

**YOUTH HOUSE
SOCIAL WORKER'S REPORT**

BRONX 5/7/58

Camp No. 26996

Date of Admission 4/16/53

Name OSWALD, LEE

Age 18 Date October 1936

Address 825 East 179th Street, Bronx, N.Y.

Father Lee (Dec)

Social Worker Evelyn Strickman

Mother Margerite

PSYCHIATRIC STUDY

Lee Oswald is a seriously detached, withdrawn youngster of thirteen, admitted to Youth House for the first time on a charge of truancy. There is no previous court record.

Lacetic and taciturn, Lee answered questions, but volunteered almost nothing about himself spontaneously. Despite the fact that he is very hard to read, Lee seems to have some ability to relate which in view of the solitary existence he has been leading is somewhat surprising. There is a rather pleasant, appealing quality about this emotionally starved, affectionless youngster which grows as one speaks to him, and it seems fairly clear that he has detached himself from the world around him because no one in it ever met any of his needs for love.

Lee said he was at Youth House for truancy and that his truancy was caused by his preference for other things, which he considered more important. Questioning as to what these things were elicited the answer "Oh, just things" but it was finally learned that Lee spent all of his time looking at television and reading various magazines. He said his truancy never became serious until he moved in here from Fort Morris about five or six months ago. He never liked school, however, and never had close relationships with other people.

By persistent questioning, the information received from Lee was as follows: his father died before he was born and he doesn't know a thing about him. He has no curiosity about his father, says he never missed having one, and never thought to ask about him. His mother was left with three children, John, 21 in the Coast Guard and stationed in New York for the last two years; Robert, 18, a pilot in the Air Force, Marines and Lee. Lee said his mother supported them by working as an insurance broker and she was on this to all day long. He doesn't remember anyone else taking care of him and he thinks she either left him in the care of his older brothers or vice that he shifted for himself. She would leave early in the morning and come home around seven or eight at night after a hard day's work. Occasionally he went with her, but found her frequent stops to sell insurance boring, while he waited for her in the car.

Lee ate lunch in school and often made his own meals at night. When his mother did come home, he was often dissatisfied with her, and complained to her that she just threw things together. Her answer was that she was too tired after a hard day's work to feel like fussing.

Lee saw little of his brothers, particularly because of the difference in their ages and partially because the older boys were either working or going out with their own friends, so that they didn't want Lee tagging after them. Lee spent very little time with the boys in his neighborhood, and preferring to be alone, when he was in the school would watch television or read magazines.

SIEGEL EXHIBIT No. 1

SOCIAL WORKER'S REPORT

BRONX 5/7/53

Case No.	<u>26996</u>	Date of Admission	<u>4/16/53</u>		
Name	<u>OSWALD, LEE</u>	Age	<u>18</u>	<u>October</u>	<u>1939</u>
			Day	Mo.	Year
Address	<u>825 East 179th Street, Bronx, N.Y.</u>	Father	<u>Lee (Dec)</u>		
Social Worker	<u>Evelyn Strickman</u>	Mother	<u>Margarite</u>		

PSYCHIATRIC STUDY

Lee Oswald is a seriously detached, withdrawn youngster of thirteen, remanded to Youth House for the first time on a charge of truancy. There is no previous court record.

Laconic and taciturn, Lee answered questions, but volunteered almost nothing about himself spontaneously. Despite the fact that he is very hard to reach, Lee seems to have some ability to relate which in view of the solitary existence he has been leading, is somewhat surprising. There is a rather pleasant, appealing quality about this emotionally starved, affectionless youngster which grows as one speaks to him, and it seems fairly clear that he has detached himself from the world around him because no one in it ever met any of his needs for love.

Lee said he was at Youth House for truancy and that his truancy was caused by his preference for other things, which he considered more important. Questioning as to what these things were elicited the answer "Oh, just things" but it was finally learned that Lee spent all of his time looking at television and reading various magazines. He said his truancy never became serious until he moved up here from Fort Worth, Texas, about five or six months ago. He never liked school, however, and never formed close relationships with other people.

