

Tried Life in Soviet Union Backed Castro's Rule

By PETER KHSS

A teen-ager who discovered Karl Marx's socialism as a new gospel...

A Marine who believed the occupation of Japan was imperialistic and who developed a grievance against the Corps...

An American who went to the Soviet Union and then decided factory life under Communism there was not for him...

A propagandist for Castro Cuba who tried to penetrate anti-Castro operations as, in effect, a fifth columnist...

A man who has been said by one of his most recent associates to have "refused to eschew violence."

This was Lee Harvey Oswald.

Ended by A Bullet

His troubled life came to a

end yesterday at the age of 24 years, one month, six days.

The end came with a bullet wound in the abdomen. The shot was fired point blank by a night club operator in the Dallas police headquarters where Oswald had been charged with the assassination of President Kennedy two days earlier.

Oswald denied killing the President.

For three days the life and mind of Lee Oswald have been the center of national inquiries, ransacking the memories of schoolmates, fellow servicemen, neighbors.

The story is far from final, far from firm.

He was born Oct. 18, 1939, in New Orleans. His father had died before he was born. His widowed mother, Mrs. Marguerite Oswald, raised him with two other sons.

Most of his early life, he said, was spent in Fort Worth, but his family moved around considerably.

He remembered his mother as working in shops. She remembered him as going to work at odd jobs at an early age, always bringing home what he earned and never spending it on himself, she said.

"He was a boy who helped his mother," she said.

Had Plenty to Eat

One school he went to was Ridglea elementary school in Fort Worth, where he was taught in sixth grade in 1951 by Mrs. Howard L. Green.

Mrs. Green said yesterday he was "not under-privileged" and had plenty to eat, "not needing an occasional nickel or dime from his teacher as some did."

He and another child may have had "a little bit of trouble-maker" in them, Mrs. Green said, but "there was nothing in his background that would turn him away from a free society

toward Communism."

Mrs. M. M. Merrett was principal when the school was first opened in the suburban community of Ridglea West in September, 1949. Oswald was a transfer student, entering in the fourth grade.

He was "kind of smily, a boy with curly hair, hair that was tousled the way curly hair gets," Mrs. Merrett remembered yesterday. "He was a very lively boy, a wiggly boy, always on the move."

Grades Varied

On citizenship, he made an A in the fourth grade, B's in the fifth and sixth grades. His grades were low in spelling, arithmetic. He had a "7.4" in a standardized achievement test in the fourth grade, against a normal 4.5; 4 in the fifth grade, against a normal 5.5; but 7.4 in the sixth grade, as against a normal 6.5.

"Back in 1959, when the news came about his trip to Russia," Mrs. Merrett said. "I remembered what I could about Lee. At that time I said to myself that I could not have foreseen that he would be a person who would go bad."

When he was 13 and 14 years old, Oswald lived in the Bronx, from September, 1952, until January, 1954. It was a rootless period.

He attended Trinity Lutheran School, 2125 Watson Avenue, for three weeks. Then he transferred to Junior High School 117, 1865 Morris Avenue, as a seventh grader. When his family moved to a new school zone, he transferred in March, 1953, to Junior High School 44, 1825 Prospect Avenue, remaining there until January, 1954.

Oswald's grades were barely passable, according to school records dug out by Nicholas Cicchetti, the present principal of Junior High School 44. His teachers rated him satisfactory in courtesy and effort, unsatisfactory in dependability, cooperation and self-control.

It was 1954 when he entered Beauregard Junior High School in New Orleans. One classmate, Edward Collier, said:

"We called him Yank because he had a Yankee accent."

He had a lot of fights. One friend he had was Edward Voebel.

In a Columbia Broadcasting System telecast yesterday Mr. Voebel said that he met Oswald when another boy punched Oswald in the mouth. Mr. Voebel said some other youngsters had put the puncher up to it, although he might not have known Oswald.

Mr. Voebel and two other boys picked Oswald up off the ground, and brought him back to the school to put cold compresses on his mouth. Like others had done, Mr. Voebel said Oswald was a "loner," not interested in extracurricular activities. He doubted Oswald's own story of having been in-

terested in Marxist ideas at 15.

Although reported a below-average student at Beauregard, Oswald scored well on his achievement tests when he entered Warren Easton High School in New Orleans. With 55 per cent considered average, he made 88 per cent in reading, 85 per cent in vocabulary.

