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Attn: FOIA/PA Office
9800 Savage Road, Suite 6932
Fort George G. Meade, MD 20755-6932
Fax: 443-479-3612
[Online Request Form](#)

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



Serial: MDR-114572
27 June 2023

This responds to your request of 25 June 2022 to have *the transcript from the oral history of Eugene Sheek (NSA OH 1982-26)* reviewed for declassification. 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 documents 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 subparagraphs (c) and remains classified TOP 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.

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 the responsive documents include other government agencies' information. We have isolated the other agencies' equities and have protected them using the other government agency (OGA) redaction code.

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,



Jacqueline M. Amacher
Chief
Declassification Services

Encl:
a/s

Oral History Interview

NSA-OH-26-82

Eugene Sheck

NSA SAB II, T542, Ft. Meade

By: Robert Farley and Henry Millington

INTRO: Today is 16 December 1982. Our interviewee, Mr. Eugene Sheck. Gene Sheck is a former NSA Staff Officer, who was assigned to the staff responsible for the tasking and monitoring of the ACRP and the Seaborne collection programs. Mr. Sheck was on duty during the period the *Pueblo* was seized by the North Koreans. Mr. Sheck will discuss that situation in this tape. Interview is taking place in the T542 interview room, SAB 2, NSA at Fort Meade. Interviewers, Bob Farley and Henry Millington, who is writing the classified story of the *Pueblo*. Mr. Sheck desires that these tapes be classified Top Secret Codeword.

FARLEY: All right, Gene. Thanks very much for coming back again. It's been two years trying to run you down and get you back with the lapel mike. To pick it up we want to talk about the *Pueblo* and in order to get a little background, the old bit. Where were you assigned in late 1967? This is before the ^{the} *Pueblo*.

SHECK: I was in K1. I'm not too sure at this point in time whether we were K12 or K18, but I think we were K12. K12. Dick Harvey was my boss and, I guess, I was the deputy of K12. And our responsibilities then were related to all mobile platforms. That was the airborne collection program run by the the Air Force and the Navy collection program using surface platforms. We had a

OGA
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[redacted] as part of our organization, as well. And, you don't have to go into that, but we did have that. So, our responsibility was for the tasking and the control and the scheduling of those mobile platforms in response to NSA tasking requirements.

FARLEY: Excellent. Let's jump right into the *Pueblo*. What was the first recollection you have of any advance notice from the Navy or JCS that the *Pueblo* was going to make a journey into the Pacific?

SHECK: Well, I think there's something that precedes that. We had five AGTR's, if you remember correctly, the Navy, ^{of} course, they were strictly tasked and controlled by NSA, ^{the} ~~the~~ AGTR, *Liberty*, *Belmont*, etc. The Navy was very interested in having a trawler program of their own. Of course, I got involved in lots of discussions with the Navy on this directly. The Navy position pretty clearly was that they wanted a Navy platform controlled by Navy, responsive to Navy kind of things. However, when you looked into the intelligence collection objectives, it was totally SIGINT. I think one of the comments I made down there that when they tried to tell us about all this other collection, it consisted of a rope and a bucket, and it pulled water out of the ocean and ^{do} ~~did~~ some salinity kinds of tasks. I said, "You're not going to get away with garbage. The Director of NSA is going to have a lot to say about what you do with SIGINT platforms and let's go from there." So the Navy continued to develop a program and the first three ^{platforms,} ~~platforms,~~ of course, the first one was the USS *Banner*, which was ^{AGTR} ~~AGTR~~ No. 1. The next one happened to be the *Pueblo* which was No. 2, and the *Palm Beach*, which was No. 3.

The *Banner* was operational for a while, because they reconverted it quickly, put it out to sea, and it did some things. It did a patrol off the Soviet Union. I know it did a patrol on the Yellow Sea off the Chinese coast. And I know it was off of Korea. Those are the three that I have pretty close knowledge of. The fact that the *Banner* was there, and the fact that the *Banner* was harassed by Soviet ships, ^{and} it was harassed by Chinese junks, considerably. It was also detected by North Koreans when it went up there on its patrol. The North Koreans didn't come out and harass it like other people did, but they certainly were aware of it.

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PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

[Redacted]

The fact that it was operating off the coast. ~~AGER-I~~ ^{AGER-I} Okay? Meanwhile, the Navy continued to develop a platform program. They started building the *Pueblo* and the *Palm Beach*. I think they were being built on the west coast, but I forget where it was.

MILLINGTON:

Bremerton? *Bremerton* Bremerton.

SHECK:

Is that where it was? Okay. And the name of the game was whichever one came out of rehab first would be the first one that would be deployed somewhere out to the Far East. So, it turns out that the *Pueblo* happened to be configured more quickly than the *Palm Beach* was, therefore, the *Pueblo* was ready to go to the Far East. And we, NSA, started talking to the Navy about how we were going to task that platform. Now, I don't remember in my own mind whether we documented those discussions, or whether it was a message exchange, or a memorandum of understanding. But the understanding clearly was that when

those ships, when they finally got out, the *Banner* and the *Pueblo* finally got out to Japan, that they would do one patrol in response to Navy tasking and then one patrol in response to NSA tasking. Clearly the tasking was to include identification of the specific operating area. Okay? And not just ^{here} ~~here~~ is the tasking, what you do you go and steam where you want to go. That we were going to define where we wanted to operate. Conversely, when the Navy decided to let it go, we would acquiesce or whatever they wanted to do and we would put on what we called in those days, maybe they still do, "supplementary tasking". So, now we have the stage set that the *Pueblo* finally is getting ready to go. The team, the skipper of the ship, came here to the building and talked to some people. Steve Harris, who I knew very well personally before he ever was assigned to the *Pueblo* and afterwards, and he came to the building and we talked. We went over the tasking. I know I sat down with Steve Harris personally and went over the tasking before they went away. And out they went, and made a stop in Hawaii. They visited DIRNAVSACGRUPAC, and CINCPAC and ^{CINCPAC} ~~CINPAC~~ Fleet and what-have-you out there. They finally deployed themselves to Japan. And they got to Japan and this was around, and I'm going to guess, November of 1968, somewhere, October, November. I don't remember the exact date.

FARLEY: 1967, probably.

SHECK: No, they were captured. Oh, '67, that's right. Because it was July 23rd, '68. I'm sorry, 1967. We then had a discussion with the Navy. Me, our office, K12, Navy, and the JRC folks had a

conversation about the deployment of the *Pueblo*. It was decided that, because the *Banner* had, I think had not too previously, had completed a patrol off of the Soviet coast, that why don't you guys, Navy, you take the first patrol of the *Pueblo* and designate where you want it to go. All right? Navy said, "Fine." They, the Navy, determined that ship ought to operate off of North Korea in 1967. And we, NSA, at that particular point in time, had no problem with that. Then we didn't have a problem with that. And ~~we started~~ we started getting our tasking together. We worked with the B Group people, particularly in those days, B1 and George Robb and company, and started gathering tasking, supplementary tasking to levy upon the platform. When along about December of 1967 a young fellow from B Group came down to our office, K12. He had a message. (message shown to Mr. Sheck.). That's not the message he had. He had a different message. This is Dick Harvey and, no that's Kirby. Those are different messages. He had a message, this young fellow from B Group, who, on his own apparently, and I don't even remember his name. That's the unfortunate thing about the whole incident. I don't know what his name was. This young fellow had a message drafted that said, "Boy, you people have got to be complete blithering idiots to put that ship off North Korea, because all kinds of bad things are going to happen. Therefore, cancel it." It had very strong, not the kind of political message you'd ever get out of the bulding or anything else. Right? Dick Harvey sat down and rewrote the message, and said. ^{L''} Yeah, we got to cool this a little bit and we've got to tell 'em what the facts

are. But we certainly can't dictate what we want to do. In addition to that, the kid had the message addressed to CINCPAC and all kinds of other commands in the theater. We went and saw Ollie Kirby. Buffham's name is on here, but we saw Kirby. Oh, Buffham was Chief of B, okay. We went and saw Kirby with the draft message, ^{and this boy} ~~and this boy~~ ^{This} I wish I knew what his name was. ~~this boy~~ ^{was there} and we had a different last paragraph. ^{We re wrote this} ~~We had a~~ ^{"In} paragraph that said, ⁱⁿ light of the above, we suggest you cancel the thing." He, Kirby, changed it to, "I wish you'd reconsider." I think. Didn't he say that? I forget the exact words. Well, yeah. These words were put in by Mr. Kirby. The last paragraph. He personally put that in there, if that's the one. Yeah, that's the same message he sent. Okay. So that message went, all right, to the JCS. And that message stayed aside at the JCS. Now, we're back at NSA, and I don't know whatever happened to that message. We never saw anything. Never saw a thing at that particular time until January 23rd, when the ship was deployed off of North Korea. It was gone for a few days and it was patrolling up and down and then on the 23rd of January, ^{we all know} ~~along with~~ the story, the North Koreans came out and they did funny things and they eventually captured the ship. Right? Now, of course, that happened around two o'clock in the afternoon, Korean time, which was like two o'clock in the morning here. I got a call to come to work and I came in to work, and General Morrison was at work. And General Morrison decided that he was going to be the guy in charge of the *Pueblo*, whatever problem we had with them. He called all kinds of other

a paragraph that said,

We had

people, but Morrison was kind of running the show at that particular time. General Carter came in and said to Morrison, "You know, there's no sense both of us standing here while this thing is trying to work itself out. You stay here, gather all the data, and I'm going to be back in at 6:30 or 7 o'clock in the morning." Mr. Zaslow by then was in. George Robb. "And I want a pretty good package of what's happening by the time I walk in in the morning." And they did. They got a whole bunch of people and they even had a little bit of data about some of the intercept. Karl Kim was in the audience the next morning and a ^{whole} ~~whole~~ bunch of other people. George Robb gave a briefing to the Director of what was happening and what happened out there. And then we presented this message. I'd given this message to Zaslow. Up to this point in time, I don't know if his name was on there. Up to this point in time, when all that he said was that he was unaware of this message until that particular time. And I don't mind saying that he wasn't. But when he saw that, boy. Mr. Zaslow showed this message to the Director. General Carter read it, and then he got up and made what I thought was the greatest political position anybody could take. He said, "I don't want anybody in this room to call or to bring to anybody's attention the existence of this message. That they will find out themselves and when they do, they will be sufficiently embarrassed about the whole situation that I don't have to worry about that and you don't have to worry about that, but I consider that message as kind of saving our ass." Right? Those are kind of the words he used. Pretty strong words. But he didn't want

anybody to call anybody. Well, it wasn't seven hours later that the JCS folks had discovered or remembered the existence of this message. Now what I found out after the fact is that they, the JCS/JRC, sent this message to CINCPAC and said "take Ref 'A' for action." Or something like that. Very short "take for act", you know, ^{They've} they've got one of them funny F-o-r-a-c kind of ^{things,} ~~and~~ ^{that} that was it. Period. And JCS never followed that up. CINCPAC folks out there said, "Ain't no NSA bunch of guys going to tell us what ^{not to do,} ~~not to do.~~" And besides that, "Who's going to capture one of our Navy combat ships." And, you know, all that kind of ^{stuff. Now} ~~now~~ in hindsight, you know, all the words that sounded funny might sound very dramatic then, sound very strange now. So the ship got captured. Right? And the crew was interned. We had to do a lot of running around in the building trying to gather information. The fingerprinting exercise started. They formed a team. There was an investigation team from downtown. People came out to the building. I talked to the people personally. I worked with Mr. Zaslav pretty closely. George Robb went to the United Nations and talked to Arthur Goldberg and he took Karl Kim with him and George spent most of his time trying to avoid TV cameras or somebody. He was having a problem with that. Because of all the publicity afterwards. And then, I, Gene Sheck, became involved with a number of studies then that the JCS started to run on really questioning the need for surface, shipborne, surface SIGINT collection activities. Why do you really have to do that? Why do you need a ship? And all that sort of thing. I was the NSA

participant. The study came out with a very, very strong position that, (1), you needed those kinds of ships. They did serve a very, very useful purpose. That the planning for them left a little bit to be desired, and that they ought to be protected in some fashion. That was the JCS military kind of implication. We deferred in any position with regard to defense, to protection, to destruction mechanisms. And although we got involved in a lot of that stuff, we did not participate or give a position from NSA whether that was good, bad, or indifferent. That was strictly a military determination that we left up to them as a follow-on on all that stuff.

