

wanted to be Vice President and now, dear God, it's come to this." I would have done anything to help her, but there was nothing I could do to help her, so rather quickly I left and went back to the main part of the airplane where everyone was seated.

The ride to Washington was silent, strained—each with his own thoughts. One of mine was something I had said about Lyndon a long time ago—that he's a good man in a tight spot. I even remember one little thing he said in that hospital room, "Tell the children to get a Secret Service man with them."

Finally, we got to Washington, with a cluster of people watching. Many bright lights. The casket went off first; then Mrs. Kennedy. The family had come to join them, and then we followed. Lyndon made a very simple, very brief, and—I think—strong, talk to the folks there. Only about four sentences, I think. We got in cars; we dropped him off at the White House, and I came home.

*Tuesday, July 28, 1964*

### TESTIMONY OF AMBASSADOR LLEWELLYN E. THOMPSON

The President's Commission met at 3 p.m., on July 28, 1964, at 200 Maryland Avenue NE., Washington, D.C.

Present were Senator John Sherman Cooper (presiding), and Allen W. Dulles, members.

Also present were J. Lee Rankin, general counsel; W. David Slawson, assistant counsel; and Richard A. Frank, attorney. Office of the Legal Adviser, Department of State.

Senator COOPER. The Commission will be in order.

Do you solemnly swear that the testimony you are about to give before this Commission is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Ambassador THOMPSON. I do.

Mr. SLAWSON. Mr. Ambassador, could you please state for the record your full name and address?

Ambassador THOMPSON. My name is Llewellyn E. Thompson. I reside at 1913 23d Street NW., Washington.

Mr. SLAWSON. And could you state your present position with the U.S. Government and the positions you have held since late 1959?

Ambassador THOMPSON. In 1959 I was Ambassador in Moscow, and then I was transferred to the State Department as Ambassador at Large, and have been that since that time. In addition, I am now Acting Deputy Under Secretary of State.

Mr. SLAWSON. Thank you. Ambassador Thompson has been asked to testify today on any contacts he may have had with Lee Harvey Oswald while the Ambassador was in his post with the American Embassy in Moscow and on any knowledge he may have on pertinent Soviet practices or American practices at that time which might relate to the treatment of Mr. Oswald.

Ambassador Thompson, could you state all of the times and describe them when you heard about Lee Harvey Oswald's dealings with your Embassy at Moscow while he was in Russia, either in late 1959 or thereafter?

Ambassador THOMPSON. Yes; the only recollection I have is that when I returned from a trip to the United States in November 1959, or some time after that, the consul informed me about the case, and said this man had asked to renounce his citizenship. I recall asking him—

Mr. DULLES. Was that Consul Richard E. Snyder?

Ambassador THOMPSON. Yes; I am almost certain of that. I recall asking him why he didn't accept the renunciation, and he explained that in cases of

this kind he normally waited to make sure the man was serious, and also in order to normally consult the State Department.

I believe he told me at that time that the man had not come back again. And I believe that is the only recollection I have of the case at all at the time I was in Moscow.

Mr. SLAWSON. And that includes any other time thereafter, including through 1962?

Ambassador THOMPSON. Yes; of course I read the press and was aware of the case when it came up in the Department. There was some discussion of it. But no knowledge that I think would bear on the case.

I recall, I think, being in Germany at the time I read in the press that he was leaving the country—leaving Moscow, that is. But I don't recall having been consulted about his application to leave.

Mr. SLAWSON. Did you have any personal dealings or any knowledge of your subordinates' dealings with Marina Oswald, Lee Oswald's wife, when she applied to accompany him back to the United States in early 1961 and frequently thereafter?

Ambassador THOMPSON. None that I recall.

Mr. SLAWSON. Mr. Ambassador, I wonder if you could make any comments you would like to make on the policy which Consul Snyder and others testifying for the Department of State have described in their treatment of Americans who sought to renounce their citizenship when they came to Moscow, and how these Americans were handled?

Ambassador THOMPSON. Well, I am aware that we have had cases where someone would say they wanted to renounce their citizenship and then after a few days in the Soviet Union change their minds. And while I don't recall any specific cases, I do know we have had cases of that sort.

Mr. SLAWSON. Was there any particular time in your career when this sort of thing was more frequent than other times—any groups of people where it might have occurred?

