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TOP SECRET DINAR [redacted]

P.L. 86-36

18 August 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: JCS Requirement for SIGINT Information Regarding [redacted] SRV Radar Surveillance of U. S. STRIKE Aircraft

1. At approximately 1245 hours, 17 August, Mr. Grant of R205, received a telephone call from Lt. Colonel Sen, DIA, relaying a request by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for a briefing in response to three questions posed by Secretary Vance, regarding SRV radar coverage of U. S. strike aircraft. This information was needed to prepare the Secretary and the Chairman for their appearance before the Senate Armed Services Committee on 18 August. Mr. Grant requested DIA confirm this request in a message and in the interim he would take steps to supply the necessary response.

2. After obtaining ADP approval, Messrs Grant [redacted] immediately departed for the Chairman's office. Preliminary sessions were held with Captain Bernstein, Legal Adviser to the Chairman, and RADM Austin, Director J3. LT. GEN Carroll, Director, DIA was also briefed after the session with General Wheeler (General Wheeler's audience also included Major General Taylor, DIA). In briefing, Mr. [redacted] avoided detail, confining his remarks to the volume of tracking, nature of tracking, times, locations, etc. The Chairman was shown a limited number of overlays illustrating our ability to define and plot such activity. During the brief, General Wheeler made notes which he later discussed with the briefers. He had concluded from the brief that the [redacted] SRV were well aware of our presence considerably prior to the President's announcement; the strike aircraft were tracked well offshore; if the enemy didn't know we were coming in it is probably because they were so confused with all the flights they were observing well before the initial retaliatory flight departed. He stated further that if the question of their detection arose he intended to respond generally along the lines, "What's the problem? - our carriers were within radar range; the only assumption we could make was they would be picked up as soon as they left the deck, and our assumption has been confirmed; they had us covered all over this area (using maps) and had well over 100 tracks, etc." At this point Mr. Grant reminded the Chirman that what we had provided was codeword material and that any further details would also be codeword. The Chairman acknowledged and stated he had discussed this with Secretaries McNamara and Vance, and they were agreed not to provide any details which would risk COMINT. Should the Committee press for where this knowledge came from, they would be told the carriers had ELINT aircraft aloft.

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Declassified and approved for release by NSA on 12-20-2005 pursuant to E.O. 12958, as amended

3. It must be recalled that on 14 August, DIA had levied an EEEC requirement for much of the same information. The briefings given on 17 August were in complete accord with NSA's previous response (N205/271-64, 142249Z) and included very little additional detail. It was obvious during our visit that none of our audience was aware of the earlier request and certainly not of our response.

LOUIS C. GRANT
N205