

Written on 26 April
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Item for DIR/SCA Chiefs Meeting - 14-15 May 1968

PUEBLO Status Report

Since the capture of the USS PUEBLO on 23 January, NSA has been especially watchful for any reflections, or any reactions, from any source, which relate to that incident. There have been many, but the vast majority have appeared in world press media.

Only days after the incident, we had compiled a thorough inventory of the cryptologic documents and equipment which were aboard the vessel. On the basis of that inventory, cognizant elements of the Agency were instructed to prepare Damage Assessment statements, predicated on the assumption of total compromise. This task has been done, and the statements are now being evaluated.

Of course, with a very few specific exceptions, gleaned from published photographs, we are not certain what was captured intact or what was able to be destroyed. We feel that we will not learn more until the De-Briefing Team has a chance to interview the crew members -- particularly those of the SIGINT Detachment. To that end, with the notable collaboration of the Naval Security Group, we have a competent SIGINT and COMSEC De-Briefing Team, ready to proceed on short notice to the locale of the crew's release to U.S. authority.

Our SIGINT analysts have been on the alert for any tightening-up of target country communication procedures, which might be traceable to that country's having learned of our past successes from captured documents. Thus far, of the communication anomalies observed, none are considered traceable to the compromise of PUEBLO documents.

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We are presently reviewing the Operations Plan, developed by CINCPACFLT, for the de-briefing of the PUEBLO crew, and we hope to ensure that our interests and preparations are in consonance with the provisions of that Plan.

We are also in the process of reviewing the requirements for classified reference materials to be held by ship-borne platforms.

To sum up, we are staying on top of developments, but it is obvious to us all that the final chapter has yet to be written; the final assessment has yet to be made. We hope that it will be soon.

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