

Biography of Lee Harvey Oswald

EARLY YEARS

Marguerite Claverie, the mother of Lee Harvey Oswald, was born in New Orleans in 1907,¹ into a family of French and German extraction.² Her mother died a few years after Marguerite was born, leaving her and five other young children in the care of their father, a streetcar conductor.³ Although Marguerite describes herself as "a child of one parent," she recalls being "one of the most popular young ladies in the [grammar] school," and thinks of her childhood as a "very full happy" one.⁴ Her older sister, Mrs. Lillian Murret, remembers Marguerite as "a very pretty child, a very beautiful girl,"⁵ as does a former acquaintance, Clem H. Sehrt, who knew the Claveries.⁶ The family was poor but, according to Mrs. Murret, was a "happy family * * * singing all the time."⁷ Marguerite had 1 year of high school.⁸ Shortly before she was 17, she went to work as a receptionist for a law firm in New Orleans.⁹

In August 1929, while she was still working at the law firm, Marguerite married Edward John Pic, Jr.,¹⁰ a quiet man of her own age, who worked as a clerk for T. Smith & Son, a New Orleans stevedoring company.¹¹ The marriage was not a success, and by the summer of 1931 she and Pic were separated.¹² Marguerite was then 3 months pregnant; she told her family that Pic did not want any children and refused to support her.¹³ Pic ascribed the separation simply to their inability to get along together.¹⁴ A boy was born on January 17, 1932, whom Marguerite named John Edward Pic.¹⁵ Pic saw his son occasionally until he was about 1 year old; after that, he did not see the boy again¹⁶ but contributed to his support until he was 18 years old.¹⁷

During her separation from her first husband, Marguerite saw a great deal of Robert Edward Lee Oswald, an insurance premium collector,¹⁸ who also was married but was separated from his wife.¹⁹ In 1933, Marguerite was divorced from Pic²⁰ and, Oswald's wife also having obtained a divorce,¹² they were married in a Lutheran church on July 20.²² Marguerite has described the period of her marriage to Oswald as "the only happy part" of her life.²³ A son was born on April 7, 1934, who was named for his father; ²⁴ Oswald wanted to adopt John Pic, but his mother objected on the ground that John's father might cut off the support payments.²⁵ In 1938, the Oswalds purchased a new house on Alvar Street for \$3,900,²⁶ in what John remembered as "a rather nice neighborhood."²⁷ The house was across the street from the William Frantz School,²⁸ which first John and

later both he and Robert, Jr., attended.²⁹ On August 19, 1939, little more than a year after the Oswalds bought the Alvar Street house, Robert Oswald died suddenly of a heart attack.³⁰

Two months later, on October 18, 1939, a second son was born.³¹ He was named Lee after his father; Harvey was his paternal grandmother's maiden name.³² For a while after her husband's death, Mrs. Oswald remained in the Alvar Street house without working; she probably lived on life insurance proceeds.³³ Sometime in 1940, she rented the house to Dr. Bruno F. Mancuso, the doctor who had delivered Lee.³⁴ (Dr. Mancuso continued to rent the house until 1944,³⁵ when Marguerite obtained a judgment of possession against him.³⁶ She sold the house for \$6,500 to the First Homestead and Savings Association, which resold it to Dr. Mancuso.)³⁷ She herself moved to a rented house at 1242 Congress Street, where she lived for about half a year.³⁸ For part of this period after Oswald's death, the two older boys were placed in the Infant Jesus College, a Catholic boarding school in Algiers, La., a suburb of New Orleans.³⁹ Neither they nor their mother liked this arrangement,⁴⁰ which John thought was intended to save money;⁴¹ it lasted for less than a year, after which the boys returned to the school Frantz and then transferred to the George Washington Elementary School.⁴²

On March 5, 1941, Mrs. Oswald purchased a frame⁴³ house at 1010 Bartholomew Street, for \$1,300.⁴⁴ According to John's recollection, the neighborhood was not as pleasant as Alvar Street; the house had a backyard, and the family kept a dog named "Sunshine."⁴⁵ A neighbor, Mrs. Viola Peterman, recalls that Mrs. Oswald kept to herself but appeared to be "a good mother to her children."⁴⁶ She opened a shop in the front room, where she sold things like sewing supplies and small groceries.⁴⁷ Oswald's Notion Shop, as it was called,⁴⁸ failed to make money,⁴⁹ and on January 16, 1942, Mrs. Oswald sold the house back to the Third District Home Association, from which she had purchased it, for a profit of \$800.⁵⁰

Probably in contemplation of the sale of the house, Mrs. Oswald applied in December 1941 to the Evangelical Lutheran Bethlehem Orphan Asylum Association for the admission of her two older sons to the orphan asylum, known as the Bethlehem Children's Home; she stated on the application that she could contribute \$20 per month to their maintenance and would supply shoes and clothing.⁵¹ She had inquired also about Lee, who was too young to be admitted.⁵² John and Robert were accepted and entered the home on January 3, 1942.⁵³

Mrs. Oswald moved to an apartment at 831 Pauline Street,⁵⁴ and returned to work. In December 1942, she listed her occupation as "telephone operator";⁵⁵ this may be the job she held at the Pittsburgh Plate Glass Co., a company for which she worked at some point during this period.⁵⁶ She left Lee for much of this time with his aunt, Mrs. Murret, who thought him a good looking, friendly child, but could not devote a great deal of attention to him because she had five children of her own.⁵⁷ In the late spring of 1942, Lee was watched for several weeks by Mrs. Thomas Roach, who lived with her husband in the

same house as the Oswalds.⁵⁸ Lee evidently did not get along with Mrs. Roach who told the next occupant of the house that Lee was a bad, unmanageable child who threw his toy gun at her.⁵⁹ Apparently referring to the Roaches, Mrs. Oswald testified that she had once hired a couple to care for Lee; the couple neglected him, so she "put them out" and cared for Lee herself until Mrs. Murret was able to help her again.⁶⁰ Soon after the incident with the Roaches, Mrs. Oswald moved again,⁶¹ this time to 111 Sherwood Forest Drive, near the Murrets.⁶²

Mrs. Murret took care of Lee for several months longer. Near Lee's third birthday, Mrs. Oswald again inquired about his admission into the Bethlehem Children's Home,⁶³ perhaps because a disagreement with her sister made it impossible to leave him with her any longer.⁶⁴ He was admitted on December 26.⁶⁵ On his application, Mrs. Oswald agreed to contribute \$10 per month and to supply shoes and clothing, as for the other boys.⁶⁶

Lee remained in the home for about 13 months, but according to John's testimony, left on several occasions to spend short periods of time with his mother or the Murrets.⁶⁷ John and Robert have pleasant memories of the home,⁶⁸ which apparently gave the children a good deal of freedom.⁶⁹ Robert described it as nondenominational but having "a Christian atmosphere"; "it might have been just a Protestant home."⁷⁰ Mrs. Oswald visited them regularly,⁷¹ and they occasionally left the home to visit her or the Murrets.⁷²

In July 1943, Mrs. Oswald was hired to manage a small hosiery store.⁷³ This is probably the store to which she referred in her testimony as the "Princess Hosiery Shop on Canal Street," at which, she testified, she was left by herself and "in 6 days' time * * * hired four girls."⁷⁴ Her employer remembers her as a neat, attractive, and hardworking woman, an aggressive person who would make a good manager.⁷⁵ She was not good with figures, however, and after several months he discharged her.⁷⁶ At about this same time, she met Edwin A. Ekdahl, an electrical engineer older than herself, who was originally from Boston but was then working in the area.⁷⁷ They saw each other often. Ekdahl met the boys⁷⁸ and, according to John's testimony, on at least one occasion, they all spent a weekend at a summer resort area in Covington, La.⁷⁹

By January 1944, Mrs. Oswald and Ekdahl had decided to marry.⁸⁰ She withdrew Lee from the Children's Home⁸¹ and moved with him to Dallas, where Ekdahl expected to be located.⁸² They planned to postpone the marriage until the end of the school year so that the older boys could complete the year at the home before they left it.⁸³ In the meantime, she would care for Ekdahl,⁸⁴ who was recovering from a serious illness, probably a heart attack.⁸⁵ Mrs. Oswald has testified that when she arrived in Dallas, she decided that she did not want to marry Ekdahl after all.⁸⁶ Using part of the proceeds from the sale of the Alvar Street house,⁸⁷ she purchased a house at 4801 Victor Street,⁸⁸ a portion of which she rented.⁸⁹ In June, John and Robert left the Children's Home and joined their mother in

Dallas.⁹⁰ They entered the nearby Davy Crockett Elementary School the following September.⁹¹

Ekdahl visited Mrs. Oswald on weekends and stayed at Victor Street.⁹² By the following year she had resolved her doubts about marrying him, influenced in part by his substantial income⁹³ and perhaps by the visit some time earlier of his sister, who favored the marriage because of his ill health.⁹⁴ Explaining that she expected to travel a great deal, Mrs. Oswald tried unsuccessfully to return the older boys to the home in February 1945.⁹⁵ She and Ekdahl were married in May.⁹⁶ After a brief honeymoon, they returned to Victor Street.⁹⁷

Ekdahl got along well with the boys, on whom he lavished much attention.⁹⁸ John testified that Ekdahl treated them as if they were his own children and that Lee seemed to find in Ekdahl "the father he never had"; John recalled that on one occasion he told Lee that Ekdahl and his mother had become reconciled after a separation, and that "this seemed to really elate Lee, this made him really happy that they were getting back together."⁹⁹

Because Ekdahl's business required him to make frequent trips, in September, John and Robert were placed in the Chamberlain-Hunt Military Academy at Port Gibson, Miss.;¹⁰⁰ their mother paid the tuition herself, using the proceeds from the sale of the Alvar Street property.¹⁰¹ They remained at the academy for the next 3 years, returning home only for vacations.¹⁰² Lee accompanied his parents on their travels.¹⁰³ Mrs. Myrtle Evans, who had known both Marguerite and Ekdahl before their marriage,¹⁰⁴ testified that Marguerite insisted on keeping Lee with her; Mrs. Evans thought that Marguerite was "too close" to Lee and "spoiled him to death," which hurt her marriage to Ekdahl.¹⁰⁵

Sometime in the fall after John and Robert were at boarding school, the Ekdahls moved to Benbrook, a suburb of Fort Worth, where they lived on Granbury Road,¹⁰⁶ in a house of stone or brick, set on a large plot of land.¹⁰⁷ Records of the Benbrook Common School show Lee's admission into the first grade on October 31; his birth date is incorrectly given as July 9, 1939, his mother presumably having given that date to satisfy the age requirement.¹⁰⁸ On February 8, 1946, he was admitted to the Harris Hospital in Fort Worth with "acute mastoiditis."¹⁰⁹ A mastoidectomy was performed without complications, and Lee left the hospital in 4 days.¹¹⁰ (In 1955, Lee indicated on a school form that he had an "abnormal ear drum in left ear,"¹¹¹ presumably a reference to the mastoidectomy; but when he entered the Marines 1 year later, physical examination disclosed no physical defects.)¹¹²

The Ekdahls' marriage quickly broke down. Before they had been married a year, Marguerite suspected Ekdahl of infidelity.¹¹³ She thought him stingy,¹¹⁴ and there were frequent arguments about his insistence that she account for her expenditures and his refusal to share his money with her.¹¹⁵ In the summer of 1946, she left Ekdahl, picked up John and Robert at Chamberlain-Hunt, and moved with the boys to Covington, La.,¹¹⁶ where they lived for at least part of the time

at 311 Vermont Street.¹¹⁷ Mrs. Evans described them at Covington, possibly during this summer, as "really a happy family"; Lee seemed like a normal boy but "kept to himself" and seemed not "to want to be with any other children."¹¹⁸ The separation continued after the two boys returned to boarding school, and in September Lee was enrolled in the Covington Elementary School.¹¹⁹ His record at Benbrook had been satisfactory—he was present on 82 school days and absent on 15, and received all A's and B's¹²⁰—but he had not completed the work of the first grade, in which he was enrolled for a second time.¹²¹

Lee received no grades at the Covington School, from which he was withdrawn on January 23, 1947,¹²² because his parents, now reconciled, were moving to Fort Worth, where they lived at 1505 Eighth Avenue.¹²³ Four days later, he enrolled in the Clayton Public School; he was still in the first grade, which he completed in May with B's in every subject except physical education and health, in which he received A's.¹²⁴ In the fall, he entered the second grade in the same school but, relations between his parents having deteriorated again, was withdrawn before any grades were recorded.¹²⁵

After the move to Fort Worth, the Ekdahls continued to argue frequently; according to John, "they would have a fight about every other day and he would leave and come back."¹²⁶ That summer, Marguerite obtained what she regarded as proof that Ekdahl was having some sort of affair. According to her testimony, a neighbor told her that Ekdahl had been living on Eighth Avenue with another woman while she was in Covington.¹²⁷ Then, at a time when Ekdahl was supposed to be out of town,¹²⁸ she went with John and several of his friends to an apartment in Fort Worth; one of the boys posed as a telegram carrier, and when the door opened she pushed her way into the apartment and found Ekdahl in his shirt sleeves in the company of a woman in a negligee.¹²⁹

Despite this apparent confirmation of her suspicions, Marguerite continued to live with Ekdahl until January 1948.¹³⁰ In January, according to Ekdahl's allegations in the subsequent divorce proceedings, she "directed * * * [him] to leave the home immediately and never to return," which he did.¹³¹ Ekdahl filed suit for divorce in March.¹³² The complaint alleged that Marguerite constantly nagged Ekdahl and argued "with reference to money matters," accused him of infidelity, threw things at him, and finally ordered him out of the house; that these acts were unprovoked by Ekdahl's conduct toward her; that her acts endangered his already impaired health; and that her "excesses, harsh and cruel treatment and outrages" toward him made it impossible for them to live together.¹³³ She denied all these allegations.¹³⁴ After a trial, at which John testified and, he thought, Lee was called to the stand but was excused without testifying,¹³⁵ the jury found on special issues that Marguerite was "guilty of excesses, cruel treatment, or outrages" unprovoked by Ekdahl's conduct.¹³⁶ On June 24, the court granted the divorce and approved an agreement between the parties disposing of their property between them and

awarding Marguerite \$1,500; at her request, the divorce restored to Marguerite her former name, Marguerite C. Oswald.¹³⁷

While the divorce suit was pending, Marguerite moved from Eighth Avenue to a house on 3300 Willing Street, next to railroad tracks.¹³⁸ The boys found her there in May when they returned from the military academy; for John, the move signified that they "were back down in the lower class again."¹³⁹ Lee's withdrawal from the Clayton School on March 18, 1948,¹⁴⁰ probably coincided with the move to Willing Street. He entered the Clark Elementary School on the following day, and in June completed the second grade with a record mostly of B's and A's.¹⁴¹ Philip Vinson, a classmate at the Clayton School, has described Lee at that time as "a quiet type of kid," who "didn't make a lot of noise."¹⁴² Lee was "stocky and well built," which made other boys look up to him and regard him as the leader of one of their schoolyard "gangs."¹⁴³ Vinson thought that Lee was not a bully and got along with his classmates, but had the impression that he rarely played with them or brought them home after school.¹⁴⁴

Shortly after the divorce, Mrs. Oswald purchased a small house in Benbrook, on what is now San Saba Street;¹⁴⁵ John has testified that it had a single bedroom, in which Lee slept with his mother, and a screened porch where John and Robert slept.¹⁴⁶ Mrs. Oswald worked at a department store in Fort Worth, and left the three boys home alone.¹⁴⁷ A neighbor, Mrs. W. H. Bell, has stated that Lee seemed to enjoy being by himself and to resent discipline;¹⁴⁸ another neighbor, Otis R. Carlton, stated that he once saw Lee chase John with a knife and throw it at him, an incident which, Carlton said, their mother passed off as a "little scuffle."¹⁴⁹ At the end of the summer, Carlton purchased the property. He stated that he appraised it at \$2,750 at Mrs. Oswald's request; she then insisted that he had made an offer to purchase at that price, which he finally agreed to do.¹⁵⁰

After the house was sold, the family returned to Fort Worth, a move necessitated by Mrs. Oswald's, and now John's, employment.¹⁵¹ Mrs. Oswald bought a two-bedroom, frame house at 7408 Ewing, from which Robert and Lee could walk to school.¹⁵² John, who was then 16, obtained a job as a shoe stockboy at Everybody's Department Store; he testified that he wanted to finish high school at the military academy, but that his mother advised him to leave school and help to support the family.¹⁵³ He gave her \$15 per week out of his salary of \$25.¹⁵⁴ Robert returned to school.¹⁵⁵

Lee entered the third grade at the Arlington Heights Elementary School.¹⁵⁶ He remained at Arlington Heights for the entire school year, completing the third grade with a satisfactory record, which included A's in social studies, citizenship, elementary science, art, and music, and a D in spelling.¹⁵⁷ In September 1949, he transferred to the Ridglea West Elementary School, where he remained for the next 3 years.¹⁵⁸ Lee's record at Ridglea is not remarkable in any respect. In the fourth and fifth grades, he received mostly B's; in the sixth grade, B's and C's predominate.¹⁵⁹ He received D's in

both the fifth and sixth grades in spelling and arithmetic; in the fourth and sixth grades, C's are recorded for Spanish,¹⁶⁰ which may account for his rudimentary familiarity with that language later on.¹⁶¹ In the fourth grade his IQ was recorded at 103; on achievement tests in each of the 3 years, he twice did best in reading and twice did worst in spelling.¹⁶²

Lee is generally characterized as an unexceptional but rather solitary boy during these years. His mother worked in a variety of jobs,¹⁶³ and, according to her own testimony, told Lee not to contact her at work except in an emergency.¹⁶⁴ He ordinarily returned home alone directly after school, in obedience to his mother's instructions.¹⁶⁵ A fourth grade teacher, Mrs. Clyde I. Livingston, described him as a lonely boy, quiet and shy, who did not easily form friendships with other students.¹⁶⁶ But Richard W. Garrett has stated that he was a classmate of Lee in the fourth or fifth grade and found him easy to get along with; he recalled playing with Lee often at school and sometimes walking home together with him.¹⁶⁷ Mrs. Livingston recalled that at Christmas 1949, Lee gave her a puppy and afterward came to her home to see the puppy and talk to her and her family.¹⁶⁸

Lee's relationship with his brothers was good but limited by the difference in their ages.¹⁶⁹ He still had a dog,¹⁷⁰ but there were few children of his age in the neighborhood, and he appears to have been by himself after school most of the time.¹⁷¹ He read a lot,¹⁷² had a stamp collection, and played chess and Monopoly with his brothers.¹⁷³ Mrs. Murret remembered that on a visit to her home in New Orleans, Lee refused to play with other children or even to leave the house; he preferred to stay indoors and read (mostly "funnybooks") or listen to the radio.¹⁷⁴ After several weeks with the Murrets, Lee wrote to his mother and asked her to come for him.¹⁷⁵ Hiram Conway, a neighbor on Ewing Street, thought Lee was an intelligent child, who picked things up easily; although he did not recall many specific incidents to support his impressions, Conway regarded Lee as "a bad kid," who was "quick to anger" and "mean when he was angry, just ornery."¹⁷⁶ John's general picture of Lee in these years is that of "a normal healthy robust boy who would get in fights and still have his serious moments."¹⁷⁷

John returned to high school in January 1949, but continued to work part time.¹⁷⁸ Early in 1950, he entered the Coast Guard.¹⁷⁹ Robert left school soon after John's departure and went to work full time, contributing most of his earnings to the support of his family.¹⁸⁰ He returned to school in 1951-52, and after completing his junior year in high school, joined the Marines in July 1952.¹⁸¹ In August, Mrs. Oswald and Lee moved to New York, where John was living with his wife and a very young baby in an apartment at 325 East 92d Street; the apartment belonged to John's mother-in-law, who was temporarily away.¹⁸² Mrs. Oswald has explained that with Robert gone she did not want Lee to be alone while she worked and that she went to New York City "not as a venture," but because she "had family" there.¹⁸³

The visit began well. John testified of his meeting with Lee: "We met in the street and I was real glad to see him and he was real glad to see me. We were real good friends."¹⁸⁴ He took about a week of leave and showed Lee the city; he remembered trips to the Museum of Natural History and Polk's Hobby Shop, and a ride on the Staten Island ferry.¹⁸⁵ But when it became obvious that his mother intended to stay, the atmosphere changed. Mrs. Oswald did not get along with John's wife, with whom she quarreled frequently.¹⁸⁶ There was difficulty about her failure to contribute anything towards her own and Lee's support.¹⁸⁷ According to John, his wife liked Lee and would have been glad to have him alone stay with them but felt that his mother set Lee against her; they never suggested that Lee remain with them since they knew that it would not work out.¹⁸⁸ The visit ended when Lee threatened Mrs. Pic with a pocket knife during a quarrel,¹⁸⁹ and she asked Mrs. Oswald to leave.¹⁹⁰ John testified that during this same quarrel Lee hit his mother, who appeared to have lost all control over him.¹⁹¹ The incident permanently destroyed the good relationship between Lee and his brother.¹⁹²

Mrs. Oswald and Lee moved uptown to a one-room basement apartment¹⁹³ in the Bronx, at 1455 Sheridan Avenue.¹⁹⁴ While they were still at the Pics, he had been enrolled at the Trinity Evangelical Lutheran School on Watson Avenue.¹⁹⁵ He was withdrawn on September 26, after several weeks of irregular attendance, and 4 days later enrolled in the seventh grade of Public School 117, a junior high school.¹⁹⁶ Mrs. Oswald found a job at one of the Lerner Shops, a chain of dress shops for which she had worked briefly in Fort Worth several years before.¹⁹⁷ In January, they moved again, to 825 East 179th Street,¹⁹⁸ and a few weeks later, she left the employ of Lerner Shops.¹⁹⁹ In April, she was working at Martin's Department Store in Brooklyn, where she earned \$45 per week;²⁰⁰ in May, she went to work for a chain of hosiery shops, with which she remained until December.²⁰¹ Lee was registered at Public School 117 until January 16, 1953,²⁰² although the move to 179th Street, which took him out of that school district, probably took place before that date.²⁰³ He had been at Public School 117 for 64 schooldays, out of which he had been present on 15 full and 2 half days;²⁰⁴ he had received failing grades in most of his courses.²⁰⁵

Lee's truancy increased after he moved; he was now located in the school district of Public School 44 but refused to go to school there.²⁰⁶ On one occasion that spring, an attendance officer located Lee at the Bronx Zoo; the officer testified that Lee was clean and well dressed, but was surly and referred to the officer as a "damned Yankee."²⁰⁷ Several truancy hearings were held in January, at the first of which at least, both Mrs. Oswald and Lee evidently failed to appear.²⁰⁸ At a hearing on January 27, by which time it was known that Lee was living in the Public School 44 district, it was decided to commence judicial proceedings if his truancy continued.²⁰⁹ Meanwhile, on January 16, his mother called the Community Service Society, to which she had

been referred by the Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies, and asked for an appointment to discuss the problem.²¹⁰ She mentioned that a truancy hearing had been held and said that Lee would not attend school despite the threat of official action; she thought that his behavior was due to difficulty in adjusting to his new environment.²¹¹ An appointment was scheduled for January 30, but she failed to appear, and the case was closed.²¹² Sometime in February, the Pics visited the Oswalds. John testified that his mother told him about Lee's truancy and asked how she could get Lee to accept psychiatric aid. Nothing came of these discussions.²¹³

On March 12, the attendance officer in charge of Lee's case filed a petition in court which alleged that Lee had been "excessively absent from school" between October and January, that he had refused to register at Public School 44 or to attend school there, and that he was "beyond the control of his mother insofar as school attendance is concerned."²¹⁴ On the same day, Mrs. Oswald appeared in court alone and informed the presiding judge that Lee refused to appear in court.²¹⁵ Evidently impressed by the proceedings, however, Lee did register at Public School 44 on March 23.²¹⁶ Nevertheless, on April 16, Justice Delany declared him a truant, and remanded him to Youth House until May 7 for psychiatric study.²¹⁷

