

The cavernous Metropole Hotel lobby in Moscow smells of sweet Russian tobacco and heavy varnish, and it was noisy with foreign tourists when I hurried through the revolving door that November day in 1959. Falling snow was softening the harshness of the Soviet streets, but the atmosphere in Moscow and the hotel lobby was far from cold.

Mir y družba (peace and friendship) was the symphony that Premier Nikita Khrushchev was conducting at that time, and the once forbidding Soviet capital had an air of relief from cold war tension.

As a foreign correspondent for United Press International, I had seen Soviets and Americans reaching out their hands to each other at the American Exhibition in Sokolniki Park that summer. I had toured the Soviet Union with the then Vice President Richard Nixon to friendly Russian receptions from Leningrad to Novosibirsk in Siberia.

The once-closed Soviet Union had just burst wide open to hordes of invading foreign tourists, and packs of them, cameras around their necks, chattered and milled around the Metropole reception desk. But I had come through the snow to the old-fashioned hotel to see another type of American tourist, a defector who did not want to be part of that gay crowd.

I had heard at the American Embassy that a young American named Lee Harvey Oswald, 20, had walked in Oct. 30, slapped his passport on the consular officer's desk and announced he'd "had enough of the United States." On Nov. 2 he had signed an affidavit saying, "I affirm that my allegiance is to the soviet socialistic republic."

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After calling all hotels where foreigners are placed by Intourist, the Soviet tourist agency, I finally found Oswald at the Metropole and, over the telephone, arranged to interview him in his room.

I went up in the creaky elevator to the second floor and down the hall, past the life-sized nude in white marble, the gigantic printing of Lenin and Stalin and the usual watchful floor clerk in her prim navy blue dress ^{with} ~~and~~ brown braids wrapped around her head.

An attractive fellow answered my knock on the door of room 233.

"I am Lee Oswald," he said, with a hesitant smile.

When I murmured some pleasantry that it was nice of him to see me, when others in his position had shunned the press, he said, "Yes, other reporters have been trying to get up here."

I couldn't tell if he was boasting or truthful.

Then he said, "I think you may understand and be friendly because you're a woman."

I speculated whether ~~he was flattered by my presence~~ ~~he was flattered me~~ because he was eager for publicity or if he preferred to talk to women because he resented men and the ~~authority~~ authority they stood for.

The young man I saw was 5 feet 9 inches tall, weighed about 150 pounds and had a slight build. He had a sallow complexion, brown eyes and dark brown hair parted on the side. He was inexpensively but well and neatly dressed in a suit, white shirt and tie, that all had the air of his "Sunday best."

He was polite, but not particularly warm or cordial, and seemed a bit awkward. I selected a red plus chair by the window.

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- he sat opposite me in another chair in the baroque room ~~xxxxxx~~ ^{resplendent} with gilt clocks and chandeliers. It was the standard 330-day room with meals that all tourists must buy.

For two hours in that old Russian setting, I talked with Lee Harvey Oswald of Fort Worth, Texas, about his philosophy, his life and why he was there.

As he spoke he held his mouth stiffly and nearly closed. His jaw was rigid. Behind his brown eyes I felt a certain coldness. He displayed neither the impassioned fervor of a devout American Communist who at last had reached the land of his dreams, nor the wise-cracking informality and friendliness of the average American. Sometimes he looked directly at me, other times at the plush furniture. Now and then he gazed out the tall window, hung with lace curtains and gold draperies, to Sverdlovsk Square and the Lenin Museum and the gold onion-shaped domes of the ancient Kremlin churches ~~xxxx~~ beyond.

He talked almost non-stop like the type of semi-educated person of little experience who clutches what he regards as some sort of unique truth. Such a person often does not expect anyone else to believe him and is contemptuous of other people who cannot see his "truth." [A zealot, he is not remotely touched by what anyone else says.] In fact, at times in my two hours with Lee Harvey Oswald I felt we were not carrying out a conversation, but that two monologues were being delivered simultaneously.