FARLEY: Gene, could I bounce back just a little bit?

SHECK: Yes.

FARLEY: Before the capture, were we aware at NSA of the documentation aboard the *Pueblo*?

SHECK: No. No.

FARLEY: Was that strictly a Navy responsibility?

SHECK: Yes, it was. And you ^{got to} ~~gotta~~ be fair to the system, now, okay? When a team is deployed, and the team they had to put on. There was no permanently assigned team of linguists, for example, assigned to the ship, because it depended upon ⁱⁿ what operating area you would operate. If you can operate against the Soviet Union, you need a Russian linguist. You going to operate China, you need ^{Chinese.} ~~China~~. If you can operate North Korea, you need North Korean linguists or Korean linguists. So the determination of what kind of linguistic capability was required was strictly related to the specific area of operation. All right?

So, now I'm sitting in Japan, if I'm a Navy guy, and I'm a linguist of some kind, they say, okay, because of your capability, we're going to assign you aboard the *Pueblo* and it's leaving tomorrow. I quickly gather all the tech support data I can find that's going to help me do my job better. One. So you have now kids, people, operators, ~~kind of~~ arbitrarily just gathering information that they think is going to help them in their job. Steve Harris gathered stuff in Hawaii. He picked up more stuff in Japan. Anything they thought that might help them do the job better, they tried to do. There were no controls levied by anybody, and that includes NSA, that said you were not allowed to have this, this or that. Just go do your thing. And you afford the classified material the same kind of protection you would afford it at any kind of a cleared area. ^{They} ~~You~~ had a cleared area. They had safes, you know. And nobody was dreaming of a capture. In spite of the fact that this incident occurred after the *USS Liberty* incident. Okay? Because everybody knew the *Liberty* incident as a terrible, terrible accident and that never would ~~have happened~~ again. That sort of thing. And, although there were some problems with classified documentation aboard the *Liberty*, I mean, some of that stuff floated to the top of the water and all that kind of stuff, ^N nobody anticipated anything like that happening. But on the other side of the coin, nobody in their right mind ever dreamed they had the amount of documentation that they had on there. Certainly not me. Because the biggest shock I got was when I found out what they really had on that goddamn ship. Really terrible. The answer to that is "no".

FARLEY: Okay, Gene. There was nothing unusual about the way NSA monitored the patrol of the *Pueblo* out in the Pacific?

SHECK: No. No.

FARLEY: It was not unusual. It was just pretty much routine. ^{that we keep}

SHECK: It was a routine patrol. We insisted that we ~~keep~~ ^{keep} position reports and the Navy put us on distribution for, I think PINs, or whatever the Navy expression is. Point of intended movement or something, and they put us on distribution. So, we had a pretty good idea of where they were, and, ^{But} ~~but~~ I do remember we were in receipt of at least a 24-hour report. That said my position is latitude, longitude. ~~(unintelligible comment)~~ They were not under radio silence. I don't know who told you that, Henry, but I guarantee you that we got reports in this building where they were operating. They sent messages to USN-39.

MILLINGTON:
Weren't they
under radio
silence?
SHECK.

FARLEY: The *Pueblo* SIGINT team?

SHECK: Yep. Now maybe the ship's general service radio people were on radio silence, but that SIGINT team was sending stuff back. I saw reports.

MILLINGTON: Oh, yes. On the 22nd, they made up some reports and sent them out then after they were first detected.

SHECK: Oh.

MILLINGTON: When ~~Duchet~~ ^{Duchet} ~~when~~ these Korean fishing trawlers circled them on the 22nd, he decided he had been observed and detected. And he thought he was then at liberty to break radio silence, to break ~~EMCON~~ ^{EMCON ("Emission Control")} ~~M-COM~~ and send that in. So, Steve Harris, at the same time prepared reports.

SHECK: On that day.

MILLINGTON: On the morning of the 23rd. So, when those messages came in they were bearing date time groups of the drafting of them.

SHECK: Ooh.

MILLINGTON: But, they weren't actually received until the 23rd.

SHECK: Okay. All right. That explains some of it.

MILLINGTON: For ten days, nobody knew where they were. They knew when they left.

SHECK: That's a complete blank, as far as I'm concerned. Because, I don't think we ever had any ship ever operate without us knowing where they were. And that sort of bothers that really happened in that time frame. You must have better facts than I can remember.

FARLEY: When was the first SIGINT reflection from the Koreans that they observed the *Pueblo* in their waters, or ⁱⁿ the waters adjacent to Korea?

SHECK: I don't have any idea. All I know is the day of the 23rd, I saw some of that intercept where they kept repeating the ~~AGER-2~~ ^{AGER-2,} which was a number indicating there was some concern about why does that fellow have ~~AGER-2~~ ^{AGER-2,} rather than probable ~~AGER-1~~ ^{AGER-1} ~~AGER-1~~ which would have been the *Banner*. I think the fact that this had a different number on it than what they must have expected. One could assume, based upon the conversation that these two guys were having that they expected something other than ~~AGER-2~~ ^{AGER-2,} because the guy, "You really mean ~~AGER-2~~ ^{AGER-2 ?}" "Yes, I mean ~~AGER-2~~ ^{AGER-2,}" And the guy kept repeating ~~AGER-2~~ ^{AGER-2,} ~~AGER-2~~ ^{AGER-2,} ~~AGER-2~~ ^{AGER-2,} And it seems like, why did they do that when one could surmise that they thought it was going to be ~~AGER-1~~ ^{AGER-1 ?} And maybe the

AGER-2.

guy

Painted his number over or something. But they were kind of surprised at that, that there was a different number on the thing. But then they started circling it, you know, and all hell broke loose after that.

FARLEY: The communications channels to the SIGINT team aboard were through USN-39 from NSA ~~through?~~ through?

SHECK: It had a USN-467 designator.

FARLEY: Okay.

SHECK: And we could send our messages out. It was before the chain-of-command problems started, which is one of the contributors. We could deal directly with the SIGINT teams on board as long as we're talking SIGINT tasking. Certainly, if we were going to propose the change, the movement of the ship, the direction of movement of the ship, the operating area of the ship, we would have gone through command channels to have that effected. When we're dealing with tasking, i.e., providing supplementary tasking, ~~if~~ we would deal directly with USN-467. Maybe we would have gone to DIRNAVSECGRUPAC or at least within the SIGINT community. Now all that's changed. A lot of that's changed since then. But we had a USN-46- something designator.

MILLINGTON: ~~to~~ Y.

SHECK: Y, I guess it was. And, of course, in telecommunications world, I guess USN-39 was the guard for those folks. So they would have relayed it from 39 to USN 467Y.

FARLEY: Okay. North Korea was the intelligence target then?

SHECK: Yes.

FARLEY: Did they collect anything useful before they were captured?

SHECK: Well, you know, Henry just said that they weren't getting any traffic in. I don't ^{know in} hindsight? You mean after the fact? The answer is, they weren't collecting anything, from what I could learn. Not very much of anything based upon our debrief of people. There was very, very little activity. They got some radar activity. They got some limited voice air, if I remember. And that's about the extent of it. Very, very little.

MILLINGTON: ~~The linguists.~~

SHECK: One of the things that came out after the fact was that when they were being attacked, Commander Bucher asked the ~~linguists~~ ^{linguists --} they had them on the loud speaker. They had North Korean ship-to-shore communications on loud speaker. And, of course, if you've listened to the tape or heard the tape, even if it's Korean, you can determine immediately that these guys were very excited, the North Koreans. The skipper, Bucher, it was alleged to have asked one of the linguists, which was a Marine kid, "What is he saying?" The kid said, "I have no idea what he's saying, but he's certainly excited." The kids just were not qualified linguists, period. I mean, there's no other way you can put that in a bag and shake it up to come out. It's going to come out they were unqualified for the job they were given. Totally.

FARLEY: That's a shame.

MILLINGTON: Plus the linguists, these young men were student linguists, Hammond and Keefer. These two Marines had made no attempt to cover their ^{inexperience.} ~~lack~~ (2). When they were first assigned and designated, they protested saying, "We haven't used this since

Monterey. And that's been over a year and we are just not ready for this."

SHECK: Yes, sir. Yes, sir.

MILLINGTON: And nobody would listen to them. And they had the MOS or the right specialty number, so they were assigned.

SHECK: That's right. That's exactly right.

FARLEY: Henry, you had some questions.

MILLINGTON: Can we back up a minute, Gene, to the sequence of events, and particularly concerning the initial tasking and the preparation of the proposal for the *Pueblo* mission that went in the JCS/JRC review book.

SHECK: (coughs) Excuse me. Right.

MILLINGTON: In that procedure, NSA has, as I understand it, NSA has no ^{determinate} ~~determined~~ voice in this. They can make, perhaps, an advisory opinion, or can they?

SHECK: I guess I would disagree with what you said. Let me tell you what the NSA ^{can do. That} ~~that~~ book still exists today. The JCS reconnaissance book is developed on the basis of everybody's input world-wide on reconnaissance activities, no matter where they be. The JRC responsibility is to put that into a meaningful publication. Now, admittedly, they will screen out many things at their level that don't get into the book, but if they feel secure enough that that makes a lot of sense, and it's also reviewed by the JCS guys themselves, that's good enough for the book. They developed the book, and now we have what they call the book review process. The Director of NSA gets a copy of that book. The Director of NSA has to forward a written statement to the

JCS that says he "concur" or "nonconcur" with the proposal set forth in that book. Or he states he has "no objections", I guess, would be a better word of saying it, because, I'm not too sure he has concur/nonconcur authority. That he has no objections with the proposal's outline to so-and-so. If he has objections, he will state those objections and provide the rationale for that objection. There have been a few cases where NSA has done that. An airborne mission that might provoke some strange reaction on the part of the Soviets might provoke the Director of NSA to say, "We don't want to do that." Admiral Inman was probably more sensitive to that responsibility than any other Director. Up until the time I retired, we briefed Admiral Inman every month on the book. He never missed one briefing on that reconnaissance book. His reaction though, if he disagreed with something, he generally picked up the telephone and talked directly with people and said, "You really ought not to do that." And that would disappear from the book before something got into a peein' contest between the NSA and the military commanders. It worked very, very well. Conversely, he had no inhibition about stating his position, if it required that. So, the book is reviewed by NSA. NSA has a pretty strong voice. You can bet your bippy that no one down there would just whitewash and say don't pay any attention to the NSA position. If NSA had gone out with a message or a position on that book in that timeframe, I'm sure the mission probably would not have gone. But nobody did that. Even this message is a little wishy-washy, because of the position NSA's in. It was a Navy patrol proposed by Navy people in response

to

to Navy tasking, and we were an outsider saying, "You really ought to look at that again, guys." If that's what you want, ^{think about it.} ~~My~~

My memory of the last paragraph which said, "In light of the above, you may wish to reconsider your proposal." That's what I remember the last paragraph saying, not ^{this} his last paragraph, which says, "It is not intended to reflect adversely on your proposal." Well, that's certainly what it's intended to do. Or was intended to do.

