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- 1. See below.

~~INDECANTER~~ Debriefing 27 Feb 90

The tape begins with conversation already in progress. Repetitions and extraneous remarks have been deleted except where added for emphasis. Requests to spell or repeat on the part of the debriefer have usually been omitted except where it is possible that the debriefer does not understand. As Subject tends to include "you know" or "and so on and so forth" in almost every sentence, these phrases have usually been omitted. Parentheses indicate words missing or partially garbled. [] indicate transcriber's explanatory notes or translations. The letter G is used to note words garbled, i.e. (1-2G) - one to two words garbled or (XG) - unknown number of words garbled. During portions of this debriefing the microphone is placed too far away from Subject, making a good portion of his comments unreadable.

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pretend that they are students. I daresay that the same thing that we mentioned here with scientists we just perform with students.

Q: You also mentioned students studying in Moscow. You target them as well?

A: Well, we have very many changes within department, with the Second Chief. Say, once British students actually belong to Fifth Department, Fifth section of my Department. Then we just hand over them to Fifth Directorate. It's a very strange thing, maybe, for you to understand but Eleventh Department of Second Chief, which is responsible for counterterrorism, handles Pushkin Institute. I don't know how to explain. Right now we are not involved directly with business with the students but we will never miss an opportunity just to recruit a British student or American student or somebody else because we are taught that, if you remember this British spy case, most of them were recruited while being in Cambridge or Oxford. And later they make their real careers in FCO or intelligence or some place like this. That's why we look on students as a potential group of targets. Besides that, well, in my case once I took a student, sorry, it was Fourth Directorate, he was a contact from a girl from Commercial Department of the British Embassy, that's why (?I recruit?).

Q: And how productive was he? He was used to work against the girl eventually or not?

A: When I showed my real truth towards this guy he got frightened and he wanted to get out from me and at that time he was journalist NBC or something like this, like reporter or something of this stuff and I wanted him to prevent from joining NBC but the boss at NBC, maybe (1-2G) later (?relieve?) my (1G) so he was recruited by one of our guys in Second Chief and that's why he said, "Hey, can't you tell this guy, 'Get rid of this student.'? I want him to work for me." And the boss told me, 'Get out. (1-2G).'

Q: He was possessive of his agent, he didn't want to get his agent involved?

A: American occupied, of course, higher position in NBC and then British student who wanted to be journalist NBC, and he personally told our officer, "I want this guy. I want this British guy to work for me in Moscow." So, he was okay.

[The recording is evidently stopped for some time.]

A: So, ~~(1G) on OSWALD~~, you mentioned earlier attending reception in KGB higher school in Minsk. He discussed his involvement with Lee Harvey OSWALD. I told you, probably, before that while being stationed in Minsk, OSWALD was considered to be one of our agents.

Q: While you were in - Wait a minute, what was that with Minsk?

A: Yes.

Q: Before you were in Minsk he was considered, while you were in Minsk -

A: I had a guy, a Colonel, Colonel, family name is YURSHAK. [Contrary to

Debriefers' notes and pronunciation, Subject consistently pronounces "sh" vice "ch" so surname will be noted as YURSHAK.] Although this Colonel told me that he ran a file on OSWALD. MARINA, OSWALD's wife, was our swallow. She was our agent.

Q: MARINA was a swallow run by, do you know which Directorate?

A: Local KGB branch in Minsk. KGB Belorussii, vtoroy otdel [Belorussian KGB, Second Directorate].

Q: Vtoroy otdel would correspond to the Second Directorate?

A: That's right.

Q: So MARINA was directed, OSWALD was living at that time in Minsk?

A: He was living at that time in Minsk. I know his living area pretty well. He was put in very good conditions. It was housing area on Svisloch River and it's very beautiful. (1G) apartments or something like this.

Q: Was she a prostitute before she was recruited?

A: She was not a prostitute, a real prostitute in the sense you mean. She was kind of our girl whom we can just tell, 'Come on and do this.' But she was not a prostitute in classic sense.

Q: And she was directed to get OSWALD in bed?

A: To get OSWALD in bed.

Q: OSWALD at that point had already been debriefed but not recruited?

A: That's right. He was recruited at that point but -

Q: By MARINA or before?

