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National Security Agency
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9800 Savage Road, Suite 6932
Fort George G. Meade, MD 20755-6932
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[Online Request Form](#)

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NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY
CENTRAL SECURITY SERVICE
FORT GEORGE G. MEADE, MARYLAND 20755-6000



Serial: MDR-114526
29 June 2023

This responds to your request of 25 June 2022 to have the Oral History of Frank F. Herrelko, NSA OH 1982-24, reviewed for declassification. This constitutes a final response to our interim letter dated 27 June 2023. The material has been reviewed under the Mandatory Declassification Review (MDR) requirements of Executive Order (E.O.) 13526 and is enclosed. We have determined that some of the information in the material requires protection.

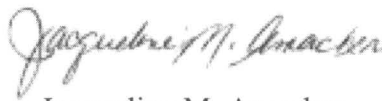
Some portions deleted from the document were found to be currently and properly classified in accordance with E.O. 13526. The information denied meets the criteria for classification as set forth in Section 1.4 subparagraph (c) and remains classified SECRET as provided in Section 1.2 of E.O. 13526. The withheld information is exempt from automatic declassification in accordance with Section 3.3(b) (3) of the Executive Order. Moreover, Section 3.5(c) of E.O. 13526 allows for the protection afforded to information under the provisions of law. Therefore, the names of NSA/CSS employees and information that would reveal NSA/CSS functions and activities have been protected in accordance with Section 6, Public Law 86-36 (50 U.S. Code 3605, formerly 50 U.S. Code 402 note).

Please be advised that this document contains other government agencies' information. We have protected their equities using the other government agency (OGA) redaction code with OGA.

Serial: MDR-114526

Since your request for declassification has been denied you are hereby advised of this Agency's appeal procedures. Any person denied access to information may file an appeal to the NSA/CSS MDR Appeal Authority. **The appeal must be postmarked no later than 60 calendar days after the date of the denial letter.** The appeal shall be in writing addressed to the NSA/CSS MDR Appeal Authority (P133), National Security Agency, 9800 Savage Road, STE 6881, Fort George G. Meade, MD 20755-6881. The appeal shall reference the initial denial of access and shall contain, in sufficient detail and particularity, the grounds upon which the requester believes the release of information is required. The NSA/CSS MDR Appeal Authority will endeavor to respond to the appeal within 60 working days after receipt of the appeal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jacqueline M. Amacher".

Jacqueline M. Amacher
Chief
Declassification Services

Encl:
a/s

OHNR: OH-1982-24

DOI: 8 Nov 1982

TRSID:
QCSID:

DTR: 23 Dec 1997

Text Review:

INAME: HERRELKO, Frank L., Col. Text w/Tape:

IPLACE: NSA, SAB2, Ft. Meade, MD; T542 Interview Room

VIEWER: FARLEY, Robert D.; JOHNSON?

[Tape 1, Side 1]

Farley: Today is 8 November 1982. Our interviewee, Colonel Frank L. Herrelko. Colonel Herrelko served with the United States Army and Air Forces from mid 1930's to mid 1960's in early warning and communications related positions. He was the first Deputy Director for COMSEC in the new 'S' organization and assumed that position in March of 1953. Colonel Herrelko will discuss his experiences during his military career. The interview is taking place in the T542 interview room, SAB II, NSA at Fort Meade. Interviewer, Bob Farley. Colonel Herrelko desires that the classification of these tapes be SECRET Handle Via COMINT Channels Only [SECRET//COMINT]. Colonel Herrelko, I do appreciate the time you're going to give us on this. We've been trying to catch you for a while.

Herrelko: Well, I wish they had captured me earlier. After a while you do forget some things, but a lot of them you don't forget.

Johnson: Sir just to set the stage would you just give me a little bit of personal background information. Maybe high school into military or college into military. Good enough that (1G) can give me any (XB) on the record.

Herrelko: Of course, I had a court house move into my third year. My father was in debt and I earned the coal mines in Pennsylvania for two and a half years, loading coal and I hated that. But I planned to do it only for a year and then finish high school. Well that one year stretch to two and a half years and the mines closed down twice and I hated them so I enlisted in the Army. In those days, there were only a hundred twenty-five thousand total officers and men in the Army. There were no vacancies. A depression was on in 1932 so I had to wait six months. And one day, the man called me and said, "We have twenty vacancies for the coast artillery in Hawaii. You've been coming here six months, I expect there will be four hundred men here that morning between five foot ten in height and six foot two, those are the requirements for a specific reason. And they say you have to take your chances." So to make a long story short, they gave us IQ tests, took the forty highest marks to the doctor and the twenty best physicals and I entered the Army. I spent a year and a half in the Artillery, a year and a half in the medics as a G.E. Technician in Hawaii. Got out for a year. Went back in the coal mines didn't know what I wanted to do. I got

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~~Dated 20044423~~
~~Declassify On 20204423~~

assigned to the worst coal mine in western Pennsylvania where I worked five hundred feet under a river. I lasted five months and five days and I cut-up my tools that had wooden handles. Thank the superintendent, said, "I'm getting out of here." He said, "You don't belong here, go on back in the service." So I reenlisted in 1936 in the Signal Corps and that was my baptism in communications and I stayed in communications electronics since then. I went to Panama. While I was there I was coerced by my commander to take an extension course for a reserve commission. In 1937, there was no visible profit in doing that but he kind of forced the issue on me. It took me nineteen months in my spare time, taking this series of extension courses, but I couldn't get a Signal Corps commission because you had to have a B.S. degree in electrical engineering to be commissioned in the Signal Corps. So he said, "Take it in the infantry and after you get your commission, transfer." So in 1939, I was already back in Fort Monmouth New Jersey, commissioned in Panama, and I met a board. I got commissioned as a 2nd LT in the Signal Corps reserve. The same year, I made Staff Sergeant in the Signal Corps. In those days, the Chief Signal Officer issued your warrant. Nobody below him could bust you except for cause. So when I took the staff examine, there were four hundred and eleven of us taking the examination for eleven expected vacancies that year. Which meant if you made number twelve, somebody had to die or get busted for you to get made. Well, I took it in two specialties; automatic telephone and administration and supply. I lucked out, number nine on one and number four on the other. So once I made Staff Sergeant, the War Department sent me a letter and said, "In compliance with your original request, since you have now become a Staff Sergeant we figure we can wave the requirements for a B.S. in electrical engineering and enclose herewith is a commission in the Signal Corps Reserve back dated to the date of your original commission." So I'm one of the few people that has two commissions, same date, in the same service; one infantry; one Signal Corps; one supersedes the other. So at the time of course I was stationed at Fort Monmouth New Jersey in the famous 51st Signal Battalion, which was the 55th telegraph battalion during World War I. About the summer of 1940, I started to get letters. If you were called to active duty, where do you want to go, what kind of unit, what kind of work you want to do, how would it take you to complete your personal stuff. I answered each one. One day out of a clear sky on the fourteenth or fifteen November, 1940, a telegraph came in instructing the post commander to discharge me, it was on a Friday, to discharge me the next day as a Staff Sergeant. Swear me in as an officer and report to the 2nd Aircraft Warning Company under the Air Corps, (B% SCWAF), Signal Corps with the Air Force, Air Corps, Mitchell Field, New York. That was not one of my requested assignments. I did work a little on the first radar that was made in the Signal Corps laboratories, the 270A, I think. And that was a new the operator sat on the antenna that went around four RPM. In about fifteen minutes, he got sick or dizzy and you had to replace him. It

was several years later before the engineers got smart enough to take the operator off the antenna and separate him. Anyway, I didn't have a uniform so I went to the post tailor and Mr. Grossman... Fortunately the year before when the Air Force went to the pink and... The Army and Air Corps went to the pink and greens they were looking for a model who had a eight inch drop from chest to waist with a bustling back. So they picked me. I went to New York with him to all the uniform makers and they measured me for the various uniforms. So I went to see the tailor. I had eighty dollars in cash I think. I said, "I'm in a problem. This is Friday. Tomorrow I'm going to get discharged. I need an officers uniform." He outfitted me with two pairs of pants, pinks, one green coat, a mackinaw, a sundown belt and a sword and a hat, I guess a pair of shoes. I gave him fifty dollars down and paid the rest off shortly after. So thirteen months before Pearl Harbor, I reported to Mitchell Field, New York. I tried to sneak out of Fort Monmouth from all my friends there and I thought I was successful, but I had a brother-in-law there who wasn't a brother-in-law then, they used to call him "Little Jesus" and me "Big Jesus" because of our voice. And so I was going out the back door. I said good-bye to the company commander and low and behold from the back door out to the road where the bus was going to stop, the whole company was lined up on both sides with raised pistols. And I after that I cried a little and went to Mitchell Field, New York, 2nd Aircraft Warning Company. They had four 1st Lts and seven 2nd Lts, mostly Thompson Act officers. The three month OCS with electronic and communications education. The commander was a captain Raymond who was in South America doing some radar sighting. Shortly after I got there, they were going to build the first Air Defense Control Center in New York at 140 West Street where the telephone long-lines building is. I got the job to design that Air Defense Information Center where there would be three hundred women plotters plotting flights. Any how, I was my own procurement officer. I think I spent some twenty-eight thousand on plotting boards and that kind of stuff. Kotex for the ladies and cots when they got sick and so forth. And my, a Captain, I can't think of his name now, a Captain and I drew up those plans on a coffee table... (B% Talbet), Captain Bill (B% Talbet). And so I did that. Commuted on a subway from Long Island to New York. After I got it started, I was called in one day and the LtCol Edwards called me in and said, "LT you have been picked to go to the Command General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth Kansas for three months to attend a G-3 course." I said, "Colonel, I don't want to go there. First you have to be a Captain with at least eight years service to go there or be a 1st LT on the Captain's list. I'm a 2nd LT, I don't want to go there and embarrass myself and my command." He said, "Lieutenant, I didn't ask you whether you want to go or not." He says, "The officers had a meeting here and your the one they picked to go." I said, "I want to see General (B% Chaney)." He said, "All right but I'll see him first." So I went to see General Chaney. He said, "Yes Lt." I told him my story.

