



# governmentattic.org

*"Rummaging in the government's attic"*

Description of document: National Security Agency (NSA) Oral History of [redacted], OH 2007-25, 2007

Requested date: 25-June-2022

Release date: 13-September-2023

Posted date: 16-October-2023

Source of document: Mandatory Declassification Review  
NSA  
National Security Agency  
NSA/CSS MDR Appeal Authority P133  
National Security Agency  
9800 Savage Road STE 6881  
Fort George G. Meade, MD 20755-6881

The governmentattic.org web site ("the site") is a First Amendment free speech web site and is noncommercial and free to the public. The site and materials made available on the site, such as this file, are for reference only. The governmentattic.org web site and its principals have made every effort to make this information as complete and as accurate as possible, however, there may be mistakes and omissions, both typographical and in content. The governmentattic.org web site and its principals shall have neither liability nor responsibility to any person or entity with respect to any loss or damage caused, or alleged to have been caused, directly or indirectly, by the information provided on the governmentattic.org web site or in this file. The public records published on the site were obtained from government agencies using proper legal channels. Each document is identified as to the source. Any concerns about the contents of the site should be directed to the agency originating the document in question. GovernmentAttic.org is not responsible for the contents of documents published on the website.



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



Serial: MDR-114598  
13 September 2023

This responds to your request of 25 June 2022 to have Oral History of [redacted], NSA OH 2007-25 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 document were found to be currently and properly classified in accordance with E.O. 13526. The information denied meets the criteria for classification as set forth in Section 1.4 subparagraphs (b) and (c) and remains classified TOP SECRET as provided in Section 1.2 of E.O. 13526.

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).

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

Serial: MDR-114598

appeal shall reference the initial denial of access and shall contain, in sufficient detail and particularity, the grounds upon which the requester believes the release of information is required. The NSA/CSS MDR Appeal Authority will endeavor to respond to the appeal within 60 working days after receipt of the appeal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jacqueline M. Amacher".

Jacqueline M. Amacher  
Chief  
Declassification Services

Encl:  
a/s

**OHNR: OH-2007-25**

**DOI: 24 September 2007**

**TRSID:** [redacted]

**DTR: 14 October 2007**

**QCSID:** [redacted] 26Nov07(sptck)

**Text Review:** [redacted] PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

**INAME:** [redacted]

**Text w/Tape:**

**IPLACE: Video Teleconference Link between NSA/CSS Texas & NSA, OPS 1 Building, Ft. Meade, MD**

**VIEWER: MURDOCK, Linda L. and MANEKI, Sharon A.**

[Tape 1, Side 1]

**Murdock:** The classification of this interview will be TOP SECRET//COMINT unless otherwise specified at the end of the recording. Today is Monday, 24 September 2007. We are interviewing [redacted] via a video teleconference between the National Security Agency's OPS 1 building and NSA/CSS Texas. [redacted] is a senior reporter at NSA/CSS Texas. I am Linda Murdock along with Sharon Maneki from the Center for Cryptologic History. Today's interview will include specific questions regarding [redacted]. Okay, Sharon. Go ahead.

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

**Maneki:** Good morning, [redacted] How are you? ((Clack.))

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

[redacted] Good morning. I'm fine. How are you?

**Maneki:** Okay. What I want to do [redacted] is... is just get a little bit about your background first, if that's all right? Like where you were you born and ((thumping)) where you went to school.

[redacted] Sure. ((Clacking.))

**Maneki:** And all that good stuff. So you want start out and...

[redacted] If, ah...lh...lf...lf I could make a quick request?

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

**Maneki:** ((Click.)) Ah.huh...

[redacted] There should be a... There should be a... a diamond key on your remote. ((Clacking.)) And you should be able ((faint acknowledgment)) to turn the camera, so I can see you. Because this ((clacking)) is just a little odd.

**Maneki:** Oh. ((Addresses Ms. Murdock: )) Can ((clack))... Can you do that, Linda?

**Murdock:** You said a diamond key?

**Maneki:** On the remote.

[redacted] Yeah. Heh... This one here. It's right in the middle. And you should be able to turn the camera from side to side with the side arrows on the... the diamond key. Yeah, there it is ((click)). Just the other direction. ((Pauses.)) Okay, perfect.

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

**Murdock:** Sorry about that.

[redacted] Now I can see you ((thump.)) Not a problem. ((Clacking, thumping.))

**Maneki:** ((Snap or clack.)) So you were going to tell us a little bit about your background.

[redacted] Sure. Ah, let's see. I was born on... Well, maybe not that much background. ((Clack.)) [redacted]

[redacted] I, ah... I proceeded to be unemployed for a couple of years. (B% Just) (2-3B)...

**Maneki:** What... What's your, ah...? What's your degree in, [redacted]

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

[redacted] My degree is in Latin, which has helped me a great deal as a linguist as a matter of fact--but otherwise has been pretty much useless. ((Slight chuckling heard.)) Ah, I spent a couple of years being unemployed, because there's nothing like, ah, high unemployment in the "Rust Belt" and a Latin degree to make you unemployable. I then went into the Air Force. Ah, the Air Force was happy to teach me Russian, and I learned it pretty well.

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

**Maneki:** So do y...?

[redacted] I, ah...

**Maneki:** Can you give me the year on the Air Force?

[redacted] I'm sorry?

**Maneki:** The year?

[redacted] Oh, ah... I, ah... I joined in January of '83.

**Maneki:** Okay.

[redacted]

I got out, ah... I went on terminal leave in the spring of 1988. Ah, so I spent, ah, early '83 to early '84 learning Russian. And then, from the ((click))... Ah, well, three months at Goodfellow. Then from the summer of '84 to summer of '87, I spent over in, ah... in Berlin. Fall of '87, actually; is when I left. Ah, ah... I sat a rack there as a collection op. I worked [redacted]

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

[redacted] systems. And, ah, then, for the remainder of my time in the Air Force, I was stationed at Ft. Meade. Ah, I was initially stationed in an office in the [redacted] ah, working I think it was PROFORMA signals. Boy, this is ancient history for me ((click)). Ah, unfortunately--or fortunately, depending on your point of view--the Air Force decided to have an early-out program then. And they did it a little bit unusually. They didn't allow you to complete ((clinking)) your enlistment if you were close to the end of it. You either got out early or you reenlisted early. And, ah, I'd had enough at that point and decided to get out. That left me so little time in that office, I never really even got trained up in it. I ended up in the tape library for the few months that I was at Ft. Meade in the military. And, ah... So I went down there and did tape transmittals and packed up boxes and unpacked boxes. ((Ms. Maneki responds.)) And it was, ah ((chuckles slightly))... Yes, it was very exciting work. And then, ah... And then I got out. However, before I got out, I,

ah...I did put in a...an application with the...the old forms that we used in those days--not this...not this new-fangled Internet resume stuff. ((Clears throat.)) And, ah...ah, put in an application. And in due course--meaning about two years--I got hired on, and started in January of 1990. I was hired as a Russian transcriber, which is a little be funny considering that even then, I was a bit hard of hearing. So I, ah...I proceeded to be a very average transcriber for a couple of year--held back by my hearing. And then, ah...Ah, after the wall came down and I was realizing I wasn't going anywhere as a transcriber, ah, I went over and worked [redacted] This was while [redacted] was still going on. And then [redacted] ended and, ah...

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

**Maneki:** Now, were you...?

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

[redacted] 'Cause they wanted...

**Maneki:** Now were you...? Were you a reporter then or...when you went to [redacted]

[redacted] Yes, I learned reporting at that point. I, ah...

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

**Maneki:** Okay.

[redacted] I actually...Ah, in the eighteen months that I worked [redacted] I was able to professionalize both as a graphic linguist and as a, eh, ah, intelligence research analyst. I think it was back then--eh...as a reporter. And, ah, at that point, [redacted] ended. And, ah...ah, they wanted me to go back to working voice even though at that point, the NSA hearing conservation people told me, "Do not do voice anymore." And so, ah, I figured it was time for a new job. And...And you know, given that I...I felt that my participation had helped--that I end communism [redacted] both ((chuckling or clacking heard))--I thought maybe I'd go work the [redacted] ((Slight chuckling heard.)) So, ah...Ah, well...I knew someone who worked over there. Ah, they certainly had billets. They, ah...They certainly had things to do. I knew that I'd be able to really improve my skills. Ah, I like to work fast. Ah, I like to work at a high pace. It looked like a good office for me to go to. So, ah, I went over there and said, "Hi, I come...I'd like to come work here." Um, after they got over being amazed, they, ah...they said, "That'd be great." ((Click.)) And it...It didn't take too long. I started working [redacted] in [redacted] Do you want me to just keep blathering away, or...?

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

**Maneki:** Yeah. Yeah, sure. ((Clacking.)) So...So, ah...Well, [redacted] then, eh, you started as a...as a reporter, right?

[redacted] As a reporter. Um; even then, I (B% supported linguists).

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

**Maneki:** What...what was it like? Hmm?

[redacted] Ah, it...For me, it wasn't too bad. But I'll go into some detail here because it certainly gets across...I can get across the flavor of how things were at that time.

