the testimony you have given this morning that you were stimulated, or, as you have indicated you prepared at least a first draft of a book or pamphlet or article respecting your experiences in the Marine Corps, and one of the central characters of which, mythical or otherwise, was a friend, Oswald.

Mr. THORNLEY. That is correct.

Mr. JENNER. And when I spoke to you by telephone the other day I inquired of you as to whether that was still in existence and you responded that it was.

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes.

Mr. JENNER. And you were kind enough to say you would bring it with you.

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes.

Mr. JENNER. Have you done so?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes.

Mr. JENNER. May I see it, please?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, sir; here is the draft completed in February of 1962.

Mr. JENNER. Yes; I am interested in seeing that in its condition as of that time.

Mr. THORNLEY. Right. That is it. There is only one addition and there is some blank paper on top. There is one addition, and that is the short preface written yesterday to give some idea of how much was fact and how much was fiction.

Mr. JENNER. All right—the page numbered 2?

Mr. THORNLEY. There was a table of contents once and it took two pages.

Mr. JENNER. Which I might identify in addition thereto as having the word "Preface," at its top and your name and the date May 17, 1964, Arlington, Va., at the bottom. That is what you prepared yesterday, is that correct?

Mr. THORNLEY. Correct.

Mr. JENNER. All of the balance, therefore, commencing with the pages numbered 3 and running through, I assume, consecutively?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes.

Mr. JENNER. To page 250 is the article as it was when you completed it in February 1962?

Mr. THORNLEY. Precisely.

Mr. JENNER. I would like the opportunity of reading through this and, of course, 200-odd pages, we don't have the time to do it as of the moment, and the Commission would like to have it among its records. May I have the material and I will take it in the back room. We have a Xerox, and have it duplicated? This, I appreciate, is your personal property and it is of value. It is not something that the Commission will place in the hands of others who may make commercial use of it.

Mr. THORNLEY. I am quite sure that it will be perfectly safe.

Mr. JENNER. All right. It is in the same condition now, that is, pages 3 through 250, as those pages were when you completed this manuscript in February 1962?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes; there might have been a couple of spelling errors corrected since then or typographical errors but that is all.

Mr. JENNER. And that article of which we now speak and which for purposes of identification I will mark as Thornley Exhibit No. 2, and I offer Thornley Exhibit No. 2 in evidence.

(The document referred to was marked Thornley Exhibit No. 2 for identification.)

Mr. JENNER. Subsequently thereto, I understand from my conversation with you, you prepared a revision of that paper.

Mr. THORNLEY. I have been working on a revision.

Mr. JENNER. And you were kind enough to say you would bring that along with you as well. Have you done so?

Mr. THORNLEY. I have been between this draft——

Mr. JENNER. When you said "this draft" you are referring to Thornley Exhibit No. 2?

Mr. THORNLEY. Exhibit No. 2, and the draft I am now giving you—several illegible drafts were made. This represents not the latest draft, but the latest typewritten draft. It represents a fragment of it.

The first third, almost the first third, minus a couple of pages of a novelette based upon this Exhibit No. 2.

Mr. JENNER. For purposes of identification the witness has now handed me a set of letter-sized pages numbered 1 through 37, consecutively.

Are they consecutive?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. And I take it, as against the length of the other paper, that these pages 1 through 37, represent an incomplete novel.

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes.

Mr. JENNER. That is it covers only a portion of the areas and times covered by Thornley Exhibit No. 2.

Mr. THORNLEY. This ones takes a completely different approach in that this did not take a chronological approach to the development of the character based on Oswald, but takes a flashback approach.



Mr. JENNER. I see.

Mr. THORNLEY. Centering around an investigation of that character after his defection to the Soviet Union.

Mr. JENNER. For further identification of the document which I will mark Thornley Exhibit No. 3, page 1 is entitled "Chapter 1, Gung Ho."

Page 4 is entitled "Chapter 2, Fallen Comrade."

Page 7, in the center, is entitled "Chapter 3, Hush Hush."

Page 11 is entitled "Chapter 4, Blue Marines."

Page 14, in the upper portion, is entitled "Chapter 5, Peace Gospel."

Page 21 is entitled, at the head, "Chapter 7, The Killer."

Page 24, near the center, is entitled "Chapter 8, Captain Kidd."

Page 27, at the bottom, "Chapter 9, Mutiny."

Page 31, "Chapter 10, John Henry."

Page 34, "Chapter 11, The Storms."

And page 37, "Chapter 12, The Chicken."

(The document referred to was marked Thornley Exhibit No. 3 for identification.)

Mr. THORNLEY. Now, this Exhibit No. 3 is a much greater fictionalized approach toward, well, as far as reference goes to Oswald, the character upon—the character which is based upon Oswald in Exhibit No. 2, Johnny Shellburn, Exhibit No. 3 is much farther from life.

Mr. JENNER. Is Johnny Shellburn assimilated to Oswald?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes; much more so in Exhibit No. 2, though, than in this one.

Mr. JENNER. That is Exhibit No. 3.

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes; since I wrote Exhibit No. 2, I have learned to write fiction rather than a thinly disguised biography.