He was pleasant and well-mannered but he sounded smug and self-important. And so often was that small smile, more like a smirk. . .

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. As the light already began to fade in the mid-afternoon over the Square, Oswald began by rather formally announcing his desire to stay in the Soviet Union. It sounded to me as if he had rehearsed these sentences, and they had a tone of childish defiance and pretentiousness.

"Soviet officials have informed me that either in the event of rejection or acceptance of my first application, I won't have to leave," he began in good English with ~~xxx~~ only a slight southern accent.

"They are investigating the possibilities of finding me an occupation. They think it would be best to continue my higher education."

He said he had "put in my application to the supreme soviet" for Soviet citizenship Oct. 16, the day after he arrived in Moscow. He added, "I had my first meeting with officials three days later."

Oswald said he was born Oct. 18, 1939 in New Orleans, where, like most of the south and ~~xxx~~ southwest of the United States, a tradition of violence runs through the town like the Mississippi River.

Behind the lacy facades of its picturesque French quarter, New Orleans is a tough town. It is emotionally divided by the cleavages between its old rich, who ~~ix~~ gathered their money through cotton and land, the new rich who snared theirs through local politics which for years had a strong underworld cast; between the poor white ignorance of Louisiana's agriculture up-country and the much more ~~xx~~ sophisticated city, and, hanging over ~~xxx~~ everything else, by the fierce, slashing hatreds between ~~Negres~~ negro and white.

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Oswald said "I lived for two years in New York...where I saw the luxuries of Park Avenue and the workers' lives on the East Side" and then his widowed mother took him and his two brothers to Fort Worth, Texas, back to New Orleans and Fort Worth again.

Oswald painted a verbal picture of a boy who grew up with an "old" mother and without the discipline, love and care of a father.

"My father died before I was born," he continued. "My mother works in shops mostly, in Fort Worth and around. I finished high school, I played baseball and football. . ."

I asked if he had formed many friendships in school.

"Oh, I had a certain amount of friends, but I don't have many attachments now in the United States. I travelled a lot. We moved from one city to the next. Besides, I was a bookworm."

And what did he read?

"Marx," he said. "I'm a Marxist," and he added that eagerly as if the label gave him pride and importance.

"I became interested about the age of 15. From an ideological viewpoint. An old lady handed me a pamphlet about saving the Rosenbergs."

He ~~xxx~~ glanced out the lace-curtained window and was quiet for a moment.

"I looked at that paper and I still remember it for some reason, I don't know why," he said.

"Then we moved to New Orleans and I discovered one book in the library, 'Das Kapital'. It was what I'd been looking for.

"It was like a very religious man opening the Bible for the first time," he said. His eyes shone like those of a religious enthusiast.

"I read the 'Manifesto'. It got me interested. I found some dusty back shelves in the New Orleans library, you know, I had to remove some front books to get at the books."

"I started to study Marxist economic theories. I could see the impoverishment of the masses before my own eyes in my own mother, and I could see the capitalists. I thought the worker's life could be better.

"I continued to indoctrinate myself for five years. My mother knew I was reading books but she didn't know what they were about.

"I would not care to live in the United States where being a worker means you are exploited by the capitalists. If I would remain in the United States, feeling as I do, under the capitalist system, I could never get ahead.

"I could not be happy. I could not live under a capitalistic system. I would have a choice of becoming a worker under the system I hate, or becoming unemployed. Or I could have become a capitalist and derived my profit and my living under the exploitation of workers.

"I will live now under a system where no individual capitalist will be able to exploit the workers. I will feel that I'm working for all the people and not for an individual capitalist making a profit for himself," he said, rushing from one sentence to another.

"Communism is an aggressive ideal as well as an economic system. Capitalism is only an economic system, and can only be offensive. Capitalism will shrink but within the borders of the United States the country is also shrinking."

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I did not quite understand that last remark, but I was too busy trying to take down his words in shorthand to puzzle through his train of thought.

