

Mr. LIEBELER. You must have talked to Philip about Oswald after the assassination.

Mr. BLALOCK. Yes.

Mr. LIEBELER. Did you recall to each other and discuss with each other the meeting that you had with Oswald in the store on Decatur Street at that time?

Mr. BLALOCK. I think I was the one that recognized him. I called it to Philip's attention, and the next day at school he said, "Yes, that is the man we met at the store." I recognized Oswald late one night when I was just about going to bed. I told my Daddy, "I went uptown and met that man up there."

Mr. LIEBELER. This was shortly after the assassination?

Mr. BLALOCK. Yes; during the time they didn't have any shows but the funeral and—

Mr. LIEBELER. [Exhibiting photograph to witness.] Let me show you a picture that has been marked as Exhibit 1 to the affidavit of Jesse J. Garner taken at New Orleans, April 6, 1964, and I ask you if you recognize the individual portrayed in that picture.

Mr. BLALOCK. Yes, sir; I recognize him.

Mr. LIEBELER. And do you recognize him as the man you met in the store that day?

Mr. BLALOCK. Yes, sir; Lee Harvey Oswald.

Mr. LIEBELER. Can you think of anything else now about your contact with Oswald, or can you think of anything else that you know about him that I haven't asked you about and you think the Commission should know about?

Mr. BLALOCK. I can't think of anything else.

Mr. LIEBELER. I don't have any other questions. If you can't think of anything else, we will terminate the deposition. On behalf of the Commission, I want to thank you very much.

TESTIMONY OF VINCENT T. LEE

The testimony of Vincent T. Lee was taken at 1:30 p.m., on April 17, 1964, at the U.S. courthouse, Foley Square, New York, N.Y., by Messrs. J. Lee Rankin, General Counsel, and Wesley J. Liebeler, assistant counsel of the President's Commission. Vincent T. Lee was accompanied by his attorney, Stanley Faulkner.

Vincent T. Lee, having duly affirmed, was examined and testified as follows:

Mr. RANKIN. Mr. Lee, this deposition is being taken by the Commission under the authority of Executive Order No. 11130 and joint resolution of the Congress No. 137. My name is J. Lee Rankin. I am general counsel for the Commission. Mr. Liebeler is associated with me in this work. You have a right to have a copy of your testimony if you wish to pay for it and you may ask the reporters to make such arrangements.

During the examination you have a right to have counsel, which you have here, and counsel may object to any of the questions. At the close of the examination by myself, if counsel wishes to ask you questions to clarify or make clear any particular part of your testimony or correct it, if you wish to call anything to his attention, why, he is free to do that.

Where do you live, Mr. Lee?

Mr. LEE. 37½ St. Mark's Place, New York City.

Mr. RANKIN. You are entitled under the rules of the Commission to 3 days' notice, and I assume since you are here you are willing to waive that and go ahead with the deposition.

Mr. LEE. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you have an official connection with the Fair Play for Cuba Committee?

Mr. LEE. The Fair Play for Cuba Committee is no longer a functioning organization.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you at one time have such a connection?

Mr. LEE. Yes; I did.

Mr. RANKIN. During what period?

Mr. LEE. From the year of 1963—yes, last year.

Mr. RANKIN. When was it closed up?

Mr. LEE. Officially the office went out of existence December 1963.

Mr. RANKIN. In 1963?

Mr. LEE. December 1963. Eviction notice was served and the office was closed.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you have some communications with Lee Harvey Oswald?

Mr. LEE. Yes; I did.

Mr. RANKIN. Have you made a search of your files for all communications that you had with him?

Mr. LEE. Upon being communicated with by the Federal agents, from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, at their behest I made an exhausting search throughout the whole Fair Play offices for any and all communications which were there, and finding certain communications I turned them over to the Federal agents, particularly Federal Agent Kennedy, in early December 1963.

Mr. RANKIN. When did you make that search?

Mr. LEE. Within a day or two after being contacted by the Federal agents.

Mr. RANKIN. Can you tell us the approximate date of that contact?

Mr. LEE. I believe it was the first week of December.

