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Helsinki

Robert S. Anson, author of "They've Killed the President! The Search for the Murderers of John F. Kennedy", offered a critical appraisal of Lee Harvey Oswald's travel through Western Europe prior to his appearance in Moscow on October 16, 1959. Anson ^{expressed particular concern} ~~expressed particular concern~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~issue~~ ~~of~~ ~~a~~ ~~Soviet~~ ~~visa~~ ~~to~~ ~~Oswald~~ ~~prior~~ ~~to~~ ~~his~~ ~~entry~~ ~~into~~ ~~the~~ ~~Soviet~~ ~~Union~~.

^{in Helsinki, Finland} ~~in Helsinki, Finland~~ ~~the~~ ~~issue~~ ~~of~~ ~~a~~ ~~Soviet~~ ~~visa~~ ~~to~~ ~~Oswald~~ ~~prior~~ ~~to~~ ~~his~~ ~~entry~~ ~~into~~ ~~the~~ ~~Soviet~~ ~~Union~~. Anson wrote that

"On Monday, October 12, Oswald went to the Soviet Consulate and applied for a visa. It was granted two days later." ^[Anson, p. 153] Anson concluded:

Oswald also managed to secure a Soviet visa in record time. The CIA told the Commission that under ordinary circumstances obtaining a visa in Finland took one or two weeks; Oswald got his in two days. [Ibid, p. 160] ~~over~~

Thus, the issue has arisen ~~whether~~ ~~whether~~ ~~Oswald's~~ ~~receipt~~ ~~of~~ ~~a~~ ~~Soviet~~ ~~visa~~ ~~prior~~ ~~to~~ ~~his~~ ~~entry~~ ~~into~~ ~~the~~ ~~Soviet~~ ~~Union~~ was an "odd happening" as Anson characterizes it; ~~circumstantial~~ ~~evidence~~ ~~leading~~ ~~to~~ ~~show~~ ~~that~~

* Anson was referring to The Warren Commission Report where it is stated:

← (The Department of State has advised the Commission that it has some information that in 1959 it usually took an American tourist in Helsinki 1 to 2 weeks to obtain a visa,¹²⁵ and that it has other information that the normal waiting period during the past 5 years has been a week or less.¹²⁶ According to the Department's information, the waiting period has always varied frequently and widely, with one confirmed instance in 1963 of a visa routinely issued in less than 24 hours.¹²⁷ The Central Intelligence Agency has indicated that visas during the 1964 tourist season were being granted in about 5 to 7 days.¹²⁸

This information from the Department of State and the Central Intelligence Agency thus suggests that Oswald's wait for a visa may have been shorter than usual but not beyond the range of possible variation. The prompt issuance of Oswald's visa may have been merely the result of normal procedures, due in part to the fact that the summer rush had ended. It might also mean that Oswald was unusually urgent in his demands that his visa be issued promptly. Oswald himself told officials at the American Embassy in Moscow on October 31, when he appeared to renounce his citizenship, that he had said nothing to the Soviets about defecting until he arrived in Moscow.¹²⁹ In any event, the Commission has found nothing in the circumstances of Oswald's entry into the Soviet Union which indicates that he was at the time an agent of the U.S.S.R. (WR p256)

grady to enter
of Soviet Union

~~that~~ Oswald had received special assistance ~~in entering the Soviet Union~~.

document
referred to which
was omitted
from the report

The Warren Commission should
Anson's concerns ^{inferred about} ~~the~~ Oswald's Soviet visit. In a letter dated

May 25, 1964 J. Lee Rankin wrote ~~Rankin~~
~~Rankin~~ Rankin ^{noted} ~~that~~

Rankin stated that he had recently
spoken with Abraham Chazy of the
State Department who contended
that at the time Oswald received
his visa to enter ^{the} Russia from
the Soviet Embassy at Helsinki,
at least one week ordinarily transpired
between ^{the} time of a tourist's application
for a visa and the issuance of the
visa. Rankin contended that if Chazy's
assessment ^{was} accurate, then Oswald's
obtaining his tourist visa in from
two to four days might ^{have} be very
significant.

Rankin also ^{stated} ~~stated~~ that from CIA
material supplied to the Warren
Commission, the Commission had
concluded that Oswald arrived in
Helsinki by plane from London
on ^{Saturday} October 10, 1959, ^{at} that Oswald
had received his Soviet tourist
visa on Wednesday, October 14, 1959,
departing by train for the Soviet
Union on October 15.

See PK
PG 90
Appendix II

* Assuming Oswald arrived in Helsinki on October 10, he would
have been able to apply for a Soviet tourist visa on the earliest
first working day after Oct 10, i.e. October 12 <sup>under normal
conditions
the earliest</sup>