Ambassador THOMPSON. Well, I know that prior to my arrival in Moscow in 1941, when I was Secretary in the Embassy, that there had been a great influx from the United States, particularly of people of Finnish origin, who had returned to the Soviet Union. I think that some of those people at least had not renounced their citizenship; they had come over there under the impression that they would receive very good treatment, and a great many of them applied subsequently to return to the United States. But many of them were unable to get exit visas.

Mr. SLAWSON. Were those that did not give up their American citizenship usually able to return to the United States if they changed their mind?

Ambassador THOMPSON. I believe so. I know of one case of a man of Finnish origin who worked for the Embassy, and he did return to the United States. It is the one case I know of personally. I am quite sure there were some others who did get out.

Mr. SLAWSON. Shifting now to the Soviet treatment of American defectors, or would-be defectors, are there any cases in your experience where you could comment on the Soviet treatment of such persons, how quickly the Russian Government made up its mind whether it wanted them for permanent residence in Russia and so on?

Ambassador THOMPSON. I think that in recent times, at least, my impression is that the Soviets, because of bad experience they have had with some people who came there to reside, and renounced their citizenship, have looked these people over and let them know that they could not remain. I think there was a case since I left the Soviet Union of that sort. I don't recall the exact particulars. But I do have the impression that they now don't automatically accept people who come and say they want to renounce their citizenship and would like to reside there.

Mr. SLAWSON. Can you give the Commission any estimate on the time periods that sometimes are involved in the Soviet authorities making up their mind?

Ambassador THOMPSON. I think that there has been at least a case or two during the time I was there where it was pretty obvious that the person concerned was unstable and that the Soviets very quickly let the person know that he

could not reside. But since I did not handle these cases, I do not—I could not cite any specific cases.

Mr. SLAWSON. Mr. Ambassador, I have a name of an American citizen, Mr. William Edgerton Morehouse, Jr., who, according to the records of the Department of State, was hospitalized in a hospital in Moscow in the fall of 1959.

According to records furnished us by the Russian Government, and according to the personal diary kept by Lee Harvey Oswald, he, too, was hospitalized in the latter part of October, and commented—Oswald commented in his diary—that in his ward with him was what he described as an elderly American. We are trying to locate that American. We think that possibly this Mr. Morehouse was that person. I wonder if you had ever heard of Mr. Morehouse before, or know who he might be?

Ambassador THOMPSON. I have no recollection of having heard of this man before.

Mr. SLAWSON. Do you have any recollection of any other American that might fit this description?

Ambassador THOMPSON. No; I do recall that there have been American tourists who have been in the hospital in Moscow. But I don't recall at that particular date whether there were any.

Mr. SLAWSON. Mr. Ambassador, can you comment on how Americans were ordinarily given medical treatment in the Botkinskaya Hospital in Moscow, which was the hospital in which Oswald was treated, to the best of your knowledge?

Ambassador THOMPSON. The Botkinskaya Hospital has a section which is reserved for the members of the diplomatic corps, and in case of prominent Americans, particularly if the illness were serious, they were often treated there.

Mr. SLAWSON. You say the Americans normally were treated in a special ward in that hospital, or a special section of it?

Ambassador THOMPSON. Yes; it was a completely separate building, I believe.

Mr. SLAWSON. Was this the invariable method of treatment, or would there be a reasonable chance that an American might have gone into a normal Soviet ward which would have treated his type of illness?

Ambassador THOMPSON. I would think that the ward which was reserved for the diplomatic corps would probably only have been used for important visitors, but it is quite a large hospital, with a large number of separate buildings. It is quite possible for Americans to have been in one or the other. And obviously, if there were an infectious disease, they would be separated, and not in the regular section.

Mr. SLAWSON. If an ordinary American tourist or businessman in Moscow were to receive an injury in, say, an automobile accident or some other normal method, would he normally be put into the same ward as Embassy people were placed, or would he receive treatment right along with normal Soviet citizens?

Ambassador THOMPSON. I think that there is an emergency hospital type where he probably would normally be taken, rather than Botkinskaya. I cannot be sure of this. But we had an American doctor in the Embassy who would normally be called in on cases of this kind, and if he felt the case required it he would probably apply to have him taken to Botkinskaya.

Mr. SLAWSON. Do you recollect who this doctor was in the fall of 1959?