By persistent questioning, the information received from Lee was as follows: his father died before he was born and he doesn't know a thing about him. He has no curiosity about his father, says he never missed having one, and never thought to ask about him. His mother was left with three children, John, 21 in the Coast Guard and stationed in New York for the last two years; Robert, 18, a pilot in the Air Force Marines and Lee. Lee said his mother supported them by working as an insurance broker and she was on the go all day long. He doesn't remember anyone else taking care of him and he thinks she either left him in the care of his older brothers or else that he shifted for himself. She would leave early in the morning and come home around seven or eight at night after a hard day's work. Occasionally he went with her, but found her frequent stops to sell insurance boring, while he waited for her in the car.

Lee ate lunch in school and often made his own meals at night. When his mother did make meals, he was often dissatisfied with them, and complained to her that she just threw things together. Her answer was that she was too tired after a hard day's work to feel like fussing.

Lee saw little of his brothers, partially because of the difference in their ages and partially because the older boys were either working or going out with their own friends, so that they didn't want Lee tagging after them. Lee spent very little time with the boys in his neighborhood, and preferring to be alone, when he came in from school would watch television or read magazines. It was

SIEGEL EXHIBIT No. 1--Continued

OSWALD, LEE

-2-

C026996

during this period that he was already experiencing difficulty in school. He said it wasn't because he couldn't do the work, but he never felt like it was important. He learned to read adequately but felt he had trouble in English, grammar and arithmetic. He denied any feelings of inferiority in relation to the other boys in his class.

After Lee's brothers entered the service and John was stationed in England, his mother decided to come here to be near John. They drove up five or six months ago and moved into John's apartment in Manhattan. Questioning revealed that while Lee felt John was glad to see them, his sister-in-law, Marjorie, was unhappy about their coming to the apartment until they could find a place of their own and she made them feel unwelcome. Lee said he slept in the living room during this period although he was not allowed to go into the apartment and he admitted that this made him feel as he always felt in his brothers' - that there was no room for him. His face lost its usual happy expression for a moment when he talked about John's baby, however and he said he was not used to fun playing with it.

Lee's mother finally found an apartment of her own on the Grand Concourse in the Bronx and she also found a job as an assistant manager in a woman's store. This meant that she was away from home all day. Lee made his own arrangements for his time alone because he didn't make friends with the boys in the neighborhood. He drew into a completely solitary and detached existence where he did not want to be and he didn't have to live by any rules or come into contact with people. He stayed in bed until eleven or twelve, got up and made himself something to eat and then he would look at magazines. When they first came to New York, Lee's mother enrolled him in a private Lutheran Academy because he thought he would like this. After two months he didn't find school interesting or important so he started to truant. He was then transferred to a public school in the Bronx at which point he stopped going to school altogether.

When questioned about his mother's reaction to this he said she told him to go to school "but she never did anything about it." When he was asked if he wished that she would do something he nodded and finally emerged with the fact that he just felt his mother "never gave a damn" for him. He always felt like a burden that she had to tolerate, and while she took care of his material needs, he never felt that she was involved with him in any way or cared very much what happened to him. When Lee and his mother are home together, he is not uncomfortable with her, but they never have anything to say to each other. She never punishes him because she is the kind of person who just lets things ride. It was hard for him to say whether she acted the same way towards his brothers, because he never noticed. Although his brothers were not as detached as his mother was, he experienced rejection from them, too, and they always pushed him away when he tried to accompany them. She never met any of his needs. He said he had to be "my own father" because there was never any one there for him. His mother bought him clothes without consulting him (which he didn't mind too much) and gave him an occasional quarter, but she was completely detached from him and they had little communication with each other. He felt that she was very much like him, in a way, because she didn't talk much. She has a few friends who visit occasionally, but she is equally silent with them. Lee feels that his mother has always left him to shift pretty much for himself and showed no concern about his whatsoever.

Lee was able to respond to expressions of understanding for his lonely situation, but he denied that he really felt lonely. Questioning elicited the information that he feels almost as if there is a wall between him and other people through which they cannot reach him, but he prefers this wall to remain intact. He admitted, however, that he was inside of the wall in talking to a social worker was not as painful as he would have anticipated. He was not comforted by this but he was not as disturbed in talking about his feelings as he thought he might be. When

SIEGEL EXHIBIT No. 1—Continued

OSWALD, LEE

during this period that he was already experiencing difficulty in school. He said it wasn't because he couldn't do the work, but he never felt like it or thought it was very important. He learned to read adequately but felt he had trouble in English grammar and arithmetic. He denied any feelings of inferiority in relation to the other boys in his class.