**Maneki:** Good.

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

~~TOP SECRET//COMINT//GAMMA//20320100~~

[redacted] Um, when I got there, ah, I was a junior reporter. I hadn't, ah, had all that much practice working [redacted] And to be honest with you, ah, the ((creak)) stuff that I had mostly been reporting ((clacking)) hadn't been all that ((clanking)) challenging. In the run-up to the, ah [redacted]

[redacted] ((clacking)). And, (B% yeah), they were interesting; they were exciting; we had, you know, bombs being blown up and things like that. But they weren't really challenging to a reporter. I didn't know that at the time. But after I went over to work [redacted] I found out pretty quickly. Because, um, I didn't go over to work [redacted]

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

[redacted] So ((clack)) I got in there. Ah, received essentially zero training ((clack)). Ah, but...And that's actually been fairly normal in my career ever since being in the Air Force. There isn't a whole lot of training. Ah...And basically got sat down and handed some traffic and said, "Okay, start reporting." Ah, I mean, you know, there was a...a day or so to...to...to get myself fit in and get accounts set up and so on. But, ah, really, it was just jump in and start working 'cause that's what everyone else was doing. And, ah, the work pace in there...Ah, I liked the sign that my team chief, [redacted] had posted at her cubicle--although I heard later that, ah, that was from earlier. When I got there, it had slowed down some. ((Clack.)) But, eh, her...her sign said, "Frantic is just first gear." ((Slight chuckling heard.)) Um, everyone had every moment occupied. Ah, once I got up to speed, I was like everyone else in there. I was writing probably five reports a day--and then, I'm not talking one-paragraph reports. These would be, you know, a page or two of text, ah, once they got done. And we worked at the highest speed--you know, given that we needed to produce quality material--that we possibly could. I was working eight-hour days because I was a junior person. And there was not much point ((click)) in having me produce work that still needed too much review by the senior reporters before it could go out. Ah, you know, having me stay late wasn't really all that productive. But most of the more experienced reporters who were not editing reports--the...the junior reporters--were working nine to ten hours a day. The senior reporters were particularly working a good twelve to fourteen--and being called in every weekend. So the, ah...The pace really was insane. Um, one of the things that, ah, that I had learned ((clack)) fairly quickly was when I had a question...Because of course, I was still new and I didn't entirely know what I was doing, I learned pretty quickly ((clack)) who to ask my questions to and who not to. Because...Since the, ah, the editors were working themselves into exhaustion ((stutters)), they could get a little bit testy sometimes when I asked my, you know, brand newbie "I don't know anything" questions. And I never resented it because th...they were working way, way too hard. But, ah, at the same time, if they were already, ah...ah, tired and...and easily aggravated, I didn't want to aggravate them further. So I tried hard not to (B% do that). Um, ((click)),

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

~~TOP SECRET//COMINT//GAMMA//20320100~~ Page 4 of 14

in talking with some of them as time went on--because things did finally slow down--ah, they told me about how...And I think this was actually in the article about how they'd, ah...Most of them had come in on, ah, on ninety-day details. They volunteered to help work this crisis, which--I guess back in [redacted]--was expected to be short-term. Um ((clack)), they also told me--several of them...And I can give you names, if you're curious. Ah, ma...They had then--once they got there on their ninety-day details--were not allowed to leave for, generally speaking, three years. Ah, one of the effects of that was that...(B% And OR In) that office had a terrible reputation. We could not get people to come in and work there because A) they expected they wouldn't be allowed to leave. And this was in the days of...of eh...employee mobility ((stutters))--employee mobility being taken for granted. Everyone knew that, ah...You know, eh...You didn't even need to apply for a job in those days typically. If you could find an office that had billets open, you could get yourself out of the office you were in and in to the one you wanted to go to. Ah, it wasn't like today were, ah, it...it's extremely difficult to move in a lot of cases. ((Clacking.)) Um, so people didn't want to be trapped in a situation like that. Ah, a lot of them didn't even want to have to do evening and weekend work. They wanted to have, ah, you know, personal lives. Ah, I was still young in those days and, ah...the, ah...the prospect of that didn't bother me in particular, so I didn't mind. But it, ah...it...it made for an office that was hard to get people into. ((Thump.)) The other thing is--and I can't say from my own experience--ah, it was not a great office even in the time I was there when things had slowed down [redacted] when I PCS'ed here to Texas. Ah, it was never a great place for personnel management. If you had a personal problem ((clacking)), well, they didn't have...We didn't have time to deal with everything that was reportable much less people's personal problems. So, ah, you were really kind of expected to just either don't have the problem, or deal with it yourself. You know, "Bother us only if you absolutely have to." However, if this sounds too negative, I will have to say that was, really, the best office I've ever worked in. Because...And...I...This is going to sound negative but, if you've had an NSA career, I think you'll know what I mean. Management was too busy to ((thump)) bother us except when it really mattered. We didn't have managers getting bright ideas for something that, you know, "Hey, I want to try this and see if it works". We didn't have ambit...eh, ((click)), ambition getting in the way ((click)) of...of you know, "Gee whiz," you know, "I need to do something that's going to look really good for my performance appraisal. I'm going to turn things upside down." Everyone was just devoted to getting the work done. And when you have a situation like that, ah, that really can be a great place for your average employee, you know? Eh...Or, you know, ah, your...your tech leader. Because I became a ((creak))...something of a technical leader in my time there. Because you're just focused on the work. And everything else is

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605



PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

peripheral. And since I'm very, you know, task-focused anyway, that...that was ideal for me.

**Maneki:**

((Click:)) Good. N...Were there many military, um, working with you?

((TR NOTE: [redacted] audio begins to noticeably break up.)) Very few. Um, I don't really remember...Well, let me put it this way. [redacted]

[redacted] Ah, in the time that I was in there, we had no military on that team. And the, ah...ah, the summary team which wrote the daily report summaries: I don't think they had any military. I don't recall seeing any in there. The, ah...At that time, I believe the, ah...It's vague. I...I don't remember the name of it any more, but it was essentially a target development team, ah((click)), under Vicky Vide. Ah, they may have had military. I didn't go over there as often, and I simply don't remember.

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

**Maneki:**

Okay.

Now in the years from [redacted] when I came down here, ah, towards the end we started getting some junior military in. But from ((click)) [redacted] I only remember seeing a few senior military who honestly, ah...This had to be very rough on them given the admin load that your average senior NCO type has. Ah, they spent all their time, typically, editing reports. We had a couple of, ah...a couple of E7's, I remember in particular, who were very good report editors. And they were putting eight hours a day in on that. So I...I hope the military gave them a break and didn't give them too much admin to do. ((Clack; clicking.))

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

**Maneki:**

Were you, ah, involved in, ah, reporting on the.. [redacted]

[redacted] Yes. Yes.

**Maneki:**

Can you tell me...

[redacted] Yeah, and...

**Maneki:**

About that?

[redacted] As a matter of fact, if...if you want some anecdotes, I...I have a few decent stories out of this.

**Maneki:**

Good.

[redacted] Of the kinds of things...Ah, I was with the s...

**Maneki:**

Hey, um, you're brea...You're breaking up. Is that just, ah, part of the system?

[redacted] Um, if we both talk at once, we'll both probably break up.

**Maneki:**

Okay.

[redacted] I'm hearing you fine.

**Maneki:**

Okay.

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

~~TOP SECRET//COMINT//GAMMA//20320108~~

[Redacted]

(B% Mmm hmm.) Um, I...I worked a...I worked the, ah...the time period after [Redacted]

Maneki:

Yes. Yes.

[Redacted]

((TR NOTE: Audio break-up continues.)) Ah, [Redacted]

[Redacted] Um, that was a very interesting time. And it actually...It has a few interesting tech notes. I teach a lot of reporting classes, and I'll frequently bring this up in there. ((Click.)) Ah, on the [Redacted]

[Redacted] of the, ah...of the reporting house was working very different (2-3G; skip or audio break-up). But what we were getting was [Redacted]

[Large Redacted Block]

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

And I don't remember the traffic in any detail after all this time. But I will say we were getting that reported as fast as we possibly could to the point that we were putting approximate times to the minutes in the report titles. I've never done anything like that before or since as far as reporting is concerned. We normally don't want to try and indicate the, ah...the time lof...of our communications because of sources and methods. It's simply not useful for understanding the information. But we had to give customers an idea of the time frames of these because we were not getting them out in chronological order. We were getting them out as fast as we could. ((Click or faint clank.)) And sometimes, later traffic was getting out before the earlier traffic was. Everyone was devoted to this. So every junior reporter was working on a piece of this traffic. As soon as they got it done, they'd pass it to whichever senior reporter was free. And so, it was happenstance which ones were going out when. And so, to give the customers an idea of how things were developing ((clacking; rustling)), (B% we'd OR we) actually put times in the titles--which, ah...which was very odd. Ah, and ((audio skip))...But (2-3G) ((thumping; clacking)), we thought it was (B% necessary) (audio skip) for the customers to be able to properly understand things. And, ah, at...Looking back, I think it was probably the right decision. But it was, ah...ah, again, a very exciting time. And of course, everything worked out well from it. Ah, my buddy down ((click)) here [Redacted] who started working [Redacted] you might want to interview her sometime. She's got more stories than I do. Ah, she's told me since that, ah...She was working the [Redacted] as it was called. And one of the things that they were reporting was all the ((thump)) [Redacted] They were putting

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

[redacted]

[redacted] So, ah, she's got some good stories, too. For me, you know, it's secondhand, but she can tell you about it, if you want. But, ah, ((click)), that was the [redacted] ((clack)). To, ah... To give you an idea of just how hard we were working in thee... in those days... One thing is, is when I look back on anything [redacted]

[redacted] the only time, I... The only way I can remember with any a... ((audio skip)) accuracy when anything was in my personal life is to remember what I was doing at work, and then go look it up ((audio skip)) and find out what was happening then. It was all a blur looking back. For example, when, ah... When I got asked to put together a

