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SUPPLEMENTAL MEMORANDUM

March 25, 1964

TO: Howard P. Willens
FROM: W. David Slawson
SUBJECT: Oswald's Trip to Mexico; Outline and Recommendations for Further Inquiries

1. Issuance of a Passport.

FACT - A citizen of the United States need not have a passport in order to travel in Mexico for short periods. Nevertheless, Oswald applied for a passport at the Passport Office in New Orleans, Louisiana, on June 24, 1963. His application states that he intended to stay abroad for from three months to one year and to visit England, France, Germany, Holland, USSR, Finland, Italy, and Poland. Passport Number D092526 was issued on June 25, 1963. It was marked for travel to all countries except Albania and Cuba and those portions of China, Korea, and Vietnam which are under Communist control. These limitations are standard and their occurrence on Oswald's passport therefore carries no special significance.

(Report of the Department of State, Lee Harvey Oswald Appendix on "Passports," pages 7-8; FBI Summary of the Assassination of President Kennedy, pages 68-69.)

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Some time during the trip Oswald told the McFarlands that his purpose in going to Mexico was to evade the American travel ban on Cuba and to get to Cuba where he could meet Castro. (Commission No. 78, page 4.)

Tickets from Nuevo Laredo to Mexico City, at least if they are purchased from Continental Trailways in New Orleans, are \$10.00 for a one-way trip. The cost of a round trip is not known. (Commission No. 183, page 22.)

8. Arrival at Mexico City.

FACT - Oswald arrived in Mexico City at about 10:00 a.m. on September 27.

COMMENT - The Flecha Roja bus upon which Oswald was riding arrived in Mexico City on or about 10:00 a.m. on September 27. (Commission No. 306, page 2.) As previously stated, our evidence is fairly firm that Oswald arrived at the bus station with one suitcase, a small zipper bag.

9. Oswald's Stay in Mexico City.

FACT - Oswald was registered at the Hotel del Comercio, Calle Sahagun 19, Mexico City from September 27 through the night of October 1. He registered as "Lee, Harvey Oswald, proceeding from the U.S.A. (Texas), a photographer and a U.S. citizen." While in Mexico City he contacted both the Soviet and Cuban Embassies, the former at least twice and

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probably three times and the latter at least twice and probably three times as well, ostensibly to obtain permission to travel to Cuba. We have no firm evidence that his real purpose was any different from his ostensible purpose. He had his passport with him and probably also carried some FPCC press clippings and some letters from the Russian Embassy in Washington.

COMMENT - Oswald registered at the Hotel del Comercio, Calle Sahagun 19, in Mexico City on September 27. He registered as "Lee, Harvey Oswald, proceeding from the U.S.A. (Texas), a photographer and a U.S. citizen." (FBI Exhibit No. D-36.) The comma following Oswald's first name and the fact that he was posing as a photographer probably derived from the fact that this comma somehow slipped into his name when his tourist card was made out and that the tourist card also listed him as a photographer. Oswald paid his bill at the hotel on October 1, the payment including the night of October 1. No one remembers when he checked out, but presumably it was sometime during the morning or early afternoon of October 2. (Commission No. 78.)

Oswald is listed as having stayed in Room 18 at the Hotel. Rooms 18 through 23 occupy one floor. The hotel clerk, Mr. Garcia Luna, examined the registry book for the period of Oswald's stay and was able to identify three of the guests who occupied rooms on the same floor during part or all of this period. He said he was able to identify these three because they frequently stopped at the hotel.

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Two of the three men identified by the clerk cannot be found and the third, Mr. Alfonso Perez Pliego, of Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico stated simply that he frequently stops at the Hotel del Comercio when he is in Mexico City, that he was there during the period September 26-28, in Room 19, but that he did not notice Oswald's presence. (Commission No. 455, pages 2-4.)

Oswald's activities in Mexico City are not known with a high degree of certainty. The address book found among his effects after his arrest following the assassination lists what appear to be the names, addresses and telephone numbers of the Soviet and Cuban Embassies in Mexico City and a Cuban airline. In addition, the name "Silvia Duran" is written under the Cuban Embassy address. (Com.

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No. 205, pages 688-69; SS No. 515; Commission Exhibit No. 18.) Presumably the Cuban airline address was for Oswald to use if he got clearance from the two embassies to travel to Cuba, but so far no investigation has been made of this address. The Australian girls on the southbound bus say Oswald showed them his passport to prove that he had traveled to Russia. (Commission No. 306, pages 4 and 8.) In his letter to the Soviet Embassy in Washington, D. C., dated November 9, 1963, Oswald states that he had contacted the Soviet Embassy in Mexico, indicates that he also contacted the Cuban Consulate there and also infers that his purpose in being in Mexico had something to do with Cuba, the last by stating that he had hoped to reach the Soviet Embassy in Havana "as planned." (FBI Exhibit No. 57.) An early draft of this letter was observed by Ruth Paine in Irving, Texas (Commission No. 5, page 196) and was found in Oswald's room after the assassination. To the extent that the draft differs from the final copy and shows crossed-out words and phrases, it tends to bear out the hypothesis that Oswald's purpose in Mexico was simply to get to Cuba and tends to counteract the inference which can be drawn from the final copy of the letter that Oswald, with the knowledge or even the cooperation of the Russian Embassy in Washington, had planned to carry out something highly secret and subversive. (FBI Exhibit No. D-72.)

