

Ruth Paine "Finds" Evidence: Oswald's Letter to the Soviet Embassy

By Carol Hewett, Esq.



Had Ruth Paine not surreptitiously copied Oswald's letter of November 9, 1963 to the Soviet Embassy in Washington, D.C., we might never have known of its existence, unless of course the Soviets were prepared to volunteer it to U.S. authorities. Then again, if U.S. authorities were intercepting mail from U.S. citizens addressed to the Soviet Embassy, those same authorities would know about Oswald's letter already. In fact, the FBI did know about the letter, as can be seen in the recently declassified tapes of J. Edgar Hoover's conversations with President Johnson dated November 23, 1963:

LBJ: Have you established any more about the visit to the Soviet Embassy in Mexico in September?

JEH: No, that's one angle that's very confusing for this reason. We have up here the tape and the photograph of the man who was at the Soviet Embassy, using Oswald's name. That picture and the tape do not correspond to this man's voice, nor to his appearance. In other words, it appears that there was a second person who was at the Soviet Embassy down there.

We do have a copy of a letter which was written by Oswald to the Soviet Embassy here in Washington inquiring as well as complaining about the harassment of his wife and the questioning of his wife by the FBI. Now, of course that letter information, we process all mail that goes to the Soviet Embassy — it is a very secret operation. No mail is delivered to the Soviet Embassy without being examined and opened by us, so that we know what they receive...

Now if we can identify this man at the Mexican Embassy, at the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City...

So if Hoover already had Oswald's letter the day after the assassination, then there was no need for Ruth to deliver her handwritten copy to the FBI the same day except of course, to protect the FBI's highly secret mail interception operation. Ruth may have simply been a concerned citizen doing her duty, unaware of the FBI's mail operation. However, the extent and manner to which she is questioned about this letter by the Warren Commission suggests that she was

providing the FBI with a cover story for its mail operation.

The embassy letter is important for several reasons. First, it is evidence on which the Warren Commission relies in part to prove that a disillusioned Oswald appeared at both the Cuban Embassy and the Russian Embassy in Mexico City for the purpose of obtaining visas to the U.S.S.R. or Cuba. Secondly, the discovery of the letter reveals the sneakiness of Ruth Paine and the subsequent sneakiness of the Warren Commission in developing her testimony on this point. Thirdly, the letter suggests some gamesmanship on Oswald's part regarding the names Kostin vs. Kostikov whom Oswald allegedly visited in Mexico, because there is now evidence indicating that Kostin and Kostikov were two separate clandestine KGB agents.

In reading this chapter, the reader should know there are three versions of this letter. There is Oswald's undated handwritten rough draft reproduced as Commission Exhibit 103,¹ the original of which was amazingly returned to Ruth at her request in the midst of the Warren Commission investigation.² Then there is Ruth's handwritten copy of the above which was never published in the Commission's 26 volumes and which is now missing from the Gemberling Report at the National Archives. Finally there is the typed letter itself which Oswald had revised and which presumably was procured from the Soviet Embassy in Washington, D.C. following the assassination. This is reproduced twice as Commission Exhibits 15 and 986.³

The weekend beginning November 9, 1963 was a long holiday weekend; Veterans Day was on Monday, November 11th. Oswald would have all three days off from work and would stay at the Paine residence from Friday evening until Tuesday morning the 12th. This would be a busy weekend for the Paines and the Oswalds. According to Ruth's affidavit dated June 24, 1964, she took her two children, and all four Oswalds to the driver's license bureau in the Oak Cliff section of Dallas on Saturday morning so

that Lee might apply for his driver's permit.⁴ As it would develop, the bureau was closed because it was a local election day. So instead, all seven of them went to a five and dime store a few blocks away from the license bureau to do a little shopping. Then all returned to Irving where they remained for the rest of the weekend. Ruth did mention that she was out of her home from 9:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. Monday, November 11, apparently to visit her downtown Dallas divorce lawyer.⁵

As for the whereabouts of Michael Paine throughout that weekend, Ruth makes no mention of it in her testimony or in the above affidavit other than to say Michael helped her move furniture Sunday night. Michael confirms in his testimony that he was present at Ruth's home on Sunday night. Unlike Lee, Michael had to work that holiday Monday. Michael would express some scorn in the disparity of their work schedules by noting that Oswald "had another day to sit in front of the TV".⁶