Mr. RANKIN. 1963?

Mr. LEE. 1963, yes. I am not positive. I am pretty sure it was somewhere around that time.

Mr. RANKIN. Was that search made by you personally?

Mr. LEE. Yes, sir.

Mr. RANKIN. Was it a thorough and complete search?

Mr. LEE. Well, I went through every scrap of paper down to the last little scrap behind the desk and under radiators and in cabinets and in drawers and under desk blotters and every possible conceivable place any piece of paper might have been stored or fallen to and laid down or anything else.

Mr. RANKIN. So you are satisfied—

Mr. LEE. As far as I know I went through every—to the best of my knowledge I went through everything I could find and everything that I found I turned over to the agents afterwards, after having copies made.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you or anybody on behalf of your committee have any oral communications with Lee Harvey Oswald that you know of?

Mr. LEE. To my knowledge there was never any such communication. I can't ever remember ever having such communication myself. I don't know that anybody else did. Nobody that I have known has ever mentioned such a thing to me.

(Document marked Lee Exhibit No. 1.)

Mr. RANKIN. I hand you Exhibit No. 1 and ask you if that is a letter that you or your committee received from Lee Harvey Oswald?

Mr. LEE. This looks very much like such a letter, sir.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you receive it near the date that it bears?

Mr. LEE. There is not a date—it is not dated. This particular letter is not dated. Evidently here on the bottom is a notation which is made. This letter requests that the organization send some literature which the organization had published and there is a notation on the bottom which says the material was sent. It says "Sent 4/19/63," which I assume was quite some time ago. I can remember when people wrote in, we had many, many communications from many parts of the country, and when they asked for something we would send it to them and we would mark the thing "Sent so and so," so we would know the communication had been answered and what had been done about it.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you know whether that notation "Sent 4/19/63" and also the circling of the "50" was done by you?

Mr. LEE. This is doubtful because at that time, let's see, at that time I was not in the New York office. I was out on a national tour, I believe I was on the west coast at that time. We have had other people coming in to volunteer to, you know, wrap packages and address envelopes and things like that, come in for an hour or two, and go on about their business, whatever it is,

and evidently somebody else did this because at that time I was on the west coast.

Mr. RANKIN. Would you be able to tell whether or not the letter, Exhibit 1, was dated or sent to you, rather than dated, somewhere around the time that this "Sent" recording was made?

Mr. LEE. I have absolutely no reason to believe otherwise. I believe there might have been an envelope which—some of the letters had envelopes. I don't know whether this particular one did or not. I think this is one of the first communications we would have, and it goes back to the end of April 1963, and to the best of my knowledge all my experience has been that these things, just so much of this was done; it was an automatic thing that was sent or replied, a certain date, which meant within that period of time, a week or so, sometimes it was slow, sometimes it was done the same day, sometimes it was done, you know, several days later, but within a week, around that area I would imagine is when that thing was replied.

(Lee Exhibits Nos. 2 to 5 marked.)

Mr. RANKIN. Mr. Lee, in accordance with the practice on these exhibits, when these exhibits are examined, the counsel doing the examining initials them, and also the witness. Would you be kind enough to do it under my initials.

Mr. LEE. Well, I would like to know what my—I would like to understand what my signature would imply.

Mr. RANKIN. It only implies that this exhibit was presented to you at the time, so there won't be any question about it.

Mr. LEE. Yes. Where should I initial it?

Mr. RANKIN. Just under mine, so it doesn't show anything except that fact. (Witness complies.)

Mr. RANKIN. Do you have any independent recollection, Mr. Lee, of this Exhibit 1 coming to your own attention at any time, other than when you went to search the files and find out what you had?

Mr. LEE. No; I don't have.

Mr. RANKIN. I hand you Exhibit 2 and ask you to examine that and see if you recall if your committee or you received it on or about or near the date that it bears.

Mr. LEE. This looks precisely like such a communication received.

Mr. RANKIN. You will notice that it bears the date May 26 at the top.