On his high school questionnaire, he listed as his favorite subjects: civics, mathematics and science. Vocational choices: biology and mechanical drawing. Favorite pastimes: reading and outdoor sports, such as football. Close personal friends: none.

He entered Warren Easton on Sept. 8, 1955. Shortly he was uprooted again. On Oct. 5, 1955, his mother wrote the school saying the family was leaving for San Diego, Calif. Six months later, school officials received a letter from Arlington Heights High School in Fort Worth requesting his transcript.

In Tulsa, Okla., Mrs. James Giles told C.B.S. yesterday she had taken a world history class with Oswald. She said:

"If the teacher asked a question in world history class, Lee would give the answer. But he did it in such a way as to come back with a question in kind of a sarcastic way.

"He was lonely, and he didn't seem to be living like the rest of the students. He didn't seem happy in any way. He didn't seem to be able to converse with anyone, as a friend would converse with anyone.

Poor Grades Recalled

In Salt Lake City, Kathleen Willett, another former Fort Worth student, said she had sat next to Oswald in biology class. He did not study, she said, he got poor grades; he "never seemed to have any friends — maybe that was part of his trouble."

This was the time, according to a reporter, that Oswald remembered becoming interested in Marxism. The reporter, Aline Mosby, a United Press International correspondent, interviewed him in Moscow in 1959, three years after those school-days.

"I played baseball and football in high school," Oswald told her. "I had a certain amount of friends, but I don't have many attachments now in the United States. In my childhood I enjoyed a few benefits of American society. I was a bookworm."

Read About Rosenbergs

"I'm a Marxist. I became interested about the age of 15. An old lady handed me a pamphlet about saving the Rosenbergs. [Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were convicted on March 29, 1951, of conspiracy to commit espionage for the Soviet Union; they were executed on June 19, 1953.]

"I still remember that pam-

phlet about the Rosenbergs
don't know why. Then we
to North Dakota and I
ered one book in the library
'Das Kapital.' It was what
been looking for. It was
very religious man opening
Bible for the first time.

"I started to study Marx
economic theories. I could
the impoverishment of
masses before my own
my own mother. I thought
worker's life could be better
found some Marxist books
dusty shelves in the New
Leans library and continued
indotinate myself for
years.

This meant it would have
france through his
Cora's career. He was
post 17 when he enlisted
Marines at Dallas in
1953.

From then in January
he underwent recruit
in San Diego, then in
February advanced to
Camp Pendleton, Calif.
March to May, 1954. He
trained in aviation
operations by

Base in Japan from
to October, 1955.

He had already
recruit in
Mr. Goodwin, a
former Marine sergeant, said
he had seen Oswald's
chief at Camp Pendleton.

"He was good with a rifle,
Mr. Goodwin said. But he was
such a hothead I was glad when
he was finally shipped out
radar training. He was
having beefs with the guys
the barracks. Never could
ure out what it was about, really.
Just to get into a fight
vent his emotions, I suppose.

"If he had any Communist leanings
at that time, I didn't know
about them," Mr. Goodwin said.
"We weren't exactly close
acquaintances. But I did know
about his temper, and the fact
he had a habit of flying off at
wrong time."

Court-Martialled Twice

In Japan, Oswald received
two summary court-martials.

On April 11, 1953, he was
convicted of having an unregis-
tered pistol. For this he was
demoted from private, first class
—the highest rating he had
achieved—to private.

On June 12, 1953, he was
convicted of using profanity
a noncommissioned officer;
could not be demoted any fur-
ther, and got a note on his record
instead.

Peter Connor, an apprentice
ironworker in West Haven,
Conn., said he had served with
Oswald in Japan.

Mr. Connor called him "a real
aggravator," whose almost con-
stant smile was a steady annoy-
ance to barracks mates. Os-
wald had a reputation for com-
petence as a technician.

He had a hair-trigger temper,
but he always got the worst of
it in fist fights, Mr. Connor
went on.

"One thing about him, he
never fought his way into the
shower," Mr. Connor said. "He
was one of the sloppiest guys
ever met in my life."

"He was a pretty insistent
kid," Mr. Connor reported. "If
he said something, he really
meant it, but he was not much
for conversation. When his
low Marines were heading for
night on the town, Oswald
would remain behind or leave
before they did or after they
did. No one ever knew what he
was in town."