Ruth also makes no mention in her affidavit that any part of Saturday, November 9th, was used by Oswald to type a letter on her typewriter. This event is described, however, on three separate occasions during her appearance before the Warren Commission. Ruth did make it clear in her affidavit that she did not take the Oswalds to the Irving Furniture Mart or to the Irving Sports shop for gun repairs that weekend or any other time, nor was she aware of any opportunity that the Oswalds might have had to run such errands at any time while staying with her. The whole purpose of this affidavit appears to be one of emphasizing these particular points which in turn make it possible to discredit the Lee and Marina sighting at the Furniture Mart in a car which matched one owned by the Paines.⁷

Ruth's testimony on three separate occasions about the embassy letter is indicative of its importance to either her or the Warren Commission. A successive reading of her testimony suggests that this ground was covered again and again in an effort to exonerate Ruth for snooping into Oswald's papers. The testimony also appears rehearsed. In her testimony of March 19, 1964, Ruth was asked by Commission counsel, Albert Jenner, as to when she first learned of Lee's travels to Mexico.⁸ This open-ended question provides a good mechanism by which Ruth can "spontaneously" mention the embassy letter. Ruth replied that she learned about the Mexico City trip from the newspapers following the assassination but

then added that there were two incidents in hindsight that should have called her attention to the matter. The first was when Oswald used the drill press to drill a hole into a foreign coin to make a necklace for Marina. She recognized the coin as a foreign one but did not realize that it had come from Mexico. Ruth then identifies the letter to the embassy as the second event.

Having brought up the matter of the letter, seemingly on her own initiative, Ruth proceeds to describe how Oswald was typing at the kitchen table Saturday morning and when she placed Oswald's daughter into the high chair, Oswald covered up the letter on which he was working. This in turn aroused her curiosity.⁹ She would later notice that his handwritten version of the letter had been placed in a folded position on top of her desk. As she was the first to awaken the following Sunday morning, she took a closer look at the letter. She noticed that the first sentence was false.¹⁰

At that point, Attorney Jenner asks Ruth to identify a particular document. Jenner identifies the document for the record as pages 321 and 322 of the Gemberling Report of Commission Document #385.¹¹ Jenner reminds Ruth that she had reviewed the document with him the previous day, which clearly indicates prior preparation of her testimony. As previously mentioned, Ruth's handwritten version was never published in the 26 volumes. Indeed it has never surfaced. The two pages of the Gemberling Report to which Jenner refers are now missing as the author learned during a visit to the National Archives in 1996. Consequently, we do not know for certain just what version of Oswald's letter she copied.

Ruth states that upon seeing that part of Oswald's letter which read "the FBI is not now interested" she was concerned because she knew that statement to be false. That is, she understood the FBI to be quite interested in Oswald's activities given the FBI's previous visits to her house to inquire of Oswald's whereabouts. Accordingly, she proceeded to read the entire letter.¹² Counsel Jenner does not point out to Ruth that the first sentence makes no mention of the FBI but he does start to read the letter into the record:

Dear Sirs: This is to inform you of recent events since my meetings with comrade Kostin...

Jenner gets no further than this when he and Ruth go off the record. Perhaps the two of them realized that the first sentence did not start out by mentioning the FBI. It is set forth in the middle of the letter and hence it

The below is a transcription of Oswald's typed letter to the Soviet Embassy. It includes misspellings, typos, and spacing errors. Note that Oswald's dyslexia in this case, with one exception, does not extend to more than one wrong or missing letter in any one word or name.

FROM: LEE H. OSWALD, P. O. BOX 6225, DALLAS, TEXAS
MARINA NICHILAYEVA OSWALD, SOVIET CITIZEN

TO: CONSULAR DIVISION
EMBASSY U.S.S.R.
WASHINGTON D. C.

NOV. 9, 1963

Dear sir;

This is to inform you of recent events sincem my meetings with comrade Kostin in the Embassy Of the Soviet Union, Mexico City, Mexico.

I was unable to remain in Mexico indefinily because of my mexican visa restrictions which was for 15 days only. I could not take a chance on reqesting a new visa which was for 15 days only. I could not take a chance on requesting a new visa unless I used my real name, so I retured to the United States.

I had not planned to contact the Soviet embassy in Mexico so they were unprepared, had I been able to reach the Soviet Embassy in Havana as planned, the embassy there would have had time to complete our business.

Of corse the Soviet embassy was not at fault, they were, as I say unprepared, the Cuban consulate was guilty of a gross breach of regulations, I am glad he has since been replced.

