

# Description of Oswald: A Lonely, Bitter Loser

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In early 1963, shortly after she moved from the Soviet Union to the United States, Marina Oswald made this assessment in her broken English of her American husband, Lee Harvey Oswald: "Me like America. Lee no like Russia. Lee no like America. Lee like the moon."

That was an apt if inadvertent metaphor. The moon, a cold, lifeless, pockmarked planetary hanger-on, is an apt simile for Oswald, the assassin of President John F. Kennedy, if the description of him by his former associates in the FBI raw files is any indication.

Their testimony is in 40,000 pages of documents made public yesterday. They reinforce the image of Oswald as a lonely, bitter, scruffy loser who lived in poverty on the fringe of society while nurturing dreams of fame, or notoriety, and intellectual achievement.

Oswald realized his dream of notoriety by assassinating Kennedy. He is described by his acquaintances (he apparently had few if any friends) as a man who beat, slapped and otherwise mistreated his wife and whose development as a social misfit is steadily chronicled, beginning with his being repeatedly sent to the principal's office in grade school for arguing with his teachers over the concept of political democracy.

**HIS WIFE AND** acquaintances indicated Oswald had early dreams of violence and previous attempts at assassination. His wife, Marina, is described in the FBI files as telling how her "crazy" husband tried to assassinate Maj. Gen. Edwin Walker, a noted right-wing political leader, in Dallas about eight months before the Kennedy assassination.

Oswald, according to the FBI report, escaped from the Walker shooting scene on foot and by bus, as he did after the Kennedy assassination, after reportedly deciding that this would allow him to outwit police in patrol cars.

The few related black points in Os-

wald's life show up early. A cousin describes him as "outgoing as a child, but he built up strong beliefs against everything."

From there it all runs downhill in the FBI files. Oswald attended several schools as his mother moved from New Orleans to Texas. While in the third to sixth grades in the Arlington Heights Elementary School he was described by a classmate as one who "laughed a lot, but was laughed at by all the others."

It was at Arlington Heights in the late 1940s that Oswald was sent to the principal by his social studies teacher because of his defiant rejections of the theory of political democracy.

He dropped out of high school in 1956 to enlist in the Marine Corps.

In the Marine Corps he was also known as a "loner." He split from a group of Marines who were being transferred from the Naval Air Station in Jacksonville, Fla., to a Marine air base in Japan and took liberty by himself in New Orleans.

On the troop ship to Japan he read Walt Whitman's "Leaves of Grass" and "The Age of Reason," along with playing some low stake poker.

He told one service acquaintance that the Marine Corps "teaches a person only how to kill, and you can become a good gangster later on in life."

In Japan, his Marine Corps acquaintances said, he had a girlfriend who was probably a Japanese prostitute, and there are stories that he was court martialed for varying offenses such as hitting a non-commissioned officer, hitting a fellow Marine with a bottle and fighting a brig guard.

By all accounts he resented Marine Corps discipline, was irritated by orders from superiors and sneered at the Marine Corps tradition of a esprit de corps.

Oswald was a radar technician who threatened to give U.S. radar "secrets" to the Russians when he went to Russia after his discharge. While in the Marine Corps, his fellow



Lee Harvey Oswald and Jack Ruby: Their lives detailed amid FBI files.

—Associated Press



—Associated Press

Rich investigative detail found in FBI packets released yesterday.

Marines told the FBI, he had undergone psychiatric examination in Japan and that he had tried to shoot himself in the leg with a .22 caliber rifle, which they interpreted as an attempt to get an early discharge.

There is little known about Oswald's three years in Russia during which he met and married Marina while he was working in a factory in Minsk. According to her testimony and that of others, he did not like Russia.

**HE COMPLAINED** that Russians were "repressed" by their political governors and described his life in the Russian factory as one of long hours, low pay and no time off.

He complained bitterly that the Russian government delayed his re-

turn to the United States with his new wife. When he returned to America, however, life did not improve.

In October 1962 he went to work for a company in Dallas that did photographic work and provided graphic supplies for printers and graphic arts companies.

He lasted six months as a trainee whose job was to make photographic enlargements and reductions, but was fired because his work never improved.

**OSWALD'S NEIGHBORS** described him as a man who frequently slapped and beat his wife and who publicly denounced her as being dirty and lazy. He was generally unfriendly to neighbors and often quarreled loudly with his wife.