In accordance with the regular procedures at Youth House, Lee took a series of tests and was interviewed by a staff social worker and a probation officer, both of whom interviewed Mrs. Oswald as well.²¹⁸ Their findings, discussed more fully in chapter VII of the Commission's report, indicated that Lee was a withdrawn, socially maladjusted boy, whose mother did not interest herself sufficiently in his welfare and had failed to establish a close relationship with him.²¹⁹ Mrs. Oswald visited Lee at Youth House and came away with a highly unfavorable impression; she regarded it as unfit for her son.²²⁰ On the basis of all the test results and reports and his own interview with Lee, Dr. Renatus Hartogs, the chief staff psychiatrist, recommended that Lee be placed on probation with a requirement that he seek help from a child guidance clinic, and that his mother be urged to contact a family agency for help; he recommended that Lee not be placed in an institution unless treatment during probation was unsuccessful.²²¹

Lee returned to court on May 7. He and his mother appeared before Justice McClancy, who discussed the Youth House reports with them.²²² He released Lee on parole until September 24, and requested that a referral be made to the Community Service Society for treatment.²²³ The probation officer called the society on the same day but was told that it would probably not be able to take the case because of its already full case load and the intensive treatment which Lee was likely to require; ²²⁴ it confirmed this position 1 week later and closed the case on May 31.²²⁵ An application was made to the Salvation Army also, which turned it down because it could not provide the needed services.²²⁶

During the few weeks of school which remained, Lee attended school regularly, and completed the seventh grade with low but passing marks in all his academic subjects.²²⁷ (He received a failing mark in a home economics course.)²²⁸ His conduct was generally satisfactory and he was rated outstanding in "Social-Participation"; the record indicates that he belonged to a model airplane club and had a special interest in horseback riding.²²⁹ Robert Oswald visited New York that summer, while he was on leave from the Marines.²³⁰ Lee did not appear to him to be unhappy or to be acting abnormally, nor did Robert observe that relations between Lee and his mother were strained.²³¹ Lee's truancy the previous fall and winter was apparently discussed only in passing, when Mrs. Oswald mentioned that Lee had had to appear before a judge.²³²

On September 14, Lee entered the eighth grade at Public School 44.²³³ His parole was due to end 10 days later. On September 24, however, Mrs. Oswald telephoned the probation officer and advised that she could not appear in court; she added that there was no need for her to do so, since Lee was attending school regularly and was now well adjusted.²³⁴ The parole was extended until October 29, before which date the school was to submit a progress report.²³⁵ The report was highly unfavorable. Although Lee was attending school regularly, his conduct was unsatisfactory: teachers reported that he refused to salute the flag, did little work, and seemed to spend most of his time "sailing paper planes around the room."²³⁶ On October 29, Mrs. Oswald again telephoned to say that she would be unable to appear. Justice Sicher continued Lee's parole until November 19 and directed the probation officer to make a referral to the Berkshire Industrial Farm or Children's Village.²³⁷

Before the next hearing, Mrs. Oswald discussed Lee's behavior with the school authorities, who indicated to the probation officer that Lee's behavior improved considerably after her visit to the school.²³⁸ He did, in fact, receive passing grades in most of his subjects in the first marking period. His report also contains notations by his teachers that he was "quick-tempered," "constantly losing control," and "getting into battles with others."²³⁹ Both Lee and his mother appeared in court on November 19. Despite Mrs. Oswald's request that Lee be discharged, Justice Sicher stated his belief that Lee needed treatment, and continued his parole until January 28, 1954; the probation officer was directed to contact the Big Brothers counseling service in the meantime.²⁴⁰

At the request of the probation officer, the Big Brothers office contacted Mrs. Oswald in December, and on January 4 a caseworker visited her and Lee at home.²⁴¹ The caseworker reported that he was cordially received but was told by Mrs. Oswald that continued counseling was unnecessary; she pointed out to him that Lee now belonged to the West Side YMCA, which he attended every Saturday. The caseworker reported, however, that Lee was plainly "displeased with the idea of being forced to join various 'Y' organizations about which he cared little." Mrs. Oswald declared her intention to return to New

Orleans and was advised to obtain Lee's release from the court's jurisdiction before she left.²⁴² On the following day, she called the probation officer, who was away on vacation, and was advised by his office again not to take Lee out of the jurisdiction without the court's consent.²⁴³ The same advice was repeated to her by the Big Brothers caseworker on January 6.²⁴⁴ Through all these contacts, Mrs. Oswald had evidenced reluctance to bring Lee into court, prompted probably by fear that he would be retained in some sort of custody as he had been at the time of the commitment to Youth House.²⁴⁵ Without further communication to the court, Mrs. Oswald and Lee returned to New Orleans sometime before January 10.²⁴⁶ On March 11, the court dismissed the case.²⁴⁷

In New Orleans, Lee and his mother stayed with the Murrets at 757 French Street while they looked for an apartment.²⁴⁸ Lee enrolled in the eighth grade at Beauregard Junior High School on January 13²⁴⁹ and completed the school year without apparent difficulty.²⁵⁰ He entered the ninth grade in September and again received mediocre but acceptable marks.²⁵¹ In October 1954, Lee took a series of achievement tests, on which he did well in reading and vocabulary, badly in mathematics.²⁵² At the end of the school year, on June 2, 1955, he filled out a "personal history." He indicated that the subjects which he liked best were civics, science, and mathematics; those he liked least were English and art. His vocational preferences were listed as biology and mechanical drawing; his plans after high school, however, were noted as "military service" and "undecided." He said that reading and outdoor sports were his recreational activities and that he liked football in particular. In response to the question whether he had "any close friends in this school," he wrote, "no."²⁵³

Lee is remembered by those who knew him in New Orleans as a quiet, solitary boy who made few friends.²⁵⁴ He was briefly a member of the Civil Air Patrol,²⁵⁵ and considered joining an organization of high school students interested in astronomy;²⁵⁶ occasionally, he played pool or darts with his friend, Edward Voebel.²⁵⁷ Beyond this, he seems to have had few contacts with other people. He read a lot, starting at some point to read Communist literature which he found at the public library;²⁵⁸ he walked or rode a bicycle, sometimes visiting a museum.²⁵⁹ Except in his relations with his mother, he was not unusually argumentative or belligerent, but he seems not to have avoided fights if they came; they did come fairly frequently, perhaps in part because of his aloofness from his fellows and the traces of a northern accent in his speech.²⁶⁰ His only close friendship, with Voebel, arose when Voebel helped him tend his wounds after a fight.²⁶¹ Friends of Mrs. Oswald thought that he was demanding and insolent toward her and that she had no control over him.²⁶²

While Lee was in the eighth and ninth grades, Mrs. Oswald worked first at Burt's Shoestore²⁶³ and then at the Dolly Shoe Co.²⁶⁴ One of her employers at Dolly, where she worked as a cashier and salesclerk, remembered her as a pleasant person and a good worker.²⁶⁵ At her request, the company hired Lee to work part time; he worked there,

mostly on Saturdays, for about 10 weeks in 1955.²⁶⁶ On the "personal history" record which he filled out in school, he stated that he had been a "retail shoosaleman";²⁶⁷ but his employer recalled that they had tried to train him as a salesman without success and that he had in fact been a stockboy.²⁶⁸

After a short period with the Murrets, Mrs. Oswald and Lee had moved to an apartment owned by Myrtle Evans at 1454 Saint Mary Street, which she and Mrs. Murret helped to furnish; later they moved to a less expensive apartment in the same building, the address of which was 1452 Saint Mary Street.²⁶⁹ Relations between Mrs. Oswald and Mrs. Evans became strained,²⁷⁰ and in the spring of 1955 the Oswalds moved to a new apartment at 126 Exchange Place in the French Quarter.²⁷¹ Although Lee gave the Exchange Place address on a school form at the end of the ninth grade,²⁷² the school authorities had apparently not been advised of these moves earlier, because Mrs. Oswald did not want Lee to be transferred from Beauregard, which she considered a good school.²⁷³ During the summer of 1955, Robert left the Marine Corps and spent a week with his mother and Lee in New Orleans before moving to Fort Worth; he found Lee unchanged.²⁷⁴

That fall, Lee entered the 10th grade at Warren Easton High School.²⁷⁵ He had been there for about a month when he presented to the school authorities a note written by himself to which he had signed his mother's name. It was dated October 7, 1955, and read:

To whom it may concern,

Because we are moving to San Diego in the middle of this month Lee must quit school now. Also, please send by him any papers such as his birth certificate that you may have. Thank you.

Sincerely

Mrs. M. Oswald ²⁷⁶

He dropped out of school a few days later, shortly before his 16th birthday.²⁷⁷ After his birthday, he tried to enlist in the Marines, using a false affidavit from his mother that he was 17.²⁷⁸ (Some years before, John Pic had joined the Marine Corps Reserve by means of his mother's false affidavit that he was 17.)²⁷⁹ The attempt failed, and, according to his mother's testimony, Lee spent the next year reading and memorizing the "Marine Manual," which he had obtained from Robert and "living to when he is age 17 to join the Marines."²⁸⁰ He worked for the rest of the school year. Between November 10 and January 14, he was a messenger boy for Gerald F. Tujague, Inc., a shipping company, where he earned \$130 per month.²⁸¹ His employer remembers him as a quiet, withdrawn person.²⁸² In January he worked briefly as an office boy for J. R. Michels, Inc.²⁸³ For several months thereafter, he was a messenger for the Pfisterer Dental Laboratory.²⁸⁴ His military record subsequently described his prior civilian jobs as follows:

Performed various clerical duties such as distributing mail, delivering messages & answering telephone. Helped file records & operated ditto, letter opening & sealing machines.²⁸⁵

Anticipating that Lee would join the Marines as soon as he was 17, Mrs. Oswald moved in July 1956 to Fort Worth,²⁸⁶ where she took an apartment at 4936 Collinswood for herself, Lee, and Robert.²⁸⁷ In September, Lee enrolled in the 10th grade at the Arlington Heights High School²⁸⁸ but attended classes for only a few weeks. He dropped out of school on September 28.²⁸⁹ A few days later, he wrote the following letter to the Socialist Party of America :

October 3, 1956

Dear Sirs;

I am sixteen years of age and would like more information about your youth League, I would like to know if there is a branch in my area, how to join, ect., I am a Marxist, and have been studying socialist principles for well over fifteen months I am very interested in your Y.P.S.L.

Sincerely

/s/ Lee Oswald²⁹⁰

Accompanying the letter was an advertisement coupon, on which he had checked the box requesting information about the Socialist Party.²⁹¹

Lee became 17 on October 18. He enlisted in the Marines on October 24.²⁹²

MARINES

On October 26, 1956, Lee Harvey Oswald reported for duty at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot in San Diego, Calif., where he was assigned to the Second Recruit Training Battalion.²⁹³ He was 68 inches tall and weighed 135 pounds; he had no physical defects.²⁹⁴ On October 30, he took a series of aptitude tests, on which he scored significantly above the Marine Corps average in reading and vocabulary and significantly below the average in tests in arithmetic and pattern analysis. His composite general classification score was 105, 2 points below the Corps average. He scored near the bottom of the lowest group in a radio code test.²⁹⁵ His preference of duty was recorded as Aircraft Maintenance and Repair, the duty assignment for which he was recommended.²⁹⁶

While he was at San Diego, Oswald was trained in the use of the M-1 rifle.²⁹⁷ His practice scores were not very good,²⁹⁸ but when his company fired for record on December 21, he scored 212, 2 points above the score necessary to qualify as a "sharpshooter" on a marksman/sharpshooter/expert scale.²⁹⁹ He did not do nearly as well when

he fired for record again shortly before he left the Marines.³⁰⁰ He practiced also with a riot gun and a .45-caliber pistol when he was in the Marines but no scores were recorded.³⁰¹

Oswald was given a 4.4 rating in both "conduct" and "proficiency" at the Recruit Depot, the highest possible rating being 5.0 and an average rating of 4.0 being required for an honorable discharge.³⁰² On January 18, 1957, he reported to Camp Pendleton, Calif., for further training and was assigned to "A" Company of the First Battalion, Second Infantry Training Regiment.³⁰³ He was at Pendleton for a little more than 5 weeks, at the end of which he was rated 4.2 in conduct and 4.0 in proficiency.³⁰⁴ Allen R. Felde, a fellow recruit who was with Oswald at San Diego and Pendleton, has stated that Oswald was generally unpopular and that his company was avoided by the other men.³⁰⁵ When his squad was given its first weekend leave from Pendleton, all eight men took a cab to Tijuana, Mexico. Oswald left the others and did not rejoin them until it was time to return to camp. Felde said that this practice was repeated on other trips to Los Angeles; Oswald accompanied the men on the bus to and from camp but did not stay with them in the city.³⁰⁶ On February 27, he went on leave for 2 weeks,³⁰⁷ during which he may have visited his mother in Fort Worth.³⁰⁸

On March 18, he reported to the Naval Air Technical Training Center at the Naval Air Station in Jacksonville, Fla.³⁰⁹ For the next 6 weeks he attended an Aviation Fundamental School, in which he received basic instruction in his specialty, including such subjects as basic radar theory, map reading, and air traffic control procedures.³¹⁰ This course, as well as his next training assignment at Keesler Air Force Base, required Oswald to deal with confidential material.³¹¹ He was granted final clearance up to the "confidential" level on May 3, "after [a] careful check of local records had disclosed no derogatory data."³¹² He completed the course on the same day, ranking 46th in a class of 54 students.³¹³ On the previous day, he had been promoted to private, first class, effective May 1.³¹⁴ At Jacksonville, he received ratings of 4.7 in conduct and 4.5 in proficiency, the highest ratings he ever attained.³¹⁵

Oswald left for Keesler Air Force Base in Biloxi, Miss., on the day his course was completed; ³¹⁶ he traveled, probably by overnight train, in a group of six marines led by Pfc. Daniel P. Powers, the senior marine in charge.³¹⁷ At Keesler, he attended the Aircraft Control and Warning Operator Course, which included instruction in aircraft surveillance and the use of radar.³¹⁸ Powers was not sure whether he had met Oswald before the trip to Biloxi ³¹⁹ but remembers him there as "a somewhat younger individual, less matured than the other boys," who "was normally outside the particular group of marines that were in this attachment to Keesler."³²⁰ (Oswald was in fact 3 years younger than Powers.)³²¹ Powers testified that Oswald had the nickname "Ozzie Rabbit."³²² Oswald generally stayed to himself, often read-

ing; he did not play cards or work out in the gym with the others.³²³ He spent his weekends alone, away from the base; Powers thought he left Biloxi and perhaps went "home" to New Orleans, less than 100 miles away.³²⁴ He finished the course seventh in a class of 30 marines on June 17,³²⁵ and on June 25, was given an MOS (military occupational specialty) of Aviation Electronics Operator.³²⁶ On June 20, he went on leave,³²⁷ possibly visiting his mother.³²⁸ His ratings at Keesler were 4.2 in conduct and 4.5 in proficiency,³²⁹ which Powers thought was "pretty good."³³⁰

On July 9, Oswald reported at the Marine Corps Air Station at El Toro, Calif., near Santa Ana.³³¹ He was classified as a replacement trainee and attached to the Fourth Replacement Battalion.³³² Six weeks later, on August 22, he departed from San Diego for Yokosuka, Japan, on board the U.S.S. *Bexar*.³³³ Powers testified that while on board, Oswald taught him to play chess, which they played frequently, sometimes for more than 4 hours a day.³³⁴ Like most of the men on board, Oswald read a lot from the books which were available. Powers thought he read "a good type of literature," remembering in particular Whitman's "Leaves of Grass."³³⁵

The *Bexar* docked at Yokosuka on September 12.³³⁶ Oswald was assigned to Marine Air Control Squadron No. 1 (MACS-1), Marine Air Group 11, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, based at Atsugi, about 20 miles west of Tokyo.³³⁷ Oswald was a radar operator in MACS-1, which had less than 100 men.³³⁸ Its function was to direct aircraft to their targets by radar, communicating with the pilots by radio.³³⁹ The squadron had also the duty of scouting for incoming foreign aircraft, such as straying Russian or Chinese planes, which would be intercepted by American planes.³⁴⁰

On October 27, when Oswald opened his locker to remove some gear, a derringer .22 caliber pistol fell to the floor and discharged; the bullet hit him in the left elbow.³⁴¹ Paul Edward Murphy, a fellow marine who was in the next cubicle, heard the shot, rushed in, and found Oswald sitting on the locker looking at his arm; without emotion, Oswald said to Murphy, "I believe I shot myself."³⁴² He was in the naval hospital at Yokosuka until November 15.³⁴³

The Judge Advocate General concluded that Oswald had "displayed a certain degree of carelessness or negligence" by storing a loaded revolver in his locker, but that his injury was incurred "in the line of duty" and was not the result "of his own misconduct."³⁴⁴ He was, however, charged with possession of an unregistered privately owned weapon in violation of general orders. A court-martial followed on April 11, 1958, when Oswald's unit returned from maneuvers, and on April 29 he was sentenced to be confined at hard labor for 20 days, to forfeit \$25 per month for 2 months, and to be reduced to the grade of private.³⁴⁵ The confinement was suspended for 6 months, after which that portion of the sentence was to be remitted.³⁴⁶

Five days after Oswald left the hospital, MACS-1 embarked aboard the *Terrell County*, LST 1157, for maneuvers in the Philippine Islands

area.³⁴⁷ According to Powers' recollection, the squadron was expected to return to Atsugi after maneuvers were completed, but an international crisis developed; since another operation was scheduled for a few months later, the squadron debarked at Cubi Point (Subic Bay) in the Philippines and set up a temporary installation.³⁴⁸ While he was in the Philippines, Oswald passed a test of eligibility for the rank of corporal;³⁴⁹ in a semiannual evaluation, however, he was given his lowest ratings thus far: 4.0 in conduct and 3.9 in proficiency.³⁵⁰ The unit participated in exercises at Corregidor, from which it sailed for Atsugi on March 7, 1958, aboard the U.S.S. *Wexford County*, LST 1168.³⁵¹ The *Wexford County* reached Atsugi 11 days later.³⁵²

Oswald was court-martialed a second time on June 27, for using "provoking words" to a noncommissioned officer (a sergeant) on June 20, at the Bluebird Cafe in Yamato, and assaulting the officer by pouring a drink on him.³⁵³ The findings were that Oswald spilled the drink accidentally, but when the sergeant shoved him away, Oswald invited the sergeant outside in insulting language.³⁵⁴ Oswald admitted that he was rather drunk and had invited the sergeant outside but did not recall insulting him.³⁵⁵ He was sentenced to be confined at hard labor for 28 days and to forfeit \$55;³⁵⁶ in addition, suspension of the previous sentence of confinement was withdrawn.³⁵⁷ He was in confinement until August 13.³⁵⁸ Meanwhile, a previously granted extension of oversea duty was canceled,³⁵⁹ and he was given ratings of 1.9 in conduct and 3.4 in proficiency.³⁶⁰

On September 14, Oswald sailed with his unit for the South China Sea area; the unit was at Ping Tung, North Taiwan on September 30, and returned to Atsugi on October 5.³⁶¹ On October 6, he was transferred out of MACS-1 and put on general duty, in anticipation of his return to the United States.³⁶² He spent several days thereafter in the Atsugi Station Hospital.³⁶³ On October 31, he received his last oversea ratings: 4.0 in both conduct and proficiency.³⁶⁴

Oswald appears generally to have been regarded by his fellows overseas as an intelligent person who followed orders and did his work well, but who complained frequently.³⁶⁵ He did not associate much with other marines and continued to read a great deal.³⁶⁶ Paul Murphy testified that Oswald could speak "a little Russian" while he was overseas.³⁶⁷ Powers believed that Oswald became more assertive in Japan and thought that he might have had a Japanese girl friend.³⁶⁸ He departed from Yokosuka on board the USNS *Barrett* on November 2, and arrived in San Francisco 13 days later.³⁶⁹ On November 19, he took 30 days' leave.³⁷⁰

On December 22, Oswald was assigned to Marine Air Control Squadron No. 9 (MACS-9) at the Marine Corps Air Station at El Toro, where he had been briefly before he went overseas.³⁷¹ He was one of about seven enlisted men and three officers who formed a "radar crew," engaged primarily in aircraft surveillance.³⁷² This work probably gave him access to certain kinds of classified material, some of which, such as aircraft call signs and radio frequencies, was

changed after his defection to Russia.³⁷³ For part of his time at El Toro, Oswald may have been assigned to clerical or janitorial tasks on the base.³⁷⁴ Some of his associates believed rumors,³⁷⁵ incorrect according to official records,³⁷⁶ that he had lost his clearance to work on radar crews; one recalled hearing that Oswald had once had clearance above the "confidential" level and had lost it because he "had poured beer over a staff NCO's head in an enlisted club in Japan, and had been put in the brig."³⁷⁷

The officer in command of the radar crew, Lt. John E. Donovan, found him "competent in all functions," and observed that he handled himself calmly and well in emergency situations.³⁷⁸ Donovan thought Oswald was not a leader but that he performed competently on occasions when, as the senior man present, he served as crew chief.³⁷⁹ This estimate was generally shared by his fellows, most of whom thought that he performed his assigned duties adequately but was deficient in disciplinary matters and such things as barracks inspection.³⁸⁰ One of them recalled that after a number of bad inspections, the other members of Oswald's quonset hut complained about him and secured his transfer to another hut.³⁸¹ He was thought to be an intelligent person, somewhat better educated and more intellectually oriented than other men on the base.³⁸² A few of the men thought it more accurate to describe him as someone who wanted to appear intelligent.³⁸³ He had a pronounced interest in world affairs, in which he appears to have been better informed than some of the officers, whose lack of knowledge amused and sometimes irritated him; he evidently enjoyed drawing others, especially officers, into conversations in which he could display his own superior knowledge.³⁸⁴

It seems clear from the various recollections of those who knew him at El Toro that by the time Oswald returned to the United States, he no longer had any spirit for the Marines; the attitudes which had prompted his enlistment as soon as he was eligible were entirely gone, and his attention had turned away from the Marines to what he might do after his discharge. While no one was able to predict his attempt to defect to Russia within a month after he left the Marines, the testimony of those who knew him at El Toro, in contrast to that of his associates in Japan, leaves no doubt that his thoughts were occupied increasingly with Russia and the Russian way of life. He had studied the Russian language enough by February 25, 1959, to request that he be given a foreign language qualification test; his rating was "poor" in all parts of the test.³⁸⁵ Most of the marines who knew him were aware that he was studying Russian; ³⁸⁶ one of them, Henry J. Roussel, Jr., arranged a date between Lee and his aunt, Rosaleen Quinn, an airline stewardess who was also studying Russian.³⁸⁷ (Miss Quinn thought that Oswald spoke Russian well in view of his lack of formal training; she found the evening uninteresting.³⁸⁸ Donovan, with whom she had a date later, testified that she told him that Oswald was "kind of an oddball.")³⁸⁹ He read, and perhaps subscribed to, a newspaper, possibly printed in Russian, which his associates connected with his Russian bent.³⁹⁰

Most of those who knew him were able to recount anecdotes which suggest that he was anxious to publicize his liking for things Russian, sometimes in good humor and sometimes seriously. Some of his fellows called him "Oswaldskovich," apparently to his pleasure.³⁹¹ He is said to have had his name written in Russian on one of his jackets;³⁹² to have played records of Russian songs "so loud that one could hear them outside the barracks";³⁹³ frequently to have made remarks in Russian³⁹⁴ or used expressions like "da" or "nyet,"³⁹⁵ or addressed others (and been addressed) as "Comrade";³⁹⁶ to have come over and said jokingly, "You called?" when one of the marines played a particular record of Russian music.³⁹⁷

Connected with this Russophilia was an interest in and acceptance of Russian political views and, to a lesser extent, Communist ideology. Less obvious to his fellows generally,³⁹⁸ it nevertheless led him into serious discussions with some of them. Donovan, who was a graduate of the School of Foreign Service of Georgetown University,³⁹⁹ thought Oswald was "truly interested in international affairs"⁴⁰⁰ and "very well versed, at least on the superficial facts of a given foreign situation."⁴⁰¹ He recalled that Oswald had a particular interest in Latin America⁴⁰² and had a good deal of information about Cuba in particular.⁴⁰³ Oswald expressed sympathy for Castro but, according to Donovan, "what he said about Castro was not an unpopular belief at that time."⁴⁰⁴ Donovan believed that Oswald subscribed to the Russian newspaper—which Donovan thought was a Communist newspaper—not only in order to read Russian but also because he thought it "presented a very different and perhaps equally just side of the international affairs in comparison with the United States newspapers."⁴⁰⁵ Donovan was clear, on the other hand, that he never heard Oswald "in any way, shape or form confess that he was a Communist, or that he ever thought about being a Communist."⁴⁰⁶