The Federal Bureu 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 visted 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 Uion, 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. Also, this is to inform you of the birth, on October 20, 1963 of a DAUGHTER, AUDREY MARINA OSWALD in DALLAS, TEXAS., to my wife.

Respectfully

was unlikely that she saw it in plain view unless Oswald folded his letter outward to expose the writing. At any rate, Ruth seems to be trying to rationalize her conduct in reading someone else's private correspondence. Later testimony by Ruth will clear up her verbal misstep.

Ruth then tells Jenner that she resented

that Oswald had written a falsehood on her typewriter and thus felt entitled to examine the entire contents. She thereby provides another excuse for reading private mail.¹³ When Ruth read the letter in its entirety she felt there were several more things which were untrue and therefore decided to copy

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New Developments on the Minox Camera Story

Researcher John Armstrong, who has been helping Carol Hewett on this matter, recently ordered first generation prints from the developed Minox photographs which now enable a more precise identification of the locales. In addition to the Roman Coliseum and the Piazza of St. Peters, we see the changing of the guard at Buckingham Palace. The primitive military encampment photos include a funeral procession. The facial features of the natives are very obviously Oriental and what first appeared to be low rounded mountains are in fact terraced hillsides. Researcher Larry Haapanen called Carol Hewett to report that George DeMoghrenschildt had been in Rome in 1960 and suggested that maybe the first Minox camera discovered by the Dallas Police might have belonged to him.

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it. She did so secretly and then put the letter back on top of the desk where it remained until she took physical custody of it on Sunday night.¹⁴

Ruth readily admits in her testimony that she made the copy for the benefit of the FBI and furthermore that she had reported the matter of the letter to the FBI.¹⁵ Ruth is not asked, however, as to *when* she reported this incident to the FBI. Oswald's rough draft version as published in the 26 volumes has FBI Agent James Hosty's initials and date of 11/23/63. Presumably Ruth turned that version over to the FBI instead of to the Dallas police who were searching her home that day. Why did Ruth present the letter to the FBI instead of the Dallas police when the FBI had not yet officially assumed jurisdiction over the case? We still do not know when Ruth's own earlier handwritten copy was delivered to the FBI. Did Ruth deliver it to the FBI during her November 11th trip to downtown Dallas to see her attorney? Until Ruth's handwritten copy is found we have no way of knowing.¹⁶

On March 20th, Ruth is reminded of her previous day's testimony about the embassy letter and readily identifies Commission Exhibit 103 which consisted of Oswald's handwritten rough draft version.¹⁷ Ruth points out that she cannot identify Oswald's handwriting as belonging to Oswald because this letter was the only handwriting of his that she has ever seen. In this way Ruth assures us that she did not examine any other papers belonging to Oswald which were stored on her premises. She reiterates that the first time she saw the letter was on a Saturday but she did not read it until Sunday. She has never seen the typed version that Lee had apparently mailed.¹⁸ She recalls that Lee had asked her permission to use her typewriter which she granted to him. She said that following his use of the typewriter, she then noticed the letter folded in half with one portion showing such that it caught her attention. Ruth then explained how she had copied the letter in her own handwriting.¹⁹

This testimony is redundant and it appears that the reason for that day's questioning was to clarify how she copied the letter in her own longhand (as opposed to photocopying) and to distinguish Oswald's handwritten version from her handwritten version. Once again she endeavors to justify her snooping into the contents of a folded letter by describing how a portion of it was exposed which in turn captured her attention. She does not tell us what portion was exposed. It apparently did not occur to Ruth at this point that Oswald had tempted her into reading the letter, first by his motion in covering it when she appeared at the table where he was typing and then by leaving the letter in plain view on top of her desk. On the other hand we have only Ruth's description of how the letter was left out in the open and not Oswald's comments on the subject. In any event, Ruth will have a third chance to give the Warren Commission a reason why she inspected the letter.