MILLINGTON: That particular review happened just about the time. ^{In} fact, it did happen between Christmas and New Year's.

SHECK: About 27 December, that's right.

MILLINGTON: And, in fact, ⁱⁿ later congressional investigations, it turned out that the Joint Chiefs, as such, individually and personally, never looked at the book. The review was made by their deputies. They, themselves, never saw it.

SHECK: In that time frame.

MILLINGTON: In that time frame.

SHECK: I don't doubt that. I don't doubt that.

MILLINGTON: And on the very last day, they were trying to squeeze this out before the New Year's weekend.

SHECK: Yep.

MILLINGTON: In particular. And this went to State, DoD, and back to JCS all in one day.

SHECK: Oh, really? They get a telephonic concurrence in many instances. They did then. They're more sensitive to it. The unfortunate part about it, ^{is} the *Pueblo* was bad enough, and ~~the~~ ^{The} crew was released in December of 1968. Then, we did our debrief

in January of '69. I got tied up until April 1st of 1969, in doing all this debrief stuff, and on April 15th, they shot down the EC-121. So, now you have the sensitivities of all of this compounded by the shutdown of the EC-121, which really caused us more grief than any of the others caused us. I think the 121 caused NSA more grief than this thing caused us. From a pure loss of cryptologic information, this was probably the biggest disaster that ever happened. Because there was nothing, literally nothing destroyed. You know, they started a fire and smoke drove ^{them} ~~em~~ out. When they tried to open the door, they got shot at. Bad things happened when they were trying to do destruction. They expended enormous amounts of time trying to sledgehammer equipment, which was the dumbest, dumbest thing they could have done, because a radio is a radio is a radio, and a recorder is a recorder. And for anybody to waste time trying to smash it up. It's different if you're taking a keying device for crypto gear and do that, but certainly not with a radio or a bank of receivers. That's what they were doing. They were banging away with things and running around trying to do something constructive, or destructive. The things they really should have worried about were ^{7th} ~~well~~ they ^{didn't} ~~did~~ worry about them. They worried about them to the extent they tried to do something. They even put the bucket that was burning outside before the Koreans started shooting at them again. And that didn't work. And they tried to throw some overboard. They threw it in bags. They might have succeeded in throwing a bag, I think that's what it was, a bag overboard. So that was the kind

of frightening thing about it. But, then, after that, it was just, "forget it!"

FARLEY: Henry, you had some other questions?

MILLINGTON: Yes, well, can we drop to what I call the "period of initial reaction."

SHECK: In the building?

OGA

MILLINGTON: In the building. When from the documentation I read, one of the first things that was asked for was to increase the [redacted] flights.

SHECK: Yes, sir. (laughs) Oh, shit. Yeah. You're going to make me say things.

MILLINGTON: There were some problems.

SHECK: Yes, he did, goddam it. I was one of his problems and so was Dick Harvey. Mr. Zaslow says, "Let's increase our [redacted] flights so we can get all the North Korean reaction." And our position was me and Dick Harvey at the low level and Mr. Zaslow started to refer to us after that as the "experts". "Ask the experts. They seem to know more about this stuff that I do." Our reaction was, you ought to be careful, Mr. Zaslow, because you know, if they've done that to the *Pueblo*, you know, we're going to lose an airplane, because those things are unescorted. There's no fighter protection around. And we don't even know where the first fighter is out in that Far East right now to do anything about the *Pueblo*. So we would say, "That's kind of a dumb thing to do." I forget, but I think the message might have gone out. But, there was a request to put up continuous [redacted] C-130 coverage out of Japan. Okay? And there was a lot of

argument in the building whether that made sense or not. And I don't remember what happened as a result. I really don't. I think we never got the flights. I think, didn't we?

MILLINGTON: We got the flights.

SHECK: I mean, that day.

MILLINGTON: Oh, yes. Yes..

SHECK: No, we didn't get nothing about that.

MILLINGTON: Then the request went to JCS. And the discussion was also between JCS and NSA as to was this a good idea?

SHECK: Yes.

MILLINGTON: AFSS was also concerned.

SHECK: Yes.

MILLINGTON: And putting in their two cents worth about sending them out unescorted. They wanted some fighters with them.

SHECK: They were concerned about the back end crews. Absolutely. Yes, sir. Which is the same concerns we had. And, of course, everybody was flapping around that morning. You got to remember that, trying to figure out what the hell we were going to do. USN-39, ^{was} we're trying to get some coverage. We're trying to get coverage out of anything that was available. And, of course, the only thing that made sense is airplanes. If you're going to get VHF Comms, it's going to be through airplanes, and So, ^{the} ~~that~~ idea to do that kind of collection in an airplane made sense except that in that kind of a hostile environment, and, I considered that environment then to be hostile, I mean, God knows what they would have done if we had started flying all sorts of things. You know, by then a bunch

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of proposals were starting to come in from the commanders in the field. CINCPAC wanted to go in and tie a lasso on it and pull it out of Wonsan Harbor. Literally!. He said he'd propose a message that said, "I will send a fleet of destroyers in with appropriate air cover. I will tie a rope on ^{the Goddamn} a ~~goddamn~~ tub and I'll pull it back out." you know, and ^{it said} ~~said~~ "Anchors Aweigh" at the end of the message. But, anyway, some cooler head in DoD says, "No, forget that. We'll keep your proposal under advisement." Another proposal was to send the *Banner* back up there with ^a very small crew and allow the *Banner* to be in a position where it may again provoke the North Koreans. And have that provocative action on the part of the North Koreans, because for us to take some retaliatory action, ^{They} they were going to do that with carriers over the horizon, out of radar range and having air cover, again airborne, out of radar range. And that the minute ^{the ship} indicated the North Koreans were coming after them, they would then, "sss"! That would be the signal to launch all the fighters. They even had rules of engagement and hot pursuit. Oh, you name it, they had it. That proposal was moving along pretty well.

MILLINGTON:

It did move.

SHECK:

Yeah, but ^{I'm} ~~it's~~ not too sure it went up there. It didn't go off ~~at~~ of North Korea.

MILLINGTON:

Joined a group.

SHECK:

Yeah, it joined ^{A task group.} ~~that's~~ right. It stayed south of the 38th parallel, because that plan had gone so far that there were ^{really serious} ~~releasers~~ ⁱⁿ ~~it~~ ^{They} ~~to~~ have a guy, an engineman, and a skipper. Just a crew of ^{were} ~~order~~ ^{going} a limited number of guys, ^{just} ~~so that~~ in case something did happen.

But they wanted to provoke the North Koreans into doing something so they could get back at them. Well, again, time, you know. It took some time to get the carriers over there. It took time to get the fighters ready to go. It took time to get the *Banner* ready for sea, and by then, the reaction of the United States was, let's "cool it", because we don't want to lose the 80 guys and all that sort of thing. So they didn't do that. They didn't do any of that.

MILLINGTON: After the first week, things began to settle a bit. Meanwhile, the 5th Air Force had asked for additional SIGINT support because of the additional aircraft that was then beginning to stage into South Korea. Some 186 of them, in fact, were coming in there and General, I think it was McKee, was the commander of 5th Air Force. He said, "I want more SIGINT support and specifically, cannot AFSS, send me some emergency reaction units out here."

SHECK: Uh, huh.

MILLINGTON: Which AFSS said, yes, they could do. Not only the equipment, but the appropriate processing personnel, including Korean linguists. And NSA was being advised and knowledgeable of these requests ^{from} ~~from~~ 5th Air Force. As the ERUs then began to deploy, then 5th Air Force was coming in and saying, not only do we want them out here, we want total control. Do you remember that? *That was the scenario.*

SHECK: I don't remember a lot of the details about that, but that's always been a major problem of delegating OPCON of a deployed SIGINT unit to anybody under any circumstances. Some of that

has cleared up somewhat over the past few years. There are better procedures for doing lots of that kind of stuff. But there was a problem with that. I don't remember the specifics. But I do know that based upon Mr. Zaslow's position--he was Chief of B-- Mr. Zaslow's position with regard to letting anybody have control of any kind of a SIGINT asset was, there ain't no way the military can do that, because they don't know what they're doing. How are they going to task it and what are they going to task it against. Where are they going to get the tech support? Who's going to provide all that sort of data? So, he would be the kind of prime guy behind saying, "I don't want to do that kind of a thing." But I don't remember too much more about that than that. But I do remember they wanted--in fact, they probably did deploy some of the people out there, I think.

MILLINGTON: Well, eventually, it ended up where, indeed, JCS sided with the 5th Air Force.

SHECK: The military. Sure ^{They} they would.

MILLINGTON: And said, you will have these as a direct support unit and you will control them.

SHECK: Right.

MILLINGTON: However, NSA was expected to provide all the tech support they needed, whatever that would be.

SHECK: Yes. Yes.

MILLINGTON: Depending upon what they wanted to do with it.

SHECK: Yes.

MILLINGTON: And AFSS said, well, we will intervene here and provide the commander of the 5th Air Force, particularly as advance echelon with the personnel who can translate his requirements.

SHECK: Into the SIGINT requirements.

MILLINGTON: The EEPs into SIGINT framework.

SHECK: Right. Right.

MILLINGTON: The administration of this, according to AFSS accounts, and those are the ones that I've been able to find which are most detailed about this, seem to indicate that as this went on, indeed NSA was kept pretty well advised of the tasking that was going on.

SHECK: Yep. Yep. Yep.

MILLINGTON: Commander of the 5th Air Force, his prime concern was that there be an early warning capability.

SHECK: Uh, huh.

MILLINGTON: And he felt that the ACRP flights might be able to provide that. And NSA's position was, to a degree, that you've got to consider the ground sites.

SHECK: Everybody.

MILLINGTON: The whole SIGINT collection effort, *in its totality rather than than take a single element.*

SHECK: That's right. That's right.

MILLINGTON: The position of the Air Force, and it seems to me the Navy, too, because Commander 7th Fleet was *giving* reporting guidance to NSC detachments out there which turned out to be, as Bob knows, in opposition to some of the Techins~~ts~~, in terms of what should be concerned critic criteria. My personal opinion is that,

initially there was concern about the recovery of the *Pueblo* itself, and the crew.

SHECK: Yes.

MILLINGTON: Within about a week's time, on the part of both the Navy and the Air Force, they had kind of given up that whole idea and they were getting ready to go to war.

