

tion of Communist policy, have become separated from their American citizen families. And from the time we first recognized the Soviets, this has been a problem there. Files are filled with notes to the Soviet Government asking them to please issue exit visas to permit certain relatives to join families in the United States. This has gone on, and I remember hearing an officer say that if the result of recognizing the Soviet Union was for no other reason than to assist these people this was a very powerful reason. During World War II no visas were issued and nobody traveled and this died. Right after the war we again had the problem of people trying to get their relatives out, and the number was greatly increased by Russia taking over those various countries, Lithuania, Estonia, parts of Poland, parts of Czechoslovakia, Rumania went into the Soviet Union, and we had the number greatly enlarged.

Then, in addition to that, because of war operations, American citizens were stationed in the Soviet Union and they had married Soviet women, and so we had pressing cases of correspondents, American correspondents, a few people assigned to the Embassy in Moscow who married Soviet wives, probably about 15 or 16 who were very, what we would call, worthy cases of good marriages and good people who had made a good marriage with women we thought were good people, and they have since made good American citizens.

So in 1953, when Stalin died, we had the first break, and they issued the visas on this group. And since then we have gone forward with this. We saw we had a break and so we have been pressing the Soviet Government to issue visas to clear this problem up.

In 1959 when Mr. Nixon went there, he was importuned by relatives to help to get their relatives out, I mean American citizens, and he took a list of about 80 people, and he agreed to take up these cases, and we added a number of worthy cases, and Mr. Khrushchev said, "I want to clear up this problem"—present it through channels.

Since then, we have presented it through channels and we have succeeded in getting about 800 relatives of American citizens out. And the defector's wife falls into that pattern, because while we are not sympathetic with these people we know that if we refuse to grant U.S. visas to a wife of an American citizen, the Soviet Government can immediately say, "Well, we grant visas to these people, exit visas. Then you don't allow them to go to the United States. What does this mean?"

So that was the basis of our whole policy with Marina Oswald, that we felt that we didn't want to put the Embassy in a position of fighting for exit visas for relatives, and then when they issue you say, "Well, this is not quite the kind we want."

Mr. COLEMAN. In other words, you say that once the Passport Office made the decision that Oswald was still an American citizen, then your policy that you don't want to separate husbands and wives came into play, and if the Soviet Union is willing to let both of them out, that we will let them come in?

Miss JAMES. That is the basic policy. That was the whole interest in our Office, the Embassy in Moscow's primary interest there as far as Marina Oswald was concerned, and her child.

Mr. COLEMAN. I have no further questions.

Thank you.

TESTIMONY OF JAMES L. RITCHIE

The testimony of James L. Ritchie was taken at 12:20 p.m., on June 17, 1964, at 200 Maryland Avenue NE., Washington, D.C., by Messrs. William T. Coleman, Jr., and W. David Slawson, assistant counsel of the President's Commission, Thomas Ehrlich, Special Assistant to the Legal Adviser, Department of State, and Carroll H. Seeley, Jr., were present.

Mr. COLEMAN. Mr. Ritchie, will you state your full name?

Mr. RITCHIE. James L. Ritchie.

Mr. COLEMAN. Will you raise your right hand? Do you solemnly swear the testimony you are about to give is the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Mr. RITCHIE. I do.

Mr. COLEMAN. Please state your name and address.

Mr. RITCHIE. James L. Ritchie, 5010 North 13th Street, Arlington, Va.

Mr. COLEMAN. Our information is, sir, that some time around October 22, 1963, you had occasion to look at the Oswald file——

Mr. RITCHIE. I did.

Mr. COLEMAN. After the Department received a telegram from the CIA indicating that Oswald had made an inquiry at the Russian Embassy in Mexico City, and that you took certain action as a result of looking at the file?

Mr. RITCHIE. I did.

Mr. COLEMAN. And that is what we want to ask you about, sir. But before I do that, let me ask you a few preliminary questions.

Mr. RITCHIE. Certainly.

Mr. COLEMAN. You have given your address, is that correct?

Mr. RITCHIE. Yes, sir.

Mr. COLEMAN. Where are you presently working?

Mr. RITCHIE. State Department Passport Office, Legal Division.

Mr. COLEMAN. And what is your position?

Mr. RITCHIE. Attorney advisor.

Mr. COLEMAN. And how long have you been in that capacity?

Mr. RITCHIE. Nine or ten years.

Mr. COLEMAN. Are you a member of the Bar?

Mr. RITCHIE. Yes; District of Columbia.

Mr. COLEMAN. When was the first time you ever heard the name Lee Harvey Oswald?

Mr. RITCHIE. October 22, 1963.

Mr. COLEMAN. And would you indicate what occasioned your hearing the name?

Mr. RITCHIE. The Security Division transmitted a telegram from the CIA marked Secret, to the Passport Office. It was received in the Legal Division October 16, and it had been marked "Mr. Anderson, pull previous" which means get the file, and it was then handed to me October 21, approximately.

