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CIA HRG Review

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Information Developed by CIA on the Activity of  
Lee Harvey OSWALD in Mexico City  
28 September - 3 October 1963

I. OSWALD's Activity in Mexico City

1. On 9 October the CIA Station in Mexico [City] received the following information from a reliable and proven source:

An American named Lee OSWALD had contacted the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City on Tuesday, 1 October 1963. He had spoken [in halting Russian] to the Soviet Embassy guard, Ivan Ivanovich OBYEDKOV, to whom he said he had visited the Embassy two days earlier, Saturday, 28 September. He asked whether there had been a reply to a telegram that the Consul with whom he had spoken, but whose name he could not recall, had promised to send to Washington. [OBYEDKOV had attempted to establish the identity of the Consul with] whom OSWALD had talked: [if it had been a dark person, then it] had probably been KOSTIKOV. OBYEDKOV,

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after a check with Soviet Consular personnel<sup>1</sup> assured OSWALD the telegram had been sent to Washington but no answer had been received.

The information was forwarded by cable to CIA Headquarters the same day it was received.

2. A file check in Washington which is routine in these matters revealed the possibility of an identity between the Lee OSWALD who had spoken with OBYEDKOV, and presumably with KOSTIKOV, and the defector returnee, Lee Harvey OSWALD.\*

3. On 10 October 1963 CIA Headquarters disseminated by cable the report in substantially the form and in the detail indicated above, in paragraph 1, to the Federal agencies whose jurisdictional interests had been established by a review of OSWALD's file: the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Depart-

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\* The CIA file on Lee Harvey OSWALD was opened on 9 December 1960 to accommodate biographic information developed by CIA in response to an inquiry from the Department of State on a list of American defectors in Soviet Bloc countries. OSWALD's was among the names in the list. The Department of State inquiry was dated 25 October 1960. An interim reply was given by CIA on 3 November 1960; a final reply, on 21 November 1960. Until early October 1963 the contents of the OSWALD file held by CIA consisted entirely of press materials and disseminations received from the Department of State, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Navy Department.

ment of State, the Navy Department, and the Immigration and Naturalization Service. A comment was included in the report noting the likelihood that the subject, Lee OSWALD, was probably identical with the former Marine who had defected to the Soviet Union in 1959. (The report disseminated by CIA in Washington on 10 October also included a physical description of an individual who was believed to have been the OSWALD who had contacted the Soviets in Mexico City. It was subsequently established by investigation that the description did not pertain to OSWALD.)

4. On the same day, 10 October 1963, CIA Headquarters sent a lengthy cable summary to the Mexico [City Station] of the background information held in the Headquarters' file on OSWALD. An instruction was included for the Mexico [City] Station to pass the substance of its 9 October report to the local representatives of the same Federal departments and agencies that had been given the information in Washington. This instruction was immediately carried out. In this manner the information on OSWALD's contact with the Soviets on 1 October was passed in Mexico City to the Embassy, the FBI representative, the Naval Attache, and to the office of the Immigration and Naturalization Service. There were no requests from recipients of the report for further information or for follow-up investigation.

5. After the assassination of President Kennedy and the arrest of Lee Harvey OSWALD, an intensive review of all available sources was undertaken in Mexico City to determine the purpose of OSWALD's visit. It was learned that OSWALD had also visited the Cuban Consulate in Mexico City and had talked there with a clerk, a Mexican national, named Silvia DURAN. After the assassination and the publicity about Lee OSWALD, Silvia DURAN had told a number of relatives and friends that she had talked to OSWALD about a Cuban visa. Silvia DURAN and her husband, Horazio DURAN Navarro, were detained and questioned by the Mexican police from 23 to 25 November 1963.

6. After giving some of the details of her own personal background - she is an admitted Leftist sympathizer and had formerly worked for the Mexican-Cuban Institute of Cultural Relations - Silvia DURAN said that when she first heard of the death of President Kennedy she had been depressed and thought the assassin must have been a maniac. When she learned that he was associated with the "Fair Play for Cuba Committee" she did not believe it.