SHECK: Yes.

MILLINGTON: Is this true?

SHECK: Yeah, I think so. I guess I wouldn't say go to war. In all this planning about what are we going to do about the *Pueblo*, you have to understand that it took time to move major combatant ships. I don't remember the exact number of days, but one of those carriers was way far away and he had to steam. He might have been in the Philippine Islands, but he had to steam toward North Korea. Or at least to get into South Korean waters, somewhere south of the 38th. And that took a number of days, certainly beyond the first week of the problem. The fact that they were planning on using the *Banner* as a decoy, the fact that we were exercising the military commands in every instance. In every instance we ever had a problem, we'll always stand up and say, we must exercise the "freedom of the seas" criteria. That no country can do that to us. Libya is a classic example, where they try to block off a hundred miles and we keep challenging Libya that you can't block off a hundred miles of that water. There's international laws regarding freedom of the seas. And that was the thing they were going to do in North Korea—to show the North Koreans that we could, in fact, exercise freedom of the

seas. And we were going to do it, by God. And they were going to put that whole great big task force up there to show 'em they could do it. So, if you'd seen a plan for war, I think they were planning for something big. Whether the North Koreans would have quietly sunk back into the background, whether they would have reacted violently, which I think they would have, That never happened, because nobody decided to exercise that task order, or implement the task order. Yeah, I think it was a scary week that they fully were prepared to do battle. No ifs, ands, or buts, as far as I'm concerned. But for good reason. I mean, they were doing things.

MILLINGTON: Another thing that I began to realize as I got into this was, while the *Pueblo* incident to NSA was quite a disaster, and quite a significant event, to the military, particularly Commander in Chief, Pacific, his main focus at that time was on Southeast Asia, the Viet Nam War.

SHECK: Yes.

MILLINGTON: He had so many forces committed down there, as did the Air Force, that this event in the Sea of Japan suddenly was kind of like a big irritant. They had to divert forces ~~to~~ from the main theater,

~~SHECK: Yes.~~

~~MILLINGTON: ...from the main theater..~~

SHECK: That's right. And it was right before Tet, too,

~~MILLINGTON: In fact,...~~

~~SHECK: And it ^a was right before Tet, too.~~

MILLINGTON: Exactly. Right before Tet. Exactly one week after the *Pueblo* when they were, as you said, all excited about repositioning forces and whatnot, boom! Tet breaks loose.

FARLEY: Let me switch.

TAPE 1 SIDE 2

MILLINGTON: So here we have Tet breaking loose, superimposed on this *Pueblo* incident, and, in fact, literally, at one point, while the *Pueblo* had been on the front page of papers with the Tet explosion, *Pueblo* was moved off of page one in the press.

SHECK: That's right.

MILLINGTON: And in some respects, I think this same rationale could be applied to the military. They suddenly realized, well, yeah, the *Pueblo's* a big thing, but here's our war, major war, going on down here.

SHECK: I think that, you know, hindsight says that the Tet offensive probably had something to do with the lack of desire to pursue anything with North Korea. And then there is the concern in the Pentagon, that had to be in the Pentagon, that what if the North Koreans react in violent fashion? What if the North Koreans take that opportunity to go galloping across the border. We got our hands full in Southeast Asia. We cannot afford to absorb another area and provide the necessary forces to take on that kind of battle. I think those kinds of considerations were the considerations that said, pull that task force back. Let's get the hell out of there, and we'll sweat out the recovery of the crew through some diplomatic or other channel. They must have had some idea where they were located, so they knew they were still

alive, I guess. So they were comfortable in that fact. And any action taken might (1) kill all the 81 guys; (2) it would just compound our problem in Southeast Asia. So, I think a lot of that had some bearing on the decision not to pursue that thing any further. And I think that was great that they didn't pursue any further. They weren't even prepared when they tried to launch fighters that day.

OGA

[Redacted]

MILLINGTON: And they were at war to begin with.

SHECK: I know.

[Large Redacted Area]

I don't know.

MILLINGTON: The Commander in Chief, Pacific, in fact, when it happened was aboard a carrier in the Gulf of Tonkin with General Westmoreland talking about the Viet Nam situation.

SHECK: Yeah, right.

MILLINGTON: And he didn't know too much about it until...

SHECK: Neither did the 5th Air Force. 5th Air Force didn't know what the hell they were talking about. When they asked 5th Air Force

to provide some support, he needed to know for what. And he didn't know the cover word for the operation. They couldn't get at a file. Somebody had it locked up in a safe. I mean, you could go on and on and on with things like that. But conversely, there was no action on the part of the CINC out there to ever alert anybody to the fact that we were going to have a proposal, that there was a ship up there, the ship was unescorted, the ship was up there by himself, and the ship was in any sort of danger. There was no traffic, no nothing to alert anybody with regard to the safety of that platform. They were on their own. They were literally one hundred per cent on their own. Now, a guy's got to look back and say, that's stupid, except that they put the *Banner* up there. All right? And the *Banner* was harassed by Soviet ships. The Soviets pointed guns at it and said, "You're in our waters", and the *Banner* flashed back, "I'm in international waters, I'm not ~~going~~ ^{going to} go nowhere." When the *Banner* was surrounded by Chinese junks and so forth in the Yellow Sea, ^{The} same thing happened. You know, they were harassing ^{them} ~~em~~ and coming at them and backing off, ^{He} ~~and he~~ flashed, "I'm in international waters, I'm not going to move." And he didn't move. He stayed right there. So. A guy comes steaming back from that kind of a thing and he says to the skipper of the *Pueblo*, Lloyd baby, you got nothing to worry about. They do that every day. They'll come out. They'll harass you. You wave back. You blink a few things at them and they'll go away. Everybody knows that. We knew it. They do it to our reconnaissance, airborne reconnaissance missions. Nobody gets excited about

that. They weren't then, anyway. So, when it did happen to the *Pueblo*, here come these guys only they weren't playing. And there's the difference between Lloyd Bucher and the guy that was on the *Banner*. The guy on the *Banner* could have been in Lloyd Bucher's place just as easily off the Sea of Japan had that Soviet skipper decided to shoot at him. But he didn't, for whatever reason. So I can understand why a guy would say, we don't have to worry about those kinds of things, because they won't bother him. They'll harass him, but they won't bother him. So I can understand why that happens. Hindsight says they should have had the whole United States Pacific fleet out there, but that's hindsight. I think even after the fact, we did some things. We had a destroyer over the horizon, which didn't make much sense to me. We had a ship out there collecting a little bit of information with a destroyer over the horizon wasting all that manpower, wasting all that combat capability, sitting around to protect a ship for an event that probably would never occur again. I guess, I don't know. But it never worked that well after that. Then, of course, we started losing the ships quickly after that.

FARLEY:

Gene, were all our field sites aware that the *Pueblo* was out there? Because [redacted] said that he was not even aware there was a *Pueblo* until somebody waved a press report at him and said, ^{What} ~~what~~ is the *Pueblo*?"

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SHECK:

Yeah. The answer to your question is that, I know in the B Group world, they sent out what they call agosh, I can't remember the exact title of the message, to kind of let people

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know that there was a platform out there [redacted]

[redacted] pass this

information on so it goes from there to 39 to the ship, ~~and it~~^{It} would help the ship redirect its collection efforts and so forth. So, I think the fact there was a platform out there, yes, that people were aware within the SIGINT community that the *Pueblo* was operating. I think that is pretty much sure. What they didn't know is, the specific track of the platform. Okay? They didn't know that. I'm not even sure that we knew the specific track. I don't remember that, but it was in the book on the dotted line somehow, but I don't remember it very clearly.

MILLINGTON: The only thing I think we really knew was, when you say specific track, we knew the parameters, the limits of the Pacific operational power is, Mars, Venus and Pluto.

SHECK: Yes. Right. Yep.

MILLINGTON: And the proposed length of the mission and what the initial concept of the skipper was to where he would leave Sasebo, and he would stay about 40 miles off the east coast of Korea and go to the Northern limits of the operational area, and then begin to come down in closer to the ^{east} coast.

SHECK: Yes.

MILLINGTON: ^{At} at no time approaching any more than...

SHECK: ^{twelve} ~~12~~ nautical miles.

MILLINGTON: ¹³ Thirteen miles.

SHECK: Thirteen. They gave them a mile. They gave them a mile hedge factor.

MILLINGTON: Right. That, I think, was about as much as ~~what~~^{what} was known. In fact, in the sailing orders specified, not much more than that.

SHECK: Yeah, that's right. That's exactly right.

MILLINGTON: They didn't give him a specific track. They just gave him the areas in which he was to operate.

SHECK: Generally, what we did with all those ships, at least when it came to the NSA tasking part of it, was that here you're going to run from point A to point B generally.

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And, you know, that happens all the time. So that's kind of standard guidance. You've got to understand, in the case of the *Pueblo*, and I'm not trying to deny any NSA involvement, we just didn't do that. We only provided what we called supplementary tasking. Here's what we're giving you on a strict not-to-interfere basis with whatever else you're doing. I know and you know and

I think the public someday ought to know, there ain't no such thing as direct support ^G goddamn tasking. It does not exist. A military commander out there ain't got no tasking. He just wants control of the platform. He wants to be able to tell it where to go, when to go, and he could care less what those little guys in the bottom or the bowels of that ship are doing. They rely totally upon NSA supplementary tasking that's on a not-to-interfere basis, because there ain't nothing to interfere with. Nothing to interfere with. We always specified on a not-to-interfere basis that, ~~you know~~ the primary purpose is to provide direct support to the embarked commander. So anything you do other than that, Charlie, you can do this. Right? But you do everything you can to protect the commander. We have a classic example, and this happened very recently in the building. When I was still working in V5, we sent ^{Admiral Inman,} a message to the Navy asking them to fly a specific flight to help us out in the Mid East. Navy came back and said, yes, they would do it. The next morning they changed the flight and we ended up with no flight because they changed it, because they had to provide a mission in support of Com Six Fleet requirements. And I wrote a little note on it, "Hogwash, there ain't no such thing!" Right? And Admiral Inman wrote me a note back and said, "What do you mean by that?" I went up to his office and told him, "Admiral Inman, they don't have any tasking from Com Six Fleet. There's nothing." He said, "Well, send them a message and ask them for it." So we wrote a message to the Navy to CNO. "Please provide us with a copy of Com Six Fleet tasking, so we have some idea what that plane

does, so we can see whether the rest of SIGINT community doing na, na na." One of these nice garbage messages. We want to see a copy of that task. What I got was a Navy Captain from NavSecGru who came to my desk and said, "Gene, you know there ain't no ^G goddamn tasking." Right? So I wrote to Admiral Inman and said, "You know there's no tasking, Admiral." "I knew that," he said. "I often wondered if they'd say it." Anyway, those are the kinds of problems that you have when a guy says he's out there in response to military tasking. They really mean control.

FARLEY: Henry, you had a question.

MILLINGTON: Yes, before we go any further, I had some questions about the debriefing. But before that, there was another thing that came up where almost within two or three days after the incident, CINCPAC comes back with a great basic operational order for

[redacted] And I have a copy of the message that when it came in, and I've got some notes from General Carter to Dr. Tordella. And Carter's note read, "Lou, here we go again. Pat." And Tordella's reply to Carter, "Yes, and on the same tired old premise." Subsequent to that, there was quite a lengthy message drafted and sent back to CINCPAC saying, in effect, and trying to be diplomatic, saying, "Before you guys go out and do this, will you please check with us?"