A: No, before, because - maybe for you to understand, every guy who is living in a different region of the Soviet Union and he is a Brit or American, the locals pretend to recruit him and they pretend that they run a very important agent. So, I don't know what kind of information could he release to them. Except for MARINA I don't know actually, but even a lady teacher from Britain who lives in Irkutsk, even they pretend that she is their agent. So YURSHAK told me directly that "I was a case officer for OSWALD. I was running a file on him." Of course, he was not a real agent in a classical form but we reported to the Center that we are running a foreign agent and all this stuff, physical description and his age. I don't know whether he is still there because in my time most of the guys are retired. He was not, he was a Colonel.

Q: Polkovnik [Colonel in Russian]?

A: Yeah. In Signal Department, then a lot of wrinkles, salt and pepper, straight hair, blue eyes, good German language, spending some, certain point of his career in East Berlin.

Q: As Third Chief Directorate do you think?

A: I think that he was assigned to N Line at that time because he was mentioning some kind of (?il)legal breach. Some seven or eight years he's in East Germany.

Q: Do you know when that would have been?

A: Frankly speaking I don't know whether it was before OSWALD's case or afterwards.

Q: When would OSWALD have been in Minsk? What years approximately?

A: Oh, I don't know, he spent there some year and a half I think.

Q: KENNEDY was shot in 1961. [Kennedy was actually assassinated in November of 1963.] So, it would have been the '50's, late '50's.

A: Late '50's maybe but I don't know correct, exact age.

Q: Okay, so YURSHAK, you don't recall his first name?

A: Maybe I will recall later but YURSHAK his real family name.

Q : Was he in the local KGB in Minsk?

A: Yes, of course.

Q: Is he Ukrainian?

A: Family name, of course, Ukrainian, but he is much more Russian. I told you, nothing (1G).

Q: Do you recall his family situation, married, children?

A: YURSHAK married, grown-up children.

Q: Already at that time?

A: Yeah.

Q: And you knew him in 1981, something like this.

A: 1981 was the time when I was in Minsk. He was a kind of supervisor for the class. In Russian, (1-2G) it's a kind of dyadka, uncle. ['Dyadka' was also used to indicate a tutor for noble families or an usher in a boys' private school.]

Q: [Mutters to himself] and his background?

A: I told you, professional KGB, approximately KGB higher school. All career devoted to KGB, maybe some kind of military start, but later of career devoted to our service.

Q: Of course, everybody has signals and signal school, that's probably not an indication of any -

A: Not everybody because in my time, I was there, all the personnel, all the cadets should wear insignia of signals but you know I know one guy who was from the Navy and he was wearing naval uniform, I mean t-shirt. Second guy, with Air Force or something like this, he wears Air Force.

Q: So this was the Belorussian KGB?

A: Yes.

Q: When he was in the school would he have been working for the KGB SSR?

A: Who?

Q: YURSHAK.

A: Actually, this school is assigned to White Russian KGB, beloruskaya [White Russian]. And this is responsibility for White Russian KGB, that's why they make second test on physical and so on and so forth. Because he had a kind of inferiority complex before the HQ.

Q: So you think he may still be at the Belorussian KGB?

A: I think that he was really seriously thinking at that point of his retirement.

Q: What was his age at that time?

A: Late 50's.

Q: So he would have been born in the early '20's.

A: Maybe mid '20's.

Q: (3-4G)? Did he talk about his experiences in the war?

A: No, I think no. He didn't mention, he had a very strong sense of, discuss certain stories but he never mentioned his war experience so I think that he didn't take part in war.

Q: With Germany. Did he, well, let's look at the second question. Why did he (1G) the OSWALD case? Was it in class or-

A: Actually, no, it was in private discussions. It was in class, also. Also, he was a guy who always tried to speak about his personal experience. He was the kind of a guy, a storyteller. But I would believe him because I know the system from its inside and of course they should have had a file on OSWALD.

Q: Do you think that he was bragging about his involvement in this, making himself seem important?

A: No, I don't think so but I think that 100 percent he was involved in this

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OSWALD case. It was also his mentioning that we never make a kind of order to OSWALD to kill President.

Q: Do you think that MARINA was still an active contact after OSWALD went to the States with her?