The November 9th letter becomes a topic of discussion during the third day of Ruth's testimony on March 21st. Without any prompting whatsoever, Ruth brings up the embassy letter stating that "I will add to my testimony here." She even knew the exhibit number by heart, Commission Exhibit 103. She recollected how Sunday evening she had asked Michael and Lee to help her move furniture and used that opportunity to secretly take Oswald's handwritten version and put it inside her desk. She explains that Oswald had "left it on my desk for 2 full days, waiting for it to be picked up".²⁰

If practice makes perfect, then Ruth has finally extricated herself from the thorny moral quagmire in which she was floundering because the purpose of this day's testimony appears to be calculated to offer a socially acceptable explanation and perhaps even a thinly disguised legal justification as to why she would seize someone else's private letter. Even Jenner interjects that Oswald left the letter "out in the open".²¹ Once again, Ruth attempts to justify her conduct in taking private papers which belonged to someone else. Why didn't she just say to Oswald while he was moving her desk, "Lee, does this belong to you?". Should we discover that Ruth notified the FBI of this letter prior to the assassination, or alternatively, turned over her own handwritten copy before the assassination, it is fair to assume that Ruth was indeed acting as an FBI informant. As for Oswald's motives in leaving the letter in plain view as Ruth claims: Was Oswald testing Ruth? Who is spying on whom with this little cat and mouse game?

Michael Paine's testimony about the letter is not nearly as elaborate. He refers to the letter as an example of Oswald's "allergy" to the FBI.²² Paine suggests that Ruth's copying of the letter was for his own benefit (rather than the for the FBI), so that she could show him the extent to which Oswald was capable of lying. Once again, the result deflects any notion that the Paines were FBI informants. According to Michael, both he and Ruth thought that Oswald was being "abusive towards the FBI" in this letter. This is a rather paternalistic attitude for Michael and Ruth to display towards the FBI considering their own allegedly liberal political tendencies. Michael does confirm that the letter was physically seized by Ruth on Sunday night when they all moved furniture. He did not see the letter that weekend, he saw it only when Ruth showed it to him a few days later during one of his usual Tuesday or Wednesday night visits to Ruth's house.²³

In spite of Ruth's alleged dismay at the contents of the letter which she read on Sunday morning, she gladly provided Oswald with a driving lesson Sunday afternoon.²⁴ The rest of Sunday was occupied by watching televised football, by moving furniture around and by dinner for both families.²⁵ Ruth would neither confront Marina nor Lee about the contents of the letter. Surely Oswald must have realized at some point in time on Sunday that his handwritten version was missing yet there is no indication from Ruth, Michael, nor Marina that

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he bothered mentioning this to any of them. From this, it would seem that Oswald did want Ruth to know about the letter.

This typed version of the November 9th letter to the Soviet Embassy was postmarked "Irving, Nov 12, 5 P.M."²⁶ Oswald left for work early in the morning on Tuesday, November 12th. Thus Oswald either left the letter at the Paine residence to be picked up by the mailman or alternatively, dropped it into a mailbox before he left Irving. From either place it must not have been processed until 5:00 P.M. The letter could not have been posted any earlier than the 12th given that the 10th was a Sunday and the 11th was a federal holiday when postal service is ordinarily suspended.

Ruth's description of the manner in which she intercepted Oswald's embassy letter conflicts with her own conduct in two respects. First, Ruth who made a habit of using her calendar to record events, makes no mention of the letter in this calendar either contemporaneously or retroactively as she has done with other events.²⁷ Secondly, Ruth wrote a very touching letter to her mother dated October 14, 1963 describing the Veterans Day's weekend with Lee.²⁸ She mentions what a good father he was, how much he helped with repairs and generally provided a welcome masculine presence to the household. Not a word to her mother about the embassy letter which so upset Ruth that she resorted to a rude invasion of her guest's privacy. These omissions, coupled with her willingness to give Lee a driving lesson following her reading of the disturbing letter, render Ruth's testimony suspect.

In view of the Paines' assistance to the FBI on the Minox camera episode (as described in the last two issues of *Probe*), we have to wonder about Ruth's alleged "discovery" of this letter on November 10th, just days before the final typed version was secretly intercepted by the FBI on its way to the Washington based Soviet Embassy. Is she fabricating a scenario so that the FBI can make public this unlawfully intercepted piece of mail?

Oswald's handwritten rough draft differs from the final typed version in several respects. First, there is the rearranging of one paragraph which does not really impact upon the style or content of the letter. Secondly, the spelling of "Kostine" has been changed to Kostin. Lastly, the reference to the Cu-

Oswalds, Oswalds Everywhere!