After Lee's brothers entered the service and John was stationed in New York, his mother decided to come here to be near John. They drove up five or six months ago, and moved into John's apartment in Manhattan. Questioning revealed that while Lee felt John was glad to see them, his sister-in-law, Marjorie, was unhappy about their sharing the apartment until they could find a place of their own and she made them feel unwelcome. Lee had to sleep in the living room during this period although there were five rooms in the apartment and he admitted that this made him feel as he always did feel with grownups - that there was no room for him. His face lost its usual impassive expression for a moment when he talked about John's baby, however and he said he had a good deal of fun playing with it.

Lee's mother finally found an apartment of her own on the Grand Concourse in the Bronx and she also found a job as an assistant manager in a woman's clothing shop. This meant that she was away from home all day. Lee made his own meals and spent all his time alone because he didn't make friends with the boys in the neighborhood. He withdrew into a completely solitary and detached existence where he did as he wanted and he didn't have to live by any rules or come into contact with people. He stayed in bed until eleven or twelve, got up and made himself something to eat and then sat and looked at magazines. When they first came to New York, his mother enrolled him in a private Lutheran Academy because he thought he would like this. After two months he didn't find school interesting or important so he started to truant. He was then transferred to a public school in the Bronx at which point he stopped going to school altogether.

When questioned about his mother's reaction to this he said she told him to go to school "but she never did anything about it." When he was asked if he wished that she would do something he nodded and finally emerged with the fact that he just felt his mother "never gave a damn" for him. He always felt like a burden that she had to tolerate, and while she took care of his material needs, he never felt that she was involved with him in any way or cared very much what happened to him. When Lee and his mother are home together, he is not uncomfortable with her, but they never have anything to say to each other. She never punishes him because she is the kind of person who just lets things ride. It was hard for him to say whether she acted the same way towards his brothers, because he never noticed. Although his brothers were not as detached as his mother was, he experienced rejection from them, too, and they always pushed him away when he tried to accompany them. They never met any of his needs. He said he had to be "my own father" because there was never any one there for him. His mother bought his clothes without consulting him (which he didn't mind too much) and gave him an occasional quarter, but she was completely detached from him and they had little communication with each other. He felt that she was very much like him, in a way, because she didn't talk much. She has a few friends who visit occasionally, but she is equally silent with them. Lee feels that his mother has always left him to shift pretty much for himself and showed no concern about him whatsoever.

Lee was able to respond to expressions of understanding for his lonely situation, but he denied that he really felt lonely. Questioning elicited the information that he feels almost as if there is a veil between him and other people through which they cannot reach him, but he prefers this veil to remain intact. He admitted, however, the tearing aside of the veil in talking to a social worker was not as painful as he would have anticipated. He was not comfortable in talking but he was not as disturbed in talking about his feelings as he thought he might be. When

This was used as an opportunity to inquire into his fantasy life, he responded with a routine that "this is my own business". He seemed to answer questions if he wanted to, but otherwise he would not. He was not particularly glib, but he was not being hostile, and sometimes he was smiling and talking to him and acknowledging fantasies about being powerful, and sometimes he was talking to him and acknowledging fantasies about being powerful. Some of these fantasies involved his mother, incidentally. He also acknowledged fantasizing but refused to talk about the details other than to admit that they sometimes involved violence, but he insisted that they were pleasant. Lee's developmental history was negative about few, a mastoid operation and a tonsillectomy when he was about seven. Somewhere that the operations frightened him, but nothing else about them.

Talk about future planning brought the fact that Lee wanted to return home, and his assurance that he would find a way if he were placed in a boarding school. Being away from home was a fear of his from the privacy to him, and he found it disturbing living with other boys, having to take showers with them and never being alone. He was easy to camp several times during his life and he enjoyed it, but it was very different than his present experiences. He was willing to acknowledge that home offered him very little but he said he wanted it this way. If he could have his own way, he would like to be on his own and join the Gervies. While he feels that living that close to other people and following a routine would be distasteful he would "steel" himself to do it. Since he rejected placement, the possibility of a return home with caseworker help was broached. Lee finally decided that although he didn't really want help, and would prefer to remain as solitary as he has always been if it came to a choice between placement and going to a caseworker, he would choose the latter. He said, too, that if it were a choice between placement and going back to school, he would make an effort to return to school and go regularly.

