

cases even the information itself must be withheld from the public. For example, the fact that a Russian MVD employee may secretly have tried to warn Oswald not to come to Russia, if disclosed, might result in the employee being severely punished or even executed. Similarly, even disclosing the information gained from certain wiretapping facilities would necessarily disclose the existence of the facilities, where the nature of the information is such that we could not have learned it except through these facilities.

I. SOME GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

A. "Foreign Involvement" Defined

We have intentionally chosen the words, "foreign involvement," to describe the problems with which we are concerned in this memorandum. The words were chosen because they are extremely broad, covering everything from a comparatively innocent arrangement for propaganda purposes, such as, for example, an agreement whereby Oswald might have served the propaganda purposes of the Castro Government in New Orleans and Dallas in exchange for that Government paying his printing expenses plus some small additional compensation, to the most serious kind of conspiratorial connection, as would be the case if a foreign power had ordered Lee Oswald to kill John F. Kennedy. By "foreign involvement," however, we do mean something more concrete than simply emotional or ideological influence. The Commission already possesses evidence, and indeed so does the general public, that Oswald considered himself a Marxist and that he sympathized wholeheartedly with the Castro regime: he openly spread pamphlets in its behalf on the streets of New Orleans and he took its side in radio

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Reference copy, JFK Collection: HSCA (PG 233)

Clemson-Stewart memorandum (m. l.) on Oswald's foreign activities

and television debates. These facts have already been established, and they will be assumed, rather than discussed, in this memorandum. The question to be treated here is whether there was some reasonably close working relationship involving Oswald and a foreign power or at least a group of men based in a foreign country.

B. "Agent for What?"

The popular discussion of the foreign-conspiracy problem, current in America and especially common in the European press, deals most frequently with whether Lee Harvey Oswald was an "agent" of some foreign power or domestic conspiratorial group. Discussing the problem in this manner is misleading, because evidence that indicates that Oswald may have been one kind of agent is read by the public to mean that he could have been an agent for almost any purpose, including the assassination of the President, when in fact, upon closer analysis, such would not be the case at all. It should be kept in mind that to conclude that Oswald was or was not an "agent" is not enough; it should always be asked, "an agent for what?" For example, if it should be shown that Oswald was a paid Soviet Agent for the purpose of spreading Communist propaganda among workers wherever he lived, this would of course be something in which the Commission would be greatly interested, but it would not at all follow that the Soviet Government should then be blamed for the death of the President.

More importantly for our purposes, the question, "Agent for What?" should be kept in mind in order that the plausibility of our evidence can

be tested. For example, an assertion that Oswald was the agent of the Castro Government for the purpose of obtaining intelligence-type information in the United States is, upon reflection, extremely unlikely. Oswald was a past defector from his country, lacked a completed high school education, was almost always confused in his own mind about all sorts of things, was usually unemployed and when he was employed, ordinarily worked as an unskilled laborer. Finally, he publicly espoused Castroism and propagandized in its behalf. Under these circumstances, the use of Oswald to obtain secret information for the Cubans, or indeed any information which was not readily available to everyone through television or newspapers, is preposterous. He could not conceivably have been permitted access to any such material, even under the loosest security arrangements. On the other hand, his circumstances and character do fit the criteria for an "agitator," propagandizer, or even an assassin, for the Cuban Government. It follows, therefore, that bits of evidence pointing towards his being an agent for one of the latter purposes must be taken seriously, whereas rumors to the effect that he was obtaining secret information for Castro should be given for less credence.

C. The Over-all Relevance of Political Motive

A third factor which should be kept in mind throughout this entire memorandum is the possible motives of the various governments and groups involved. This obviously ties in closely with the previous discussion on the various kinds of agent Oswald may have been. Here, too, examples will show what we mean. Khrushchev seems to have gotten along reasonably well with the late President and in general seems to be

sophisticated enough to have realized that the death of President Kennedy and the succession to power of Vice President Johnson would not result in any significant change in American foreign policy towards the Soviet Union. Consequently, the Soviet use of Oswald as an agent to assassinate the President is relatively unlikely. The same conclusion does not follow for the Soviet use of Oswald as an assassination agent to kill other persons in the United States, however. Even as recently as the late 1950's the Soviet Government was using assassination as one of the methods to gain its political ends. Two Russian Ukrainian anti-Communist leaders were murdered in Western Europe by an agent of the KGB. This agent later got into trouble with his superiors and defected to the West; he told Western intelligence that before he got into trouble he was in line for training in the language and customs of the United States and the British Commonwealth countries, so that he could carry on his work there. It is conceivable therefore that the Soviet Government has agents in the United States at this time ready to kill when directed to do so by their Government. Once we accept this fact, the possibility that their network, if it exists, included Lee Harvey Oswald must be fully explored. An analysis of the possible motives of the Cuban Government is more difficult. The men who make up that Government are probably less coolheaded and rational than the Russians. Simple retaliation, for example, is a motive which must be thoroughly considered in dealing with Castro.

The foregoing discussion of motive is not meant to be exhaustive. We only mention it here because it is extremely important and because it cuts across all the other more specific and detailed evidence which

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

II. INVOLVEMENT BY THE SOVIET UNION

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

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

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

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

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