"Capitalism has passed its peak. Unemployment is growing. An era of depression is on the way - uh, or perhaps not.

"The forces of communism are growing. I believe capitalism will disappear as feudalism disappeared. A young man in the United States looks forward as a millionaire, when he's young. When he ~~xx~~ gets old he looks forward as a worker.

"The hysteria in America has gotten worse. If practice made us perfect, the U.S. is getting better," he said sarcastically. "You know, fashions, money, clothes, food -- and hating communists or niggers. You go along with the crowd. I am against conformism in such matters, such as fashionably hating minority groups. Being a southern boy, I've seen poor niggers. That was a lesson, too. People hate because they're told to hate. Like school kids. In Little Rock they don't know the difference between a nigger and a white man but it was the fashion to hate niggers so they hated them. People in the United States are like that in everything."

I finally got a word in edgewise to inquire if he were a member of the Communist party).

"Communist?" he ~~xx~~ looked surprised. "I've never met a communist. I might have seen a communist once in New York, the old lady who gave me the pamphlet, save the Rosenbergs."

I asked him what he thought about communist party members in the United States, or even socialists.

"I don't want any socialist people to act for me," he said, his voice heavy with scorn. "I dislike them as I know them in the United States. You don't just sit around and talk about it. You go out and do it. I just haven't got out of university and read about Marx. I've seen all the workers on the east side."

"Of course, the conduct of America towards the communists is harsh," he added. "That was to be expected. My sympathies are with them as the underdog. That's natural, too.

"The Soviet Union has always been my ideal, as the bulwark of communism. The communists have been a minority in the United States, and have to rely on outside power and moral support from the Soviet Union. American communists can look to the Soviet Union as some sort of an ideal. The Americans are right in assuming that communism all over the world has ties with the Soviet Union, like the Catholic Church has ties with the Pope."

I tried to steer his conversation back to his mother and his early childhood. Did early poverty influence his decision to come to Moscow?"

"Well-lll," he said in a sort of mock drawl, "My childhood allowed me to have a few benefits of American society. I was not completely hamstrung in enjoying life.

"But seeing my mother always as a worker, always with less money than she could use, , ,

"You see," he said, leaning forward and speaking slowly to emphasize his words, "my coming here, well, it was, uh, a matter of intelligence. I couldn't care to gamble. One way or another I'd lose in the United States. In my own mind, even if I'd be

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Oswald also indicated that life as he saw it in the U.S. Marine Corps convinced him he should move to the other side of the Iron Curtain. For the Marine Corps, and for United States policy, he showed ^{DEEP} intense hatred.

"After I finished high school, I joined the Marine Corps at 17," he said. "I was in Japan, ^{FOR MOSA} the Philippines. I was discharged when I was 20, in Santa Ana, California. I was a radar operator."

American Embassy officials had said Oswald told them he would reveal to the Soviets all he knew about American radar.

"I joined the Marine Corps because I ^{HAD} a brother in the Marines. I had a good conduct medal," he said.

Oswald did not have smooth relationships in the Marines, however. I later learned he had been arrested twice before a military court for breaking regulations. At the end of his three years in uniform, he still was a private first class.

But he was skilled with guns. In classes he qualified as a sharpshooter, which is the second of three gradings for shooting ability in the Marine Corps.

The Marines put him on an inactive reserve list when he was discharged but later struck off his name as an undesirable.

But this he did not mention, of course, that snowy November day as we sat in his hotel room in Moscow.

This week a Fort Worth policeman who went to school with Oswald commented that "he was always opposed to any kind of discipline. He seemed to hold it against people up there -- any authority." This apparently applied to his three years in the Marine Corps.

HE SAID,

"In the Marine Corps I observed American leaders in certain foreign countries. The Russians would say 'military imperialism,' well, the occupation of one country is imperialistic. Like Formosa. The conduct of American technicians there, helping drag up guns for the Chinese. Watching American technicians show the Chinese how to use them -- it's one thing to talk about communism and another thing to drag a gun up a mountainside.

