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VIII

TOP SECRET

GENERAL COUNSEL

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15 January 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR [redacted] (b)(6) OGA

SUBJECT: Memorandum for the Record on the Secret Pueblo Hearings of the House Committee on Armed Services

1. In response to your telephone call of 10 January, there is inclosed the Memorandum for the Record requested by the Director.

2. I confirmed the substance of the Memorandum by examination of the transcript of the testimony. Please submit the inclosure for the review and approval of the Director at his convenience.

ROY R. BANNER
General Counsel

Incl:
a/s

~~Appended Document Contains Code Word Material Downgrade to Confidential Upon Removal of Inclosure~~

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Approved for release by NSA on 05-27-2014, Transparency Case# 63391

a message into the CRITIC system by simply marking it "X CRITIC". The average time for transmission of each of these messages to Washington, D. C. was approximately 15 minutes. The initial message was sent by the Pueblo when ordered to heave to by the North Korean Patrol Boat around noon of 23 January. General Carter personally read this message one hour and 39 minutes after the event occurred.

Please check this time - I think I said the exact times for each msg -

c. Chairman Rivers asked if General Carter had any criticism of the CRITIC communications system. General Carter replied that the system was out-dated and we are relying on make-shift means until the Agency can get automatic switches approved and installed.

d. General Carter testified on the extent to which our communications intelligence gathering capabilities and the U. S. codes were compromised by the capture of the men and materiel of the Pueblo. He reminded the Committee that he had given them the worst possible case on 1 February 1968 and that it looks now as if we have had irreparable damage done to our SIGINT activities. He pointed out that the North Koreans had made some operational changes in their communications which could be inferred to have resulted from the capture of the documents aboard the Pueblo. These documents, which were used as aids in the interception of North Korean communications, disclosed the extent of our break-in to the classified communications of the North Koreans. General Carter added that we cannot directly tie the immediate emergency measures taken by the North Koreans to the Pueblo capture, but the inference is clearly there since these emergency measures were taken shortly after the capture. He testified that there has been no change in the Russian communications procedures other than those normally expected from time to time. He advised that it is reasonable to assume, however, that the documentation captured from the Pueblo has been turned over to the Soviets and possibly to the CHICOMS. [redacted] The great danger is that having acquired our equipments, apparently largely intact, the knowledge provided therein as to systems logic would be sufficient to enable the Soviets to enhance significantly their own communications security. Further, the Soviets and CHICOMS could improve their security [redacted] North Korean communications. General Carter testified that the protection of our own U. S. communications is not in jeopardy because U. S. security depends upon daily changing variables in keying materiels that are introduced into our communications machines. These keying

(b)(1)
(b)(3)-50 USC 403
(b)(3)-18 USC 798
(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36

variables are generated at NSA and computerized; and all the users need do is to change the key cards and code materiel. Nevertheless, the compromise of the equipment that apparently was captured gave the communist powers a leg up because this equipment provided the logic that we use in the machines.

e. General Carter further testified that he could not arrive at a final conclusion as to damage assessment until the Agency had examined the voluminous material resulting from the debriefing of the crew members and this would require some time. Our debriefing of the crew is continuing on an extensive basis, but the debriefing and damage assessment are not yet completed. Indications so far are that the worst possible case of compromise which he had posed to the Committee on 1 February has materialized as an actual case.

4. Following General Carter's testimony, a Navy Captain briefed the Committee on the inhuman treatment of the crew by the North Koreans during their capture. The hearings closed around noon on 7 January.

Roy R. Banner

ROY R. BANNER
General Counsel

10 January 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD:

SUBJECT: Testimony of the Director Concerning the Pueblo Before the House Committee on Armed Services on 6 and 7 January 1969

1. General Carter appeared before the Special Subcommittee on CIA of the House Committee on Armed Services which took testimony to bring Members up to date on the Pueblo incident. These hearings were held secretly and in Executive Session on 6 and 7 January 1969. House Members present included Representatives Rivers, Philbin, Hebert, Price (Ill.), Fisher, and Bennett (Fla.) of the Majority, and Representatives Bates, Arends, O'Konski, Bray, and Gubser of the Minority. Also present were Mr. Russell Blandford, Chief Counsel of the House Armed Services Committee, who steered the questioning so as to cover all points of interest to the Members, and Mr. Frank Slatinshek, Assistant Counsel of the Committee. The principal witness before the Committee on 6 January was Admiral Leslie J. O'Brien, Director, ASW and Ocean Surveillance Division, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Navy Department. Admiral O'Brien was questioned extensively by Members of the Subcommittee and by Mr. Blandford. A transcript of the sessions was made, but Mr. Blandford stated that the Committee is not releasing the transcript to any official of the Executive Branch. Since the transcript will not be published nor made available, this memorandum is being made to summarize for the record the testimony of the Director, NSA.

2. On the morning of the 7th of January, General Carter gave testimony in two primary areas: First, the handling of communications concerning the capture of the Pueblo by the North Koreans and, Second, the damage to the signals intelligence and communications security activities of the U. S. resulting from the capture of the men and materiel by the North Koreans.

3. General Carter was asked to participate in the testimony being given by Admiral O'Brien. General Carter made these principal points, many in answer to direct questions:

a. The communications equipment aboard the Pueblo could have been destroyed by a thermal grenade, but destruction equipment of this degree was not carried by the Pueblo.

b. During and immediately following the capture of the Pueblo, five messages were introduced by Naval Commands into the CRITICOMM system. Under established procedures any Command or official can put