Private Kerry Thornley described himself as a close acquaintance, but not a good friend, of Oswald, whom he met in the spring of 1959;⁴⁰⁷ he later wrote an unpublished novel in which he drew heavily on his impressions of Oswald.⁴⁰⁸ Thornley generally corroborates Donovan's testimony but thought Oswald definitely believed that "the Marxist morality was the most rational morality to follow" and communism, "the best system in the world."⁴⁰⁹ Thornley thought this belief was "theoretical," a "dispassionate appraisal" which did not indicate "any active commitment to the Communist ends"; he described Oswald as "idle in his admiration for communism."⁴¹⁰ He recalled discussions about Marxism in which Oswald criticized capitalism and praised the Soviet economic system.⁴¹¹ Thornley testified that his association with Oswald ended when, in response to Oswald's criticism of a parade in which they both had to march, he said "Well, comes the revolution you will change all that." Oswald, he said, looked at him "like a betrayed Caesar" and walked away.⁴¹² Thornley attributed Oswald's decision to go to Russia to a growing disillusionment with the United States, especially its role in the Far East, and a conviction that communism

would eventually prevail.⁴¹³ He was surprised by the decision but expected Oswald to adjust to Russian life and remain in Russia permanently.⁴¹⁴

Another marine, Nelson Delgado, met Oswald soon after the latter arrived at El Toro.⁴¹⁵ They were about the same age and had similar interests; Oswald enjoyed trying to speak Spanish with Delgado, who spoke it fluently.⁴¹⁶ Delgado regarded him as a "complete believer that our way of government was not quite right," but did not think he was a Communist.⁴¹⁷ Their discussions were concerned more with Cuba than Russia.⁴¹⁸ They both favored the Castro government and talked—"dreaming," Delgado said—about joining the Cuban Army or Government and perhaps leading expeditions to other Caribbean islands to "free them too."⁴¹⁹ Oswald told Delgado that he was in touch with Cuban diplomatic officials in this country; which Delgado at first took to be "one of his * * * lies,"⁴²⁰ but later believed.⁴²¹

Oswald's interest in Russia and developing ideological attachment to theoretical communism apparently dominated his stay at El Toro. He was still withdrawn from most of his fellows, although his special interests appear to have made him stand out more there than he had at other posts and to have given him a source for conversation which he had hitherto lacked.⁴²² According to several of the witnesses, names like "Ozzie Rabbit" still clung to him; ⁴²³ others recalled no nickname or only shortened versions of his real name.⁴²⁴ His reading acquired direction; books like "Das Kapital" and Orwell's "Animal Farm" and "1984" are mentioned in the testimony concerning this period.⁴²⁵ He played chess; ⁴²⁶ according to one of his opponents he chose the red pieces, expressing a preference for the "Red Army."⁴²⁷ He listened to classical music.⁴²⁸ For a short time, he played on the squadron football team.⁴²⁹ According to Donovan, who coached the team, Oswald was not very good; he lacked team spirit and often tried to call the plays, which was not his job.⁴³⁰ Delgado thought Oswald was a mediocre player.⁴³¹ Donovan did not know whether Oswald quit or was thrown off the team.⁴³² He spent most of his weekends alone, as he had at Keesler, and did not leave the post as often as the other men.⁴³³ Delgado once rode with him on the train to Los Angeles but separated from him there; Oswald returned to the base after one night.⁴³⁴ Delgado recalls that on another weekend Oswald accepted his invitation to go to Tijuana; they stayed there for one night.⁴³⁵

At the end of January 1959 and at the end of July, Oswald was given his semiannual ratings, scoring 4.0 in conduct both times, and 4.0 and 4.2 in proficiency.⁴³⁶ (The July ratings were repeated in September, when he was transferred from MACS-9 in preparation for his discharge.)⁴³⁷ On March 9, he was promoted as of March 1, to the rank of private, first class, for the second time.⁴³⁸ He took a series of high school level general educational development tests on March 23 and received an overall rating of "satisfactory." His best scores, in the 76th and 79th U.S. percentiles, were in English composition and physical sciences; his worst was English literature, in which he placed in the 34th percentile.⁴³⁹

In the spring, Oswald applied to Albert Schweitzer College in Churwalden, Switzerland, for admission to the spring term in 1960; the application is dated March 19.⁴⁴⁰ Schweitzer is a small school, which specializes in courses in religion, ethics, science, and literature. He claimed a proficiency in Russian equal to 1 year of schooling⁴⁴¹ and that he had completed high school by correspondence with an average grade of 85 percent.⁴⁴² He listed philosophy, psychology, ideology, football, baseball, tennis and stamp-collecting as special interests, and writing short stories "on contemporary American life" as his vocational interest.⁴⁴³ Jack London, Charles Darwin, and Norman Vincent Peale were listed as favorite authors.⁴⁴⁴ He claimed membership in the YMCA and the "A.Y.H. Association," and said that he had participated in a "student body movement in school" for the control of juvenile delinquency.⁴⁴⁵ Asked to give a general statement of his reasons for wanting to attend the college, he wrote:

In order to acquire a fuller understanding of that subject which interest me most, Philosophy. To meet with Europeans who can broaden my scope of understanding. To receive formal Education by Instructors of high standing and character. To broaden my knowledge of German and to live in a healthy climate and Good moral atmosphere.⁴⁴⁶

On the basis of these representations, Oswald's application was approved by the college.⁴⁴⁷ He enclosed a registration fee of \$25 in a letter dated June 19, in which he said that he was "looking forward to a fine stay."⁴⁴⁸ Few of the other marines seem to have known about this application. He told Delgado, however, that he planned to attend a Swiss school to study psychology, and Delgado knew that some application had been made.⁴⁴⁹ Another marine, Richard Call, also knew something of his plans.⁴⁵⁰

Oswald was obligated to serve on active duty until December 7, 1959 (the date having been adjusted to compensate for the period of confinement).⁴⁵¹ On August 17, he submitted a request for a dependency discharge, on the ground that his mother needed his support.⁴⁵² The request was accompanied by an affidavit of Mrs. Oswald and corroborating affidavits from an attorney, a doctor, and two friends, attesting that she had been injured at work in December 1958, and was unable to support herself.⁴⁵³ Oswald had previously made a voluntary allotment of part of his salary to his mother, under which arrangement she received \$40 in August, and had submitted an application for a "Q" allotment (dependency allowance) in her behalf of \$91.30; one payment of the "Q" allotment, for the month of August, was made in September.⁴⁵⁴ On August 28, the Wing Hardship or Dependency Discharge Board recommended that Oswald's request for a discharge be approved; ⁴⁵⁵ approval followed shortly.⁴⁵⁶ On September 4, he was transferred from MACS-9 to the H. & H. Squadron,⁴⁵⁷ and on September 11, he was released from active duty and transferred to the Marine Corps Reserve, in which he was expected to

serve until December 8, 1962.⁴⁵⁸ He was assigned to the Marine Air Reserve Training Command at the Naval Air Station in Glenview, Ill.⁴⁵⁹

Almost exactly 1 year later, on September 13, 1960, Oswald was given an "undesirable discharge" from the Marine Corps Reserve,⁴⁶⁰ based on:

reliable information which indicated that he had renounced his U.S. citizenship with the intentions of becoming a permanent citizen of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Further, that petitioner brought discredit to the Marine Corps through adverse newspaper publicity, which was generated by the foregoing action, and had thereby, in the opinion of his commanding officer, proved himself unfit for retention in the naval service.⁴⁶¹

SOVIET UNION

On September 4, the day on which he was transferred out of MACS-9 in preparation for his discharge, Oswald had applied for a passport at the Superior Court of Santa Ana, Calif. His application stated that he planned to leave the United States on September 21 to attend the Albert Schweitzer College and the University of Turku in Finland, and to travel in Cuba, the Dominican Republic, England, France, Germany, and Russia.⁴⁶² The passport was routinely issued 6 days later.⁴⁶³

Oswald went directly home after his discharge, and arrived in Fort Worth by September 14.⁴⁶⁴ He told his mother that he intended to get a job on a ship or possibly in the "export-import business."⁴⁶⁵ If he stayed in Fort Worth, he said, he would be able to earn only about \$30 per week; on a ship, he would earn "big money" and be able to send substantial amounts home.⁴⁶⁶ Three days after he arrived in Fort Worth, he left for New Orleans.⁴⁶⁷ While he was in Fort Worth he had registered his dependency discharge and entry into the Marine Reserve at the Fort Worth Selective Service Board,⁴⁶⁸ and visited his brother Robert and his family.⁴⁶⁹ He also gave his mother \$100.⁴⁷⁰

On September 17, Oswald spoke with a representative of Travel Consultants, Inc., a New Orleans travel bureau; he filled out a "Passenger Immigration Questionnaire," on which he gave his occupation as "shipping export agent" and said that he would be abroad for 2 months on a pleasure trip. He booked passage from New Orleans to Le Havre, France, on a freighter, the SS *Marion Lykes*, scheduled to sail on September 18, for which he paid \$220.75.⁴⁷¹ On the evening of September 17, he registered at the Liberty Hotel.⁴⁷²

The *Marion Lykes* did not sail until the early morning of September 20.⁴⁷³ Before its departure, Oswald wrote his mother a letter, which was her last news of him until she read stories of his defection in Fort Worth newspapers:

Dear Mother :

Well, I have booked passage on a ship to Europe, I would of had to sooner or later and I think it's best I go now. Just remember above all else that my values are very different from Robert's or your's. It is difficult to tell you how I feel, Just remember this is what I must do. I did not tell you about my plans because you could harly be expected to understand.

I did not see aunt Lilian while I was here. I will write again as soon as I land.

Lee ⁴⁷⁴

The *Marion Lykes* carried only four passengers.⁴⁷⁵ Oswald shared his cabin with Billy Joe Lord, a young man who had just graduated from high school and was going to France to continue his education. Lord testified that he and Oswald did not discuss politics but did have a few amicable religious arguments, in which Oswald defended atheism. Oswald was "standoffish," but told Lord generally about his background, mentioning that his mother worked in a drug-store in Fort Worth and that he was bitter about the low wages which she received. He told Lord that he intended to travel in Europe and possibly to attend school in Sweden or Switzerland if he had sufficient funds.⁴⁷⁶ The other two passengers were Lt. Col. and Mrs. George B. Church, Jr., who also found Oswald unfriendly and had little contact with him. Oswald told them that he had not liked the Marine Corps and that he planned to study in Switzerland; they observed some "bitterness" about his mother's difficulties, but did not discuss this with him. No one on board suspected that he intended to defect to Russia.⁴⁷⁷

Oswald disembarked at Le Havre on October 8. He left for England that same day, and arrived on October 9.⁴⁷⁸ He told English customs officials in Southampton that he had \$700 and planned to remain in the United Kingdom for 1 week before proceeding to a school in Switzerland. But on the same day, he flew to Helsinki, Finland, where he registered at the Torn Hotel; on the following day, he moved to the Klaus Kurki Hotel.⁴⁷⁹

Oswald probably applied for a visa at the Russian consulate on October 12, his first business day in Helsinki.⁴⁸⁰ The visa was issued on October 14. It was valid until October 20 and permitted him to take one trip of not more than 6 days to the Soviet Union.⁴⁸¹ He also purchased 10 Soviet "tourist vouchers" which cost \$30 apiece.⁴⁸² He left Helsinki by train on the following day, crossed the Finnish-Russian border at Vainikkala, and arrived in Moscow on October 16.⁴⁸³

He was met at the Moscow railroad station by a representative of "Intourist," the state tourist agency, and taken to the Hotel Berlin, where he registered as a student.⁴⁸⁴ On the same day he met the Intourist guide assigned to him during his stay in Russia, a young woman named Rima Shirokova. They went sightseeing the next day. Almost immediately he told her that he wanted to leave

the United States and become a citizen of the Soviet Union. According to Oswald's "Historic Diary," she later told him that she had reported his statement to Intourist headquarters, which in turn had notified the "Passport and Visa Office" (probably the Visa and Registration Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the MVD⁴⁸⁵). She was instructed to help Oswald prepare a letter to the Supreme Soviet requesting that he be granted citizenship. Oswald mailed such a letter that same day.⁴⁸⁶ (The "Historic Diary" is Oswald's handwritten account of his life in Russia.⁴⁸⁷ The earlier entries were written after the events which they describe; later, in Minsk, he probably kept a contemporaneous record of his experiences.⁴⁸⁸ The Commission has used the diary, which Oswald may have written with future readers in mind, only as Oswald's record of his private life and personal impressions as he sought to present them and has relied wherever possible on official documents, correspondence, and the testimony of witnesses.)

The diary records that when Oswald told Rima Shirokova that he intended to defect she was "flabbergasted," but agreed to help.⁴⁸⁹ She was "politly sympathetic but uneasy" when he told her that he wanted to defect because he was "a Communist, ect."⁴⁹⁰ As an Intourist guide, Rima toured parts of Moscow with Oswald in the next few days. His primary concern, however, appeared to be his effort to become a Soviet citizen, and she also aided him in his dealings with the Soviet Government.⁴⁹¹ He thought that Rima felt sorry for him and tried to be a friend because he was "someth. new."⁴⁹² On his 20th birthday, 2 days after he arrived in Russia, she gave him Dostoevski's "The Idiot,"⁴⁹³ in which she had written: "Dear Lee, Great congratulations! Let all your dreams come true! 18.X 1959"⁴⁹⁴

On October 19, Oswald was probably interviewed in his hotel room by a man named Lev Setyayev, who said that he was a reporter for Radio Moscow seeking statements from American tourists about their impressions of Moscow,⁴⁹⁵ but who was probably also acting for the KGB.⁴⁹⁶ Two years later, Oswald told officials at the American Embassy that he had made a few routine comments to Setyayev of no political significance. The interview with Setyayev may, however, have been the occasion for an attempt by the KGB, in accordance with regular practice, to assess Oswald or even to elicit compromising statements from him; the interview was apparently never broadcast.⁴⁹⁷ (As discussed in ch. VI of this report, the Commission is aware that many of the Soviet officials with whom Oswald came into contact were employees of the KGB, the agency which has primary jurisdiction for the treatment of defectors.)

On the following day, Rima Shirokova told him that the "Pass. and Visa Dept." wanted to see him,⁴⁹⁸ and on the morning of October 21, he was interviewed by an official concerning his application for citizenship. The official offered little information and no encouragement; he told Oswald only that he would check to see if the visa could

be extended. Oswald returned to the Hotel Berlin.⁴⁹⁹ That afternoon, he was notified that his visa had expired and that he had to leave Moscow within 2 hours.⁵⁰⁰

Oswald responded to the unfavorable decision by cutting himself above his left wrist, in an apparent suicide attempt. Rima Shirokova found him unconscious in his hotel room and had him taken to the Botkinskaya Hospital. His diary states: "Poor Rimmea stays by my side as interrptor (my Russian is still very bad) far into the night, I tell her 'Go home' (my mood is bad) but she stays, she is 'my friend.'" ⁵⁰¹

For 3 days Oswald was confined in the psychiatric ward of the hospital. He was examined by a psychiatrist, who concluded that he was not dangerous to other people and could be transferred to the "somatic" department. Hospital records containing the results of the examination ⁵⁰² state that Oswald came to Russia in order to apply for citizenship, and that "in order to postpone his departure he inflicted the injury upon himself." ⁵⁰³ They note that Oswald understood some Russian and, presumably based on information which he provided, that he had "graduated from a technical high school in radio technology and radio electronics." ⁵⁰⁴ The record states: "He claims he regrets his action. After recovering he intends to return to his homeland." ⁵⁰⁵

Oswald resented being in the psychiatric ward and told Rima Shirokova that he wanted a transfer.⁵⁰⁶ She visited him at the hospital frequently and his diary records that "only at this moment" did he "notice [that] she is preety." ⁵⁰⁷ Another entry for the hospital period says: "Afternoon I am visited by Roza Agafonova of the hotel tourist office, who askes about my health, very beautiful, excelant Eng., very merry and kind, she makes me very glad to be alive." ⁵⁰⁸ These entries reflect an attitude gentler and friendlier than his attitude before the suicide attempt, when he seemed to be coldly concerned only with his status in Russia. Once Oswald was out of the psychiatric ward, he found the hospital more pleasant. The new ward, which he shared with 11 other patients, was "airy," and the food was good. His only complaint, according to his diary, was that an "elderly American" patient was distrustful of him because he had not registered at the American Embassy and because he was evasive about the reasons for his presence in Moscow and confinement in the hospital.⁵⁰⁹

He was released from the hospital on October 28,⁵¹⁰ and, accompanied by Rima Shirokova, was driven to the Hotel Berlin in an Intourist car. After he said goodby to Lyudmila Dmitrieva, head of the Intourist office at the Berlin, and to Roza Agafonova, another Intourist employee at the hotel, he checked out of the Berlin and registered at the Metropole,⁵¹¹ a large hotel under the same administration as the Berlin.⁵¹² The Government had undoubtedly directed him to make the change. His visa had expired while he was in the hospital, and his presence in Russia was technically illegal; he had received no word that the decision that he must leave had been reversed. Later that day, however, Rima told him that the "Pass and Registration Office" wished

to talk to him about his future.⁵¹³ According to the diary, when Oswald appeared at the office he was asked whether he still wanted to become a Soviet citizen and he replied that he did; he provided his Marine Corps discharge papers for identification. He was told that he could not expect a decision soon, and was dismissed. During this interview, Oswald was apparently questioned about the interview which preceded his hospitalization, which led him to conclude that there had been no communication between the two sets of officials.⁵¹⁴ That evening he met Rima, on whom he vented his frustration at being put off by the authorities.⁵¹⁵

Oswald ate only once on the following day; he stayed near the telephone, fully dressed and ready to leave immediately if he were summoned. He remained in his room for 3 days, which seemed to him "like three years,"⁵¹⁶ until October 31, when he decided to act. He met Rima Shirokova at noon and told her that he was impatient, but did not say what he planned to do; she cautioned him to stay in his room "and eat well."⁵¹⁷ She left him after a short while and, a few minutes later, he took a taxi to the American Embassy, where he asked to see the consul. (See Commission Exhibits Nos. 24, 912, 913, pp. 264, 263, 261.) When the receptionist asked him first to sign the tourist register, he laid his passport on the desk and said that he had come to "dissolve his American citizenship." Richard E. Snyder, the Second Secretary and senior consular official,⁵¹⁸ was summoned, and he invited Oswald into his office.⁵¹⁹

Oswald's meeting with Snyder, at which Snyder's assistant, John A. McVickar, was also present, is more fully discussed in appendix XV to the Commission's report. Oswald declared that he wanted to renounce his American citizenship; he denounced the United States and praised the Government of the Soviet Union. Over Oswald's objections, Snyder sought to learn something of Oswald's motives and background and to forestall immediate action. Oswald told him that he had already offered to tell a Soviet official what he had learned as a radar operator in the Marines. The interview ended when Snyder told Oswald that he could renounce his citizenship on the following Monday, 2 days later, if he would appear personally to do so. During the interview, Oswald handed to Snyder a note⁵²⁰ which suggests that he had studied and sought to comply with section 349 of the Immigration and Nationality Act, which provides for loss of American citizenship.⁵²¹ The note contains paragraphs which read like inartistic attempts to cast off citizenship in three of the ways specified by the statute. The attempts failed but there is no reason to doubt that they were sincere. Snyder has testified that he believed that Oswald would immediately have formally renounced his citizenship had he been permitted to do so.⁵²²

The interview lasted for less than an hour. Oswald returned to his hotel angry about the delay but "elated" by the "showdown" and sure that he would be permitted to remain after his "sign of * * * faith" in the Russians.⁵²³ Soon after he returned to the hotel, he was

approached by A. I. Goldberg, a reporter for the Associated Press, whom the Embassy had told about Oswald's actions. Oswald refused to speak to him.⁵²⁴ He answered a few questions for two other reporters, R. J. Korengold and Miss Aline Mosby, but again refused to be interviewed.⁵²⁵ Thereafter, the news services made repeated unsuccessful attempts to interview him, which he thought was an indirect form of pressure from the Embassy to return to the United States.⁵²⁶

On the day after Oswald's meeting with Snyder, his family read in the newspapers about his appearance at the Embassy and tried to contact him. Mrs. Oswald testified that she was shocked at her son's decision to defect but respected his motives for doing so; later she suspected that he had been forcibly removed to Russia.⁵²⁷ She placed a telephone call to him,⁵²⁸ but he either refused to speak to her⁵²⁹ or cut her off very quickly.⁵³⁰ So too, on November 2, he rejected the Embassy's efforts to deliver or read on the telephone a telegram from his brother Robert.⁵³¹ A call from Robert was either canceled before it was completed or was refused.⁵³² Robert's telegram, along with a message asking Oswald to contact him immediately, which Robert had asked the State Department to deliver,⁵³³ was finally sent to Oswald from the Embassy by registered mail.⁵³⁴

A few days later, the Embassy received a letter from Oswald dated November 3 which requested that his citizenship be revoked.⁵³⁵ The letter stated that he had appeared at the Embassy "for the purpose of signing the formal papers to this effect" and protested against the "conduct of the official" who had refused him "this legal right." Oswald noted that his application for Soviet citizenship was pending and said that if it were granted he would ask the Soviet Government "to lodge a formal protest" on his behalf.⁵³⁶ The Embassy replied on November 9 that Oswald could renounce his citizenship by appearing at the Embassy and executing the necessary papers.⁵³⁷

Oswald's diary describes the period from November 2 to November 15, during which he continued to isolate himself, as "days of utter loneliness."⁵³⁸ On November 8, he wrote to his brother:

Dear Robert

Well, what shall we talk about, the weather perhaps? Certainly you do not wish me to speak of my decision to remain in the Soviet Union and apply for citizenship here, since I'm afraid you would not be able to comprehend my reasons. You really don't know anything about me. Do you know for instance that I have waited to do this for well over a year, do you know that I * * * [phrase in Russian] speak a fair amount of Russian which I have been studying for many months.

I have been told that I will not *have* to leave the Soviet Union if I do not care to. This is my decision. I will not leave this country, the Soviet Union, under any conditions, I will never return to the United States which is a country I hate.

Someday, perhaps soon, and then again perhaps in a few years, I will become a citizen of the Soviet Union, but it is a very legal

process, *in any event*, I will not have to leave the Soviet Union and I will never * * * [word missing].

I received your telegram and was glad to hear from you, only one word bothered me, the word "mistake." I assume you mean that I have made a "mistake" it is not for you to tell me that you cannot understand my reasons for this very action.

I will not speak to anyone from the United States over the telephone since it may be taped by the Americans.

If you wish to correspond with me you can write to the below address, but I really don't see what we could take about if you want to send me money, that I can use, but I do not expect to be able to send it back.

Lee ⁵³⁹

Oswald's statement that he had been told that he could remain in Russia was not true. According to his diary, he was not told until later that he could remain even temporarily in Russia,⁵⁴⁰ and only in January was he told that he could remain indefinitely.⁵⁴¹ The Embassy tried to deliver a typed copy of a telegram from his brother John on November 9; Oswald refused to answer the knock on his door, and the message was then sent to him by registered mail.⁵⁴²

Toward the end of this waiting period, probably on November 13, Aline Mosby succeeded in interviewing Oswald.⁵⁴³ A reporter for United Press International, she had called him on the telephone and was told to come right over, Oswald's explanation being that he thought she might "understand and be friendly" because she was a woman.⁵⁴⁴ She was the first person who was not a Soviet citizen to whom he granted an interview since his meeting with Snyder at the Embassy on October 31. Miss Mosby found him polite but stiff; she said that he seemed full of confidence, often showing a "small smile, more like a smirk," and that he talked almost "non-stop." Oswald said to her that he had been told that he could remain in the Soviet Union and that job possibilities were being explored; they thought it probably would be best, he said, to continue his education. He admitted that his Russian was bad but was confident that it would improve rapidly. He based his dislike for the United States on his observations of racial prejudice and the contrast between "the luxuries of Park Avenue and workers' lives on the East Side," and mentioned his mother's poverty; he said that if he had remained in the United States he too would have become either a capitalist or a worker. "One way or another," he said, "I'd lose in the United States. In my own mind, even if I'd be exploiting other workers. That's why I chose Marxist ideology."