Mr. JENNER. In other words, Exhibit No. 2 was primarily a biography?

Mr. THORNLEY. Not in the strict sense that it portrayed a man's life in detail, but in the sense that any reference, most of the references, as is explained in this preface toward the end of the book——

Mr. JENNER. When you say this preface, you mean the preface to Exhibit No. 2?

Mr. THORNLEY. That is, Johnny Shellburn toward the end of the book, well, from before the middle of the book on, extends more and more to reflect Oswald's character, and I definitely was thinking about Lee Harvey Oswald when I wrote this book, Exhibit No. 2, whereas——

Mr. JENNER. In your discussion refer to them by exhibit number.

Mr. THORNLEY. I will keep my hands below the table.

Mr. JENNER. You don't have to do that. Just use the exhibit numbers.

Mr. THORNLEY. Whereas in Exhibit No. 3, I have universalized it more, tried to get away from giving any impression that I am making a chronology of the life and times of Lee Harvey Oswald, which is something I thought would be relevant as far as the Commission would be concerned in reading the material.

Mr. JENNER. Would you mark Exhibit No. 3 accordingly, Mr. Reporter?

I offer in evidence Thornley Exhibit No. 3. I take it, Mr. Thornley, that you commenced the preparation of Exhibit No. 3 subsequently to the assassination of President John Fitzgerald Kennedy.

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. And that Exhibit No. 3 reflects a course of events and their imprint upon you that occurred on and after November 22, 1963.

Mr. THORNLEY. No, no; Exhibit No. 3 reflects the same course of events reflected in Exhibit No. 2. As far as the telling of the story goes and the characters therein it takes place back in 1959. It makes a definite attempt, however, to get away from Oswald as a specific character and to discuss the problem of disillusionment in the peacetime military or disillusionment with values on a much more universalized range than Exhibit No. 2.

Mr. JENNER. All right. May I make a copy of Exhibit No. 3?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes.

Mr. JENNER. Under the same circumstances and upon the same conditions as you granted your consent to make a copy of Exhibit No. 2?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, sir; Exhibit No. 3 also does include some things on—that I have acquired through the news on Oswald since the assassination because

Oswald tends to reflect the type of person I was talking about. So to put it, to make it as clear as possible, right now I realize I am saying Exhibit No. 3 is more like Oswald and less like Oswald, to put it as clearly as possible.

Mr. JENNER. You are going in two directions at once.

Mr. THORNLEY. Exhibit No. 2 is more like the Oswald I knew in MACS 9, the Oswald of my experience, whereas Exhibit No. 3 is a universalized Oswaldian-type character based upon not only my own experience but the news that has come to me about Oswald, about other people like Oswald, other defectors, other assassins, and so on and so forth, since November 22.

Mr. JENNER. All right. Now, Mr. Thornley, tell me something about Kerry Thornley. You obviously, to me, are not a doorman.

Mr. THORNLEY. Oh, yes; I am a doorman.

Mr. JENNER. You are at the moment performing that service. But that isn't your objective in life.

Mr. THORNLEY. My objective is to write books, novels primarily, as many as I can in the years that are given to me, and possibly upon publication of one of them to go back to school to further my ability to write.

Mr. JENNER. Are you taking any training in that respect or have you in recent years?

Mr. THORNLEY. Well, not formally. I have devoted myself to a lot of exercises in writing, and I have availed myself of the help of any experts I could grab onto, including successful novelists and former newspaper reporters and so on and so forth, to help me solve problems in my writing and improve it, but there is really, to my mind, my outlook on writing a novel; for example, there is not much you can learn from a formal course in writing. I think you can learn much more from, say, the study of linguistics or semantics; if you are going to learn anything from a university, for example, on writing, and this I intend to do in due time.

Mr. JENNER. We occasionally have been off the record, not often, and I have talked with you on the telephone. Is there anything that was said between us in the course of our telephone conversations or in any off-the-record discussions that you think is pertinent to the Commission's assignment of investigating the assassination of President Kennedy that I have failed to bring onto the record?

Mr. THORNLEY. No, sir; I think we have very thoroughly covered it.

Mr. JENNER. Is there anything that occurs to you that you would like to add that you think might be pertinent to our inquiry and of help to the Commission?

Mr. THORNLEY. No; there is certainly nothing else I can think of.

Mr. JENNER. Your deposition will be written up rather promptly. We probably will have it tomorrow, and would you be good enough to call me, say—when do you go on duty?

Mr. THORNLEY. At 5 o'clock.

Mr. JENNER. Call me in the forenoon—I mean right after lunch—and if it is convenient will you come in and read over your deposition and sign it?

Mr. THORNLEY. All right. May I just, to make absolutely sure, may I take down your phone number once more?

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### AFFIDAVIT OF GEORGE B. CHURCH, JR.

The following affidavit was executed by George B. Church, Jr., on June 27, 1964.

PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION  
ON THE ASSASSINATION OF  
PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY

AFFIDAVIT

STATE OF FLORIDA,  
*County of Hillsborough, ss:*

I, George B. Church, Jr., 2427 Sunset Drive, Tampa 9, Florida, being duly sworn say: