

Thursday, June 11, 1964

TESTIMONY OF MRS. LEE HARVEY OSWALD AND HARRIS COULTER

The President's Commission met at 9:45 a.m., on June 11, 1964, at 200 Maryland Avenue NE., Washington, D.C.

Present were Chief Justice Earl Warren, Chairman; Senator John Sherman Cooper, Representative Gerald Ford, and Allen W. Dulles, members.

Also present were J. Lee Rankin, general counsel; Norman Redlich, assistant counsel; Harris Coulter, interpreter; Leon Jaworski, special counsel to the attorney general of Texas; William McKenzie, attorney for Mrs. Lee Harvey Oswald; and Charles Murray, observer.

TESTIMONY OF MRS. LEE HARVEY OSWALD RESUMED

The CHAIRMAN. The Commission will be in order.

Shall we reswear Mrs. Oswald?

Mr. RANKIN. I would think her former swearing would be sufficient, Mr. Chief Justice.

The CHAIRMAN. Very well. You consider yourself under oath, do you, Mrs. Oswald?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. Mrs. Oswald, we would like to have you tell about the incident in regard to Mr. Nixon that you have told about since we had your last examination. Could you tell us what you know about that incident, first, when it happened insofar as you can recall?

Mrs. OSWALD. I am very sorry I didn't mention this before. I prefer that you ask me the questions and that will help me to remember what there is.

Mr. RANKIN. Can you tell us what Mr. Nixon it is, was it Richard Nixon, the former Vice President of the United States that you were referring to?

Mrs. OSWALD. I only know one Nixon and I think it was Richard Nixon which it was all about.

Mr. RANKIN. Can you fix the date when this occurrence did happen? Approximately?

Mrs. OSWALD. It was a weekend before he went to New Orleans and after the Walker business I think. But I might be mistaken as to whether or not this was a weekend because I am basing this on the fact that my husband was home and he wasn't—wasn't always employed and he was at home weekdays as well sometimes, so I can't be entirely sure that it was a weekend.

Mr. RANKIN. Can you place the place of the various homes you had that this happened?

Mrs. OSWALD. Neely Street.

Mr. RANKIN. At the Neely Street house. Do you know what time of day it occurred?

Mrs. OSWALD. This was in the morning.

Mr. RANKIN. Who was there?

Mrs. OSWALD. Just my husband and me.

Mr. RANKIN. Now, will you describe in detail just what happened. Mrs. Oswald, when you are answering the questions will you try to break up your answers, and let the interpreter try to translate; I think it will be helpful in not having the interpreter have to try to remember everything of a long answer. Do you understand me?

Mr. DULLES. May I suggest also, Mr. Rankin, that I think it would be preferable that the record be in the first person, that is, the interpreter translate just as she said it.

I was looking over the earlier record and that is the way it was over the earlier record and it went quite well.

Mrs. OSWALD. It was early in the morning and my husband went out to get a newspaper, then he came in and sat reading the newspaper. I didn't pay any attention to him because I was occupied with the housework.

Then he got dressed and put on a good suit. I saw that he took a pistol.

I asked him where he was going, and why he was getting dressed. He answered, "Nixon is coming. I want to go and have a look." I said, "I know how you look," or rather, "I know how you customarily look, how you customarily take a look," because I saw he was taking the pistol with him rather than I know how you look in the sense that you are dressed, how you look at things is what I mean.

Mr. RANKIN. Had it come to your attention, Mrs. Oswald, that Mr. Nixon was going to be in Dallas prior to that time?

Mrs. OSWALD. No; it did not.

Mr. RANKIN. Had you seen anything in the newspapers or heard anything over the radio or television?

Mrs. OSWALD. No; we didn't have TV. I didn't see this in the newspaper.

Mr. DULLES. Do you know what newspaper it was in which your husband read this report?

Mrs. OSWALD. No; Dallas Morning News maybe. It was a morning paper.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you know whether there was any information at all in the papers about Mr. Nixon planning to come to Dallas about that time?

Mrs. OSWALD. I didn't ever read the newspaper and I did not know; therefore, didn't know whether there was any information in the newspapers prior to this time about Vice President Nixon's arrival in Dallas.

Representative FORD. Could we establish the date more precisely, either by the newspapers or by testimony from Mrs. Oswald?

(At this point, the Chief Justice left the hearing room.)

Mr. RANKIN. Mrs. Oswald, can you help us by telling how many days it was before you went to New Orleans that this incident occurred?

Mrs. OSWALD. What day did I go to New Orleans?

Mr. RANKIN. Do you recall that your husband went to New Orleans on April 24?

Mrs. OSWALD. April 24? My husband?

Mr. RANKIN. Yes; and you went at a later date with Mrs. Paine, do you remember that?

Mrs. OSWALD. I remember it was about 2 weeks before.

Mr. RANKIN. Two weeks before April 24?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes; but when was the incident with Walker?

Mr. RANKIN. April 10 was the Walker incident. Does that help you?

Mrs. OSWALD. This is a short distance, you know, I think maybe—

Mr. RANKIN. So you think it had to be sometime between April 10 and April 24?

Mrs. OSWALD. This may be 10 days or more. I think it was closer to the time when my husband left for New Orleans than it was to the incident of General Walker. I think it was less than a week before my husband left for New Orleans. I did not think up this incident with Nixon myself.

Mr. RANKIN. What do you mean by that, Mrs. Oswald?

Mrs. OSWALD. I had forgotten entirely about the incident with Vice President Nixon when I was here the first time. When you asked me the questions about it, then I remembered it. I wasn't trying to deceive you the first time.

Mr. RANKIN. What did your husband say that day about Richard Nixon, when he got this gun and dressed up. Did he tell you anything about him?

Mrs. OSWALD. No; I just didn't know what to do, you know.

Mr. RANKIN. How did you know he was interested in doing something about Mr. Nixon at that time?

Mrs. OSWALD. My husband just said that Nixon is coming to Dallas.

Mr. RANKIN. Then what did you do?

Mrs. OSWALD. First I didn't know what to do. I wanted to prevent him from going out.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you say anything to him?

Mrs. OSWALD. I called him into the bathroom and I closed the door and I wanted to prevent him and then I started to cry. And I told him that he shouldn't do this, that he had promised me.

Mr. RANKIN. Are you referring to his promise to you that you described in your prior testimony after the Walker incident?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes; that was the promise.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you recall the bathroom, how the door closes? Does it close into the bathroom on Neely Street or from the outside in?

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't remember now. I don't remember. I only remember that it was something to do with the bathroom.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you lock him into the bathroom?

Mrs. OSWALD. I can't remember precisely.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you recall how the locks were on the bathroom door there?

Mrs. OSWALD. I can't recall. We had several apartments and I might be confusing one apartment with the other.

Mr. RANKIN. Is it your testimony that you made it impossible for him to get out if he wanted to?

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't remember.

Representative FORD. Did he try to get out of the bathroom?

Mrs. OSWALD. I remember that I held him. We actually struggled for several minutes and then he quieted down. I remember that I told him that if he goes out it would be better for him to kill me than to go out.

Mr. DULLES. He is quite a big man and you are a small woman.

Mrs. OSWALD. No; he is not a big man. He is not strong.

Mr. DULLES. Well, he was 5 feet 9, and you are how tall?

Mrs. OSWALD. When he is very upset, my husband is very upset he is not strong and when I want to and when I collect all my forces and want to do something very badly I am stronger than he is.

Mr. DULLES. You meant mentally or physically?

Mrs. OSWALD. I am not strong but, you know, there is a certain balance of forces between us.

Mr. DULLES. Do you think it was persuasion, your persuasion of him or the physical force or both that prevented him from going?

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't think it was physically, physical prevention because if he—I couldn't keep him from going out if he really wanted to. It might have been that he was just trying to test me. He was the kind of person who could try and wound somebody in that way. Possibly he didn't want to go out at all but was just doing this all as a sort of joke, not really as a joke but rather to simply wound me, to make me feel bad.

Mr. McKENZIE. Mr. Rankin, if I may interpose here for a moment. Mrs. Oswald has been interrogated at length by the FBI in connection with this particular incident—the Nixon incident. I feel confident that the FBI has made a written report insofar as her testimony is concerned in their interrogation, but for purposes of the record I have no objection whatsoever for the FBI report to be included in the record as part of the record.

Mr. RANKIN. Thank you, Mr. McKenzie. We will incorporate those reports as a part of the record in regard to this incident, if that is agreeable to the Commission.

