ISSUE: (U) DCI concurrence is required for VENONA declassification Event.

BACKGROUND: (TSC) You will see the DCI on 5 June and will travel to Europe on 6 June. We expect the DCI to raise options for an event to announce the declassification of the first 49 VENONA messages, involving the Atomic Bomb spies and the Rosenbergs. This background will also be useful to you should Sir John Adye raise the subject during your trip.

DISCUSSION: (TSC) This package will update you on what has been sent to the DCI for review and decision, and

- TAB A is a package couriered to DCI 26 May, with exemplary translations and a schedule for release of the full 2,200 translations.

- TAB B is a package couriered to DCI on 1 June with a draft of the proposed declassified short history of VENONA, and alternatives for a VENONA declassification event at NSA during week of 5 or 12 June. WE NEED A DECISION FROM DCI ON HIS PARTICIPATION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

- TAB C is a synopsis of our contact with the FBI on the release.

- TAB D

RECOMMENDATION: (U) FIRST, that you attempt to have the DCI identify today which of the event options he prefers, and SECOND, that you inform the DCI that we plan to notify the Congressional oversight and appropriations committee leadership prior to the event.
DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF POLICY

6/5/95

To: DIR.

Sir:

Please note this is an improved version of the Venona history found at TAB 3, completed over the weekend.

Dr. Deutch has not yet seen this version which, upon clearance by OGC and DDRK, will go to press. I have provided an extra copy for the DCI.

Yrs.

[Signature]
MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

SUBJECT: Release of Venona Translations - INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

Attached at Tab A is our proposed schedule for releasing the Venona translations, beginning with a group of high interest items: the Rosenberg and Atomic bomb spies messages.

I have enclosed a selection of the Rosenberg/Atomic bomb messages and the ALES translation.

We are sending the first group of messages to the FBI to obtain their approval for release of names of individuals that appear in the text of the translations or in the footnotes. The FBI must review the Venona translations as they may have criminal, counterintelligence or informant relevance. I have talked to the Deputy Director of the FBI who has agreed to assist us in expediting this request. We will make our own review of these names to weigh individual privacy versus historical interest.

Some of the names in these translations might be redacted before public release. We also need to protect cryptanalytic technique, organizational information and possibly some UK data on the translation forms. However, I expect that very little will be deleted. In the samples we have given you - leaving aside for now the matter of names of individuals - we will probably only delete the codeword UMBRA, currently in use, and possibly a few other non-textual technical items still in use.

At Tab B is our date-of-translation notice that will accompany every released set of translations at each milestone. This is exceptionally important for reasons of history and credibility, so important that we expand upon it in the summary unclassified history of Venona that we will be releasing along with the translations.

While I am confident that most of the translations will be released in near complete form, we must do a very careful review, message-by-message and clear all personal names with the FBI.

WILLIAM P. CROWELL
Deputy Director
Lou Benson, M5J, 963-1978s

**SCHEDULE FOR RELEASE OF VENONA TRANSLATIONS**


   Thereafter to be released to public:


4. March 1996: translations of KGB messages on the San Francisco to/from Moscow lanes during 1943-1946 and Mexico City to/from Moscow lanes during 1943-1946. *(400 messages)*

5. July 1996: translations of GRU messages passed on the Washington to/from Moscow lanes during 1943, and small number of translations of miscellaneous other Western Hemisphere KGB, Soviet Foreign Ministry and Soviet Trade messages. *(400 messages)*

6. Date TBD. Release of translations of KGB and GRU traffic on European and Pacific lanes during the 1940s. Will defer to the British on how and when this will be done and who will process and release the translations, but we are pressing them to agree to a comparable schedule as above. *(approx 350 messages)*

**Comments:**

a. More than 2200 translations to be released during events 1. to 6., most of them released by NSA (events 1. to 5.) Exact number uncertain right now because of different accounting systems (a technicality). However, number would significantly increase if British decide to release GRU/COMINTERN/KGB European and Asian agent traffic of the 1930s-1945 period.

b. The NSA schedule depends on FBI ability to OK the releasability of names in the Venona translations. A very big issue.

c. Personal privacy vs. historical interest a many-sided issue.
DATES OF VENONA TRANSLATIONS

NSA is releasing translations of decrypted KGB and GRU messages of the 1940s, the final product of the VENONA program. In each instance the released translation is the last one prepared. Most messages were translated several times, often over a period of many years. This was done because continuing analysis by NSA led to the recovery of more parts of the encrypted messages.

However, the very earliest translations, from the later 1940s and early 1950s often contained almost all the information needed for counterintelligence purposes, allowing the FBI to take action.

For example, a released translation may show a date of 1960, but the message may have been broken in the late 1940s. KGB message covers (e.g. ANTENNA and LIBERAL), and details of espionage work and the related agent networks were decrypted and translated in a number of KGB 1944/45 messages beginning in 1947.
No Code
No Code
No Code
No Code
No Code
No Code
No Code
TO: DCI

SUBJ: Public Release of VENONA Papers

1. Attached for your decision is an outline of alternatives for public release of the VENONA papers. Also attached is a draft of the brief unclassified history of VENONA for release concurrent with the translations.

2. In addition, we are compiling a list of questions we anticipate the press may ask, along with proposed responses. We will forward these to you upon completion.

