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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

December 2, 1966

BY LIAISON

*(6)*

Honorable Marvin Watson  
Special Assistant to the President  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Watson:

For your information, I am enclosing  
a communication which may be of interest to you.

Upon removal of the enclosure, if  
classified, this transmittal form becomes  
unclassified.

Sincerely yours,

*J. Edgar Hoover*  
John Edgar Hoover  
Director

Enc.

In accordance with your request  
on November 29, 1966, there is attached a  
memorandum summarizing information in our  
files concerning reaction of Soviet and  
Communist Party officials to the assassina-  
tion of President John F. Kennedy. This data  
has not been furnished to the Acting  
Attorney General.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20535

December 1, 1966

Reply, Please Refer to  
File No.

REACTION OF SOVIET AND  
COMMUNIST PARTY OFFICIALS  
TO THE ASSASSINATION OF  
PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY

A source who has furnished reliable information in the past and who was in Russia on the date of the assassination of the late President John F. Kennedy advised on December 4, 1963, that the news of the assassination of President Kennedy was flashed to the Soviet people almost immediately after its occurrence. It was greeted by great shock and consternation and church bells were tolled in the memory of President Kennedy.

According to our source, officials of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union believed there was some well-organized conspiracy on the part of the "ultraright" in the United States to effect a "coup." They seemed convinced that the assassination was not the deed of one man, but that it arose out of a carefully planned campaign in which several people played a part. They felt that those elements interested in utilizing the assassination and playing on anticommunist sentiments in the United States would then utilize this act to stop negotiations with the Soviet Union, attack Cuba and thereafter spread the war. As a result of these feelings, the Soviet Union immediately went into a state of national alert.

Our source further stated that Soviet officials were fearful that without leadership, some irresponsible general in the United States might launch a missile at the Soviet Union. It was the further opinion of the Soviet officials that only maniacs would think that the "left" forces in the United States, as represented by the Communist Party, USA, would assassinate President Kennedy, especially in view of the abuse the Communist Party, USA, has taken from the "ultraleft" as a result of its support of the peaceful coexistence and disarmament policies of the Kennedy administration.

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REACTION OF SOVIET AND COMMUNIST  
PARTY OFFICIALS TO THE ASSASSINATION  
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According to our source, Soviet officials claimed that Lee Harvey Oswald had no connection whatsoever with the Soviet Union. They described him as a neurotic maniac who was disloyal to his own country and everything else. They noted that Oswald never belonged to any organization in the Soviet Union and was never given Soviet citizenship.

A second source who has furnished reliable information in the past advised on November 27, 1963, that Nikolai T. Fedorenko, the Permanent Representative to the Soviet Mission to the United Nations, held a brief meeting with all diplomatic personnel employed at the Soviet Mission on November 23, 1963. During this meeting, Fedorenko related for the benefit of all present the news of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy and stated that Kennedy's death was very much regretted by the Soviet Union and had caused considerable shock in Soviet Government circles. Fedorenko stated that the Soviet Union would have preferred to have had President Kennedy at the helm of the American Government. He added that President Kennedy had, to some degree, a mutual understanding with the Soviet Union, and had tried seriously to improve relations between the United States and Russia. Fedorenko also added that little or nothing was known by the Soviet Government concerning President Lyndon Johnson and, as a result, the Soviet Government did not know what policies President Johnson would follow in the future regarding the Soviet Union.

According to our source, Colonel Boris Ivanov, Chief of the Soviet Committee for State Security (KGB) Residency in New York City, held a meeting of KGB personnel on the morning of November 25, 1963. Ivanov informed those present that President Kennedy's death had posed a problem for the KGB and stated that it was necessary for all KGB employees to lend their efforts to solving the problem.

According to our source, Ivanov stated that it was his personal feeling that the assassination of President Kennedy had been planned by an organized group rather than being the act of one individual assassin. Ivanov stated that it was therefore necessary that the KGB ascertain with the greatest possible speed the true story surrounding President Kennedy's assassination. Ivanov stated that the KGB was interested in knowing all the factors and all of the possible groups which might have worked behind the scenes to organize and plan this assassination.