Johnson: What was his position, General Chaney?

Herrelko: He was a Commander of the ... what was the Air Defense Command. And I think it had a number then, the 1st Air Defense Region or something. And he said, "Lieutenant, I didn't ask you whether you wanted to go. You're picked to go, you're going to go. Won't get a waiver. Now get the hell out there and bring back a diploma." Well, I went to Fort Leavenworth. I didn't own a car and somewhere in the regulations I read where you can travel two hundred and fifty miles a day. That's all you're required to travel. So I took my good ole time and stopped in Chicago had a good time at my Aunt's place. Reported on time to Fort Leavenworth and the first day in the auditorium there was a General (B% Grubber) was the Commandant and he was lecturing to us, welcoming us. There were four 2nd Lts in the class. No 1st Lts and then Captains, Majors, and Lieutenant Colonels. The Lieutenant Colonels were by and large reserve and guard officers. He said, "Gentlemen, we ask the War Department to send officers here not below the grade of Captain, unless they were on the promotion list as 1st Lts and not over forty-five years of age. By looking at the audience, I see we have some officers here who will retire shortly after they graduate, if they graduate, and we have some that were nearly children," and looking at me. I was half way out of my seat to say, "Sir, I didn't ask to come here," and two Lieutenant Colonels on my left and right said, "Sit still son." So I did. I had troubles, I couldn't look at a map and see troops marching down the gridlines like some of those officers could and I was taking a G-3 course. But I worked hard. We lived in apartments. There were twelve graded problems. You had to make at least ... you were allowed to make three 'U's, that's unsatisfactory, nine of them had to be satisfactory to graduate. The fourth 'U' and you were out and if you were out from that class, your career was ruined. I lucked out on the first six problems. I lucked out three 'S's and three 'A's and one day they knocked on my door and General Grubber walked in. And he says, "Lieutenant, as my remarks pertain to you on opening day, I was driving." He said, "Keep up the good work." He said, "You're doing okay."

Johnson: Quite a compliment.

Herrelko: So I finished my school there and then was reassigned to the Aircraft Warning Unit Training Center, Drew Field, Florida and I watched it grow from four hundred to about forty thousand people.

Johnson: This is still 1941?

Herrelko: This is 1941, right. And I was one of the air defense experts supposedly four 2nd Lts from Mitchell Field, New York were considered the air defense expert in Direction Centers and Air Defense Centers. I reported there on the fourth of July, 1941 to a Colonel Benjamin Stern, Signal Corps. He said, "You're just in time to attend the meeting. The General Walter H. Frank, Commander 3rd Air Force is in. They're going to have a demonstration of a Portable Air Defense Direction and Photo Center that somebody had designed that would fit into a C-47 aircraft." We put our suitcases down and we went into this meeting. Some officer was showing

his version of a Portable Air Defense Direction Center and Area Defense Center. Plywood, pipes, plumper pipes with joints screwed together and so forth and he demonstrated it. He didn't have any equipment hang on it yet and everybody seemed to be impressed. General Frank said, "Are there any questions?" Air Frank you know, put his hand up, he says, "Yes LT." I said, "Sir, I think its bulky, unweldy, it's not going to work, and it won't fit into the door a C-47 aircraft." He looked at my boss, Colonel Stern and he said, "Benjamin, who is this young upstart." So he introduced us as the four young officers who knew the most about air defense. So he said, "All right LT, this is Friday. Monday you bring me a set of plans and you'll build one." So I said, "Sir, I've never done this before." He said, "Well, you seemed to know that this won't work." I said, "Because I know the size of the aircraft." So I said, "All right." So we lived in the (1G) apartments, the four of us, bachelors. And that weekend over pall malls, there over three officers had given me ideas. I drew up the plans for a Portable Air Defense Direction and Air Defense Direction and (1G) Center made from poplar, magnolia and Cyprus wood. Loose pin butt hinges, no section bigger than four foot by four foot by eight inches thick without a door. I brought my plans in Monday. Laid them out in front of the General. He looked them over. His attention to detail was amazing. He picked one hinge of mine where with that particular table was stood up, the pin would have fallen out. I had it in the wrong end. He said, "This pin will fall out." He said, "Okay, LT looks okay." He says, "Build it." Now he said, "We can have it, what's it going to cost me." I said, "Sir, its never been done before." He said, "God Dammit. Is it four hundred or four thousand dollars. Is it three months or three weeks." So I gave him an estimated cost and a time frame with a hopefully a little padding on it. I said, "Sir, I'll need three NCOs to work with me who claim to be carpenters. I like space in one of the new hangers that have no runway yet, and I want a relative free hand. I want to be my own purchasing officer." We planned to build the first prototype of each one the different section and then farm it out to a lumber company to mass produce them because he wanted of them. One for Hawaii as a operating element and one for a group to use a training element. So, we were working on these and one day he walks into the hanger and we're working in hanger shorts, stripped to the waist, was a half a case of beer sitting there on a box, and I had to two Sergeants instead of three working with me and he walked in. He had a twitch in the right side of his face and he carried a swagger stick and he smoked a long, he smoked cigarettes in a long cigarette holder, he walked in he says, "Where is the officer in charge here." He knew damn well where the officer in charge was. I said, "Here I am sir." I wet from feet to my hair. He said, "You would never know it LT." He said, "Don't you know its not customary for officers to be dressed like this or doing this kind of work?" So I said, "Sir, do you want this when I promised it to you." He said, "Yes." "Then is how its going to get done." So he said, "Come over here." He says, "You not afraid of me are you?" I says, "No sir, I respect you. Why?" So he said, "You don't yes

me all the time." So to make a long story short, we built two of those. Farmed out the big jobs out to the (1G) lumber company and they produced them. One was shipped to Hawaii. It was sunk before it got there and the one at Drew Field was used for about a year, became the prototype for a Army lumber model and they made about twelve of those and they were shipped all over the world. So much for that

Johnson: Did they use special equipment at all or radios or...

Herrelko: Oh, I established with the Bell Laboratories and with them, they designed the equipment to hang on the board, there were twelve inch boards that detachable on all these tables and platforms and this equipment was a "Plug and Jack" type affair. And the Bell Labs built in time and it was a prototype for the ones that were designed and had numbers something like A-M-A-N-T-P-S (1G). To make a long story short, my Colonel boss got the Legion of Merit for that but I guess that's the name of the game. So in 19... I got married in 1942 there and a month after I got married, I made 1st LT. Eleven months later I made Captain and eleven months later I made Major while we were in a training status at Hattiesburg, Mississippi, the 3rd Signal Aircraft Training Battalion.

Johnson: Could I bounce back to Pearl Harbor, where were you before Pearl Harbor? What assignment did you have when Pearl Harbor happened?