Mr. McKENZIE. The reason I say that is because of the fact that those interrogations were conducted at an earlier date and closer to the actual incident, the state of time, closer to the actual incidents than her interrogation here today, and insofar as dates are concerned I think that her mind would be clearer on those dates, and I likewise know that at that time a Russian interpreter was there.

Mr. RANKIN. Mr. McKenzie, I think with the members of the Commission here that I want to ask a number of questions about this incident because of its importance so they can observe the witness as well as have the benefit of her testimony.

Mr. McKENZIE. Mr. Rankin, in no way am I suggesting otherwise but if it would help the Commission in evaluating her testimony and evaluating the evidence that it has had heretofore in prior testimony we have no objection to those reports being a part of the record in any way.

Mr. RANKIN. Thank you.

Mrs. OSWALD. I might be mistaken about some of the details of this incident but it is very definite he got dressed, took a gun, and then didn't go out. The reason why there might be some confusion in my mind about the details because it happened in other apartments in which we lived that we quarreled and then I would shut him in the bathroom, and in this particular case it may not have

happened quite that way, but there is no doubt that he got dressed and had a gun.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you remember what you said to him and what he said to you at that time?

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't remember now but I told the FBI precisely.

Mr. RANKIN. And were your reports to the FBI in regard to this incident accurate, truthful, and correct?

Mrs. OSWALD. They were correct as far as I could remember. The only detail as far as my memory served me—the only detail which might be confused is the one with the bathroom.

Mr. RANKIN. Had your husband said anything before or did he say anything at that time in regard to Mr. Nixon showing any hostility, friendship, or anything else?

Mrs. OSWALD. Showing any hostility or friendship toward Mr. Nixon?

Mr. RANKIN. Yes; toward Nixon.

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't remember him saying anything—I don't remember but he didn't tell me. I don't remember him saying anything of that sort. I only remember the next day he told me that Nixon did not come. Excuse me.

Mr. RANKIN. Yes.

Mrs. OSWALD. The FBI suggested that possibly I was confused between Johnson and Nixon but there is no question that in this incident it was a question of Mr. Nixon. I remember distinctly the name Nixon because I read from the presidential elections that there was a choice between President Kennedy and Mr. Nixon.

Representative FORD. Where did your husband get the pistol that morning; do you remember?

Mrs. OSWALD. What, where?

Representative FORD. Where.

Mrs. OSWALD. My husband had a small room where he kept all that sort of thing. It is a little larger than a closet.

Representative FORD. Did you see him go in and get the pistol?

Mrs. OSWALD. I didn't see him go into the room. I only saw him standing before the open door and putting the pistol in his pocket.

Representative FORD. Do you recall which pocket he put the pistol in?

Mrs. OSWALD. It was not in a pocket. He put it in his belt.

(Discussion off the record.)

Mr. DULLES. Had you and your husband ever discussed Mr. Nixon at a previous, at any previous time?

Mrs. OSWALD. No. No.

Mr. RANKIN. What else happened about this incident beyond what you have told us?

Mrs. OSWALD. He took off his suit and stayed home all day reading a book. He gave me the pistol and I hid it under the mattress.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you say anything more than you have told us to him about this matter at that time?

Mrs. OSWALD. I closed the front door to the building that day and when we were quarreling about—when we were struggling over the question of whether or not he should go out I said a great deal to him.

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

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't remember.

Mr. RANKIN. Just tell us in substance?

Mrs. OSWALD. I really don't remember now. I only remember that I told him that I am sorry of all these pranks of his and especially after the one with General Walker, and he had promised me, I told him that he had promised me—

Mr. RANKIN. Did he say anything in answer to that?

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't remember.

Mr. DULLES. As I recall, in your previous testimony there was some indication that you had said that if he did the Walker type of thing again you would notify the authorities. Did that conversation come up at this time with your husband?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes; I said that. But he didn't go at that time and after all he was my husband.

Mr. DULLES. Does—do you mean you said it again at the time of the Nixon incident?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes; I told him that but you must understand that I don't speak English very well, and for that reason I used to keep a piece of paper with me, and I had it, you know, what piece of paper I am talking about. At that time I didn't know how to go in police station; I don't know where it was.

Mr. McKENZIE. Was that the passport?

Mrs. OSWALD. No. After the incident with Walker—

Mr. RANKIN. Was that paper the Walker incident note that you have described in your testimony?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Representative FORD. When you put the pistol under the mattress, what happened to the pistol from then on?

Mrs. OSWALD. That evening he asked for it and said that nothing was going to happen, and that he said he wouldn't do anything and took the pistol back. And put it into his room.

Mr. DULLES. Did you keep the, what you call, the Walker note with you all the time or did you have it in a particular place where you could go and get it and show it to him?

Mrs. OSWALD. I had it all the time. I kept it in a certain place initially and then I put it in the pages of a book.

Senator COOPER. Mr. Rankin, would you ask the witness to state again what Lee Oswald's promise was to her that he had made at the time of the Walker incident?

Mr. RANKIN. Will you relate the promise that your husband made to you right after the discovery of the Walker incident by you?

Mrs. OSWALD. This wasn't a written promise.

Mr. RANKIN. No.

Mrs. OSWALD. But in words it was more or less that I told him that he was very lucky that he hadn't killed—it was very good that he hadn't killed General Walker. I said it was fate that—it was fated that General Walker not be killed and therefore he shouldn't try such a thing again.

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

Mrs. OSWALD. He said perhaps I am right. I myself didn't believe what I was saying because I didn't believe that he was fated. I was just trying to find some way of dissuading my husband to do such a thing again. Do you understand what I mean?

Mr. RANKIN. Yes. Did he say that he would or would not do that again, that is what I want to know.

Mrs. OSWALD. At the time I did definitely convince him that I was right, and at the time he said that he would not do such a thing again.

Mr. RANKIN. Now, when you talked to him about the Nixon incident and persuaded him not to go out and do anything to Mr. Nixon, did you say anything about your pregnancy in trying to persuade him?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. What did you say about that?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes; I told him that I was pregnant.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you observe his action at the time of this Nixon incident, how he acted?

Mrs. OSWALD. How he reacted to this?

Mr. RANKIN. How he reacted to your interfering with him.

Mrs. OSWALD. At first he was extremely angry, and he said, "You are always getting in my way." But then rather quickly he gave in, which was rather unusual for him. At the time I didn't give this any thought, but now I think it was just rather a kind of nasty joke he was playing with me. Sometimes Lee was—he had a sadistic—my husband had a sadistic streak in him and he got pleasure out of harming people, and out of harming me, not physically but emotionally and mentally.

Mr. RANKIN. Have you told us substantially all that happened about this Nixon incident?

Mrs. OSWALD. That is all I can remember.

Representative FORD. Can you tell us why you didn't mention this incident to the Commission when you appeared before?

Mrs. OSWALD. There were an awful lot of questions at that time, and I was very tired and felt that I had told everything and I don't remember, I can't understand why I didn't mention this. It would have been better for me to mention it the first time than to make you all do more work on it.

Mr. DULLES. At the time of this incident did you threaten to go to the authorities in case your husband did not desist in his intention?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes; I said that.

Senator COOPER. I may have to go—could I ask a few questions? Mrs. Oswald, will you repeat what your husband said that morning when he dressed and got the pistol?

Mrs. OSWALD. I asked him where he was going and why he was getting dressed. He answered, "Today Nixon is coming and I want to go out and have a look at him."

I answered, "I know how you look," and I had in mind the fact that he was taking a pistol with him.

Senator COOPER. Did he say anything about what he intended to do with the pistol?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Senator COOPER. Did you ask him if he intended to use the pistol against Mr. Nixon?

Mrs. OSWALD. I told him that, "You have already promised me not to play any more with that thing." Not really play, but, you know—I didn't mean, of course, just playing but using the pistol. Then he said, "I am going to go out and find out if there will be an appropriate opportunity and if there is I will use the pistol." I just remembered this and maybe I didn't say this in my first testimony and now it just has occurred to me that he said this.

Senator COOPER. Did your husband say why he wanted to use the pistol against Mr. Nixon?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Senator COOPER. Did he say where he intended to see Mr. Nixon?

Mrs. OSWALD. He didn't say. He just said in Dallas, and since Nixon was coming to Dallas.