Observation of Lee's relationship with other boys during his stay at Youth House showed that he related himself completely and remained aloof to friendship by others. Although he reacted favorably to supervision and did whatever was asked of him without comment when on his floor he sat by himself and read. At 6:15 every evening he asked to be excused so that he could go to bed. The other boys appeared to respect his inclination and didn't force themselves on him. He did not encourage conversation with anyone, and when asked questions was very terse in his replies. He was very neat and clean and always finished his work before going out to the floor.

In the recreation area he was usually quiet and withdrawn sitting by himself. If he did become involved in any minor altercations he was very hostile and belligerent and somewhat defiant or supervisory. He seemed to be respected by group members who left him alone.

This pattern of behavior was also noted in school, where he was quiet, cooperative and respectful of authority but avoided contact with members of his group. He seemed timid and fearful of physical contact.

There was some very minimal movement in his relationship with his social worker, although it was as small as to be almost negligible. Ordinarily when approached he remained passive but when he was shown some special attention and concern when he had an attitude, he responded somewhat. He never sought his caseworker out, and asked for nothing, nor did he volunteer anything further about himself.

Miss Smith, Lee's mother was seen for an interview at Youth House. She is a smartly dressed, middle-aged woman, somewhat overbearing and alert and superficially affable. She was somewhat defensive, rigid, self-involved person who was not very open to people.

SIEGEL EXHIBIT No. 1—Continued

this was used as an opportunity to inquire into his fantasy life, he responded with a reminder that "this is my own business". He agreed to answer questions if he wanted to, rejecting those which upset him and acknowledged fantasies about being powerful, and sometimes hurting or killing people, but refused to elaborate on this. None of these fantasies involved his mother, incidentally. He also acknowledged dreaming but refused to talk about the dreams other than to admit that they sometimes contained violence, but he insisted that they were pleasant. Lee's developmental history was negative except for a mastoid operation and a tonsillectomy when he was about seven. He remembers that the operations frightened him, but nothing else about them.

Talk about future planning produced the fact that Lee wanted to return home, and his assurance that he would run away if he were placed in a boarding school. Being away from home means a loss of his freedom and privacy to him, and he finds it disturbing living with other boys, having to take showers with them and never being alone. He was away to camp several times during his life and he enjoyed it, but it was very different than his present experiences. He was willing to acknowledge that home offered him very little but he said he wanted it this way. If he could have his own way, he would like to be on his own and join the Service. While he feels that living that close to other people and following a routine would be distasteful he would "steel" himself to do it. Since he rejected placement, the possibility of a return home with casework help was broached. Lee finally decided that although he didn't really want help, and would prefer to remain as solitary as he has always chose the latter. He said, too, that if it were a choice between placement and going back to school, he would make an effort to return to school and go regularly.

Observation of Lee's relationship with other boys during his stay at Youth House showed that he detached himself completely, and repulsed any efforts at friendship by others. Although he reacted favorably to supervision and did whatever was asked of him without comment when on his floor he sat by himself and read. At 8:15 every evening he asked to be excused so that he could go to bed. The other boys appeared to respect his seclusion and didn't force themselves on him. He did not encourage conversation with anyone, and when asked questions was very terse in his replies. He was very neat and clean and always finished his work before going out to the floor.

In the recreation area he was usually quiet and withdrawn sitting by himself. If he did become involved in any minor altercation he was very hostile and belligerent and somewhat defiant of supervision. He seemed to be respected by group members who left him alone.

This pattern of behavior was also noted in school, where he was quiet, cooperative and respectful of authority but avoided contact with members of his group. He seemed timid and fearful of physical contact.

There was some very minimal movement in his relationship with his social worker, although it was so small as to be almost not noticeable. Ordinarily when approached he remained polite but uncommunicative but when he was shown some special attention and concern when he had an earache, he responded somewhat. He never sought his caseworker out, and asked for nothing, nor did he volunteer anything further about himself.

Mrs. Oswald, Lee's mother was seen for an interview at Youth House. She is a smartly dressed, gray haired woman, very self-possessed and alert and superficially affable. Essentially, however, she was revealed as a defensive, rigid, self-involved person Illegible in accepting and relating to people.

SIEGEL EXHIBIT No. 1—Continued

One of the first things Mrs. Oswald wanted to know was why Lee was at Youth Homes and she gave no opportunity to explain the purpose of his stay here and instead wanted to know if it was possible to have him removed from the institution. She had not been satisfied with the explanation given by the physician with the mentalist. When she was told that our examination had revealed nothing unusual, she looked at once relieved and disappeared.