7. She talked about the case to her husband and when she heard the name of Lee OSWALD mentioned, she recognized it as

the man who had come to the Consulate about two months before to get a visa to transit Cuba on his way to the USSR. She realized that he had said he was married to a Russian and that he had belonged to the "Fair Play for Cuba" group. She checked her file on him in the Consular archives and from the descriptive data, she was sure it was the same man. He was short, blond, poorly dressed and his face got red when he talked. He was denied a Cuban transit visa because he did not yet have a Soviet visa, and he was told to get the Soviet visa first, but it was noted that this would take about four months. She had asked the Cuban Consul himself, Eusebio AZCUE, to talk to OSWALD and they had an argument when AZCUE urged OSWALD to leave Mexico instead of waiting there. The Consul had phoned the Soviet Consulate and talked to the person handling OSWALD's case, who had said it would take about four months to hear from Moscow about the Soviet visa. The same afternoon, OSWALD had come back again and she had told him the same thing. She gave OSWALD a slip of paper with her name and telephone number on it in case he ever got his Soviet visa. He did not call back, she said.

8. Silvia DURAN's husband, Horacio DURAN Navarro, gave essentially the same story, as he had previously heard it from his wife after the assassination. He had never had any personal contact with OSWALD.

9. Silvia DURAN was reinterrogated by the Mexican police from 27 to 29 November but she did not change or add materially to her story about OSWALD.

10. It is known that the Cuban Ambassador in Mexico, Joaquin HERNANDEZ Armas, reported on the detainment and interrogation of Silvia DURAN by the Mexican authorities. The Cuban Government sent the Mexican Government a stiff note of protest, which the Mexicans rejected.

11. We are reliably informed that on 26 <sup>?</sup> September, the day after DURAN's release, Cuban President DORTICOS queried HERNANDEZ about his report. HERNANDEZ confirmed that there had been an altercation between OSWALD and Consul AZCUE. DORTICOS made a persistent but unsuccessful effort to determine from HERNANDEZ whether the Mexican authorities had questioned Mrs. DURAN about money, or thought that the Cubans had paid OSWALD money.

12. The CIA follow-up investigation produced the following confirmed results which have a bearing on Mrs. DURAN's account:

a. 27 September. In mid-afternoon, Silvia DURAN informed the Soviet Embassy that a male American citizen had requested a visa to transit Cuba on his way to the

Soviet Union. She desired to know who the American had talked with at the Soviet Consulate. Also, she indicated that the Cuban Consulate could grant him the visa and arrange immigration details if the concession of a Soviet visa were assured.

b. 27 September. Pursuant to her inquiry, Silvia DURAN received a confirmation from the Soviet Embassy that the American had been to the USSR installation. He had shown them a letter from the Soviet Consulate in Washington indicating that he had been long awaiting a visa for himself and his wife to go to the USSR. No answer had come from Washington; however, the waiting period was sometimes four or five months. The American also had a letter attesting that he was a member of a pro-Cuban organization but he had claimed that the Cubans would not give him a visa unless he had already received a Russian visa.

Although the American was still at the Cuban Consulate, Silvia DURAN repeated that she could not give him a transit visa unless a Soviet visa was forthcoming, notwithstanding the American's wish to go to Cuba to wait

there for his Soviet visa. According to DURAN, the American knew no one in Cuba and she intended to appropriately annotate the American's card. The Soviet official echoed her statement that the American was not known.

c. 28 September. Silvia DURAN was again visited at the Cuban Embassy in Mexico City by the American seeking a Cuban transit visa. Mrs. DURAN contacted at least two members of the Soviet Embassy and facilitated a direct conversation between one of the Soviets and the American. Conversing in poor Russian, the American stated that he already had been to the Soviet Consulate and had left an address. The Soviet official replied that he was aware of that. The American suggested that he had not known his address then, and he had gone to the Cuban Embassy to ask for the address, because they had it. The American then acceded to the Soviet official's invitation to come by and give them the address.

d. 1 October. In mid-morning an unidentified individual, speaking broken Russian, contacted the Soviet Military Attache in Mexico City. He said he had been to

[the Embassy the previous Saturday (28 September) and had talked with a Consul who had said they would send a telegram to Washington: had there been a reply? He was referred to the Consulate for the information.]

These additional materials were promptly disseminated in Washington by the CIA to the White House, the Department of State, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

e. 1 October. See paragraph 1 above for Lee OSWALD's contact with the Soviet Consulate.

## II. Valeriy Vladimirovich KOSTIKOV

13. It is believed that the Soviet official with whom OSWALD dealt in Mexico City was Consular Attache Valeriy Vladimirovich KOSTIKOV, born in Moscow, 17 March 1933. A photograph of KOSTIKOV is attached. In his letter of 9 November to the Soviet Consulate in Washington, OSWALD wrote about his "meetings with Comrade KOSTIN (sic) of the Soviet Union in Mexico City, Mexico." There is no official of the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City with a name resembling "KOSTIN", other than Consul KOSTIKOV.

