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# SLAIN SUSPECTED ASSASSIN 'REAL LOSER' Wrote Novel About Oswald, Says Orleanian

By DON HUDSON  
Lee Harvey Oswald, the ex-New Orleanian who was charged with the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, then was killed himself—so impressed a Marine buddy in 1959 that the buddy wrote a novel about him two years ago.

"I called it 'The Idle Warriors.' In it the major character went to Russia," said Kerry Thornley, 25, a Whittier, Calif., native, now living at 1824 Dauphine.

(In October, 1959—only a few months after Thornley had known him—Oswald turned up in Russia and at-

tempted to renounce his American citizenship.) Thornley said he served with Oswald in Marine Air Control Squadron No. 9 at El Toro Marine Base, Santa Ana, Calif., in the early months of 1959.

OSWALD, WHO had been court martialed twice while in Japan in 1958, was "kind of the outfit janitor, because he had lost his security clearance for being in the brig," said Thornley.

"He had a reputation in the outfit of being the real loser. I thought he was a very intelligent person. This is why I especially remember him. He didn't have any close friends, but he was very witty and satirical in a conversation. He was at his best in a crowd."

Thornley said his book has not been published, but that "in the light of recent events" an agent is now seeking to sell the last few chapters as the basis for a television script.

LIFE IN THE Marines had a profound effect on Oswald's outlook and personality, Thornley believes.

"I think Oswald became a Communist before he became a Marine, but I believe the



KERRY THORNLEY

Marines only made things worse with him.

"My main conclusion in the book was that you can't train men to be killers, then give them a half-hour lecture, send them to Japan and expect them to be good little boys.

"Stuff like this in the Marines sets up a kind of schizophrenic reaction.

"With a person like Oswald, who was probably a little psychotic to begin with, this only makes things worse."

THORNLEY SAID a mutual interest in books and bull sessions, drew him to Oswald.

"He was very well read and I read a lot. We'd get together in the afternoon, he and I and six or seven others. We discussed politics and religion and such.

"He said he thought communism was the best religion.

"But there was always this satirical, half-mocking attitude, he took. You couldn't tell whether he was really serious or not.

"HE HAD a wonderful sense of humor. I don't think this was ever brought out in what I've been reading about him.

"He often joked about communism. I remember one time a master sergeant got up on the tail-gate of a truck for a lecture of some type. Oswald remarked, in a Russian accent: 'Ah, another collectivist farm lecture.'"

Oswald's favorite book at the time was George Orwell's "1984," a bitter satire on 20th century trends toward totalitarianism, Thornley said.

"I read it at his recommendation.

"HE WAS always drawing parallels between the Marine Corps and '1984,' something I thought funny, seeing as the book is pretty much a slap against communism."

Was Oswald the assassin type?

"Well, he was very resentful of the military; he was very much the man who would 'play' the part of an assassin.

"But, I'm still not sure he committed the assassination. He never showed any tendency toward violence. He was more of a talker than anything else.

"I saw the picture of his getting shot . . . a man I knew, who was sort of a pathetic individual . . . seeing him get a slug in the belly. This got me.

"He was a sort of poor soul."

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