Herrelko: Oh I'm sorry. When Pearl Harbor hit, I was a commander of and aircraft... of a radar station on Mount Soledad, California. Sorry about that. And I was a young officer there. I had forty-three enlisted men and a Tech Sergeant and a Staff Sergeant. Living in tents when Pearl Harbor hit. When Pearl Harbor hit, Brigadier General (B% Mann), Headquarters 4th Air Force called me on the phone and said, I was a 1st LT then, no I was a 2nd LT, and he said, "LT, Pearl Harbor has been attacked. As of now we are in a war status effectively you will act accordingly and you and all your men will carry sidearms loaded and operate under the OPSPLAN in case of war." I says, "Sir." He said, "And there always be an officer present at camp." I said, "That's impossible, we have to go to town to La Jolla California down off the mountain to get gasoline and food and stuff." I said, "You are going to have to let me wave that so that either me or the Tech Sergeant are here." "Okay." Well the next day, I told the men to put their 45s on with (B% ball) ammunition. I found out that two thirds of my men had never had any training with a pistol or rifle. So (3G) the second day, one man was getting ready to go on duty. He was preparing his pistol. He made the mistake of putting the magazine in and then releasing the slide. He had his finger on trigger. The gun went off and shot a man three tents away. He died. I knew I had problems. I called up the General told him what happened. I said, "I want to immediately court marshal this man and give him a fine of a dollar and then give him a carton of cigarettes." That was the (1G) in those days so he cannot be tried by civil court. I had to write a letter to the people, the parents of this man. It was a terrible thing, the men refused to carry loaded guns. I bring them, I had a problem so I

told General Mann I have a problem and I had the man, the one that was tried within two days. Fined a buck and given a carton of cigarettes and transferred out immediately. I called General Mann and I said, "The men refused to carry loaded weapons. My camp is running scared." I said, "I want you to send me five thousand rounds of ammunition down here and let me give them some quick training." So they did and the next day a truck came down with five thousand rounds of .45. I had the Mess Sergeant save the number ten cans from food and took six of them at a time, in the morning and six in the afternoon up against a hill side and had them shoot this gun until at fifteen yards they could hit the can. And then I made them carry the loaded weapon. Made damn sure that there was none in the chamber, just in a magazine. From there...

Johnson: What was the state of art of your radar equipment?

Herrelko: We had a 271. The long range radar, a real high antenna. At that point the operator, the operator was still on the antenna, four RPM. 270A still that same one and so I got them trained so that they could last a half hour and ever half hour I had to change operators because they'd get sick. That was in December, in January I got reassigned back Drew Field. My wife who had quit her job three times to come to marry me in various places had to give all the presents back because each time she come I'd be moved. This time she met me in Tampa and we were married there on January 28th. I got there, I was assigned to the 3rd Signal Aircraft Warning Battalion under a LtCol Floyd from Hattiesburg Mississippi. In early 1943, we were sent to Hattiesburg Mississippi to train prior to going overseas. My second boss at that time was a Colonel George P. (B% Turtlelow), Air Corps who made Brigadier General while he was there. While I was at Hattiesburg, in the meantime I had made Captain in '42 and while I was at Hattiesburg I made Major. A telegram came in one day assigning me to Iceland as the Exec of the 556th Signal Aircraft Warning Battalion at Reykjavik, Iceland. There were... had thirteen radar stations round the island. About three of them up near the Artic Circle where nobody went in after September until May and nobody came out. We dropped the mail to them by plane. Well, I had six separate companies, thirteen radar stations, about two hundred and some motor vehicles. The Air Defense Center was in a hundred by forty Quonset hut, anchored to the ground and the men lived in Quonsets that where sixteen by thirty-six. Shortly after I got there, my boss was a Air Corps Lieutenant Colonel, I'll think of his name in a minute. While we're still at Reykjavik, he got a notice that his wife gave birth to a son and he had club hand so forth and the man was a loner. He didn't go anywhere much. Pretty soon he began to have problems so I went to see a doctor. I said, "I think you had better talk to Colonel Bob," I can't think of his name. And they sent him back home on a mental... so the two Signal officer were going to send a senior Lieutenant Colonel out there, I was a Major, to take ccmmand. By that time, Brigadier General Turtlelow, who was at Drew Field, had been assigned there as the Senior Air Officer and a Major General from the National Guard was the

Commander of the Iceland Base Command. They wired back to Signal Officer, "Do not send another officer. The Exec on the job will assume command." So I assumed command of the battalion and I got promoted to Lieutenant Colonel. I was thirty years old then and my Major... my Exec was a Major, a Bell Telephone type man. I stayed there and the winds were so high sometimes that we had ropes from the various quonset huts to the Air Defense Center because it was metal and you had bare hands, your hands would stick and the skin would come off. They had a... they went to work lock-step like prisoners holding on to the fence. One time they had a man lost at an outpost. He was lost for three hours and they had to fence in the outpost. He was going to the latrine. He didn't make it. So in 1944 when they were making the big push to bomb over Europe, Iceland was the stop-off point for the bombers coming over. There is no such thing as a IRS or a GCA in those days. I used a Army (1M) Control Radar, a 584 which had a very narrow beam as a GCA to bring the planes because Iceland was socked in most of the time. And we brought the bombers in and from there they would take-off and go make the bomb runs. In 1945, I brought my battalion back to the States...

Johnson: After the war?

Herrelko: After the war. After the Europe part of the war.

Johnson: VE Day right.

Herrelko: Right.

Johnson: VE Day.

Herrelko: After VE Day. Brought them back to Camp (B% Carema), New Jersey. Disbanded it and I was assigned to Bladenboro North Carolina for transition training prior to going out to the west coast to command the Los Angeles Control Group which covered the area from Santa Maria to the Mexican border for Air Defense including the islands of Catalina and so forth.

Johnson: Sir can I hark back to World War II, just before you get into the Los Angeles bit, about three questions. One question, when you were at Monmouth, were you familiar with the 2nd Signal Service Battalion, the cryptologic organization?

Herrelko: No, but I was familiar with the 1st Signal Service Company. But my experience with them was limited and my knowledge of COMSEC was the M209 and the BROOMSTICK. And the M138, the strip (TRNOTE: Missed section due to Mr. Johnson and Mr. Herrelko talking at the same time.) device. Because... the reason I don't remember that, I'm way ahead of myself now... while I was at Fort Monmouth, back tracking, and I was a Staff Sergeant, remember the year was in 1940. To Camp McCoy, Wisconsin. And it is while we were there that the orders from Washington to mobilize the National Guard came out. The unit kept secret so that the people wouldn't get all unduly excited. Well the message came in code and I was the Communications Center Chief at Camp McCoy, Wisconsin

But in those days, an officer had the combination to the safe for the codes and either he had to break down the message or he had to stand over the shoulder of a non-comm who did. Well the Colonel who was the Signal Officer, I said, "Colonel we have this message here. I think I know what it is, but I can't get in the safe and I can't decode it for you because the Lieutenants not here." Unfortunately for him, he was out collecting little liqueur samples, it was a hobby of his. And the Colonel almost had a fit because he says, "Well you go ahead and decode that." I said, "Well I can't open the safe." He said, "Nether can I." And the Lieutenant wasn't here. I said, "And the combination really back in Fort Monmouth some place." Well in about an hour, the Lieutenant showed up. He said, "Lieutenant, open that safe. I want you to decode this message." He said, "I don't know how to operate the M138." I said... He said, "Sergeant can you..." I said, "Yes sir." So we get the powder, put the powder on, put the strips in the stuff and it was a message that was telling us that the National Guard was going to be mobilized and for us to make the preparations not telling them yet, because this is like a May or June...

Johnson: '41 then?

Herrelko: No '40. Before I was called to active duty, I'm back tracking now. The battalion was still in half then. Half went Plattsburgh New York for the other half went to Fort Benning, Georgia. I went to Fort Benning, Georgia and Louisiana. After that was over about August we came back to Fort Monmouth and I picked up the story from then on then. You had another question?

Johnson: So COMSEC was sort of an unknown entity in those days?

Herrelko: That's right.

Johnson: No communication security at all?

Herrelko: Nobody ever talked about it. Except the M209, there were no... we had teletype machines because I went to the school and learned how to maintain those. There was no... everything was off-line. Never heard of anything on-line, that's all there was. The (2G), the twenty-six disks, the M209 is strapped to your knee and the strip cipher device. If there were any other ones, I was not aware of them.

Johnson: You never heard of the Abbott later on in the war?

Herrelko: Not then. Later on I did, but not then. I'm now at Iceland, back to Iceland again.

Johnson: All right.

Herrelko: Unless you have a question

Johnson: No only if you want to go back to... We were up to Los Angeles. Is there something else about Iceland you want talk about?

Herrelko: No, we were at Los Angeles now, okay. I'm back there for a second time, this time as the Commander of a Group, Aircraft Control Warning Group

We were located in a brick block house so to speak on top of a mountain. It later became a girl's school. We had to block off all the roads. Up near the top there was a cross on a hill and couples used to go up there and swoon and we had to block off that road so I was a little SOB. While I was there, I went down to one of my southern stations near the Mexico border and while I was there I got a telegram that I had been selected to be assigned to the Allied Control Commission for Hungary, Bulgaria, and Romania because of my possible then, language ability in Slovak. I was frozen in Long Beach, California for thirty days at one of my squadron locations while they were conducting an investigation of me and my wife.

Johnson: Security clearance type?

Herrelko: Security clearance type. In the meantime, I got instructions that I would have to take over basic foods for two years and extra allowance to buy liquor. I'd be entertaining and stuff and so forth. And how they trained attaches to go to these parties and don't get soused and all that stuff. Well I had assumed command of the squadron while I was there but I didn't want to interfere so I didn't want to do this if I could avoid it. So I got temporarily assigned to the Long Beach Air Force Base screening some three thousand personnel records for anticipated mobilization. I didn't have to take over the squadron. When the month was about up and we were almost ready to go, because the communist were in those countries, they decided not to send the commission over. So I was ordered, this is then 1957...

