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7-1958

## U.S. Civil Service Commission Report of Investigation

Bern Porter

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## UNITED STATES CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

TWELFTH REGION INVESTIGATIONS DIVISION

## REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

NAME BERNARD HARDEN PORTER Aka: Bern Porter	ADDRESS % CAA, Anchorage, Alaska
DATE OF BIRTH February 14, 1911	PLACE OF BIRTH Houlton, Maine
POSITION Electronic Engineer	AGENCY Department of Commerce (CAA) Washington, D. C.
TYPE OF CASE Limited Suitability	CSC CASE SERIAL NO. 11.58.7913
PLACE(S) OF INVESTIGATION San Diego, California	PLACE(S) OF RECORD SEARCH
DATE(S) OF INVESTIGATION July 24, 25, 1958	NAME OF INVESTIGATOR 

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Information in this report has been obtained under a pledge of confidence. The sources of information must not be disclosed to the person investigated. He may not be confronted with any information in this report in a manner which would reveal or permit him to deduce the source of the information. Exceptions to this rule are (1) information of public record which could be obtained on request by the general public, and (2) information from Federal personnel records which could be obtained on request by the employee.

The report and its contents must be safeguarded in a manner to prohibit its unauthorized disclosure. Authorized access is limited to those persons who by virtue of their official duty require access to the information contained therein.

The testimony of all witnesses is given in substance unless indicated by quotation marks.

## SYNOPSIS OF FACTS

This investigation was based on information that the subject was forced to resign from employment at Convair, San Diego, California. Investigation at San Diego corroborated the above information. Subject was described by one witness as mentally ill and by another as childish.

SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

[REDACTED]

CONVAIR ASTRONAUTICS, A DIVISION OF GENERAL DYNAMICS CORPORATION, Kerny-villa Road, San Diego, California:

The records of Convair Astronautics reflect that Bernard Harden Porter, Social Security Number 083-10-2491, was born February 14, 1911, at Houlton, Maine. His residence address was given as 3300 India Street, San Diego (Airman Hotel). His marital status was shown as married. His application indicated that in case of emergency Mrs. B. H. Porter, wife, 6621 California Street, San Francisco, California, was to be notified.

Mr. Porter was hired May 1, 1956, in Engineering Department 706-0 as an Engineering Writer at \$600 per month. He terminated October 12, 1956, in Engineering Department 706-7 as an Engineering Writer at \$635 per month. The reason for leaving was shown as "quit, personal affair". His previous employment was shown as follows:

November 1945, to April 1956: Bern Porter Books, San Francisco, California, Writer-Publisher, \$7000 - \$9000 per year. Reason for leaving: To extend experience.

November 1940, to August 1945: Manhattan Project (A Bomb), Oakridge, Princeton, Berkeley, Physicist, Writer. End of war. \$350 per month.

November 1935, to November 1940: Acheson Cowids Corporation, Newark, New Jersey. Physicist, Writer. \$175 per month. Drafted to do war research.

The file contained nothing else of a pertinent, significant, discrepant, or derogatory nature. No indication was given as to eligibility for re-hire.

[REDACTED]

Convair Astronautics:

I had professional contact with Bern Porter during the entire period of his employment. He worked for [REDACTED] for about six months as an engineering writer. When he was initially hired in the middle of 1956 he came under [REDACTED] supervision, but only remained under [REDACTED] a short period of time. He was then transferred to another supervisor, [REDACTED], but I continued to have contact with him as we were working

in the same [redacted] just about every day at work. I had no outside or social contact with him. I know nothing about his outside activities or associates. I recall that he was married, but I do not believe that his wife was down here. I believe that she was in San Francisco and did not move down at all.

Security-wise, I would have no reason to feel that Bern Porter would not be a good employee. I would have no reason to question his loyalty to the United States Government. His personal habits, morals, character, and conduct - with a few exceptions - were normal. The exceptions that I refer to are the points that brought about his termination from the company. Porter was not a good employee. He had too many problems. They were not important things, but from the standpoint of supervision, he was a nuisance. I always felt that he was somewhat childish. This, however, did not bring about his actual termination. The facts which led up to his leaving are as follows:

Convair has a policy in regard to private data. By private data I mean Company information that is not classified and therefore does not come under security regulations. This private data regulation would cover such things as public relations, commercial enterprises, and the like. It is the Company policy that no information concerning company activities of an unclassified nature be given out without express permission from the company. Press releases would fall in this category. Porter apparently did not feel that this was very important and on at least one occasion released information to one of the local radio stations without the Company's permission. The information released pertained to a particular achievement by a Convair employee, and the Company had decided that our own employee should be given the information about the matter before it was released to the general public. Pamphlets were prepared for general distribution in the plant. During their preparation, Porter called this friend of his who worked for one of the radio stations and gave out the information. The radio station then released the information to the general public ahead of time, thereby causing wasted effort in the preparation of the Company publication on the matter. When Porter was spoken to about this matter, it did not seem to have any effect upon him. He was told that his conduct was unprofessional and that his resignation was requested. He didn't seem to mind at all and apparently was quite glad to leave his job. I never felt that he was entirely happy here, and I know that he had ties up in the San Francisco area.