Ambassador THOMPSON. I believe at that time it was an Air Force officer. It sometimes rotated among the services. But I am almost certain it was an Air Force officer. I could get the name, but I don't recall it at the moment. I just don't recall the name.

Senator COOPER. I suggest that the Secretary can supply the name for the Commission.

Mr. SLAWSON. Mr. Ambassador, do you think it would be usual of the Soviet Government to permit someone in Oswald's circumstances, that is a would-be defector from his own government, to be treated in the same ward as other Americans, or particularly as Americans who might come under the category of this important person or Embassy official ward you were speaking of?

Ambassador THOMPSON. I would think it is probably somewhat unusual. This doctor could give you expert testimony on this, because he has been involved in almost all cases.

Mr. DULLES. Do you happen to know whether that doctor is in the United States at the present time?

Ambassador THOMPSON. He was in Texas the last I heard. I draw a blank on his name at the moment, although I know him quite well.

Mr. SLAWSON. I think with the lead you have given us, we shouldn't have any difficulty in finding his name. I have no other questions. Does anyone else present care to place a question?

Senator COOPER. It appears from the testimony that we have heard that Lee Oswald appeared at the Embassy on October 31, 1959, and stated he wished to renounce his American citizenship. As I understand, at that time you were out of the Soviet Union.

Ambassador THOMPSON. That is correct.

Senator COOPER. Was Edward L. Freers, Chargé d'Affaire?

Ambassador THOMPSON. Yes, sir.

Senator COOPER. Was there a consulate in Moscow?

Ambassador THOMPSON. There is a consular section of the Embassy, but not a separate consulate.

Senator COOPER. Who had charge of the consulate section of the Embassy?

Ambassador THOMPSON. At that time I believe it was Mr. Richard Snyder.

Senator COOPER. And was he the one who advised you on your return to Moscow that Oswald had applied to the Embassy and stated that he wished to renounce his citizenship?

Ambassador THOMPSON. I believe that is correct. I think the counselor was also present at the time. I think both of them informed me.

Senator COOPER. We have had in evidence dispatches from the Embassy at Moscow upon this question, and the matter was referred to the Department of State as to what steps should be taken towards his renunciation. Was that the normal way of the Embassy handling such applications for renunciation of citizenship?

Ambassador THOMPSON. Yes, sir; I believe that would be done in every case.

Senator COOPER. Did the State Department have any policy, other than reference to the State Department, as to the approval of such applications?

Ambassador THOMPSON. I believe our practice is that whenever we are convinced that the man is serious, and knows what he is doing, that this is allowed to take place—the renunciation is accepted.

Senator COOPER. Is there a policy or practice of attempting to determine whether the person is serious, or whether the person might change his or her mind after the original renunciation application?

Ambassador THOMPSON. Yes; that is correct. Because, as I said earlier, there have been cases where people have changed their minds in a very few days. Also, there is always the possibility that someone might be temporarily of unsound mind or some other reason, why it would need to be ascertained that they were aware of what they were doing.

Senator COOPER. There is also in evidence a letter, or a dispatch from the Embassy to the Department of State, dated May 26, 1961, signed for the Ambassador by Edward L. Freers, minister counselor. This dispatch deals with the application of Oswald to secure a renewal of his passport. Were you out of Moscow at that time?

Ambassador THOMPSON. What was the date, sir?

Senator COOPER. May 26, 1961.

Ambassador THOMPSON. I believe I was in Moscow at that time. I took a trip within the Soviet Union from May 10 to 14, 1961, but I believe I was there on May 9.

Senator COOPER. Then these dispatches, they were sent in your name, or by someone for the Ambassador?

Ambassador THOMPSON. Yes; but I don't recall having been shown them.

Mr. SLAWSON. For the record, Senator Cooper, could I state that the dispatch of May 26, 1961, you referred to is Commission Exhibit No. 936, and the memorandum you are also reading from is Commission Exhibit No. 935.

Mr. DULLES. How were those signed, Mr. Slawson?

Mr. SLAWSON. Commission Exhibit No. 935 is signed for the Ambassador by Boris H. Klosson, counselor for political affairs. And Commission Exhibit

No. 936 is signed for the Ambassador by Edward L. Freers, minister counselor.

Senator COOPER. I might also refer to the earlier dispatch November 2, 1959, Commission Exhibit No. 908.