Johnson: Let me switch tapes please sir (TRNOTE: The tape is switched)

[End of Tape 1, Side 1]

[Tape 1, Side 2]

Johnson: All right sir, what date was that again?

Herrelko: Correction, 1947 and I got orders to, this is early '47, to report as the Deputy Commander of the 505th Aircraft Control and Warning Group at McChord Air Force Base, Washington. My Commander was a Lieutenant Colonel Arthur Kingman. We had the northern part of the United States, up to Alaska and the northern island off the coast for air defense. I was there less than a year when I was ordered to Alaska as the Air Force Communication Electronics member of the Joint Communication Electronics Staff for General Twinings, Commanding Chief, Alaska. My boss was a (B% W. Preston Corderman), Colonel U.S. Army and ASA experienced and later much expose in the communications security business. In Alaska, I got exposed to more COMSEC than I had before and I think there were I first knew about the ABBA and such things. Or whatever they were that existed at that time. I used to travel a lot from the northern part of Alaska out to Chain, to Shamia [Shemya], to places like (1M) and God forsaking places were it got sixty below sometimes. I stayed in Alaska two years and returned to the United States to attend the Armed Forces Staff College in Norfolk, Virginia. Really things should work the

other way. I should have gone there first before I went to Alaska on a joint job but the Army didn't move that way. To backtrack a little bit, while I was Commander of the Los Angeles Control Group, I completed my high school education. One day I went down to the American Council of Education and took batteries of examinations for three days for high school diploma and two years of college and passed them but I did not want to state certificate. I want a high school diploma from the school I started out with in North Union Township High School in Union Town, Pennsylvania. I found out that I had to come back east and appear before an examining board to get that diploma. They were going to test me. I came back to Pennsylvania. Appeared before the examining board and got my high school diploma and I graduated with the class of 1948. They didn't know this, but someday they're going to see me at a class reunion and wonder where the hell did he come from.

Johnson: You'll stay in uniform probably.

Herrelko: Right. I spent five months at the Armed Forces Staff College at Norfolk, Virginia. By that time, well I have to backtrack again, while I was at the Los Angeles Control Group, I also applied for a regular commission. They were going to commission seven thousand officers and they had twenty-eight thousand applicants. If you... eighty-five percent of those twenty-eight thousand had at least one degree or more. Fifteen percent didn't. I was one of the fifteen percent. The officers with degrees had an option of a waiver and taking a flat exemption score of eighty-four on the battery of test or taking the examinations and accepting the grade they made, lower or higher. Most of them took the exemption score. In my case, I had to take the test since I didn't have a degree. I was lucky I was pretty good in math so I knocked out a ninety-two and then fifty percent of the officers didn't make the physical I guess, so I was commissioned by appearing before a board at Fort MacArthur, California in 1946 and I was integrated into the regular Army. I choose Air Corps. It was six or one half dozen of the other, the (2-3G) the same way. I had been with the Air Corps by that time, it was the Army Air Forces. So I choose the Air Corps and was commissioned a permanent 1st Lieutenant in the regular Army in the Air Corps with a date of rank of eight June, 1938. I was given constructive credit because of my birthday. That was one of the few class, the West Point Class, did not graduate on the seventh of June, they graduated on the twelfth of June. So I outranked the whole class of West Point of '38. I lost a lot of friends. Next year when they gave me another year of credit, they corrected that and my date the twelfth, another year as an officer constructive service. So my friends didn't get mad at me anymore because they got their credit.

Johnson: Sir, could I bounce back again to Alaska?

Herrelko: Yes.

Johnson: Why was there such concern about communication security in 1947-48?

- Herrelko:** Well in Alaska, its about thirty-eight miles across the Bering Straights and then you get to two little islands, Big Diomedede and Lower [Little] Diomedede. You could throw a stone from one to the other. One of ten belongs to Russian and one belongs to us. In the winter time, you could walk from one island to the other and across the straight, twenty-eight or thirty-eight miles, it was kind of like between U.S. and Canada. You'd swim across and came back. Wasn't too much of control going on. And out the Aleutian chain while I was there, there was a recognized coming need for air defense and I played a part in locating radar stations on the Aleutian chain for that purpose. That was the basis of my thesis for the Armed Forces Staff College and its in the library down there, The Air Defense Plan for Alaska, The Aleutian Chain. But when you were up close Russia and well since 1946 or '47, whatever kind of intelligence they had after World War II. So we have to be prepared, we can't wait and they had problems like, (1G) frost. Construction is different. Building a radar antenna is different. I guess we were concerned more than ever before. There were scares at that time. One time they were scared, they thought the Russian submarine was seen off the coast and one time while I was at Los Angeles, there was a scare that a unknown sub was in the L.A. water area. To go back again, when we had to look into it, it was a great big tree that had floated down and like a limb was sticking, like a periscope, but people were running scared. And Alaska was worse. Before I left the state of Washington, McCord Air Force Base, I was already packing to go to Alaska, I remember, and there was a scare. And my boss couldn't be found. He had a bee hobby and he was somewhere with the bees. Lieutenant Colonel Kingdom, he never made Bird Colonel for some reason. He was at Pearl Harbor when it happened. I don't know how he was mixed up in it, but they called me and I was packing to mobilize the radars that were transportable and get them out on location. Well, it was a scare again, nothing happened but it was a scare. People were running a little scared after World War II, more so than before World War II.
- Johnson:** What sort of instructions were passed to the communicators? Like restrict chatter encipher plain language, any type...
- Herrelko:** Voice silence except when you have to talk. You had pre-arranged words that mean certain things without a book. But we did use code books. We did use code books. And we used words more so than the five letter M209 type things. I forget the name now of the code books we used, but they changed them every month. Whatever your (1G) use words and they were words that you could read and they made sense when you read them. But they meant something else.
- Johnson:** These were prepared by the Signal Corps at Monmouth?
- Herrelko:** Yes, by the Signal Corps, Monmouth and they were orange in color with a strip on them. There were field cards. DFCT-1 and those kind of numbers if I can I remember, Division Field Code, that's hard to remember.
- Johnson:** Was there some control over these? The cooks and bakers couldn't see

them or was there a code room? Was there a restricted area where...

Herrelko: Yes. When I was in Alaska, I was responsible for that and I had a Navy Lieutenant who was assigned to me and he was the man that controlled the safe and all the codes and classified documents.

Johnson: So you had some sort of a message center there?

Herrelko: Yes. And I remember very well one time that I went home. Walked home from work to my quarters and we had a double check system for securing the safes and stuff. And I couldn't remember having locked the safe. I just could not remember having locked that great big safe we had. So I told my wife I have to go back to the office. I'm not sure that I secured everything. So I walked back and I found the safe was closed, looked like it was locked but was unlocked. I spent five hours that night inventorying that safe. Everything was in it. I never left a safe unlocked again. Everything was in there. Naturally, something could have been removed, photographed and put back, but I had my doubts because the building was secured. But I accounted for everything and then I installed a triple system where one man checked the locker and somebody else checked the checker. But we did have codes in there. We used the books mostly, they used the strip cipher device or something like it for real sensitive things, eyes only. By that time they had machines of course. I had... I did not have access to the crypto center and CINCCAL, that was a separate operating element. The Lieutenant, the Navy Lieutenant who was responsible for the safe and the codes, he did. Where I didn't have access to that. None of the communication electronic officers did who worked on the staff.

Johnson: This is right in the Alaskan Command Headquarters?

Herrelko: Right in the (%Crumbling), we called [it] the Crumbling building. Concrete block building there, right there. The Army had their headquarters on old Fort Richardson. We were on Elmendorf Air Force Base. Let see, I'm back at the...

Johnson: Staff College and moving up...