While the Paines and the Oswalds were steeped in domestic activities in Irving from November 9th until the morning of November 12th, curious events were taking place elsewhere. That Veterans Day weekend would mark a dramatic increase in Oswald sightings which in turn coincided with the arrival in town of ex-Navy man, Igor Vaganov, a multilingual post WWII immigrant from Latvia who was an Oswald look-alike. Vaganov had suddenly departed the Philadelphia area for Dallas in a bright red Thunderbird convertible with a white top (like the one later seen near the Tippit shooting). He brought with him a 2-way radio, a .38 pistol and a rifle. Vaganov later rented a room in Oak Cliff and eventually got a job downstairs from Jack Ruby's Carousel Club just days before the assassination. On Saturday morning at 6:45 A.M. before Oswald had even

left Irving for the driver's license bureau, a person believed to be Oswald showed up at the Allright Parking garage of the Southland Hotel looking for work in a tall building that commanded a view of Dallas. That same morning while the real Oswald was shopping with Ruth, an Oswald appeared at the Dallas Lincoln Mercury dealership on Saturday morning where he made a spectacle of himself, recklessly test driving a bright red Comet and proclaiming that Russia was a more hospitable climate for the working man. This Oswald also stated that he was going to come into some money very shortly with which to buy a new car. Later that weekend a man believed to be Oswald was seen at Ruby's nightclub. Several witnesses would claim to see Oswald practicing at a rifle range that weekend. Yes, Veterans Day weekend was a busy, busy weekend for some folks.

ban consular is revised from the "stupid" Cuban consular to a Cuban consular who engaged in a "gross breach of regulations". How did the more dignified and professional reference to the Cuban consular's misconduct come about? Did Oswald think better of his choice of words? This author has even entertained the idea that Ruth actually collaborated with Oswald and that it was her schoolteacher suggestions that altered the tone of the letter. This thought occurred because the Paines and the Oswalds seemed to have enjoyed a closer relationship than they are willing to admit and because Ruth's story as to how she discovered and copied the letter rings hollow unless she was in fact an informant for the FBI.

The letter is significant in that it places Oswald at both the Cuban Embassy and the Russian Embassy in Mexico City. However, Oswald claims in his letter that he did not use his real name in Mexico when all of the wiretap evidence supposedly relied upon by the CIA indicates the name Lee Oswald was used.²⁹ Meanwhile, CIA's surveillance photographs failed to capture the real Oswald and instead revealed a husky, older man who looked nothing like Oswald.³⁰ Recall Hoover's comment above regarding the need to identify the man photographed at the embassy. In an extraordinary statement, Michael Paine would respond to a question about the identity of the CIA's "Oswald" pictured in CE 237 (the photo of the "mys-

tery man" photo taken outside the Russian Embassy in Mexico City) as someone who might possibly work at Bell Helicopter where he himself worked.³¹ There is no follow-up by Counsel Albert Jenner to this remarkable statement by Mr. Paine.

Oswald's typed letter also refers to "comrade Kostin". For decades it has been assumed that the allegedly dyslexic Oswald was referring to Valery Kostikov who during the 1960's was a KGB agent stationed at the Russian Embassy in Mexico City under diplomatic cover, and was expelled from Mexico in 1968. The discovery of any contact between Oswald and Kostikov should have set off alarm bells throughout the U.S. intelligence community since our government stated that Kostikov was an agent of Department 13 of the KGB, that branch of the KGB which handles liquidation (assassination) matters.³²

In his book *Passport to Assassination*, Oleg Nechiporenko, a former KGB agent stationed at Mexico City recounts Oswald's two visits to the Russian Embassy where Oswald met Nechiporenko, Kostikov and a third KGB agent, Pavel Yatskov.³³ If Nechiporenko is writing truthfully, Kostikov was the only agent present at both meetings and the only one to show his ID to Oswald. Yet contrary to Oswald's claims of meetings with Kostin(e), Oswald was initially passed off by Kostikov to Nechiporenko who handled the first interview while Yatskov handled the

second interview which both Nechiporenko and Kostikov merely observed. Nechiporenko rationalizes that Oswald must have referred to the name "Kostin" because he did not know the names of the other two agents who had actually conducted the interviews.

In reality there are two Valery K.'s and both were deemed by U.S. intelligence to be Soviet clandestine agents working abroad. One is Nechiporenko's coworker at the embassy in Mexico, Valery Vladimirovich Kostikov, and the other is Valery Dmitrevich Kostin. Kostin served in the Netherlands from 1966 to 1969 and in Finland beginning in 1971.³⁴ This author was unable to determine anything more about Kostin and his whereabouts prior to 1966. The first and only mention of KGB Agent Kostin in the spy literature is John Barron's book *KGB: The Secret Work of Secret Soviet Agents* published in 1974. There, both Kostikov and Kostin are listed as agents known to U.S. intelligence. Reflect for a moment on the fact that Lee Harvey Oswald, a lonely, disillusioned and chronically unemployed private U.S. citizen, just happened to know the name of a clandestine KGB operative who in 1963 was otherwise unknown to the rest of the Western world.