Now, were the procedures followed with respect to his request for renewal of his passport—that is in reference to the Department of State, for decision—was that the normal procedure followed when persons who had attempted to renounce or had renounced, claimed or desired to secure renewal of their passport—to refer it to the Department of State?

Ambassador THOMPSON. Yes, sir; I think in every case that would be done.

Senator COOPER. Now, between the time of Oswald's entrance into the Soviet Union and his exit, did you ever see Oswald yourself?

Ambassador THOMPSON. No, sir; I never saw him that I knew of.

Senator COOPER. Did you hear anything about him during his stay in the Soviet Union?

Ambassador THOMPSON. My only recollection is of this first briefing. I don't recall hearing anything else about him.

Senator COOPER. In evidence it has appeared that not too long after he came to Moscow, he went to Minsk and secured a job there.

From your experience as Ambassador, our Ambassador in Russia, and also in other positions in the Embassy, would you consider that unusual, that Oswald should be able to secure a job in a Russian factory while he was there?

Ambassador THOMPSON. No, sir; I think that once they had agreed to let him stay in the Soviet Union, they would have assisted him in obtaining employment, because they believe that everyone that is able to in the country should work, and since he was obviously not staying just as a tourist, I think they would normally have provided employment for him.

Senator COOPER. Also in evidence it indicates he was provided by the Soviet officials with a passport or document which described him as a stateless person.

From your experience would you be able to say whether or not that was a normal procedure for the Soviets to follow with respect to an American tourist?

Ambassador THOMPSON. I think that as long as they agreed to let him stay beyond the normal time of a tourist, that is a month or at the most 2 months, that they would then provide him with documentation so he could identify himself to the police. The police would not normally be able to read an American passport. In the Soviet Union, if you travel at all, you have to produce documentation—to stay in a hotel, very often to obtain transportation. So I think it would be normal that they would provide him with documentation.

Senator COOPER. Would you say that in late 1959, or 1960 or 1961 that the provision by the Soviet Union officials to a tourist of a document like this, saying he is a stateless person, and allowing him to stay beyond the usual time, for a tourist, was ordinary or usual? Would that indicate anything unusual to you, from your experience in the Embassy in Moscow?

Ambassador THOMPSON. No; I think not. I think that in cases of this kind that this would be normal.

Senator COOPER. Would it indicate in any way that they might be considering further his application to become a citizen of the Soviet Union or, in another way, that they were considering whether or not he might be used as an agent of the Soviet Union?

Ambassador THOMPSON. Well, I think there have been a good many cases of people who have come to the Soviet Union from abroad, and I believe that a number of them have not formally renounced citizenship. I recall that in 1941, when Germany attacked the Soviet Union, that there were a number of people who turned up that we had not known were in the Soviet Union, had never been near the Embassy, and had never, as far as we know renounced their citizenship. But they had been living there all this time.

Senator COOPER. You would not have any reason to think, then, that these circumstances might indicate that the Soviets were—could consider using him as an agent at some future time?

Ambassador THOMPSON. I would not have much on which to base a judgment on that, other than that it seems to me, of course, possible, in this or any other case in which a foreigner has come in to reside. But as I say there have been a great many cases.

For example, there are many people of Armenian origin who have returned to the Soviet Union and have been encouraged to do so by the Soviet Government. And in view of the very large numbers, I would think that the intention to use any of them as an agent would be very rare.

As far as I can understand, they encouraged them to come back because they wanted their skills available.

Senator COOPER. When he applied for a renewal of his passport, his wife, Marina, made application for a passport. And I believe it was said that that was a prerequisite to securing an exit visa from the Soviet Union.

From your experience as Ambassador and in other posts in the American Embassy, do you consider the time in which she was able to secure an exit visa from Russia, within so short time, as unusual?

Ambassador THOMPSON. Well, if it was a short time—and I am not aware of the exact time, myself—but if it were a short time, I would say it is unusual, because we have had cases that drag out over years, and in many cases, of course, they never get an exit visa.

Senator COOPER. Well, perhaps without reference to time, from your experience, have you found that—do you know whether it was difficult for a Soviet citizen, such as Marina Oswald, even though she might be married to an American—that it is difficult for them to secure an exit visa from the Soviet Union?

Ambassador THOMPSON. Yes; it is very difficult.

Senator COOPER. Do you know the basis for that? Is it that they do not want to permit the exit of any Soviet citizen?