Senator COOPER. When he was talking to you about seeing Mr. Nixon and using the pistol, what was his attitude? Was he angry or—

Mrs. OSWALD. He wasn't angry. He looked more preoccupied and had sort of a concentrated look.

Senator COOPER. Now, from the beginning, from the time that he first told you that he was going to use the pistol, until the time that you say he became quieted, did he again make any statement about using the pistol against Mr. Nixon?

Mrs. OSWALD. I told him that I didn't want him to use his gun any more. He said, "I will go out and have a look and perhaps I won't use my gun, but if there is a convenient opportunity perhaps I will." Strike "perhaps" please from that last sentence. I didn't have a lot of time to think of what we were actually saying. All I was trying to do was to prevent him from going out.

Senator COOPER. How much time elapsed, if you can remember, from the time he first told you that he was going out and when he finally became pacified?

Mrs. OSWALD. This was maybe 30 minutes. The whole incident took maybe 20 minutes. It was about 10 minutes I took—15 minutes maybe. 15 minutes, it took maybe 10 minutes for him to be prepared to go out and then the incident in the bathroom took maybe 5 minutes until he quieted down. It doesn't mean I held him in the bathroom for 5 minutes because I couldn't do that but the general discussion in the bathroom.

Senator COOPER. You said he stayed at the house the remainder of the day. During the remainder of the day did you discuss again with him the incident?

Mrs. OSWALD. No; no.

Senator COOPER. Did he say anything more that day?

Mrs. OSWALD. No. He read a book.

Mr. DULLES. Do you know what book it was, by chance?

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't remember. It was some kind of book from the public library. He had a two-volume history of the United States. This is not from the library, this was his own book.

Mr. DULLES. The incident occurred, you said, just a few days after he had told you he shot at General Walker?

Mrs. OSWALD. It was about 10 or 12 days after the incident with General Walker, perhaps about 3 days before we left for the departure for New Orleans. This didn't happen right after the incident with General Walker. It happened rather closer to a time when we departed for New Orleans.

Mr. DULLES. The General Walker incident made a very strong impression on you, didn't it?

Mrs. OSWALD. Of course. I never thought that Lee had a gun in order to use it to shoot at somebody with.

Mr. DULLES. Didn't this statement that he made about Vice President Nixon make a strong impression on you also?

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't know. I was pregnant at the time. I had a lot of other things to worry about. I was getting pretty well tired of all of these escapades of his.

Mr. DULLES. Was there any reason why you didn't tell the Commission about this when you testified before?

Mrs. OSWALD. I had no—there is no particular reason. I just forgot. Very likely this incident didn't make a very great impression on me at that time.

Mr. DULLES. Now, before the death of President Kennedy, of course, you knew that your husband had purchased a rifle?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. DULLES. You knew that he had purchased a pistol?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. DULLES. And a knife?

Mrs. OSWALD. No; what kind of knife?

Mr. DULLES. Did he have a knife?

Mrs. OSWALD. He had a little pocket knife; I think.

Mr. DULLES. You knew that he had told you that he had tried to kill General Walker?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. DULLES. And, of course, as you said you heard him make a threat against Nixon.

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. DULLES. Did you have some fear that he would use these weapons against someone else?

Mrs. OSWALD. Of course; I was afraid.

Mr. DULLES. What?

Mrs. OSWALD. Of course; I was afraid.

Mr. DULLES. You thought that he might use his weapons against someone?

Mrs. OSWALD. After the incident with Nixon I stopped believing him.

Mr. DULLES. You what?

Mrs. OSWALD. I stopped believing him.

Mr. DULLES. Why?

Mrs. OSWALD. Because he wasn't obeying me any longer, because he promised and then he broke his promise.

Mr. DULLES. Would you repeat that?

Mrs. OSWALD. Because he wasn't obeying me any more. He promised and, he made a promise and then he broke it.

Mr. DULLES. That is my question. Having been told that—isn't it correct he told you that he shot at General Walker? He made a promise to you that he wouldn't do anything like that again, you heard him threaten Vice President Nixon, didn't it occur to you then that there was danger that he would use these weapons against someone else in the future?

Mrs. OSWALD. After the incident with Walker, I believed him when he told me that he wouldn't use the weapons any longer.

Mr. DULLES. I remember you testified before and I asked you if you had heard him threaten any official or other person and your answer was no.

Mrs. OSWALD. Because I forgot at that time about the incident with Nixon.

Mr. DULLES. I want to ask you again: In view of the fact that you knew—in view of the fact that he had threatened Walker by shooting at him, and he threatened Vice President Nixon can you not tell this Commission whether after that he threatened to hurt, harm any other person?

Mrs. OSWALD. Nobody else. Perhaps I should be punished for not having said anything about all this, but I was just a wife and I was trying to keep the family together, at that time. I mean to say. I am talking, of course, of the time before President Kennedy's death. And if I forget to say anything now, I am not doing it on purpose.

Mr. DULLES. I am just asking questions. Will you say here that he never did make any statement against President Kennedy?

Mrs. OSWALD. Never.

Mr. DULLES. Did he ever make any statement about him of any kind?

Mrs. OSWALD. He used to read and translate articles from the newspaper about Kennedy to me and from magazines, favorable articles about Kennedy. He never commented on them and he never discussed them in any way but because of his translations and his reading to me he always had a favorable feeling about President Kennedy because he always read these favorably inclined articles to me. He never said that these articles never were true, that he was a bad President or anything like that.

Mr. DULLES. I didn't catch the last.

Mrs. OSWALD. He never said these articles were not true or that President Kennedy was a bad President or anything like that.

Senator COOPER. I think you testified before that he made statements showing his dislike of our system of government and its economic system.

Mrs. OSWALD. He used to complain about the educational difficulties and about the unemployment in the United States and about the high cost of medical care.

Mr. McKENZIE. Right there, please, may I, Mr. Dulles when did he complain of those things, was this in Russia or was it in the United States after you returned from Russia?

Mrs. OSWALD. After our return from Russia. When we were living in New Orleans after returning from Russia.

Mr. McKENZIE. Did he likewise make such complaints about the American system while you were living in Russia after you were married?

Mrs. OSWALD. He used to tell me that it was difficult to find a job and to get work in the United States but nonetheless we would be better there than we were in Russia. Excuse me. He was the kind of person who was never able to get along anywhere he was and when he was in Russia he used to say good things about the United States and when he was in the United States he used to talk well about Russia.

Senator COOPER. You knew, of course, because of the incidents in New Orleans that he did not like American policy respecting Cuba.

Mrs. OSWALD. He was definitely a supporter of Cuba. This was something which remained with him from Russia.

Senator COOPER. Did he ever say to you who was responsible or who had some responsibility for our policy toward Cuba?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Senator COOPER. Had he ever mentioned President Kennedy in connection with our Cuban policy?

Mrs. OSWALD. Never to me.

Mr. DULLES. Did he ever say anything—

Mrs. OSWALD. He might have discussed this with Paine.

Senator COOPER. With who?

Mrs. OSWALD. Mr. Paine, husband of Ruth Paine.

Senator COOPER. He might have done what now?

Mrs. OSWALD. With the husband of Ruth Paine.

Senator COOPER. Why do you say that, did you ever hear him talking about it?

Mrs. OSWALD. He used to talk politics with Mr. Paine. I don't know what they were talking about because at that time I didn't understand English.

Senator COOPER. Did you mean, though, to say that you believed he might have discussed the Cuban policy with Mr. Paine.

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes; especially after we returned from New Orleans.

Senator COOPER. Why? Why do you make that statement?

Mrs. OSWALD. Because we only saw Mr. Paine once or twice before we went to New Orleans. And there was more opportunity to see Mr. Paine after we came back.

Senator COOPER. But my question is what makes you think he might have talked to Mr. Paine about Cuba?

Mrs. OSWALD. I think, sir; because after returning from New Orleans this was his favorite subject, Cuba, and he was quite—a little bit cracked about it, crazy about Cuba.

Senator COOPER. You mean he talked to you a great deal about it after you came from New Orleans?

Mrs. OSWALD. Well, in New Orleans he used to talk to me endlessly about Cuba, but after we came back he didn't talk to me about it any longer because I was just sick and tired of this.

Mr. DULLES. "He" in this case is your husband?

Mrs. OSWALD. That is right. I really don't know about what he talked with Mr. Paine. I think that they were talking about politics, that is to say my husband with Mr. Paine because my husband used to tell me afterwards, "Well, he doesn't understand anything about politics." "He is not too strong on politics."