Nechiporenko makes no mention of Valery Dmitrevich Kostin in his book. Although Nechiporenko was aware of Oswald's letter to the Soviet Embassy making references to meetings with Kostin, he may have been unaware of the real Kostin. It is extraordinary that Oswald would use the name of Kostin, an actual Soviet agent, in lieu of the real name of Kostikov, the agent in Mexico. This cannot be neatly explained away by a learning disability, not with an actual Kostin in existence. Surely both the Soviets receiving the letter in Washington as well as the Americans who intercepted the letter picked up on this anomaly. Perhaps Kostikov deliberately used the name Kostin to protect his own identity when he encountered Oswald in Mexico.

It also bears mentioning that this was not the first communication on Oswald's part with the Washington based Soviet Embassy. Since the spring of 1963 both Marina and Lee had been engaged in regular correspondence with the Embassy for the purpose of seeking visas in order to return to Russia. Marina's first letter in this regard is dated February 17, 1963.³⁵ The FBI had probably obtained this letter as part of their secret mail interception program and knew of her desire to return. Marina Oswald could be of value to the FBI in terms of serving as a "bird

of attraction" for clandestine Soviet agents operating in the U.S. After all, according to one of Nechiporenko's sources, there were only a handful of people like Marina living in the U.S.³⁶ This may explain Ruth Paine's sudden and earnest efforts in early April to invite Marina (whom she barely knew at this point in time) to come live with her. This, of course, would mean that the FBI had somehow enlisted Ruth's cooperation.

Marina testified that in early 1963 Lee was forcing her back to Russia by herself. Ruth also testified that Marina told her in March 1963 that Lee was forcing her back to Russia alone. This is the reason why Ruth wrote (but did not mail) a letter dated April 7th inviting Marina to stay with her.³⁷ Contrary to the testimony of both women, Lee's own communications to the Soviet Embassy in Washington dated May 5, 1963 and July 1, 1963 indicated that he was planning to return to Russia as well. Indeed, his application for a visa was included with Marina's undated letter to the Soviet Embassy which was written sometime between 6/4/63 and 7/1/63.³⁸

While the post-assassination testimony of these two women make it appear that only Marina is endeavoring to return to Russia, however reluctantly, the contemporaneous physical evidence points to a mutual effort by Lee and Marina to leave the country. In the meantime, both Soviet intelligence and the FBI jump into action after Marina's February 17th letter. On March 4th, FBI agent James Hosty endeavors to track down Marina only to find out a few days later that the Oswalds had already moved.³⁹ In April 1963, double agent Richard Case Nagell is dispatched by the Soviets to check on Marina.⁴⁰ Have both women been compelled to tell a story that would cover up the mail interception of Marina's February 17th letter and all subsequent letters of the Oswalds? Was Ruth pressed into service to either keep Marina in the United States or to isolate her from Lee in an effort to determine what, if any, Soviet agents would pay a visit to either one of the Oswalds? This "gracious detention" of Marina would repeat itself again in September of 1963 when Ruth firmed up plans to rescue Marina from New Orleans (without Marina's knowledge) despite Marina's ongoing efforts to re-enter Russia and to maintain her marriage to Lee.⁴¹

In conclusion, Oswald's motive in leaving the letter in plain view, his reference to KGB Agent Kostin, and Ruth Paine's interception of this letter for the benefit of the FBI all require further analysis. Scrutiny of the FBI's response to all of the mail of Lee

and Marina may also help us understand the intelligence roles played by the Oswalds (wittingly or unwittingly), and may shed light on the true nature of the Paine/Oswald and the Paine/FBI relationships. †

Notes

1. CE 103, WC Vol. 16, p. 443-444.
2. See NARA, FBI #105-126128-5th NR 112, 6th NR 112, dated 4/17/64 and NARA, FBI #105-126128-4th NR 115, 5th NR 115, dated 5/5/64 (cross-referencing the 1/23/64 report of Agents Odum and DeBrueys.)
3. CE 15, WC Vol. 16, p.33 (same as CE 986 at WC Vol. 18, p. 539.) CE 15 has a notation of the Cyrillic date of 20/XI/63, so November 20th must be the day the letter finally reached the Soviet Embassy.
4. RP's affidavit at WC Vol. 2, p. 153
5. RP's calendar at WC Vol. 17, p. 60; A divorce petition was filed on Wednesday November 12 on behalf of Ruth who was being represented by the law firm of Raggio and Raggio located at 734 Rio Grande Building in Dallas. This case was dismissed 6 months later for failure to prosecute; the Paines were divorced several years later. See NARA, FBI # 105-126128-108, dated 4/17/64