"If you live with that for three years, you get the impression things aren't quite so right.

"I guess you could say I was influenced by what I read, and by observing that the material was correct in its thesis, both in civilian life and military."

Oswald said that while in the Marines he continued to read Marxist books and laid careful plans to go to Russia.

"I thought it would give me a chance to observe that which I had read," he went on.

He said intensely, "when I was working in the middle of the night on guard duty, I would think how long it would be and how much money I would have to have. It would be like being out of prison. I saved about \$1500.

"For two years I've had it in my mind, don't form any attachments, because I knew I was going away. I was planning to divest myself of everything to do with the United States.

"I've not just been thinking about it, but waiting to do it. For two years, saving my money.

"I'm sincere in my ideal. This is not something intangible. I'm going through pain and difficulty to do this."

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I asked if his buddies in the Marines knew of his plans to give up his country.

"Nobody knew how I felt about things," he said. ^{AND} "I felt them very strongly. My superiors thought I was just interested in a foreign language. My commanding officer, a major, was studying Russian and we used to talk about it."

Outside the hotel window ^{WE EQUAL SIZE} Muscovites, bundled against the snow in heavy shubas and fur shapkas, were queuing up for buses and hurrying through the swirling snow.

"Now that you're in Moscow," I said, "do you think Soviet society works as well in reality as Marx had it on paper?"

"Considering Russia of 50 years ago, I can see the Soviet worker of today is remarkably well off," replied Oswald.

"Now, I personally would not say every person who thinks of himself as a communist should migrate to Russia. The drawbacks are many. But the basic ideas that brought me here are sound. The United States has more light bulbs and hot water heaters, but I don't feel that will be the case in 20 or 30 years. I would like to spend the rest of my life getting a normal life here, and if that means a marriage and so forth, okay."

I asked what his mother thought about his decision.

"She doesn't know," he said. "She's rather old. I couldn't expect her to understand. I guess it wasn't quite fair of me not to say anything, but it's better that way. I don't want to ^{VC} involve my family in this. I think it would be best if they would forget about me. My brother might lose his job because of this."

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I asked how he thought he would get along in a foreign country where he did not know the language.

"Oh, I've been in a lot of classes in Russian," he said. "I want to expand my reading and writing. I can get along in restaurants but my Russian is very bad. The only barrier here is learning absolutely fluently the language. I have Soviet friends. I've gone to museums and theaters. They are very sympathetic to me."

He thought a moment and chuckled.

"I am in essence an ignorant immigrant. I never thought I'd be an immigrant from the U.S. to some other country. Like a German living in America."

~~Two hours had passed. When he started in on "the ebb and flow of communism" again, I got up and said I had to go. I was tired of listening to what sounded like recitations out of Pravda.~~

As I put on my coat, I thought about how Oswald appeared totally disinterested in anything but himself. He never once asked what I was doing in Moscow, or how we foreigners lived there.

I also thought about a boy trying to digest that Metropole ~~snack~~ hotel food every night, a stranger in a foreign land without family or close friends. Perhaps if he came to my apartment where he would see other westerners, he might think twice of his decision..

"Thank you," he said to my casual invitation to come to dinner some night. It was obvious he had no intention of seeing me again.

I had talked to other defectors in Moscow, and, later at my office, I compared Oswald with them. While Khrushchev was allowing a steady trickle of Soviet citizens to rejoin relatives in the west, there also was traffic in the other direction. In fact, in our UPI bureau in Moscow we had filed marked "defectors: east-west" and "Defectors: west-east." Our Soviet translators filed articles with

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never a glance as to which file was getting latter.

Defectors appear to fall into two categories, but I was not sure Oswald belonged in either. The first type is the high-level ~~skxxxix~~ official who had played an important role in his country and decided to transfer his knowledge to the Soviet side, defecting because of fear of discovery of his sentiments or a change in the ~~Englxxx~~ ~~xxxxxxx~~ political climate. This category could include the English defector colony in Moscow, such as Journalist ~~xxxxxxx~~ Harold Philby, ~~xxx~~ the late Guy Burgess and Donald MacLean. Some of these also had personal problems which may have contributed to their change of address.