And, therefore, I think they were probably talking with the American political system and the Russian political system and comparisons between them. I think that Mr. Paine could probably tell you more about this than I can.

Senator COOPER. That is all I want to ask for the time being.

Mrs. OSWALD. I think that Mr. Paine knows more about my husband's political attitudes toward the United States than I do.

Mr. RANKIN. You said the FBI asked you whether you could have been mistaken about it being Mr. Nixon that your husband was interested in going and seeing and maybe doing something to with his gun.

Do you know what Mr. Johnson you were asking about?

Let me rephrase the question.

You said the FBI asked you whether you might have been mistaken about Mr. Nixon and whether it might have been Mr. Johnson instead of Mr. Nixon that your husband was interested in doing something to with his gun.

Do you know what Mr. Johnson was being referred to?

Mrs. OSWALD. No; I didn't know who Johnson was. I am ashamed but I never knew his name. I am ashamed myself but I didn't know who Johnson was.

Mr. RANKIN. You didn't know that the FBI was asking about the then Vice President and now President Johnson?

Mrs. OSWALD. No; I never heard of Johnson before he became President.

Mr. DULLES. And you are quite sure——

Mrs. OSWALD. Maybe I am stupid, I don't know.

Mr. DULLES. And you are quite sure that your husband mentioned the name of Nixon to you——

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes; I am sure it was Nixon.

Mr. DULLES. That morning?

Mr. RANKIN. Do you know whether this Nixon incident occurred the day before your husband went to New Orleans?

Mrs. OSWALD. It wasn't the day before. Perhaps 3 days before.

Mr. MCKENZIE. Mr. Rankin, may I ask a question?

Mr. RANKIN. Yes.

Mr. MCKENZIE. Mrs. Oswald, you say or you said a few minutes ago that Mr. Paine knew or knows more about your husband's attitude about the United States than you do. Why did you say that?

Mrs. OSWALD. Because my husband's favorite topic of discussion was politics, and whoever he was with he talked to them politics and Mr. Paine was with him a fair amount and I am not sure they talked about politics. They went to meetings of some kind together, I don't know what kind of meetings.

Mr. MCKENZIE. Do you know where the meetings were?

Mrs. OSWALD. In Dallas. After they came back from some meeting my hus-

band said to me something about Walker being at this meeting, and he said, "Paine knows that I shot him."

I don't know whether this was the truth or not. I don't know whether it was true or not but this is what he told me.

Mr. MCKENZIE. Would they go in Mr. Paine's automobile?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes; it was about 2 days after this incident with Stevenson or the next day, or maybe it was the same place, or the next day that a meeting was held where General Walker appeared.

Mr. MCKENZIE. It was the day before.

Mrs. OSWALD. The day before? The day after. I think there was 1 day's difference between them, either it was the day before or the day after.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you say that there were a number of political meetings—

Mrs. OSWALD. Excuse me; but I think this was on Friday. I think that Lee was at this meeting on a Friday.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you say there were a number of political meetings that your husband went to—

Mrs. OSWALD. Excuse me; this was October 24.

Mr. RANKIN. With Mr. Paine?

Mrs. OSWALD. A week after his birthday—this was Friday. I think it was a week after my husband's birthday about October 24 or something like that or the 25th.

Mr. RANKIN. Mr. Reporter, can you give her the question that I asked?

Mrs. OSWALD. Excuse me, please.

(The question was read by the reporter.)

Mrs. OSWALD. I only know about this one.

Mr. RANKIN. Did the FBI tell you that the reason they were asking about whether there was a mistake as to whether it was Mr. Nixon or Vice President Johnson was because there was a report in Dallas papers about Vice President Johnson going to Dallas around the 23d of April?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes; they did tell me this. They said that at this time there was only one announcement in the newspapers of anyone coming and that was Vice President Johnson.

Mr. RANKIN. But you still are certain it was Mr. Nixon and not Vice President Johnson?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, no. I am getting a little confused with so many questions. I was absolutely convinced it was Nixon and now after all these questions I wonder if I am right in my mind.

Mr. RANKIN. Did your husband—

Mrs. OSWALD. I never heard about Johnson. I never heard about Johnson. I never knew anything about Johnson. I just don't think it was Johnson. I didn't know his name.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you husband during the Nixon incident say Mr. Nixon's name several times or how many times.

Mrs. OSWALD. Only once.

Mr. RANKIN. Now, you said that your husband went to get the pistol in the room. Will you tell us what room that was that he went to get the pistol?

Mrs. OSWALD. It was a small sort of storeroom. Just to the left off the balcony as you come in; it is just on the left from the balcony.

Mr. RANKIN. Was it out, was the pistol out in the room or was it in a closet?

Mrs. OSWALD. This room contained only a table and some shelves, and the pistol was not on the table. It was hidden somewhere on a shelf.

Representative FORD. Was the rifle in that room, too?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. Where was the rifle in the room?

Mrs. OSWALD. Sometimes it was in the corner, sometimes it was up on a shelf. Lee didn't like me to go into this room. That is why he kept it closed all the time and told me not to go into it. Sometimes he went in there and sat by himself for long periods of time.

Mr. DULLES. By closed, do you mean locked?

Mrs. OSWALD. He used to close it from the inside. I don't remember what kind of lock it was. Possibly it was just a—some kind of a tongue—

Mr. McKENZIE. Latch.

Mrs. OSWALD. Latch or something like that.

Mr. DULLES. How could he close it from the inside and then get out?

Mrs. OSWALD. When he was inside he could close it from the inside so that I couldn't come in.

Mr. DULLES. But when he came out could he close it from the outside so that you could not get in?

Mrs. OSWALD. No; from the outside it couldn't be locked.

Representative FORD. When you went to New Orleans and packed for the trip to New Orleans, did you help to pack the pistol or the rifle?

Mrs. OSWALD. No, no; Lee never let me pack things when we went for trips. He always did it himself.

Representative FORD. Did you see him pack the pistol or the rifle?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Representative FORD. Did you know the pistol and the rifle were in the luggage going to New Orleans?

Mrs. OSWALD. I stayed for some time with Ruth Paine after he left for New Orleans and I don't know whether they were in his things or they were in the stuff which was left with me.

Representative FORD. At the time Mrs. Paine picked you up to go to the bus station, did you intend to go by bus to New Orleans at that time?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Representative FORD. While you were living on Neely Street you didn't tell us before of any extensive rifle shooting at Love Field or rifle practice at Love Field. Can you tell us more about it now?

Mrs. OSWALD. Lee didn't tell me when he was going out to practice. I only remember one time distinctly that he went out because he took the bus. I don't know if he went to Love Field at that time. I don't—after all this testimony, after all this testimony, when I was asked did he clean his gun a lot, and I answered yes, I came to the conclusion that he was practicing with his gun because he was cleaning it afterwards.

Representative FORD. Did he take the rifle and the pistol to Love Field or at the time he went on the bus?

Mrs. OSWALD. Only the rifle.

Mr. McKENZIE. Just a minute. Let me ask her a question. May I ask a question?

Representative FORD. Yes, sir.

Mr. McKENZIE. Representative Ford, I wasn't here as you know when Mrs. Oswald testified before. I have been with her when she was interrogated by the FBI relative to practicing the rifle shooting. This is the first time that I have heard the use of the words "Love Field." Has there been prior testimony by Mrs. Oswald here that he was practicing at Love Field, because the reason I ask this is because she has steadfastly in the past told me and the FBI that she didn't know where he went to practice and that is the reason I wanted to know.

Mr. RANKIN. The record is——

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't know where he practiced. I just think that the bus goes to, went to Love Field.

Mr. RANKIN. Her testimony before was that the bus that he took, that she knows about when he went, was a bus that went to Love Field, and she thought he went to some place in that area to do his practicing.

Mr. McKENZIE. The reason I ask the question, Mr. Rankin, is because I don't believe there is any practice area at Love Field for rifle practicing.

Mr. RANKIN. Well, the investigation that the Commission has made shows that there is a place near Love Field where people do shooting and practicing.

Mr. McKENZIE. Not at Love Field.

Mr. RANKIN. It is right adjacent, in the neighborhood.

Mrs. OSWALD. Once we went out with Kathy Ford with the children to watch airplanes landing and these airplanes made a tremendous noise and for that reason I thought that maybe my husband was practicing somewhere in that area because you couldn't hear the sound of shots. I don't know if there is any place near there where one can practice shooting, though. This idea just came to me

a little while ago when we were out there, watching the airplanes because it was a couple of weeks ago that this happened. Just sort of a guess of mine.