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Marina Oswald has testified to the Commission (Transcript, pages 286-90) that when Oswald returned to Texas after his trip to Mexico he told her that aside from going to the two embassies, in an effort to do all he could to get to Cuba, he had done nothing but see a bull fight, visit museums and go sight-seeing. The Spanish-English dictionary found among Oswald's effects carries notations on the flyleaf in the back, apparently in Oswald's handwriting, reading as follows: (Commission Exhibit No. 116.)

"Phone embassy
get bus tickets
eat

"watch Jai Lai game
buy silver bracelet
" record

"
_____"(in Russian)

A silver bracelet, enscribed "Marina" has been found. (FBI Exhibit D-72.) No record has been found.

A check of all the records of the Mexican national telegraph company and of all the leading banks in or around Mexico City has failed to show any money sent or received by Oswald under his real name or known aliases. (Commission No. 664.)

The foregoing general information has been supplemented by the CIA in a memorandum dated 31 January 1964,

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(Commission No. 347), a supplemental memorandum dated February 19, 1964, (Commission No. 384), sent in answer to certain questions posed by us after reading their first memorandum, and a copy of a summary of the interrogation of certain Cuban Embassy employees carried out by the Mexican police. (Commission No. 426.) The CIA has stated that its sources of information for the memoranda are very reliable. The information in these reports nevertheless has two important weaknesses. First, a large part of it is simply a summation of what the Mexican police learned when they interrogated Mrs. Silvia Duran, an employee of the Cuban Consulate in Mexico City, and is therefore only as accurate as Mrs. Duran's testimony to the police. Second, in many respects the information contained in the reports is ambiguous or conflicting as to what actually was going on. The second CIA memorandum attempted to resolve some of these ambiguities and was partially successful, but some of them, of course, are inherent in the source material itself. Subject to these qualifications, Oswald's actions in Mexico City, to the extent we know them, were as described on the following pages. For a partial statement of my reasons for resolving some of the uncertainties and inconsistencies in the testimony the way I did, reference is made to my memorandum entitled, "Tentative Conclusions on Lee Harvey Oswald's Stay in Mexico City: Visits to Soviet and Cuban Embassies," dated March 27, 1964.

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The Cuban Consulate and the Cuban Embassy are separate offices located in separate buildings, but the buildings are on the same street and are separated only by a parking lot, which is privately owned and operated for the occupants of the two buildings. The Cuban Consulate is on the corner of Marquez and Zamora Streets; the Embassy is at 160 Marquez Street. The Soviet Embassy and the Soviet Consulate are both located in a large mansion with connected outbuildings. We do not know the location of the Soviet and Cuban complexes, relative to one another, nor relative to the Hotel del Comercio; nor do we know the location of the Soviet Military Attache's Office (though presumably it would also be in the mansion, along with the Embassy and the Consulate).

Friday, September 27:

As previously stated, the bus upon which Oswald arrived at Mexico City was scheduled to arrive there at 10:00 a.m.

Oswald probably went straight from the bus station to the Cuban Embassy. He asked for a visa to travel through Cuba on his way to Russia, this kind of visa being referred to as an "in-transit visa." He was told, rather perfunctorily it now appears, that such a visa could issue only if he first

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obtained a Russian visa.

Oswald then went to the Soviet Consulate to ask for a Russian visa, explaining why he wanted it. He showed the Russian officials a letter from the Soviet Consulate in Washington indicating that he had been long awaiting a visa for himself and his wife to go to Russia. (The file of the Soviet Embassy in Washington, D. C., handed over to the American Government by Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin shortly after the assassination of the President, contains several letters from the Embassy to Marina Oswald concerning her visa application, dating back to the early spring of 1963. Probably Oswald had one or more of these letters in his possession.) Oswald stated that no answer had as yet come from Washington. The Soviet officials told him that the waiting period was sometimes four or five months. Oswald also displayed a letter attesting that he was a member of a pro-Cuban organization. (Marina has testified that he took the press clippings about his arrest in New Orleans in connection with Fair Play For Cuba Committee activities, and we know that he had at least one letter from V. T. Lee, National Director for the Fair Play For Cuba Committee, New York City, forwarding him a membership card (FBI Exhibit No. 11) and outlining the steps he should take if he wanted to form a local

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chapter in New Orleans. (FBI Exhibit No. 53.) Oswald also had some other documents and posters in connection with the apparently fictitious New Orleans Fair Play For Cuba Committee chapter which he claimed to have formed, all these documents either being outright forgeries (e.g., FBI Exhibit No. 35) or at least misleading in that they represented that there was an active chapter in New Orleans headed by a man named "Hidell.) Oswald told the Russian officials that the Cubans would not give him a visa unless he had already obtained a Russian visa.