EO 3.3b(3)
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SHECK: That's right.

MILLINGTON: Otherwise, [redacted]

SHECK: That's exactly right. [redacted]

MILLINGTON: Is this a common practice?

SHECK: Every time something happens, it happens. Classic. Let me just give you a very good example of that. In 1964, in the Dominican Republic a problem started, we sent forces to help either the rebels or the good guys. I'm not sure who we supported, but whoever we were in support of on the Dominican Republic side, we sent forces out in 1964. It was a Sunday morning when I got a phone call at home from Juanita Moody, who said, "Come in here, please."

[redacted] Mrs. Moody said to me on the telephone, "I

have the Secretary of Defense on the phone. Would you please hurry in here." Well, I almost busted ^{my} ass getting in here and it wasn't the Secretary, it was somebody else. It sounded dramatic, but it got me in. Anyway, I got in here and she said to me, "The problem is that SECDEF wants [redacted]

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[redacted]

[redacted]

Now can that be done?" And I said, "You called the wrong guy, Charlie. I don't know what you're talking about." "Well, you know all about [redacted] I said, "What do you want [redacted]

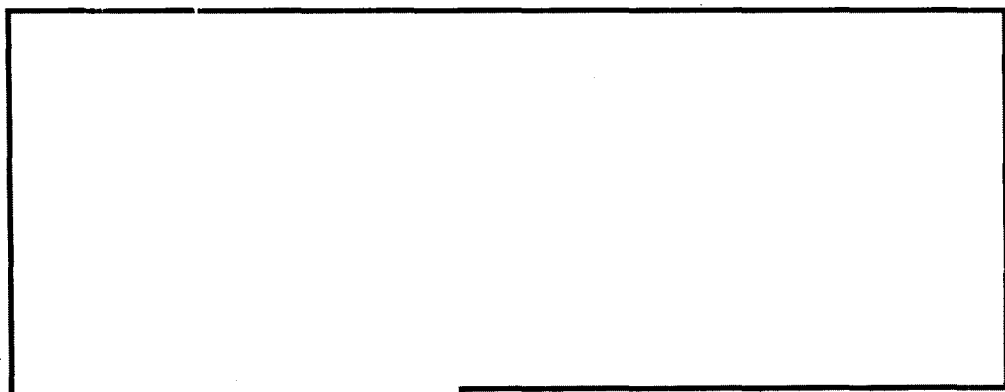
[redacted] I said, [redacted]

[redacted]

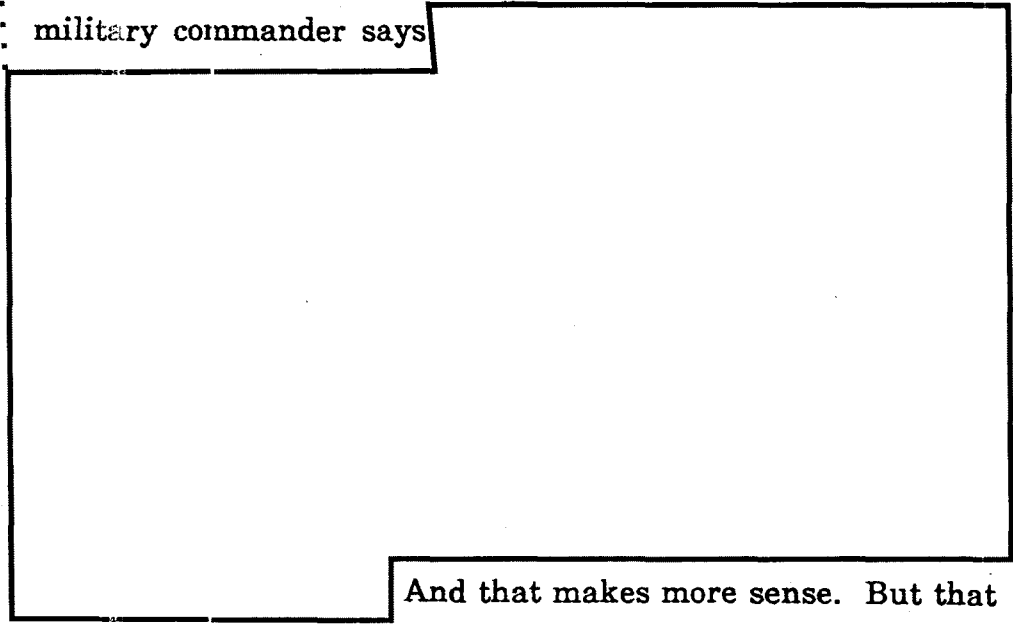
you can forget that. If that's what you want to do, fine." She says, "Well, I don't know. I want to be able to have [redacted]

[redacted] because that's what SECDEF says. He doesn't

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So it worked. But the answer to your question, every time there's a military activity, the military commander says



And that makes more sense. But that

even happens today. That's not new.

MILLINGTON: About the debriefing. I've got a chapter that I prepared about the debriefing episode ~~and one of these~~

SHECK: It was a lot of fun. (laughs)

MILLINGTON: Oh, yeah. ^(and here again the) ~~The~~ initial planning really started almost within two weeks of the incident.

SHECK: Yes.

MILLINGTON: And I would have to believe as I read through it all, that you mentioned earlier that General Carter had been very astute in handling the incident.

SHECK: Yes.

MILLINGTON: It seems to me that the same astuteness ran, or I should say tact ran through the debriefing preparation. Because initially, the Navy said, "NSA, this is our show^{er}."

SHECK: Stay out of it.

MILLINGTON: "You are going to have no part in this."

SHECK: Yes, sir. Yes, sir. Yes, sir.

MILLINGTON: And it was this point that General Carter tactfully went to the Joint Chiefs and said, "Wait a minute. We not only deserve to be in this, but we have a responsibility to the DCI which supports our being there through the whole show."

SHECK: Yes, sir.

MILLINGTON: This Navy foot dragging. Did it seem to continue even through the debriefing?

SHECK: Ha ha. Well, yeah, let me tell you. It's pretty interesting--what happened. What you say is absolutely true. The Navy was very reluctant to have NSA play any part in this. But we did, through whatever mechanism, we did succeed in telling them that the ^{primary purpose and the} only responsibility NSA had in this exercise, was to determine the significance of the cryptologic loss, so we could report that to the DCI. And, that in the view of NSA and national authorities, took precedence over any other investigation conducted by the Navy with regard to the whole exercise. Okay? Now, Navy accepted that. They said, "Okay, that's fine." However, the

Navy said, "We're going to be in charge of the whole debrief process, Navy." They had a Navy civilian. I can't even remember his name now.

MILLINGTON: Abbott?

SHECK: Bill Abbott. Turned out to be a strange duck. I really do. I think he "click". He kissed you every morning before he went to work. (all laugh). Anyway, very strange man. He was in charge of the Navy contingent. Admiral March, who was then Captain March, became Admiral March, had a NAVSEC routine. And NAVSECGRU and Navy provided a bunch of security kinds of guys to assist in the questioning. We were alerted sometime before Christmas, "Go have your Christmas now, because the crew's going to get released and you guys are going to have to go to San Diego." So San Diego was picked long in advance. Don Snow was our lead guy, and Don got all the hotels lined up and he was out there and did all kinds of great things. Fantastic things. And they told us, "Go have your Christmas." So on December 22nd we had Christmas in my house and then they called me up next morning and says, "Forget it! You're not going to go until the day after Christmas." So we had another Christmas on December 25. So on December 26 we went. Had a chartered airplane and all of us, 80 some odd people got in an airplane out in Baltimore and we flew out to San Diego and got there four or five hours later. A little happy, because we drank a lot of funny little ^{"toones"} "tinies" on the airplane going there. We got there, and went right out to the base in San Diego and started getting organized. The Navy was already there. The Navy - Navy, I'm

((General Service))

talking about the Gen Sers ^{Navy}, was already on the spot. They had the crew. They had badges for us. They got ^{our} out pictures taken. They were very, very cooperative, but they were in charge. Okay? Very much so in charge. Okay, so they decided now, that was December 26th and we're going to go right to work tomorrow morning. We're going to divide up the interviews. Here's how we're going to do it, and we said, "Okay. Fine." Well, now we start our interviews. Our team of some ten NSA guys, I forget, -- I could rattle off a name. Dick Finley was our boss and Dick Lord was there, and I was there and Bill Black. We started our interviews that day. We talked to guys. It was very disorganized that first day. And then they had a debrief every night. The debrief was totally related to the fact that here's what happened. All non-cryptologic kinds of things were coming out of this conversation and not cryptologic things, which ^{was} ~~was~~ the primary purpose for us being there. Dick Finley went up the road to Sunnyvale or drove up to San Francisco, or met a guy in a gas station half way up or something, but sent a message back to General Carter and said, "These guys are ~~at~~ this ain't going to work, Charlie, because we can't really get our foot in the door, ^{and} ~~and~~ ^{We're} we're having a real problem getting ourselves to the point where we can really do what we have to do from a cryptologic standpoint." Carter is alleged to have sent a message back, or the word back, "I don't care what you have to do, Dick, but take over. Or take over and don't let the Navy know you've done that." Okay? We had a meeting of our team; Dick Lord, Dick Finley, Jack Noonan. Jack Noonan was key guy in this

particular exercise, because we decided the only way to do it would be to take control of the whole process, the whole paperhandling process. Because it was so screwed up. We'll walk in tomorrow morning at four o'clock in the morning and we'll go to those desks and we'll reorganize. Navy sits over here, NSA sits over here, and here's the paper flow. You do this, you do this. We're going to debrief these guys today. Here's the schedule. So we have it all organized. And when they walked in at seven o'clock or eight o'clock in the morning, we just handed out sheets and said, "You're going to do this, and you're going to do that. We're going to have a debrief at 4:30." Now we were in charge, and they didn't know quite what happened. And they literally didn't understand that they had just been had, and they were had. And so the next three weeks, we did what we wanted to do. But only because Jack Noonan was clever enough to get this whole thing organized in about three hours, and pass out all these sheets. We then took over the control of all the interviews. And then we had a cryptologic meeting every day and started weeding out individuals, "We don't have to worry with this guy no more, let's go back and talk to this guy some more, or forget that guy." And we started writing our words. We found out after two days or three days that we needed more help. So we sent back and got Dick Harvey and [redacted] ..? Anyway, about five guys and some more girls, transcribing girls. So they came out, and so we could do more interviews, because the Navy was on us. Navy said, "Look. The quicker you guys get done with your debrief, the quicker we can get at them from a

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general service standpoint and we can start worrying about their problem, which was one of court martial and all that sort of thing. Before we got there, the Navy guys lined all the crew up and told them that they were going to be interviewed by a bunch of guys and that they were going to talk into a tape recorder, that nothing they said would be held against them. Lieutenant Commander Murphy, the executive officer of the *Pueblo*, was probably, as far as I'm concerned, was probably the smartest guy on the whole ship. Literally, the smartest guy on the whole ship.