MR. DULLES. How did he pack the gun or conceal the gun when he went out on the bus toward Love Field?

MRS. OSWALD. Are you talking about the gun or the rifle?

MR. DULLES. I am talking about the rifle.

MRS. OSWALD. He used to wrap it up in his overcoat, raincoat.

MR. RANKIN. So that the record will be clear on this, Mr. McKenzie, the prior testimony did not purport to indicate that Mrs. Oswald thought he was practicing right on Love Field where the airplanes were landing or anything like that. It was that he took that bus and took the rifle and came back with the rifle and that the bus went to Love Field and the investigation has shown that there is at least one place in that immediate neighborhood where there is gun practice carried on.

MR. DULLES. Is there testimony, Mr. Rankin, as to more than one trip or should we get that from the witness?

MR. RANKIN. She testified right now she only knew of this one although she knew of his cleaning his guns a number of times. She just testified to that. Do you want more than that?

MR. DULLES. I thought the record was a little fuzzy. Maybe you should clarify it.

MR. MCKENZIE. I think you should ask the question.

MR. RANKIN. Will you tell us, Mrs. Oswald, how you thought your husband might have been practicing in the area near Love Field or how you concluded that he might have been practicing with the rifle in the area near Love Field.

MRS. OSWALD. Only because that is the bus, only because that is where the bus goes. He never told me where.

MR. RANKIN. And you don't know whether he was practicing at a place near Love Field or some place between where he got on the bus near your home and Love Field; is that right?

MRS. OSWALD. No; I don't know, even now I don't know where it is.

SENATOR COOPER. Can I just ask a question? Do you know how many times he took the rifle from your home?

MRS. OSWALD. Well——

MR. DULLES. You are speaking of Neely Street.

MRS. OSWALD. I only saw——

SENATOR COOPER. When you were living on Neely Street—strike that. You have told about his taking the rifle from the house on Neely Street and then later cleaning the rifle. Do you know how many times that occurred?

MRS. OSWALD. I saw him take the rifle only once when we were living on Neely Street but he cleaned the rifle perhaps three or four times, perhaps three times—three times.

SENATOR COOPER. Did he ever tell you that he was practicing with a rifle?

MRS. OSWALD. Only after I saw him take the gun that one time.

SENATOR COOPER. Did you ask him if he had been practicing with the rifle?

MRS. OSWALD. Yes, I asked him.

SENATOR COOPER. What did he say?

MRS. OSWALD. He said yes.

SENATOR COOPER. Did he ever give any reason why he was practicing with the rifle to you?

MRS. OSWALD. He didn't give me a reason. He just said that for a man it is an interesting thing to have a rifle. I considered this some kind of a sport for him. I didn't think he was planning to employ it. I didn't take it seriously.

(At this point, Senator Cooper left the hearing room.)

MR. RANKIN. At the time of the Nixon incident did you know who Mr. Nixon was?

MRS. OSWALD. I didn't know what position he held. I thought he was Vice President.

MR. RANKIN. Did you ever check to see whether Mr. Nixon was in fact in Dallas anytime around that date?

MRS. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. After the day of the Nixon incident did you ever discuss that incident again with your husband?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Did the Nixon incident have anything to do with your decision to go to New Orleans to live?

Mrs. OSWALD. After the incident with Walker it became clear to me that it would be a good idea to go away from Dallas and after the incident with Nixon insisted—I insisted on it.

Mr. RANKIN. After the Nixon incident did you ever discuss that Nixon incident again with your husband?

Mrs. OSWALD. No. I don't know why. Perhaps it didn't make a very strong impression on me and that is why I didn't mention it in my first testimony. Perhaps it is because the first incident with Walker made such a strong impression that what happened afterward was somewhat effaced by it. I was so much upset by this incident with General Walker that I only just wanted to get away from Dallas as fast as possible.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you discuss the Nixon incident with anyone other than your husband before the assassination of President Kennedy?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you ever consider telling the police about the Walker and Nixon incidents?

Mrs. OSWALD. I thought of this but then Lee was the only person who was supporting me in the United States, you see. I didn't have any friends, I didn't speak any English and I couldn't work and I didn't know what would happen if they locked him up and I didn't know what would happen to us. Of course, my reason told me that I should do it but because of circumstances I couldn't do it.

Mr. RANKIN. When did you first tell something about the Nixon incident?

Mrs. OSWALD. It was after the assassination; we were in Martin's house and I think Robert was there also. That is when I first mentioned that. I don't remember whether I told them both at the same time or told Martin first and Robert second or Robert first and Martin second.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you know about when that was with reference to the time you moved in with the Martins?

Mrs. OSWALD. I think it was in the first month. I don't remember which day it was, though.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you recall whether you first told Robert about it some time in January of this year?

Mrs. OSWALD. I think it was earlier than that, early in December. Perhaps in the beginning of January, but I think it was before New Year's.

Mr. RANKIN. If Robert has stated that it was on a Sunday, January 12 of this year, do you think he is in error then?

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't think that Robert would make a mistake. I might make a mistake myself but I don't think he would make a mistake because he doesn't have quite as many, because he has not been in contact with quite as many of these events and doesn't have quite as much to remember as I have. And in general, I have a bad memory for figures.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you discuss the Nixon incident at anytime with Mr. Thorne or Mr. Martin, your agent?

Mrs. OSWALD. I told Martin about it but I don't think I told Thorne about it, and if Thorne learned about it it must have been from Martin.

Mr. RANKIN. You just related how you told Mr. Martin about it and the occasion in your testimony a moment ago; is that right?

Mrs. OSWALD. I am certain that these were the circumstances in which I told Martin about this. Whether or not the—it's possible I was just talking with Martin and his wife about Lee and it just came into my mind and I don't remember whether Robert was there or not, or whether I told Robert later.

Mr. RANKIN. Did anyone at anytime advise you or tell you not to tell the Commission about this incident?

Mrs. OSWALD. Martin told me that it is not necessary to mention this. But when they were asking me here in the Commission whether I had anything to

add to my testimony, I really forgot about it. When Martin and I were talking about it he said, "Well, try not to think about these things too much."

Mr. RANKIN. Did he say anything about why it wasn't necessary to tell about this incident?

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't remember. I don't think he told me why. Maybe he told me and I just didn't understand because I didn't understand English very well.

Mr. RANKIN. When you were telling about the Nixon incident you referred to your husband's sadistic streak. Do you recall that?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. Can you tell us a little more about that, how it showed?

Mrs. OSWALD. Anytime I did something which didn't please him he would make me sit down at a table and write letters to the Russian Embassy stating that I wanted to go back to Russia. He liked to tease me and torment me in this way. He knew that this—he just liked to torment me and upset me and hurt me, and he used to do this especially if I interfered in any of his political affairs, in any of his political discussions. He made me several times write such letters.

Mr. DULLES. I have just one question: What did you or your husband do with these letters that you wrote? Did any of them get mailed or did they all get destroyed?

Mrs. OSWALD. He kept carbons of these letters but he sent the letters off himself.

Mr. DULLES. To the Russian Embassy?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes; he didn't give me any money to buy stamps. I never had any pocket money of my own.

Mr. RANKIN. But the letters to the Embassy you are referring to are actual letters and requested—requests—they weren't practice letters or anything of that kind to punish you, were they?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes; they were real letters. I mean if my husband didn't want me to live with him any longer and wanted me to go back, I would go back, not because I wanted to go back but I didn't have any choice.

Mr. RANKIN. I misunderstood you then because I thought you were describing the fact that he made you write letters as a part of this sadistic streak that would never be sent but what he actually did was have you prepare the letters and then he proceeded to send them, is that your testimony?

Mrs. OSWALD. He did send them and he really wanted this. He knew that this hurt me.

Mr. RANKIN. Those are the letters to the Russian Embassy we have introduced in evidence in connection with your testimony; is that right?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes; those are the letters.

Representative FORD. Did he ever show you replies to those letters?

Mrs. OSWALD. At first—yes; there were. At first I didn't believe that he was sending off those letters.

Representative FORD. But you did see the replies?

Mrs. OSWALD. I received answers from the embassy.

Mr. RANKIN. Now, I will turn to another subject, Mrs. Oswald.

Mr. DULLES. Would you like to have a 5-minute recess? We will proceed.