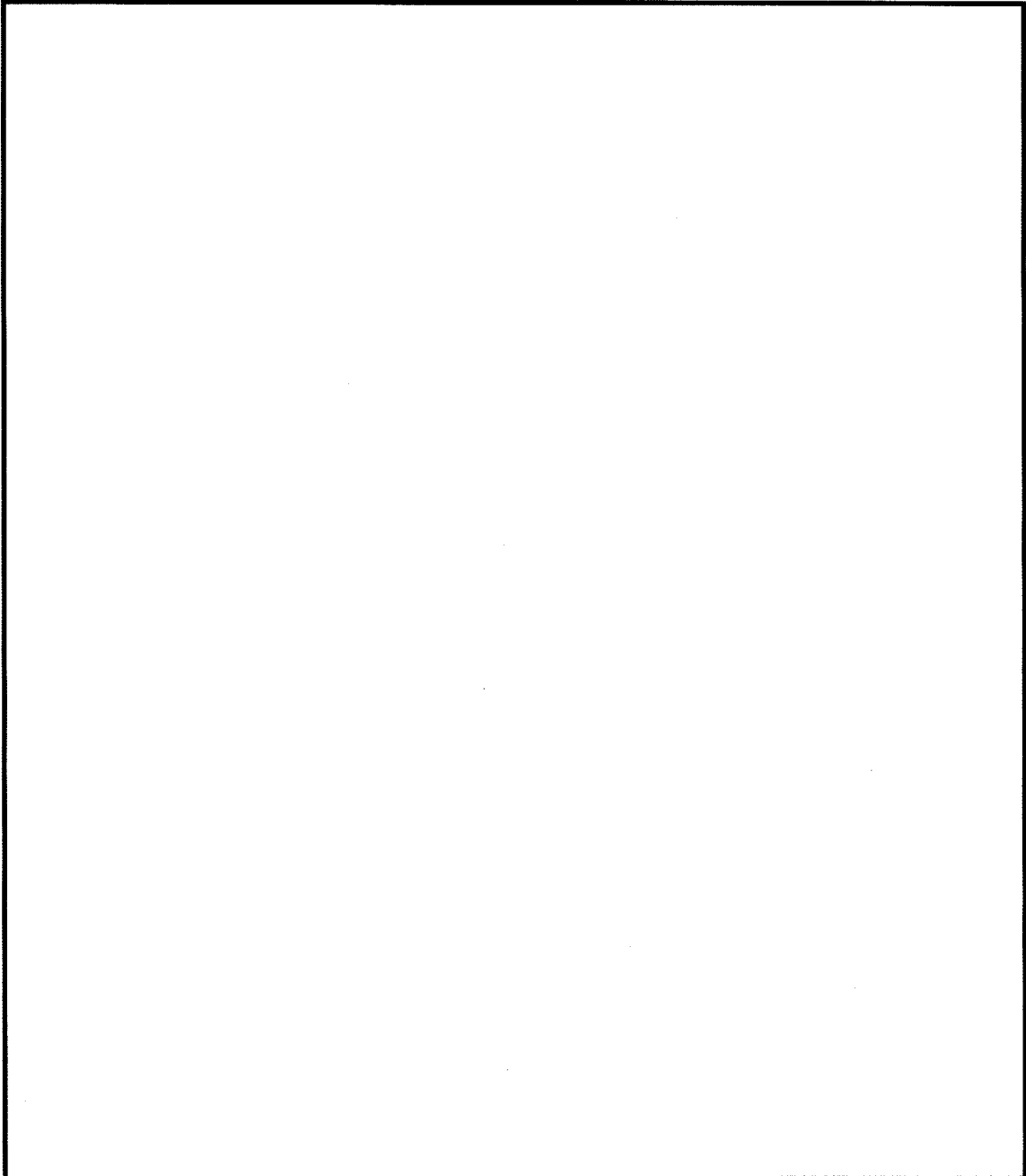
EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

[redacted] history class to teach to our new people here a few years ago... When I was putting it together, I specifically remembered working the [redacted] ((click; audio skip)) and of efforts to [redacted] you know, ah... ah... eh, of their reflections, that is--at the same time as the fall of [redacted] And when I was putting this history class together, I thought, you know, I really ought to check my dates. You know, and... Proper historians do that. And, ah... Ah, looking it up, those were weeks apart. I had merged them in my memory. So, ah, ((clacking)), I will say that I'm never, eh, for the rest of my career going to forget working (B% the) ((audio skip))

[redacted]

~~TOP SECRET//COMINT//GAMMA//20320108~~

back up their, ah... their claim to be for [redacted] So one of the things that the [redacted] have always claimed.. And it's probably true, although I never saw anything in traffic one way or the other. They always claimed that the [redacted] and the other areas were using them to attack from. And then, they would retreat to them ((audio skip)), and of course, couldn't be pursued into the [redacted] And I can see how that would be a little on the provoking side with the [redacted] On the other hand... The approach that they... And their... their response ((clacking)) was to, ah, [redacted] [redacted] who were in the area, ah, and then proceed to--



it this way. Th...they really weren't very PR savvy ((click)) at all. And, ah, early in the day, I was thinking, "Yes we're going to go in... We're going to shoot these people like they deserve to be shot." I, ah...I was feeling very partisan that day, I'm sorry. And as the day wore on ((click)) and we kept getting more and more [redacted]

And no one did anything about it. And, you know, I learned Russian back when. ((Clacking; clicking.)) I wanted to work the Soviet target--the "Evil Empire". Ah, nasty people. You know, ((clicking)), very totalitarian in their own special way. And, ah, ((clacking; clicking)). And when that ((clicking)) spot... stopped being so ugly, I went and worked [redacted] because I saw [redacted] as evil and...I'm sorry, but I like feeling like I'm opposing evil with my work. It's a just a...a personal quirk of mine. And certainly working [redacted] ah, you know, they're... You... You'll get arguments with people as to, you know, good versus evil, and whether we should even use terms like that anymore. Well, I will tell you ((clack)) by any definition of the word, evil things happened in [redacted] And I got to see some of the SIGINT reflections of that. And that was (B% the) day when evil things were happening. And I really never signed up to stand by and report on it ((audio skip)) (B% while) nothing happened. And th...that for me was a ((clacking))...was a pretty shameful day. ((Click.)) On the other hand, just like you have a little historical perspective on that at this point, ah, you'll never (1G) ((audio skip))...Whenever the NS...Oh, [redacted]

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

[redacted]

((Clacking; creak.)) (B% So...) Ah, as long as I'm on the topic of evil... And you guys are just letting me ramble on here--'cause I can... I can ramble and ramble if you haven't noticed yet. ((Clacking.)) Ah, one of the other things that I never got to listen to but I found out about, ah, part way through... Um, we [redacted]

[redacted]

far enough along that they would give me an RFI to answer. Now in the time I'd been there, we'd never seen anything like that. Although those [redacted] as far as I know, but, ah, I was asked to answer the

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

~~TOP SECRET//COMINT//GAMMA//20320108~~

RFI because, ah, the RFI was basically ((audio skip)), "How come," you know, "you're not reporting on that anymore?" And they said, "Well," you know, [redacted] look and see..." You know, I ((verbal pause))..."We...we still have on record [redacted]

[redacted] ((Audio skip.))

An...And, ah, I did, and we weren't. And so, the RFI was answered in the negative. But, ah, I remember it was a...a real surprise to me that, ah, that we were getting those comms. Because, you know, sorry, after all those years of working the ah, you know, the Soviet Union; and...and the

[redacted] Ah, it

shouldn't have surprised me given that, ah, [redacted]

[redacted] And,

ah, it was on the news, but I just missed it back when. Ah, ((verbal pause; audio skip)) ((thump))...But I guess (B% I OR ah) shouldn't have surprised me--given that they would let someone walk in and film the

[redacted]

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

Maneki:

[redacted] can I ask you a question? I, um...

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

[redacted]

Absolutely.

Maneki:

[redacted]

we...the way we wanted to. Do you agree with that?

[redacted]

We...I have to watch out for classification level here because, ah...ah, there's only so much I can ((beeping)) actually say at the TOP SECRET//COMINT level. Ah, I know...

Maneki:

Well, we can che...We can upgrade the cah...classification.

[redacted]

Okay, if...if you're willing to go up to [redacted]

[redacted]

EO 1.4.(b)  
EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

EO 1.4.(b)  
EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

[Redacted]

**Maneki:** ((Smack.)) Is there anything you...

[Redacted]

Eh ((sighs))...

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

**Maneki:** You can tell me about [Redacted]

[Redacted]

Oh, yeah. Ah, I was not at that time working [Redacted]

[Redacted]

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

and so on. But...Ah, well, I don't know if those are really exciting. But they're more exciting than average reporting days. Anyway, ah, I just remember that we were extremely busy trying to...to keep up on all of this. ((Faint thumping.)) And, ah, we put in an awful lot of hours. I got to put in my share because I was a senior reporter by then. And, ah...Ah, it was a...It was a busy time. But I don't remember anything specific from it, I'm sorry.

**Maneki:** Okay.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

~~TOP SECRET//COMINT//GAMMA//20320108~~

right around the same time frame, I think the [redacted]  
[redacted] So there was a... You know, it  
made it interesting ((clacking)) for a lot of [redacted] reporters. But,  
ah, when we were reporting [redacted] ah, like I said [redacted]  
[redacted] and it, ah... It made for some  
challenging reporting. But, ah, they would talk very openly--typically--with,  
ah... with these folks. And we got an awful lot of good reporting on... on  
their thoughts and their feelings. Didn't tend to get a lot in the way of  
plans. It wasn't like they would come up and talk about what they were,  
you know wanting to do the next day or anything like that. But, ah, we  
certainly, ((audio skip; click)) ah... ah ((audio skip))... (1-2G) we certainly  
saw a lot of [redacted]

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

[redacted] ((Creaking; thump.)) Because they really thought that,  
ah... They... They... Ah, they didn't really understand (B% the) politics of  
the West real well, ((click)), and, ah, were under the impression that, ah,  
you know, any time the West saw bad things, we'd go in and fix it. And  
it's... You know... Eah... As anyone knows, it's not that simple.

**Maneki:** Now I have been told that after, um, ((click)), [redacted]  
[redacted] And... and so, there was a scramble.  
to try to, ah, get back in business, so to speak.

[redacted]

Yes. Ah, all I can really tell you from that... Because I was a reporter.

**Maneki:** Mmm hmm.

[redacted]

So, you know, ((audio skip)) (B% in) terms of the collection and  
transcription and reporting ((creaking; clicking))--you know, steps of the  
process--I was fairly removed from it. And if you talk with Vicky Vid...  
[redacted]

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

**Maneki:** Right.

[redacted]

You know, she was, ah... You know she can tell you ((creaking)) anything  
you ever want to know about collection from ever since when in [redacted]  
[redacted] 'cause she is ((background noise)) the authority on it. But yeah,  
definitely, our, ah... [redacted]

[redacted] And, ah, I do remember talking with... I believe it was  
another reporter at the time. And him making the comment that we had

[redacted]

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

You know, "What do you think you're doing?" And, you know, all we could



say (B% of this), [redacted] You know, "What are we ((audio skip)) (B% going to) do?" But, yeah, we... We tried to find the [redacted] Um, I don't recall us having an enormous amount of success at that, ah ((audio skip))...ah, with any immediacy. You know, we were sorting of hoping that within a few days of [redacted] we could find wherever they had been moved to. But I don't recall us having a whole lot of success at that for at least weeks.

