
**Draft, Chapter 6:
Military Records: ONI
Section A. 2. c.
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A.2.c. Possible ONI post-defection investigation. Through fortuitous circumstance, the Review Board staff became aware of a Mr. Fred Reeves of California, who was reputed to have been in charge of a post-defection “net damage assessment” of Oswald by ONI shortly after his defection to the USSR. Mr. Reeves was contacted, interviewed twice by telephone, and then flown to Washington, and interviewed in person by the ARRB staff. [The in-person, unsworn interview was tape-recorded, and the three written interview reports are dated August 5, August 13, and September 16, 1997, respectively.] Summarizing, Mr. Reeves was a Navy civilian Intelligence Operations Specialist with the 11th Naval District (San Diego) District Intelligence Office in 1959. He told the Review Board staff that about a week or so after Oswald defected, two officers from ONI in Washington, one of them Rufus Taylor (who was Director of Naval Intelligence in 1964), called him and asked him to conduct a background investigation at El Toro MCAS, Oswald’s last duty station prior to his discharge from the Marine Corps. Mr. Reeves said that he went to El Toro, copied Oswald’s enlisted personnel file, obtained the names of many of his associates, and mailed this information to ONI in Washington. He said that the post-defection investigation of Oswald was run by ONI in Washington, directing various agents in the field. Although he did not interview anyone himself, he said that later (circa late 1959 or early 1960) he did see approximately 12-15 “119” reports concerning Oswald (OPNAV Forms 5520-119, ONI’s equivalent of an FBI FD-302 investigative report), cross his desk. He said he was aware of “119” reports from Japan and Texas, and that the primary concern of the reports he read on Oswald were in attempting to ascertain what damage had been done to national security by Oswald’s defection. Mr. Reeves said he had also seen 8 to 10 “119” reports on Oswald after the assassination, but that he was confident he was not confusing the two events in his mind. He

seemed quite credible in his recollection that the two investigations were separate and distinct events. On March 25, 1998, ARRB staff members met with 2 NCIS records management officials, one of whom personally verified that he had searched (with negative results) for DIO records from the San Diego, Dallas, and New Orleans District Intelligence Offices in 1996, including "119" reports from the time period 1959-1964, during an extensive search of record group 181--and that the search included any records that would have been related to Oswald's defection. Thus, while the three Review Board staff members who interviewed Mr. Reeves found his recollections of a "net damage assessment investigation" of Lee Harvey Oswald by ONI following his defection to the Soviet Union to be credible, and even persuasive, the Review Board could locate no documentary evidence to substantiate his claims.