In "mid-afternoon" Oswald returned to the Cuban Embassy. Here he spoke to Mrs. Silvia Duran, the only employee of the Consulate other than the Consul himself, "Eusebio Azque." Oswald told her of his lack of success at the Soviet Consulate and asked again for a Cuban visa. Mrs. Duran at this point telephoned the Soviet Consulate. They confirmed that Oswald had been there, that he had shown them a letter from Washington and a letter showing his pro-Cuban activities, and that he had asserted that he had long been awaiting a visa from the Soviet Embassy in Washington. However, the Soviet officials repeated to Mrs. Duran that there would probably be a long wait before Oswald could get a Soviet visa. During the call Mrs. Duran also said something to the effect that Oswald did not know anyone in Cuba, and there were replies by the

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Soviet officials to the effect that Oswald was not known to them, etc., but all this is very unclear.

(Yuri Ivanovich Nosenko, the recent Soviet Defector, has stated that the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City sent word by telegram all the way back to Moscow of Oswald's attempts to obtain a Soviet visa. (Commission No. 451, page 4 and Commission No. 434, page 3.) Whether the Soviet Embassy did this when Oswald was there on Friday, whether it waited until Oswald returned there on Saturday, or whether it delayed sending the telegram until several days thereafter, is not known.) Apparently Oswald persisted in his endeavor to obtain a Cuban visa despite not having a Soviet visa in his possession, so Mrs. Duran asked Consul Azque to speak directly to him on the matter. This Azque did, but without much success: there then ensued an argument between Azque and Oswald, and Oswald got angry and left the Consulate.

Saturday, September 28:

At some time, probably Saturday morning while Oswald was not there, Consul Azque telephoned the Russian Consulate to inquire about Oswald's situation. We do not know any of the specific contents of this call except that the person with whom he spoke was supposedly the one in charge of the Russian office and except that Azque was informed that the case would have to

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be referred to Moscow and there would probably be a four-month delay.

Oswald returned to the Cuban Consulate and apparently remained there for a rather long time. Silvia Duran again telephoned the Russian Embassy, this time speaking to two officials there and putting Oswald on the line with one of them. During this telephone conversation Oswald conversed in what is described as "poor Russian." He said that he had already been to the Soviet Consulate and had left an address there. The Soviet official replied that he was aware of that. Oswald then said something to the effect that he had not known his address when he was at the Soviet Consulate and had returned to the Cuban Embassy to ask for the address, because they had it. The Soviet official then invited Oswald to come by again and give them the correct address. Oswald agreed.

It is not at all clear what the discussion about the address really meant. The fact that the address seems to have been known to the Cuban Embassy but not to the Russian suggests that the address of the Hotel del Comercio was the subject of discussion. We have indications from the file supplied by Ambassador Mann (Commission No. 442) that the Hotel del Comercio is a popular meeting place for Cuban revolutionaries and that Oswald was probably pointed there by the Cuban Embassy. However, it seems strange that, if this were the case, Oswald would not have remembered the hotel's address or at least

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have it written down someplace on his person, else how could he have found the place when he was directed there by the Consulate? A possible - and interesting - resolution of this apparent discrepancy is that Oswald was actually taken to the Hotel del Comercio by someone from the Cuban Embassy or someone called upon by the Cuban Embassy for this purpose. All this is pure speculation at this point, of course. The conversation about the address may also have referred to Oswald's address in the United States, which we now know had recently changed from New Orleans to Dallas (or Irving), Texas.

Toward the end of this visit to the Cuban Embassy, Silvia Duran gave Oswald a slip of paper with her name and telephone number on it (presumably her office number) and told Oswald to call her when he got his Soviet visa. She said he never called back. The flyleaf in the back of Oswald's Spanish-English dictionary contains the handwritten notation, "Phone embassy, get bus tickets, eat." (Commission Exhibit No. 116.)

Oswald once again went to the Russian Consulate, this time by invitation, in order to give the "proper address." We have no other information about what happened during this visit except a reference by Oswald himself to the guard at the Soviet Embassy the following Tuesday, that he had been told by the Consul (probably "Kostikov") the previous Saturday that

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the Embassy was sending a telegram to Washington about his case.

Sunday, September 29:

No Information.

Monday, September 30:

No Information.

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A man who fits the description of Oswald in "mid-morning" contacted the Soviet Military Attache in Mexico City, saying he had been to the Soviet Embassy the previous Saturday and had been told by the Soviet Consul that they were sending a telegram to Washington, and he asked the Military Attache whether there had been a reply to that telegram. The Military Attache replied to Oswald that he should inquire at the Consulate. Oswald went to the Russian Embassy and spoke to the guard in what is described as "halting" Russian, saying he had been there two days earlier, that there had been a telegram, etc., and asking whether there had been a reply to the telegram. After trying to establish by physical descriptions who at the Embassy Oswald had spoken to two days earlier, the guard stated that if it was a dark man it was probably "Kostikov." The guard then left Oswald outside of the Embassy, went in himself and spoke with someone, returned and said that the telegram had been sent but that no reply had been received.

Wednesday, October 2:

No Information.

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