Mr. RANKIN. Now, Mrs. Oswald, I would like to ask you about the Irving Gun Shop in Dallas.

Mrs. OSWALD. The what? I don't know anything about this at all.

Mr. RANKIN. Your counsel tells me I should correct that, that Irving is not a part of Dallas. It is the city of Irving. A witness has said that you and your two children and your husband came into a furniture shop asking the location of a gunshop in that area in Irving, and after appearing there that you and your husband, with your husband driving the car, along with your two children, got in the car and went up the street in the direction of where the gunshop was. Did you recall any incident of that kind?

Mrs. OSWALD. This is just a complete fabrication. Lee never drove a car with me. Only Ruth Paine drove a car with me. And I never took my baby with me.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you ever go into such a furniture store in Irving?

Mrs. OSWALD. Never.

Mr. RANKIN. That you recall?

Mrs. OSWALD. I was only twice in a store in Irving where they sell, like a cafe, where you can buy something to eat and where they sell toys and clothes and things like that; a little bit like a Woolworths, a one-story shop but without any furniture in it.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you know a Mrs. Whitworth who works in a furniture store in Irving?

Mrs. OSWALD. I was never in Irving in any furniture store.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you know a Mrs. Whitworth?

Mrs. OSWALD. It is the first time I have ever heard that name.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you know a Mrs. Hunter, a friend of Mrs. Whitworth?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you ever go on a trip with your husband to have a telescopic lens mounted on a gun at a gunshop?

Mrs. OSWALD. Never. No; this is all not true. In the first place, my husband couldn't drive, and I was never alone with him in a car. Anytime we went in a car it was with Ruth Paine, and there was never—we never went to any gun store and never had any telescopic lens mounted.

Mr. RANKIN. Did the four of you, that is, your husband, you, and your two children, ever go alone any place in Irving?

Mrs. OSWALD. In Irving the baby was only 1 month old. I never took her out anywhere.

Representative FORD. Did you ever go anytime—

Mrs. OSWALD. Just to doctor, you know.

Representative FORD. Did you ever go anytime with your husband in a car with the rifle?

Mrs. OSWALD. I was never at anytime in a car with my husband and with a rifle. Not only with the rifle, not even with a pistol. Even without anything I was never with my husband in a car under circumstances where he was driving a car.

Representative FORD. Did you go in a car with somebody else driving where your husband had the pistol or the rifle?

Mrs. OSWALD. Never. I don't know what to think about this.

Mr. RANKIN. Mrs. Oswald, I will hand you Commission's Exhibit No. 819 and ask you particularly about the signature at the bottom.

Mrs. OSWALD. That is Lee's handwriting, and this is mine.

Mr. RANKIN. Were the words "A. J. Hidell, Chapter President" on Commission Exhibit No. 819 are in your handwriting?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. Would you tell the Commission how you happened to sign that?

Mrs. OSWALD. Lee wrote this down on a piece of paper and told me to sign it on this card, and said that he would beat me if I didn't sign that name on the card.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you have any other discussion about your signing that name?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. What discussion did you have?

Mrs. OSWALD. I said that this sounded like Fidel. I said, "You have selected this name because it sounds like Fidel" and he blushed and said, "Shut up, it is none of your business."

Mr. RANKIN. Was there any discussion about who Hidell, as signed on the bottom of that card, was?

Mrs. OSWALD. He said that it was his own name and that there is no Hidell in existence, and I asked him, "You just have two names," and he said, "Yes."

Mr. RANKIN. Was anything else said about that matter at any time?

Mrs. OSWALD. I taunted him about this and teased about this and said how shameful it is that a person who has his own perfectly good name should take another name and he said, "It is none of your business, I would have to do it this way, people will think I have a big organization" and so forth.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you ask him why he needed to have the other name in your handwriting rather than his own?

Mrs. OSWALD. I did ask him that and he would answer that in order that people will think it is two people involved and not just one.

Mr. DULLES. Did you ever sign any more such cards with the name "Hidell"?

Mrs. OSWALD. Only this one.

Mr. DULLES. And you never signed the name "Hidell" on any other paper at any time?

Mrs. OSWALD. Only once.

Representative FORD. Where did this actual signing take place, Mrs. Oswald?

Mrs. OSWALD. In New Orleans.

Representative FORD. Where in New Orleans?

Mrs. OSWALD. In what is the name of the street where we lived, in an apartment house.

Representative FORD. In your apartment house?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes; in our apartment house.

Representative FORD. What time of day, do you recall?

Mrs. OSWALD. It might have been 8 or 9 o'clock in the evening.

Mr. DULLES. Had you ever heard the name "Hidell" before?

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't remember whether this was before or after Lee spoke on the radio. I think it was after.

Mr. DULLES. Did he use the name Hidell on the radio?

Mrs. OSWALD. I think that he might have when he was talking on the radio said that Hidell is the President of his organization but, of course, I don't understand English well and I don't know. He spoke on the radio using his own name but might have mentioned the name Hidell. This is what he told me. When I tried to find out what he said on the radio.

Mr. DULLES. This might have been on television also?

Mrs. OSWALD. It was on the radio, not on television. He told me that someone had taken movies of him for to be shown later on television but I don't know if they ever were.

Mr. DULLES. Did you ever sign the name Hidell at any subsequent time to any document?

Mr. McKENZIE. If you recall signing it. Do you recall signing his name to any other document?

Mrs. OSWALD. I only remember this one occasion.

Mr. RANKIN. Was the way you signed on this Commission's Exhibit No. 819 your usual way of writing English?

Mrs. OSWALD. My English handwriting changes every day, and my Russian handwriting, too. But that is more or less my usual style.

Mr. RANKIN. You weren't trying to conceal the way you sign anything?

Mrs. OSWALD. I tried to do it, I just tried to write it as nicely as possible.

Mr. DULLES. Did you make some practice runs of writing this name before you actually put it on the card?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes; because it was difficult for me to write English properly.

Mr. DULLES. So you mean you wrote it several times on another sheet of paper and then put it on this card?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Representative FORD. Was there anybody else present at the time of this incident?

Mrs. OSWALD. No; only Lee.

Representative FORD. Did he have you sign only one card?

Mrs. OSWALD. This was the only time when I—when Lee asked me to do this and I did it. I might have signed two or—cards and not just one but there weren't a great many.

Representative FORD. Did the other cards have someone else's name besides Lee Harvey Oswald on it?

Mrs. OSWALD. No; only Lee Oswald.

Representative FORD. But you think you might have signed more than one such card?

Mrs. OSWALD. Maybe two, three. This is just 1 day when I was signing this. It just happened on one occasion.

Mr. RANKIN. Mrs. Oswald, turning to another subject, I would like to ask you about some correspondence with the Dallas Civil Liberties Union.

Do you recall that they inquired as to whether you were being kept from seeing and speaking to people against your will?

Mrs. OSWALD. This letter was translated by Ruth Paine and I answered on the basis of the translation.

Mr. McKENZIE. May I see those letters, Mr. Rankin?

Mr. RANKIN. Yes.

Mrs. OSWALD. I didn't want to answer this letter. It was simply a matter of courtesy on my part.

Mr. RANKIN. Now, you received a letter from the local chapter of the Civil Liberties Union in Russian, did you not?

Mrs. OSWALD. There was a letter that was in English and there was a translation which came with it, and it was stated that the translation was done by Ruth Paine.

Mr. RANKIN. What did you do with the translation or the—I will ask you the translation first. Did you keep that?

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't remember what I did with it.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you know what you did with the part that was in Russian?

Mrs. OSWALD. Perhaps it is somewhere among my papers but I didn't pay any special attention to it.

Mr. RANKIN. I will hand you Commission Exhibit No. 331 and ask you if that is the letter in English that you referred to?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes; it is the letter.

Mr. RANKIN. I call the Commission's attention to the fact that that has already been received in evidence.

Mr. McKENZIE. Mr. Rankin, did you write Mr. Olds about this? This appears to be a letter in reply to a letter from you.

Mr. RANKIN. That is right. I asked for it.

Mrs. OSWALD. Will you examine Commission Exhibits Nos. 990 and 991 and state whether you know the handwriting in those exhibits?

Mrs. OSWALD. This is all mine, my handwriting. This is the answer to that letter.

Mr. RANKIN. And the letter, Exhibit No. 990, and the envelope, Exhibit No. 991, in your handwriting were your response to the inquiry of the Dallas Civil Liberties Union on the Exhibit No. 331?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes; this was my answer to this letter, Exhibit No. 331.