TOP SECRET

- 2 -

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REACTION OF SOVIET AND COMMUNIST  
PARTY OFFICIALS TO THE ASSASSINATION  
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Our source added that Ivanov also emphasized that it was of extreme importance to the Soviet Government to determine precisely what kind of a man the new President Lyndon Johnson would be. Ivanov said that President Johnson was practically an unknown to the Soviet Government and, accordingly, the KGB had issued instructions to all of its agents to immediately obtain all data available concerning the incumbent President. Ivanov said that it would be necessary for KGB personnel to gather and correlate all information concerning President Johnson, including his background, his past working experience and record in Congress, his present attitude toward the Soviet Union, and particularly all information which might have bearing upon the future foreign policy line he would follow.

On September 16, 1965, this same source reported that the KGB Residency in New York City received instructions approximately September 16, 1965, from KGB headquarters in Moscow to develop all possible information concerning President Lyndon B. Johnson's character, background, personal friends, family, and from which quarters he derives his support in his position as President of the United States. Our source added that in the instructions from Moscow, it was indicated that "now" the KGB was in possession of data purporting to indicate President Johnson was responsible for the assassination of the late President John F. Kennedy. KGB headquarters indicated that in view of this information, it was necessary for the Soviet Government to know the existing personal relationship between President Johnson and the Kennedy family, particularly that between President Johnson and Robert and "Ted" Kennedy.

On March 3, 1964, Yuri I. Nosenko, Soviet defector whose bona fides has not been established, advised that he was handling Soviet Committee for State Security (KGB) investigations of tourists from the United States at the time Lee Harvey Oswald visited Russia in 1959, and consequently was fully cognizant of the Lee Harvey Oswald case.

According to Nosenko, Oswald came to the attention of the KGB when he expressed a wish to defect to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shortly after his arrival in Russia. However, the KGB, after inquiry, decided he was mentally unstable and informed him he had to return to the United States upon completion of his visit. Thereafter, when Oswald missed a sight-seeing tour he was to take, his hotel room was forced open and he was found with one of his wrists badly cut.

TOP SECRET

- 3 -

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Nosenko added that Oswald was hospitalized and thereafter was allowed to remain in Russia, apparently through the efforts of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Red Cross. Oswald again came to the attention of the KGB when he attempted to re-enter the Soviet Union by placing a request with the Soviet Embassy in Mexico, after his return to the United States. Nosenko stated that the KGB recommended against allowing Oswald to re-enter the Soviet Union. According to Nosenko, Oswald's case was a routine one in which the KGB had no interest until he assassinated President Kennedy. He was not approached or recruited for espionage by the KGB nor was his wife, Marina. Nosenko said Marina was regarded as a woman who possessed little intelligence and he added that she had once been a member of the Communist Party but had been dropped for failure over a long period of time to pay her dues.

It was the opinion of Nosenko that President Kennedy was held in high esteem by the Soviet Government and that President Kennedy had been evaluated by the Soviet Government as a person interested in maintaining peace. According to Nosenko, following the assassination, Soviet guards were removed from around the American Embassy in Moscow and the Soviet people were permitted without interference to visit the American Embassy to express their condolences. Nosenko added that the KGB provided approximately 20 men who spoke the English language to handle duties in the immediate vicinity of the American Embassy in Moscow at that time to insure that no disrespect was shown during this period.

Following the assassination of President Kennedy, Anatoli Dobrynin, Soviet Ambassador to the United States, turned over to the Secretary of State a file alleged to be the complete consular file on Lee H. and Marina Oswald maintained in the Soviet Embassy, Washington, D. C. Subsequently, the Soviet Government made available to the United States Government the hospitalization record of Lee Harvey Oswald during his hospitalization in the Soviet Union. This record corroborated data previously received indicating Oswald had attempted to commit suicide in the Soviet Union.