Herrelko: Right. Upon graduation from Armed Forces Staff College, and that was a good experience because you got your first experience working with the Army, Navy, Air Corps, and Marines to where you forgot your color, uniform and all the plans were joint. When I finished there, I was assigned to the Eastern Air Defense Force, Mitchell Field, New York where I first started out as a Deputy Chief of Staff, Comm Electronics for the Eastern Air Defense Force. My boss was a Major General Fredrick Smith. Under him was a One Star guy name of Jacob E. Smart who later became Four Star General in the Air Force. Now he either at part time, full time, or consultant to NASA. General Smith was a son of a Brigadier General Smith, Artillery that I had occasion to work for on a couple of occasions in Panama while I was there. Small world. While I was stationed at Eastern Air Defense Force, for a short time I was not the DC&E. I worked for another Colonel who retired from there. And there I got more involved in

code because I had my own crypto center and air defense was the key. They were just starting to work things like SAGE and automation. I stayed there for three years. Just before my three years were up, in December 1952, I was attending the special Air Force Manpower Management course at George Washington University when I got a call one day from General Maude who was originally the Company Commander of the Mitchell Field outfit that I was first assigned to. He was now the Director of Communications, USAF and he called me and he says, "Frank, your three year tour at Stewart Air Force Base is about up. You've never had a Washington tour. We've sent your folder along with four or five other to a Lieutenant General Canine who is the Director of NSA." I said, "What's NSA?" I knew about AFSA and ASA. He said, "Well its the National Security Agency. I don't know too much about it. They don't talk much about it but he has picked your folder out and we would like to talk with you about an assignment to be the Chief of Comm Security for the United States." I said, "I'm not interested General." He said, "Well, then I guess your next assignment will be in the pentagon." And I never wanted to be assigned in the pentagon. I said, "I'll go talk to the General." So to make a long story short, before I finished my one month course there, I went to the Naval Security Station where the agency was then located and was escorted to the office of General Ralph J. Canine by his secretary.

Johnson: Had you heard of communications and intelligence before this time?

Herrelko: Yes but not very much. I heard of it as signals intelligence not communication intelligence.

Johnson: Remember how far back? Signals Intelligence?

Herrelko: Yes but things were so hush-hush in those days. Those people didn't talk to us. When they did come around and say how much security do you need, well the platoon commander said, "All I need is thirty minutes." The guy back at division would say "I need a week." And corps would need a month. Well if you came up with something, it was cumbersome for the platoon leader so its a, how much security do you need, not want. Need. They just couldn't come up with something that would satisfy the Lieutenant at the platoon on the firing line and give depth security to the division commander and corps commander in those days. And that was a problem for some years to come. Anyway, we would give them answers like that and they would go back to work.

Johnson: Had you heard of Arlington Hall or Nebraska Avenue at all?

Herrelko: No. Until that time, all I knew is that the Navy was located at Nebraska Avenue. Arlington Hall, never heard of it to me. So anyway, General Canine talked to me, interviewed me and he says, "I'm going to ask for you to be my Deputy Director for Communications Security for the United States." So I says, "Yes sir." So the next day, got a call from General Maude, said, "When your school is up I'll cut orders on you. You'll report to National Security Agency at Nebraska Avenue," I think on the second of

March I think it was, I can't remember exactly, "to General Canine your job." I found out while I was talking to him that there was nobody in that job for seventy-two days by the time I got there. A Colonel Johnson was my Deputy. I reported there. Found a place to live in Bethesda. There was no... My predecessor, Colonel (B% Pagenski), was there as the Deputy Director NSA COMSEC for less than a month it had to be because he was gone seventy-two days before I got there. If you backtrack from second of March, its the later part of November and the agency had become an agency in the early part of November, I can't recall the date.

Johnson: Forth of March

Herrelko: Forth of November...

Johnson: Forth of November, right

Herrelko: Yes, so I was going to get my feet real wet fast. Thirty days after I got there, Colonel Johnson got sick and he as relieved, reassigned and they assigned me a new Deputy, Colonel K.I. Davis. He was my Deputy. Well, the agency at that time did not yet have a COMSEC charter. The rules were generally the same. The SIGINT side of the family had plenty of authority and teeth in their work. COMSEC didn't have that kind of authority and it was decided that we're going to have to do ours by persuasion, cooperation and coordination. In the long run, I think that proved to be good way to do it because you didn't have to shove anything down anybody's throat. You had to get their concurrence before you could do it because it was their money your spending. The first thing we had to do was to start to work on a charter. A COMSEC charter for the United States. I of course was the agency representative. The Navy representative was a Captain (B% Halose). I can't recall the Army man's name. The Marines had somebody there too. The CIA had somebody there and the FBI. But I can only remember Captain Halose for a special reasons. Three times a week we met for six months preparing this charter. Since it was a matter of persuasion and cooperation, words became a problem. Like, somebody would bring up, if I coordinate a subject or a paper with you Captain Halose, and you sign-off on it, does that mean that you agree with it. Oh no, no, no Colonel. That could mean that I accidentally saw it or you showed it to me or I concur. I said, "Well, lets pick a word like concur." Oh no, that's too hard and fast. To make a long story short, we did get the document written. Everybody signed-off on it and I understand that it lasted eighteen years before it needed to redone and it was redone some ten years ago or whenever it was. So we were pretty proud of that document, it lasted that long.

Johnson: What instructions did General Canine give you?

Herrelko: He gave me instructions that you're going to prepare documents that going to be binding on the agency, on the United States, on the Army, Navy, Air Force, and the civilian community. And he said, "It's going to have to be a document that everybody agrees on and is willing to live by."

You mustn't expect to get our way a hundred percent but when you sit in that committee, you will wear a purple suit. Now," he says, "I realize that your an Air Force officer and that your going to have at least fifteen years left after you leave here and that you could dig a hole for yourself. So I expect you to incorporate as much Air Force philosophy in here wearing your purple uniform. As long as it consistent with agency guidance. That you're a purple suitor. And if you have any doubt, you check with me and have your day in court." Which I did many times and sometimes he agreed with me and sometimes he didn't. Whatever the decision was, I'd go back and wore my purple suit talking what Air Force liked to hear or talking what they didn't like to hear necessarily but I had to have my day in court. He says, "I know that its going to the difficult when you have to send other people of yours over to the pentagon to talk with the Army and Navy and Air Force and the Marines and the civilians." He said, "In my case, I've had thirty-six years," he said, "in the cannonball shooting business and I don't give a damn if I ruffle somebocy's feathers." He says, "So you make it a policy as the Deputy Director for COMSEC, that if you have an Army problem, don't send an Army officer over there. Send an Air Force officer, Navy officer, Marine or civilian and conversely with the Air Force and the Navy. However, I'm sorry when its a major COMSEC problem, you have to go. And all I can say to you is that I hope that you have understanding people who guide your career n the Air Force so you wont unnecessarily dig a hole for which you never get out, because your going to dig some." We did dig some. We were right in the middle AFSAM-7 and AFSAM-9 as well as the KL-7 and KL-9 and we had all kind of problems with it. The Navy of course wanted every piece of equipment that goes on a ship, it cant carry incendiary stuff in it. It has to be able to shield or water proof and all this stuff. So they more or less always had a modified version of what we were developing. The AFSAM-7 and 9 later KL-7 and 9 had a lot of problems but it was built. I used to have to go over to a meeting once a week, Air Force meeting once a week, and one Army meeting once a week, and the Navy meeting ornce a week. At the Air Force meeting, the man that controlled my career was General Blake, later a director of the agency. He, I'm sure, understood what my purple suit problems were but he used to always bring his deputy to the meeting who was a Brigadier General Wooten. He kid him and call him "Scotch and Soda Complexion Wooten" because he had a reddish face not the necessarily drank a lot. Bringing Wooten I don't think ever had a real joint job and he never could understand how I as General Canine's representative could come over there and advocate a COMSEC for the position for the United States that wasn't necessarily a blue suit Air Force position. Well I made it known that I had my day in court. I knew the Air Force position sometimes I bought it a hundred percent, sometimes fifty, sometimes nil. So one day I got tired of Berny Wooten challenging me, "How can you come over here wearing a blue suit advocating something like that?" General Blake more or less let him talk, so I said, "Berny, the trouble is yours. You've never had a real

joint job and you need one. You need my job for about six weeks and one of two things will happen to you. It would ate or end up in a straight jacket or in a guard house. He never came again to any of the meetings. I think General Blake asked him he'd rather he didn't come. We were successful in that. We had satellite places, for example, [] was at Adlington Hall Station, much of it was. R&D was at Naval Security Station. [] was at Naval Security Station. We had a satellite at Vint Hill Farms and I had an Army Major down there in charge. They wound the rotors for the crypto machines for the 7 and the 9 and I remember that was a manual winding job. Girls did that. Females, a tedious job and there was no mechanization in this. I was there only a short time. I made... I had a policy that I want to meet every new employee that's hired. I think I had some thousand, maybe a thousand people then. I pick'd once a week on a certain day, I'd meet somebody from each office to have coffee to get to know them. And Mr. Ken (B% Chewn) was the head of my [] or version of S3, maybe it was [] I'm not sure, Ken Chewn. Shortly after I got there our member people like Frank Austin, I can't remember quite what he did, Corry, I think he was already out of uniform. Hiring Ray Tate and people like Frost, Don Frost. Oh my memory fails me now. I remember people like Harry Clark.

Johnson: Was Sinkov there or no?