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So they lined
them all up, ^{what} and ~~what~~ we did is, we went to the kids' rooms. Wherever their rooms were we took a tape recorder with us and we sat down. We had to drag one of these Navy guys with us. But they really became no problem. As a matter of fact, they

became very cooperative with us. And they made things easier as time progressed to get through the system and they were happy with all the information we were getting. So we started going through this process of interviewing guys. We had to convince them 1) that we really knew what we were talking about; 2) that we were really only there to find out about the cryptologic losses. We told them I don't want to hear anything about the fight. I don't want to hear anything about the battle. I don't want to hear nothing about who got shot. I don't want to hear nothing about who was on their hands and knees praying. I don't want to hear none of that stuff. All I want to know is what did you take aboard that ship when you went? And the kids became pretty free in telling me that. Of course, during the conversations, they did embellish the stories with things that happened that we have records of and so forth, that came out of that that could give a pretty story of what happened. But we did stick pretty much to cryptologic things, and when we weren't satisfied with an answer, we went back to the guy and tried to get more information. So that was the way we tried to build ^{the story,} ~~up~~ That

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was the way we found out

And they had everything, everything imaginable. Complete copy of ^{Techins} ~~techins~~ from one end to the other.

They had books and documents on that. Just awful the

OGA

information they had. But we did succeed in doing our thing and we did that in about a two-week period, maybe. I forget the exact number of days. Seems like we were home by the 17th of January. I forget. We came home not satisfied that the preliminary report we did was really good, because we didn't have much time to go through transcripts like we really should have. So we regrouped our team and we went back down to Nebraska Avenue. Dick Finley selected some eight or ten of us, and down to Nebraska we went. We stayed down there from whatever date that was in February to sometime in April. I think it was the first day in April that we stayed down there and we went over every transcript. I mean, line by line by line. And we tried to pick out all the things and then we produced our document, the report, which we turned over to NSA, ~~and~~ ^{whatever} ~~whatever~~ NSA did with it was beyond me. At least the document I know exists. And it has the complete story of what happened. As far as the classified information is concerned. There was a great deal of reluctance on the part of the Navy to let us get involved, a great deal of reluctance or willingness to become active participants. But they were had. Only to the extent that we had a job to do and by God, to Dick Finley's credit and Dick Lord's credit and the rest of the folks out there, you know, we knew what we wanted to do and we did it. And we did get cooperation, finally, within a day or two, from the Navy cats, because they saw this great flow of information and we kept them inundated with documentation and paper so they would stay out of our hair.

MILLINGTON: I appreciate very much what you said, particularly about the Sunnyvale bit, because I have a copy of a message, but I can't very well tell how it got here. My suspicion was if they used an SSO channel, it was obviously outside of the Navy communications.

SHECK: Admiral, whoever he was, in charge of the whole debrief, and I forget his name, ^{He} ~~he~~ wasn't a very pleasant guy. He said that we, NSA guys, could send no communications to anybody without his authority.

MILLINGTON: Yes.

SHECK: And his concurrence, concurrence. He didn't say, "Just let me see it." He wanted to "concur" or "non-concur". Well, that's when Dick says, "Ain't no way I'm going to do that, baby." And up the road he went and found this outlet in Sunnyvale or someplace, ^{Met} ~~met~~ the guy in a gas station, halfway up the road, whatever. When we said, where you going? "I'll be back later." Then he came back with guidance the next day and he got a message back from Carter and General Morrison. And they had a little group in PO4 that was helping support us while we were out there.

MILLINGTON: And one of the things that later I thought was very diplomatic of Carter, he sends a message to, I think, it was Moorer, saying, "Admiral Moorer, I want to thank you for a great job you Navy people have done for us."

SHECK: That's exactly. ^{That's right.} Exactly right. Dick Finley wrote that message for Carter. That message said, "Without you guys, man, we couldn't have done nothing." That's exactly right. And it was our show. Until we left. After that now, they did their

thing when we left and that's when it started getting kind of nasty. I was going to start talking about, you know, Murphy, whom I thought was the cleverest guy

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First of all, he never got along with Bucher, from what I gathered.

He was also given a medal subsequent to that. Did you know that? For his conduct in POW camp. The day he got awarded it, he demanded a public presentation of his medal, which he got.

Then when he got the medal, he turned around to the Admiral of the *California* and said, "Now, sir, now that I've received this medal, you can take it back. I don't want it. I don't deserve it for what I did and I don't need it." This is on TV. Public! "Take this back." And he left. Tough.

MILLINGTON: What I've done, as I mentioned earlier, I've gone through the transcripts. First of all, I'm in no way trying to regurgitate or repeat the excellent stuff that was done, in terms of damage assessment. I made reference to it, but I'm not going to repeat that. What I was concerned with, in going through the transcripts, was (1), to get some facts about what happened aboard the ship that day, because so many people see it in a different way. Because nobody was standing there with a TV camera above this taking pictures. Because everybody has a different idea as to what happened. What I was really concerned too about what I could learn about the training of the crewmen, the NSG people aboard this ship. And it turns out, from what I got from the transcript, that -- well, I was shocked.

SHECK: There was nothing. They had no watch and quarter station bill. They weren't familiar with that. I mean, where you were supposed to go -- and they had none. They had nothing. They had nothing. Ill-prepared. ^{The} ~~They~~ shipshod ^{handling, Not} ~~handled, not~~ much enthusiasm.

MILLINGTON: The chief petty officer who'd been with them, a Chief who'd been with them all through their refitting and rehabbing: in Bremerton, through their sea trials off San Diego, on the trip: out to Hawaii, out from there up to Yokusuka when the goddam:

^{rudder}
rotor broke all the time, five days before the mission [redacted] is transferred to Edsel.

SHECK: Transferred. That's right. Took him right off the ship.

MILLINGTON: And they get a ^{chap} chief by the name of..?, all I can think of is Shepard, at the moment.

SHECK: I can't remember names.

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MILLINGTON: It was not Shepard, but it was another chief with tremendous background. But here he is placed ^{there} here five days before departure.

SHECK: Right. That's right.

MILLINGTON: First time he's ever met anybody aboard the ship, including the officers, his NSG grooming. He had no idea their individual capabilities.

SHECK: Right.

MILLINGTON: What they could do.

SHECK: Right.

MILLINGTON: What they could handle. It just was incredible.

SHECK: Right. I agree with that.

[redacted]
He had access to anything he wanted

to have if he really wanted to have that. And he probably should have got more involved.

FARLEY: Is that a reflection of his attitude toward Murphy and Murphy toward him?

SHECK: Well, they had their problems. No, I think that was just a reflection of his attitude. He's an old submariner, "Let's go to shore and drink and have a big party." He considered this to be kind of a dramatic thing. I don't think there's anybody in the world, when you go back and look what he did while he was a POW could ever find a more exemplary figure. He was far and above any individual who was placed in that kind of position where he worried about the crew. He protected the crew, he did everything he could for the guys. He was just the one that they gathered around. The day we were in San Diego, the first couple of days, all those kids talked about was their skipper. What a great individual. They had forgotten what happened before. They only remembered those eleven lousy months in the POW camp. That the times they did see him or were aware of his presence, it was always way above everybody and he said, "Hang in there, guys", and "I'm going to do everything I can for you", and ^{They} ~~they~~ really, really, really respected that. And I think that all 81 guys that came back, probably unanimously, would agree that that guy really did a tremendous job in the POW camp. The things that happened before that, I don't know. When you're being attacked and you ain't got much to shoot back with, and the ship is starting to burn a little bit and guys are dying ^A a couple guys are bleeding and you don't know what the hell to do

and you're surrounded. You're literally surrounded. You've got to make a judgment. Do I lose all 81 guys? Those days of John Paul Jones, as far as I'm concerned, are long gone. While the Navy shudders and shakes of the thought that somebody surrendered a Navy ship, I don't think he had any choice. I went aboard the *Palm Beach*. I was never aboard the *Pueblo*, but I was aboard the *Palm Beach*. That's the only ship I ever went aboard that you step down to get into. I mean, that's kind of scary. You usually walk up, you know? But not this one. You step down. That's how small that ship was. So you can imagine that thing being surrounded by all these gun boats out there and patrol boats and these guys just pulled right up to them and just literally climbed on board. And they had nothing to fight back with. One 50 caliber machine gun, a couple of small guns, maybe a rifle or two, I don't know. But nothing that made sense.

FARLEY: Gene, did you have need to interview the crew other than the SIGINT people?

SHECK: GenSer guys?

FARLEY: Yes.

SHECK: The security group guys did not talk to anybody in GenSer, except the officers. We interviewed all the officers, because one of them didn't even have a clearance, but we did interview him anyway.

MILLINGTON: Lacey?

SHECK: Lacey. That's a warrant officer. That's right. But all the guys had clearances. So we interviewed them all but only for the purposes in determining cryptologic loss. And we talked with

[REDACTED]

result of that. No, we didn't interview GenSer guys at all. Only the cryptologic guys. Except we allowed the Navy guys to do that. We said, "Here, why don't you keep busy with that", because there was nothing we could have gotten from them that would have helped our cause, so that's why we did it.

MILLINGTON: As I remember going through the transcripts of the GenSer people, I've forgotten who was going the interviewing, but one of the standard questions seemed to be, "What did they know of the mission of the ship?"

SHECK: That's right.

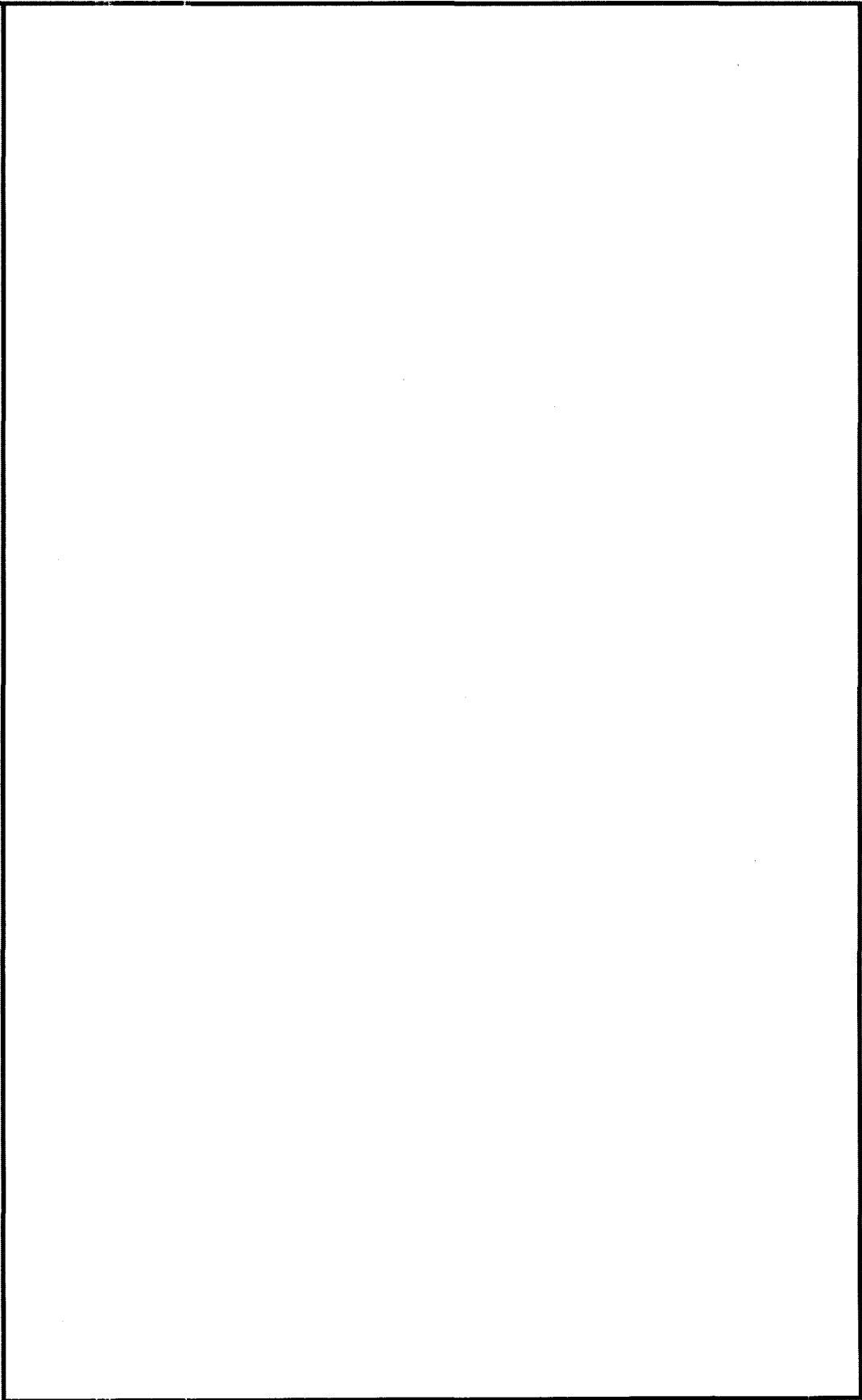
MILLINGTON: The real intelligence mission of the ship. And most of them, didn't know.