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Keeping History From Us

In the Spring of 1964, the Warren Commission, through General Counsel J. Lee Rankin, authorized the release of Oswald's original handwritten rough draft of the embassy letter to Ruth Paine. Ruth Paine had specifically requested the return of this letter because she considered it a "historical document". She felt that it should either be kept in the public archives or, if it were to be returned to the private domain, then she would like for it to be returned to her. In another one of many acts of presumptuousness, Ruth apparently thinks she owns this letter, even though, for all practical purposes, she stole it from Oswald. She is oblivious to the fact that as a matter of law, the letter belongs either to the government or to Oswald's widow, Marina. Attorney Rankin must have been equally ignorant of the law to return it to her. Perhaps Ruth wanted a souvenir of her patriotic good deed in intercepting an alleged assassin's suspicious communication with our Cold War enemy. Rankin willingly obliged her.

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6. MP's testimony at WC Vol. 9 p. 458-459
7. Carol Hewett presented a paper on the Paines' third vehicle at the 1995 COPA conference; a more thorough analysis of this matter will appear in an upcoming issue of *Probe*.
8. RP's 3/19/63 testimony, WC Vol. 3, p. 12-13
9. RP's 3/19/63 testimony, WC Vol. 3, p. 13
10. RP's 3/19/63 testimony, WC Vol. 3, p. 13
11. RP's 3/19/63 testimony, WC Vol. 3, p. 13
12. RP's 3/19/63 testimony, WC Vol. 3, p. 14
13. RP's 3/19/63 testimony, WC Vol. 3, p. 14
14. RP's 3/19/63 testimony, WC Vol. 3, p. 15-17
15. RP's 3/19/63 testimony, WC Vol. 3, p. 15
16. Generally speaking, researchers see only photocopies of documents at the NARA; the author is currently working with the NARA to track down the original Gemberling Report in hopes of finding the missing pages.
17. RP's 3/20/63 testimony, WC Vol. 3, p. 51
18. RP's 3/20/63 testimony, WC Vol. 3, p. 51
19. RP's 3/20/63 testimony, WC Vol. 3, p. 52
20. RP's 3/21/63 testimony, WC Vol. 9, p. 395
21. RP's 3/21/63 testimony, WC Vol. 9, p. 395
22. MP's 3/17/64 testimony, WC Vol. 9, p. 458-459
23. MP's 3/17/64 testimony, WC Vol. 9, p. 459
24. RP's 3/21/63 testimony, WC Vol. 9, p. 395
25. RP's 3/21/63 testimony, WC Vol. 9, p. 395
26. CE 15, WC Vol. 16, p.34
27. RP's calendar at WC Vol. 17, p. 60; WC Vol. 9, p. 358
28. RP's letter to Mother CE 425, WC Vol XVII, pp. 150-153
29. *Oswald and the CIA* by John Newman, p. 371.
30. *Ibid.*, p.398.
31. MP's testimony at WC Vol. 11, p. 401.
32. Newman, p. 427. The CIA claims it was unaware of Kostikov's Department 13 connections until after the assassination. Professor Newman argues for disclosure of CIA files on Kostikov to confirm or refute this point. Consider also that the FBI still maintained a significant (and rival) presence in Mexico after the creation of the CIA and may have known of Kostikov's background even if the CIA did not.
33. Oleg Nechiporenko, *Passport to Assassination*, p.66-81.
34. John Barron, *KGB: The Secret Work of Secret Soviet Agents*, pp. 379, 392
35. CE 7, WC Vol. 16, p. 10 36. Nechiporenko, p. 82. The author did not provide any insight into the meaning of this statement. Presumably the source meant that there were few Soviet citizens who had immigrated to the U.S. after marrying an American abroad in the U.S.S.R.
37. MO's testimony at WC Vol. 1, p. 10-12 and RP's testimony at WC Vol. 2, p. 449.
38. See Marina's letter at CE 12, WC Vol. 16, p.25-29, the date of which can be inferred from CE 11 and CE 13. Lee turns in a change of address to the Soviet Embassy on behalf of himself

and Marina on 5/5/63. On 7/1/63 he asks the Embassy to expedite both their visa requests, albeit separately. See CE 986, WC Vol. 18, p. 516, 526.