Mr. LEE. Yes; and I have every reason to believe that it would be an accurate—

Mr. RANKIN. And you are quite sure that you received Exhibit 1 before you received Exhibit 2?

Mr. LEE. Well, like I say, you see, this one here was, I believe—I believe this probably arrived—I have every reason to believe that this arrived particularly during the weeks that I was away from the office, before this one.

Mr. RANKIN. This one—

Mr. LEE. And in piecing the thing together to the best of my own knowledge over a period of time like this and by using this to jog my recollection, this one here would have come to my attention after this one.

Mr. RANKIN. When you say this one here—

Mr. LEE. This one dated—Exhibit No. 2, dated May 26, yes.

Mr. RANKIN. Came to you after Exhibit No. 1?

Mr. LEE. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. Did you do anything about the information that was in Exhibit No. 2?

Mr. LEE. Well, I cannot be sure what I did, because I have no—I never bothered to keep records on these details.

Mr. RANKIN. I see.

Mr. LEE. But I had a general policy which I pursued, when somebody addressed a communication which I received, I would write to them, trying to present them with the information they requested or the material which they requested in whatever way I thought best at the time for the particular case, whatever it was. Like I said, not having saved—not having made any copies of any of these things, I can't be sure of what I did. I really don't know what

I would have said, but I always made it a policy to try and reply to these communications.

Mr. RANKIN. Mr. Lee, I hand you Exhibit No. 3, which purports to be a photocopy of a purported reply that you have made to Lee Harvey Oswald's letter of May 26, Exhibit No. 3, purporting to be a letter of May 29. Do you recall having sent that?

Mr. LEE. Yes. It's dated May 29.

Mr. RANKIN. Yes.

Mr. LEE. This is a copy—this must be a copy of a letter—this looks like my signature here, and I don't actually recall this—did I miss something?—Oh, I see. I don't actually recall writing the letter, but it looks like something which I might have written at the time in response to the previous inquiry.

Mr. RANKIN. Yes.

Mr. LEE. But I can't say that I remember sitting down and writing it.

Mr. RANKIN. We will try to secure the original and submit it to you for your approval in substitution for this copy.

Mr. LEE. Well, I am not actually questioning it. I am saying I can't really remember. Actually, I have thought about this. I haven't a real recollection of sitting down and writing, you know, letters to that particular person. Like I said, I was answering as many communications myself as possible to many, many inquiries which came into the office, so it is hard for me to pick out such and such a person a year later, even if something had happened in between to make the name prominent, to go back then. The name wouldn't mean too much to me at that time that I had written.

Mr. RANKIN. And when you referred to his getting a post office box as a must, what did you mean by that?

Mr. LEE. Well, this is a recommendation which was made, an organizational recommendation which had been made a long time before I myself had gone into a position with the organization. Because of the nature of the organization, people would come and go. They would support it and then drop out, and sometimes they would move, and if somebody—naturally most of the thing was just a small, little local activity. People didn't maintain business offices for such an organization, and if a person would move or drop out of the organization and the activities, the communications between the national office and the local area would get all tangled up because we didn't know where the mail would be returned, where we would write, whereas if there was a post office box, if one person in the organization dropped out who was receiving mail, then the mail would still be delivered to a post office box, where the other officials of the chapter, if it still existed, would still have access to the mail and be able to reply to communications from the national organization concerning the activities of the organization. The purpose of the post office box was purely to facilitate communications between areas and maintain them on a permanent basis.

Mr. RANKIN. I hand you Exhibit 3-A and see if you recall seeing the original of which that appears to be a photocopy. It is dated May 22, 1963.

Mr. LEE. It looks very much like a formal notice that I may have sent. I mean, I was accustomed to sending many such communications, and that looks very much like something I would have sent. Did I sign the other one?

Mr. RANKIN. No. I hand you Exhibit No. 4, which I don't find to be dated, either, but it does show an address in New Orleans which helps to make it possible for us to fix the general period. Do you recall having seen that before?

Mr. LEE. Yes. This was another one of the communications which were sent to me. Obviously, not through recollection of having seen the letters but piecing these things together, I conclude that this was one of the letters which were sent after I had entered into direct communications with this person, because he no longer addresses it "Dear Sirs." Evidently he has received communications from us, so he addresses us by name. I would say that evidently that was a communication sent to me which I received.