SHECK: Yeah, right.

MILLINGTON: Some of them had some idea, but they were guessing. There seemed to be no talking or discussion of this between the NSG people and the GenSer people. Oh, they recognized, as a crew, that you do your thing and we'll do ours.

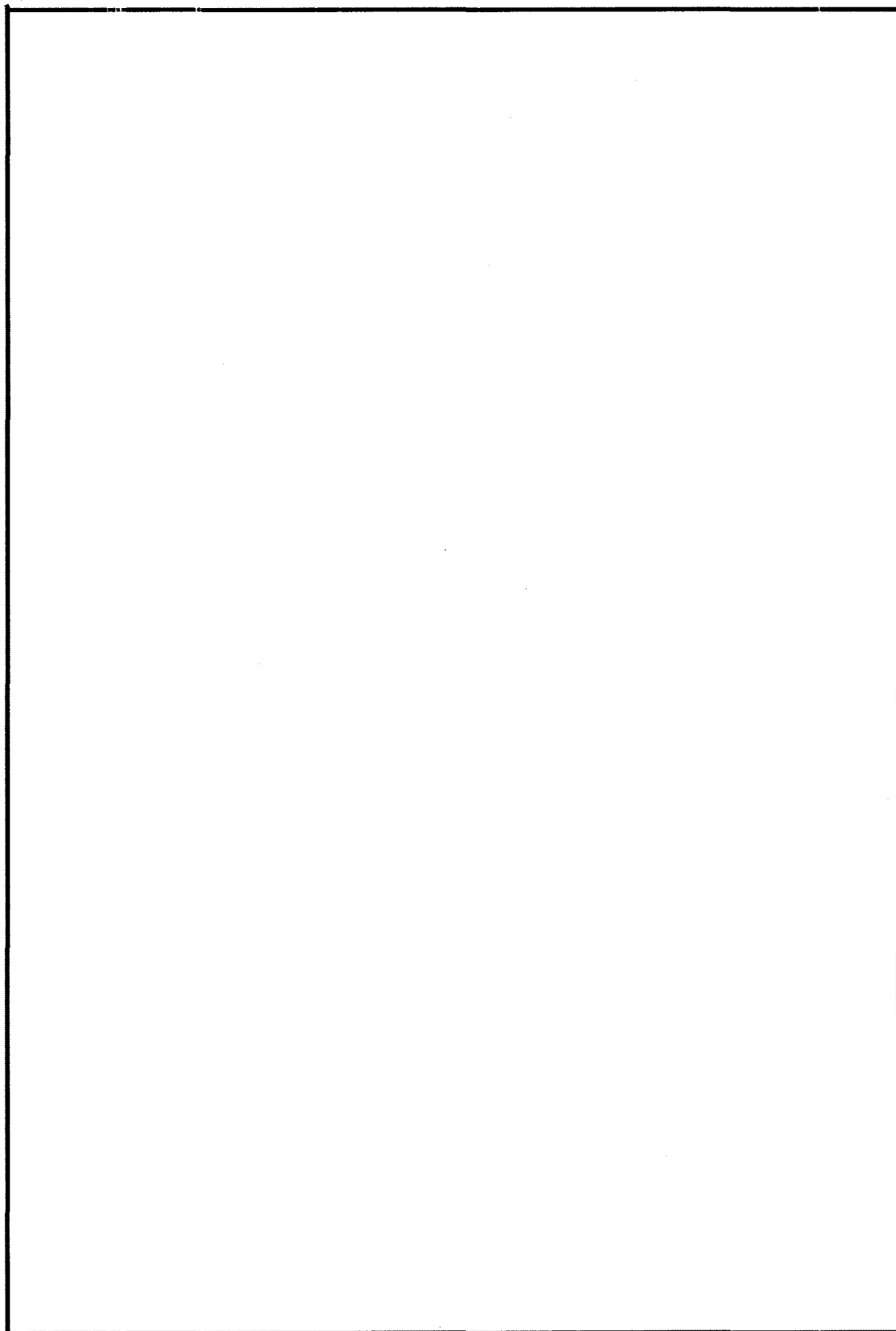
SHECK:

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FARLEY:

SHECK:



FARLEY: Let me switch to a second tape.

TAPE 2 SIDE 1

SHECK:

Things like that bring back memories. Sure does.

That's a long time ago.

FARLEY:

Anything more on the debriefings, ⁷ or 121?

MILLINGTON:

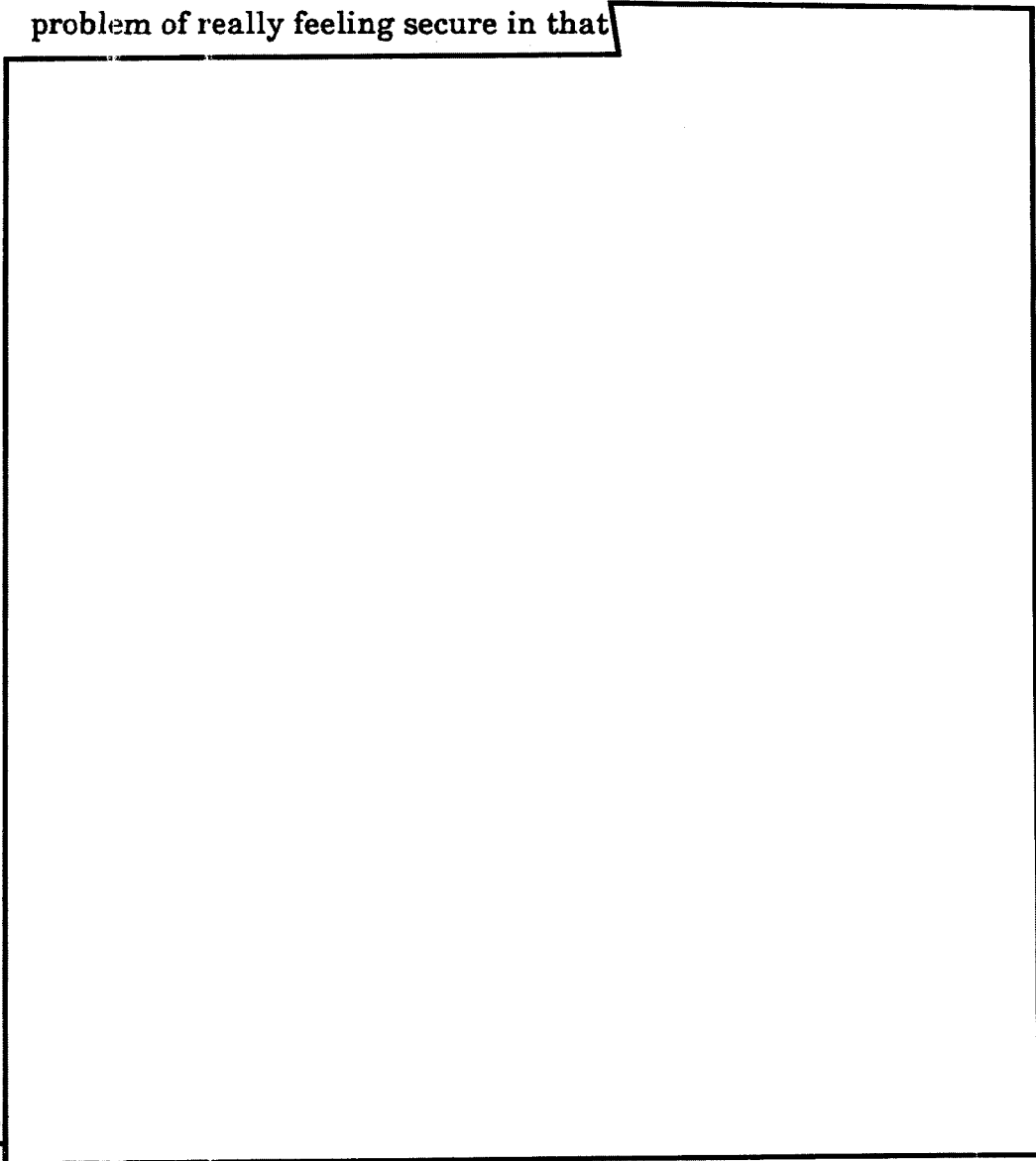
No, I think not.

FARLEY:

Were any of them uncooperative at all, Gene, other than being reluctant to put things on tape for probably court martial use later on?

SHECK:

I think collectively we, as a group in the debrief team, had a problem of really feeling secure in that



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And that's too bad. But you know, those things happen to anybody. That again, none of us were in that position. And I don't care what anybody says, you can put all the stars and stripes on your arm as you want. You know, you're not there, you can't tell how you'd react. And that was the sad part about the whole thing. The saddest part about it is that somebody allowed all that information^y to get on the ship. After that happened, we did all kinds of good things. That doesn't happen anymore. If you had a shipborne program you wouldn't have that kind of stuff. Next, you put things on water-

soluble paper so you can throw it away. You only take what's necessary for that particular patrol. You make sure you have an A-package. Like we designated a couple of places to be focal points, SIGINT sites to be focal points for the packaging up of material. You only give the ship that's related to the particular operating area. You give ^{them} 'em nothing more because you don't need nothing more. And as soon as it comes back you take the package away from them guys and you never give 'em any more than one pack~~on~~ on and on and on. So there were very specific directives developed on the basis of all that happened with regard to the *Pueblo* to prevent that from happening again.