What Oswald thought, he said,
in Moscow, was that service
with the occupation forces
in Japan was "imperialist."

watched American technicians show Chinese how to use guns in Taiwan, and that kind of experience for three years gave him the impression "things aren't quite right."

He got back to California in December, 1958, to the Third AIX Wing at El Toro. There he applied for a discharge for hardship reasons to support his mother. On Sept. 11, 1959, he

was put on inactive reserve status.

Government records indicate he was issued a passport in Los Angeles one day earlier. He told his sister-in-law, Mrs. Robert L. Oswald, on a visit to Fort Worth, that he "wanted to travel a lot" and he talked "about going to Cuba."

Mack Osborn, a real estate dealer in Lubbock, Tex., said yesterday, however, that Oswald, who had shared a double bunk with him for about six months at El Toro, had "spent most of his spare time studying Russian."

Sought Soviet Citizenship

By Oct. 13, he turned up in Moscow. His occupation was listed as shipping export agent. On Oct. 31, he appeared at the United States Embassy. He said he had applied for Soviet citizenship.

"I have made up my mind. I'm through," he said.

He told Miss Mosby: "I've been waiting to do it for two years, saving my money, just waiting until I got out of the Marine Corps, like waiting to get out of prison. For two years I've had it in my mind not to form any attachments because I knew I was going away."

"My mother doesn't know. She's rather old. I couldn't expect her to understand."

"Capitalism has passed its peak," he said. "Capitalism will disappear as feudalism disappeared."

He said the United States was a place of hatred. He was against racial segregation.

"I've seen poor niggers, being a Southern boy," Miss Mosby quoted him as having said, "and that was a lesson. People hate because they're told to hate, like school kids. It's the fashion to hate people in the United States."

His mother said she had tried to call him in Moscow. The telephone clicked, she said; he hung up on her. On Nov. 2, he wrote out an affidavit in Moscow:

"I affirm that my allegiance is to the Soviet Socialist Republic."

But on Nov. 14, he said that

Soviet officials had refused to grant him Soviet citizenship. They told him he could remain as an alien resident, he said.

He wound up in Minsk as a factory worker.

Later he said he had tried for a Soviet exit visa as early as July 20, 1960. The United States Embassy got word of his desire to return home in February, 1961.

By May, 1961, he was reporting that he had married a Russian woman, Marina Nicholaeva, a pharmacist in Minsk, and that she would need a visa to accompany him home.

Appealed to Senator

By January, 1962, Oswald had the idea of appealing to Senator John G. Tower, a Texas Republican, who was a stranger to him. His handwritten letter said:

"I beseech you, Senator Tower, to rise the question of holding by the Soviet Union of a citizen of the United States, against his will and expressed desires."

The Senator referred the letter to the State Department. The department reported that Oswald had a mother living in Vernon, Tex., and a pregnant Soviet wife, and was unable to pay for his return here.

On May 24, 1962, the United States Embassy in Moscow, on instructions from the State Department, renewed Oswald's old passport, and amended it to include a daughter, June Lee, born Feb. 15, 1962. This was based on a decision that he had not expatriated himself.

The passport was made valid only for return to the United States. At the same time, his wife was granted a visa. The family needed Soviet exit permits.

The embassy lent the family \$435.71 for travel expenses, pre-

sumably based on a claim of expatriation.

On June 13, 1962, Oswald, his wife and child arrived in New York. Between October and last January, the travel loan was repaid.

In Washington, the Marine Corps indicated it had received a request from Oswald while he was in the Soviet Union July 20, 1960, to be discharged so that he could accept Soviet citizenship. A board of officers was convened at the Naval Air Station, Glenview, Ill., and recommended that he be separated as undesirable.

Wrote to Connally

He was given an undesirable discharge as of Sept. 13, 1960. In January of last year, this came to Oswald's notice, and he wrote a bitter letter from Minsk to John B. Connally Jr., then Secretary of the Navy and now Governor of Texas.

He contended he had been in the Soviet Union with "the full sanction of the United States Embassy, Moscow," and asked that the Navy Department "take the necessary steps to repair the damage done to me and my family."

He wrote that he was returning home, and "I shall employ all means to right this gross mistake or injustice to a certified (sic) U.S. citizen and ex-serviceman."

Last May 9 the Oswald family — his wife expecting a second child — moved into a one-bedroom home at 4907 Magazine Street in New Orleans. Mrs. Lana Garner, the landlady, said:

"He wouldn't speak to anyone. When he passed me or my husband in the yard he wouldn't say anything. He just kept walking with his head down."