Mrs. Oswald gave what she termed her "analysis" of the situation as the more from Port Worth to New York as being the reason for Lee's truancy. She herself was somewhat perturbed by the charges and said she was sorry she knew, since she was finding it difficult to adjust to New York. At Home where she was also a manager in women's shops, she had some contact with women she made it a point never to be very respectful but here she complained of their arrogance. Furthermore, she found living conditions difficult. After her confidence was gained somewhat Mrs. Oswald said that she did not live too close to be near John, because Lee was left so much alone after he left the service. Her eyes filled with tears as she said there had been no answer to her letters and telephone calls with John. She said she had only to ride out on arrival that her daughter-in-law was not at all. Her daughter-in-law is only 17 and went out of her way to let Mrs. Oswald know she could not live with them permanently. Mrs. Oswald said she had had no such intention, although she did expect her daughter-in-law to put her up until she could find an apartment and a job. She was so uncomfortable there, however, that she had Lee and moved into a very inadequate basement apartment, where Lee seemed to become very depressed. As soon as she could she found an apartment in the Bronx and he seemed to perk up considerably.

According to Mrs. Oswald, she never had any difficulty with Lee in Fort Worth and she disclosed any knowledge of his haunting there. She said he had always been a very quiet boy, as was John and she felt they were like her, while Robert was like their father. Even when Lee was little, he never mixed freely with other children and she wanted it this way because she had always been a working woman who didn't want to have to worry about his wandering off or associating with other children. She instructed him to stay in the yard and he always did so. If other boys came to play with him that was all right, although when other boys did approach him to play, he usually preferred to be by himself. She thought this was in his nature and that one couldn't change a person's nature. She didn't see anything strange about his seclusiveness and said she was not a gregarious person herself and she had never felt the need to make friends.

Questioning revealed that Mrs. Oswald had lost her husband when she was seven months pregnant with Lee. He died suddenly one morning of a heart attack and in a burst of confidence she confided that since then, she has not spoken to his family. He died at 6 A.M. and she wanted him buried the same day because her thought was for her father and the child she was carrying and she didn't think she could do her husband any good by an elaborate funeral or a wake. His family was horrified and said they never saw anything as cold as this. They have avoided her since and she had to rely on neighbor's help when Lee was born. She justified herself at great length as not cold but "sensible."

When it was offered that it must have been difficult for her to be both parents as well as the breadwinner, proudly she said she had never found it so. She felt she was a very independent, self-reliant person, who never needed help from anyone, and who pulled herself up by her own bootstraps. Her mother died when she was only two, and her father raised six children with the help of housekeepers in a very poor section of New Orleans of mixed racial groups. She always had "sign-faustin" ideas and managed to make something of herself.

One of the first things Mrs. Oswald demanded to know was why Lee was at Youth House but she gave no opportunity to explain the purpose of his stay here and instead wanted to know if he had received a complete physical examination. She had not been satisfied with a recent examination particularly with the genitalia. When she was told that our examination had reveals nothing unusual, she looked at once relieved and disappointed.

Mrs. Oswald gave what she termed her "analysis" of the situation as the move from Fort Worth to New York as being the reason for Lee's truancy. She herself had been very discomfited by the change, and said she was sorry she came, since she is finding it difficult to adjust to New York. At home where she was also a manager in women's shops, she had found her "help" with whom she made it a point never to mix, very respectful but here she complained of their arrogance. Furthermore, she found living conditions difficult. After her confidence was gained somewhat Mrs. Oswald said that she had come from Fort Worth to be near John, because Lee was left so much alone after Robert joined the Service. Her eyes filled with tears as she said there had been an exchange of letters and telephone calls with John anxious for her to come, only to find out on arrival that her daughter-in-law was extremely cold. The daughter-in-law is only 17 and went out of her way to let Mrs. Oswald know she could not stay with them permanently. Mrs. Oswald said she had had no such intention, although she did expect her daughter-in-law to put her up until she could find an apartment and a job. She was so uncomfortable there, however, that she took Lee and moved into a very inadequate basement apartment, where Lee seemed to become very depressed. As soon as she could she found an apartment in the Bronx and he seemed to perk up considerably.