A: No. He told me that, he used an expression for her as a bitch because he told me, 'This bitch just completely forget about us when she reach States.'

Q: That she did (1-2G). What did he say privately about the case as opposed to what he said in class?

A: It was very long ago and I can only recollect that I heard the same type of stories that he used to tell before the class and that he discussed with me privately. He was stuck to his one point of view. First, never had any kind of task for OSWALD to kill KENNEDY. Second, that he was actually recruited and he ran him. And third, MARINA was our swallow and then she rejected cooperation. These three points were repeated by him more than once.

Q: And he didn't say what OSWALD was recruited for?

A: I told you that, just to understand us from inside, it's a local KGB branch, rarely visited, especially at that period of time, by Americans or Western targets. Imagine American is settled down in this place. Of course he will be run. I just believe in this.

Q: Just for the prestige of having recruited an American?

A: Just for the prestige of having American recruitment, American agent in small Russian city.

Q: Did he say anything about what did happen, whether he was called in and asked about OSWALD and OSWALD shot the President?

A: What do you mean?

Q: Was YURSHAK contacted and asked about OSWALD?

A: No, I don't recollect anything about this but, of course, he could be debriefed at this period of time because he was actually agent runner and he never told me that it was a kind of task made by us.

Q: Would he have continued to be considered the agent handler even after OSWALD was back in the States?

A: He said that later he passed the file to HQ. That's what he told me.

Q: Later, before the President was shot but after OSWALD went to the States

A: Yeah.

Q: He turned the files over?

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- A: Something maybe, no, maybe not in this case.
- Q: Did he say how extensive the files were?
- A: What do you mean by extensive?
- Q: Were there two small folders or were there lots of -
- A: He said that he was running a lot of files on OSWALD, lots of volumes.
- Q: Thick volumes?
- A: Yeah, because we just, we put inside agent report, surveillance report, then monitoring report inside, and so on.
- Q: What did he say about OSWALD as an agent? Was he cooperative?
- A: He said that he was the sort of person that doesn't know that he is an agent of somebody else.
- Q: He didn't understand what was -
- A: He said that he himself is of a very low opinion on OSWALD as a personality. He said that he always suspected this American marine to be a bit crazy and unpredictable in his (?tasks?). One more thing, maybe that will help. He mentioned that OSWALD never wrote (??a real??) receipt.
- Q: What was the importance of that, do you think?
- A: In '50's we were more tough on -
- Q: Accounting receipts?
- A: Yeah, but no, not accounting for money. I mean receipts that I mentioned in the morning, "I just fully agree to work for the KGB" and so on.
- Q: He didn't sign an agreement to cooperate?
- A: He didn't sign.
- Q: But that he was, and OSWALD may not have realized it, what the relationship was.
- A: That's right. Although I can tell you that YURSHAK told me that OSWALD knows exactly that this guy is not a, say, guy from Institute of Foreign Affairs, White Russian, that he is a KGB. He never (1-2G) meetings but he never write a receipt and my personal estimation of this, he never see something very important or (1-2G).
- Q: Give me a little background if you would on the Belorussian KGB relations with the KGB of the USSR. Would an officer of the Belorussian KGB be assigned abroad in some cases?

A: Of course, because I knew a guy who was also a teacher in my school but he was a Representative or Deputy Representative of White Russian U.N.

Q: That's what I was wondering because of the White Russian mission -

A: Being a White Russian national you can be assigned for a certain period of time to First Directorate.

Q: So would he, assigned abroad, would he be a First Chief Directorate Officer?

A: This is the slot of First Chief, of course. He can serve in First Department of White Russian KGB but when he's placed in U.N. in United States he's reassigned to First Chief Directorate.

Q: Where would OSWALD's file have gone, the Belorussian KGB if they were to term this case a U.S. Marine who had defected to the Soviet Union was going back to the States, if they were to give that file to KGB Headquarters, which part of the KGB would have it?

A: To HQ. Of course, at that time it should be Second Chief Directorate but I think it will be First Department of Second Chief.

Q: American targets?

A: Yes, 100 percent. At that period of time of course, only then.

Q: A little more about YURSHAK. He was getting to retire probably in his late 50's. What would retirement age have been?