MILLINGTON: I know. Right after the *Pueblo*, I think Tordella was aghast!

SHECK: Oh. Oh, yes, he was.

MILLINGTON: (laughing)

SHECK: Well, you know. Some funny things came out of all these exercises. We've got a few minutes left^{as} as an aside. What I didn't know, until that particular incident^{no}, it was 'til the EC-121, which happened on the 15th of April. We and K-12 or then K-18 or whatever we were, talked every day to JCS/JRC, more than once a day. Generally, probably five times a day, generally to the NSA liaison officer down there, who at that particular time was Bob Livingston. And John Connell was before Bob Livingston and after Bob Livingston was...? It doesn't make any difference. But Bob was pretty heavily involved. Regarding the EC-121 incident, I got a call from somebody that said^{from} from the JCS, that said General Stakely wants a complete copy of such-and-such such-and-such. Right? This was at 2 or 3 o'clock in the

morning, and we're in the midst of trying to get all this stuff together. This seemed like such an innocuous request that this, regardless of who said it was coming from, that Stakely was the Chief of the JRC. I said, in my infinite stupidity, "Oh, tell the General to go bite my ass. I got all kinds of things to do right here, and that doesn't rate very high priority." Right? So I slammed the phone down. (Millington and Farley laughing) Because Morrison was screaming about something and I was talking to Bob, I guess. Well, I found out the next day that this JCS now was reconstructing all the night's activities in the JCS with a taped recording. Every one of those grey telephones...I never knew that until, and there's my conversation. "Tell the General to stick it in his ear." Well, I ran up from there as soon as I found that out, I said, "You got to be kidding me that that stuff's being recorded." No. I went up to Dr. Tordella's office. I told Dr. Tordella, "Are you aware that they're recording the conversations that we have from this building down to the JCS?" "I'll yank out every grey phone they've got down there," he says. Right? Until that day we found a memorandum authorizing such a thing to happen, signed by Dr. Tordella.

FARLEY: (Laughs) Oh, boy, Did they have it recorded?

SHECK: Yep. They asked for permission to do it and he said, "Fine."

FARLEY: Did they play back ~~you~~ for you?

SHECK: Oh, yeah, Stakely. Fortunately, we had a great relationship with the people down there and Stakely said, "Gene, I wish you'd just watch what you say when you say it." I said, "Yes, sir. Forgive

me! I knew not what I'd done." (all laugh) Anyway, it was a shock of my life when I found that out.

FARLEY: Gene, how many pages in the "Lessons Learned" study on the *Pueblo* crisis? How many pages did you have?

SHECK: Oh, gee, I don't know. I really don't know. Lots of them.

FARLEY: Hundreds and hundreds, I guess.

SHECK: We had all kinds of things happen as a result of that. As a result of the *Pueblo* and the EC-121 I was almost detached from my job and I went down to JCS and spent most of my time down there at the JRC doing all kinds of studies. We did a world-wide study on command and control. We did a world-wide study on the use of destroyers in lieu of using combatant ships, in lieu of unprotected ships. A JCS study on the needs for TRSs and AGTRs. So my time down there was writing up or helping write up these dumb, dumb papers that people could wave around and say, "Look, how smart we are" kinds of things. The world-wide study on command/control made more sense than anything, because it was a case of ^(inaudible) ~~Thomas~~ going around the JCS. We formed a team of some 6 or 7 very senior military people representing all the services. We went to every major command - Army, Navy, Air Force - CINCEUR, CINCPAC, CINCLANT, down to subordinate camp commands, Com 7th Fleet, CINCLANTFLEET, CINCPAC Fleet, submarine commanders, London, CINCUSNAVEUR, all over the world. It took us over a period of

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a year. It took us probably six months to do this whole trip. We did it in two separate trips - one to the Pacific and one to the European area. The purpose being, if in fact, you as a military commander were ever confronted with a situation, i.e., like the *Pueblo*, or like the EC-121, [REDACTED] finds itself in some problem area, what would you do as the military commander if you became the first knowledgeable individual with regard to that funny exercise? There was a strange incident that happened [REDACTED] [REDACTED] that stemmed all this. You could look into that in your documents, but it's around somewhere. I won't go into any details, but that's what stemmed the thing off. And we went and interviewed all these military commanders. Surprisingly enough, most commanders would wait for guidance from somebody back home before they would do anything. One commander indicated he'd start World War III. One commander said, "I will sit here and hold my things before I did anything to start World War III." Most of them were pretty confident when it

[REDACTED] They were aware that necessary protection ^{ought} ~~out~~ to be afforded those kinds of things. The command and control lines were very clearly defined. There wouldn't be a problem with the *Liberty*

going in to where Com Six Fleet says "Nobody ever told me". All that kind of thing and the same hand-waving out in the Pacific that "Nobody told me how significant that was." That would have never happened again in the 1971 timeframe. And that was probably the best thing that JCS ever did was to make the commands aware that somebody was looking over their shoulder, and you ought to really be sensitive to that. The thing that disappointed me the most was military commanders didn't know how to use critic messages. They said, "Well, that's up to them SIGINT guys." They think only critic messages are issued by SIGINTers. They really do. They ran an exercise of an attack, like a European exercise, where somebody was going to attack. Some group of dissident in Italy was going to attack an atomic warehouse or a nuclear storage warehouse. Right? And they wrote this exercise for it. I stopped and I said, "At what point in time would one of you guys send a critic message?" "Critic message? How do you mean a critic message?" I said, "You have a U.S. resource being attacked by a bunch of dissidents, it's got nuclear weapons in it and you didn't send no critic message to anybody?" "What's a critic message?" "Only intelligence weenies send critic messages." So we showed them. "Here, look in the documentation, boy. Anybody can send a critic message on anything. Don't have to be related to SIGINT." Anyway that helped that cause a little bit. And critic handling. That's another thing, you know. There's been a lot of dirty words about critic handling on a couple of those incidents and we checked into that, and cleared some of that up. But I got involved in all that

stuff. I kind of got away, until I went to NSA Europe for three years.

FARLEY: How soon after that exercise did they cancel the seaborne activity?

SHECK: Well, that was more of an economic consideration.

FARLEY: Oh, was it?

SHECK: Yeah, what happened, ^{was} as the war in Viet Nam was phasing down the need to identify dollars for other things was very obvious. JCS sent a message. No, let me rephrase that. The Navy lost some money in the budget and sent a message out to the fleet commanders saying, "Look, we only have X number of dollars to continue operations of all our combatant ships," and all that sort of thing and the manpower to do that. And, of course, the ~~war~~ ^{war} was ended and the kids were getting out of the service. "If you have your choice, what ships do you want to give up?" Well, every Navy CINC came back and said the AGTRs Perk One, for one, they ain't theirs and they like to count guns and not receivers and so they recommended the AGTRs. We went down to the Pentagon and tried to rebutt that, and we rebutted it where they did it slowly, but they did it, and eventually all the ships went out of the program. So there are none today.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

It's a response to tasking, and they accept . . .

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the tasking. And while you still have to go out and call it
"supplementary" and you have to go through the fleet
commanders and you have to kind of hold your hat in your hand,
they do do it. And they are totally responsive. And that's the
important thing. Who cares what the process is? You know, the
end result is the important thing. That's probably a better way of
doing things, although there is a need, as far as I'm concerned,
there still is and there always will be, a need for the National
Security Agency to have a mobile platform that you can deploy

[Redacted]

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We ought to be looking into that.

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I'm sure we are. [Redacted]

[Redacted] That's what happened. And it just got too
cost-ineffective, I guess, is the best way to say it. So they said,
let's get rid of ^{them} ~~em~~. So we got rid of ^{them} ~~em~~ all.

FARLEY: And the talent is not what it should be either, the personal
talent.

SHECK: You take the ASRP program for example, where the Air Force
has their flights that they fly around the world where they have
very capable, competent guys [Redacted]

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The Air Force has got the best training program in the whole
world for that kind of activity - for mobile collection. The Navy
does the same thing, but they don't have the training program.
They don't have the linguistic capability that the Air Force does.

They rotate guys too frequently. They just don't say to a guy, "You're going to be an airborne guy forever and ever and ever like the Air Force does. And you're going to be the best linguist we got in that particular area." They just keep changing these guys around. The Air Force doesn't do that. Maybe because they're Air Force. I don't really know, but they don't have the quality of people in the Navy that the Air Force does when it comes to providing that kind of data. Any Air Force kid in an airplane knows he's going to be attacked. No ifs, ands, or buts -- they know it. You do that with a Navy guy, they'd just sit there, "What was that that just went by us?" or something, you know. That's not being derogatory, that's fact. Like the EC-121.

FARLEY: Thought it was a chain being dragged across the deck.

SHECK: Right. So there, guys!

FARLEY: Henry, do you have any more questions?

MILLINGTON: No, I really don't.

FARLEY: I think this has been extremely interesting.

SHECK: Well, thank you for the opportunity. I enjoyed it. I haven't really given it much thought until you start stirring my mind up about some of the things that happened. But I appreciate it.

FARLEY: Gene, should we classify it ~~Top Secret or Higher~~

SHECK: Yeah, I think you ought to classify it ~~Top Secret Codeword~~. I guess you ought to put on tape that I do have sensitivities about that funny little piece of paper I signed and that as long as it's "Eyes Only". I don't remember the exact words, but I guess as

long as it's within the community, it's all right. But I certainly know I signed something that said you would not divulge.

FARLEY: I'll put a form in your envelope giving you dispensation for talking with us.

SHECK: That's great, fine.

FARLEY: Because you can be given this for discussing anything related to cryptologic history.

SHECK: That satisfies me. That satisfies me.

MILLINGTON: My use of these transcripts has been that certainly nothing will ever appear in my work, let's say, about vis a vis the personal aspects of the crew, but I am concerned about what could be learned as lessons. As I said earlier, I'm really concerned that there be some attention given to recognition of the need for proper training of people.

SHECK: Oh, boy.

MILLINGTON: Who go out on such missions.

SHECK: That's right. That's right. You just can't send an incompetent crew on any of these kinds of things.

MILLINGTON: And having gotten them together, they don't take such actions, which to me is a tremendous mistake of taking their chief petty officer, or whoever it is, and removing him five days before they're going to go on their first mission.

SHECK: He wouldn't agree with you. (all laugh)

MILLINGTON: Right.

SHECK: Because he got off and saved his neck.

MILLINGTON: But you know, this, as you said, the Navy's always moving these people.

SHECK: That's right. They just move 'em around too much. They do.

MILLINGTON: Yeah.

SHECK: And it's too bad. I'm not too sure having any competent linguistic capability would have prevented a damn thing different than what happened that day, but at least they might have known a little bit more. And they might have been able to react in some slightly different fashion, which they didn't even have a chance to do, because some of the kids' reactions were "I don't know what he's talking about, but he's sure excited" is not a way to say, "This is what he's saying".

MILLINGTON: Yeah.

SHECK: And if you heard the tape transcript, which I did, and not understanding one word of Korean, the guy is screaming into a microphone and obviously very excited - and up to no good. You can tell that the minute you hear the guy talking. It's kind of pucker-up time. Okay?

FARLEY: Gene, thank you much.

SHECK: You're quite welcome.

*Reviewed by Eugene Sheck
24 June 1986;*

E. Sheck