TOP SECRET

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USCIB: 13/338

APPENDED DOCUMENTS CON-TAIN CODE WORD MATERIAL

28 May 1953

TOP SECRET - SECURITY INFORMATION

MEMORANDUM FOR THE MEMBERS OF USCIB:

Subject:

Security of COMINT Information.

The enclosure is forwarded for information at the request of the Director, NSA.

RUFUS L. TAYLOR
Captain, U. S. Navy
Executive Secretary, USCIB

Enclosure
NSA Ser: 000303S dtd
26 May 53, w/l incl.

USCIB: 13/338

APPENDED DOCUMENTS CON-TAIN CODE WORD MATERIAL This document is to be read only by those personnel officially indoctrinated in accordance with communication intelligence security regulations and authorized to receive the information reported herein.

## NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY WASHINGTON 25. D. C.

Serial: 000303S

26 May 1953

## TOP SECRET CANCE - SECURITY INFORMATION

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ACTING EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, USCIB

SUBJECT: Security of COMINT Information

- 1. During the period November 1952 March 1953, the Director, NSA, received a considerable number of reports of incidents wherein COMINT information has been subjected to compromise. A summary of the incidents in which the Director, NSA, has determined that COMINT information must be considered potentially compromised is attached as Inclosure 1.
- 2. In one of the incidents summarized (paragraph 5 of the inclosure), the loss of a COMINT document can not be explained. The document is believed, however, to have been inadvertently destroyed. In all of the other incidents, COMINT information was subjected to compromise as the result of inadvertent failure to observe established rules and procedures for maintaining the security of COMINT communications.
- 3. The Director, NSA, has not observed thus far any positive evidence that foreign countries have exploited the compromises summarized in the inclosure. Although in some or all of these instances, the material in question actually may never have been obtained by unauthorized persons, the possibility that it has been compromised definitely exists, and the consequences must be faced.
- 4. As is indicated in the inclosure, certain COMINT codewords must be considered compromised. No positive security benefits would be expected to result from supersession of these codewords and no codeword changes therefore are recommended at this time.
- 5. It is requested that copies of this correspondence be forwarded to USCIB members for information. It is obvious that all possible effort must be exerted to prevent further compromises, and

Enclosure with USCIB 13/338 dated 28 May 1953.

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Ser: 0003038

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USCIB members are enjoined to take all possible measures within activities under their jurisdiction to insure better security. The Director, NSA, will forward a copy to SUSIO with a request that appropriate British authorities be informed of its contents.

FOR THE DIRECTOR:

(Signed)
ALFRED R. MARCY
Colonel, US Army
Chief of Staff

Incl:

TOP SECRET CANOE - SECURITY INFORMATION

EO 3.3(h)(2) PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

## SUMMARY OF RECENT COMPROMISES OF COMINT INFORMATION

1. A TOP SECRET CANOE message and six SECRET CHUTE messages
originated at HQ NSA, and transmitted in an ORCUS system on various
long-distance circuits were subjected to compromise (and must be
considered compromised) because of an error which occurred on 10
November 1952 at CommSupAct. The
nature of the violation was the use of a "decrypt only" rotor arrange-
ment at for the encryption of two messages transmitted
(ORCUS off-line) from that location. The TOP SECRET message mentioned
above indicated that communications
are being exploited. The SECRET messages reveal successes in studies
of call signs, operating signals and frequency allocations.
2. On 20 December 1952, a message classified SECRET CHUTE was
inadvertently transmitted in plain-language on land-line from HQ ASA,
Europe, Frankfurt, to 8608 AAU, Scheyern. As a result of this trans-
mission security violation, the message must be considered compromised.
The message contains a reference to and
reveals thereby that the has been solved
and is being exploited. The report of investigation by ASA Europe stated
that the two mon responsible were severely reprimended.
3. Four messages, we sent 30 December 1952, and two sent 31
December 1952, are considered compromised as the result of operator
error on those dates at Soll AAU, Baumholder. The nature of the error
was re-use of ORCUS (off-line) message rotor alignments, and failure to
check-decrypt prior to transmission of the messages. Each of the
messages was classified SECRET CHUTE, and consisted of intercept operators
log extracts. The texts indicated some exploitation of
but no elements of cryptanalysis were indicated. A full investigation of
the incidents has been conducted by ASA, Europe, whereupon it was decided
that the form of logging at encrypting positions must be changed, and a
formal training program must be conducted at 8611 AAU.
I On 21 Issues 2052 the 6020th Consider Comm memorial the in

## TOP SECRETATION

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TOP SECRET CANGE - SECURITY INFORMATION

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5. On 26 January 1953 the loss of	The same of the sa
was discovered. One portion of the document was class	18 <b>1</b> -
fied SECRET WITCH and the remainder was classified SECRET CHUTE. The	
document had been retained in a secure area at Arlington Hall Station :	in
the custody of NSA personnel who are fully cleared and indoctrinated for	
COMINT. The loss has not been explained despite a thorough investigat:	
of the incident, and the document therefore must be considered comprom	
Investigating authorities are of the opinion, however, that the loss di	
not result from penetration or defection. This opinion is based not or	
upon an examination of physical security and personnel security condit.	
but also upon consideration that subversive intent would be equally se	
and better covered if an agent merely noted that the U.S. has reconstru	
These call signs. The document is believed to have been inadvertently	
destroyed.	
dept.0.000	

- 6. Four SECRET CHUTE messages must be considered compromised as the result of rotor failure and failure of operating personnel to perform offective check decryption prior to transmission. The incident occurred on 11 February 1953 in an ORCUS off-line radio transmission from DET.E, 333rd Communications Reconnaissance Company, Nome, to the U.S. The messages reveal methods and successes in traffic analysis. including D/F reporting and the exploitation of the compromised texts.
- 7. On 12 February 1953, a portion of a TOP SECRET CANCE message was inadvertently transmitted in the clear during an intended plain-language test transmission on land line from HQ USAFSS, Brooks AFB, San Antonie, to HQ, NSA. As a result of this violation, the clear text portion transmitted must be considered compromised. It reveals
- 8. On 13 February, 1953, as the result of an operator error at 6961 Communication Security Squadron, Brooks AFB, San Antonio, a small portion of COMINT raw intercept was transmitted in the clear on a radio circuit. On-line APOLLO was intended. The transmitted portion must be considered compromised. The compromised material is CONFIDENTIAL.
- 9. During a two day period (2 and 3 March 1953) there were three operator errors at 6920th Security Group, Johnson Air Base, Irumagawa, in APOLLO on-line radio circuits from Japan to the U.S. In each of the three incidents, a small portion of the text of a SECRET CHUTE message was transmitted in plain language. In two of these incidents the plain language transmissions were limited to raw intercept and as a result, CONFIDENTIAL COMINT material is considered compromised. In the third incident, SECRET CHUTE evidences of successful analysis of were sent in the clear and this information (although not the cedeword in this case) must be considered compromised.