Mr. RANKIN. You will note it has four pages as a part of the letter and has a membership blank for—

Mr. LEE. Yes. My recollection on this is that in previous letters—for a moment I would like to go over this and make sure I don't get the letters confused

one with the other. This—yes, yes. This evidently is a letter which was sent in reply, after I had—he had in one letter asked for information about the possibilities of doing—setting up a chapter, for which I had sent him the rules and regulations regarding the functioning of our organization and copies of our constitution and bylaws and things like that. This evidently is a letter which he wrote in which he replies that he had gone ahead and acted on his own without any authorization from the organization, and if I recall correctly this was also a letter which was received by myself in my capacity, not having any great happiness at somebody going off on their own and doing something against the rules of the organization, under the name of the organization, which is obviously what was done, because this set up himself—this thing reads, “New Orleans Chapter, Member Branch.” There was no such thing, because he had just received—just previous to this he had received the regulations, and my letter would give an indication of what would be necessary to set up a chapter, which would certainly consist of more than one person operating on his own, and this, if I recall correctly, was such a letter which I received.

Naturally, anybody in an organization position such as I was in any other organization, you would always be interested in expanding and getting your ideas across and reaching more people, and when somebody writes to you and says they would like to help you, your immediate response is, “Well, wonderful. Here is a new contact in a new part of the hinterlands and, gee, I hope this works out.” And then, when somebody goes off like this, violating all the rules that you send him, it comes as quite a disappointment, because you have had hopes. Obviously this man was not operating in an official capacity for the organization. As he states, he went off with his own innovations and everything else.

Mr. RANKIN. You will note that he refers in the letter to this throw sheet.

Mr. LEE. Yes.

Mr. RANKIN. And the fact that he has established a charter in violation of your instructions.

Mr. LEE. Yes. I certainly do.

Mr. RANKIN. And then he also refers to his membership blank.

Mr. LEE. Yes, which is another complete violation. It has no—

Mr. RANKIN. Apparently both of those were enclosed with a letter, were they?

Mr. LEE. Evidently, yes. To the best of my recollection, they would be. As I say, all of these details—I can't be positive of every little thing, because it's been such a time and so much has transpired in between.

Mr. RANKIN. Exhibit No. 5 is apparently a letter of August 1 from Lee Harvey Oswald. Do you recall that?

Mr. LEE. There was a couple of letters here. I don't know whether it was these two, Exhibits 4 and 5, but it's hard for me to determine, they came so close together. They came, you know, almost on top of each other, to the best of my recollection, that I don't know which one—only by studying the text can you halfway determine which came first. I remember vaguely receiving these communications in this order.

You see here, another case where I mentioned, and I would recommend not trying to get an office to start off with, particularly the—what was being espoused by our organization wouldn't be the most popular thing in the area of New Orleans, Louisiana, and I would automatically, myself, personally, from my own experience, would say to anybody, “You know, you better be way ahead before you start something like that,” and certainly he has gone ahead against all of that recommendation from everybody else. But to the best of my recollection, these letters were very close together, about the same time, the same issue.

Mr. RANKIN. That was one of the letters, Exhibit No. 5, that you supplied the FBI at the time?

Mr. LEE. Yes.

(Document marked Lee Exhibit No. 6.)

Mr. RANKIN. Your Exhibit No. 6, which apparently is composed of a letter and an affidavit in regard to a charge against Lee Harvey Oswald, and a clipping in regard to the disposition of that charge, do you recall that correspondence and the attachments?

Mr. LEE. Yes, I have a recollection of this. I don't think the clipping—a matter of fact, I seem to remember that this clipping was not attached to a piece of paper, though. I think this may have been attached since I submitted it. That is the only difference I can see.

Mr. RANKIN. Apparently since you furnished the letter, Exhibit 6, and the copy of the charge against Lee Harvey Oswald and the clipping, the clipping has been stapled to a piece of paper?