Herrelko: Oh yes. Kullback and Sinkov where there. Tordella was there then. The man who was then the version of L was a Major. He worked with people at Monmouth that did purchasing and stuff. A Colonel (B% Heatherington) was the head administrator under Canine. Wenger, Admiral Wenger was the Vice Director. An Air Force Colonel, can't think of his name, he was only there a month and he left. He got promoted to BG. About that time, they were building the first multicolored offset print press. They were going to print codes. They put the press together at NSS and then more or less finished the building around it because they couldn't get it through any doors. It took a long time, my job was to get that damn press operational. I think I was there a year before we got it operational. It was the first one of its kind and nobody knew much about these kind of things. We did get it operational to where it could print these multicolored codes faster than we could handle them and store them.

Johnson: Could I bounce back quickly to the charter. This is pretty open minded on the part of the services. Were they willing to cooperate or where they always the foot draggers who said, well we can't do it this way and let's forget it?

Herrelko: Actually, if I had to stack them in order of least resistance or most cooperative, I would have to put the Army first. They went along more than anybody else. The Air Force second and the Navy third. Unfortunately the Navy were most hard nosed about everything. And they still are I suppose. They, unlike the Army and the Navy, had a different funding and budget arrangement, different. They didn't have any commissary or exchanges like the Army the Air Force, they had ship

stores ashore. They had a budget that was more flexible. They could juggle funds more than the Air Force and the Army did. And of course in those days, one thing that was good in some ways and not good in others, mid-year funds. Sometimes we used funds that were allocated four year earlier to get things. It took a number of years for the government to get smart that four funds were expensive. They shortened them to two years or three years funds and then like everywhere else, when it came time near the end of the funding year and you had funds left, everybody ran like hell to try and spend the funds. Sometimes maybe not as judiciously as it should have been done. But that's the way that life went. General Canine, there's quite an article, I notice, in the recent NSA newsletter about him and a story written by one of the retired members in the (1G) General Canine, people were scared of him but deep down inside he had a heart of gold. He made it a point to walk daily through various parts of his little empire unannounced. He didn't want them to know they were coming. There were a few places that didn't want him to come in that way. One of them was Fred Kelly's model shop, part of [] was still at Arlington Hall. One day he found out that Canine was in his shop and also a man name of Leo Rosen who was then the head of R&D. He walked in there and he found. Kelly walked and found Leo Rosen making something on one his lathes. Next day he went out there and he saw Canine walking around and chit-chatting with the workers so he just locked the God Damned back door and told the General, "You want to come in my shop, you come through this door. I want to know when some ones in here. I worry about your safety." Leo Rosen, he said, "I don't want you fooling around with the machines." Rosen actually developed things on those machines down there. Kelly was a real task master and Canine didn't challenge him. And he wore white gloves sometimes and go around and see how dusty things were. He did not like pack rats. When I move Ken Chewn's shop [] I guess it was or [] from Arlington Hall to Nebraska Avenue, one day two forty foot flatbed trailers pulled up full of the biggest conglomeration of junk I've ever seen in my life. Motors that came off of presses back in 1946. A vise that the Navy must of used to hold gun barrels in the years ago. All kind of stuff. Unidentifiable components. I was out there one day in my (2G) jacket. Didn't know that General Canine wasn't far away behind a hedge. When the two trailers pulled up I said, "Chewn, what do you got on those things?" "Well these came out of presses in 1946." "What the hell is that big vise?" "The Navy uses that to hold the gun barrel into something." I said, "Chewn, don't unload anything off of those trailers that you can't foresee a need for within ninety days. If you can't leave it on the trailers and dispose of it."

Johnson: Let me switch tapes please. (TRNOTE: The tape is switched)

Herrelko: And by that time he was calling me Colonel in front of other people, I'll have to go back after a while.

Johnson: Tell me that story again.

Herrelko: He said, "Colonel, your a lot kinder than I would have been. I would have told Chewn, if you have no use for anything on there within the next thirty days, don't unload it." He says, "I'll be back in ninety days and see if this stuff is still here." It was either used or it was gotten rid of. Getting back to calling me Colonel. About the second day I reported to him, I must of made the mistake and within his earshot but not immediate presence of referring to him as General Canine. (TRNOTE: K9) Nobody ever told me that you don't say Canine, you say Canine [Kuh-NINE]. Well I paid for that. For the next eight months after that, he called me "boy". He would only call me Colonel in front of somebody else. He called me "boy". We had meetings once a week. There were only seven of us that sat around the big meetings around this table and you sat by protocol. You knew exactly where you sat. And those were the meetings where you discussed hairy problems, the promotion board, when you wanted to promote somebody. Say, "I want to promote Jim. He knew the hell [who] Jim was. I said, "Well, when has he walked on water the last time or what has he done for the guy that shoots the cannonballs today." That's how you got him promoted. But at the other weekly meeting, in those days, there was the Deputy Directors and Office Chiefs and then a lot of Division Chiefs and they sat in that same room around the wall in chairs. Must have been twenty of them in the agency at that time or more. And I was told by Colonel Heatherington, they referred to him as Mother Heatherington in a paternal way. He said, "The General needles somebody at everyone of those weekly meetings. Not for any particular cause, but to keep them alert and to know that he knows they're there. Your turn will come some time." Well my turn didn't come for eight months and at that meeting, it started at eight thirty in the morning. He, as the last one in at exactly about eight thirty and when the door was closed, his chair was like up against the door. If you came ate, General Canine had to get up out of his chair so that the person could get in. You didn't do that more than once. So eight months went by and I generally had three to five items to bring up. They said don't discuss earth shaking things there, save those for the small meeting so I generally had somethings to bring up, either informative, good, or not earth shaking. This one day, every time I opened my mouth, he climbed up one side of me and down the other for no particular reason. After about three items, he says, "Have you any other items Colonel?" I knew that he's going to stop calling me boy right there. I said, "Yes Sir, I have a couple more." He said, "You're sure a glutton for punishment," and he never needled me again after that. And he started calling me Frank except in public and then Colonel.

Johnson: I bet you were hating that. That's a good story. Sir, could we bounce back to when the charter was approved. Was the organization structure or do you want to go... do you want to proceed that a bit and talk about how long it took to approve the charter and finally when you were given the go ahead. How did the organization look. Or how you established it.

Herrelko: Oh boy.

Johnson: Do you remember that?

Herrelko: Well, when the charter was completed and shortly after that, almost concurrent, the ASA was in being of course, the U.S. Air Force Security Service was created. And the COMSEC part of it, they had a depot established at Kelly Air Force Base. The Army had their Signal Depot, I can't recall exactly where it was. The Navy had the Naval Security Group that was at Nebraska Avenue and the Commander of the Station at that time was a Captain (B% Kurch), later became Admiral Kurch. Right Kurch. And not too long after I came there, Wenger left whether he retired or was ill health, I can't remember, but a Major General John B Ackerman became the vice Director of the agency. In the agency itself, there was of course COMSEC and we had [redacted] I don't recall anymore numbers, just those three plus staff.

Johnson: Do you remember what they stood for? [redacted] would have... What did [redacted] do?

Herrelko: I can...

Johnson: It was soo long ago, I realize.

Herrelko: [redacted]

Johnson: That's fine.

Herrelko: I'm trying to remember who was the head of... Frank (B% Austin) may have been the head of [redacted]

Johnson: (B% Barlow) in there at all or was he on staff?

Herrelko: Barlow was a... Howard Barlow.

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Johnson: Paul Neft, any of those names...

Herrelko: Paul Neft was but Howard Barlow could have been. I can't recall where Paul Neft was. I think he was up on the staff someplace. Can't recall whether Barlow was in R there or S, I can't remember. And then there was P. I guess [redacted] and there was R, same thing, [redacted] [redacted] Rather simple organization chart. I wish I had a picture of it, I would have it with me. I may have it at home someplace. Remember in those days, we weren't allowed to keep those kind of things. I may not have one.

Johnson: Did you have a skeleton organization at all to start with or did you start from scratch and say this is going to be in [redacted]

Herrelko: No. We had a skeleton organization. We just didn't have a charter. We had a skeleton organization and there were the things like distribution. We would distribute to the services and they would distribute within the services. We would distribute directly to CINCs and civilian agencies like FBI, CIA and so forth to all the others.

Johnson: When did you take over the distribution from the Signal Corps, at least responsibility being passed to your people rather than the Signal Corps?

Was that right after World War II or was it when you established S organization?

Herrelko: I think it was either concurrent with S or shortly after the establishment when we started to do the distributing. The Navy was always a problem because we had to send to somewhere to the Navy and then they had to get it out to the ships. So they had to keep more codes on hand in places we could get to more readily. Now the Air Force did theirs from Kelly. The Army did theirs from Arlington Hall. Later we did more of the distribution at the requests of the services direct to certain elements to save time. Of course, once we got the press operating, we printed things for the services plus the agency ones because we had the plant capability. We used the GPO for a lot of printing. We used GPO less after we got the press for sensitive reasons and color. If you want to prompt me or pump me now, any.

Johnson: I was going to ask you one thing that its related I think. The Korean war had just about concluded or was near its conclusion about the time you went in. What was the impact or what lessons did you people learn from supplying equipments and manuals?