Oswald told his interviewer that he had been interested in Communist theory since he was 15, when "an old lady" in New York handed him "a pamphlet about saving the Rosenbergs." But when Mosby asked if he were a member of the Communist Party he said that he had never met a Communist and that he "might have seen" one only once, when he saw that "old lady." He told her that while

he was in the Marine Corps he had seen American imperialism in action, and had saved \$1,500 in secret preparation for his defection to Russia. His only apparent regrets concerned his family: his mother, whom he had not told of his plans, and his brother, who might lose his job as a result of the publicity.⁵⁴⁵

The interview lasted for about 2 hours. According to Oswald's own account, he exacted a promise from Miss Mosby that she would show him the story before publication but she broke the promise; he found the published story to contain distortions of his words.⁵⁴⁶ Miss Mosby's notes indicate that he called her to complain of the distortions, saying in particular that his family had not been "poverty-stricken" and that his defection was not prompted by personal hardship but that was "a matter only of ideology."⁵⁴⁷

According to the diary, Oswald was told in mid-November that he could remain temporarily in Russia "until some solution was found with what to do" with him.⁵⁴⁸ Armed with this "comforting news,"⁵⁴⁹ he granted a second interview, again to a woman, on November 16.⁵⁵⁰ Miss Priscilla Johnson of the North American Newspaper Alliance knocked on the door of his room at the Metropole, and Oswald agreed to come to her room at the hotel that evening. This interview lasted about 5 hours, from 9 p.m. until about 2 in the morning. During the interview he frequently mentioned the fact that he would be able to remain in Russia, which gave him great pleasure, but he also showed disappointment about the difficulties standing in the way of his request for Soviet citizenship. He repeated most of the information he had given Aline Mosby and again denied having been a member of the Communist Party or even ever having seen a Communist in the United States. When Miss Johnson asked him to specify some of the socialist writers whose works he had read during the past 5 years, he could name only Marx and Engels; the only title he could recall was "Das Kapital." They talked for a long while about Communist economic theory, which Miss Johnson thought was "his language"; she became convinced that his knowledge of the subject was very superficial.⁵⁵¹ He commented that the Russians treated his defection as a "legal formality," neither encouraging nor discouraging it.⁵⁵² When she suggested that if he really wished to renounce his American citizenship he could do so by returning to the Embassy, he said that he would "never set foot in the Embassy again," since he was sure that he would be given the "same run-around" as before. He seemed to Miss Johnson to be avoiding effective renunciation, consciously or unconsciously, in order to preserve his right to reenter the United States.⁵⁵³

For the rest of the year, Oswald seldom left his hotel room where he had arranged to take his meals, except perhaps for a few trips to museums. He spent most of his time studying Russian, "8 hours a day" his diary records. The routine was broken only by another interview at the passport office; occasional visits from Rima Shirokova; lessons in Russian from her and other Intourist guides; and a New Year's visit from Roza Agafonova, who gave

him a small "Boratin" clown as a New Year's present.⁵⁵⁴ He replied to a letter from Robert in a letter quoted at length in chapter VII of this report, which contains his most bitter statements against the United States.⁵⁵⁵ Robert received a third letter on December 17, in which Oswald said that he would not write again and did not wish Robert to write to him. The letter concluded:

I am starting a new life and I do not wish to have anything to do with the old life.

I hope you and your family will always be in good health.

Lee ⁵⁵⁶

His mother mailed him a personal check for \$20 dated December 18. It was returned to her on January 5 with the notation that he could not "use this check, of course"; he asked her to send him \$20 in cash and added that he had little money and needed "the rest," presumably a reference to the \$100 he had given her in September. Mrs. Oswald later sent him a money order for about \$25.⁵⁵⁷

On January 4, Oswald was summoned to the Soviet Passport Office and given Identity Document for Stateless Persons No. 311479.⁵⁵⁸ He was told that he was being sent to Minsk,⁵⁵⁹ an industrial city located about 450 miles southwest of Moscow and with a population in 1959 of about 510,000.⁵⁶⁰ His disappointment that he had not been granted Soviet citizenship was balanced by relief that the uncertainty was ended; he told Rima Shirokova that he was happy.⁵⁶¹ On the following day, he went to a Government agency which the Russians call the "Red Cross"; it gave him 5,000 rubles (about 500 new rubles, or \$500 at the official exchange rate).⁵⁶² He used 2,200 rubles to pay his hotel bill and 150 rubles to purchase a railroad ticket to Minsk.⁵⁶³

Oswald arrived in Minsk on January 7. He was met at the station by two "Red Cross" workers who took him to the Hotel Minsk. Two Intourist employees, both of whom spoke excellent English, were waiting for him.⁵⁶⁴ One of them, a young woman named Roza Kuznetsova, became his close friend and attended his 21st birthday party in October 1960.⁵⁶⁵ (See Commission Exhibit No. 2609, p. 271.) On the following day, Oswald met the "Mayor," who welcomed him to Minsk, promised him a rent-free apartment, and warned him against "uncultured persons" who sometimes insulted foreigners.⁵⁶⁶

Oswald reported for work at the Belorussian Radio and Television Factory on January 13.⁵⁶⁷ Two days earlier he had visited the factory and met Alexander Ziger, a Polish Jew who had emigrated to Argentina in 1938 and went to Russia in 1955. Ziger was a department head at the factory; he spoke English, and he and his family became good friends of Oswald and corresponded with him after his return to the United States.⁵⁶⁸ The factory, a major producer of electronic parts and systems, employed about 5,000 persons.⁵⁶⁹ Oswald's union card described him as a "metal worker";⁵⁷⁰ Marina testified that he fashioned parts on a lathe.⁵⁷¹ As Oswald later described it, the shop in

which he worked, called the "experimental shop,"⁵⁷² employed 58 workers and 5 foremen. It was located in the middle part of the factory area in a 2-story building made of red brick. The workday began at 8 o'clock sharp. Work was assigned according to "pay levels," which were numbered from one to five plus a top "master" level. A worker could ask to be tested for a higher level at any time.⁵⁷³

Oswald had hoped to continue his education in Russia, and was disappointed by his assignment to a factory.⁵⁷⁴ His salary varied from 700 to perhaps as high as 900 rubles per month (\$70-\$90).⁵⁷⁵ Although high compared with the salaries of certain professional groups in Russia, which in some areas have not grown proportionately with the wages of factory workers,⁵⁷⁶ his salary was normal for his type of work.⁵⁷⁷ It was supplemented, however, by 700 rubles per month, which he received from the "Red Cross," and, according to Oswald, his total income was about equal to that of the director of the factory.⁵⁷⁸ In August he applied for membership in the union; ⁵⁷⁹ he became a dues-paying member in September.⁵⁸⁰

Undoubtedly more noteworthy to most Russians than his extra income was the attractive apartment which Oswald was given in March 1959. It was a small flat with a balcony overlooking the river,⁵⁸¹ for which he paid only 60 rubles a month.⁵⁸² (See Commission Exhibit No. 2606, p. 271.) Oswald describes it in his diary as "a Russian dream."⁵⁸³ Had Oswald been a Russian worker, he would probably have had to wait for several years for a comparable apartment, and would have been given one even then only if he had a family.⁵⁸⁴ The "Red Cross" subsidy and the apartment were typical of the favorable treatment which the Soviet Union has given defectors.⁵⁸⁵

Oswald's diary records that he enjoyed his first months in Minsk. His work at the factory was easy and his coworkers were friendly and curious about life in the United States; he declined an invitation to speak at a mass meeting. He took Roza Kuznetsova, his interpreter and language teacher,⁵⁸⁶ to the theater, a movie, or an opera almost every night, until he moved into his apartment and temporarily lost contact with her. He wrote in his diary, "I'm living big and am very satisfied."⁵⁸⁷ In March or April, he met Pavel Golovachev, a coworker at the factory, whom Oswald described as intelligent and friendly and an excellent radio technician. (See Commission Exhibit No. 2609, p. 271.) Oswald helped Golovachev with English.⁵⁸⁸ They became friends,⁵⁸⁹ and corresponded after Oswald returned to the United States until at least as late as September 1963.⁵⁹⁰

The spring and summer passed easily and uneventfully. There were picnics and drives in the country, which Oswald described as "green beauty."⁵⁹¹ On June 18, he obtained a hunting license and soon afterward purchased a 16-gage single-barrel shotgun. His hunting license identifies him as "Aleksy Harvey Oswald." (He was called "Alec" by his Russian friends, because "Lee" sounded foreign to them and was difficult for them to pronounce.)⁵⁹² He joined a local chapter of the Belorussian Society of Hunters and Fishermen, a hunting club sponsored by his factory, and hunted for small game in the

farm regions around Minsk about half a dozen times in the summer and fall. The hunters spent the night in small villages and often left their bag with the villagers; Oswald described the peasant life which he saw as crude and poor.⁵⁹³ Sometime in June, he met Ella German, a worker at the factory, of whom he later said he "perhaps fell in love with her the first minute" he saw her.⁵⁹⁴ (See Commission Exhibit No. 2609, p. 271.)

At the same time, however, the first signs of disillusionment with his Russian life appeared. He noted in his diary that he felt "uneasy inside" after a friend took him aside at a party and advised him to return to the United States.⁵⁹⁵ Another entry compared life in Minsk with military life:

I have become habituated to a small cafe which is where I dine in the evening. The food is generally poor and always exactly the same, menu in any cafe, at any point in the city. The food is cheap and I don't really care about quality after three years in the U.S.M.C.⁵⁹⁶

In an entry for August-September, he wrote that he was becoming "increasingly conscious of just what sort of a society" he lived in.⁵⁹⁷

He spent New Year's Day at the home of Ella German and her family. They ate and drank in a friendly atmosphere, and he was "drunk and happy" when he returned home. During the walk back to his apartment he decided to ask Ella to marry him. On the following night, after he had brought her home from the movies, he proposed on her doorstep. She rejected him, saying that she did not love him and that she was afraid to marry an American. She said that the Polish intervention in the 1920's had led to the arrest of all people in the Soviet Union of Polish origin and she feared that something similar might happen to Americans some day. Oswald was "too stunned to think," and concluded that she had gone out with him only because she was envied by the other girls for having an American as an escort.⁵⁹⁸ But in one of the entries in the diary he appears to have attributed her failure to love him to "a state of fear which was always in the Soviet Union."⁵⁹⁹ His affection for Ella German apparently continued for some time; ⁶⁰⁰ he had his last formal date with her in February and remained on friendly terms with her as long as he was in Russia.⁶⁰¹

After he returned to the United States, Oswald often commented on Russian life. He discussed the Soviet systems of public education ⁶⁰² and medical care.⁶⁰³ He observed to one acquaintance that everyone in Russia was trained to do something,⁶⁰⁴ and discussed with another the system of regular wage and salary increases.⁶⁰⁵ His most frequent criticisms concerned the contrast between the lives of ordinary workers and the lives of Communist Party members. He told an acquaintance in Dallas that the working class in the Soviet Union made just about enough to buy clothing and food and that only party members could afford luxuries.⁶⁰⁶ On another occasion, he remarked

that if he had had as much money as some of the "managers," he could have visited the Black Sea resorts.⁶⁰⁷ He complained about the lack of freedom in Russia; ⁶⁰⁸ the lack of opportunity to travel; ⁶⁰⁹ inadequate housing; ⁶¹⁰ and the chronic scarcity of food products.⁶¹¹ To one acquaintance, he observed that the party members were all "opportunists," who "shouted the loudest and made the most noise," but who were interested only in their own welfare.⁶¹²

He expressed similar views in a manuscript which he worked on in Russia ⁶¹³ and probably intended to publish; soon after he returned to the United States, he hired a stenographer to prepare a typed draft from his notes.⁶¹⁴ Oswald described the manuscript, which amounted to 50 typed pages, as "a look into the lives of work-a-day average Russians."⁶¹⁵

The manuscript describes the factory in which Oswald worked and suggests that political considerations of which Oswald disapproved dominated its operation. He attributed the lack of unemployment to the shortage of labor-saving machinery and the heavy load of bureaucracy, which kept "tons of paper work" flowing in and out of the factory and required a high foreman-worker ratio.⁶¹⁶ In addition, he wrote, there was "a small army of examiners, committees, and supply checkers and the quality-control board."⁶¹⁷

He described life in Russia, including life at the factory, as centered around the "Kollektive." The head of the Kollektive in his shop, Comrade Lebizen, saw to it that everyone maintained shop discipline, attended party meetings, and received all the new propaganda as it came out. He hung the walls of the shop with signs and slogans of the Communist Party. Meetings of the Kollektive were "so numerous as to be staggering." In a single month, there were scheduled one meeting of the professional union, four political information meetings, two young Communist meetings, one meeting of the production committee to discuss ways of improving work, two Communist Party meetings, four meetings of the "School of Communist Labor," and one sports meeting. All but one of them were compulsory for Communist Party members and all but three were compulsory for everyone.⁶¹⁸ (Marina Oswald testified that her husband did not attend the courses in Marxism and Leninism given in the factory for party members and those who wished to become party members.)⁶¹⁹ They were scheduled so as not to interfere with work, and lasted anywhere from 10 minutes to 2 hours. Oswald said that no one liked the meetings, which were accepted "philosophically"; at the political meetings especially, everyone paid strict attention, and party members were posted in the audience to watch for the slightest sign that anyone's attention might relax, even for a moment.⁶²⁰

Oswald wrote that the "spontaneous" demonstrations on Soviet holidays or for distinguished visitors were almost as well organized as the Kollektivist meetings at the factory.⁶²¹ He noted that elections were supervised to ensure that everyone voted, and that they voted for the candidates of the Communist Party. The manuscript touches on other aspects of Soviet life—as the housing shortage and the corrup-

tion which it evoked, the "rest-homes" where workers had their vacations, television and the omni-present radio, and Russian reading habits.⁶²² This writing also may include only what Oswald thought might be acceptable.

On January 4, 1961, 1 year after he had been issued his "stateless" residence permit, Oswald was summoned to the passport office in Minsk and asked if he still wanted to become a Soviet citizen. He replied that he did not, but asked that his residence permit be extended for another year.⁶²³ The entry in his diary for January 4-31 reads: "I am stating to reconsider my disire about staying. The work is drab. The money I get has nowhere to be spent. No nightclubs or bowling allys, no places of recreation accept the trade union dances. I have had enough."⁶²⁴

The American Embassy in Moscow had not heard from Oswald after it received his letter of November 3, 1959.⁶²⁵ On February 13, 1961, it received an undated letter from him which had been mailed in Minsk about a week earlier. He asked for the return of his passport and stated that he wanted to return to the United States if he could "come to some agreement [with the American Government] concerning the dropping of any legal proceedings" against him. He noted that he had not become a Soviet citizen and was living in Russia with "nonpermanent type papers for a foreigner," and said that he did not appear personally because he could not leave Minsk without permission. The letter concluded: "I hope that in recalling the responsibility I have to America that you remember yours in doing everything you can to help me, since I am an American citizen."⁶²⁶ In this letter, Oswald referred to a previous letter which he said had gone unanswered; there is evidence that such a letter was never sent.⁶²⁷

The Second Secretary, Richard Snyder, answered on February 28 that Oswald would have to appear at the Embassy personally to discuss his return to the United States.⁶²⁸ In the meantime, Oswald's mother, who in January had inquired at the Department of State about his whereabouts,⁶²⁹ had been notified of his letter.⁶³⁰ A second letter from Oswald, posted on March 5, reached the Embassy on March 20; it reiterated that he was unable to leave Minsk without permission and asked that "preliminary inquiries * * * be put in the form of a questionnaire" and sent to him.⁶³¹ His diary entry for this period records his "state of expectation about going back to the U.S.," and adds that a friend had approved his plans but warned him not to discuss them with others.⁶³² (The Soviet authorities had undoubtedly intercepted and read the correspondence between Oswald and the Embassy and knew of his plans.⁶³³ Soon after the correspondence began, his monthly payments from the "Red Cross" were cut off.)⁶³⁴ Having informed Washington,⁶³⁵ the Embassy wrote to Oswald on March 24, stating again that he would have to come to Moscow.⁶³⁶ Later, the Department of State decided that Oswald's passport should be returned to him only if he appeared at the Embassy for it and the Embassy was satisfied, after exploring the matter with him, that he had not renounced his citizenship.⁶³⁷

Sometime in the second week of March, Miss Katherine Mallory, who was on tour in Minsk with the University of Michigan symphonic band, found herself surrounded by curious Russian citizens. A young man who identified himself as a Texan and former marine stepped out of the crowd and asked if she needed an interpreter; he interpreted for her for the next 15 or 20 minutes. Later he told her that he despised the United States and hoped to stay in Minsk for the rest of his life. Miss Mallory is unable to swear that her interpreter was Oswald, but is personally convinced that it was he.⁶³⁸

A few days later, probably on March 17, Oswald attended a trade union dance with a friend, Erik Titovyets, at the Palace of Culture for Professional Workers in Minsk.⁶³⁹ The dance followed a lecture by a Russian woman who had recently returned from a trip to the United States.⁶⁴⁰ Marina Nikolayevna Prusakova arrived too late to hear the lecture⁶⁴¹ but was at the dance. Oswald noticed her and asked Yuriy Merezhinskiy, the son of the lecturer and a friend of both Oswald and Marina, to introduce him to her. Oswald asked her to dance. According to the diary, they liked each other immediately and he obtained her telephone number before she left.⁶⁴² Marina testified that she told Oswald that she might see him at another dance, but did not give him her telephone number.⁶⁴³ Oswald was smitten.⁶⁴⁴

Marina Prusakova was 19 years old when she met Oswald. (See Commission Exhibit No. 1395, p. 270.) She was born on July 17, 1941, at Severodvinsk (formerly Molotovsk), Arkhangel Oblast', Russia.⁶⁴⁵ A few years later, her mother, Klavdiya Vasilievna Prusakova, married Aleksandr Ivanovich Medvedev, who became the only father Marina knew.⁶⁴⁶ While she was still a young girl, Marina went to Arkhangel'sk, Arkhangel Oblast', to live with her maternal grandparents, Tatyana Yakovlevna Prusakova and Vasiliy Prusakov. Her grandfather died when Marina was about 4 years old; she continued to live with her grandmother for some time.⁶⁴⁷ When she was not more than 7, she moved to Zgurutva, Moldavian SSR (formerly called Bessarabia) to live with her mother and stepfather, who was an electrical worker.⁶⁴⁸ In 1952, the family moved to Leningrad,⁶⁴⁹ where her stepfather obtained a job in a power station.⁶⁵⁰ Marina testified that neither he nor her mother was a member of the Communist Party.⁶⁵¹

In Leningrad, Marina attended the Three Hundred and Seventy-Fourth Women's School. After she had completed the seventh grade at the school in 1955,⁶⁵² she entered the Pharmacy Teknikum for special training, which she had requested on the ground that her mother was ill and Marina might need to have a specialty in order to support herself. While she was at the Teknikum, she joined the Trade Union for Medical Workers⁶⁵³ and, in her last year there, worked part time in the Central Pharmacy in Leningrad. She graduated from the Teknikum with a diploma in pharmacy in June 1959.

Marina's mother had died in 1957, during Marina's second year at the Teknikum; she continued to live with her stepfather, but had little contact with him. She testified that she did not get along with

her stepfather, whom she displeased by her fresh conduct; she said that she was not easily disciplined⁶⁵⁴ and was a source of concern to him.⁶⁵⁵ Because of the friction between them, Marina regarded her childhood as an unhappy one.

After her graduation, Marina was assigned to a job preparing and packing orders in a pharmaceutical warehouse in Leningrad; as a new employee she had the right to leave this job within 3 days after the assignment,⁶⁵⁶ and she did so after the first day. She took no job for the next 2 months, at the end of which she went to live in Minsk with an aunt and uncle, the Prusakovs, who had no children. She had known them since she was a child and there was a mutual affection between her and them.⁶⁵⁷ Her uncle, a member of the Communist Party,⁶⁵⁸ was assigned to the Ministry of Internal Affairs and headed the local bureau concerned with lumber. The Prusakovs had one of the best apartments in a building reserved for MVD employees.⁶⁵⁹

Marina was 18 when she arrived in Minsk. She had had boyfriends in Leningrad but was not interested in marriage. In October 1960 she started work in the drug section of the Third Clinical Hospital where she earned about 450 rubles per month;⁶⁶⁰ at about the same time she became a member of the local Komsomol, the Communist youth organization.⁶⁶¹ Her friends were mostly students, whose social life consisted of meeting in cafes to sip coffee, read newspapers, gossip, and carry on discussions. The group of friends "ran together," and Marina did not attach herself to a particular boyfriend. She enjoyed this life, which she had been leading for about 7 months when she met Oswald at the dance at the Palace of Culture in March 1961.⁶⁶²

When Marina met Oswald, she thought he was from one of the Russian-speaking Baltic countries because he spoke with an accent; later that same evening she learned that he was an American.⁶⁶³ She met him again at another dance a week later.⁶⁶⁴ They danced together most of the evening, at the end of which he walked home with her. They arranged to meet again the following week.⁶⁶⁵ Before the scheduled time, Oswald called to say that he was in the hospital and that Marina should visit him there.⁶⁶⁶ Medical records furnished to the Commission by the Russian Government show that Oswald was admitted to the Clinical Hospital—Ear, Nose, and Throat Division, on Thursday, March 30, 1961.⁶⁶⁷ Marina visited him often,⁶⁶⁸ taking advantage of her uniform to visit him outside regular visiting hours, which were only on Sunday.⁶⁶⁹ On Easter Sunday, the first Sunday after his admission to the hospital, she brought him an Easter egg.⁶⁷⁰ On a subsequent visit, he asked her to be his fiancée, and she agreed to consider it.⁶⁷¹ He left the hospital on April 11.⁶⁷²

During these visits, Marina apparently discussed with Oswald his reasons for coming to Russia and his current status. According to her later account, he told her that he had surrendered his American documents to the Embassy in Moscow and had told American officials that he did not intend to return to the United States. He did not say definitely that he was no longer an American citizen, but said in answer

to a question about his citizenship that he could not return to the United States.⁶⁷³

Oswald visited Marina regularly at her aunt and uncle's apartment; they were apparently not disturbed by the fact that he was an American and did not disapprove of her seeing him. He continued to ask her to marry him and, according to her recollection, she accepted his proposal on April 20; ⁶⁷⁴ Oswald's diary puts the date 5 days earlier.⁶⁷⁵ Marina testified that she believed that Oswald could not return to the United States when she agreed to marry him, and that she had not married him in hope of going to the United States.⁶⁷⁶

After filing notice of their intent to marry at the registrar, obtaining the special consent necessary for an alien to marry a citizen, and waiting the usual 10 days, they were married on April 30.⁶⁷⁷ The diary entry for the wedding day reads:

two of Marinas girl friends act as bridesmaids. We are married. At her aunts home we have a dinner reception for about 20 friends and neboribos who wish us happiness (in spite of my origin and accept [accent?] which was in general rather disquiting to any Russian since for. are very rare in the soviet Union even tourist. After an evening of eating and drinking in which * * * [Marina's uncle] started a fright [fight?] and the fuse blow on an overloaded circite we take our leave and walk the 15 minutes to our home. We lived near each other, at midnight we were home.⁶⁷⁸

They both took 3 days off from their jobs, which they spent in Minsk.⁶⁷⁹

Oswald wrote in his diary for May 1, 1 day after the wedding: "In spite of fact I married Marina to hurt Ella I found myself in love with Marina."⁶⁸⁰ The next entry, marked simply "May," reads in part:

The trasistion of changing full love from Ella to Marina was very painfull esp. as I saw Ella almost every day at the factory but as the days & weeks went by I adjusted more and more [to] my wife mentaly * * * She is maddly in love with me from the very start. Boat rides on Lake Minsk walks through the parks evening at home or at Aunt Valia's place mark May."⁶⁸¹

And in June: "A continence of May, except that; we draw closer and closer, and I think very little now of Ella."⁶⁸²

Sometime within the first month or two after they were married Oswald told his wife that he was anxious to return to the United States. The diary says that he told her "in the last days" of June and that she was "slightly startled" but encouraged him to do as he wished.⁶⁸³ Marina's recollection is that she learned of his plan between May and July. Embassy records show that Oswald notified the Embassy in a letter received on May 25 that he was married and his wife would

seek to accompany him to the United States.⁶⁸⁴ At about this time, the Oswalds began to make inquiries in Soviet offices about exit visas.⁶⁸⁵

While these preparations were being made, the Oswalds apparently enjoyed their new life.⁶⁸⁶ They ate most of their meals in cafes or at restaurants where they worked.⁶⁸⁷ For amusement, they went boating, attended the opera, concerts, the circus, and films; occasionally, they gathered with a group of friends for a cooperative meal at someone's apartment.⁶⁸⁸ His Russian improved, but he retained an accent and never learned to speak grammatically or to write well.⁶⁸⁹ He read the English language edition of the Daily Worker and books, also in English, on Marxism and Leninism; he also read some Russian newspapers.⁶⁹⁰

Before he married Marina (and presumably before February, when he had begun his efforts to return to the United States) Oswald had applied for admission to the Patrice Lumumba Friendship University in Moscow. He received a letter dated May 3 apologizing for the delay in responding to his application and turning it down on the ground that the university had been established exclusively for students from the underdeveloped countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America.⁶⁹¹ Oswald expressed his disappointment at having been turned down to Marina.⁶⁹²

Oswald reopened his correspondence with his family on May 5, with a friendly letter to his brother Robert. He said nothing about his contacts with the American Embassy, but mentioned that he had married, and that he had a job as a "metal-smith" and was living well. He asked his brother for their mother's address, and encouraged him to come to Minsk for a visit.⁶⁹³ Robert answered the letter quickly. On May 31, Oswald wrote again and expressed his pleasure at having heard from Robert after so long. Apparently in response to an offer to send him whatever he needed, Oswald wrote that he needed nothing and thanked Robert for the thought; he suggested, however, that Marina might like a small wedding present. At the end of the letter he said that he did not know whether he would ever return to the United States; he said that before he could return he would have to obtain the permission of the Soviet Union for him and Marina to leave and insure that no charges would be lodged against him in the United States. In this letter, he mentioned that he was in touch with the Embassy in Moscow.⁶⁹⁴ At about this time, Oswald wrote also to his mother.⁶⁹⁵

On May 25, the Embassy received a letter mailed in Minsk about 10 days before, in which Oswald asked for assurances that he would not be prosecuted if he returned to the United States, and informed the Embassy that he had married a Russian woman who would want to accompany him.⁶⁹⁶ The Embassy communicated this development to Washington⁶⁹⁷ and did not answer Oswald immediately. In addition, he had had no word since March concerning the return of his passport. Impatient for action,⁶⁹⁸ he appeared without warning at the Embassy on July 8; it was a Saturday and the offices were closed.⁶⁹⁹ He used the house telephone to reach Snyder, who came

to the office, talked with him briefly, and suggested that he return on the following Monday.⁷⁰⁰ Oswald called Marina and asked her to join him in Moscow. She arrived on Sunday, July 9,⁷⁰¹ and they took a room at the Hotel Berlin,⁷⁰² where he had stayed when he first arrived in Russia.