14. KOSTIKOV is the senior officer of five Soviet Consular representatives who deal with visas and related

matters. There is firm evidence for the conclusion that KOSTIKOV is a Soviet State Security (KGB) officer, and the other four Consular officers are also known or strongly suspected to be Soviet State Security personnel serving under official cover. The State Security Service is the major of the Soviet intelligence services and it is charged with espionage, counterintelligence and related matters inside the Soviet Union and over seas.

15. It must be clearly stated that Soviet intelligence and security officers placed abroad under official cover normally are required to perform the routine and legitimate business demanded by the cover job in an embassy or consulate.

16. [KOSTIKOV was first spotted as a KGB man because of his travels around Mexico, his habitual association with known KGB officers, and because consuls, in Soviet practice, are usually KGB men.]

17. [KOSTIKOV is believed to work for Department Thirteen of the First Chief Directorate of the KGB. It is the Department responsible for executive action, including sabotage and assassination. These functions of the KGB are known within the Service itself as "Wet Affairs" (mokryye dela). The Thirteenth Department headquarters, according to very reliable information, conducts interviews or, as appropriate, file reviews on every foreign]

[military defector to the USSR to study and to determine the possibility of utilizing the defector in his country of origin.]

18. An intensive review of the files of our Mexico[City] Station was undertaken immediately after the assassination to comb out any previously unreported information about KOSTIKOV's activity. No useful new information bearing on the assassination resulted from this effort.

19. [A close observation was maintained on the Soviet personnel, KOSTIKOV in particular, for days after 22 November. Nothing unusual or out-of-pattern was noted in the activity or movements of the Soviet personnel.]

20. [It is of parenthetic interest, however, that the Soviet Ambassador, when he made his call of sympathy on the American Ambassador, 23 November, was accompanied by two ranking intelligence officers who are in the Soviet installation under diplomatic cover. One is known to be from the State Security Service and the other is an identified Soviet Gernal Staff Intelligence (GRU) officer.]

### III. Monetary Payment to OSWALD - Investigation of Allegation

21. On 26 November 1963 a young Nicaraguan named Gilberte ALVARADO Ugarte walked into the U.S. Embassy in

Mexico City and claimed he had been in the Cuban Embassy in Mexico City on 18 September 1963 when a man he later recognized to be Lee OSWALD had been given \$6,500 in cash to kill someone. [ALVARADO was known to CIA as a former informant of a Central American security service and to have been used to penetrate communist guerrilla groups. He said that he was in Mexico City [still working for his service] trying to get himself accepted by the Cubans as a communist so they would take him to Cuba for guerrilla training. [ALVARADO clearly was a trained intelligence agent and he was able to describe people and locations well.] He had apparently visited the Cuban Embassy and its Consular offices on a number of occasions and he correctly identified some twenty Cuban Embassy and Consular employees.

22. While intensive investigation in the United States showed that OSWALD could not possibly have been in Mexico City on 18 September (he was known to have been in New Orleans on both 17 and 19 September), intensive interrogation failed to shake ALVARADO's story. [However, the Central American service for which he claimed to be acting, denied that he was still working for them.]

23. [On 28 November 1963, the Mexican police took ALVARADO over for further interrogation. At first, ALVARADO persisted in his story, but on 30 November he finally admitted in a signed statement that he had fabricated the whole incident of seeing OSWALD in the Cuban Consulate being paid to kill someone.]

24. [Once released, however, ALVARADO promptly retracted his confession, claiming that it had been extorted under threat of extreme duress.]

25. [Under ordinary circumstances CIA would have disregarded this retraction.] But because of the importance of resolving the problem CIA personnel continued the interrogation in close coordination with the FBI. ALVARADO voluntarily agreed to a lie detector examination. A [CIA] polygraph expert, assisted by an FBI special agent, requestioned ALVARADO and secured admissions that he must have been mistaken. The CIA polygraph expert concluded from the results of his tests that ALVARADO had fabricated his story about OSWALD in toto.

26. It should be noted that when he first told his story on 26 November, ALVARADO could have known from the Mexican press that OSWALD had visited the Cuban Consulate

in Mexico City. Also, he could have heard the rumors current there that OSWALD had \$5,000 with him when he returned from Mexico to the United States. ALVARADO has since been deported by the Mexican authorities to his native Nicaragua.

Attachment - photograph

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