Reaction of Communist Party officials to the assassination of President Kennedy and to the investigation

TOP SECRET

- 4 -

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REACTION OF SOVIET AND COMMUNIST  
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OF PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY

conducted by the Warren Commission concerning such assassination closely follows the Soviet party line. On December 4, 1963, Gus Hall, General Secretary, Communist Party, USA, informed one of our sources who has furnished reliable information in the past that the assassination followed a pattern which clearly indicated it could have been done by no one other than the "ultraright" and that Hall feels that Oswald was killed by the "ultraright" in order to prevent him from talking. Hall indicated to our source that he planned to contact Soviet officials to determine if they planned to interview Marina Oswald and, if so, he planned to ask the Soviets to question Marina whether Lee Harvey Oswald had any connections with the "ultraright," had any relations with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, or had any relations or contacts with Jack Ruby.

Hall also told our source that he felt the Soviets are too lax in allowing "all kinds of persons to go to Moscow." Hall expressed his opinion that at the time Oswald went to Moscow, he was operating for the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Hall further stated that Oswald "could have been a nut, too."

The position of the Communist Party, USA, toward the Warren Commission Report was clearly set forth in the October 11, 1964, issue of "The Worker," an East Coast communist newspaper. In an article captioned "Warren Report Brushes Off Ultra-Rightist Conspiracy," it was stated that the Warren Report gives comparatively very little space to the material that came before it indicating that a "Right-wing conspiracy" was in the making and that Oswald was a "Left-painted" undercover instrument of such forces or of a Government agency. The article further stated that even the limited material which the Warren Commission has put into the record on the Rightist conspiracy that was in progress is an important contribution and provides a basis for further investigation.

No information has been developed indicating any of the so-called communist "splinter groups," such as the Progressive Labor Party, Socialist Workers Party or the Workers World Party, have planned or instituted any concerted effort or drive to discredit or attack the Warren Commission. Official publications of these organizations have from time to time contained isolated articles which have been critical of the Warren Commission. For example,

TOP SECRET

- 5 -

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"Progressive Labor," the official publication of the Progressive Labor Party, issued a Special Supplement dated November 27, 1963, which contained an article which attempted to raise doubts as to whether Lee Harvey Oswald actually killed President Kennedy. The article also attempted to establish that Oswald possibly had been "framed." The December, 1963, issue of this same magazine contained an article which further attempted to establish that Oswald had been "framed" and that the Warren Commission did not make a thorough investigation of the assassination.

The Soviet press, from time to time since the assassination of President Kennedy, has carried articles attacking the conclusions of the Warren Commission. Immediately following the publication of the Warren Commission Report on September 24, 1964, the Soviet newspaper "Pravda" carried an article in its September 28, 1964, edition summarizing the findings of the Warren Commission. In this article, the Soviet author stated that the Warren Commission Report did not dispel all doubts and suspicions about the "crime of the century." The article also noted that "not everything mysterious has become public" and pointed out that at the beginning of the work of the Warren Commission, Mr. Warren declared that some facts connected with the assassination of President Kennedy may not be revealed in the lifetime of this generation.

In an article in the Soviet newspaper "Izvestia" for September 21, 1965, Soviet reporter V. Zorin criticized the Warren Commission investigation and the conclusions of the Warren Commission. The author also summarized the allegations of a number of American and European authors who have written books critical of the Warren Commission Report and concluded that the assassination in Dallas has many riddles to offer and that the mystery remains a mystery.

In September, 1966, the Soviet publication "New Times" published excerpts of book reviews by American journalist Professor Richard Popkin. Among the excerpts pointed out were comments made by Professor Popkin concerning the books "Whitewash" by Harold Weisberg and "Inquest" by Edward J. Epstein. The Soviet publication points out that it is the conclusion of Professor Popkin that the Kennedy assassination was the outcome of a carefully laid plot in which influential quarters were implicated.

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- 6 -

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OSWALD, LEE, TRAVEL, PROPOSED RUSSIAN TRIP (1963)  
OSWALD, LEE, TRIP TO MEXICO  
WARREN COMMISSION  
OSWALD, LEE, GOVERNMENT AFFILIATIONS  
NEWSPAPER, PROGRESSIVE LABOR  
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