I saw Burgess several times in Moscow before his recent death. There were - and still are - various translators, journalists, minor government workers and others who moved to Russia from America and other western countries during the depression and either can not or do not want to leave.

I call these persons members of the "twilight zone." They are not full-fledged members of either the Soviet or foreign worlds. They belong nowhere. Some of them socialize with foreign correspondents and diplomats, but they still are regarded as being in a special category. Some journalists and embassy officials shun them outright, and their histories are a subject of gossip and debate.

The Soviets do not accept fully the "twilight zone" members, either. One American-born ~~xxx~~ woman, brought as a child to Moscow during the '30's, married a Soviet factory official. She told me that until 1958, when Soviet-American relations began to improve, her husband more or less kept her out of sight.

The Russians are suspicious by tradition, and completely trust

not for ignors, including defectors. Even prominent officials ~~xxxxxxx~~ Guy Burgess and given only routine non-sensitive jobs, such as translators in publishing houses. During the worst terror days under Stalin, many foreign-born persons were imprisoned, including the entire staff of an English-language newspaper. One staff writer told me he was released after a year but for years could not get a job, a type of McCarthyism in reverse. Now he works as a translator in Moscow and, despite his past anguish, is a loyal Soviet citizen.

Once I ^{was} discussing with a Soviet intellectual the case of a girl secretary at the U.S. Embassy who defected, married an ~~xxx~~ Soviet actor and wrote a book blistering the Embassy. Despite her obvious fidelity to the "undying principles of Marxism and Leninism", my Soviet friend remarked patronizingly that "she's not very happy here. She doesn't really fit in, and never will."

"Yes, she speaks good Russian, but," well, you know, she'll always have that accent...." he explained.

The second category of defector is the romantic variety. He flees behind the Iron Curtain in the hopes of escaping personal problems, but soon flees out again. During the American Exhibition of 1959 in Moscow, ^A ~~one~~ technician with a bad marriage back home fell in love with a pretty Moscow hotel elevator operator. In his mind, what better way to solve the mess than to stay in the Soviet Union? After a six-month idyll, however, he appealed to the American Embassy to help him get a Soviet exit visa. I heard he finally returned to the United States.

Another defector ~~we~~ journalists called "Marty" because he resembled the title character in the film of that name---large, lonely, lonely and helpless. Like others in this category, Marty ^{had} had trouble holding a job in the U.S. His marriage failed. He desperately came to "Mother Russia" hoping he would be taken care of under "communism." But Mother Russia has no use for maladjusted defectors unless they have a special skill or information to benefit the state. As days dragged by and Marty received to Soviet reply to his request for citizenship, he realized Russia didn't want him.

he had signed away his U.S. citizenship and spent frantic days trying to get it back. He ran out of money; he was lonely and frightened. He couldn't speak Russian and he was not used to the drabness of the Soviet capital. Another journalist and I virtually supported "Marty" for two weeks until he received money from his sister and finally a Soviet exit visa to return to the United States. Even when frantically busy on stories, we had to drop by the Ukraine Hotel with food in bags or money for Marty.

Oswald appeared to be a one-man third category. Like the "romantic" defectors, he was a man of no particular experience or value to the Soviet State. But instead of defecting for economic or love reasons, he apparently had made the plunge for the glory he might receive in Moscow that he had not received in his own country.

I had known other men of Oswald's type. In Montana where I grew up and in cities such as Seattle, Phoenix and San Francisco where I worked as a beginning reporter I had seen Oswald's counterparts - young "loners" or "Mavericks." They worked as cowhands and long-shoremen, served in the Marines or the Army, went from town to town and from job to job, married casually or not at all, got drunk and into fights, always seeking recognition and some way of expressing their frustrations.