Oswald returned to the Embassy on Monday. Marina waited outside during his interview with Snyder,⁷⁰³ who asked to see Oswald's Soviet papers and questioned him closely about his life in Russia and possible expatriating acts. Oswald stated that he was not a citizen of the Soviet Union and had never formally applied for citizenship, that he had never taken an oath of allegiance to the Soviet Union, and that he was not a member of the factory trade union organization. He said that he had never given Soviet officials any confidential information that he had learned in the Marines, had never been asked to give such information, and "doubted" that he would have done so had he been asked.⁷⁰⁴ Some of Oswald's statements during this interview were undoubtedly false. He had almost certainly applied for citizenship in the Soviet Union⁷⁰⁵ and, at least for a time, been disappointed when it was denied.⁷⁰⁶ He possessed a membership card in the union organization.⁷⁰⁷ In addition, his assertion to Snyder that he had never been questioned by Soviet authorities concerning his life in the United States is simply unbelievable.

Oswald showed anxiety, already displayed in his letters, that he might be prosecuted and imprisoned if he returned to the United States. Snyder told him informally that he did not know any grounds on which he would be prosecuted but that he could give no assurances in this regard.⁷⁰⁸ Snyder testified that Oswald seemed to have matured while he was in Russia and did not show the bravado and arrogance which characterized his first contacts with the Embassy. Oswald told him that he had "learned a hard lesson the hard way" and had acquired a new appreciation of the United States and the meaning of freedom.⁷⁰⁹

Since Oswald's passport would expire on September 10, 1961,⁷¹⁰ before which date he probably would not be able to obtain Russian exit papers, he filled out an application for its renewal.⁷¹¹ On a questionnaire attached to the application,⁷¹² he reiterated his oral statements that he had obtained only a residence permit in the Soviet Union and was still an American national. On the basis of Oswald's written and oral statements, Snyder concluded that he had not expatriated himself and returned his passport, stamped valid only for direct travel to the United States,⁷¹³ to him. Accompanied by his wife,⁷¹⁴ Oswald came to the Embassy again on the following day,⁷¹⁵ to initiate procedures for her admission to the United States as an immigrant; they had a routine interview with McVickar, Snyder's assistant.⁷¹⁶ Three days later, they returned to Minsk.⁷¹⁷

On the same day, Oswald wrote to his brother. He told Robert that he had his passport again and that he and Marina were doing everything possible to leave the Soviet Union. Apparently referring to his initial reappearance at the Embassy in quest of his passport, he

wrote: "I could write a book about how many feeling have come and gone since that day." The letter closed with an affectionate greeting to his brother and his family.⁷¹⁸ The letter's tone of firm purpose to return to the United States in the face of heavy odds reflected Oswald's attitude thereafter.

As soon as they returned to Minsk, the Oswalds began to work with local authorities for permission to leave the country.⁷¹⁹ His diary entry for July 16 through August 20 reads,

We have found out which blanks and certificates are necessary to apply for a exit visa. They number about 20 papers; birth certificates, affidavit, photos, ect. On Aug 20th we give the papers out they say it will be 3½ months before we know wheather they let us go or not. In the meantime Marina has had to stade 4 differant meeting at the place of work held by her boss's at the direction of "someone" by phone. The Young Comm. leauge headquttes also called about her and she had to go see them for 1½ hours. The purpose (expressed) is to dissuade her from going to the U.S.A. Net effect: Make her more stubborn about wanting to go. Marina is pregnet. We only hope that the visas come through soon.⁷²⁰

In a letter dated July 15, he reported their efforts to the Embassy, and said that he would keep it informed "as to the overall picture." The letter mentioned that Marina was having difficulties at work because of her decision to leave but added that such "tactics" were "quite useless" and that Marina had "stood up well, without getting into trouble."⁷²¹ For August 21 through September 1, the diary reads:

I make repeated trips to the passport & visa office, also to Ministry of For. Affairs in Minsk, also Min. of Internal Affairs, all of which have a say in the granting of a visa. I extractted promises of quick attention to us.⁷²²

For September through October 18, "No word from Min. ('They'll call us.')." ⁷²³

Marina testified that when the news of her visit to the American Embassy in July reached Minsk, she was dropped from membership in "Komsomol," the Communist Youth Organization,⁷²⁴ and that "meetings were arranged" at which "members of the various organizations" attempted to dissuade her from leaving the Soviet Union.⁷²⁵ Her aunt and uncle did not speak to her for "a long time."⁷²⁶ Paul Gregory, to whom Marina taught Russian in the United States, testified that she once referred to this period of her life in Minsk as "a very horrible time."⁷²⁷

Oswald wrote to the Embassy again on October 4, to request that the U.S. Government officially intervene to facilitate his and his wife's applications for exit visas.⁷²⁸ He stated that there had been "systematic and concerted attempts to intimidate [Marina] * * * into with-

drawing her application for a visa" which had resulted in her being hospitalized for a 5-day period on September 22 for "nervous exhaustion."⁷²⁹ Marina has denied that she was hospitalized for a nervous disorder⁷³⁰ and he made no mention of it in his diary or letters to his family; he probably lied to the Embassy. The Embassy replied to his letter on October 12, saying that it had no way of influencing Soviet conduct on such matters and that its experience had been that action on applications for exit visas was "seldom taken rapidly."⁷³¹

In October 1961 Marina took her annual vacation.⁷³² She and Oswald agreed that she should get a "change of scenery,"⁷³³ and she spent about 3 weeks with an aunt in Khar'kov. It is possible that they were not getting along well together during this period.⁷³⁴ A dairy entry after her return indicates that they were having some quarrels and that she was wavering in her decision to go to the United States, which Oswald attributed to anxiety about their applications for visas and the fact that she was pregnant; he in turn dreaded the approach of the "hard Russian winter."⁷³⁵ He noted in his dairy that he was lonely while she was gone, but that he and his friend "Erich," presumably Erik Titovyets, went to some dances and other public amusements.⁷³⁶ On his 22nd birthday he went alone to see his favorite opera, "The Queen of Spades."⁷³⁷ Marina sent him a gold and silver cup, inscribed "To my dear husband on his birthday, 18/x/61" and other gifts, for which he wrote to thank her.⁷³⁸ She returned on November 12, in Oswald's words, "radiant, with several jars of preserves for me from her aunt."⁷³⁹

Sometime after Marina's return Oswald applied for an interview with Col. Nicolay Aksenov, an official in the local MVD, in an effort to expedite their application for exit visas; he was told by the colonel's subordinates that they were competent to handle the matter. Oswald then insisted that Marina seek an interview; she agreed reluctantly. The interview was granted;⁷⁴⁰ Marina thought that this might have been due to the fact that her uncle was also a high-ranking official in the Minsk MVD, but she did not believe that he would personally have presumed on his official position to obtain special treatment.⁷⁴¹ Colonel Aksenov questioned her about her reasons for wanting to go to the United States and, noticing that she was pregnant, suggested that she at least delay her departure so that her child could be born in Russia, but did not otherwise try to discourage her. He finally told her that there were many others seeking visas and that she and her husband would have to wait their turn.⁷⁴²

Throughout this period, Oswald continued to correspond with his mother and brother. His letters contained the usual chatter among members of a family and occasional references to the progress of the visa applications.⁷⁴³ He wrote to the Embassy on November 1, saying that if, as he anticipated, his residence permit were renewed in January for another year, it would be over his protest.⁷⁴⁴ On November 13 the Embassy replied, telling Oswald that retention of his Soviet passport, which was of the kind issued to persons considered to be stateless, or an extension of it, would not prejudice his claim to Ameri-

can citizenship. The letter added that he could discuss the renewal of his American passport whenever he appeared in person at the Embassy to do so.⁷⁴⁵

Late in December, Oswald wrote a letter to Senator John G. Tower of Texas, which was received in Washington near the end of January. He stated that he was an American citizen and that the Soviet Government refused to permit him and his wife to leave the Soviet Union. He asked Senator Tower to raise "the question of holding by the Soviet Union of a citizen of the U.S., against his will and expressed desires." The letter was referred to the State Department and no further action concerning it was taken.⁷⁴⁶ On December 25, Marina was called to the Soviet Passport Office and told that exit visas would be granted to her and her husband; she was surprised, having doubted that she would ever be permitted to leave. Oswald wrote to the Embassy on December 27 that they would be given visas and asked that his passport be extended without another trip to Moscow; he added, however, that he would come to Moscow if this would expedite the processing of his application. In his diary, he wrote, "It's great (I think?)." ⁷⁴⁷ Before the year ended, Marina went on maternity leave from her job.⁷⁴⁸ They spent New Year's Eve at a dinner party given by the Zigers.⁷⁴⁹

Oswald wrote to his mother on January 2, 1962, and told her that he and his wife expected to arrive in the United States sometime around March. He asked her to contact the local Red Cross and request that it put his case before the International Rescue Committee or some other group which aids immigrants to the United States. He told her that he would need about \$800 and that she should insist on a gift rather than a loan; he told her not to send any of her own money.⁷⁵⁰ Despite his instructions, she requested a loan from the Red Cross.⁷⁵¹ On January 13, Oswald wrote to the International Rescue Committee himself; he asked for \$800 with which to purchase two tickets from Moscow to Texas.⁷⁵² He wrote to the Committee again on January 26, this time asking for \$1,000.⁷⁵³

In the meantime, letters of Oswald ⁷⁵⁴ and the American Embassy,⁷⁵⁵ both dated January 5, crossed in the mail. The Embassy's letter suggested that since there might be difficulties in obtaining an American visa for Marina, he consider returning alone and bringing her over later. He replied on the 16th that he would not leave Russia without her.⁷⁵⁶ In his letter, Oswald requested that the U.S. Government loan him the money for his and Marina's airplane tickets or arrange a loan from another source. The Embassy replied on January 15 that Marina had not yet obtained an American visa and that no evidence had yet been submitted that she would not become a public charge in the United States.⁷⁵⁷ It suggested that Oswald's mother or some other close relative file an affidavit of support in Marina's behalf. Before receiving this letter, Oswald wrote out such a document himself ⁷⁵⁸ and mailed it to the Embassy.⁷⁵⁹

On January 23, after receiving the Embassy's letter, he wrote that his own affidavit should be sufficient, since he had been away from

the United States for more than 2 years and could not be expected to obtain an affidavit from someone else.⁷⁶⁰ But on the same day, he wrote to his mother asking that she file an affidavit of support with the Immigration and Naturalization Service.⁷⁶¹ On January 24, the Embassy acknowledged receipt of his affidavit, but again suggested that he obtain one from someone else.⁷⁶²

Late in January, Oswald received a letter from his mother telling him that he had been given a dishonorable discharge from the Marines.⁷⁶³ (The discharge had actually been "undesirable," a less derogatory characterization.)⁷⁶⁴ This apparently revived his fear of prosecution, and on January 30, he wrote to his brother for more information.⁷⁶⁵ On the same day he wrote also to John B. Connally, Jr., then Governor of Texas, who Oswald believed was still Secretary of Navy. The letter read:

I wish to call your attention to a case about which you may have personal knowlege since you are a resident of Ft. Worth as I am.

In November 1959 an event was well publicated in the Ft. Worth newspapers concerning a person who had gone to the Soviet Union to reside for a short time, (much in the same way E. Hemingway resided in Paris.)

This person in answers to questions put to him by reporteds in Moscow criticized certain facets of american life. The story was blown up into another "turncoat" sensation, with the result that the Navy department gave this person a belated dishonourable discharge, although he had received an honourable discharge after three years service on Sept. 11, 1959 at El Toro, Marine corps base in California.

These are the basic facts of *my* case.

I have and allways had the full sanction of the U.S. Embassy, Moscow USSR. and hence the U.S. government. In as much as I am returning to the U.S.A. in this year with the aid of the U.S. Embassy, bring with me my family (since I married in the USSR) I shall employ all means to right this gross mistake or injustice to a boni-fied U.S. citizen and *ex*-service man. The U.S. government has no charges or complaints against me. I ask you to look into this case and take the neccessary steps to repair the damage done to me and my family. For information I would direct you to consult the American Embassy, Chikovski St. 19/21, Moscow, USSR.⁷⁶⁶

Connally referred the letter to the Department of the Navy,⁷⁶⁷ which sent Oswald a letter stating that the Department contemplated no change in the undesirable discharge.⁷⁶⁸ On March 22, Oswald wrote to the Department insisting that his discharge be given a further, full review.⁷⁶⁹ The Department promptly replied that it had no authority to hear and review petitions of this sort and referred Oswald to the Navy Discharge Review Board.⁷⁷⁰ Oswald filled out

the enclosed application for review in Minsk but did not mail it until he returned to the United States.⁷⁷¹

The Department of State had notified Oswald's mother that it would need \$900 to make the travel arrangements for her son and daughter-in-law.⁷⁷² On February 1, Oswald sent his mother a brief letter rejecting her suggestion that she try to raise money by telling the newspapers about his financial plight.⁷⁷³ Five days later, the Embassy wrote to Oswald and asked him to make formal application for a loan.⁷⁷⁴ Oswald wrote to his mother again on February 9, reminding her to file an affidavit of support and asking that she send him clippings from the Fort Worth newspapers about his defection to Russia, a request which he later repeated to his brother. He told her that he wanted to know what had been written about him, so that he could be "forewarned."⁷⁷⁵

Oswald took Marina to the hospital on the morning of February 15. A baby girl was born at about 10 a.m.⁷⁷⁶ He had gone on to the factory where news of the birth awaited him on his arrival.⁷⁷⁷ In accordance with regular hospital practice,⁷⁷⁸ he did not see the baby until Marina left the hospital.⁷⁷⁹ He was excited by the child,⁷⁸⁰ who was named "June Lee" in accordance with the Russian custom and law that a child's second name must be the father's first name or a variation of it. He had wanted to name his child "June Marina," and protested the application of the law to her, since he had a United States passport. His diary contains the wry comment, "Po-Ruski."⁷⁸¹ His coworkers at the factory gave the Oswalds "one summer blanket, 6 light diapers, 4 warm diapers, 2 chemises, 3 very good warm chemises, 4 very nice suits and two toys" for the baby.⁷⁸² Marina came home on February 23.⁷⁸³

There was less urgency about the departure for the United States after June Lee was born.⁷⁸⁴ Oswald wrote to his mother,⁷⁸⁵ and brother,⁷⁸⁶ that he would probably not arrive for several months. The Embassy received a letter on March 3, in which Oswald applied for a loan of \$800; ⁷⁸⁷ the Embassy replied that it was authorized to loan him only \$500.⁷⁸⁸ It had in the meantime decided that his own affidavit of support for Marina would be sufficient under the circumstances.⁷⁸⁹ On March 15, he received notification from the Immigration and Naturalization Service that Marina's application for a visa had been approved.⁷⁹⁰ By March 28, he had received an affidavit of support in Marina's behalf from his mother's employer, Byron K. Phillips,⁷⁹¹ which he filed although it was no longer necessary to do so.⁷⁹² A few days before, Marina, still on maternity leave, had quit her job.⁷⁹³ Discussions with the Embassy to complete financial and travel arrangements continued in April and May.⁷⁹⁴ In a letter to Robert on April 12, Oswald wrote that only "the American side" was holding up their departure, but added that the winter being over, he didn't "really * * * want to leave until the beginning of fall, since the spring and summer * * * [in Russia] are so nice."⁷⁹⁵

On May 10, the Embassy wrote that everything was in order and suggested that Oswald come to the Embassy with his family to sign the final papers.⁷⁹⁶ At his request,⁷⁹⁷ he was discharged from the factory on about May 18.⁷⁹⁸ His work had apparently never been very good. Marina testified that he was rather lazy and resented having to take orders.⁷⁹⁹ This estimate is confirmed by a report of the plant director and personnel department chief, filed on December 11, 1961, which was apparently a routine assessment of his work. The report noted that he did not "display the initiative for increasing his skill" in his job, that he was "over-sensitive * * * to remarks from the foremen, and * * * careless in his work"; Oswald took "no part in the social life of the shop" and kept "very much to himself."⁸⁰⁰

Oswald picked up his Soviet exit visa on May 22;⁸⁰¹ at about this time, he also had an interview with an official of the MVD to obtain final clearance for his departure.⁸⁰² He wrote to Robert that he and his family would leave for Moscow on the following day and depart for England 10 to 14 days later. He expected to cross the Atlantic by ship, probably docking in New Orleans. Returning to a point which he had made in an earlier letter to his mother, he commented that he knew from the newspaper clippings what Robert had said about him when he left for Russia; he thought that Robert had talked too much at that time, and asked that Robert say nothing to the newspapers now.⁸⁰³

The Oswalds arrived in Moscow by May 24⁸⁰⁴ and on that date filled out various documents at the American Embassy;⁸⁰⁵ Marina was given her American visa.⁸⁰⁶ Final arrangements for their emigration were made with Soviet officials.⁸⁰⁷ On June 1, Oswald signed a promissory note at the Embassy for a repatriation loan of \$435.71.⁸⁰⁸ He and his family boarded a train for Holland,⁸⁰⁹ which passed through Minsk that night.⁸¹⁰ They crossed the Soviet frontier at Brest on June 2. Two days later, they departed from Holland on the SS *Maasdam*.⁸¹¹ Onboard ship, the Oswalds stayed by themselves; Marina testified that she did not often go on deck because she was poorly dressed and Oswald was ashamed of her.⁸¹²

Probably while he was on board the *Maasdam* Oswald wrote some notes on ship stationery, which appear to be a summary of what he thought he had learned by living under both the capitalist and Communist systems. The notes reflect his unhappy and deepening feeling of disillusionment with both the Soviet Union and the United States. Oswald observed that although reform groups may oppose the government in power, they always declare that they are for their people and their country, and he asked what "would happen if somebody was to stand up and say he was utterly opposed not only to the governments, but to the people, too the entire land and complete foundations" of his society. He condemned existing political groups and proposed the formation of a third choice between communism and capitalism, neither of which was acceptable to him. "I have lived," he said, "under both systems, I have *sought* the answers and although it would

be very easy to dupe myself into believing one system is better than the other, I know they are not." In these notes, he acknowledged that his "Red Cross" subsidy had been paid by the Soviet Government rather than the international organization, and said, "I shall never sell myself intentionally, or unintentionally to anyone again."⁸¹³ (Commission Exhibit No. 25, p. 273.) It was probably also onboard ship that Oswald wrote two sets of answers to questions which he anticipated about his decision to go to Russia and later to return to the United States. Although the sets of answers are somewhat similar, but the tone of one is apologetic, while the other suggests that Oswald went to Russia to study the Soviet system, but remained a loyal American and owed no apologies.⁸¹⁴

The *Maasdam* landed at Hoboken, N.J., on June 13.⁸¹⁵ The Oswalds were met by Spas T. Raikin, a representative of the Traveler's Aid Society, which had been contacted by the Department of State; Raikin had the impression that Oswald was trying to avoid meeting anyone. He told Raikin that he had only \$63 and had no plans either for that night or for travel to Fort Worth, and accepted the society's help, according to Raikin, "with confidence and appreciation."⁸¹⁶ They passed through the immigration office without incident,⁸¹⁷ and Raikin helped them through customs.⁸¹⁸

The society referred the Oswalds to the New York City Department of Welfare, which helped them find a room at the Times Square Hotel.⁸¹⁹ Oswald told both Raikin and representatives of the welfare department that he had been a marine stationed at the American Embassy in Moscow, had married a Russian girl, renounced his citizenship, and worked in Minsk; he soon found out, he said, that the Russian propaganda was inaccurate but had not been able to obtain an exit visa for his wife and child for more than 2 years. He said also that he had paid the travel expenses himself.⁸²⁰

The welfare department called Robert Oswald's home in Fort Worth. His wife answered and said that they would help. She contacted her husband who sent \$200 immediately.⁸²¹ Oswald refused to accept the money and insisted that the department itself should pay the fare to Texas; he threatened that they would go as far as they could on \$63 and rely on local authorities to get them the rest of the way. In the end he accepted the money.⁸²² On the afternoon of June 14, the Oswalds left New York by plane for Fort Worth.⁸²³

FORT WORTH, DALLAS, NEW ORLEANS

Oswald had originally indicated that he and his family would stay with his mother in Vernon, Tex.⁸²⁴ His decision to stay with Robert Oswald in Fort Worth apparently had been prompted by his brother's invitation in a letter to him in Russia.⁸²⁵ Oswald listed only his brother as a relative on an "Intake Interview" form which he prepared for the New York Department of Welfare.⁸²⁶

Robert took his wife and children to Love Field, the Dallas airport, to meet Lee and Marina and their baby, June Lee.⁸²⁷ He testified that the most noticeable change in his brother's appearance was that he had become rather bald; he seemed also to be somewhat thinner than he had been in 1959. Robert thought that his brother had picked up "something of an accent" but, except for these changes was "the same boy" whom he had known before.⁸²⁸ Lee commented on the absence of newspaper reporters and seemed to Robert to be disappointed that none had appeared.⁸²⁹ Later on, Lee was anxious to avoid publicity.⁸³⁰

Robert drove the Oswalds to his home at 7313 Davenport Street.⁸³¹ For a few days, Lee seemed tense,⁸³² but the brothers got along well,⁸³³ and to Robert it was "more or less * * * [as if Lee] had not been to Russia"; they were "just together again."⁸³⁴ They did not discuss politics, according to Robert because of a "tacit agreement" between them.⁸³⁵ Lee indicated to his brother that he hoped to have his undesirable discharge from the Marines corrected.⁸³⁶ Robert and his wife "took to Marina and June," and enjoyed showing Marina "things that she had never seen before."⁸³⁷ Marina rested and took care of her baby, and when she could, helped in the household.⁸³⁸ She testified that, apart from a trip to the library, Lee spent about a week "merely talking."⁸³⁹