Mr. RANKIN. I offer in evidence Commission Exhibits Nos. 990 and 991.

Mr. DULLES. You want them admitted at this time?

Mr. RANKIN. Yes; Mr. Chairman.

Mr. DULLES. They shall be admitted.

(Commission Exhibits Nos. 990 and 991 were marked for identification and received in evidence.)

Mr. RANKIN. Mrs. Oswald, I will ask you to examine Exhibit No. 988 and with the help of the interpreter, advise us whether or not it is a reasonably correct translation of your letter, Exhibit No. 990.

Mrs. OSWALD. This is not an accurate translation.

Mr. RANKIN. Mrs. Oswald, can you tell us what errors were made, where the corrections should be to make it a correct translation?

Mrs. OSWALD. There is one place here in which it refers to the third sentence of the English text which states: "What you read in the papers is correct."

Mr. RANKIN. How would you correct that?

Mrs. OSWALD. This is incorrect. A better, a proper translation, although unofficial of this passage, and the Russian text of my letter would read, "Your concern is quite unnecessary although it is quite understandable if one is to judge from what is written in the papers."

Mr. RANKIN. Now, will you proceed with any other corrections?

Mrs. OSWALD. This, the letter, the spirit of the letter reflects my own spirit in my own Russian text—although the translation is somewhat inaccurate and tends to shorten my own text somewhat.

There is another inaccuracy which is more important than the others—it is not more important, the first one is more important—there is another which should be called to the Commission's attention.

The last sentence of the English text reads: "Please let Mrs. Ruth Paine know I owe to her much and think of her as one of my best friends."

Whereas the letter only states that: "Of course, consider her my friend."

Mr. RANKIN. Mrs. Oswald, I call your attention to Commission Exhibit No. 990 and ask you to note the date which appears to be December 7, 1964.

The Dallas Civil Liberties Union letter, you will note, was dated January 6, 1964, which I will hand you so you can examine it. Could you explain that discrepancy? You might wish to examine them.

Mrs. OSWALD. It can't possibly be the 7th of December 1964 because it hasn't even come yet.

Mr. RANKIN. You might wish to examine the envelope, Exhibit No. 991, that may help you as to the correct date.

Mrs. OSWALD. January 8. I wrote this January 7. It was just my mistake. I wrote it on January 7 and mailed it on the 8th. I just out of habit still writing December.

Mr. MCKENZIE. Mr. Rankin, may I ask the Commission, on Commission Exhibit No. 988, which purports to be a translation of Mrs. Oswald's letter to the Dallas Civil Liberties Union, do you know who translated this letter or could you tell us who translated the letter?

Mr. RANKIN. Mr. McKenzie—

Mrs. OSWALD. They wrote me that I can answer them in Russian, and which I did but I haven't any idea who translated my answer.

Mr. RANKIN. The Commission Exhibit No. 987 which I will now offer states that the translation was handled by Mrs. Ford and later seen by Mrs. Paine.

The translation of the exhibit that you now have in your hand, what is the number of that?

Mr. MCKENZIE. This is Commission Exhibit No. 988 in English which purports to be a translation of Mrs. Oswald's letter to the Dallas Civil Liberties Union and I am asking does the Commission know who translated the letter?

Mr. RANKIN. We were informed by the Dallas Civil Liberties Union in Exhibit No. 987 that the translation was made by Mrs. Ford and later seen by Mrs. Paine, and I now offer all exhibits together with Exhibit No. 987 as part of the testimony of this witness.

Mr. DULLES. The exhibits shall be admitted. Have we the numbers of all of these exhibits?

Mr. RANKIN. Yes; the reporter has them.

(Commission Exhibit No. 987 was marked for identification and received in evidence.)

Mr. RANKIN. Mrs. Oswald, I will hand you the cameras of your—

Mr. DULLES. I wonder before we finish this—

Mr. MCKENZIE. I would prefer, Mr. Rankin, for the purposes of the record so that the record will be complete, to have a correct English translation of Mrs. Oswald's letter in the record in lieu of Commission Exhibit No. 988.

Mr. RANKIN. Mr. Chairman, if it is agreeable to the Commission, I would like to ask counsel to furnish such a translation and we will then make it the next number, Exhibit No. 992, as a part of this record.

Mr. DULLES. That shall be admitted then as Exhibit No. 992, the other already being in the record I think, probably has to stay there particularly in view of all this discussion of it.

Mr. RANKIN. If you will furnish it.

Mr. MCKENZIE. You are putting the onus or burden back on me, Mr. Rankin, when the Commission has a fully qualified, I presume, Russian interpreter here, and if the Commission would not mind going to the further expense of having the interpretation of the letter made, I think it would expedite the Commission's report.

Mr. RANKIN. If it is satisfactory to Mr. McKenzie, then, Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask Mr. Coulter if he would make a translation and submit it to Mr. McKenzie for submission to his client for approval, and then we will have that marked the Exhibit No. 992 and made part of this record.

Mr. DULLES. Excellent, that will be admitted as such, Commission Exhibit No. 992.

Mr. McKENZIE. Thank you, Mr. Rankin and thank you Mr. Chairman.
(Commission Exhibit No. 992 was marked for identification and received in evidence.)

Mr. RANKIN. Mrs. Oswald, will you examine the cameras of your husband and tell us which one took the pictures that showed your husband with the rifle and the pistol, as you will recall?

The pictures I am asking you about are Exhibits Nos. 133-A and 133-B which you recall are the ones that you said in your prior testimony you took yourself.

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. With one of these cameras.

Mrs. OSWALD. This is the first and last time in my life I ever took a photograph and it was done with this gray camera.

Mr. REDLICH. Mr. Rankin, the Commission exhibit numbers of the two cameras, one is Commission Exhibit No. 136 and one is Commission Exhibit No. 750.

Mr. McKENZIE. And the gray camera she is referring to, Mr. Rankin, for the purpose of the record is Commission Exhibit No. 750, isn't that right, Mrs. Oswald?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. That is the gray camera you just said you took pictures with, is that correct?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes. The other camera also belonged to Lee but I don't use it.

Mr. RANKIN. Turning to another subject now, Mrs. Oswald, while you and Lee Harvey Oswald were at Minsk in the Soviet Union, can you tell us how Lee Harvey Oswald spent his leisure time while he was there?

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't know how he spent his time before we were married but afterwards he was a great lover of classical music and used to go to concerts a lot, and theaters, and movies, symphony concerts, and we used to go out on the lakes around Minsk. There are some lakes in the confines of Minsk and outside where we used to go.

Mr. RANKIN. While there did he read much?

Mrs. OSWALD. He didn't read very much because there wasn't a very great choice of books in English except the ones on Marxism.

Mr. DULLES. He could, however, read books in Russian, could he not, at this time?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes; but it was a lot of work for him and he really didn't enjoy it very much. But he did go to Russian films and understood them.

Mr. RANKIN. Did he go to the rifle club there?

Mrs. OSWALD. He belonged to a hunters—a club of hunters and had a rifle but he never went to the practice meetings of this club. He only paid his membership dues, and I think that he joined this club in order to be able to acquire a rifle because only apparently members of such hunting clubs have the right in the Soviet Union to own a rifle. Only once did he go out with a group of some of my friends and take his rifle and try and shoot some game but he didn't catch anything.

Representative FORD. Did he buy the rifle or was it given to him?

Mrs. OSWALD. He bought it.

Representative FORD. What did you do with it when you went to the United States?

Mrs. OSWALD. I think he sold it.

Representative FORD. Was it a rifle of—much like the one that was used in the assassination?

Mrs. OSWALD. All rifles look alike to me.

Mr. McKENZIE. Did it have a telescopic sight on it, Marina?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. McKENZIE. But it was similar to the same rifle that he had in the United States?

Mrs. OSWALD. No. It wasn't identical but it might have been similar, seeing as how they are both single barrel rifles. I don't understand anything about rifles at all and I really am not qualified to talk about them.

Mr. RANKIN. You mentioned that he went to the rifle club on one occasion or the hunting club on one occasion with some friends to hunt squirrels or

rabbits or things of that sort. Did he go to the hunting club on other occasions to practice to shoot?

Mrs. OSWALD. When I first saw the rifle here in the United States I didn't pay much attention to it because I thought this was the rifle he had brought from Russia.