The swift pace of American life had passed them by for one reason or another, and they resented it. Emotionally dulled, they never found a true cause although they may have dabbled in some. Their main goal was to be somebody, to achieve some sort of personal glory. One such man might become a street corner rowdie, another an Army deserter in Korea, a member of the Ku Klux Klan, the American Nazi party or the pro-or anti-Castro clubs; a third a hanger-on in a political or religious movement. They never are leaders, and,

as in Oswald's case, not even removers. Their cause ^{gave} ~~meant~~ meaning to their lives. It was a way of expressing their fury against a world that did not give them what they had expected. In their own eyes they were nothing but chips tossing in the fast mainstream of America, and when they talked in their tight-lipped way they displayed their grudges, bitterness and self-hatred.

Oswald had kept saying he was "sincere" in his beliefs, and obviously he was concerned about how they were presented to the public and as to how he fared in the first limelight of his life. A rival correspondent was queried by his London office about my interview on Oswald, ^{The DEFECTOR} ~~which~~ ^{he} immediately telephoned me, not to suggest dinner, but to complain. "He objected because I stressed that he was affected by his mother's plight.

"We weren't poverty-stricken," he said indignantly. "I am here because I believe in Marxist ideals. It's a matter only of ideology. You don't understand."

We never got together for dinner. Once I saw Oswald at a Moscow theater across a lobby. I felt sorry for him and wanted to say hello, but before I could reach him he was swallowed up in the crowd pushing around the ice cream stand and snack bar.

I had a feeling that the Soviets would not want this confused young man around Moscow. I never saw him ^{that following Soviet custom} ~~after that~~. Later we heard he had been shipped off to unglamorous Minsk.

Oswald never followed his plans that he so excitedly outlined to me to enter college and study electronics. He worked in a factory in Minsk. Then he married a petite blonde nurse, Marina, and they had a child. The Soviets, as could have been predicted, ignored his plea to become a citizen of the first communist state.

Nine months after his arrival in Moscow, Oswald, as also could have been predicted, asked the Soviets in July, 1960, for an exit visa and applied to the U.S. Embassy for the return of his passport.

Like the American Exhibition lover, technician, or Marty, he ~~was~~ probably was disillusioned with life in Russia, homesick and ~~discovered~~ ^{HAD FOUND} he could not leave his personal problems behind just by stepping behind the Iron Curtain. But most important of all, Oswald had discovered that he failed to find in Russia the glory that he never found in his own country, and for which he had given up his passport.

When a Soviet exit visa was not forthcoming, Oswald, the lad who had scorned the U.S. government and marine cops and vowed to me he would live forever in the Soviet Union, wrote to Sen. John Tower of Texas in January, 1962. The letter, with various misspellings, was:

"My name is Lee Harvey Oswald, 22, of Fort Worth, up till Oct. 1959, when I came to the Soviet Union for a residuual (sic) stay. I took a residuual (sic) document for a non-Soviet person living for a time in the USSR. The American Embassy in Moscow is familiar with my case

"Since July 20, 1960, I have unsuccessfully applied for a Soviet exit visa to leave this country. The Soviets refuse to permit me and my Soviet wife (who applied at the U.S. Embassy, Moscow, July 8, 1960, for immigration status to the USA), to leave the Soviet Union. I am a citizen of the United States of America (a passport number 1733242, 1955) and I beseech you, Senator Tower, to rise (sic) the question of holding by the Soviet Union of a citizen of the U.S. against his will and expressed desires. Yours very truly, Lee H. Oswald."

With the Senator's help, the State Department decided to provide the usual loan of \$435.71 for Oswald, his wife and child to return to Texas. They received ~~the~~ Soviet exit visas and left Moscow May, 1962.

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Oswald was a man who had never been noticed, and who obviously still wanted to be. Back in New Orleans his unstable philosophy ^{HOPPED} ~~was~~ ^{FROM ONE NOTION TO ANOTHER} ~~was~~ ^{spread out of various sources.} He campaigned with anti-Castro, then Castro forces. He applied for a ~~new~~ passport to travel to Eastern Europe and Russia again.