Herrelko: The lessons that we learned mainly was to find out what the commander needed. It wasn't too much being done about that. What comm security did he need and then see if we could satisfy the thirty minute guy, the one week guy, the month guy at the same time, without delaying their actions or complicating their lives. On-line was a thing then coming into being. Not off-line communication, but simultaneous coding and decoding, that's what we were striving for. We were just getting into that. We also found out that the biggest thing is... There was a study made, "Joint Communications in Korea". Its on file someplace here. One recommendation was to give every rifle carrying man a voice secure telephone. We decided that's all we need. They talk too much now. That's the last thing we need, so that never materialized. There was a study that was done by that and we had to evaluate that study.

Johnson: Did you invent the walkie-talkie, or was that a result of somebody's decision in COMSEC?

Herrelko: The secure walkie-talkie, yes, was developed by the agency as a requirement. But I think since we yet weren't getting the requirements that we should from the services, the 'R' people by necessity were always dreaming ahead. Sometimes going down the wrong road, but if they waited for the operational requirements to come in before they started doing anything, there was never enough time to get it down. Its just like the signal or communications officer, for years he's been trying to write the signal or communication annex to an OPSPLAN before the OPSPLAN is written. In other words, your trying to do the how before the what's been established. Things haven't changed much today, but they better than they were. You can't do the how before you know the what, but if you from experience can get some of the how done along the way to buy time,

your staying ahead of the operators. Destruction of codes became an important subject. How do you destroy codes. You know, the eating the paper days are over and we developed, at the agency, thermal equipment that would burn a machine and so forth. I mentioned that the Navy weren't interested in that on a ship. How somebody could destroy all the codes if they had to vacate someplace and that became a...

Johnson: Water soluble paper for the Navy.

Herrelko: Yes, that's right. During my tenure as the first head of S, even before I came there, SAC of the Air Force, Strategic Air Command, for a long time had been moving, practicing moving dummy atomic bombs, weapons, from a storage place through a city to a supposed base for launching. They been doing this for a long time and it was advertised. Everybody knew they were dummies. The troops knew they were dummies but they were taught to handle them like they were live. See how long it would take them to get a weapon from point A, through area Z, to point B. Well there came a time, not too long after I got there, that they wanted to move some live stuff instead of dummy with the same kind of advertising and stuff but they didn't want the people to know nor the men handling it to know. You can imagine the consternations if the people in town Z knew that tomorrow they're going to move real live atomic weapons through their town. So I got a call one day from a guy on atomic energy, said, "We're going to need some special communications security help from you when this exercise takes place." There wasn't a hell of a lot of time, like three or four months off. And I said, "Okay." So we worked with them, developed special stuff for them. I don't think there were more than five people that I knew of in the NSA complex that knew this was going to happen and very few outside. Well I had to have atomic energy clearance to do this. I didn't have that clearance. Now those clearances as you know have a number. Nobody else ever has that number so they initiated a expedite atomic clearance on me. Four days before this was to happen, my clearance hadn't come through. One day an FBI agent called me and says, "Colonel, my name is so and so. I'm from the FBI. We've been doing a expedite background on you, investigation for an atomic energy clearance." I says, "Oh you have." He said, "We're being pushed to clear it. We're all set to go, but we can't validate your alleged residence in Tacoma, Washington while you were assigned to the 505th Aircraft Control Warning Group." I said, "Well the hell you say. I lived there for eight months." He said, "Well, if you could please help us, we never do this, help us. We're really being pressured and you know why." I said, "How the hell do I know that your an FBI agent?" He said, "Well let me, if you will listen for one minute and let me tell you some things about you. And if you have any questions after that, I'll be glad to come out." After one minute, I said, "You don't have to talk anymore." I said, "You have to be the FBI. You know things about me that no one else knows." I said, "All right," I said, "I'll see what I can do." He says, "The best place to start is with canceled checks. See what you can find out from canceled

checks." I called my wife up. It was eight thirty in the morning. I said, "Edie I want you to do something. Go up in the attic and get the canceled checks out for the time we lived in Tacoma, Washington. See what you can find out about our mailing address, street address, telephone number, baby sitter, where we bought our fuel, our coal, where we paid our utility bills. Anything you can find out." She called me back in exactly four hours and gave me all the information that I could ever need. So I called the guy. I said, "Well are you ready. Put a recorder on." So I told him, he says, "Well Colonel, we're really ashamed." He says, "We had our Seattle agent check you out, and for two weeks he could not validate your alleged residence in Tacoma, Washington." I said, "Well," I said, "Number one I lived there, here's the information. Number two replace your agent in Seattle. Nine chances out of ten he used a gasoline station map. And nine chances out of ten your going to find that the park land, the area where I lived, probably doesn't exist anymore. And there's a Clover leaf there probably and new highway." He called me the next day, he says, "Your right. Where you lived doesn't exist anymore, but it did." So the next day my atomic energy clearance came through and they had the exercise and it went through without a hitch. Interesting story about security

Johnson: Okay, could I bounce back once more? The mission, do you remember the mission or function statement, after everything was ready to roll when S was formed?

Herrelko: Provide the best possible communications security to the customers we served with the least complex but most complete accounting and with the least interference with operations. That's the best I can remember.

Johnson: Yep, that's good. That says it. So what was the first responsibility of COMSEC or of S organization? The prime responsibility? □

Herrelko: Provide COMSEC for the United States.

Johnson: Okay. Now that was for all governmental agencies as well as military services?

Herrelko: Right, provide COMSEC for the United States.

Johnson: Good.

Herrelko: And that included State Department and everybody else.

OGA

Johnson: Where the other governmental agencies pretty cooperative?

Herrelko: Yes.

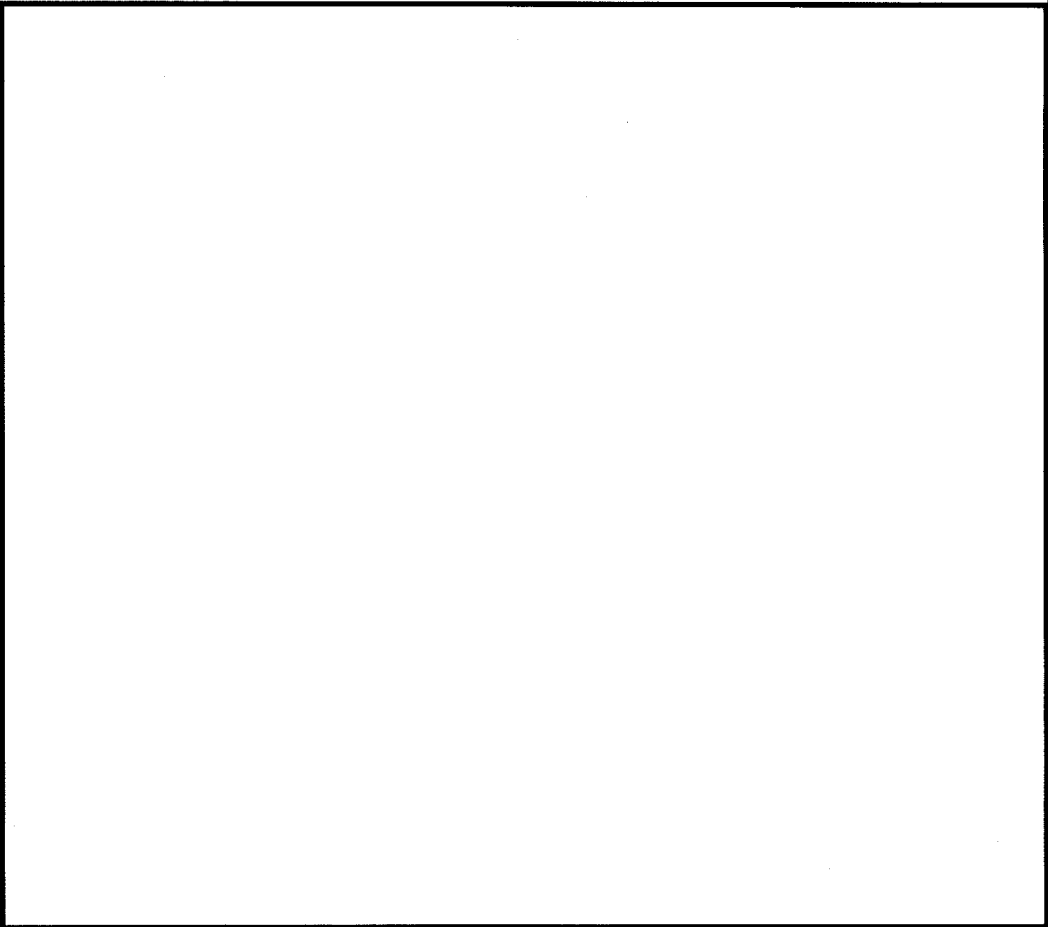
[Redacted]

[Redacted] We did a lot of special codes. We did also... There were special handling and specially secured and specially stored for SAC for the SAC strikes and things and they gave them codes and codenames. Not many people had access to those. And we produced the, in the end, the two person little envelopes that were the keys. Like the two keys for missiles and stuff. Both persons had to be

present and had to have their part of it or no one person could do it. So this prevented, or played a large part in preventing an accidental unintended strike.