Mr. LEE. Yes. The reason I say that is simply because I never paper-clip things; I always rubber cement them.

(Document marked Lee Exhibit No. 7.)

Mr. RANKIN. I hand you Exhibit 7, which consists of two pages of a letter dated August 17, and an envelope attached by a clip, and ask you if that exhibit in that form was one you received from Lee Harvey Oswald and furnished to the Bureau as you described?

Mr. LEE. I believe so; yes.

Mr. RANKIN. Throughout this period of time you had no oral or personal telephone conversations with Lee Harvey Oswald, did you?

Mr. LEE. To the best of my knowledge, to the very best of my knowledge, I can't ever remember speaking to this person. The only communications I can recall or having heard of him was through these series of letters, and I have subsequently seen photographs, and as a matter of fact I was another one of the millions of TV witnesses, and I don't recall ever having seen the man or having heard his voice. The only thing I ever had at all, that I can ever remember, are purely these communications. He is a complete stranger to me outside of this, and even within the framework of this he wasn't very much more than a stranger.

(Documents marked Lee Exhibits Nos. 8A through 8C.)

Mr. RANKIN. I hand you Exhibits 8A, B and C, respectively, which appear to be change of address cards.

Mr. LEE. Yes, these are post office cards. I have a recollection of receiving these. Of course we always got scads of these too, but this was a very normal thing. Usually people send these in with changes of address, people who subscribe to our publications and things. Do you want me to initial those?

Mr. RANKIN. Would you initial those?

(Witness complies.)

(Document marked Lee Exhibit No. 9.)

Mr. RANKIN. I hand you Exhibit 9 and ask you if you recall having seen that before?

Mr. LEE. It seems like there should be a letter to go with it. I believe that each of the things that I turned in, where it was available, there was an envelope with the letter. I don't recall that I turned in any isolated envelope that wasn't with a letter.

Mr. FAULKNER. This has a postmark, New Orleans, 4 Aug. 1963.

Mr. RANKIN. I might ask you, Mr. Lee, if that envelope, Exhibit 9, might be connected with the Exhibit 5.

Mr. LEE. Well, now, it's possible. The letter is dated August 1, and the thing is postmarked PM, August 4. I assume—it looks very much like it would fit in there, the envelope and paper match up, and there is no difference in the ink, the pen used, from what I can see. I do remember specifically that when I turned over the material to the Federal agents I did—I don't recall at any time having a loose envelope, it was with one of the letters.

Mr. RANKIN. It is apparently closer to any of the letters timewise.

Mr. LEE. It is very likely that it goes with this letter, and from my own experience there is a date discrepancy of a couple of days there, but I have carried a letter around in my pocket for a couple of days, too, and I can very well assume that somebody else would do the same.

Mr. RANKIN. On the back of Exhibit 7 there is a penciled number. Does that have anything to do with your organization?

Mr. LEE. I haven't the faintest idea what this thing is, sir. There is one on here too. I have never seen this before. It is certainly not my hand on these things, and I very much—in fact I am pretty positive that this material has been added to these letters since I turned these things into the Federal agents.

It is probably a filing code number or something or other used by the Federal agents.

Mr. RANKIN. The FBI, yes.

Mr. LEE. It is not in my hand, and it certainly doesn't look like—in fact I remember when I made copies of these things I was looking at both sides of the papers to make sure that I had a complete copy when I made the copy of these letters for my own personal file on the issue, and these things were not on. I am sure that these things were not on them when I turned them in.

Mr. RANKIN. By "these things" you mean those pencil marks on the back?

Mr. LEE. The penciled digits on the back of the letters.

Mr. RANKIN. Such as on Exhibit 7 that I just referred you to, the mark "62-109060-1845"?

Mr. LEE. Yes, those things must have been added after I turned them in.

Mr. RANKIN. Mr. Lee, I asked you about the circling of the figure 50 and the notation "Sent 4/19/63" on Exhibit 1. As I recall, you said you were out traveling over the country at that time, and you knew you were not in the office so as to send that literature. Do you have any idea what 50 copies were sent?