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

**Maneki:** Tell me a little more about, um...ah ((clack)), you know, the working conditions and...and...and that sort of thing. I know that...

[redacted]

Okay.

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

**Maneki:** That, ah...Go ahead.

[redacted]

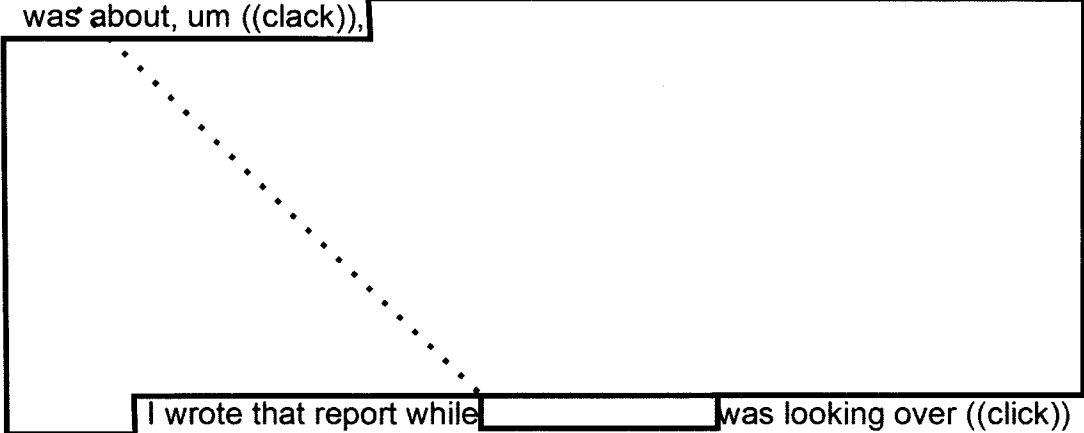
Sure. Ah, let me...Let me give you one example in particular because I can remember it really well. Ah, of those [redacted]

[redacted]

At the time that that was happening, ah, I recall that very clearly as being over Memorial Day weekend. And normally, what would happen on the weekend was...Ah, I don't know of...of...if you have a whole lot of reporting background. But typically, if you're trying to get things done in the most efficient way possible with limited resources, ah, it's simplest to just have your senior reporter write the report to begin with. They're going to make less mistakes. There's less to correct. It takes less time; you can get it out quicker. And so, normally on the weekends, they didn't really didn't call the junior reports in. Only if things went completely to, ah...to, eh...to heck. Ah, if...if things ((clack)) were getting really bad, they might call in some junior reporters. But typically, one senior reporter would be called in. If they were getting swamped, they would call in another one. On, ah...On Memorial Day Saturday ((click)), I, ah...I spent the day at home, ah, watching the news some and...and, you know, wondering what was going on and hoping our folks weren't working too hard. Because we all knew, at...at the start of the weekend, we were going to have people get called in. Well, low and behold, Sunday morning, I got called in. What happened was, was the two senior reporters on call had both been in the day before. And, ah, the word that I got was one worked fourteen hours and the other worked sixteen hours. And they were just too used up to come in on Sunday. So

they called me and another junior reporter in. Ah, I don't remember his name at this point, although I remember his face very clearly. He was an intern who'd come over. He actually had something like fifteen years of Agency experience, but it'd all been on, ah, like, ah, ((stutters)), on Finance and Personnel and Payroll, and things like that. And the good news was he knew how to write. He'd written enough memos in his time, he could write well. And so, he and I were experienced enough junior reporters, they were comfortable with us doing that. And the, ah...the branch chief came in. That was [redacted] And, ah, I remember that what we were doing was: ah, me and the other junior ((click)) reporter were writing our reports; (B% passing) it to each other; ah, giving it a look-over; and getting it out as fast as we can. And I know I had one report...The only FLASH priority report I've done in my career, ah...ah, it was about, um ((clack)), [redacted]

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605



EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

I wrote that report while [redacted] was looking over ((click)) my shoulder. And when I finished writing it, he finished looking it over. He said, "It's good. Send it out." And, ah...Ah, every reporter tends to remember the first time they got a report to go out without any changes. And that was the first time I'd ever got one to go out without being changed. And, ah...So that was, ah...That was a very exciting time ((clack)). I put in eight hours that day because I'd actually been the second junior reporter called in. The other one put in ten. And then, the, ah...the word that I got when we came back in Tuesday was those same two senior reporters that had been in on Saturday were called in on Monday--big surprise--and worked twelve and fourteen hours. So, ah, I know when I talked with [redacted] ah, after [redacted]-well, around the time of [redacted] when they were actually starting to let people on their ninety-day details and leave after three years--he told me that in the three years that he had been working that target that he had written or edited three thousand reports. Now I can tell you, I'm a fast reporter. I've been working [redacted] a long time now--though it hasn't been exciting like it was then. And I use to keep track of how many reports I had done. And then once (B% PLUS) came along, I stopped keeping track. But from time to time, I do a pull. I've got a rough idea I've done somewhere between twelve hundred and fifteen hundred reports since I became a reporter in [redacted] as a reporter, I've done ((thump)) maybe half

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

((audio skip)) (B% as) many reports as [redacted] did in those three years on [redacted]. The pace was insane. And to be honest with you, we had a fair amount of resentment about it at the time. And I'd like to address that a little bit--given the, ah...the reapportionment moves that are currently going on. Ah, I don't...

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

Maneki:

(1-2B)...

[redacted]

Oppose reapportionment because our whole feeling the whole time that this was going on was, [redacted]

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

[redacted]

And, un...Ah, (B% yeah OR you know), obviously, we weren't getting an answer and we weren't really posing the question to anybody in a position to answer it anyway. But it was...The...the working conditions (B% weren't) unreasonable. It's not something you should ever subject anyone to for a very long period of time. ((Clacking.)) And I guess senior management just kept thinking ((rustling; clacking)) that [redacted] would go away. But, ah, as we know, it took years for that to happen. Um, but one of the things that

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

((clank)) fed into our perception of being completely neglected was all those years of being [redacted] ((Clacking; loud thumps.)) Because...eh, because with rumor...Maybe this was ((clacking)) just, you know, people having an attitude. ((Clacking.)) I wouldn't know. But the word that ((noise)) we had amongst ourselves--our personal belief--was that we were an [redacted] because nobody wanted to try and deal ((rustling; clack)) with us. And so, we were [redacted] answering to, I don't know, I guess [redacted] in those days. And no one really wanted to deal with us. They didn't want to figure out how many resources we needed. They didn't want to try and put people to us. And when we did get people, what typically was happening was, was somebody would, you know, finally say to some

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

division chief some place, "Send me a couple of people to work [redacted] [redacted] (B% meaning), if they need more people. And naturally, they would send us their castoffs. ((Click.)) So, ah, w...ah, we (B% have OR had) a lot of very proficient, high quality people working that target, but we never felt like we had the support that we should have had from senior management. And the thing that bothers me now with reapportionment is that I'm not usually in favor of grabbing people and say, "Here, go work another target." It's not good for morale to do that. You're going to do it if you have to, of course. I mean you do what you have to do. ((Slight chuckle.)) We certainly did for years working ((click)) [redacted]. But ((snapping)), I just feel like the lesson learned from our experiences on [redacted] [redacted]--from not having enough people ((clacking))--that they didn't take that into account with reapportionment. They were just grabbing people and shoving them to...to fill holes. And ((clicking; stutters))...((He clears his throat.)) There we were for all those years working way too hard to do

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

this. And the answer is, is to start getting folks in there early on. And to be honest with you, the other thing that you want to do is you want to give people an incentive to go there. Because one of the things that, ah, that we found, ((audio skip)) funny after a while, we had people come in, ah, after a while [redacted] People would come in thinking, you know, [redacted]

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

[redacted] as it was designated in those days. "Coming here and working this for a while will get me promoted." And the answer to that was, "Not so fast." Ah, we actually...I...I can remember ((clack))...Prob...It would have been the promotions that were announced [redacted] Ah, to begin with, we had no 12 and below promotions. Then a... a couple days later, they found a 12 and below promotion for us...to give us. And the reason that we were given...And this came from management, so this wasn't just, ah, you know, a...an urban legend getting started, or anything like that. But the reason that we were given at the time, was that our, ah...our people weren't being looked at very favorably by the promotion board because we weren't working outside the box. We weren't getting outside of our organizational boundaries, because that was a big mantra at that time. ((Audio skip.)) And, you know, ah, [redacted]

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

[redacted]

Of course, we were working inside the box. Ah, so it...it always kind of amused us when people would come in to get promoted because it didn't work that way. Ah...Eh, working [redacted]

[redacted] but the money did follow that. Now I hear that [redacted] getting more promotions than the rest of the Agency at...now with reapportionment. And I'm fine with that. I...It's the highest priority thing there is. Of course there should be more promotions with it. But when you just...You know, back in those days [redacted] promotions was, ah, practically the only way you could support these sort of things. I will say, by the way, I got a cash award practically every year from [redacted] So I'm not ((clack))

complaining. Ah, you know, I did just (B% fine, [redacted] And, ah, besides, it was a great experience. But, ah, if all you do to support an office is give it more promotions: ah...eh...eh, not really the best way to go because promotions...((Stutters.)) Promotions go to the people that promotions go to. And typically these days, that's the people with the best paperwork. And to be honest with you, if you're working something ((clack)) like [redacted]

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

[redacted] Um, what should you be spending time on? [redacted] or getting your resume spiffed up? You know? So, ah, I'm not so sure that promotions go to the ((thump)) best people in our current environment. But on the other hand, I don't think promotions have gone to the right people at any time in my career. So, whatever. You

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

know? I...I...I...I know you don't really want to get too much into that, or at least I...I wouldn't think you would. But as far as working conditions were concerned, they were, ah...they were terrible, honestly. And I...I...I honestly don't think that senior management ever supported us the way they should. I...I'm sure they were trying. I can tell you we...We got a new server for the computers every year because they just kept adding more positions--which meant we were adding ((clack)) people. But it was...It was never really enough for what we were doing. And, ah...Ah, certainly, in the early years--which in my experience: [redacted] (thump)) to, you know, [redacted]--ah, we were way overworked. And it wasn't really handled that well. ((Audio skip.)) But the Agency in the '80s did not prepare itself to be able to work a situation like that. So what ((clack)) can you say? ((Clacking.))