Ambassador THOMPSON. I think that except in the cases of rather elderly people, they have not wanted any of their people to leave permanently. They let them go on tourist trips abroad, but not for permanent residence. As you possibly know, leaving the Soviet Union without permission is one of the most severely punished crimes you can commit in the Soviet Union.

Senator COOPER. What was that?

Ambassador THOMPSON. Leaving without permission.

Senator COOPER. Would the fact that there was a child born to Lee Oswald and Marina Oswald have altered this practice of the Soviet Union, as far as any experience that you have had or any knowledge you have had about such cases?

Ambassador THOMPSON. I think the existence of a child born in the Soviet Union would normally make it more difficult for a person to secure an exit visa.

Mr. SLAWSON. Mr. Ambassador, in the facts of the Oswald case they applied to leave the Soviet Union, of course, well before their first child was born, and in fact probably received Soviet permission to leave in late December 1961, and the child, I believe, was born in February 1962—although the Oswalds in fact did not leave until very early June 1962.

They nevertheless had received Soviet permission to do so before the child was born.

In light of that fact, could you comment further upon the perhaps greater difficulty of leaving when you have a child?

Ambassador THOMPSON. Well, I think probably having once processed the case and agreed to let the husband and wife leave, that they would have been more inclined then to let the child leave than if the case had been considered after the child was born.

Senator COOPER. I take it the policy of the United States would be the reverse—that is, because Marina was the wife of Lee Oswald, and because the baby had been born, the practice of the United States would be to grant a passport to Marina for the child.

Ambassador THOMPSON. I believe that is right, on compassionate grounds.

Senator COOPER. Are you familiar with the testimony about a loan that was made to the Oswalds in order to help them get back to the United States?

Ambassador THOMPSON. I have read in the press that they had received the normal loan.

Senator COOPER. Can you say anything about that as a practice of the American Government?

Ambassador THOMPSON. I only know that in general where a citizen wishes to return to the United States and doesn't have the means to do so, that we

frequently do assist them. This goes back many years. But I haven't been myself concerned in this for probably 25 years, or even more.

Senator COOPER. But is it the practice that if a determination has been made that the individual is an American citizen, therefore entitled to what protections are given to American citizens, if necessary, loans will be made to assist them to return to the United States? Is that about the basis of the policy?

Ambassador THOMPSON. That is correct; yes, sir.

Senator COOPER. I think that is all I have.

Mr. DULLES. Did you have any conversations at any time while you were Ambassador or after you returned to the United States with any Soviet official with regard to the Oswald case?

Ambassador THOMPSON. I discussed with the Soviet Ambassador the desire of the Commission to receive any documentation that they might have available, but I did not in any way discuss the case itself, nor did the Soviet official with whom I talked.

Mr. DULLES. And do you know of any conversations of that nature that any other official of the Department had in connection with the Oswald case?

Ambassador THOMPSON. I do not myself know of any.

Mr. DULLES. You probably would, would you not, if that had taken place—of any importance?

Ambassador THOMPSON. Off the record.

(Discussion off the record.)

Mr. DULLES. Your testimony is you have no knowledge of any other conversations other than that of the Secretary of State, in connection with communications to and from the Soviet Government on this case?

Ambassador THOMPSON. That is correct. I know of no other cases where it was discussed with Soviet officials.

Mr. DULLES. That is all I have.

Mr. SLAWSON. Thank you very much, Mr. Ambassador.

(Whereupon, at 3:40 p.m., the President's Commission adjourned.)

*Wednesday, September 2, 1964*

#### TESTIMONY OF C. DOUGLAS DILLON

The President's Commission met at 12:05 p. m., on September 2, 1964, at 200 Maryland Avenue NE., Washington, D.C.

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

Also present was J. Lee Rankin, general counsel.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Secretary, would you please rise and follow me.

Do you solemnly swear the testimony you are about to give before this Commission will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God.

Secretary DILLON. I do.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Rankin will conduct the examination, Mr. Secretary. Secretary DILLON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. RANKIN. Mr. Secretary, will you state your name and residence, please?

Secretary DILLON. C. Douglas Dillon of Far Hills, N.J., presently residing in Washington, 2534 Belmont Road, NW.

Mr. RANKIN. Do you have an official position with the Government?

Secretary DILLON. Yes, I do. I am the Secretary of the Treasury.

Mr. RANKIN. In that capacity do you have responsibility for the Secret Service of the United States?