

Army apparently didn't tell commission of Oswald's alias

Dallas Morning News 3/19/78

By EARL GOLZ

Army intelligence officers in San Antonio knew about one hour after Lee Harvey Oswald was arrested in Dallas on the day of the Kennedy assassination that he had used the alias "A. J. Hidell."

The 112th Intelligence Group at San Antonio, however, apparently turned over no material from its files to the Warren Commission despite requests for all pre-assassination Defense Department records on Oswald.

FBI RECORDS recently declassified state Lt. Col. Robert E. Jones, operations officer for the 112th Group, by 3:15 p.m. on Nov. 22, 1963, had informed the FBI that Oswald used the Hidell alias when he was distributing pro-Cuban literature in New Orleans earlier that year. Oswald, a former Marine, was a proper subject for Navy, but not Army, intelligence files.

"Where Col. Jones got his information, I can't comment," said Col. Roy A. Pate, the Army intelligence officer then in charge in Dallas. "I just don't know. We didn't report anything like that because we didn't have that available."

Jones, who has retired from the Army, could not be located for comment. The 112th Intelligence Group which he headed is now defunct.

A check of Defense Department records last December by the Army Intelligence and Security Command "indicated no record of any Army intelligence investigative files existing" for Oswald or his alias, a command spokesman said.

Dallas Police Lt. Gerald Hill, one of the officers who arrested Oswald in the Texas Theater, said he understood the Texas Department of Public Safety's intelligence unit in Austin "had a file on Oswald" before the assassination.

"And in all probability Army intelligence got their information from DPS who had it probably 10 minutes after we got back here (to the Dallas Police Department) with him," Hill said.

DALLAS POLICE, however, had no way of knowing that Oswald had the Hidell alias

"... in all probability Army intelligence got their information from DPS who had it probably 10 minutes after we got back here with him (Oswald)."

when distributing pro-Castro literature in New Orleans because Oswald refused to acknowledge he used the name during three days of questioning by Dallas police.

A DPS spokesman said his agency's intelligence unit in Austin had a file on Oswald before the assassination with "a considerable number of newspaper clippings . . . But there really wasn't much hard intelligence in there, as I recall."

Hill and other officers arrested Oswald in the movie theater shortly before 2 p.m. and had driven him to the police station downtown by 2:15 p.m. On the way they discovered identification cards in his wallet under his real name and the Hidell alias; Hill said, but they referred to him only as "our suspect" over the police car radio.

After Oswald was brought to the station, police intelligence officer Bill Biggio was told about the two identifying names. Hill said he thinks Biggio gave this information "immediately" to DPS intelligence in Austin.

However, Biggio, who was directing police intelligence communications at the Fair Park office the day of the assassination, said, "We called down to Austin after we got the name Hidell, I believe, and they came back with that information."

Former Dallas police Capt. W. P. Gannaway, who commanded the special service bureau in which Biggio worked, said if Army intelligence in San Antonio or Dallas "had any information pertaining to Oswald, we didn't know about it." Neither did Capt. Jack Revill, in charge of Gannaway's intelligence section, know of any input about Oswald by Army intelligence.

REVILL SAID he gave a ride Nov. 22 to an Army intelligence officer from near the Texas School Book Depository where

Oswald earlier had allegedly shot President Kennedy.

Revill said he couldn't recall whether the officer's name was James W. Powell, identified by the Warren Commission as a member of the Army intelligence reserve. Powell was on the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository when Oswald's rifle was found and later was trapped inside the building when police sealed it off.

Don Stringfellow, a fellow police intelligence officer working with Biggio at the Fair Park office, was named as the source of information in a secret cable the night of Nov. 22 from Army intelligence in Texas to the U.S. Strike Command at MacDill Air Force Base in Florida. The cable said that information "obtained from Oswald revealed that he had defected to Cuba in 1959 and is a card-carrying member of the Communist Party."

THIS CABLE, containing false information, was sent to an Army-Air Force operation set up three years earlier to provide a quick-reacting strike force in case of enemy attack.

Gannaway and Revill said they could not recall Stringfellow giving such specific information to Army intelligence but Gannaway said it was "entirely possible because their agents were in our office nearly every day."

Pate, the Army intelligence commander in Dallas, said his group was getting information soon after the assassination from both the Dallas police and the FBI, but the cable using Stringfellow as a source "did not originate in Dallas because my only reporting channels in the Army were to the 112th in San Antonio."

Army intelligence, however, did not turn over an Oswald file to the Warren Commission and does not now have such a file.