Mr. COLEMAN. Who handed it to you?

Mr. RITCHIE. I don't know. It was placed on my desk. I imagine the file——

Mr. COLEMAN. Prior to that time, you hadn't called for the file? You knew nothing about the case?

Mr. RITCHIE. No; I knew nothing about it. It had been placed on my desk for review. I read the telegram, noted that copies had been sent to SCA, that is the Bureau of Security and Consular Affairs, CMA, Mexico, the Soviet desk, and the press section of RAR.

Mr. SEELEY. American Republics Political Division.

Mr. COLEMAN. Then what did you do after you got the telegram?

Mr. RITCHIE. I reviewed the entire file.

Mr. COLEMAN. That means you read every document in the file?

Mr. RITCHIE. Yes.

Mr. COLEMAN. And do you have any idea how long it took you?

Mr. RITCHIE. Not more than a half hour.

Mr. COLEMAN. And then what did you do after you read or reviewed the file?

Mr. RITCHIE. I don't want to say I read every item. I read the majority.

Mr. COLEMAN. As a lawyer?

Mr. RITCHIE. Yes; I glanced over it.

Mr. COLEMAN. You read what you felt was relevant?

Mr. RITCHIE. Relevant.

Mr. COLEMAN. But you did thumb through every document?

Mr. RITCHIE. Yes.

Mr. COLEMAN. What did you then do?

Mr. RITCHIE. I made a judgment there was no passport action to be taken, and marked the file to be filed.

Mr. COLEMAN. Did you make a written memorandum?

Mr. RITCHIE. No, sir; just put "file" on it.

Mr. COLEMAN. Did you discuss it with Mr. Seeley or anyone else?

Mr. RITCHIE. I took the file to Mr. Seeley.

Mr. COLEMAN. Did you summarize for him what was in the file?

Mr. RITCHIE. No; I did not. I don't know what my exact words were to him. I must have said, "Look at this."

Mr. COLEMAN. Didn't you say to him, "This guy was a defector"?

Mr. RITCHIE. I don't recall what I said to him, back in October. I know I said something to him. I directed his attention to it.

Mr. COLEMAN. Then did he discuss it with you?

Mr. RITCHIE. No.

Mr. COLEMAN. You put the file on his desk and you didn't have anything to do with it?

Mr. RITCHIE. That is right.

Mr. COLEMAN. Why did you put it on his desk?

Mr. RITCHIE. He was in charge of the section, and I just brought it to him for his attention.

Mr. COLEMAN. Would you do that with every file that you are asked to review?

Mr. RITCHIE. Those files that I thought should be brought to his attention; yes.

Mr. COLEMAN. So, therefore, you felt that this file was other than just the routine file that you would look at and put back?

Mr. RITCHIE. Yes, sir.

Mr. COLEMAN. Wouldn't you tell Mr. Seeley something as to why you thought it was other than routine?

Mr. RITCHIE. No, sir; I just said "Look at it." I presume I just directed his attention to the file, and that he should look at it.

Mr. COLEMAN. And then you had no more discussion with him?

Mr. RITCHIE. None that I can recall.

Mr. COLEMAN. Did you say anything to him, like for example, "This guy the last time he was abroad tried to, or at least threatened that he would give to the Soviets whatever he had learned in the Marine Corps with reference to our radar information"?

Mr. RITCHIE. I have no recollection of my conversation with Mr. Seeley. All I know is my usual procedure is I review a case. If there is no passport action to be taken, I place it, mark it "file" and place it in the box to go to file.

Mr. COLEMAN. Without Mr. Seeley taking a look at it?

Mr. RITCHIE. Without Mr. Seeley ever seeing it.

Mr. COLEMAN. And this one you felt—

Mr. RITCHIE. And this one I felt he should see.

Mr. COLEMAN. But you didn't give him any memorandum—

Mr. RITCHIE. No, sir.

Mr. COLEMAN. Or point out what he should look at?

Mr. RITCHIE. I may have directed his attention to the case, but I have no independent recollection of it.

Mr. COLEMAN. Then after October 22, 1963, you had no contact with Oswald, the file or anything else?

Mr. RITCHIE. No, sir; let me change that. I reviewed the file before I came here. I have reviewed the file.

Mr. COLEMAN. Oh, sure.

That is all. Thank you, sir.

TESTIMONY OF CARROLL HAMILTON SEELEY, JR.

The testimony of Carroll Hamilton Seeley, Jr., was taken at 11 a.m., on June 17, 1964, at 200 Maryland Avenue NE., Washington, D.C., by Messrs. William T. Coleman, Jr., and W. David Slawson, assistant counsel of the President's Commission. Thomas Ehrlich, Esq., Special Assistant to the Legal Adviser, Department of State, and James L. Ritchie, were present.