

LIKE RAT CAUGHT IN MAZE

3/27/67

Last Orleans Summer Frustrating for Oswald

With the developing investigation of the Kennedy assassination by District Attorney Jim Garrison, the life and activities of Lee Harvey Oswald in New Orleans have taken on new significance. While the story of Oswald's stay here has been told before, The States-Item felt its readers would find renewed interest in the facts surrounding his time in the city. This is the first of five articles on Oswald in New Orleans taken from information contained in The Warren Report.

By NEIL SANDERS

Lee Harvey Oswald spent the last summer of his life in New Orleans, the city of his birth.

It was a summer filled with frustration and unhappiness for the accused assassin of President John F. Kennedy. He was like a rat caught in a maze from which there was no hope of escape.

His marriage, never very stable, was on the verge of breaking up.

His wife was pregnant with their second child and Oswald at first had no job.

He was bitterly disillusioned with the governments of both Russia and the United States.

His efforts to attract support for the self-conceived Fair Play for Cuba Committee had failed dismally.

The Marine Corps had refused to retract the dishonorable discharge he received in 1962.

Little wonder, then, that his wife, Marina, was to later tell the Warren Commission that Oswald became very depressed in New Orleans and that she once found him alone in the dark crying.

THOUGH IT GREW PROGRESSIVELY DARKER, the outlook during the first part of Oswald's five-month stay here seemed almost bright.

It was a warm spring day in late April, 1963, when Oswald returned to the city where he was born and had attended Beauregard and Warren Easton schools.

He came here by bus, leaving his Russian wife and 14-month-old daughter with a friend, Mrs. Ruth Paine, in Irving, Tex.

From the bus station, he dialed his mother's sister, Mrs. Lillian Murret, and asked if he could stay with her until he found a job. The call took Mrs. Murret by surprise. She didn't know her nephew had returned from a three-year stay in Russia.

Mrs. Murret agreed to put up Oswald at her home on French st., a tree-lined, upper middle-class area near City Park.

The next day Oswald began looking for a job. Mrs. Murret told the Warren Commission he would spend the day job-hunting, return to her home for supper, watch television,

and go to bed.

DURING HIS FIRST FEW DAYS HERE, Oswald showed

interest in finding out what had happened to relatives of his father, who died two months before Lee Harvey was born.

"He visited the cemetery where his father was buried and called all the Oswalds in the telephone book," the Warren Report states. "By this method he located one relative, Mrs. Hazel Oswald of Metairie, the widow of William Stout Oswald, his father's brother."

Lee visited Mrs. Oswald and chatted at length with her. She gave him a picture of his father and told him the rest of the family was dead.

Oswald began work May 10 as an oiler at William B. Reily Co., a coffee firm at 640 Magazine. Salary: \$1.50 an hour.

He was elated to find work. ". . . He came home waving the newspaper and he grabbed me around the neck, and he even kissed me, and he said, 'I got it; I got it,'" Mrs. Murret recalled.

Even so, Oswald apparently felt the job was beneath him. He later told his wife and Mrs. Paine that he was working in commercial photography.

Also employed by the coffee firm at that time was Dante Marachini, one of the men subpoenaed by District Attorney Jim Garrison in his new probe of the Kennedy assassination. Nothing can be found in the Warren Report to indicate Marachini knew Oswald. He has refused to talk to newsmen.

(Continued tomorrow.)