A: Well, it's not common thing for the school, in the school they can just serve, even in their mid 60's or something like this because they are off duty and they work only with cadets, like me. I think he was telling us that he is going to retire because this job is very boring for him and he was responsible for the personnel and he didn't want to be responsible for anybody in class getting below a certain (1G) -

Q: Young guys.

A: Yes.

(The tape ends at this point.)

A: And by the way, I had plastic ID for Ministry for Foreign Trade, also. But normally, not in my case, -

Q: Was that CASTLE also, was that Terrence William -

A: No, no. For Foreign Ministry it was PETROV, of course, but normally we do have so-called burka, burka [a black felt cape commonly worn by the military and police] means Moscow criminal police.

Q: Get out of jail. Oh, you mean this is ID, identifies you -

A: Identifies you as a policeman, but I didn't because I had too many

documents. But it's very common and very normal for a Second Chief officer to have burka, Moscow general ID.

Q: Does anything else come to mind on OSWALD? Did you hear any other rumors or any other authoritative comments on OSWALD besides from YURSHAK?

A: Well, we had also, of course, rumors from this case with different, other guys and I -

Q: You mean the school?

A: No, after, from First Department and so on and so forth. And my strong personal inclination is, of course he used to be our agent when he was in Russia but he was not given the task to kill KENNEDY, that's my personal belief.

Q: Any of the rumors that you heard change any of this attitude?

A: No, I can estimate only one, I told you that MARINA, of course, was our agent and she really denied cooperation when she get out of the Soviet Union. That's why I heard this expression about her "a bitch, ' not only from YURSHAK but from some of the guys from First Department.

Q: Do you think that normally they would have tried to continue contact with a person of her status when she -

A: Of course, why not? Remember MILLER's case.

Q: MILLER was -?

A: Bureau.

Q: Yeah, but she was married then. I don't know if she was so attractive that she could, I mean if she, just as OSWALD's -

A: The thing that I heard about her, that she was assigned to N Line, this girl.

Q: Who? As a swallow?

A: Yes, not as a case officer but as a swallow.

Q: So they might have used her abroad if she had been cooperative, try to seduce, to contact other -

A: Of course. Besides that, one of our basic principles, we never just break connections with persons until they break their connections with us and, can't you imagine, in any place of the world a Russian girl is going off to the United States. Of course it's better for us to cover her than to let her go. (3-4G) 'Good-bye to KGB.'

Q: Yeah. Where did you hear about (??Martin ANDREWS??)? Was that rumored later or was that also -

A: In (?Bureau?) case?

Q: I mean in connection with MARINA.

A: No, no. You maybe misunderstood me. This girl in MILLER case

Q: Oh, who was a contact -

A: I heard about N involvement, but not about MARINA. I heard about this, 'I'm leaving, forget about this.' That's what I heard about MARINA's case but in MILLER case, I heard that she was plant.

Q: She was planted to approach MILLER?

A: Maybe, targeting different guy or something like this but she has a strong connection with swallow.

Q: Meaning that she would have been run by an illegal rather than being run -

A: She is not a case officer, she is a swallow assigned to him, that's what I heard.

Q: A swallow assigned to him would have had contact with an illegal or she would have had contact with a Line N officer in the States?

A: I don't know exactly, but all I can tell you is kind of service rumors, it means the guys mention more than once a certain subject. In this case they mentioned more than once this girl is highly connected with N Line. And she is not a case officer. That's what I heard.

Q: You have talked about that extensively?

A: Yeah, sure. But if I don't see (1-2G) the same information, it can be possible. In this case I didn't see any kind of written information that, yes she was an agent of N. I'm just telling you about office rumors. ... Of course, this is the Department boss who is directly in charge but LIPNYAVICHUS, when I saw him last he was a head of squad which is responsible for those inspections, head of squad of guys who were responsible. Besides that, -

Q: What's a squad in Russian?

A: Otdeleniye. Besides that, I know the guy from First Department, from American Counterintelligence who is also responsible for those inspections. This guy works directly with American military targets but he takes part. He takes his cover and he goes with American in different parts of the Soviet Union.

Q: He's responsible for the military targets in the U.S. Embassy? Attache?

A: Yes.

Q: But not the Marines.

A: No, don't mix the guards, I call them the guards, and military attaches. This guy was responsible for military attaches. I told Bill that he had