WILLIAM P. CROWELL

Encl:
    a/s

cc: Director, NSA
SUBJECT: Public Release of VENONA Documents – DECISION NOTE

BACKGROUND: VENONA is the project name for the US/UK effort to exploit KGB messages between Moscow and Western Hemisphere Agents. At the request of the DCI, these documents are being released to the public for the first time. The initial installment of the VENONA documents, (those relating to the KGB’s recruitment and handling of the Atomic Bomb spies), will be ready for release in early June. Jointly with this release, a VENONA display is being prepared at the National Cryptologic Museum (NCM).

DISCUSSION: To commemorate this historical event, NSA plans to host a formal ceremony at the NCM. NSA would like the DCI to be present as the keynote speaker at the NCM when the documents are publicly released and the new display is unveiled. There are several proposals that follow for your review and decision:

FOCUS:
- Law enforcement and intelligence team effort
- Move toward less secrecy
- Value of signals intelligence in Cold War – KGB target
- Historical value of intelligence

SUGGESTED CEREMONY PARTICIPANTS/INVITED GUESTS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Guests</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DCI</td>
<td>Sen. Arlen Specter, Chairman SSCI (R-PA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIRNSA or D/DIRNSA</td>
<td>Sen. Robert Kerrey, Ranking Minority (D–NE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director, FBI</td>
<td>Cong. Larry Combest, Chairman HPSCI (R–TX)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK Ambassador (if closed ceremony)</td>
<td>Cong. Norm Dicks, Ranking Minority (D–WA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. David Kahn, Scholar-in-Residence</td>
<td>Hon. Jamie Gorelick, DAG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. David Hatch, NSA Historian</td>
<td>Dr. Trudy H. Peterson, Acting Archivist, U.S.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OPTIONS FOR ANNOUNCING RELEASE

OPTION 1: Controlled release with separate ceremonies at the NCM

- Ceremony A – D/DIRNSA hosts evening event/reception at the NCM, with invited dignitaries, no media coverage. Ceremony as follows:
  
  Welcome – DIRNSA or D/DIRNSA  
  Keynote – DCI  
  Importance of Intelligence to Law Enforcement – DIR FBI  
  Openness in Government – Sen. Moynihan  
  Historical Importance of VENONA – David Kahn  
  Turnover of Documents – D/DIR NSA passes to Sen Moynihan who passes to NSA Historian

- Ceremony B – Separate press event at NCM to take place the day following Ceremony A. This ceremony could be hosted by NSA historians, including Dr. Kahn, to publicly unveil the new VENONA display. Press
kits would be distributed with information on VENONA and the new display and to possibly include previous night's statements from DCI, Chairman of Secrecy Commission, and Dr. Kahn's historical perspective. Chairmen of HPSCI and SSCI could also provide written press statements to be included.

OPTION 2: DCI hosted event at NCM
- Afternoon/early evening ceremony at the NCM, conducted as Option 1A.
- Press invited attending on “RSVP basis” because of limited seating; initial press releases with invitations embargoed until conclusion of ceremony.
- Private ceremony for invited guests (no press) in adjacent conference room, following the ceremony.
- Because of limited space, logistics will be challenging; however, we will sequence events so that press will not be able to mingle with invited guests.

OPTION 3: Option 1 or 2 ceremony at an alternate location. (e.g. CIA Headquarters)

SCHEDULING OF EVENT: NSA will be ready to release the information and host the ceremony as early as 8 June. In order to perfect the museum display, arrange all the necessary calendars, and ensure that this precedent-setting public event runs without incident, we recommend scheduling the event no earlier than 14 June.

RECOMMENDATION: Option 1 to be held as your schedule permits between 13 and 15 June.

RATIONALE: Makes press attendance/exposure manageable
- Positive media opportunity for IC and elected officials
- Allows some time to coordinate and perfect public presentation

ALTERNATIVE: Option 2 to be held as your schedule permits between 12 and 15 June.
RATIONALE: This option is similar to Option 1 but without the dual ceremony. Option 2 also brings press into the ceremony with the invited guests.

DCI DECISION:

_____ Option 1
_____ Option 2

_____ Option 3 at ________________

_____ Other ________________

DCI DECISION:

_____ 8 June
_____ 12 through 15 June

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY
ISSUE: Status of NSA Interaction with FBI on VENONA Release

BACKGROUND: We have been in close contact with the FBI since 25 May in attempting to get their clearance on the VENONA material for release. Actions taken and status are as follows:

25 May - DDIR spoke with Mr. Potts, FBI Deputy Director by phone, using the attached notes, and soliciting a point of contact from FBI who would: check names for current investigation equities and privacy concerns, and FBI collateral references for releasability.

26 May - DDIR received a call from Mr. Bill Baugh, FBI, confirming that he would be the point of contact, and that the person in charge would be Mr. Kevin O'Brien, FBI FOIA office.

26 May - NSP shipped a package containing the 49 messages of interest via courier to FBI.

29 May - NSP confirmed with FBI that the 49 messages were in the hands of Mr. Bill Baugh.

30 May - NSP spoke with FBI FOIA requestor who called to confirm areas of concern for which we have asked FBI opinion.

31 May - NSP spoke with FBI FOIA branch which confirmed that there would be no problem in meeting the target date of 7 June.

1 June - Another contact with FBI FOIA branch indicates that FBI review is still on track, and thus far has turned up no information requiring redaction from FBI's point of view.
(b)(1)
(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36