Mr. RANKIN. Did he practice shooting the rifle in Russia?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you see him or observe him cleaning the rifle in Russia?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. And would he clean the rifle, did he clean it on several occasions?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes, several times.

Mr. RANKIN. The hunting club that he belonged to, did it have an instructor in shooting the rifle?

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't know but there should have been one.

Mr. RANKIN. Now, he had to have a permit to purchase the rifle in Russia.

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes; you can't possess a rifle without a—permission in the Soviet Union.

Mr. RANKIN. Did he purchase the rifle from a government agency?

Mrs. OSWALD. You buy these rifles in special stores, but to buy them you have to have a paper from the hunting club stating that you have the right to buy a rifle.

Mr. RANKIN. And the authorized government official gave him authority to buy the gun through the hunting club?

Mrs. OSWALD. The hunting club issues this permit. He used to clean the rifle but he never used it. It always hung on the wall.

Mr. RANKIN. Mrs. Oswald, will you describe what you were saying off the record in regard to his going out to use the rifle in the country as distinguished from using it in the club?

Mrs. OSWALD. We all went out together in a group of boys and girls in order to get—to swim a little and to get a suntan. It was a lake which is just on the edge of town not far from Minsk, and the men had guns, and they all went out to try to shoot some kind of rabbit or bird or something like that, and the men went off together and I heard several shots and they came back and they hadn't caught anything so we laughed at it.

Mr. RANKIN. Did that happen more than once?

Mrs. OSWALD. Only one such trip. And even that time he didn't want to take the gun with him. He took it only because one of my friends was laughing at him and said, "You have a gun hanging here and you never use it. Why don't you bring it along and see if you can use it."

Mr. RANKIN. Did you and your husband have any friends other than Russians while you were at Minsk?

Mrs. OSWALD. There were friends. We had some friends from Argentina but they didn't come on this excursion with us.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you have any friends there who were from Cuba?

Mrs. OSWALD. There were Cuban students studying in Minsk, and this Argentinian girl had a Cuban boyfriend and possibly Lee met this boyfriend, this Cuban student, but I never met him.

Mr. DULLES. Do you know where the Cuban students were studying, what particular school?

Mrs. OSWALD. They study in various educational institutions in Minsk, some are in the medical institute, others are in the agricultural and others are in the polytechnical institute.

Mr. DULLES. Could you tell us a little more about these Argentinians, were they there for educational reasons or what was the reason they were there?

Mrs. OSWALD. Excuse me; I am mixed up with Cubans. You talk about Argentinians?

Mr. DULLES. I asked about Argentinians but I would be glad to have you add the Cubans to it, too.

Mrs. OSWALD. There is agreement between the Cuban Government and the Russian Government; and the Cuban Government under this agreement sends Cuban students to study in the Soviet Union.

From what I could tell from what Lee said, many of these Cuban students

were not satisfied with life in the Soviet Union, and this Argentinian girl told me the same thing. Many of them thought that, they were not satisfied with conditions in the Soviet Union and thought if Castro were to be in power that the conditions in Cuba would become similar to those in the Soviet Union and they were not satisfied with this. They said it wasn't worth while carrying out a revolution just to have the kind of life that these people in the Soviet Union had.

Representative FORD. Would you have any idea how many Cubans were in school in Minsk?

Mrs. OSWALD. I heard the figure of 300 but I never knew even a single one.

Representative FORD. Could you be more helpful in the kind of schools they went to, what were the schools?

Mrs. OSWALD. Most of them were in agricultural institutes. Some were in the institute of foreign languages where they spent a year studying Russian in order subsequently to go on into some other institute where they could study some more formal subject or some more formal discipline.

Representative FORD. About how old were these students?

Mrs. OSWALD. About between 17 and 21.

Mr. DULLES. Was your husband absent from you during any protracted period after your marriage, and during your stay in Minsk other than the trip I think he took one trip to Moscow without you.

Mrs. OSWALD. Once I went to Kharkov, and he stayed in Minsk. Other than that there were no absences on his part, except, of course, for the trip to Moscow. Do you want to talk about the Argentinian students?

Mr. DULLES. Yes; if you have more to say about that.

Mrs. OSWALD. These are people who left Poland about 30 years previously for Argentina. Then after the second World War the part of Poland where they had been living became part of the Soviet Union and the father of this family was an engineer and worked in the same factory where Lee worked, his name was Zieger.

They had two daughters born in Argentina, and the wife was very homesick for her native country, so they came back and the Soviet Government gave them Soviet citizenship before they got on the boat to come back. Then she told us what she had been reading in the newspapers was just propaganda and they thought the life was a little better than what they found out what it was when they arrived. Now, they have been there 7 or 8 years and they would prefer to go back to Argentina but they can't.

Mr. DULLES. In connection with your husband's work in the factory did he have any indoctrination courses as a part of that in Marxism, Leninism, or in anything of that kind in connection with his work in the factory?

Mrs. OSWALD. I think there are such courses in the factory for party members and for people who want to become party members but Lee never went to them. When he was in Russia he didn't like Russian Communists. He thought they were all bureaucrats. I don't actually know what he liked except himself.

Mr. DULLES. Do you know whether your husband received any special pay or special funds through the Russian Red Cross or through any other channel in addition to his regular pay in the factory?

Mrs. OSWALD. Before we were married he apparently—he told me he was getting some assistance from the Government, but he told me this after we were married, and I don't know from whom or in what way he got it.

Representative FORD. Did you have any idea how much extra he was getting over his wages?

Mrs. OSWALD. I don't know how much it was but he had quite a lot of money in the beginning. Maybe he wrote about this in his diary.

Representative FORD. Did you know how much he was earning each week while he was employed?

Mrs. OSWALD. In Russia they don't pay for every week. Eighty rubles a month.

Representative FORD. Eighty rubles a month?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Mr. DULLES. Those are the new rubles?

Mrs. OSWALD. New rubles.

Mr. DULLES. Those were the new rubles, revalued rubles, that is about \$90; is it not?

Mrs. OSWALD. \$90 or \$80.

Representative FORD. While you were married did you know of any extra money he was getting?

Mrs. OSWALD. He didn't receive any—he didn't receive any extra money while we were married, he had a little bit left over from what he was getting before, that is all.

Representative FORD. Did he handle all of the money that he received or did he give you some while you were in the Soviet Union?

Mrs. OSWALD. I was working at the same time, and I gave him my salary and he in turn would give me some money every now and then to buy groceries with and that sort of thing, but I didn't ever get any money from his salary.

Representative FORD. So the only income that you know about was the money you earned and the money that he earned?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes.

Representative FORD. And how much did you earn?

Mrs. OSWALD. 45.

Representative FORD. 45 rubles a month?

Mrs. OSWALD. A month.

Representative FORD. There were no other funds, to your knowledge, that he received after you were married?

Mrs. OSWALD. No.

Representative FORD. He paid all the bills?

Mrs. OSWALD. Yes. You didn't have too much bills in Russia.

Mr. DULLES. Did he take your money, too? What was your rent, do you recall at that time, rent of the apartment?

Mrs. OSWALD. Seven rubles and 50 cents, kopeks.

Mr. DULLES. Was it 7 rubles and 50 kopeks? A week?

Mrs. OSWALD. A month; the rent in Russia are usually about 10 percent of wages a month.

Mr. McKENZIE. Wages are low, too.

Mrs. OSWALD. Of course, people who get more, higher wages have bigger apartments.

Mr. DULLES. Mr. Rankin, I think, is it all right to adjourn at this point?

We will reconvene at 2 o'clock.

(Whereupon, at 12:50 p.m., the President's Commission recessed.)

Afternoon Session

TESTIMONY OF HARRIS COULTER

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

(Members present at this point: Chief Justice Warren and Representative Ford.)

The CHAIRMAN. The Commission will come to order. You may proceed, Mr. Rankin.

Mr. RANKIN. Mr. Chief Justice, Mr. McKenzie has asked that we develop in the record a little bit about the qualifications of Mr. Coulter as an interpreter, so it would be clear that he is able to translate back and forth.

The CHAIRMAN. Very well.

Mr. RANKIN. Mr. Coulter, I think you should be sworn for this.

The CHAIRMAN. Would you rise and be sworn, please? Do you solemnly swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Mr. COULTER. I do.

Mr. RANKIN. Will you please state your full name?

Mr. COULTER. Harris Livermore Coulter.

Mr. RANKIN. Where do you live?

Mr. COULTER. Glen Echo Heights, Md.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you have a position in the Government at the present time?