According to Mrs. Oswald, she never had any difficulty with Lee in Fort Worth and she disclaimed any knowledge of his truancy there. She said he had always been a very quiet boy, as was John and she felt they were like her, while Robert was like their father. Even when Lee was little, he never mixed freely with other children and she wanted it this way because she had always been a working woman who didn't want to have to worry about his wandering off or associating with other children. She instructed him to stay in the yard and he always did so. If other boys came to play with him that was all right, although when other boys did approach him to play, he usually preferred to be by himself. She thought this was in his nature and that one couldn't change a person's nature. She didn't see anything strange about his seclusiveness and said she was not a gregarious person herself and she had never felt the need to make friends.

Questioning revealed that Mrs. Oswald had lost her husband when she was seven months pregnant with Lee. He died suddenly one morning of a heart attack and in a burst of confidence she confided that since then, she has not spoken to his family. He died at 6 A.M. and she wanted him buried the same day because her thought was for herself and the child she was carrying and she didn't think she could do her husband any good by an elaborate funeral or a wake. His family was horrified and said they never saw anything as cold as this. They have avoided her since and she had to rely on neighbor's help when Lee was born. She justified herself at great length as not cold but "sensible."

When it was offered that it must have been difficult for her to be both parents as well as the breadwinner, proudly she said she had never found it so. She felt she was a very independent, self-reliant person, who never needed help from anyone, and who pulled herself up by her own bootstraps. Her mother died when she was only two, and her father raised six children with the help of housekeepers in a very poor section of New Orleans of mixed racial groups. She always had "high-falutin" ideas and managed to make something of herself.

CHAS. L. LEE

0526996

After her husband died, Mrs. Oswald stayed at home for two years, taking care of the children and living on the insurance her husband left when this ran out, then placed the two older boys in a Lutheran Home and moved in with her sister who took care of Lee while she worked. At one point, Mrs. Oswald moved out and took a furnished room because she felt she had to have a free mind to work, and couldn't be bothered with a child. When her sister began to complain, however, since she had a houseful of children of her own, Mrs. Oswald placed Lee in the Lutheran Home for three or four months too and the brought all the children home again.

after she reconstituted the family she left the boys pretty much to their own devices since she was working all kinds of hours and did not go home until late at night. All the boys were extremely quiet, rather withdrawn children who made little demand on her and played by themselves. Of this she was very proud. Lee had a completely uneventful development except for the mastoid operation when he was five, but he was a very stoical child, who never complained of pain. Mrs. Oswald bathed all the children herself until they were 11 or 12, when, she said in an embarrassed manner, they got a little too old for "me to look at".

Her feeling was that New York City laws were in a large measure responsible for Lee's continued truancy and that if they had left things to her to handle, she could have handled him. John also had been a truant and she let him go out to work until he decided that he wanted to go back to school. At first she had not been aware that Lee was truanting, since he dressed and left every morning, but when she found out, she talked to him and made several visits to the school, but got nowhere. She advised him that he could be put away, but Lee didn't believe her. She thought the biggest mistake was the way the Bureau of Attendance approached the boy, and said they were making a "criminal out of him". She wanted to be able to raise her own child the way she saw fit. She agreed that if truancy were carried to a certain extent it did become a problem. She would not agree that Lee's seclusiveness was a problem, although she finally admitted that there was something not quite right about the fact that he was entirely alone. She wouldn't be worried if he saw boys in school during the day and then wanted to be alone, but if he was alone all day and here the night it didn't look so good. She listened attentively to the possible alternatives the cops might offer to solve the problem, but she was angry at the idea of truancy saying that this wasn't a real chance. She also felt that involvement with a Street Worker was sticking to a stranger and she didn't think this was a "real chance" either. She thought that he ought to have a chance to see if he could go to school without any probation officer or social worker to interfere and then, if he proved ineffective for one day, he ought to be put away in a home. Her plan seemed to be to make a decision on her own and not have any intervention from any understanding of her and she didn't seem to see him as a person at all.

[illegible]

After her husband died, Mrs. Oswald stayed at home for two years, taking care of the children and living on the insurance her husband left. When this ran out, she placed the two older boys in a Lutheran Home and moved in with her sister who took care of Lee while she worked. At one point, Mrs. Oswald moved out and took a furnished room because she felt she had to have a free mind to work, and couldn't be bothered with a child. When her sister began to complain, however, since she had a houseful of children of her own, Mrs. Oswald placed Lee in the Lutheran Home for three or four months too and then brought all the children home again.