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

**Maneki:** What do you think of, ah, SIGINT on Demand? ((Clicking.))

[redacted]

Um, I think SIGINT on Demand was an absolutely brilliant idea. I was there when it was created. I was a senior-enough reporter that I had a...a little bit of input into it after it was created. I certainly was not involved in its creation. That was [redacted] and the...the folks working ((clack)) with him. Um, absolutely brilliant idea. Eh, something to fill the gap between the, ah...you know, the...We're not saying this is reliable. And it only goes to a limited (1-2G) (B% of) customers (B% that) (1-2G) KLI EGLIGHT. And the...This is the last word on the subject no matter how long it takes us. Ah, product report...((TR NOTE: Addresses Ms. Maneki and Ms. Murdock:)) Uh oh. We're just about out of time here. Already?

**Maneki:** Are we?

[redacted]

(XB by others talking.)

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

**Murdock:** I got another hour.

**Maneki:** Oh, we have another hour.

[redacted]

Okay. ((Clacking.)) Good, good. Anyway, um, I think it was a brilliant idea where we would b...be able to put stuff out and, you know, not claim that it was utterly reliable. Ah, ((click)), and...and be able to gauge customer interest from it. I don't really like what they've done with it since then, when it, ah...when it became, ah ((click))...What was it? SNIPITS or something? After that, it was held ((acknowledgement)) to the same, ah ((clacking))...ah, the same standards as a product report. We already do product reports. What's the point? It's just another vehicle. So what? We don't really need another vehicle. We have one. And I will say, I haven't used...Ah, what is it? Content Preparation Environment: CPE?

**Maneki:** Mmm hmm.

[redacted]

But I've talked to at least one ((clack)) senior reporter here who has ((snap)). And, ah, ((snapping)), it looks like an absolute disaster at present. It sh...It seems to me to be extremely promising ((click; rumbling.)) But when I talk to people, and they say something that should

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

OH-2007-25 [redacted]

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

take an hour to get out, takes two to three. ((More rumbling.)) Ah, n...Yeeh...((Thump.)) But (1G), SIGINT on Demand was a great idea. I don't think it's been developed properly since it was first created. But ((clicking; other noises.)) ((Pause.))

**Maneki:**

We, um, traditionally have trouble in crises. Um, ah...You know, getting reporters, keeping reporters. Ah...ahm...((She pauses.)) ((Click.)) Do you think that, ahm, anything was really learned from [redacted]

Um, looking at what's happened since and from talking to some folks, ah, primarily at NSA [redacted] I don't think so, honestly. Um, one of the things that has always surprised ((clacking)) me...Ah, you know, I...I haven't gotten into my lin...my linguist side too much. But you know, I learned Russian back when ((click)). And of course, I'm too hard of hearing to be able to pass probably even an English PQE or...or ((clack)) the LPT, where the voice side is concerned 'cause I just ((clack))...I can't hear well enough to be able to do that. But I very nearly professionalized in Russian. The two times that I took ((clack)) the, ah...the...the PQE 2 on the [redacted]

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

[redacted] PQE, ah, I had been down here for a few years and hadn't been able to work it. But even then, I went ahead and tried taking it. And I missed the cutoff for that...from that PQE by--I don't know--thirty-four points or something? I mean, I wasn't...I wasn't far away. Ah, (B% I) already shown that I can work a crisis. ((Rustling.)) That, you know, I don't, ah...I don't get frazzled out by it, you know more than anybody else does. I can pick up languages quickly. Why don't they ever look at...? Well, I...I know why they don't look at...But I think they really should look at, ((clacking)), ah, people who (B% had) volunteered to...you know, "I will go jump in for whatever, whenever", ah, folks. ((He clears his throat.)) There's people like me who would be willing to do it. I don't mind. ((Clacking.)) I like working a crisis. It's more fun. ((Creaking.)) But, ah, ((clack)), eah...You know, I realize that they would, then, have to come up with billets that could be moveable, and are you willing to have people jump off of ((thumping)) whatever target they're on and go do it? But, eah...You know...Wa...As you said, we've never done well with crises. Well, all right then. We've never had the answer. Let's try some new ones. Let's try doing something different. Ah, you know, calling for volunteers is fine, but what if folks won't let you go from where you're at? You know, how do we deal with the billets? Ah, I will tell you I think that what's killing the Agency...Ah, well, I think there's a lot of things killing the Agency. But one thing that's killing the Agency any more and has for years now is being ((clacking)) (B% sewed at) the billets. I understand that Congress mandates the maximum number of people. But, ah, how many managers have you ever talked you who spend more time worrying about ((click)) billets than they do about the people filling them? ((Clacking.)) That is the wrong thing to be focusing on. Don't let billets get

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

in the way of getting the work done. Don't let billets be more important than the people that are doing the work. Find a way to make billets more moveable. There...There's got to be some kind of better answer.

**Maneki:** ((Smack.)) Um...

[redacted] (1-2G) (B% think something) like that...

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

**Maneki:** How did the, ah...?

[redacted] (2-3B) (B% answer)...

**Maneki:** How did the transfer of, ah...Um, ((click))...A lot of [redacted] I understand, was...was transferred to Texas.

[redacted] That, ah...That's...That's an interesting point, and I'll be ((click)) happy to answer that for you, and I'll try to keep to under fifteen hours. Um ((noise))...Ah...I don't know how much you've heard about what we're now calling the NSA Texas. Ah, however, I can tell you...Ah, well, ((he stutters)), a couple of things were going on. One was: I was getting a little bit restless up at the Fort, ah, when they were talking about moving the mission that had been at Bad Ailing Station to what was, then, the...the Medina RSOC--now NSA Texas. Ah, combine that with the fact that coming from the Midwest, I never felt entirely comfortable in Maryland. ((Clicking.)) Maryland for me is a very crowded place, and it's not what I'm use to. And when they announced ((audio skip)) that the mission was coming here and they were looking for people to come down here and work it, I volunteered immediately. Ah, I was teaching reporting classes even then, ((click)), and I would mention to my classes when we would have, you know, the "let's introduce ourself" portion of the class, I'd mention that I was coming down here. And I had two or three students who had been down here, and they said virtually the same thing, "Don't go there. They don't recognize quality. ((Click.)) They don't recognize expertise." ((Click.)) Ah, ((click)), since coming down here, I think that that was true. I think it remains true. Ah, I will tell you that this is the worse place I have ever worked. I had a better job as a busboy in a steak house back when I was eighteen years old than working here. Um, as to the mission transfer, it was extremely ((audio skip)) awkward. Ah, when we got here, we had...There were people setting it up before people...Well, let me put it this way. There were mistakes from day one with this. Some folks who had been working the [redacted]

[redacted] that was in [redacted] after they had made a lot of their initial plans. Ah, eh, started getting things set up before the mission was going to transfer. Then they came up to Fort Meade and asked ((clack)) for people to come down. ((Clicking.)) Um, so they were already...They already had their notions of how things should be, without talking to the people ((clack)) who really had the direct [redacted] experience. I don't think that's really the best move. However, there's historically been a fair amount of friction between this site and

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

OH-2007-25 [redacted]

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

headquarters. And that probably--I wouldn't know--but I would  
sus... assume that, that ((click)) probably played a part. Ah, I got  
here... Ah, well as a matter of fact, I got here six weeks before 9/11 ((TR  
NOTE: Spoken as individual numbers: 9-1-1.)) So I got here in ((clack))  
early August of 2001. Ah...ah ((audio skip))... Had I not moved heaven  
and earth to get down here before the school year started, I ((audio skip))  
still would have been up there, and I never would have come down here  
because I would have gone over and worked something ((clack)) really  
exciting when 9/11 ((TR NOTE: Again, spoken as 9-1-1)) happened. But  
eine... Instead, I came down here. The problem was, was, ah  
((pauses))... eh, MRSOC has an almost all... Well, it depends. And it's  
gotten a little bit better. But back then, had an almost all-military  
workforce. Even now, on our [redacted] we have a, you know, very  
large military workforce and very few civilians.

[redacted]

So we have all of these military folks who,  
unfortunately, ah, the linguists may stay put for a few years, but analysts  
are frequently, (B% you know), ((audio skip)), in place only for perhaps a  
year. [redacted] is such a complicated area, it typically takes a year to  
get up to speed on it. So our, ah... our analysts normally never get up to  
speed before they're gone. A few. You know, we... we do keep a few  
after that year, year and a half (1-2G) (B% point). ((Audio skip.)) But  
when I got here in August of '01, ((click)), ah, I started training folks on the  
[redacted] Ah, they'd gotten some training that was brought down from the  
Fort. But even then, ah, people were already starting to rotate out who  
had been on [redacted] before we got it. So all they had been  
involved in was getting it set up, and then they rotated out before we ever  
even picked up the mission. When 9/11 ((TR NOTE: spoken as 9-1-1))  
happened, ah, ((clack; clears throat)), honestly, we, ah... I... I think we  
were kind of trapped (B% in it, but) ((audio skip)) some mistakes were  
made.

[redacted]

So we went live with untrained people. And  
at the time, it was a 24-hour support mission. So we went 24/7 with, at the  
time ((click))... What was it? ((He sighs.)) There were [redacted]  
who, ah, honestly really knew what we were doing with reporting. So  
((shifting sound)) we had one per shift and an extra on days. And, ah, on  
break days, ah, I just told them to call me in for my, ah... well, the folks on  
my shift. I said, "Don't put a report out without me." Ah, they didn't really  
know what they were doing. Now of course, I kept on training ((audio  
skip)) them, but I should have been training everyone. And I ended up  
training only a (B% shit's OR shift's) worth. And honestly, that was six  
years ago; we still have not recovered. We still have a... a workforce that's  
undertrained; ah, under-knowledgeable. Ah, frankly, they're

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605



undermotivated ((clacking)) in most cases simply because ((thump)) the, ah, the Services in general are not interested as far as promotions are concerned in what people are doing ((clack)) with the mission. They're more interested ((creaking)) in their PT scores; whether they've been to the range; whether they're doing charitable work. Ah, things like that. Um, it makes for a very awkward environment as far as trying to get anything done. ((Clank.)) But, you know, how was the mission transfer handled? Ah, we did the best we could. But it didn't go anywhere near as smoothly as anyone would have liked, because going live when your folks barely know what they're doing: eh ((click)), not the answer. ((Clack.))