Porter's resignation was definitely requested and he was definitely aware that it had been requested. I personally would not rehire him, although I do not feel that I would block his being reemployed in some other department providing that the facts of his termination were known at the time of his reemployment. I have nothing against Porter and would trust him from a security standpoint. I do not feel that I would want to recommend the man for employment, but as I said previously, I would not want to block his employment. I know nothing else of a derogatory or adverse nature

about him. I know of no organizations in which he held membership.

[REDACTED] Convair Astro-nautics:

I did not hire Bernard Porter and did not supervise him [REDACTED]. He was hired to work for [REDACTED], but as it turned out, there was more work for him to do in [REDACTED], so he was assigned to [REDACTED] after he was hired. I would say that he worked in [REDACTED]'s section for possibly a couple of weeks before coming to [REDACTED] remained with [REDACTED] until his termination. His total employment with the company would have been about six months, in the latter part of 1956. He terminated at our request and would have been let go had he not resigned. He was aware of the circumstances and that his resignation was requested. I don't like to put any stumbling blocks in Porter's way, and I don't want to hurt the man. My personal feeling is that he is sick. The man is mentally ill.

My contact with Porter was limited to professional matters and I have no knowledge of his outside activities or associates. I believe that he was married, but I do not think that his wife was here with him in San Diego. He came to San Diego from San Francisco and, as I understand it, he returned to San Francisco after he was terminated. Porter was, in my opinion, a psychotic. He was very ill. As an example of the type of thing that you could expect from him let me cite this instance: He went around here telling everyone that no one would teach him how to fill out a time card. He seemed to have the impression that we were withholding this information from him. He spoke to me about it, and when I volunteered to assist him right then and there, he then told me that he had found out himself. He still insisted that no one would show him how to fill out a time card. Mr. Porter was a college graduate and held a Master of Science Degree. Filling out a time card is a very routine and minor thing and certainly beneath his intellectual level unless there was some mental illness. The reason for his termination was another indication of his mental state. The Company has a requirement that all releases to the press and radio regarding Company affairs go through channels. Porter saw one of the other writers preparing a release to be given to our employees before being released to the general public, and then called someone he knew in one of the local radio stations and gave him the information. The station then gave out the information immediately. It was this incident that led to his termination. He was called in and I was present during his termination interview. He was told why he was being let go and given the option of resigning or being fired. He tendered his resignation and left. He made no excuse for what he had done, and apparently felt no guilt in the matter.

After Porter left, a Master Index being prepared by the Department was missing. I am not inferring that Porter deliberately took this Master

Index, as I do not know that such is the case; however, the index is missing and he was the last one to have it. While here at Convair, he was working on the preparation of a technical dictionary connected with our program. When the compilation was completed a few copies were made and circulated within the department for comment. These comments were made into a master index and were very important to the project. He was given the master index for use in his work in preparing the final dictionary. When Porter left and the master index was missing, it negated almost the entire project and much of the work would of necessity be repeated in order to achieve the desired results.

Insofar as Porter's habits and morals are concerned, I know nothing adverse. I would have no reason to question his loyalty to the United States Government, although I do feel that he certainly displayed no loyalty to the Company. In regard to his honesty, I can only cite his unauthorized release of the information to the radio station and the missing master index. I, personally, feel that his conduct at Convair was due entirely to his mental makeup. I believe he needs help and that he could be made into a very desirable employee. I would not rehire him. I do not have the time to spend on the close supervision that would be required, nor do I have the time and ability to correct his mental quirks. I would have no doubts about Porter from a security standpoint, but I just don't feel that he is the kind of man that I would want. I do not feel qualified to make a statement regarding his suitability for Federal employment, and can only reiterate that I, personally, would not want him back.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Aircraft Apartments, 3300 India Street,  
San Diego, California:

This used to be called the Airmens Hotel. I recall Mr. Porter as a resident here for about six months about a year or two ago. At the time I was not [REDACTED] the apartments, so I do not know the exact dates that he was here, but I would estimate that it was in the latter part of 1956. I was not friendly with Mr. Porter, and really did not know him very well. I knew him by sight and would say hello to him when we passed but that was about it. He lived alone and kept to himself most of the time. I saw no indication of any excessive drinking, immoral conduct, or misbehavior of any sort. I would have no reason to question his loyalty to the United States Government. I know of no organizations in which he held membership. I believe he was employed at Convair. If Mr. Porter should come back, I would [REDACTED] as he seemed to be a normal person and a pretty good tenant. I really don't feel that I know the man well enough to recommend him for important Federal employment, but I would have no other reason for not recommending him.

INVESTIGATOR'S NOTE: Further inquiry failed to locate any other person who had any knowledge of the subject.

[REDACTED]

SAN DIEGO POLICE DEPARTMENT: No Record.

SAN DIEGO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE: No Record.

PROXY CREDIT AGENCY, Spreckles Building: No Record.

[REDACTED]: 7/29/58