Johnson:

Herrelko:



Johnson:

Herrelko:

R&D did the development of that until it came to the engineering phase and then we did the engineering phase of it. Like its done now. About six months after I took over the job of head of COMSEC, an employee asked to see me. His name was William Spaulding. He is now, he's a black man, he's now a member of the DC council. Just recently reelected. He left the agency. I think he was a GS-11 when he came to see me in 1953. Remember me talking about Vint Hill Farms, where they had the ladies down there winding these rotors for NATO especially and for us too. It was a laborious job. Slow, we couldn't crank them out. Had the human element involved. Mr. Spaulding claimed that he had developed a device that could wind ten of those mechanically at a time and up to now, nobody wanted to listen to him, because it would take about five thousand dollars to build that thing. My predecessor apparently didn't listen to him and nobody else did. I said, "Bring your plans up and show them to me." He brought the plans up and to me it looked five thousand dollars, it looked like it might work. You turned the crank and then we motorized it of

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course and it wound ten of those bobbins that go into the AFSAM-7 machine mechanically. So he made a prototype, demonstrated it, it worked. I said, "Go ahead and build one." He built one and he got promoted and he got an award for it, cash money award. I guess that thing was used full-time for a while and then they'd pull it out of the closet every once in a while when we,

[REDACTED] But that thing paid for itself many times. I got a call from him recently. He just thought that I did something that nobody else would ever do. I said, "Well to me it was something that we needed." We plan on having lunch sometime together.

Johnson: Sir, in the early days when S was started. I assume there were growing pains. What were the... what was the major problem or major problems?

Herrelko: The major problems were number one space. Number two, what do you do obsolescent stuff that you still need for a while but your using new stuff Manual proof reading was a laborious job and again the human element. People going blind. A lady who commuted from Baltimore down to NSS for thirty years, Edith Stanley, she was the only person I knew that called General Canine, Ralph. You know to put him in his place. She had about twenty-four women down there proof reading all these codes that came off the press, manually. Comparing them against a master gadget. Poor lighting. For that kind of job, you need a hundred foot candles of light right over you. Shortly after I came to down there one day and she says, "Well, I hope you could do something for me that nobody else has been able to do, not even Ralph." I said, "Ralph who?" "General Canine. Poor women in here are getting blind. Bad lights." She said, "Why can't I have lights here like a draftsman uses?" I said, "Well, that doesn't seem like an insurmountable problem." So I said, "Let me see what I can do for you." So I'm back in the office, got a hold of the supply officer. I said, "This is Monday. Wednesday I want you to produce twenty-four of these fluorescent lights, twenty inch with the clamp and an arm. I want them to go down in Mrs. Stanley's shop. I want them ladies to go blind down there." "Wednesday?" I said, "Yep. Wednesday." So somehow working with the Navy, Wednesday she got her lights. And the next day I happened to be down there when General Canine and she said, "Ralph, where did you find the young man," pointing to me. He says from the Air Force. She says, "Well I'd like you to know that he got me these lights in three days. I been asking you for these lights for months." She said, "Now my girls wont go blind." She died later on, but she was one of the pearls of the agency, Mrs. Edith Stanley.

Johnson: What percentage of people who were assigned to your unit were former Navy types, former Army types?

Herrelko: A large majority. The Corrys, the Tordellas, the Kullbacks, the Sinkovs, the Rowletts, the Larry Clarks, Tordellas, all military experience because they were in the Signals Service. Part of the Army Be sure and look at the

article in the (1M) that somebody wrote. They even name all of these people and there's a photograph someplace that shows them all. They were lieutenants in the Signal Corps and that's where the experience came from. There was no other experience. When you were... even for years later where did the agencies technological experience come from, it had to come from the military. Nobody else was doing codeword. So fore, there was no other source. Mathews was military too. All of them. There was no other source to get it.

Johnson: Most of them were pretty talented people.

Herrelko: Exactly. So anyway, came 1955. I was due for an overseas job. The AFSAM-7s were being produced by a factory out in Indiana someplace. NATO was going get a whole slug of them. My next assignment was going to be the special assistant for avionics. A word was just coined then and Deputy Chief of Staff, Communication Electronics for the Commander, Allied Air Forces, Southern Europe, NATO stationed in Naples. General Canine said, "I have your next assignment orders. Your going to NATO, Naples, Italy. We are going to make sure that you keep your clearance because you apparently going to have a both U.S. crypto room and a NATO crypto room." I said, "Gee I'd like to know what I'm getting into." He said, "Well," he says, "You want to go out TDY?" He says, "We're sending the first shipment of AFSAM-7s to NATO, through the British Admiralty in London. Why don't you volunteer to be the courier and I'll assign a Navy enlisted man with you and you can go out their as a courier, deliver the equipment and take a few days leave and go down take a look at your situation, all right." They chartered a DC-4, a four engine aircraft from some airline. Went out to Indiana, picked up the AFSAM-7s. No other cargo on the plane. Pilot, a co-pilot, an engineer, and a navigator and I think three stewardesses who were deadheading there with this but they were going to come back with passengers. They put the seats in. It had about nine seats in it. Plush seats. So we took the equipment to England. We stopped at Shannon Ireland to refuel and since its a neutral stop, I had to make sure that the customs people didn't get aboard. So as they came up the ramp, I stopped them there. I had my coat off and I was carrying a shoulder .38 and the Navy man had a G I. .45 around his waist. He said, "That kind of cargo." I said, "Yes." "Well," he said, "we'll just stay here until you leave." I says, "The pilot and co-pilot want to eat." He says, "If you're going to eat, you can't carry that weapon into the dining room. How you going to eat?" I said, "When I go, the Navy man will wear both of them. When he goes, I'll wear both o' them." So while the Navy man went to eat first, I wore his .45 and my .38 and I got talking. I know that Ireland is a Catholic country and I got to talking about the World War I and that I was a Catholic. "Oh," he said, "then you are familiar with the fighting 69th." He said, "How they won World War I and how the policeman and the fireman in New York are the example cf your nation." Then we got to talking about Knights of Columbus. And I sad, "Why is that here your a Catholic country (TRNOTE: The audio drops out in mid-sentence.)... and there's no Knights

of Columbus in Ireland and so forth." Well to make a long story short, by the time it came my turn to go and eat just because I was Catholic and we struck a conversation, I could have gone to eat with both guns on me and nobody would have bothered me. Just goes to show you how personal recognition is the best security you can get. I came back in July or August, 1955. I was reassigned to NATO. Went over there. Spent three years on the staff of the Commander Allied Air Forces Southern Europe, and I can't even think of his name. I had the Air telecommunications and communication security responsibility NATO wise for Italy, Greece and Turkey and wore my U.S. hat as a special assistant to the Commander, Lieutenant General Timberlake, U.S. for the U.S. COMSEC for our part of CINCEUR, the U.S. part over there. So I had two code rooms. My American... half of my staff was American, almost half Italian and sprinkling of Greek, Turkish and Italian and one or two French and one or two British. The American COMSEC people worked in both vaults. The NATO only in the NATO vault. It was a unique situation.

Johnson: Was that the comm center... the crypto center, the vault that your talking about?

Herrelko: It was the crypto center for Allied Air Force Southern Europe, NATO and the U.S. part in Naples. That's where I met... (TRNOTE: The audio drops out in mid-sentence)... General Blake who became later the Director, NSA. He knew me and he came out there on some U.S. COMSEC business, so I was the guy he had to contact of course. I went out to the Capadkino Airport to get him. I had Italian driver. They don't drive like we do. By the time I got back, I don't think General Blake ever full sat on the rear seat. He said, "Everybody drive here that way?" He an experience he never had before. And that's where I got to know him. There and of course having been here before. So I stayed there three. In 1958, I came back and became Mr. Mathews Exec in R. He was the Deputy Director for Research and Development and for the next four years from 1958 to 1962, I was the Exec in R. That was a unique assignment for me. I never had been in the pure R&D end before, but I was the internal R manager. And I made sure that the non-technical management end of it was well as I could get it work and it worked rather well. At that time, the Deputy to Mathews was Barlow. Mathews didn't need a Deputy really. He was the Deputy Director and the Deputy Director. He had a mind for detail like nobody else.

Johnson: Sir could I switch tapes?

Herrelko: Yes. (TRNOTE: The tape cuts off.)

[End of Tape 1, Side 2?; End of Tape 2?]

(TR NOTE: The third and final tape of this interview is completely inaudible.)

[End of Interview OH-1982-24-HERRELKO]