Mr. LEE. Well, this is back in April of 1963, and he asks, I quote, "I now ask for 40 or 50," and the circle is around 50, and this, the normal procedure had always been to note it. When the circle was made around the 50, I just assume, and I very much believe, that it was 50 items that were sent. Now, we have printed various leaflets, and this is what was sent, these leaflets, such as, you know, calling for the end of hostile relations, and so forth, between the Government of the United States and the Government of Cuba, which we used for distribution at various public affairs and public places.

Mr. RANKIN. We had information from the Bureau that you had said that notation was by you and that you sent the material. Is that incorrect?

Mr. LEE. Well, I can't see how it could possibly be when I wasn't in the area at the time. The 19th of April I was somewhere on the west coast, I was somewhere between Los Angeles and Seattle, Washington. I arrived on the west coast, I believe, on April the 1st or 2d of 1963, and I didn't return until the first week of May of 1963, and the last point of departure to New York was from, I believe, the City of Chicago. I was out on the west coast and the west and midwest during that period of time, and I wasn't there. Now, I assume that at some point along the line in my communications I had sent this gentleman some material, which we always had in stock. This was part of our activity, to print up leaflets and pamphlets and translations of various things and provide them to the general public.

But this particular item, assuming that all these dates are correct, I can't possibly have sent it. But the point is that I would authorize—to me it was a standard policy that if anybody asked for anything that we had, we would give it to them, and that is the best I can say. But as for myself, at that particular date, I was not in the New York area. I was very far away at that particular time. In fact I was definitely on the west coast of the United States at that time.

Mr. RANKIN. So if they recorded that you said that, there was some error?

Mr. LEE. There was an error somewhere. Maybe they got confused in the conversation over maybe something else, some other communication that I mentioned, that I had felt that I had replied to, communications, and sent him stuff like the constitution and bylaws. Maybe that might have got confused.

Mr. RANKIN. Was there any connection with you or your organization or anyone from your organization that you know of with the acts of Lee Harvey Oswald in connection with the assassination of the President?

Mr. LEE. With myself or organizationally, to the best of my knowledge, no; nor have I heard or know of any other person related to the organization in any way. Definitely there would be no connection between the act—acts of Lee Harvey Oswald. Whether or not he did anything in relation to the assassination, I don't know. As I understood, this is what is trying to be determined, and so forth, with this hearing. But whether he did or did not in relation, we had nothing to do with this. In fact I would feel very free to say that this particular act by anybody would be the worst possible thing that we could conceive of. Our idea was certainly not to engage in any activities of violence or illegal actions of any kind. We try very much to maintain a character of nonviolent

participation in community affairs. In fact we have organizationally held, in which I directed and participated, demonstrations in which we made a very firm commitment to peaceful assembly and demonstration, and even when attacked physically did not respond to the attack but withheld and conducted ourselves peacefully and legally.

Mr. RANKIN. Was Lee Harvey Oswald a member of your organization?

Mr. LEE. I have no record of this. You see, we never kept a membership file. We never at any time maintained a membership file. If somebody asked to join the organization, we made out a membership card for them and the card was sent to the person, but there was no duplicate and there was no special recording of it; it was just a simple formality, and we just sent them the card. And so there is no way that I can tell for sure that he was or he wasn't, because we never did maintain a file in this direction.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you recall anything about his being a member, as far as your recollection?

Mr. LEE. I am not sure on that score. I mean I don't know. It is entirely possible. It is entirely possible. But I can't say that I recall, you know, filling out a card for him. It is entirely possible. I may very well have. But as far as saying absolutely I remember, no, I don't, I can't say that, because I really don't remember, but I will say it is entirely possible. In fact I would assume from the communications—I would assume from the communications which were conducted with this gentleman that it is very likely that he asked to join, and our membership was the type of thing where it was open to anybody who asked to become a member, was given membership. We had no restrictions on membership. In fact we had one of the policy statements of the organization, its constitution and bylaws, was that it was open to all regardless of race, creed, color, religion, national origin or political opinion. It was open to anybody, anybody at all could join, and from the communications, since I was writing to him in connection with—he was asking if he could start a chapter, well, I can't conceive of my writing to a nonmember in the direction of starting a chapter. It is very—I assume that he must have at some point along the line asked to join as a member and met the simple requirements of sending in a membership fee, which was really a subscription to any of our publications, and I assume that he must have been, otherwise I can't quite conceive of my having written to him about membership, starting a chapter, replying to such a question without having—the letters—evidently there would have been some communication saying, well, "You can't do it unless you join," and from the letters you showed me, which I assume are correct, he must have already at some point in the communications decided to join the organization.