Twice, she said, he plastered the porch with propaganda in favor of Premier Fidel Castro's

regime in Cuba. She told him to remove the signs. He told her he was a Russian, she said.

"We always had to go and ask him for the rent," Mrs. Garner said. "When he left, he owed me for about 15 days."

She said Oswald had told her he was sending his wife back to Texas to have her baby. He sneaked out, she said, and left the apartment dirty.

Incredible to Him

Her husband, Jesse James Garner, a taxi driver, found it hard to believe Oswald could have shot President Kennedy.

"He was too quiet, too reserved," Mr. Garner said. "He certainly had the intelligence, and he looked like he could be efficient at doing almost anything."

A. P. Eames 3d, a field clerk with the United States Engineers, was a next-door neighbor at 4903 Magazine Street. He said Oswald was frequently bringing home armfuls of books from the public library.

He called Oswald "a very arrogant person in that he would not greet you or make any attempt to be congenial or neighborly."

Mr. Eames's wife, Doris, said: "His little Russian wife was just the opposite. She couldn't speak English, but she seemed very friendly, except when he was around. He didn't seem to want her to mix with anyone."

"She always smiled. She learned to say hello, although she never spoke English. She would try to answer back when someone greeted her. I don't believe he ever took her anywhere."

"The only place we ever saw them go together was the corner grocery store. Whenever they spoke, he and his wife always spoke in a foreign language."

One man said Oswald used

to give cosmetics for his wife in a drugstore, and then send her with money to buy them after the deal had been arranged. There were some complaints that he used to dump trash in everyone's garbage can along Magazine Street.

Last June 24, Oswald applied for a new passport. He said he was a photographer, and he wanted to take a trip abroad for three months to a year, and would leave between October and December of this year.

Gave His Itinerary

He listed as his proposed itinerary England, France, Germany, the Soviet Union, Finland, Italy and Poland.

The passport was issued on June 25, which indicated he must have replied negatively to questions as to whether he had for 12 months been a member of a Communist organization or ever sought foreign nationality.

Offered to Fight Castro

In July, he introduced himself to Carlos Bringuiet, New Orleans delegate of the anti-Castro Cuban Student Directorate, as a man who wanted to fight Communism and who could help train exiles for an invasion effort. Mr. Bringuiet was suspicious, and put Oswald off.

Some days later, Mr. Bringuiet found Oswald distributing literature with pro-Castro pickets on Canal Street. The Cuban upbraided him and proposed to punch him; Oswald spread his arms as a ready example of nonviolent protest.

They all wound up in court; Oswald paid a \$10 fine for disturbing the peace.

On Aug. 21, during an interview on radio station WSDU, he said he was secretary of the New Orleans chapter of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee, and a Marxist but not Communist.

Vincent Theodore Lee, the Fair Play group's national director, said that the organization sympathetic to the Castro regime had never had a

chapter in Louisiana or Texas, and had never had Oswald as an official or representative.

Oswald might have obtained Fair Play literature, Mr. Lee said.

The Oswald family slipped away from the home they had rented from Mrs. Garner just about that time.

Last Sept. 23, he sent his wife and child from New Orleans to Irving, Tex., to live with Mrs. Michael R. Paine, a Quaker friend they had met in Dallas in February. A month ago, their second child, Audrey Marina Rachel, was born there.

A neighbor of Mrs. Paine's, Mrs. William Randall, was having coffee one day with Mrs. Paine and Mrs. Oswald, and reported there was a job open in the Texas School Book Depository Building in Dallas.

Seemed Glad to Work

Mrs. Paine said yesterday that Oswald had followed up the tip, seemed very happy to get the job, and spoke hopefully of being able to rent an apartment next year with his \$50-a-week earnings. Meanwhile, he stayed at a rooming house in Dallas and visited his family weekends.

He got into long discussions with Mr. Paine, a Bell Helicopter engineer, when Mr. Paine also came to visit. Mr. Paine said "Marxism was a religion" with Oswald.

"He wanted to change the free-enterprise system, while at the same time saying he returned to the United States from Russia because he liked the freedom people had in this country," Mr. Paine said.

"Oswald refused to eschew violence as a method for achieving desired ends."

Last Friday, a rifle bullet from the schoolbook warehouse building killed President Kennedy. Another wounded former Governor Connally, who was riding in a car with the President.