On June 18, 4 days after he arrived in Fort Worth, Oswald went to the office of Mrs. Pauline Virginia Bates, a public stenographer whose name he had found in the telephone directory,⁸⁴⁰ and asked her to type a manuscript from the "scraps of paper," on which he had recorded his impressions of the Soviet Union.⁸⁴¹ Intrigued by his tale that he had just returned from the Soviet Union and had smuggled his notes out of that country, she agreed to type the notes for \$1 per page or \$2 an hour, 50 cents less than her usual hourly rate.⁸⁴² On that day and the succeeding 2 days, Mrs. Bates spent 8 hours typing for Oswald while he remained in her office helping her with the notes and translating portions of them which were in Russian.⁸⁴³ At the end of each session he collected his notes and as much of the manuscript as she had done and took them away with him.⁸⁴⁴ On June 20, he gave Mrs. Bates \$10 for the 10 completed pages; he told her that he had no more money and refused to accept her offer to postpone payment or continue the work for nothing.⁸⁴⁵

Oswald told Mrs. Bates that there was an engineer in Fort Worth who wanted to help him publish his notes.⁸⁴⁶ On June 19,⁸⁴⁷ he had called Peter Gregory, a petroleum engineer who was born in Siberia and taught Russian at the Fort Worth Public Library as a "civic enterprise."⁸⁴⁸ He asked if Gregory could give him a letter testifying to his ability to read and speak Russian, so that he could obtain work as an interpreter or translator. Gregory suggested that Oswald come to his office, where Gregory opened a Russian book at random and asked Oswald to read from it. Oswald read well, and Gregory gave him the letter he wanted.⁸⁴⁹ Gregory and Oswald had lunch together and discussed Oswald's life in the Soviet Union,⁸⁵⁰ but, according to Gregory's testimony, nothing was said about publishing Oswald's

manuscript.⁸⁵¹ About a week later, Gregory and his son Paul, a college student, visited the Oswalds at Robert Oswald's home and arranged for Marina to give Paul lessons in Russian during the summer.⁸⁵²

On June 26, Oswald was interviewed by FBI agents in Fort Worth.⁸⁵³ One of the agents who interviewed him described him as tense and "drawn up"; he said that Oswald "exhibited an arrogant attitude * * * and [was] inclined to be just a little insolent."⁸⁵⁴ Oswald declined to say why he had gone to Russia, saying that he refused to "relive the past."⁸⁵⁵ He said that he had not attempted to obtain Soviet citizenship, had not been approached by Soviet officials for information about his experiences in the Marines, and had not offered them such information. Marina's Soviet passport required her to notify the Soviet Embassy in Washington of her address in this country, and Oswald told the agents that he planned to contact the Embassy for this purpose within a few days.⁸⁵⁶ He promised to notify the FBI if he were contacted by Soviet agents "under suspicious circumstances or otherwise."⁸⁵⁷ Oswald told his brother about the interview, saying that it had been "just fine."⁸⁵⁸

Oswald and his family remained with Robert for about a month.⁸⁵⁹ While they were there his mother moved to Fort Worth from Crowell, Tex.,⁸⁶⁰ and, sometime in July they moved into her apartment at 1501 West Seventh Street.⁸⁶¹ Mrs. Oswald testified that she had visited them at Robert's house in June⁸⁶² and moved to Fort Worth because she thought that the house was too crowded and wanted to help them.⁸⁶³ Mrs. Oswald described the period when her son and his family lived with her as "a very happy month"; according to her testimony, she and her son and daughter-in-law got along well. She mentioned that she not only helped Marina keep house and care for the baby but also aided her son in his efforts to find employment.⁸⁶⁴ Marina testified, however, that Lee did not get along well with his mother and that he decided after several weeks that they should move to their own apartment.⁸⁶⁵ He did not file a change-of-address card at the post office when the family moved to West Seventh Street, as he did when they made their next move,⁸⁶⁶ so he may have contemplated from the beginning that they would stay with his mother for only a short while. Around the middle of August,⁸⁶⁷ the Oswalds moved to a one-bedroom furnished apartment at 2703 Mercedes Street, for which they paid \$59.50 in advance for 1 month's rent.⁸⁶⁸

In the third week in July, Oswald had obtained a job as a sheet metal worker with the Louv-R-Pak Division of the Leslie Welding Co.,⁸⁶⁹ a manufacturer of louvers and ventilators,⁸⁷⁰ to which he had been referred by the Texas Employment Commission.⁸⁷¹ On his application for employment, filled out several days before, he wrote falsely that he had had experience as a sheet metal worker and machinist in the Marines and had been honorably discharged.⁸⁷² He usually worked 8 or 9 hours a day, for which he was paid \$1.25 an hour.⁸⁷³ Marina testified that Oswald did not like his work,⁸⁷⁴ but he was regarded as a good employee⁸⁷⁵ and remained with the company until October,

when he quit.⁸⁷⁶ On the job, he kept to himself and was considered uncommunicative.⁸⁷⁷

Mrs. Oswald visited her son and his family at their apartment and tried to help them get settled; she testified that she bought some clothes for Marina and a highchair for the baby but that Oswald told her that he did not want her to buy "things for his wife that he himself could not buy."⁸⁷⁸ Finally, Oswald apparently decided that he did not want his mother to visit the apartment anymore and he became incensed when his wife permitted her to visit despite his instructions.⁸⁷⁹ After he moved to Dallas in October, Oswald did not see his mother or communicate with her in any way until she came to see him after the assassination.⁸⁸⁰ Witnesses have described the Mercedes Street apartment as "decrepit" and very poorly furnished;⁸⁸¹ there was no telephone service.⁸⁸² Acquaintances observed that Marina and the baby were poorly clothed, that the Oswalds had little food, and that at first there was not a bed for the baby.⁸⁸³

On August 16, the FBI again interviewed Oswald. This interview took place in the back seat of a car in front of his home and covered substantially the same material as the previous interview. Oswald again denied having made any deal with representatives of the Soviet Union. He protested his undesirable discharge from the Marines, and stated that his wife was registered at the Soviet Embassy. He still refused to discuss why he had gone to the Soviet Union, but he was less hostile than he had been during the previous interview.⁸⁸⁴ According to his wife, however, he was very upset by the interest the FBI showed in him.⁸⁸⁵

The Oswalds became acquainted with a growing number of people of the Russian-speaking community in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, who were tied together socially by a common origin, language, and religion. The group was not restricted to people from Russia but was composed primarily of people from Eastern European countries.⁸⁸⁶ The Oswalds' initial contact with this group was through Peter Gregory. Marina gave conversational Russian lessons to Paul Gregory 2 days a week during August and early September, for which she was paid \$35. Most of the lessons took place at the Mercedes Street apartment and Oswald was generally present.⁸⁸⁷ In addition, Paul Gregory occasionally took the Oswalds shopping; after they became friendly, he had a number of discussions with Oswald, some of them politically oriented.⁸⁸⁸

Sometime around August 25, Peter Gregory invited the Oswalds and several members of the Russian community to his house for dinner. One of the guests was George Bouhe, a Dallas accountant and a leader of the Russian community. He was very interested in meeting and conversing with Marina, because she had spent much of her life in Leningrad, which was his birthplace.⁸⁸⁹ Also present was Mrs. Anna Meller, the Russian-born wife of a Dallas department store employee.⁸⁹⁰ Near the end of August, the Oswalds met Declan Ford, a consulting geologist in the Dallas area, and his Russian-born wife at Mrs. Meller's home. The Oswalds were also introduced to Mrs.

Elena Hall, who was born in Tehran, Iran, of Russian parentage. She worked in a dental laboratory and at this time was divorced from her former husband John Hall, whom she subsequently remarried. In order to obtain dental aid for Marina, George Bouhe had brought her to Mrs. Hall's house.⁸⁹¹ In early September, the Oswalds met Alexander Kleinlerer, another member of the Russian group, who was then courting Mrs. Hall.⁸⁹² Mrs. Max Clark was introduced to Marina during this period by George Bouhe and Anna Meller. Max Clark met the Oswalds at a later time.⁸⁹³ At about the same time, they were visited by George De Mohrenschildt, a petroleum engineer born in Russia,⁸⁹⁴ who had heard of them from one of the Russian-speaking group.⁸⁹⁵ Later on, the Oswalds met his wife, Jeanne, and his daughter and son-in-law, Gary and Alexandra Taylor.⁸⁹⁶

Most of the members of the Russian community were interested in the Oswalds not only because they needed help, but also because they could provide the latest information about what was happening in Russia.⁸⁹⁷ Some members of the group were at first apprehensive about them because the apparent ease with which they had left Russia seemed suspicious.⁸⁹⁸ Nevertheless, many of the group provided small amounts of money, groceries, clothing, and furniture for the Oswalds; George Bouhe, Anna Meller, and Elena Hall were the primary contributors, although others provided help in the form of transportation and groceries.⁸⁹⁹ These acquaintances occasionally visited the Oswalds, and the Oswalds in turn visited some of them in Dallas.⁹⁰⁰

It was evident that Oswald did not appreciate the help of the Russian community.⁹⁰¹ At least once he flew into a rage and shouted that he did not need any of the things that people were giving to him.⁹⁰² Some felt that he resented the gifts because he could not give his wife what the others were providing; ⁹⁰³ he apparently was critical of them also because he felt that they were overly concerned with improving themselves economically.⁹⁰⁴

Oswald became increasingly unpopular with his Russian-speaking acquaintances, partly because of his resentment of their assistance.⁹⁰⁵ Alexander Kleinlerer stated that none of them cared for Oswald "because of his political philosophy, his criticism of the United States, his apparent lack of interest in anyone but himself and because of his treatment of Marina."⁹⁰⁶ Some of them believed that Oswald was mentally disturbed.⁹⁰⁷ However, they felt sorry for Marina and the child and continued to help.⁹⁰⁸

On a weekend afternoon early in October, the Oswalds were visited by his mother and a number of people from the Russian community, including George Bouhe, Anna Meller, the Halls, the De Mohrenschildts, and the Taylors.⁹⁰⁹ Oswald had apparently decided to look for a new job, and discussed his lack of job prospects and the fact that his rent was overdue.⁹¹⁰ He was advised to seek employment in the Dallas area.⁹¹¹ Elena Hall invited Marina to move into her house in Fort Worth until Oswald found a job in Dallas. She accepted the proposal, and Mrs. Hall moved Marina, her daughter June, and the

Oswalds' few household goods in a pickup truck belonging to the dental laboratory where she was employed.⁹¹²

Oswald worked at the Leslie Welding Co. on Monday, October 8, but failed to appear on the following day. He was already in Dallas.⁹¹³ He falsely told his wife that he had been discharged,⁹¹⁴ and told George Bouhe that the job had been a temporary one.⁹¹⁵ Sometime later, the company received an undated letter from him stating that he had "moved permanently to Dallas," and asking that the wages due him be forwarded to him at box 2915 in Dallas.⁹¹⁶ He did not tell his mother that he was leaving Fort Worth.⁹¹⁷

While they were in Fort Worth, the Oswalds were having marital problems.⁹¹⁸ Several people noted that Marina had a blackened eye when they visited her at the Mercedes Street apartment.⁹¹⁹ She told her mother-in-law and George Bouhe that her husband had struck her, but said to Anna Meller that she had walked into a door.⁹²⁰ It seems clear that Oswald had in fact hit her.⁹²¹ People observed friction between the Oswalds on various occasions,⁹²² although their disputes became more apparent later. Marina has written that this was a difficult period for them and that her husband was "very irritable" and sometimes some completely trivial thing would "drive him into a rage."⁹²³

She testified that:

* * * immediately after coming to the United States Lee changed. I did not know him as such a man in Russia. * * * He helped me as before, but he became a little more of a recluse * * * He was very irritable, sometimes for a trifle * * *⁹²⁴

She has denied, however, that their separation was the result of quarrels between them.⁹²⁵

Marina spent the first few weeks after Oswald's departure at Elena Hall's house in Fort Worth, except for a brief stay at Gary Taylor's house in Dallas after one of her appointments at the Baylor Dental Clinic.⁹²⁶ While she was in Dallas, Mrs. De Mohrenschildt brought her to the clinic on October 8, October 10, and October 15;⁹²⁷ George Bouhe had given Mrs. De Mohrenschildt the money to cover the expense of Marina's dental care.⁹²⁸

Even before Oswald went to Dallas, some of his acquaintances were helping him in his effort to find a job there.⁹²⁹ George De Mohrenschildt directed him to Samuel B. Ballen, a Dallas financial consultant, but no employment resulted.⁹³⁰ George Bouhe recommended that Oswald go to the Texas Employment Commission in Dallas; and Anna Meller had her husband ask Mrs. Helen Cunningham, a counselor in the clerical and sales division of the Dallas office of the employment commission, to help Oswald find a job.⁹³¹ Oswald first came into the office of the employment commission on October 9. He was reluctant to accept industrial employment, and was placed in the clerical category and turned over to Mrs. Cunningham for counseling. He

indicated that he had an interest in writing. The results of general aptitude tests which he had taken at the Fort Worth employment office had been transmitted to the Dallas office, and indicated that he had some aptitude in this direction and for clerical work. It was noted on his application form that he had "outstanding verbal-clerical potential." He demonstrated ability to perform many skilled and semi-skilled jobs, and there was some indication that he could do college work. Mrs. Cunningham gave him three special tests: for general clerical work, work as an insurance claims examiner, and drafting work. He scored high on all three. His application form indicated that he did not have a driver's license, and noted: "well-groomed and spoken, business suit, alert replies—expresses self extremely well." He told Mrs. Cunningham that he hoped to develop qualifications for responsible junior executive employment by a work-study program at a local college but that this must be delayed because of his immediate financial needs and responsibilities.⁹³²

Mrs. Cunningham concluded that although Oswald would be classified for clerical work, she should try to get him any available job, since he badly needed money. He was referred to an architect for an opening as a messenger but was not hired. On October 11, he was referred to Jaggars-Chiles-Stovall Co., a graphic arts company, in response to a call from John Graef, head of the photographic department of the company, who had told the employment commission that he needed a photoprint trainee. Oswald was enthusiastic about his prospects and apparently made a good impression; Graef picked him over several other applicants.⁹³³ On the following day he began working in his new position as a trainee making prints of advertising material. He worked a 40-hour week at approximately \$1.35 per hour; his take-home pay varied from \$49 to \$74 a week.⁹³⁴ According to his wife, "he liked his work very much."⁹³⁵

Oswald moved into the YMCA on October 15, and stayed there until October 19, paying \$2.25 a night.⁹³⁶ He had used the Taylors' address and telephone number as a place where he could be reached,⁹³⁷ but on October 9 had also rented post office box 2915 under his own name at the main post office on Ervay Street.⁹³⁸ On October 10, he filed a change-of-address form indicating that mail for 2703 Mercedes Street should be forwarded to the box.⁹³⁹ Marina has written that Oswald wrote her letters and telephoned her during the separation.⁹⁴⁰

On October 16, Mrs. Hall brought Marina and June to Dallas to have June baptized. Marina apparently did this surreptitiously, because her husband opposed baptism; they did not contact him in Dallas, but left birthday gifts for him at the Taylors. Oswald did not appear very disturbed when he found out about the baptism.⁹⁴¹

Two days later, Mrs. Hall had an automobile accident and went to the hospital, where she remained until October 26; Marina remained in the Hall house. Mrs. Max Clark and Alexander Kleinlerer, a friend of Mrs. Hall, checked up to make sure that she was getting

along without too much trouble.⁹⁴² After Oswald left the YMCA on October 19, he moved to a room or apartment somewhere in Dallas,⁹⁴³ which has not been located.⁹⁴⁴ It seems likely, however, that during that time he spent several weekends with Marina at the Hall house.⁹⁴⁵

Four days after Mrs. Hall returned from the hospital, she left for New York to visit friends. By the time she returned, Marina had moved to a three-room apartment at 604 Elsbeth Street in Dallas, which Oswald had rented on Saturday, November 3;⁹⁴⁶ the landlady stated that he had looked at the apartment about a week before. The monthly rent was \$68, in addition to which he had to pay several dollars a month for utilities. He paid the rent plus a \$5 deposit on November 3,⁹⁴⁷ but probably spent that night with Marina at the Hall house. On Sunday the Taylors helped the Oswalds move their belongings to the Elsbeth Street apartment with a rented trailer.⁹⁴⁸ Oswald had asked Kleinlerer to help them move, and Kleinlerer also was present when they departed.⁹⁴⁹

Soon after the Oswalds were reunited, their marital difficulties started again. While they were moving to Elsbeth Street, Kleinlerer noticed that Oswald slapped his wife for not having the zipper on her dress completely closed.⁹⁵⁰ They argued over his refusal to allow her to smoke.⁹⁵¹ There was a quarrel also when he told the landlady that Marina was from Czechoslovakia; he was angered when Marina, who disapproved of this deception, told the landlady the truth.⁹⁵²

Although several people tried to help Marina improve her scanty knowledge of English, Oswald discouraged this,⁹⁵³ perhaps because he wanted to keep up his Russian.⁹⁵⁴ Some witnesses testified that she commented about his sexual abilities.⁹⁵⁵ He apparently continued to beat her, and once she suggested to George De Mohrenschildt that she should "get away" from Oswald. When De Mohrenschildt criticized Oswald's conduct, Oswald replied, "It is my business."⁹⁵⁶ Marina testified that when they moved into the Elsbeth Street apartment, her husband became "nervous and irritable" and was very angry over "trifles."⁹⁵⁷ She said that it was sometimes her fault that he beat her,⁹⁵⁸ for example when she wrote to an old boyfriend in Russia that she wished she had married him; the letter was returned for postage due, and Oswald read it.⁹⁵⁹

Because of this quarreling, a few of their acquaintances felt that Marina would be better off alone. George Bouhe offered to help her if she promised to leave Oswald permanently.⁹⁶⁰ Finally, in early November, Marina, helped by the De Mohrenschildts, moved into Anna Meller's house with the intention not to return to Oswald. He was apparently quite upset and did not want Marina to leave him.⁹⁶¹

Oswald did not visit his wife at Anna Meller's house,⁹⁶² and for a short time did not even know where she was.⁹⁶³ According to Marina, he called her after she moved and they met at De Mohrenschildt's house. He asked her to return home. She insisted that he stop quarreling and that he change his ways. He said that he could not change. Marina would not agree to return home with him and he left.⁹⁶⁴

Marina was uncomfortable at the Meller house, where there was very little room. She moved to Katherine Ford's house⁹⁶⁵ where she apparently stayed from November 11 to 17. She indicated that she had decided never to return to her husband;⁹⁶⁶ it was Mrs. Ford's impression that Marina was going to stay at other people's houses until a permanent place could be found for her.⁹⁶⁷ When Mr. Ford returned from a business trip on November 17, Marina and June moved to the home of Mrs. Frank Ray, where they spent the day. Mrs. Ray, the wife of a Dallas advertising man, was also of Russian origin. Since Mrs. Ray had no baby bed, Marina returned to the Fords that evening. On the next day, however, Marina moved her belongings to the Rays' house. That same day, Oswald called and asked to visit his wife, whom he had called and written. Mr. Ray picked him up and took him to Marina.⁹⁶⁸

Marina testified that at this meeting Oswald professed his love for her. She stated: "I saw him cry * * * [he] begged me to come back, asked my forgiveness, and promised that he would try to improve, if only I would come back."⁹⁶⁹ On another occasion she said: "* * * he cried and you know a woman's heart—I went back to him. He said he didn't care to live if I did not return."⁹⁷⁰ That same day she decided to return to him. Mr. Ray packed her belongings and took her back to the Elsbeth Street apartment.⁹⁷¹

Members of the Russian community who had taken care of Marina so that she would not have to live with Oswald felt that their efforts had been in vain. George Bouhe was so irritated that he never again tried to help either of the Oswalds.⁹⁷² Contacts between them and members of the Russian community diminished markedly.⁹⁷³ Oswald did not care for most of these people and made his feelings apparent.⁹⁷⁴ Even the De Mohrenschildts, whom he liked most, saw much less of them.⁹⁷⁵ Lydia Dymitruk, another Russian born woman in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, testified that she saw the Oswalds on only one occasion, and did not care to see them again. She drove Marina and June, who had a high fever, to the hospital; Oswald told the hospital that he was unemployed in order to avoid paying for June's treatment and later left Mrs. Dymitruk without thanking her.⁹⁷⁶ Mrs. Ford testified that Marina had told her that she contemplated suicide during this period because Oswald was treating her badly and she had no friends; she felt that she had "no way out."⁹⁷⁷ Marina acknowledged to the Commission that she had had such thoughts.⁹⁷⁸

In an effort to renew family ties, Robert Oswald wrote to Lee and John Pic on November 17, inviting them and their families to Thanksgiving dinner. Lee accepted the invitation. He and Marina traveled to Fort Worth by bus on Thanksgiving Day, and John Pic and Robert met them at the station.⁹⁷⁹ Pic had not seen his half-brother for 10 years. He observed, as many others have also attested, that Lee seemed to be a good father and to take an active interest in June.⁹⁸⁰ After dinner, Marina phoned Paul Gregory, who later drove the Oswalds to his house for sandwiches and then took them to the bus station for the return trip to Dallas.⁹⁸¹ Thereafter, Robert spoke to his

brother once by telephone and received a post card and a letter from him, but he eventually lost contact with Lee and did not see him again until after the assassination.⁹⁸²

Despite his disillusionment with Soviet life, Oswald kept up his interest in Russia. He wrote to the Soviet Embassy in Washington for information on how to subscribe to Russian periodicals and for "any periodicals or bulletins which you may put out for the benefit of your citizens living, for a time, in the U.S.A."⁹⁸³ He subsequently subscribed to several Russian journals.⁹⁸⁴ In December 1962, the Soviet Embassy received a card in Russian, signed "Marina and Lee Oswald," which conveyed New Year's greetings and wishes for "health, success and all of the best" to the employees at the Embassy.⁹⁸⁵ The Oswalds continued to correspond with acquaintances in Russia.⁹⁸⁶

Soon after his return to this country, Oswald had started to correspond with the Communist Party, U.S.A., and the Socialist Workers Party. He subscribed to the Worker in August 1962.⁹⁸⁷ He wrote for additional literature from these organizations, and attempted to join the Socialist Workers Party, which, however, had no branch in Texas.⁹⁸⁸ He sent samples of his photographic work to the Socialist Workers Party, the Worker, and the Hall-Davis Defense Committee, and offered to aid them in printing and photographic work in connection with posters; these offers were not accepted.⁹⁸⁹

He continued to read a great deal on a variety of subjects.⁹⁹⁰ George Bouhe testified that Oswald's fare consisted of books by Marx, Lenin, "and similar things."⁹⁹¹ Marina said that he read books of a historical nature, including H. G. Wells' two volume "Outline of History," and biographies of Hitler, Kennedy, and Khrushchev.⁹⁹²

Despite the Oswalds' break with the Russian community, De Mohrenschildt, knowing that they would be alone during the Christmas season, asked the Fords whether he could bring the Oswalds to a party celebrating the Russian Christmas at the Fords' home; the Fords assented. The party was attended by many members of the Russian community.⁹⁹³ Oswald spoke at length with Yaeko Okui, a Japanese woman who had been brought to the party by Lev Aronson, first cellist of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra; ⁹⁹⁴ she told Federal investigators that she never saw Oswald again.⁹⁹⁵ The Oswalds were not invited to three other Russian Christmas season gatherings which occurred during the next few days.⁹⁹⁶

Marina visited the De Mohrenschildts several times after Christmas.⁹⁹⁷ They invited both Lee and Marina to a small dinner party in February 1963; also present were Everett Glover, a chemist employed in Dallas, and his roommate Volkmar Schmidt.⁹⁹⁸ On February 22, Glover had a gathering at his house, one of the purposes of which was to permit his friends, many of whom were studying Russian, to meet the Oswalds.⁹⁹⁹ They were the objects of much attention.¹⁰⁰⁰ Marina conversed at length with another guest named Ruth Paine, who had recently separated from her husband, Michael Paine, a research engineer at the Bell Helicopter plant in Fort Worth. Mrs. Paine, who was studying Russian, obtained Marina's address ¹⁰⁰¹ and

shortly thereafter wrote Marina asking to see her. Marina responded by inviting Mrs. Paine to visit her.¹⁰⁰²

The Oswalds moved out of their Elsbeth Street apartment on March 3, 1963, to an upstairs apartment several blocks away at 214 West Neely Street. Oswald inquired about the apartment in response to a "For Rent" sign; the rent was \$60 per month, not including utilities.¹⁰⁰³ They moved without assistance, carrying their belongings in their hands and in a baby stroller.¹⁰⁰⁴ Marina preferred the Neely Street apartment because it had a porch and was, she felt, more suitable for June.¹⁰⁰⁵