Mr. RANKIN. I call your attention to the first paragraph, Mr. Lee, of Exhibit No. 2.

Mr. LEE. Oh, yes; sure, here it is, "I am requesting formal membership in your organizations." Well, evidently at this point, at the end of May, 1963, he requested formal—I don't—let's see, is there a note in here of having sent him—well, anyhow, assuming that accompanying this letter there was—

Mr. RANKIN. Let me call your attention to Exhibit 3, and there is in the first paragraph there—

Mr. LEE. Oh, yes; evidently he did join, yes. I assumed that it was so, because I can't conceive of having written him about a chapter unless he had joined. One doesn't organizationally ask people to help the organization who are not members.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you know of any combination, conspiracy or common action of any kind that worked with Lee Harvey Oswald in connection with his acts concerning the assassination of President Kennedy?

Mr. LEE. I have no knowledge of any such thing.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you know of any members of Fair Play for Cuba Committee in New Orleans that were working with Lee Harvey Oswald in connection with anything he did there for the committee?

Mr. LEE. No; I have no recollection of any such thing. In fact all I can recall is that the man communicated I think to me that somehow in these letters that he had nobody and that he was completely alone, and that in fact I think

one of the letters mentioned how he was out somewhere all alone and that he had no—nobody at all, nobody working with him or through him or for him or around him or anything else. He gave me the impression that he was completely isolated in his community, which became obvious to me from his actions which would certainly isolate him in his community. I could see very well how he would be.

Mr. RANKIN. I call your attention to Exhibit 7 and the paragraph in which he says he was working with three people in the demonstration. He doesn't purport to say they are members.

Mr. LEE. Demonstration of three. I wonder if he was one of the three, or who it was. Somewhere in some of these letters, I don't know where—I could check back—I got the indication that he had no support and that he was completely isolated. Now, what this business of the three people is, I have no idea. He doesn't seem to mention anything more about this, and I don't even know whether he was one of the three or whether there were three besides him or what.

Mr. RANKIN. I call your attention to Exhibit 5, in which he refers to the fact that he was attacked during one of the demonstrations, and then the following page of that Exhibit 5, that robbed him of any associates.

Mr. LEE. “. . . the support I had, leaving me alone.” Yes, I guess this is what I had in mind, “This incident robbed me of what support I had, leaving me alone.” Now, what support he had, I don't know.

If I recall correctly, at this incident which he mentions here, he had sent me the things from his court, the arrest things, and the only people that are mentioned in that are Oswald and the people who he claims attacked him, and that is the only people, evidently, according to the court records and the police, you know, who the police brought charges on. There didn't seem to be anybody involved but this Lee Harvey Oswald and the Cuban exiles who he became involved in a fracas with down there. So I don't know how much validity—I really don't know how much validity there is in these other people existing, whether they did or not.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you know of any members of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee in Dallas?

Mr. LEE. As I said, I never kept a membership file and I don't recall who is a member and who wouldn't be a member. I know we received many communications requesting literature of various types and things like that from all over the country, and I don't know of any state of the union which has not been sent some material at some time during the 3½-year history of the organization. I would assume that somewhere, at some time, in Texas some people wrote in and received something, some communication, but as far as doing anything particularly about Dallas, no. The only thing I know about Dallas is what I read in the papers, which doesn't tell me too much.

Mr. RANKIN. And that same situation about whether there were any members of the committee in New Orleans would be true, would it?