39. Hosty began an inquiry into Marina's whereabouts on March 4, 1963, claiming that it was pursuant to routine procedure that he was checking up on her every 6 months as a Russian immigrant specifically selected for observation. WC Vol. 4, p. 441.

40. Military Intelligence File on RCN/Marina: 1969 Agent Report, Thomas J. Hench, 766 Military Detachment.

41. On 6/5/63 Marina wrote Ruth to tell her that LHO was insisting that she return to Russia (CE 409, WC Vol. 17, p. 100). Yet in Marina's 7/8/63 letter to the Soviet Embassy, Marina begs for expeditious processing for the Oswald family (CE 986, WC Vol. 18, p. 527). Ruth wrote a letter on 7/11/63 to Marina inviting Marina to come live with her (CE 410, WC Vol. 17, p. 10). Ruth wrote on 7/21/63 again extending an invitation (CE 90, Vol. 16, p. 280.). Meanwhile a letter to Marina from a friend in Russia dated 9/29/63 suggests that Marina expressed to this friend a continuing interest in returning to Russia with Lee (CE 75, WC Vol. 16, p. 237-239). At the 1995 COPA Conference, researcher Steve Jones described Ruth's curious and timely comments to her friends during August and September 1963 that she was taking Marina back to live with her even before the 9/24/63 decision was made by Marina and LHO to accept Ruth's invitation.

King Case

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evidence do not deserve another hearing. "He's the confessed killer. Nothing else out there can really be looked upon as credible evidence," said Campbell. And Campbell is not alone. Former Chief Counsel Robert Blakey of the HSCA, asked "Is the rule now that we don't believe guilty pleas?" Blakey's comments are especially embarrassing in light of the evidence that strongly supports the contention that the guilty plea was indeed coerced. Blakey's committee even concluded there was a strong possibility of a conspiracy in the King killing, but tried to limit it to Ray and a few southern bigots. Multiple lone nuts, you see, not a serious conspiracy.

The all-too-familiar media "spin" piece was perhaps best exemplified by the *Newsday* piece by Sheryl McCarthy (2/24/97). Remember, she is writing about the King case, although if you blink you might swear she was talking about another. She wrote:

When a notable man or woman is slain...When the identified villain happens to be a single actor, we figure there must be more to it than that. Because the loss was so great, so, too, must be the scheme that caused it.

These days there's a clamor for a trial for

James Earl Ray...The bizarre thing is that King's family has joined in asking for a trial...

The idea that King's murder was part of a conspiracy is tempting...

If, as his lawyer claims, they know where Raoul [Ray's supposed handler] lives, then they should produce an address.

Sound familiar? It was just a lone nut. When people are killed by lone nuts no one believes it (because that's not usually what happened). That King's family would want to find the truth is labeled "bizarre". And any ideas of conspiracy are "tempting" but unjustified. And the last is a classic that will be familiar to any who participate in online discussions of the Kennedy assassination. If you say Oswald didn't do it, lone nut defenders will ask, or rather demand, that you name the conspirators who did. One doesn't have to show who *did* commit a crime to show that the accused *didn't*.

But what else are we to expect in a case that again seems to imply high level involvement by agencies of our government? Why should the media assets rest when there are fables to be spun? And they *are* nervous. This is as close as Ray has ever come to a chance to formally, and for all time, put his comments safely in the record where they be-

long. McCarthy ended her article by noting that no one has kept Ray from talking but Ray himself, therefore why have a new trial. But discerning readers will note that sworn testimony is infinitely more important than a prisoner's ramblings. And Ray could talk all he wants, and have no guarantee that his information will ever be on record. By having a public trial, Ray would finally have such a chance. "Put me on the witness stand and you'll find out what really, what really, what took place," the frail Ray stammered during his recent appearance on the Montel Williams show. "I didn't, didn't do it."

Judge Brown has decided to allow the testing of the rifle. But the State Appeals court could overrule Judge Brown. Dexter pleaded not just with the Judge, but with all of us when he said, "It's time to come clean, and it's time to start letting people know that in order for this nation to come together, we have to deal with the sins of our past."

Martin Luther King's daughter Yolanda told perhaps the most difficult truth of all: "We always hoped that somebody else would lead the charge...We realized that without our direct involvement, perhaps the truth would never come out."

Kennedy children please take note. It's never too late to do the right thing. ☐