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

Maneki:

Now, you were involved in both the [redacted] early part and in the ((thump or clank))...and in the, um, [redacted] Did we learn anything between those two parts? You know, n...were things better when ((click)) [redacted] than maybe they had been earlier or...?

[redacted]

Definitely. They were absolutely handled better. Ah, we had let ((clack)) a lot of people go after [redacted] Almost all of them volunteered to come back. ((Clicking.)) We've since, of course, ((creak)), had people replace them. So we actually were in a pretty healthy situation when [redacted] happened. Ah, an awful lot of people who knew [redacted] knew how to report it; knew what to expect; knew what the conditions would be like; ((audio skip)) came back and worked. ((Audio skip.)) Ah, I know during the, ((click)), I'd say five, six months initially after, ah, the [redacted] started--when, ah, I was working rotating shifts--((clicking)) I...ah, I didn't work a lot of eight-hour days. But you know, honestly, I worked mostly nine-hour days. The first few days, I worked eleven and twelve hours. But, ah, we knew what we were doing at that point. We had a lot of people in ((click)) and, ah...Ah, honestly, of course, ((rustling or shuffling sound)), [redacted] So ((hiss; clacking)) we didn't have as [redacted] ((Rubbing or sifting sound.)) But, ah...Ah, I just remember that as being, ah, you know, ah...It was a crisis, and it was...Eh, everyone was working very hard, working high speed. Ah, I was the reporter on duty when [redacted]

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

[redacted] ((Sifting sound continues.)) But, ah...Ah...We, ah...We were very busy. It was a...a really exciting time. As a matter of fact, let me, ah...Let me throw this in really quickly. What we did on [redacted] [redacted]. We had a team...This, by the way, tells you something about what the management was like in those days. [redacted]

[redacted] ((Click.)) Ah, they looked around...looked at who we had. ((Buzzing sound.)) They basically said to the mothers of young children, "We don't want to put you on shift work." And all of the rest of us were fine with that. If anybody was going

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

to see that as people being singled out for the wrong reasons, none of us agreed with that. We didn't want those people being taken away from their young children. So me [sic] ((clack)) and [redacted] [redacted]..Or in my clay...in my case, eh...ah, they figured, "Well, he's ((snap))...he's close." Eh ((perhaps a slight chuckle))...ah ((clack))...They put us on rotating shifts. We were on NSOC's ((thump)) schedule to begin with. But we later...I don't know why NSOC works ((clack)) that schedule. We later reversed it, so we were forward rotating instead of backward rotating. In other words, keep staying up later ((audio skip)) every day and you'll be ready for your next shift when it comes up. Um, ((thump)), so we were on rotating shifts. And when it wasn't Monday through Friday days, we were "it". And I mean "it". When, ah...when traffic would come in ((buzzing sound)), I would read it in

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

[redacted]

[redacted] write a product report off of it, and issue it. We didn't have any language QC; we didn't have any report editing. Ah, that was what we did. Ah, the good news about it was, was anything that was that important--that couldn't wait and had to go--ah, tended to be extremely straightforward ((audio skip)), both linguistically and from a reporting standpoint. So, ah...Eh, in terms of, ah...In terms of language difficulty, it was level-two traffic, not level-three typically. But, ah...Ah, you know ((audio skip)), that's not really the way we like to do SIGINT. Y...Ah, you know, I talked about the standards the product reports are held to. Everything will have a language QC; ah, everything is going to be edited; and so on. [redacted] So, ah, that was the operation that we went into for a good six months. And that was, ah...((Clacking.)) That was a very fulfilling time career-wise for me, as far as I'm concerned. I mean, ah, I (B% didn't) get a promotion out of it or anything. Got an awful lot of overtime and night diff ((TR NOTE: short for shift "differential")). That was fun. You know, s...But it...Ah, when I talk about fulfillment, I don't normally mean money; I mean in terms of working something complicated; stretching myself in...in terms of my ((audio skip)) abilities; and, ah...That was, ah...That was...That was a highlight in my career: was being trusted to work at that kind of level and get everything right, and doing it. Because, ah, one of the things...They had some concerns as I mentioned. You know, [redacted] close enough as a linguist." When everything ((clicking)) died down, a couple of the senior linguists went back through my work and reviewed it. And they said, "He didn't miss anything significant." So that was, ah...That was...It was nice being asked to step up and be entrusted with working at that level, because you don't normally do that. ((Clack.)) And yet, that's what they asked me to do. They trusted me to do it, and I did it. ((Clacking.))

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

~~TOP SECRET//COMINT//GAMMA//20320100~~

Maneki:

We're you involved with the division of effort at all between the, ah, [redacted] ((Sifting or sniffing sound.))

Yes. I never ((click)) was involved in any of the negotiations, although I did sit in on one session when it...we hosted it. Ah, and I n...Ah, I never really had a problem with anything in the division of effort. It was usually ((clack)) pretty straight forwardly ((slam or clack)) (B% done). ((Audio skip.)) I will say in the early days-- [redacted]--ah, it was absolutely ugly. I fortunately never had to deal with it. ((Thump.)) But in those days, there was a division of effort within our own office

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

[redacted] And ((audio skip)) the problem was...Excuse me for one moment here. ((Click; thump.)) The way the division ((click)) worked was that if it was all ((clacking)) military comms (1-2G; cut off; audio skip), that those folks did. If it was all [redacted] ((creaking)), of course, we did it. ((Thump.)) Um, but where it ran into trouble was whenever [redacted] was involved, ((click)), because of course, all sides were busy trying to...to get themselves, ah, ((clacking)), [redacted] at a minimum ((audio skip))--and generally [redacted] and anything else they could get, ah, at a maximum. And that was never fully developed in the division of effort. The [redacted] branch had a branch chief at that time who I heard--this is hearsay ((buzzing sound))--was very aggressive as far as who should be reporting

PL 86-36/50  
USC 3605

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

what. And he felt that--according to hearsay...Ah, this is second, third hand. Ah...Ah, he felt his folks were, ((click)), ah, far better prepared to report this than we were. ((Click.)) And so, what happened was, in effect, each branch ended up trying to cherry-pick any traffic that could conceivably go between the two of them. ((Clack.)) Ah, I'm not going to try and say "anybody was wrong, anybody was right," but I do recall the..the team chief from the [redacted] branch, ah, and the team chief from my team, ah, getting into a (1-2G) basically a screaming match over who should be working some traffic. And of course, both of them were frazzled and overworked. ((Clack.)) But it, ah...It shouldn't come to that. As a...as a side note that might amuse you, ah, I took a leadership class. I don't remember which one. Seh...A few years later--probably about [redacted]

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

Something like that. Might have been [redacted] (buzzing sound), ah, from [redacted] who's ((acknowledgement)) since retired and is now ((clack)) a contractor. And, ah, he had case studies in the class. And we were going through one case study. And I said...I...I finally just raised my hand part way through part way through. And I said, [redacted] was this [redacted]

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

[redacted] I said, "I swear I recognize this." And he paused and he said, "Well, you know, yes it was. I was called in, ah, to try and...and resolve the problem. And this ((clicking)) was one of the non-success stories. I wasn't able to resolve it." Ah, I can tell you that the only things that ever caused that particular issue to die down...And I'm not going to ascribe to one or the other because they happened about the same. [redacted] happened about the same time

as that a...allegedly aggressive branch chief moved on. So whether it was [redacted] and everything calming down some, or that branch chief leaving—I couldn't tell you. ((Sifting or rubbing sound.)) But that is when the problem finally went away. It was never resolved.

**Maneki:** ((She chuckles.)) Okay.

[redacted] Yes, I name names. Sorry. ((Clack; chuckles.))

**Maneki:** ((Pauses.)) I'm sorry. You name names?

[redacted] Uh huh. (2-3G). ((Clack.)) Heh...You know I, ah...I don't know what the strictures might be on you guys for what you can publish and what goes where. But, ah, you know, NSA has its bright days; NSA has its dark days.

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

**Maneki:** Oh, yeah.

[redacted] And I'm not going to hide the one ((audio skip)) over the other. So...

**Maneki:** Mmm hmm. That's not a problem.

[redacted] Some things (B% on the) (1-2G), (B% just leave it right). ((Clears his throat.)) So...

**Maneki:** W...We...

[redacted] Go ahead.

**Maneki:** We understand that. We, ah...We...we want the...We want the real scoop. ((Clacking.)) We don't, ah, want anything sugar-coated. So, don't worry about that.

[redacted] Okay. ((Pause here.))

**Maneki:** What, um...? ((Click.)) I guess you didn't really get involved in the tra...in the, um...ah, some of the things that were done to ((clacking))...to make it easier for linguists? What I mean was the...the setting up of the...You know, letting people work in Utah, and things like that?