Mr. LEE. Well, it is like I say. As for membership, this is an almost impossible situation in view of the fact that we didn't conduct a membership file or a duplicate membership card system and we just had mailing lists. In fact the mailing lists—even the mailing lists wouldn't tell very much, if anything, and that was just a case, anybody who thought somebody should receive a communication gave the name of somebody, in fact for now deceased Governor Lehman was on that list, Senators and Congressmen were placed on the mailing list, everybody and his brother who we thought should be—well, we thought some reason should receive the material which we sent out, we just sent material. It could be anybody. And like I say, stuff went to all over the country, just automatically, just did large mailings to every place we could think of, dream of or hope for in any of our activities of mailing.

But as far as particularly—there was never an active organization of the committee in these areas. We have had in the past—there was in existence in the committee a series of chapters, committee chapters, in various parts of the country, but there were never any chapters or active participation on a local level, to my knowledge, in either Texas or Louisiana at any time during the entire history of the organization.

Mr. RANKIN. Is there any information, evidence or knowledge that you haven't given us that would bear upon this assassination of President Kennedy, that might help the Commission?

Mr. LEE. No, sir; I have no information whatsoever. I have more than personal, more than just curiosity, and I hope very much to know the truth about this incident and hope very much that the truth is known, particularly for my own personal reasons, as well as any other reasons, because having been practically a victim of very serious slander in this direction, both by individuals and by elements of the press and various periodicals, I have very serious concern about developing the truth. I have been threatened. People have tried to break into my home, somehow connecting myself and my organizational activities, quite falsely, with the assassination—I would like to see the truth come up, because I am quite sure that any investigation will show that this was not true, that I didn't have any part of this. I am as much interested and probably more interested in my own way in having the facts presented than many of the average people on the street. I have a personal involvement in this.

Mr. RANKIN. That is all.

Mr. Faulkner, do you have anything?

Mr. FAULKNER. I was just going to ask Mr. Lee one question with regard to Exhibit No. 1, where the date in the lower righthand corner appears reading, "Sent 4/19/63" in his handwriting.

Mr. LEE. Well, you see, the thing is, I don't think it is, because I don't see how I could have written that if I wasn't there. That's the whole thing. But it could be—like I said, that office was an open door. Everybody used to come and go, and people would come in and say, "I've got twenty minutes"—a kid from school, some kid would come in and say, "I've got 20 minutes between classes. Can I do something to help you?" And somebody would say, "Yes, wrap that package", and they would be off 20 minutes later. So it could be anybody in the world. Or perhaps the only possibility is when I returned, perhaps somebody mentioned that it was taken care of, and I wrote it after my return. But certainly not at that time, because I wasn't even present.

Mr. RANKIN. Is it satisfactory, Mr. Lee, if we finally obtain the originals from the Bureau and send them to you of these Exhibits 3 and 3-A, which purport to be copies or photocopies of your correspondence, and on your verification substitute those for those copies?

Mr. FAULKNER. If—

Mr. LEE. If you find it's necessary. Actually, as I say, I would assume these very much—I mean, this looks very much like what I would expect a duplicate, a duplication of the stationery which I used to look like. I mean, just, you know, like I say, I assume—

Mr. FAULKNER. We would be satisfied.

Mr. LEE. (Continuing.) I would be satisfied to make this—

Mr. FAULKNER. If you are satisfied when you see the original, compare it with this, and if you are satisfied that they correspond, there is no reason to call Mr. Lee.

Mr. LEE. No; I am quite agreeable to verification.

Mr. RANKIN. Fine. Thank you very much.

TESTIMONY OF ARNOLD SAMUEL JOHNSON

The testimony of Arnold Samuel Johnson was taken at 9:30 a.m., on April 17, 1964, at the U.S. Courthouse, Foley Square, New York, N.Y., by Messrs. J. Lee Rankin, general counsel, and Wesley J. Liebeler, assistant counsel of the President's Commission. Mr. Arnold Samuel Johnson was accompanied by his attorney, John J. Abt.

Arnold Samuel Johnson, having been first duly sworn, was examined and testified as follows:

Mr. RANKIN. Will you give the reporter your name and address.