Rankin noted that the Commission was interested in Oswald ^{James White} did in fact obtain his tourist visa ^{more} more quickly than was normal ^{at that time for} the Soviet Embassy in Helsinki ~~and that~~ ~~fact~~ ~~is~~ ~~mentioned~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~letter~~ ~~by~~ ~~J. Lee Rankin~~ ~~to~~ ~~Richard Helms~~, DDP4-2676, 25 May 1964]

request for information

The CIA responded to Rankin's ~~request~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~time~~ ~~needed~~ ~~for~~ ~~response~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~Soviet~~ ~~Embassy~~ ~~on~~ ~~July~~ ~~31~~, 1964 ~~and~~ ~~in~~ ~~response~~ ~~to~~ ~~Rankin's~~ ~~discovery~~ ~~of~~ ~~Helms's~~ ~~letter~~ ~~to~~ ~~Rankin~~. Helms ^{Rankin} wrote that a ~~delays~~ ~~in~~ ~~processing~~ ~~the~~ ~~visa~~ ~~at~~ ~~the~~ ~~Soviet~~ ~~Consulate~~ ~~in~~ ~~Helsinki~~ ~~was~~ ~~able~~ ~~to~~ ~~issue~~ ~~a~~ ~~transit~~ ~~visa~~ ~~(valid~~ ~~for~~ ~~24~~ ~~hours)~~ ~~to~~ ~~U.S.~~ ~~businessmen~~ ~~within~~ ~~five~~ ~~minutes~~ ~~but~~ ~~if~~ ~~a~~ ~~longer~~ ~~stay~~ ~~was~~ ~~intended~~ ~~at~~ ~~least~~ ~~one~~ ~~week~~ ~~was~~ ~~needed~~ ~~to~~ ~~process~~ ~~a~~ ~~visa~~ ~~application~~ ~~and~~ ~~arrange~~ ~~lodging~~ ~~through~~ ~~INTOURIST~~. [Richard Helms to J. Lee Rankin, DDP4-3916, 31 July 1964]. A second communication from ~~Richard~~ Helms to Rankin dated September 14, 1964 added that during the 1964 tourist season ~~some~~ Soviet Consulates in at least some Western European cities ~~were~~ ~~able~~ ~~to~~ ~~issue~~ ~~Soviet~~ ~~tourist~~ ~~visas~~ ~~in~~ ~~from~~ ~~five~~ ~~to~~ ~~seven~~ ~~days~~. [^{Letter of Richard} Helms to J. Lee Rankin, DDP4-4775, 14 September 1964]

~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ In an effort to resolve the issue,

The Committee has ~~created~~ ^{reviewed} an additional ^{file} maintained by the CIA which sheds further light on ~~the time period~~ ^{the circumstances surrounding} ~~the~~ ^{assumed} ~~assumed~~ ^{assumed} of a Soviet tourist visa ~~issued~~. The CIA file ~~subject~~ ^{concerns} Gregory ~~the~~ Golub, Soviet Consul in Helsinki at the time of Oswald's ~~appearance~~ ^{appearance} ~~in~~ ^{was issued} ~~his~~ ^{his} tourist visa. [CIA Doc (OFHA)-3439, 2 July 1959, (OCOA) 3745, 21 April 1959, (OFHA)-4132, 9 October 59]. Golub's file reveals that in addition to his consular activities, he was believed to be an officer of the Soviet KGB. [(OCOW)-2909, 26 June 1959, (OFHW)-2937, 21 September 1959]

→ With regard to the time necessary for issuance of visas to Americans for travel into the Soviet Union.

Two CIA dispatchs ^(from Helsinki) ~~concerning~~ ^{concerning} ~~visa~~ ^{visa} ~~issuance~~ ^{issuance} of Golub are of particular ^{significance} ~~importance~~.

The first dispatch records that Golub disclosed (during a luncheon conversation ~~with a CIA officer~~) that: "Moscow had given him the authority to give Americans visas without prior approval from Moscow. He [Golub] stated that this would make his job much easier, and as long as he

incident
→ quote

made advance Intourist re-
servations. When they did this,
Golub immediately gave them
their visas... [OFHA] 4132,
9 Oct. 1959] *

^{based upon those assumed}
~~in light of~~ two factors: 1)
Thus, ~~that~~ Golub's authority
to issue visas ^{to Americans} without prior approval
from Moscow ^{and} a demonstration of
the ~~the~~ authority, ^{approximately} one
month before Oswald's appearance
at the Embassy ^{Soviet}
Committee's ~~letter~~ ^{for Oswald's visa} ~~that~~ ^{was available} ~~was~~ ⁱⁿ ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~embassy~~ ^{embassy} ~~was~~ ^{was} ~~not~~ ^{not} ~~available~~ ^{available}

support the
conclusion
that

~~that~~ Oswald's ^{immigration} ~~visa~~ ^{was} ~~issued~~ ^{issued} ~~within~~
two ^{from} days after ^{his} appearance at the
Soviet Consulate, ^{while} ~~was~~ ^{not} ~~not~~ ^{not} ~~available~~ ^{available}
~~does not~~ ~~do~~ ~~to~~ ~~support~~ ~~the~~ ~~belief~~ ~~that~~
Oswald's travel ^{into} ~~into~~ ^{the} ~~the~~ ^{Soviet} ~~Union~~
~~was~~, was assisted by ^{others}, partic-
ularly the Soviet. However the pos-
sibility ^{of assistance} cannot be dismissed due
to Golub's probable connection
with the KGB and the lack of other
substantive information available
to ~~the~~ ^{defendants} confirm ~~that~~ Oswald's
visa was handled in a manner
similar to that of the two American
students who had entered the Soviet
Union ^{with Golub's assistance} via Finland.

Evidently, Oswald had made arrangements
with Intourist because upon his arrival
at ~~the~~ ⁱⁿ Moscow ^{on} Oct 16, he was met by an Intourist
representative and taken to the Hotel Berlin where he
resided as a student. (W 7691)