[redacted] Ah, I was never involved in that. But I, ah...I dealt with some of that. I honestly felt like ((audio skip)) that was one of the best things NSA ever did. I thought that was really great. Ah, we had one guy whose name I no longer recall...He's since resigned unfortunately. Ah, he had--I believe it was his father--was a family member ((audio skip)) who was very, very ill. It was, eh...eh, something I...I don't remember if it was cancer or what, but it was something very...Yeah, it was definitely life-threatening. And, ah, he needed to go and take care of that family member. And the family member certainly couldn't be moved at the time at least--and lived in Chicago. And I don't know what we did, but we moved heaven and earth for this guy. Ah, Vicky Vide probably remembers ((audio skip)) if, ah...if you want to re-interview her. ((Acknowledgement.)) Because I think she was involved in that. ((Acknowledgement.)) Ah, but we were able to set it up so he was able to work part-time for us, you know, remotely from Chicago. And you know, we don't...we don't have anything ((sifting

sound)) in Chicago. I don't know what they did to make this work out. I don't know (B% if OR of)...ah, what kind of facility he was working from. But we were able to do that. Ah, obviously ((click)) with the, ah, (2-3G) (B% service) in Utah. And we realized they could be used better. Ah,

[redacted] --one of our senior linguists ((sifting sound; clack))-- ended up PCS'ing out there to work with them so they had a senior linguist ((clacking)) to help bring them along and get them better. And, ah, that worked out really well because those guys were good. ((Clacking.)) They had great attitudes, great work ethics--the folks in Utah. And, ah...Ah, certainly once we [redacted] their, ah...You know, they were ((thump)) doing their best to begin with. But their quality did go up after he got there. And they were ((sifting sound; clacking)) doing some excellent work for us. Ah, that was absolutely great. Ah, [redacted] is down here in San Antonio. She works from, ah...from, ah...Dang! It's just (1G) north of San Antonio. I can't remember the name of it all of a sudden. Anyway, ah, ((click)), she works from a facility up there. And, ah, that's worked out very well. We, ah...((Click.)) I, ah...I worked with [redacted]

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

some by remote control before ever coming down here. And she's helped us a few times since from across town. And ah...It's been great. Ah, I know from, ah...from talking with her that, ah, she's been very pleased with the situation up there. ((Clacking.)) Ah, certainly she's, ah...I...I know she's run into ((audio skip)) a lot less frustration than those of us here at, ah...at NSA Texas have run into. So, ah ((clack))...I think it's a ((audio skip)) great thing. I mean, you know, le...let's face it. Ah ((audio skip)), you know, we need managers and...and leaders to, ah...to...to be looking ahead and trying to plan and strategize and deal with billets ((snap)). 'Cause somebody's got to. But it's your folks that get the work done. And if you can find a way to make that easier, you gotta do it.

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

**Maneki:** ((Click.)) Right, right. Now ((clack)) did you feel that, um, the office got the technology resources that it needed? Did you like some of the new things that they tried? Or were they just...

[redacted]

Um...

**Maneki:** Show pieces?

[redacted]

I honestly don't ((audio skip)) really remember that they were trying anything new in particular other than SIGINT on Demand--which I thought initially until ((he chuckles))...until corporate got a hold of it--I thought it was great. Um, ((he clears his throat))...

**Maneki:** Well, I guess, um...

[redacted]

I...I...(B% You know)...

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

**Maneki:** There was some [redacted] um...There was some more--ah, I'm...I'm told--some more, um, direct reporting at NSA that...you know, that normal...normally field would have done. That...that kind of thing.

[redacted]

Oh, I never was involved with that.

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

**Maneki:** ((Click.)) Okay.

[redacted] Ah, that sounds like what the [redacted] might have been doing. That, ah...Ah...I...My buddy [redacted] that I mentioned that works here, she works, ah...She works mids. But, ah, she started with the [redacted] [redacted] She might be a good person to talk to about that. I...I honestly cannot address ((audio skip)) (B% it).

**Maneki:** Okay, okay. So who was the, um ((clicking))...? Who were some of the, ah, chiefs when you were...when you were working the [redacted] Was it George, ah...? I can't think of his name.

[redacted] When...George Moore.

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

**Maneki:** Yeah.

[redacted] When I...When I first...Yeah, when I first started working there. Ah, ((drawn out)), let me think. Um ((click))...Ah, [redacted] was my team chief. ((Clacking.)) She's now somebody in reporting policy. [redacted]

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

[redacted] was the branch chief. Ah, [redacted] I think, was his deputy at that ((clack)) point. I'm pretty sure that she's retired now. ((Buzzing sound.)) And, ah, [redacted] was the division chief. And if you want to interview some of those other old timers... 'Cause I know [redacted] is still around and [redacted] is still around. [redacted]

[redacted] is still around. ((Audio skip.)) He took over after [redacted] moved on. Ah, they would be good people to talk to because [redacted] from everything I ever heard ((click))- came in to what was an absolute ((door closing, creaking)) mess in terms of management--and straightened it out. Ah, it's not something I know about. He was already in place when I got there. But that is what I heard: was that, ah, it was ((clack)) truly a...a poorly run organization, (B% with) just nobody knew what they were doing. It was a mess. That was the sort of thing I heard; and that, ah, [redacted] came in and straightened it out. So, ah, it might be worth talking to some other old timers. But as I said, I...You know, I got there [redacted] he was already in place. Ah, the few times that I was in a...you know, a meeting with him or something like that... 'Cause, you know, an office like that: meetings were an absolute minimum. ((Rustling sound; clacking.)) Um, we...You know, we just got work done, instead of having meetings. But, eh...I'm kidding. Mostly kidding. Um, anyway...((Clack.)) Ah, [redacted] The...the few meetings I had that he was in, he, ah...He certainly seemed to know his stuff. Ah, seemed to be a very decisive man, ah, and...and very good at what he did. Um, ((buzzing sound; clank)), honestly, I was...I...I thought all of our managers that I dealt with were very good. When I went over to [redacted]. Ah, let me think ((click)). It was, ah, [redacted] ((acknowledgement)) was the branch chief, and ((drawn out)) I don't ((clacking)) remember who her deputy was when I first went over there anymore. It might have been...It might have been [redacted] was the deputy. George Moore later became the deputy and then after a reorg, he became a branch chief. And, ah, I think he was a team chief on ((audio skip)), maybe the [redacted] when I first

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

got there. He, ah... You know, I... I know you interviewed him, and he certainly knows [redacted] very well. Ah, George, ah, I thought was an excellent manager. But honestly, I thought almost all of our managers were really good. But you know, as I said, ((clicking)), they didn't deal with us except when they had to. I... They... they were too busy with things. Um, you know, we were continually getting [redacted] [redacted] And so, they were involved in decisions on where to put those things; when they were going to come in; you know, what places would be safe to put them; what are we going to do with the traffic; how is it going to be reported?; what's the classification level? Ah, so they were very busy with things like that--ah, just trying to keep up with customer requests--RFIs--'cause they mostly answered those early on. Ah, ((clicking))... Ah, they were extremely busy. So they didn't bother us much. ((Audio skip.)) And honestly, I... You know, if you've got a workforce that's snown... that knows what it's doing, managers shouldn't really be all, you know, all that involved. They, ah... They should be looking ahead and looking to make sure everyone's getting along, and, ah, you know, looking ((audio skip)) at the people aspects of things. So, ah... I... I thought all our managers were great. But I... You know, I... I always like when managers don't bother me. ((Click.)) I know what I'm doing.

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

**Maneki:** Right.

Right.

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

[redacted] ((He laughs.)) I don't need a lot of managing.

**Maneki:** Yeah. Right, right. Um...

Yeah. Right, right. Um...

[redacted] Eh...

Eh...

**Maneki:** What, ah...? How much...? One of the big pry... problems in crises is that there's more traffic than can possibly, ah, be reported. Um, that was certainly true in Vietnam. Was that true in [redacted]

What, ah...? How much...? One of the big pry... problems in crises is that there's more traffic than can possibly, ah, be reported. Um, that was certainly true in Vietnam. Was that true in [redacted]

[redacted] Absolutely. Ah, I know later on, when we were dur... [redacted] I got curious. This is one thing that has slowed down a fair amount. So this is, ah... This is from ((clank)) probably--I would guess-- [redacted] probably. Just... It... It feels like it was from about then. ((Sifting sound in background.)) Ah, I went ahead and just ((click)) did a pull off of whatever we were working from at those... in those days. And, ah, w... we were ((pop)) working our, ah ((clacking))... ah, working ((clicks)) our butts off.

Absolutely. Ah, I know later on, when we were dur... [redacted] I got curious. This is one thing that has slowed down a fair amount. So this is, ah... This is from ((clank)) probably--I would guess-- [redacted] probably. Just... It... It feels like it was from about then. ((Sifting sound in background.)) Ah, I went ahead and just ((click)) did a pull off of whatever we were working from at those... in those days. And, ah, w... we were ((pop)) working our, ah ((clacking))... ah, working ((clicks)) our butts off.

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

And we were able to get the top seventy percent of the traffic that we considered reportable, reported. The bottom thirty percent never saw the light of day. ((Click.)) Customers never knew anything about it. ((Clicking.)) And I'm sure back in the, ah, [redacted] the percentage had to have been lower although, ah, we--you know, [redacted] mean--ah, that we were, ah... we were practically killing ourselves to report everything we possibly could. Ah, I will tell you, ah... Because I remember this now from [redacted] one of the things that [redacted] did ((click)) was he said that, ah, "No one goes home until all the priorities are out." And what was

And we were able to get the top seventy percent of the traffic that we considered reportable, reported. The bottom thirty percent never saw the light of day. ((Click.)) Customers never knew anything about it. ((Clicking.)) And I'm sure back in the, ah, [redacted] the percentage had to have been lower although, ah, we--you know, [redacted] mean--ah, that we were, ah... we were practically killing ourselves to report everything we possibly could. Ah, I will tell you, ah... Because I remember this now from [redacted] one of the things that [redacted] did ((click)) was he said that, ah, "No one goes home until all the priorities are out." And what was

And I'm sure back in the, ah, [redacted] the percentage had to have been lower although, ah, we--you know, [redacted] mean--ah, that we were, ah... we were practically killing ourselves to report everything we possibly could. Ah, I will tell you, ah... Because I remember this now from [redacted] one of the things that [redacted] did ((click)) was he said that, ah, "No one goes home until all the priorities are out." And what was

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

happening back in [redacted] was we didn't do any routine reporting. ((Acknowledgement.)) We got all the priority reports out. That was probably by about eight p.m. at night. I wasn't still there th...at that point. But, you know, that's typically when the senior reporters were the last one to be staying 'til. And once they got that last priority ((click)) out, they went home, you know, to catch what sleep they could before being in at, typically six...six thirty the next morning. ((Click.)) And, ah...Ah, we got all the priorities done, but we didn't even get to the routine. ((Clack; acknowledgment.)) It just didn't happen.

