'He looked like he was just lost'

(OSWALD CONTINUED)

...assassination, but the substance of it is as follows:

It was apparent that Oswald was an emotionally disturbed, mentally constructed youngster who tended to isolate himself from contacts with others, was suspicious and defiant in his attitude toward authority, and overly sensitive and vigilant in his relationships with his peers. He saw himself as being singled out for rejection and frustration, Dr. Hartogs said, but did not seem to have developed the courage to act upon his hostility in an aggressive or destructive fashion. He was suspected of having participated in sexual identity and his future role as a male. He was generally considered a failure and a child who had given up hope of making himself unimportant. His contact with others was definitely a child who had given up hope of being understood by anyone about his mother. He was definitely a child who had given up hope of being understood by anyone about his mother. He was definitely a child who had given up hope of being understood by anyone about his mother.

An awareness that only a limited amount of affection was available, combined with a feeling of being pushed to the side, led him to seek an outlet for his hostility, and apparently began to read avidly at New Orleans libraries. His mother said he was bored and restless in school. He used to come home and say, 'I already know all the stuff they're teaching. Why bother with that?'

In 1954, Lee and his mother were back in New Orleans, and Lee entered in the eighth grade at Beau-regard Junior High School. Shortly before he graduated from Beau-regard in 1955, Lee was asked to fill out a personal history sheet. On the form, the school was told he had two brothers but did not name them. He identified his religious affiliation as Lutheran, but did not list a church. His hobbies were reading and outdoor sports, especially football. He wrote that after school he wanted to either join the military service or become a draftsman. Of his school subjects he listed English as the best, art the least. When asked to list two personal friends, Oswald wrote two names, then erased them. They are not legible on the sheet.

His grades at Beau-regard were generally below average, but his attendance was good. His record cards show he was excused only seven days of school during the 1954-55 academic year.

But Lee was having more trouble getting along with his classmates. 'He fought with a lot of guys,' recalled one. 'I don't remember him fighting with anybody.'

Edward Voebel is one Beau-regard schoolmate who remembers Oswald, sympathetically, as a loner—a word used increasingly by persons who know him from the age of 13 on. "One day he showed me a toy pistol," Voebel said, "and I asked me if it looked real. I told him it didn't. Then some time later, he said he knew where he could get a real pistol, but would have to steal it from a pawn shop. I talked him out of it."

Lee did well on the achievement tests he took when entering Warren Easton High School in the fall of 1955, when he was almost 16. He scored an 88 in reading and an 85 in vocabulary. SS was regarded as average. In English, mathematics and science his scores were lower.

He stayed in high school less than a month. On Oct. 7, 1955, his mother wrote a letter to the school, saying that her son would have to withdraw because they were moving to San Diego. This was a means to allow Lee to try to enlist in the Marine Corps. Actually, they stayed in New Orleans until late in the summer of 1956. Lee remained out of school during this time, and apparently began to read avidly at New Orleans libraries. His mother said, "He was bored and restless in school. He used to come home and say, 'I already know all the stuff they're teaching. Why bother with that?'"

Then he 'dropped out of the library.' Immediately after his 16th birthday, in October, he tried to enlist in the Marines, but was rejected because of his age. He managed to get several jobs—one as a messenger on the Mississippi River docks, another as a runner for a dental laboratory in New Orleans. In between, jobs he read.

"He brought home books on Marxism and socialism," said his mother. "But I didn't worry. You can't protect children from everything, just try to help them see things in the right way. Besides, if those books are so bad, why are there any where children can get hold of them?"

In August of 1956, Lee and his mother moved to Fort Worth, and he entered Arlington Heights High School. The pattern of disaffection and separation from the other students, which had its beginning in New York, continued.

There was a pregnant reunion with a grammar school acquaintance, Richard Garrett. "He walked up to me in the hall at school," said Garrett. "I remember I had to look down to talk to him, and it seemed strange, because he had been the tallest, the dominant member of our group in grammar school. He looked like he was just lost. He was very different from the way I remembered him. He seemed to have no personality at all. He couldn't express himself well. He just hadn't turned into somebody. He hadn't turned into anybody. I've read where people say he was a loner. Well, he wasn't in the sixth grade but he sure was in high school."

Lee turned out for the 'B' football team, which was composed of boys not good enough for the varsity. After practice the team members were supposed to run a short distance at top speed. Nick Ruggieri, the coach, recalled that one of his assistants told him Lee Oswald had refused to sprint with the other boys. Oswald had said that this was a free country and he didn't have to run if he didn't want to. "I told the boy myself that if he wanted to play he had to finish practice with the sprint, just like the others," says Ruggieri. "He gave me the same answer. I told him to hand in his cleats."

On Oct. 18, 1956, Lee turned 17, old enough to enter the service. He told his mother that he was going to drop out of school and enlist in the Marine Corps. "I just want to do something different," he said. She did not try to talk him out of it. On Oct. 24 he went to Dallas and signed up for three years in the Marines.

He went to San Diego for boot camp and then to Camp Pendleton where he took advanced infantry training. Allen Feldes, also 17 at the time, who shared boot camp and advanced training experience with Oswald, says he tried to understand. "I remember him as quiet, serious and trying to find himself. He's been wrestling and horse around, but he would have his book in the corner..."