Aware of Oswald's difficulties in obtaining employment, George Bouhe had advised him as early as October 1962 to attend a night school in Dallas.¹⁰⁰⁶ On January 14, Oswald enrolled in a typing course in the night school of Crozier Technical High School, and started attending on January 28. The class ran from 6:15 to 7:15 p.m. on Mondays, Tuesday, and Thursdays. Although Oswald reviewed a typing textbook at home, he attended the course irregularly and stopped going altogether on about March 28.¹⁰⁰⁷

Ruth Paine and Marina started to exchange visits in March. Mrs. Paine invited the Oswalds for dinner, and on April 20 she took them on a picnic. When Oswald was not present, the two women frequently discussed their respective marital problems, and Marina disclosed to Mrs. Paine that she was pregnant.¹⁰⁰⁸ Marina wrote of these meetings:

One day we were invited to a friend's house, where I met Ruth Paine, who was studying Russian here in America and wanted to improve her conversational knowledge. We began to see each other. Ruth would come to see me with her children. This was very good for both me and for June. She was growing up alone and becoming terribly wild, so the company of other children was good for her. Sometimes we went out on picnics at a nearby lake. Lee loved to fish, and we would look and rejoice if he caught a little fish. Several times we went to visit Ruth who lived in Irving.¹⁰⁰⁹

Using the name of A. J. Hidell, Oswald had ordered a Smith & Wesson .38 revolver from Los Angeles on a form which he dated January 27. On March 12, he ordered a rifle from Klein's Sporting Goods in Chicago under the name of A. Hidell.¹⁰¹⁰ Oswald used the name "Alek James Hidell" on identification cards which he probably produced at Jaggars-Chiles-Stovall. One of his fellow employees taught him various photographic techniques, which he could have used to prepare not only these cards, but also the samples of his work which he sent to various organizations.¹⁰¹¹

Both weapons were shipped on March 20.¹⁰¹² Oswald kept the rifle in a small storeroom at the Neely Street apartment. He spent long periods of time in the storeroom, which he told Marina she was not to enter.¹⁰¹³ He told her that he intended to use the rifle for hunt-

ing¹⁰¹⁴ and that he practiced with it. She saw him leave with it once, and clean it several times.¹⁰¹⁵ He also posed for two pictures, taken by Marina in the backyard of the Neely apartment, in which he held his rifle and copies of the Worker and the Militant and the revolver was strapped to his belt. He gave one of the pictures to his wife and asked her to keep it for June.¹⁰¹⁶

Over the weekend of March 9-10, Oswald photographed the alley which runs behind the home of Gen. Edwin Walker, and probably at about the same time he photographed the rear of Walker's home and a nearby railroad track and right-of-way.¹⁰¹⁷ He prepared and studied a notebook in which he outlined a plan to shoot General Walker, and he looked at bus schedules.¹⁰¹⁸ He went to the Walker residence on the evening of April 6 or 7, planning to make his attack. However, he changed his plans, hid his rifle nearby, and determined to act on the following Wednesday, April 10, when a nearby church was planning a meeting which, Oswald reasoned, would create a diversion that would help him escape.¹⁰¹⁹ On Wednesday, Oswald left a note for Marina telling her what to do if he were apprehended. He retrieved his rifle and fired at Walker, but the bullet narrowly missed Walker's head. Oswald secreted his rifle again and took the bus home.¹⁰²⁰

When Oswald told Marina what he had done, she became angry and made him promise never to repeat such an act. She testified that she kept his letter, intending to give it to the authorities if he repeated his attempt. He told Marina that he was sorry he had missed Walker and said that the shooting of Walker would have been analogous to an assassination of Hitler.¹⁰²¹ Several days later, the De Mohrenschildts visited the Oswalds, bringing an Easter present for June. During the visit, Jeanne De Mohrenschildt saw the rifle and told her husband about it. Without any knowledge of the truth, De Mohrenschildt jokingly intimated that Oswald was the one who had shot at Walker. Oswald apparently concluded that Marina had told De Mohrenschildt of his role in the attempt and was visibly shaken.¹⁰²²

On April 6, Oswald was dropped by Jaggars-Chiles-Stovall because, in his supervisor's opinion, he could not do the work, although he was trying; in addition, he did not get along with his fellow employees.¹⁰²³ The fact that he brought a Russian newspaper to work may also have been of some significance.¹⁰²⁴ Marina testified that her husband, who had always worried about his job security at Jaggars-Chiles-Stovall,¹⁰²⁵ was quite upset by the loss of his job since he had liked the work.¹⁰²⁶

Oswald again resorted to the Texas Employment Commission.¹⁰²⁷ On April 8, he informed the Commission that he was seeking employment but was referred to no employers. He stated that he had been laid off at Jaggars-Chiles-Stovall due to lack of work.¹⁰²⁸ On April 12, he made a claim for unemployment benefits; 4 days later the commission mailed him a determination disapproving his claim because of insufficient wage credits.¹⁰²⁹

For a while after the Oswalds moved into the Neely Street apartment they got along well,¹⁰³⁰ but they soon began to quarrel.¹⁰³¹

Oswald was apparently still preventing Marina from learning English,¹⁰³² and there is some indication that he continued to beat her.¹⁰³³ Since February, he had been urging her to return to Russia.¹⁰³⁴ Marina wrote several letters to the Russian Embassy requesting a visa to return to Russia; ¹⁰³⁵ she testified, however, that Oswald forced her to write them, and that she never wanted to return to Russia.¹⁰³⁶

When Ruth Paine visited the Oswalds at their apartment on April 24, she was surprised to learn that Oswald was packed and ready to leave for New Orleans by bus. He explained that he had been unable to find employment in or around Dallas, and that Marina had suggested that he go to New Orleans since he had been born there.¹⁰³⁷ Marina has testified that the real reason behind her suggestion was that she wanted to get him out of town because of the Walker incident.¹⁰³⁸ Mrs. Paine offered to drive Marina to New Orleans at a later date, and also to have Marina and June stay with her rather than at the apartment in the meantime. Oswald helped the women pack Mrs. Paine's car, and the two women moved everything from the Neely Street apartment to the Paine house in Irving.¹⁰³⁹

When he arrived at the bus station in New Orleans, Oswald telephoned his aunt, Lillian Murret, to ask if he could stay at her home at 757 French Street while he looked for employment. She had been unaware that he had returned from Russia or that he was married and had a child and was surprised to hear from him. She said that she did not have room to accommodate three guests, but that since he was alone he was welcome.¹⁰⁴⁰

Oswald had been born in New Orleans, and on his return showed great interest in finding out what had happened to the other members of his father's family. He visited the cemetery where his father was buried and called all the Oswalds in the telephone book. By this method he located one relative, Mrs. Hazel Oswald of Metairie, La., the widow of William Stout Oswald, his father's brother. He visited her at her home; she gave him a picture of his father and told him that as far as she knew the rest of the family was dead.¹⁰⁴¹

On April 26, Oswald began his search for employment. He went to the employment office of the Louisiana Department of Labor and stated that he was qualified as a commercial photographer, shipping clerk, or "darkroom man." The interviewer noted on Oswald's application card: "Will travel on limited basis. Will relocate. Min. \$1.25 hr. Neat. Suit. Tie. Polite."¹⁰⁴² Although the employment commission made a few referrals, Oswald relied primarily upon newspaper advertisements, and applied for a number of positions.¹⁰⁴³ Mrs. Murret testified that he would spend the day job hunting, return to her home for supper, watch television, and go to bed.¹⁰⁴⁴

On April 29, he filed a request for reconsideration of the employment commission's disapproval of his unemployment compensation claim. His complaint that he had not been credited for his employment at Jaggars-Chiles-Stovall was ruled valid on May 8, and he was granted maximum benefits of \$369, payable at the rate of \$33 per week. He filed interstate claims on May 7 and 15, and received

\$33 in response to the latter; the former claim was filed before the expiration of the prescribed waiting period.¹⁰⁴⁵ Not only had Oswald in fact been working since May 10, but he included on his claim sheet, as concerns with which he had sought work, fictitious employers and employers whom he apparently had not contacted.¹⁰⁴⁶

Oswald wrote to Marina: "All is well. I am living with Aunt Lillian. She has very kindly taken us in. I am now looking for work. When I find it I will write you."¹⁰⁴⁷ And on May 3, he wrote to Marina and Ruth Paine: "Girls, I still have not found work, but I receive money from the unemployment office in the amount 15 to 20 dollars. They were mistaken in the Dallas office when they refused, but I straightened everything out. Uncle 'Dyuz' offered me a loan of \$200.00 if needed. Great, eh?!"¹⁰⁴⁸

On May 9, responding to a newspaper advertisement, Oswald completed an application for employment with William B. Reily Co., Inc., at 640 Magazine Street, an enterprise engaged in the roasting, grinding, canning, bagging, and sale of coffee. On his application form, Oswald listed as references in addition to John Murret, "Sgt. Robert Hidell" and "Lieut. J. Evans," both apparently fictitious names.¹⁰⁴⁹ His application was approved and he began work on May 10, at the rate of \$1.50 per hour. His task was the lubrication of the company's machinery.¹⁰⁵⁰ Oswald did not enjoy this work,¹⁰⁵¹ and told his wife and Mrs. Paine that he was working in commercial photography.¹⁰⁵²

Also on May 9, Oswald obtained an apartment at 4905 Magazine Street with the help of Myrtle Evans, who had known him when he was a child. The rent was \$65 a month. Oswald moved in on May 10,¹⁰⁵³ after telephoning Marina on the ninth and asking her to come to New Orleans. Ruth Paine testified that the invitation elated Marina: "Papa nas lubet"—"Daddy loves us," she repeated again and again. Mrs. Paine drove Marina and June to New Orleans; they left Dallas on May 10, spent the night in Shreveport, and arrived on the 11th. Mrs. Paine stayed with the Oswalds for 3 days; the three of them, with June and Mrs. Paine's children, toured the French Quarter. On May 14, Mrs. Paine left New Orleans to return to her home.¹⁰⁵⁴

The Murrets and the Oswalds exchanged visits from time to time; Marina testified that the Murrets were very good to them.¹⁰⁵⁵ Mrs. Murret's daughter, Marilyn, took the Oswalds on an outing.¹⁰⁵⁶ But, according to Marina's testimony, aside from Ruth Paine and Ruth Kloefer and her daughters, the Murrets were the only social visitors the Oswalds had.¹⁰⁵⁷ Ruth Kloefer was a clerk of the Quaker Meeting in New Orleans whom Ruth Paine had written in the hope that she might know some Russian-speaking people who could visit Marina. Mrs. Kloefer herself visited the Oswalds but made no attempt to direct any Russian-speaking people to them.¹⁰⁵⁸

On July 19, Oswald was dismissed by Reily because of inefficiency and inattention to his work. He had spent many of his working hours next door at the Crescent City Garage, where he read gun magazines and discussed guns with one of the owners, Adrian Alba.¹⁰⁵⁹ On the

following Monday, July 22, Oswald again visited the Louisiana employment office to seek new employment and file a claim for unemployment compensation. Thereafter, he collected unemployment compensation weekly and, although apparently making some effort to obtain another job, again listed a number of fictitious job applications on his unemployment compensation claim forms.¹⁰⁶⁰ He soon gave up his search for employment, and began to spend his days at home reading.¹⁰⁶¹ He received another setback on July 25, when he was notified that in response to the request for review which he had made in 1962, his undesirable discharge from the Marine Corps had been affirmed.¹⁰⁶²

During this period, Oswald began to evidence thoughts of returning to the Soviet Union or going to Cuba. On June 24 he applied for a new passport, which he received on the following day.¹⁰⁶³ Apparently at Oswald's request,¹⁰⁶⁴ Marina wrote to the Russian Embassy, expressing a desire to return to Russia and indicating that she would be accompanied by her husband. She explained that she wanted to return because of family problems, including the impending birth of her second child.¹⁰⁶⁵ Accompanying her letter was a letter written by Oswald dated July 1, in which he asked the Embassy to rush an entrance visa for his wife and requested that his visa be considered separately.¹⁰⁶⁶ Marina believed that Oswald was really planning to go only to Cuba.¹⁰⁶⁷ She testified that "his basic desire was to get to Cuba by any means, and that all the rest of it was window dressing for that purpose."¹⁰⁶⁸

During the early days of the New Orleans period, the Oswalds' marriage was more harmonious than it had been previously. Marina wrote:

* * * our family life in New Orleans was more peaceful. Lee took great satisfaction in showing me the city where he was born. We often went to the beach, the zoo, and the park. Lee liked to go and hunt crabs. It is true, that he was not very pleased with his job * * * We did not have very much money, and the birth of a new child involved new expenses * * * As before, Lee spent a great deal of time reading.¹⁰⁶⁹

Marina testified, however, that after they had been in New Orleans for a while, Oswald became depressed and that she once found him alone in the dark crying.¹⁰⁷⁰ She wrote to Ruth Paine that his "love" had ceased soon after Mrs. Paine had left New Orleans.¹⁰⁷¹ Mrs. Paine testified, however, that she had noticed friction between the Oswalds before she left.¹⁰⁷² On July 11, Mrs. Paine wrote Marina that if Oswald did not wish to live with her any more and preferred that she return to the Soviet Union, she could live at the Paines' house. Although Mrs. Paine had long entertained this idea, this was the first time she explicitly made the invitation. She renewed the invitation on July 12, and again on July 14; she attempted to overcome any feeling which Marina might have that she would be a burden by stating that

Marina could help with the housework and help her learn Russian, and that she would also provide a tax advantage.¹⁰⁷³

Marina replied that she had previously raised the subject of a separation and that it had led to arguments. She stated that she was happy and that for a considerable period of time Oswald had been good to her. She attributed this improved attitude to the fact that he was anticipating their second child. Marina turned down Mrs. Paine's invitation but said that she would take advantage of it if things became worse.¹⁰⁷⁴ Mrs. Paine replied that she was taking a trip north to visit her parents and would visit Marina in New Orleans about September 18. She also suggested that Marina come to her house for the birth of the baby.¹⁰⁷⁵

On July 6, Eugene Murret, a cousin of Oswald who was studying to be a Jesuit Priest in Mobile, Ala., wrote and asked if Oswald could come to Mobile and speak at the Jesuit House of Studies about "contemporary Russia and the practice of Communism there." Oswald accepted, and on July 27 he and his family, joined by some of the Murrets, traveled to Mobile; Charles Murret paid the expenses. Oswald spoke concerning his observations in Russia and conducted a question and answer period; he impressed his listeners as articulate. He indicated that he had become disillusioned during his stay in Russia, and that in his opinion the best political system would be one which combined the best points of capitalism and communism.¹⁰⁷⁶ While he left his listeners with the impression that he was an atheist, he avoided a direct discussion of religion. The group returned to New Orleans on July 28.¹⁰⁷⁷

In late May and early June, Oswald had apparently begun to formulate plans for creating a New Orleans branch of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee. Using the name "Lee Osborne" he ordered a number of printed circulars demanding "Hands off Cuba" in large letters, and application forms and membership cards for the proposed chapter.¹⁰⁷⁸ On August 5, he visited a store managed by Carlos Bringuier, a Cuban refugee and avid opponent of Castro and the New Orleans delegate of the Cuban student directorate. Oswald indicated an interest in joining the struggle against Castro. He told Bringuier that he had been a marine and was trained in guerrilla warfare, and that he was willing not only to train Cubans to fight Castro but also to join the fight himself. The next day Oswald returned to the store and left his "Guidebook for Marines" for Bringuier.¹⁰⁷⁹

On August 9, Bringuier saw Oswald passing out Fair Play for Cuba leaflets. Bringuier and his companions became angry and a dispute resulted. Oswald and the three Cuban exiles were arrested for disturbing the peace.¹⁰⁸⁰ Oswald spent the night in jail and was interviewed the next day by a lieutenant of the New Orleans Police Department. At Oswald's request, an FBI agent also interviewed him. Oswald maintained that he was a member of the New Orleans branch of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee which, he claimed, had 35 members. He stated also that he had been in touch with the president of that organization, A. J. Hidell.¹⁰⁸¹ Oswald was in fact the

only member of the "New Orleans branch," which had never been chartered by the National Fair Play for Cuba Committee.¹⁰⁸² Later that day Oswald was released on bail, and 2 days later he pleaded guilty to the charges against him and paid a \$10 fine. The charges against the Cuban exiles were dismissed.¹⁰⁸³ Marina testified that the arrest upset Lee and that he "became less active, he cooled off a little" after it.¹⁰⁸⁴

On August 16, Oswald, assisted by at least one other person who was a hired helper, again passed out Fair Play for Cuba literature, this time in front of the International Trade Mart. That night, television newscasts ran pictures of Oswald's activities.¹⁰⁸⁵ (This hindered Oswald's subsequent attempts to obtain employment in New Orleans.)¹⁰⁸⁶ Bringuier sent one of his friends to Oswald's home to pose as a Castro sympathizer and attempt to obtain information about Oswald, but Oswald apparently saw through the ruse.¹⁰⁸⁷

William Stuckey, a radio broadcaster with a program called "Latin Listening Post," had long been looking for a member of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee to appear on his program. He learned about Oswald from Bringuier, and visited Oswald on August 17. Later that day, Stuckey recorded an interview with Oswald which was cut to about 5 minutes and played back on the show that evening.¹⁰⁸⁸ Two days later, Stuckey asked the news director of the station if he could run the entire tape, but the director felt that a debate with a local opponent of Castro would be of greater public interest. Consequently, Stuckey arranged for a debate between Oswald and Bringuier on a 25-minute daily public affairs program called "Conversation Carte Blanche," which took place on August 21.¹⁰⁸⁹ Oswald defended the Castro regime and discussed Marxism. He was put on the defensive when his defection to Russia was brought up,¹⁰⁹⁰ and Stuckey later testified that he thought that the program had finished the Fair Play for Cuba Committee in New Orleans.¹⁰⁹¹ However, Stuckey also testified that Oswald seemed to be a clean-cut and intelligent person who conducted himself very well during the interviews and debates.¹⁰⁹²

Oswald wrote several times to V. T. Lee, then national director of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee, telling him, sometimes in exaggerated terms, of his activities.¹⁰⁹³ He wrote also to the Communist Party and asked whether, in view of his prior defection, he should "continue to fight, handicapped as it were, by * * * [his] past record, [and] compete with anti-progressive forces, above-ground or * * * should always remain in the background, i.e., underground."¹⁰⁹⁴ The Party replied that "often it is advisable for some people to remain in the background, not underground."¹⁰⁹⁵ And although Oswald wrote four letters to V. T. Lee during the summer,¹⁰⁹⁶ there is no evidence that Oswald heard from him after May 29.

Ruth Paine arrived in New Orleans on September 20, and spent three nights with the Oswalds. During this stay, Mrs. Paine found relations between them much improved. Nonetheless, it was decided that Marina would go back with her to Irving for the birth of the

baby. Marina and Mrs. Paine toured Bourbon Street while Oswald stayed home and did some packing for Marina's return to Texas.¹⁰⁰⁷ On Sunday, September 22, Oswald and Mrs. Paine finished loading the station wagon with the Oswalds' household belongings.¹⁰⁰⁸

MEXICO CITY

Marina Oswald testified that sometime in August her husband first told her of his plan to go to Mexico and from there to Cuba, where he planned to stay; he had given up a plan to hijack an airplane and fly directly to Cuba, which plan Marina consistently opposed.¹⁰⁰⁹ On September 17, he obtained from the Mexican consulate general in New Orleans a "Tourist Card," FM-8 No. 24085, good for one journey into Mexico for no longer than 15 days. Typed in the blank, "Apellidos y nombre," was "Lee, Harvey Oswald," "Fotografo"; the intended destination was shown as Mexico City.¹¹⁰⁰ (The comma between "Lee" and "Harvey" seems to have been an error.)¹¹⁰¹ On the application Oswald stated that he was employed at "640 Rampart"; he was in fact unemployed.¹¹⁰² (See Commission Exhibits Nos. 2478, 2481, p. 300.)

Marina and June departed with Mrs. Ruth Paine for Irving on the morning of September 23.¹¹⁰³ Before she left, Oswald told Marina that she should not tell anyone about his impending trip to Mexico.¹¹⁰⁴ Marina kept this secret until after the assassination.¹¹⁰⁵ On the previous day, Oswald's landlord had seen Mrs. Paine's car being packed and had asked Oswald, whose rent was about 15 days overdue, whether he was leaving. Oswald told him that Marina was leaving temporarily but that he would remain.¹¹⁰⁶ A neighbor testified that on the evening of September 24, he saw Oswald, carrying two pieces of luggage, hurriedly leave the Magazine Street apartment and board a bus.¹¹⁰⁷ Though uncertain of the exact date, a city busdriver recalls that at the same time of day and at the same location he picked up a man who was carrying two suitcases of different sizes and helped him place them so that they would not disturb the other passengers. The driver remembers that the man asked directions to the Greyhound bus station. He discharged the passenger at an intersection where he could board a Canal Street car and transfer to another bus which would go past the Greyhound and Continental Trailways stations.¹¹⁰⁸ The landlord found Oswald's apartment vacant on September 25.¹¹⁰⁹

Oswald appears to have taken with him a Spanish-English dictionary;¹¹¹⁰ his address book;¹¹¹¹ his 1963 passport and old passport;¹¹¹² his correspondence with the Communist Party and with the Soviet Embassy in Washington, some of which was in Russian;¹¹¹³ proof of his marriage;¹¹¹⁴ newspaper clippings concerning his arrest and his interest in the activities of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee¹¹¹⁵ (activities which, Marina testified, he had undertaken because he thought that they would help him when he got to Cuba);¹¹¹⁶ evidence that he

was the "Director" of the New Orleans chapter of the Committee; ¹¹¹⁷ and various other cards, such as a work card, which he had obtained in Russia.¹¹¹⁸ He took also several sheets of notepaper on which he had written a summary of important events in his life which he presumably intended to call to the attention of Cuban and Soviet officials in Mexico City to convince them to let him enter Cuba. On these sheets he had recorded facts about his Marine service, including the dates of his enlistment and discharge, the places where he had served, and the diplomas that he had received from military school. Recorded also were notes on his stay in the Soviet Union, his early interest in Communist literature, his ability to speak Russian, his organization of the New Orleans chapter of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee, his contact with police authorities in connection with his work for the Committee, and his experience in "street agitation," as a "radio speaker and lecturer," and as a photographer.¹¹¹⁹ The two pieces of luggage which Oswald took with him were a small, blue, zipper bag ¹¹²⁰ and a large, olive-colored bag,¹¹²¹ both made of cloth. He carried the smaller bag with him throughout the trip, but, at least from Nuevo Laredo to Mexico City, checked the larger one through to his destination.¹¹²²

Oswald remained in New Orleans until September 25. His precise whereabouts on the night of September 24 are uncertain, but in view of his limited finances, he probably returned to the apartment to sleep after checking his luggage at a bus station or spent the night at an inexpensive hotel or roominghouse. Some time after 5 a. m. on September 25, he collected a Texas unemployment compensation check for \$33 at his New Orleans post office box. He cashed the check between 8 a.m. and noon at a store about six blocks from his apartment on Magazine Street.¹¹²³ This gave him about \$200 for the trip to Mexico.¹¹²⁴

He left New Orleans by bus,¹¹²⁵ probably on Continental Trailways Bus No. 5121, departing New Orleans at 12:20 p.m. on September 25, and scheduled to arrive in Houston at 10:50 p.m.; that bus is the only one on which Oswald could have left New Orleans after noon on September 25 ¹¹²⁶ and arrived in Houston before midnight.¹¹²⁷ Sometime in the evening he called the home of Horace Elroy Twiford, a member of the Socialist Labor Party who had received Oswald's name from the party's headquarters in New York and sent him a copy of its official publication, the "Weekly People."¹¹²⁸ Mrs. Twiford, who answered the telephone,¹¹²⁹ believes that the call was made locally, before 10 p.m. It may have been made from Beaumont or some other stop on the route; however, in view of the bus schedule, it probably was made in Houston later than Mrs. Twiford remembered.¹¹³⁰ Oswald told Mrs. Twiford that he was a member of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee and that he hoped to see her husband for a few hours that evening before he flew to Mexico. He wanted also to find out how Twiford had obtained his name and address. Mrs. Twiford told Oswald that her husband, a merchant seaman, was at sea but would be happy to see him at some other time; she offered to take a message.