On Aug. 21 he appeared on a New Orleans radio ~~program~~ ^{program}, claiming to be the secretary of the New Orleans chapter of "The Fair Play for Cuba Committee", which the committee brands an outright lie as he was no secretary and there is no New Orleans chapter.

The program pointed out that Oswald had done a 180-degree switch from many ~~of~~ ideas he had expounded to me. He also sounded to me more confident than when I knew him, and, at least, apparently he had learned a few more things about communism and the Soviet Union than he knew in 1959. But I heard still the smug cockiness in his voice during the radio interview.

(text of interview attached if needed).

The night of Friday, Nov. 22, 1963, on a teletype in the UPI Paris bureau, where I now am stationed, I read a dispatch that police had arrested a suspect in the assassination of President Kennedy. The suspect had lived for a while in Russia and had a Russian wife.

My mind raced over the parade of defectors and twilight-zoners I had known in Moscow. Not Marty, surely, but Oswald---

During the night my office telephoned me at home that the suspect was "that Lee Oswald that you knew in Moscow." I was not surprised.

In a trunkful of papers and mementoes of Moscow, I found a tan notebook labeled, "defector." ^{My} ~~His~~ notes began, "Lee Harvey Oswald, Fort Worth, room 233, Metropole..."

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he looked just the same ~~xx~~ in the newspaper photographs I saw in the morning. But I disagree with the captions which say, "glaring at photographers defiantly..."

Oswald was not glaring angrily. I have a feeling that in a way he was enjoying every minute of it. There was that same tight-lipped secretive ~~smile~~ smirk he wore when he related his self-imposed mission to me that snowy day in Moscow so far from Texas.

That same little smile was on his face when he walked out of his cell for the last time to face reporters and photographers, but the smile changed to the grimace of pain and death.

If he was guilty, why did he not confess in jail? In my opinion he did not confess probably because he felt nobody would understand him. Nobody ever had.

For 24 hours---from the time somebody^{up} raised a rifle from the 5th floor window of a warehouse where Oswald worked and aimed it at the passing figure of one of the world's most popular leaders, until his own death at the hands of an enraged strip tease club owner---Lee Harvey Oswald at last found the place in the sun he had been seeking.

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Date 11/26/63

Commission Exhibit 1385

Airman Second Class PALMER E. McBRIDE was interviewed at Air Police Headquarters, Patrick Air Force Base, Florida, and furnished the following signed statement:

"Patrick Air Force Base,
Florida
November 23, 1963

"I, PALMER E. McBRIDE hereby furnish the following free and voluntary statement to JOHN R. PALMER who I know to be a Special Agent of the FBI. I have been advised that this statement can be used in a court of law. No threats or promises have been made to me.

"I was born on November 29, 1937, at New Orleans, Louisiana. I enlisted in the United States Air Force on November 25, 1960, and since June 15, 1961, I have been assigned to Patrick Air Force Base, Florida. I am presently an Airman Second Class assigned to the 6550th Maintenance Group with Air Force Serial Number AF 25589222.

"In about June, 1955, I went to work as a dental messenger for the Pfisterer Dental Laboratory Company in the 200 block of Dauphine Street, New Orleans, Louisiana. In about December, 1957, a young man named LEE OSWALD was employed in the same capacity. Because we both enjoyed classical music I invited him to my home at 1416 Baronne Street, New Orleans, and he did visit my home perhaps two or three times. I was living with my parents at that time, and during his visits we would listen to records in my room.

"During his first visit to my home in late 1957 or early 1958 the discussion turned to politics and to the possibility of war. At this time I made a statement to the effect that President DWIGHT EISENHOWER was doing a pretty good job for a man of his age and background, but that I did feel

On 11/23/63 at Patrick Air Force Base, Florida File # TP 62-455

by SA JOHN R. PALMER : nme Date dictated 11/26/63

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COMMISSION EXHIBIT No. 1386