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INAME: Milton Zaslow

IPLACE: Center for Cryptologic History Conf Rm., Fanx 3

IVIEWER: C. Baker, G. Vanderpool, T. Johnson

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Johnson We're still on the "B" Group problem. How about the (1-2G)? You could get into a series of crises that were once (1-2G). We certainly would need to talk about the Gulf of Tonkin crisis and your (1-2blkd)..and maybe that should come first..

Zaslow Let's talk about the Gulf of Tonkin. And, here again, Del Lang features. We were watching what was going on in the area. We saw the beginnings of Vietnamese actions. We reported them. And we reported the hostile actions on two occasions..the first incident and the second incident..in both cases, before the event took place. We reported it electrically, and the ships in the Gulf were on electrical distribution. We believe they received a warning before the attack took place. What we did not know, was that it was a Vietnamese reaction to U.S. operations..34A. None of us had been

cleared for 34A, and we did not know that there were actions underway, to which this was a reaction. But it didn't affect the reporting..the reporting went out, and essentially told in advance of the raid that the raid would take place. Now, there have been many arguments since then that there was a spurious raid that never took place. That's not what we felt we saw. And I had the foresight to have Del Lang stop what he was doing after it was over and write an account of what happened in the Gulf of Tonkin incident. So, whatever that says is accurate.

Baker So, from a SIGINT point of view, regardless of the provocation, the attack was real?

Zaslow We thought it was..absolutely. We had no reason to believe it wasn't.

Johnson Did you have to go "downtown" later on and talk about that? Did you have to go down and talk to the Fulbright investigation?

Zaslow No.

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Baker

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Johnson Well, I wanted to talk about the Gulf of Tonkin crisis. This has been a very difficult one for me to write, because..

Zaslow Well, all I would say is, you should have the greatest confidence in writing that because of the paper that Del Lang wrote. He wrote it at the time it occurred, not after it happened. And he knew he was writing for history, and it was based totally on the facts. So, you should be very comfortable with that.

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