Oswald said that he could not await her husband's return because he was flying to Mexico.¹¹³¹ The Twifords have stated that they had no other contact with Oswald.¹¹³²

An employee of the U.S. Selective Service System has stated that an individual calling himself "Harvey Oswald" appeared at her office in Austin, Tex., immediately after lunch on September 25, and discussed with her the possibility of rectifying his undesirable discharge from the Marine Corps.¹¹³³ Despite the employee's reputation and apparent sincerity, all of the information which she furnished with respect to Oswald's appearance and conversation could have been derived from news media, consciously or unconsciously, by the time she told the FBI her story. Other persons in Austin who, according to the employee's testimony, should also have observed Oswald failed to corroborate her testimony.¹¹³⁴ No other evidence tending to show that Oswald was in Austin at this time has been discovered.

The telephone call which Oswald made to the Twifords on the evening of September 25, indicates that he was either in Houston or on his way there when he made it, since the purpose of the call was to make an appointment to see Twiford in Houston that evening. Oswald could not have left New Orleans on September 25, been in Austin 521 miles away by early afternoon, and returned 162 miles to Houston by night unless he traveled by air; airline records contain no indication that Oswald was on such flights.¹¹³⁵ It is very unlikely that he had with him enough money beyond what he needed for the trip to Mexico City to take such flights, and the poor state of his finances at this time plus his well-established frugality make it extremely unlikely that he would have considered it worthwhile to do so even if he could. There is no evidence that Oswald was in such a hurry to reach Mexico that he would have felt it necessary to travel by airplane rather than a less expensive means of travel. He took a bus from Houston to Mexico City, lived very inexpensively there, and took a bus back to Dallas; there is no apparent reason why he would have interrupted such an inexpensive trip to fly to Austin and then to Houston. He told a passenger whom he met on the next leg of his trip that he had come from New Orleans, and made no reference to Austin.¹¹³⁶

On September 26, Oswald boarded Continental Trailways bus No. 5133 in Houston and departed at 2:35 a.m. for Laredo, Tex., via Corpus Christi and Alice.¹¹³⁷ Two British tourists, Dr. and Mrs. John B. McFarland, who boarded No. 5133 in Houston, noticed Oswald when they awoke at about 6 a.m. Oswald told them that he was going to Cuba via Mexico City, and they inferred from conversation with him that he had left New Orleans early in the afternoon of September 25 and that he was going to Cuba via Mexico City. He said also that he was secretary of the New Orleans branch of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee and that he hoped to see Fidel Castro in Cuba. The bus was scheduled to arrive in Laredo at approximately 1:20 p.m.¹¹³⁸

Oswald crossed the border from Laredo to Nuevo Laredo, Mexico, between 1:30 and 2 p.m.¹¹³⁹ From Nuevo Laredo, he traveled to Mexico City aboard bus No. 516 of the Flecha Roja Bus Line, which departed at 2:15 p.m. and was scheduled to arrive in Mexico City at 9:45 a.m. on the following day; he held baggage claim check No. 320435.¹¹⁴⁰ He was seen on the bus by the McFarlands and by two Australian girls who boarded the bus on the evening of September 26 at Monterrey.¹¹⁴¹ He occupied the seat next to an elderly Englishman, who told the girls that the young man sitting next to him apparently had been to Mexico before.¹¹⁴² The man next to Oswald was probably Albert Osborne, a native of the British Isles who has worked as an itinerant preacher in the Southern United States and Mexico for many years. Osborne denied that he sat beside Oswald; but in view of his inconsistent and untrue responses to Federal investigators concerning matters not directly related to Oswald, the Commission believes that his denial cannot be credited. It appeared to the other passengers on the bus that Osborne and Oswald had not previously met; extensive investigation has revealed no other contact between them.¹¹⁴³

In the course of the 20-hour bus trip, Oswald initiated two conversations with the Australian girls, during which he mentioned his visit to Russia and recommended the Hotel Cuba in Mexico City as a "clean and cheap" hotel; he told them, apparently falsely, that he had stayed there on previous occasions. He said that when he had seen them board the bus with their heavy suitcases, he had been under the impression that they were Mexican and had therefore asked the man next to him how to say "How can I help you?" in Spanish. From this they inferred that Oswald did not speak Spanish, an impression which is shared by every witness who met Oswald on his trip and is supported by notations which he made on documents that he carried.¹¹⁴⁴ He got off the bus at every stop and ate large meals, always eating by himself; the girls thought he ate so much because he could not make himself understood in Spanish and had to order by pointing at the menu.¹¹⁴⁵ The bus arrived in Mexico City 15 minutes late, at 10 a.m.¹¹⁴⁶ Oswald left the bus station by himself and had no known further contact with any of the people with whom he had spoken on the bus.¹¹⁴⁷

Oswald registered at the Hotel del Comercio within an hour of his arrival in Mexico City. He stayed there throughout his visit.¹¹⁴⁸ The hotel, located not far from the commercial heart of the city and within four blocks of the bus station, is one of a group of hotels located near the intercity bus terminals and has perhaps the best appearance of the group.¹¹⁴⁹ It is known by personnel in other hotels that the owner of the Hotel del Comercio can understand and speak a little English.¹¹⁵⁰ Oswald registered as "Lee, Harvey Oswald," and gave his occupation as "photo."¹¹⁵¹ He had room 18 which cost \$1.28 per day.¹¹⁵²

After he had registered, Oswald turned promptly to the task of obtaining permission to enter Cuba. Mexican officials would not permit a U.S. citizen without a Cuban visa to board a plane for Cuba

even if he had an American passport, but would permit passage if he had a visa even though the passport proscribed travel to Cuba.¹¹⁵³ Oswald had a 1963 American passport (stamped invalid for travel to Cuba)¹¹⁵⁴ but had neither a regular Cuban visa nor an intransit visa which would permit a short stay in Cuba on his way to Russia or some other country. His address book contained the telephone number and address of a Cuban airline, but there is evidence that he never visited its office.¹¹⁵⁵

He visited the Cuban Embassy on Friday, September 27 and spoke with Senora Silvia Tirado de Duran, a Mexican citizen employed there. Senora Duran later made a signed statement to the Mexican police that Oswald:

* * * applied for a visa to Cuba in transit to Russia and based his application on his presentation of his passport in which it was recorded that he had been living in the latter country for a period of three years, his work permit from that same country written in the Russian language and letters in the same language, as well as proof of his being married to a woman of Russian nationality and being the apparent Director in the city of New Orleans of the organization called "Fair Play for Cuba" with the desire that he should be accepted as a "friend" of the Cuban Revolution * * *.¹¹⁵⁶

He apparently also stated that he was a member of the Communist Party and displayed documents which he claimed to be evidence of his membership.¹¹⁵⁷ He said that he intended to go to Cuba on September 30 and to remain there for 2 weeks, or longer if possible, and then go on to Russia.¹¹⁵⁸ Senora Duran took down the relevant date and filled out the appropriate application. Oswald left the Embassy but was to return in the afternoon.¹¹⁵⁹

Then, or possibly even before his initial visit to the Cuban Embassy Oswald went to the Soviet Embassy where he spoke with either Pavel Antonovich Yatskov or Valeriy Vladimirovich Kostikov.¹¹⁶⁰ They are both consular officials serving also as agents of the KGB.¹¹⁶¹ Oswald later said that he had dealt with "Kostin,"¹¹⁶² undoubtedly a reference to Kostikov. He was unable to obtain a Soviet visa then. Marina said that the officials at the Soviet Embassy "refused to have anything to do with him."¹¹⁶³

Oswald returned to the Cuban Embassy later that afternoon, this time bringing with him passport photographs which he may have obtained in the United States.¹¹⁶⁴ Senora Duran telephoned the Soviet Embassy to inquire about the status of Oswald's Russian visa and was told that there would be a delay of about 4 months.¹¹⁶⁵ Oswald became "highly agitated and angry," particularly when he learned that he could not obtain an intransit visa to Cuba before he acquired a Russian visa. Senora Duran called the Cuban consul, then Eusibio Azque, to speak to him. The discussion between Oswald and Azque developed into a heated argument, which ended when Azque told Oswald that in

his opinion people like Oswald were harming the Cuban Revolution and that so far as Azque was concerned, he would not give Oswald a visa.¹¹⁶⁶ Senora Duran wrote her name and the phone number of the Embassy on a piece of paper which she gave to Oswald in case he wished to contact her again. He copied this information into his address book.¹¹⁶⁷ Senora Duran forwarded the Cuban visa application to Havana;¹¹⁶⁸ the Cuban Ministry of Foreign Affairs replied on October 15 that the visa could be issued only after Oswald had obtained a Russian visa.¹¹⁶⁹ (See Commission Exhibit No. 2564, p. 303.)

Oswald contacted the Russian and Cuban Embassies again during his stay in Mexico.¹¹⁷⁰ He had no greater success than he had before. Marina testified that when he returned to Texas, he was convinced that his trip had been a failure and disappointed at having been unable to go to Cuba.¹¹⁷¹ A month later, in a painstakingly composed¹¹⁷² letter to the Soviet Embassy in Washington, Oswald ascribed his failure to "a gross breach of regulations" on the part of the Cuban Embassy. "Of corse," he wrote, "the Soviet Embassy was not at fault, they were, as I say unprepared."¹¹⁷³

The hotel maid said that Oswald generally was gone by the time she arrived at 9 a.m. The night watchman said he usually returned at about midnight,¹¹⁷⁴ which is not unusual, in view of the late hour at which Mexico City's evening activities begin. He ate several lunches at a small restaurant immediately adjacent to the hotel, coming to the restaurant shortly after 2 p.m., and ordering food by pointing to the menu, apparently with some consideration of cost; he spent between 40 and 48 cents for each meal. He ate the soup of the day, rice, and either meat or eggs, but refused dessert and coffee; the waitress concluded that Oswald did not realize that the items which he refused were included in the price of the lunch.¹¹⁷⁵ He was seen with no other person either at his hotel or at the restaurant.¹¹⁷⁶ A hotel guest stated that on one occasion he sat down at a table with Oswald because there was no empty table in the restaurant, but that neither spoke to the other because of the language barrier.¹¹⁷⁷

Although the Soviet and Cuban Embassies are within two blocks of each other, they are some distance from Oswald's hotel.¹¹⁷⁸ He must, therefore, have traversed a substantial portion of the city on more than one occasion. Marina testified that he told her that he had seen a bullfight,¹¹⁷⁹ which would normally have been on Sunday afternoon, and that he had visited museums¹¹⁸⁰ and done some sightseeing.¹¹⁸¹ He apparently also saw one or more motion pictures, either American with Spanish subtitles or Mexican with English subtitles.¹¹⁸² From notations in his Spanish-English dictionary and on his guide map of Mexico City, it appears that Oswald intended to attend a jai alai game¹¹⁸³ but he almost certainly did not do so.¹¹⁸⁴

He purchased several postcards depicting bullfights and tourist attractions, which he brought back to Marina.¹¹⁸⁵ She had told him be-

fore he left that she would like Mexican silver bracelets as a souvenir, and he brought her a silver bracelet inscribed with her name.¹¹⁸⁶ Marina suspected, almost certainly correctly, that the bracelet, of Japanese origin, did not come from Mexico.¹¹⁸⁷ No such jewelry is known to be sold in or around Mexico City, because of a high duty¹¹⁸⁸ but the bracelet is of a type commonly sold in 5-and-10-cent stores in Dallas.¹¹⁸⁹ Oswald did not buy the Mexican phonograph records which Marina had requested, despite the notation, "records," which he had placed in his dictionary.¹¹⁹⁰

On Monday, September 30, Oswald began to prepare for his return to the United States. He appeared at the Agencia de Viages, Transportes Chihuahuenses,¹¹⁹¹ and purchased international exchange orders costing \$20.30 for travel on a Transportes del Norte bus from Mexico City to Laredo and by Greyhound bus directly from Laredo to Dallas. The travel agency made a reservation for him on Transportes del Norte bus No. 332, departing Mexico City at 8:30 a.m. on October 2. The seat, No. 12, was reserved in the name of the travel agency, which recorded the reservation in the name of "H. O. Lee."¹¹⁹² The employee who made the reservation testified that he probably wrote the name that way because he was copying from Oswald's tourist card, which read "Lee, Harvey Oswald."¹¹⁹³ (The manifest for Transportes Frontera bus No. 340, leaving Mexico City for Monterrey and Nuevo Laredo at 1 p.m. on Wednesday, October 2, 1963, contains the name "Oswald" [sic], which apparently was added to the manifest after the trip;¹¹⁹⁴ in any event, Oswald did not take bus 340.)¹¹⁹⁵

On October 1, Oswald paid his hotel bill through that night.¹¹⁹⁶ The hotel night watchman remembers helping Oswald obtain a taxicab at about 6:30 or 7 on the following morning.¹¹⁹⁷ Transportes del Norte bus No. 332 left as scheduled at about 8:30 a.m.; at Monterrey the passengers were shifted to a relief bus, No. 373, scheduled to depart for Laredo at 10 p.m. that evening.¹¹⁹⁸ Fellow passengers recall that Oswald was pulled off the bus by Mexican officials at the border, because of some alleged irregularity in his Mexican tourist papers; one passenger overheard him mumbling complaints about the Mexican immigration officials when he returned to the bus.¹¹⁹⁹ They remember also that Oswald was hurriedly "gulping" down a banana after the bus reached customs, perhaps because he believed that he could not take fruit into the United States.¹²⁰⁰ (Marina has testified that her husband liked bananas and frequently ate them.)¹²⁰¹ One of the passengers testified that Oswald annoyed him by keeping his overhead light on to read after 10 p.m.¹²⁰² He may have conversed with an elderly woman on the bus, but he was not traveling with her.¹²⁰³

At about 1:35 a.m. on October 3, Oswald crossed the International Bridge from Nuevo Laredo into Texas.¹²⁰⁴ He traveled from Laredo to Dallas via San Antonio, on Greyhound bus No. 1265, substantially following Interstate Route 35 for the entire trip¹²⁰⁵ leaving Laredo at 3 a.m. and arriving in Dallas at about 2:20 p.m. on the same day.¹²⁰⁶

DALLAS

Oswald did not contact his wife immediately when he returned to Dallas. He went to the office of the employment commission, where he filed an unemployment compensation claim ¹²⁰⁷ and announced that he was again looking for work.¹²⁰⁸ He spent the night at the YMCA, where he registered as a serviceman in order to avoid paying the membership fee.¹²⁰⁹ On the following day, he applied for a job as a typesetter trainee at the Padgett Printing Co. He made a favorable impression on the department foreman, but the plant superintendent called Jaggars-Chiles-Stovall and decided not to hire Oswald because of the unfavorable responses which his inquiries produced.¹²¹⁰ Later that day, Oswald telephoned Marina and asked her to have Mrs. Paine pick him up in Dallas. Marina refused, and he hitchhiked out to the Paine home,¹²¹¹ where he spent part or all of the weekend.¹²¹⁰ Marina testified that although her husband "changed for the better" and treated her better after his Mexican trip,¹²¹³ she did not want to live with him because she was pregnant and thought it would be better "to be with a woman who spoke English and Russian."¹²¹⁴ On Monday, October 7, Mrs. Paine drove Oswald to the bus station, and he returned to Dallas to look for a job and a place to live.¹²¹⁵

Oswald thought that the YMCA was too expensive for him, and intended to rent a room.¹²¹⁶ He inquired about a room at 1026 North Beckley, where he lived later, but on October 7 there were no vacancies.¹²¹⁷ He next responded to a "For Rent" sign at a rooming house at 621 Marsalis Street. He obtained a room, for which he paid the weekly rent of \$7 in advance, and moved in on the same day.¹²¹⁸ He immediately resumed his job-hunting, relying partially on referrals by the employment commission.¹²¹⁹ He spent much of the time when he was not looking for work in his room.¹²²⁰ He telephoned his wife daily.¹²²¹ She wrote: "Lee called twice a day, was worried about my health and about June."¹²²² On Friday, Oswald told his landlady, Mrs. Mary Bledsoe, that he was going to Irving for the weekend but would return the following week. She refused to rent the room to him for another week because she didn't like him.¹²²³

Oswald spent the weekend of October 12-13 at Mrs. Paine's home, during which time she gave him a driving lesson.¹²²⁴ He told her that he had received the last of the unemployment checks due him, and that it had been smaller than the previous ones. Mrs. Paine testified that Oswald was extremely discouraged because his wife was expecting a baby, he had no job prospects in sight, and he no longer had any source of income.¹²²⁵

On Monday, Mrs. Paine drove Oswald into Dallas, since she had other business there.¹²²⁶ He picked up his bag from Mrs. Bledsoe's roominghouse ¹²²⁷ and later that day rented a room at 1026 North Beckley Avenue from Mrs. A. C. Johnson for \$8 a week. He registered as O. H. Lee and moved in immediately.¹²²⁸ Oswald felt that this room was more comfortable than the previous one, particularly

because he had television and refrigerator privileges.¹²²⁹ He apparently continued to spend most of his evenings in his room.¹²³⁰ He borrowed books from the library¹²³¹ and had subscriptions to various periodicals, including *Time*, the *Worker*, the *Militant*, and some Russian periodicals.¹²³²

On that Monday, Mrs. Paine mentioned the Oswalds' financial and employment problems to neighbors whom she was visiting. Mrs. Linnie Mae Randle, who was also present, remarked that she thought that her younger brother, Buell Wesley Frazier, who worked at the Texas School Book Depository, had said that there was a job opening there. When Marina heard of this, she asked Mrs. Paine to call the Depository to see if there was an opening.¹²³³ Mrs. Paine called Roy S. Truly, superintendent of the Depository, who indicated that he would talk to Oswald if he would apply in person.¹²³⁴ When Oswald telephoned the Paine house on Monday evening, Mrs. Paine told him about this possibility.¹²³⁵ On the next day, Oswald was interviewed by Truly and hired in a temporary capacity. He began work on Wednesday, October 16. His duties were to fill book orders; his hours were 8 a.m. to 4:45 p.m., for which he received \$1.25 an hour.¹²³⁶

Both the Oswalds were elated with the new job,¹²³⁷ although it apparently required little skill or experience¹²³⁸ and he indicated that he still hoped to obtain a better job.¹²³⁹ He did a satisfactory job at the Depository,¹²⁴⁰ but he kept to himself and very few of his fellow employees got to know him.¹²⁴¹

During his first week at work, Oswald became acquainted with Frazier, with whom he arranged to ride to Irving on weekends.¹²⁴² On Friday, October 18, Frazier drove him from work to the Paine home;¹²⁴³ since it was his birthday, Marina and Ruth Paine had arranged a small celebration.¹²⁴⁴ On Sunday, he stayed with June and the Paine children, while Mrs. Paine drove Marina to Parkland Hospital where she gave birth to a second daughter, Rachel.¹²⁴⁵ He went to work on Monday, but that evening visited Marina in the hospital and spent the night in Irving.¹²⁴⁶ Marina wrote:

Monday evening Lee visited me in the hospital. He was very happy at the birth of another daughter and even wept a little. He said that two daughters were better for each other—two sisters. He stayed with me about two hours.¹²⁴⁷

Oswald returned to Dallas the next morning.¹²⁴⁸

Oswald wrote to Arnold Johnson of the Communist Party, U.S.A., that on the evening of October 23, he had attended an "ultra right" meeting headed by Gen. Edwin A. Walker.¹²⁴⁹ Two evenings later, he accompanied Michael Paine to a meeting of the American Civil Liberties Union, held at Southern Methodist University.¹²⁵⁰ At this meeting, a statement was made to the effect that members of the John Birch Society should not be considered anti-Semitic; Oswald rose and stated that at the meeting which he had attended 2 days earlier, he had heard a number of anti-Semitic and anti-Catholic statements.

Later in the evening, Oswald became involved in a discussion with several people, including Frank Krystinik, who was employed with Paine at the Bell Helicopter plant. During this conversation, Oswald expressed Marxist views and declared that he was a Marxist, although denying that he was a Communist. He admitted that the United States was superior to the Soviet Union in the area of civil liberties and praised President Kennedy for his work in that connection.¹²⁵¹ Krystinik testified that he got the impression that Oswald did not fully understand the views he was expounding.¹²⁵²

Throughout that week Oswald telephoned his wife to inquire about her health and that of the baby. He spent the weekend at the Paine home, to which Marina and Rachel had returned during the week.¹²⁵³ On Friday, November 1, he obtained post office box No. 6225 at the Terminal Annex Post Office Station. He indicated that the box would also be used to receive mail for the Fair Play for Cuba Committee and the American Civil Liberties Union.¹²⁵⁴ Once again he spent the weekend in Irving.¹²⁵⁵

Throughout this period, the FBI had been aware of the whereabouts of the Oswalds. There was a record in the Dallas office of the FBI that Oswald subscribed to the Worker, engaged in Fair Play for Cuba Committee activities and had traveled to Mexico.¹²⁵⁶ An FBI agent visited the Paine home on November 1 and, accompanied by another agent, again on November 5, and spoke briefly with Mrs. Paine. On neither occasion was Oswald present.¹²⁵⁷ Ruth Paine noted the agent's name and telephone number and, in accordance with her husband's instructions, Marina noted the license number of the agent's automobile, all of which was subsequently reported to Oswald.¹²⁵⁸ Both Mrs. Paine and Marina testified that Oswald was troubled by the FBI's interest in him.¹²⁵⁹ He declared that the FBI was "trying to inhibit" his activities,¹²⁶⁰ and wrote the Soviet Embassy in Washington:

The Federal Bureau of Investigation is not now interested in my activities in the progressive organization "Fair Play for Cuba Committee" of which I was secretary in New Orleans (state Louisiana) since I no longer reside in that state. However, the F.B.I. has visited us here in Dallas, Texas, on November 1st. Agent James P. Hasty warned me that if I engaged in F.P.C.C. activities in Texas the F.B.I. will again take an "interest" in me.

This agent also 'suggested' to Marina Nichilayeva that she could remain in the United States under F.B.I. 'protection', that is, she could defect from the Soviet Union, of course, I and my wife strongly protested these tactics by the notorious F.B.I.

Please inform us of the arrival of our Soviet entrance visa's as soon as they come.¹²⁶¹ (See Commission Exhibit 15, p. 311.)

Marina testified that the statements, both by and to the FBI agents, to which her husband referred in this letter, were in fact never made.¹²⁶²

The following Friday, November 8, Oswald as usual drove to the Paine house with Frazier.¹²⁶³ On Saturday Mrs. Paine took him to the Texas Drivers' License Examining Station, but because it was an election day the station was closed. Oswald stayed at the Paines through Monday, November 11, which was Veterans Day. During the weekend, Mrs. Paine gave Oswald a second driving lesson.¹²⁶⁴

Oswald did not go to Irving on the next weekend. His wife had asked him not to come because Michael Paine, with whom Oswald did not get along, would be there to celebrate his daughter's birthday. Also, she felt that because he had stayed for 3 days the preceding weekend, he would abuse Mrs. Paine's hospitality if he returned so soon. Oswald telephoned Marina on Saturday afternoon and said that he had returned to the drivers' license examining station that morning but had not waited because there was a long line.¹²⁶⁵

On Sunday, November 17, at Marina's request, Ruth Paine telephoned Oswald at the Beckley Avenue number, which he had given to Marina. When she asked for him, she was told that no one by that name lived at the address, which greatly surprised her. On the next day, Oswald telephoned his wife. When she indicated that she had been upset by the fact that there had been no Lee Oswald at the number which she had asked Mrs. Paine to call, Oswald became angry; he said that he was using a fictitious name and that she should not have called the Beckley Avenue number.¹²⁶⁶ He did not telephone on the following day, which was unusual.¹²⁶⁷

On the morning of Thursday, November 21, Oswald asked Frazier to take him to Irving when he went home that evening, saying that he wanted to pick up some curtain rods.¹²⁶⁸ His arrival was a surprise because he generally asked Mrs. Paine's permission before arriving for a visit.¹²⁶⁹ The women thought that he had come to Irving because he felt badly about arguing with his wife about the use of the fictitious name.¹²⁷⁰ He said that he was lonely, because he had not come the preceding weekend, and told Marina that he "wanted to make his peace" with her.¹²⁷¹ He spent the time before dinner on the lawn playing with his daughter.¹²⁷² However, when he attempted to talk to his wife she would not answer, which upset him. He asked her to live with him in Dallas, and she refused.¹²⁷³ After supper, Oswald watched television while the women cleaned the house and prepared their children for bed.¹²⁷⁴ He retired early in the evening at about 9.¹²⁷⁵