After she reconstituted the family she left the boys pretty much to their own devices since she was working all kinds of hours and did not get home until late at night. All the boys were extremely quiet, rather withdrawn children who made little demand on her and played by themselves. Of this she was very proud. Lee had a completely uneventful development except for the mastoid operation when he was five, but he was a very stoical child, who never complained of pain. Mrs. Oswald bathed all the children herself until they were 11 or 12, when, she said in an embarrassed manner, they got a little too old for "me to look at".

Her feeling was that New York City laws were in a large measure responsible for Lee's continued truancy and that if they had left things to her to handle, she could have managed him. John also had been a truant and she let him go out to work until he decided that he wanted to go back to school. At first she had not been aware that Lee was truanting, since he dressed and left every morning, but when she found out, she talked to him and made several visits to the school, but got nowhere. She warned him that he could be put away, but Lee didn't believe her. She thought the biggest mistake was the way the Bureau of Attendance approached the boy, and said they were making a "criminal out of him". She wanted to be able to raise her own child the way she saw fit. She agreed that if truancy were carried to a certain extent it could be a problem. She would not agree that Lee's seclusiveness was a problem, although she finally admitted that there was something not quite right about the fact that he was entirely alone. She wouldn't be worried if he saw boys in school during the day and then wanted to be alone, but if he was alone all day and half the night it didn't look so good. She listened attentively to the possible alternatives the court might order to solve the problem, but she was angry at the idea of probation saying that this wasn't a "real chance". She also felt that involvement with a social worker was "talking to a stranger" and she didn't think this was a "real chance" either. She thought that he ought to have a chance to see if he could go to school without any probation officer or social worker to interfere and then, if he played hookey for even one day, he ought to be put away in a home. Her plan seemed to be more of an expression of her need to assert her own volition against authority than any understanding of Lee. She didn't seem to see him as a person at all, but as an extension of herself.

Lee Oswald is a seriously withdrawn, detached and emotionally isolated boy of 13, who is at Youth House for the first time on a charge of truancy. Lee came here from Ft. Worth, Texas with his mother, about six months ago and he has been unable to make an adjustment in New York. The root of his difficulties which produced warning signals before he ever came here, seems to lie in his relationship with his mother. Lee feels that while she always cared for his material needs she was never really involved with him and didn't care very much what happened to him. There was no one in his family who could meet his needs for love and interest since his father died of a heart attack two months before he was born and two older brothers now 21 and 18 were involved with their own friends and activities and repulsed his advances. Lee became a seclusive child who was thrown upon himself and his own resources and he never made friends with other children. His mother who worked and who, when he was an infant, demonstrated her need to shift responsibility for him by leaving him with her

OSGALD, LEE

-6-

026996

sister and then placing him for awhile in a home, appears to be a rigid, self-involved woman with strong ideas and she has little understanding of this boy's belief or her of the protective shell he has drawn around himself in his effort to avoid contact with people which may result in hurt for him. It is possible that her own negative attitude about casework help and probation officers may communicate itself to Lee, interfering with his chances for help. On the other hand there would be little accomplished by placing him in the impersonal setting afforded by an institution without seeing, first, if he can be reached in therapy. Despite his withdrawal, he gives the impression that he is not so difficult to reach as he appears and patient, prolonged effort in a sustained relationship with one therapist might bring results. There are indications that he has suffered serious personal damage but if he can receive help quickly this might be repaired to some extent.

SIEGEL EXHIBIT No. 1—Continued

sister and then placing him for awhile in a Home, appears to be a rigid, self-involved woman with strong ideas and she has little understanding of this boy's behavior nor of the protective shell he has drawn around himself in his effort to avoid contact with people which may result in hurt for him. It is possible that her own negative attitude about casework help and probation officers may communicate itself to Lee, interfering with his chances for help. On the other hand there would be little accomplished by placing him in the impersonal setting afforded by an institution without seeing, first, if he can be reached in therapy. Despite his withdrawal, he gives the impression that he is not so difficult to reach as he appears and patient, prolonged effort in a sustained relationship with one therapist might bring results. There are indications that he has suffered serious personality damage but if he can receive help quickly this might be repaired to some extent.

SIEGEL EXHIBIT No. 1—Continued