

June 22, 1998

Chief of Naval Operations (Attn: N09B35)  
901 M Street, S.E.  
Washington Navy Yard  
Washington, D.C. 20374-5071

Re: Requested Search for Administrative Records of the Director, ONI for the Period September, 1959-September, 1964 (Inclusive) in Response to the JFK Records Act

Dear LT Greene:

This letter is a follow up to our telephone conversation of June 11, 1998, in which I requested that the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations conduct a search for administrative files of the Director of the Office of Naval Intelligence for the period September, 1959 through September, 1964 (inclusive).

Recapitulating our discussion of June 11, I am the Chief Analyst for Military Records at the Assassination Records Review Board (ARRB), an independent Federal Agency created by the JFK Records Act of 1992. Since this agency became operational in the fall of 1995, we have been charged with the primary responsibility of defining, locating, and opening assassination records related to the death of President Kennedy, and depositing them in the JFK Collection in the National Archives. A copy of our enabling legislation, the JFK Act, is provided as attachment 1.

The Navy's searches for assassination records appear to be complete, with the exception of this one request. Our primary point of contact with the Navy has been Lt Col M. E. Finnie, USMC (with the Navy's Office of General Counsel), and our primary point of contact with ONI has been LCDR R. D. Bastien, JAGC. LCDR Bastien advised us that ONI does not hold in its record group (RG 289) any files of the Director, ONI for the time period we are interested in. He stated that there may very well be files of the ONI Director in RG 38, and referred us to Mr. Ron Marshall at OPNAV. Mr. Marshall, in turn, referred us to you.

Within the time frame September, 1959, through September, 1964, there are two periods of particular interest for us. The *first period* is September 11, 1959 through December 1960, since accused presidential assassin Lee Harvey Oswald was discharged from the Marine Corps on September 11, 1959, and defected to the USSR late in October of that year--and the CIA did not open its "201" file

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until December 9, 1960. We are searching for any records that would illuminate whether there was, or was not, a “damage control assessment” investigation by ONI (or any other government agency), or any other documentation in the Director’s files relating to the defection of this former Marine radar operator who had tracked U-2 reconnaissance flights in the Far East, and in California. The *second period* we are particularly interested in is the period from November 22, 1963 (the day of the assassination) through the end of September, 1964 (when the Warren Commission concluded its work).

Listed below is an information table indicating our interests, the reasons for that interest, and attachments to this letter that illuminate the reasons for that interest:

Area of Interest (i.e., question) Lead(s)--and Associated Attachment(s)

Did ONI (or anyone else) conduct a post-defection “damage control assessment” of defector Lee Harvey Oswald during the period September, 1959-December, 1960?	A former civilian employee of the San Diego ONI District Office told the ARRB in September 1997 that he was present during a telephone call from Rufus Taylor (“incoming ONI Director”) to the San Diego District Intelligence Office (11th Naval District) at approximately the time of Oswald’s defection, directing the DIO to investigate Oswald (presumably after his defection took place). Mr. Reeves then indicated to us that he personally went to MCAS El Toro, where Oswald had last been stationed, and transferred Oswald’s Enlisted Personnel File, and names of his former associates, to ONI in Washington. Mr Reeves stated that ONI in Washington ran an investigation of Oswald following his defection. <i>See attachment 2.</i>
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How did Rear Admiral Rufus Taylor ascertain that “Lee Harvey Oswald was never utilized as an agent or informant for the Office of Naval Intelligence?” Were there memoranda or reports that allowed the ONI Director to make this sworn declaration with assurance? If so, do such	On approximately September 21, 1964, RADM Rufus Taylor (Director, ONI) executed an affidavit to the Director of DIA stating that accused assassin Lee Harvey Oswald was never an agent or informant for ONI; this was in response to a September 10, 1964 letter from Earl Warren to Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara asking if SECDEF could provide assurances that Oswald had never worked as an informant or agent of a U.S. military intelligence agency, as had the FBI Director, J. Edgar Hoover,
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records still exist? The operative with respect to the FBI. *See attachments*  
time period here is November 3, 4, 5 and 6.  
22, 1963-September 21, 1964.

I hope the above information is helpful to you in understanding the reasons for our request. Any records found that would illuminate these issues, in any way, belong in the JFK Collection in the National Archives, in accordance with the JFK Act.

The time remaining for the Review Board is short, inasmuch as our existence will terminate on September 30, 1998. Therefore, I request your assistance in completing CNO's search for responsive records in RG 38 (or elsewhere, if necessary) no later than 31 July, 1998.

If any records of the ONI Director (such as correspondence, memoranda, or personal notes) are located covering the time period September, 1959, through September, 1964, whether at the Federal Records Center at Suitland, the Naval Historical Center, or the National Archives, a member of our staff will be happy to review them for relevance after appropriate clearances are passed.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at (202) 724-0088 should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Douglas P. Horne  
Chief Analyst for Military Records

CC: Lt Col M. E. Finnie, USMC (Navy OGC)  
LCDR R. D. Bastien, JAGC, USN (ONI)