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

Maneki:

[redacted]

How did you...? How did people keep up the pace so long?

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

Um, I don't know. Adrenaline? I mean, ((clicking; he laughs)). Ah ((stutters)), I really can't tell you. We...we...we really believed in what we were doing. We knew it had to be done, and we were the ones to do it. So we did it. And, ah...ah, one thing I'll have to tell you is...is, ah, those [redacted] and...and the QC'ers and so on that I've known who basically were working the target back in the 80s when it was [redacted] only...And some of them are still there. Although, eh, from what I hear with reapportionment [redacted] that's going to exist is going to [redacted] mission down here--shortly at least. ((Door closing or clack.)) But, ah, they worked the entire thing. They worked the, ah...They worked

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

[redacted]

Ah, I don't know ((audio skip)) how they stayed sane. ((Clack.)) I...I really don't. I mean, they were there through the entire thing. ((Click.)) They couldn't leave. Ah, if you were a...If you were QC level on the...on ((door closing)) [redacted]

'Cause the only ((clack)) other choice you were really going to be given was to resign. Um, (B% and) that stayed true until well after [redacted] honestly. Ah, although, I don't know that it was hard and fast at that point. Maybe if somebody had wanted to leave, they could have. But I know none of them did until, really, after [redacted] ((Clack.)) Ah, I don't know how they stayed sane, because the...the workload on them was immense. Because, see, one of the things about it being [redacted] back when, was that when it was [redacted] the reporters ((clack)) were linguists. ((Click.)) So once it became a crisis, we split linguists and, ah, reporters up. But the senior reporters who were also linguists were still involved in the reporting. We needed them to be. So they were trying to keep up with all the QC'ing and trying to keep up with the editing. And, ah, you know, I can tell you in a few cases, [redacted] a couple of guys I worked with--ah, they'd work at a fanatical pace. They, ah...They're amazing. In the case of Fred Shermer, ah, who re...ah, recently retired ((door closing)), ah...He, ah...Eh, he had his pace that he worked at, and he just didn't vary it. He'd stay late, but he didn't speed up.

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605



PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

But he, ah...He produced excellent work as well. And, ah, ((clacking)), it was just insane. But honestly...Ah, you know ((stutters)) [redacted]? Are either of you familiar with the Layering Study that came out in 1991? ((Door closing, or clacking.))

**Maneki:**

Yes.

[redacted]

Okay. I...I actually have that soft copy. A buddy of mine at the Fort, ah, recently got a copy of that from the archives and got it scanned in as PDF. So I have a soft copy. If you'd like to have a soft copy, let me know. But, ah...((Click.)) Ah, I never read it until this year. But it was all the buzz ((audio skip)) when I was a new hire back in...Well, I was still the new hire ((clack)) in '91...

**Maneki:**

Mmm hmm.

[redacted]

And, ah, the thing that ((clacking))...that everyone talked about from the Layering Study that I remember is really just one sentence out of the introduction. But, ah...The...the way that it was presented to most of us in the workforce was...was that ((thump)) the Layering Study concluded that the NSA workforce succeeded ((clicking)) despite management.

**Maneki:**

Yeah.

[redacted]

And I...I ((audio skip))...I honestly think that there is validity to that. I don't think that we need to go into depth on that at the moment. But we succeeded because we were dedicated. I mean, look: it's what we were there to do. It's what we joined on to NSA to do. Ah, w...I...None of us I think really wanted to work as many hours as we had to. But you know ((thump))...Speaking more for the folks who were putting in the twelve and fourteen hours than me, because I had it easier...But it needed to be done. You know, ah, [redacted]

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

[redacted] it was our job to report it. We were going to report it. Ah, we were always, you know, a little bit angry underneath that we weren't being given more help to do it with. But if all we had was who we had, then that was what we were going to do--and we did it. ((Smack.)) So, ah, you know...

**Maneki:**

Did you see much, um...? Sometimes when you...when you're involved in, um [redacted] um, people can get too close ((clank)) to one side. D...did you see any of that in [redacted] ((squeak))?

[redacted]

We did. And actually, it was almost all among our native linguists, to be honest with you. I saw among a few people--among for example the reporters. But I actually have a...a funny story for you, if you'd like to have it.

**Maneki:**

Sure.

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

[redacted]

And maybe even if you don't like to have it, I think I'll tell it anyway, 'cause I like the story. ((Creaking.)) Um, when, ah.. [redacted]

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

[redacted]

[Redacted]

ah... Because we indulged in the kind of dark humor that people working a crisis often do. She, ah... She put in the email... So she (B% would start a pool for), you know, what day he dies. Heh ((clack))... And, ah, she got absolutely ((thump)) hammered. You know, "This was ((clack)) inappropriate." You know, th... that "This was not funny. It's not the sort of thing you should be saying," blah, blah, blah, by every ((creaking))

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

[Redacted]

**Maneki:** ((Slight chuckle.))

[Redacted]

And I know during [Redacted]

ah, in the office... We didn't have too many, but we did have one. But both of them talking to me about how I... I shouldn't ((clacking)) regard the [Redacted] And, ah... In both cases, I looked them in the eye and I said, "They are, you know... (B% Beh)... In terms of [Redacted] I said, "And so are the others. So don't worry about it." ((He laughs.)) So ((clacking)) ... Now the, ah... The whole... The whole time of... of the... the... [Redacted]

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

[Redacted]

Ah, you know, th... They don't have anything to write home about and say you know, "We, ah... we were right." Ah, the one thing I will tell you from, ah... [Redacted] .. And we ran into this constantly, and it took me a while to figure it out. But they would, ah... It... [Redacted]

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

[Redacted] it didn't matter--ah, they never could understand why ((audio skip)) everyone didn't realize they were right. ((Clicking.)) Lock, stock and barrel: every position they had ever taken--everything they ever wanted to do--it was right. And we got that from [Redacted] They could not ever see anyone else's point of view-

[Redacted] Ah... And,

ah... You know, all I can say is there is no wonder [redacted] is... is, you know, behind the rest of the world in a lot of ways. You... you... you don't get anywhere with that viewpoint.

**Maneki:** ((Pause.)) So what, um...? ((Click.)) [redacted] is ((thump)) certainly, ah, not the priority it was. What, ahn...? What do you see happening ((thump)) there?

[redacted]

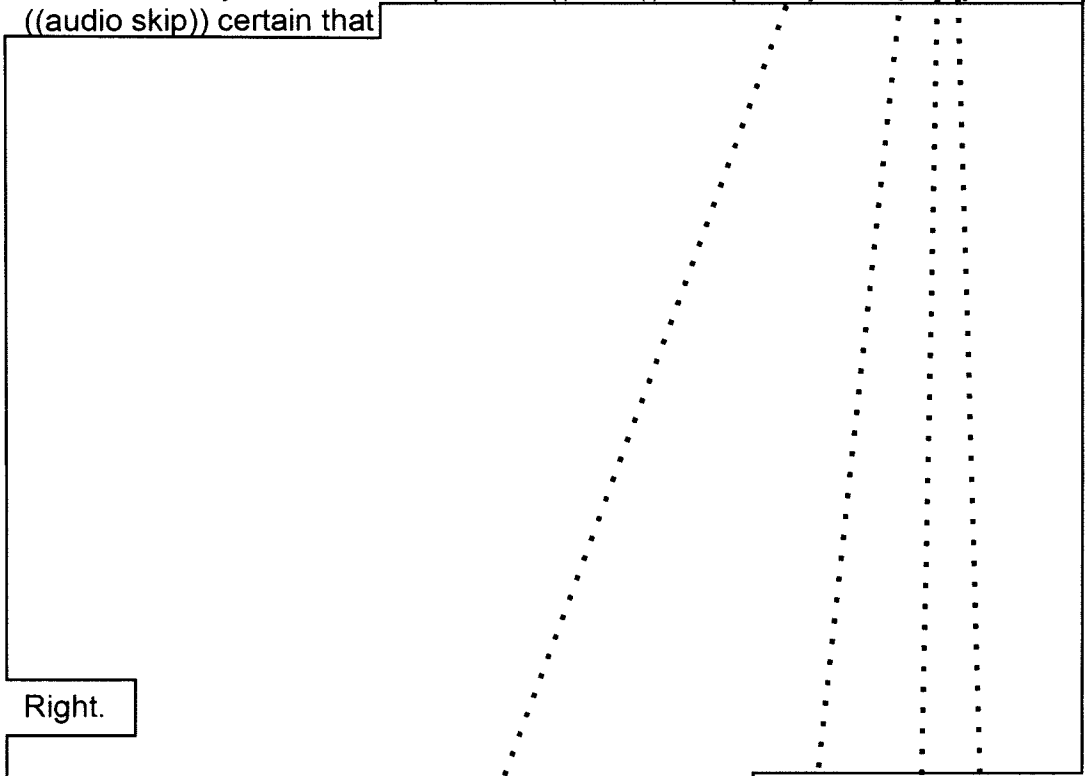
Well, I will tell you this: there's going to be another war.

**Maneki:** Mmm hmm.

[redacted]

I am absolutely one hundred percent ((clack)) completely and totally ((audio skip)) certain that [redacted]

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605



**Maneki:** [redacted]

**Maneki:** Right.

[redacted]

(((Clicking.))) Maybe you'll leave it to your children, but I think it's going to happen some day. The...the thing that's s...stirring the pot is that we are seeing (B%

[redacted] The, ah...The last figures that I pulled for were from 2004, I believe. And the unemployment rate [redacted] was comparable to that of the United States during the Great Depression. ((Click; audible response.)) So you've got ((clack)) a...an entire ((thump)) generation that has grown up of [redacted]

[redacted] And you know, to give you ahn...an example on that: how many people when America was attacked for being an American on 9/11 ((TR NOTE: spoken as 9-1-1)), started putting flags on their cars? Remember?

**Maneki:** Mmm hmm.

[redacted]

You know? So they've got something to make them, if anything, more

[Redacted]

((Clack; clink.)) It's, ah... You know, it...it'll be interesting. Maybe we're going to have another ((clack)) war in the next ten years, and we'll be on [Redacted] Who knows? But it, ah...ah, [Redacted] is the, ah, division chief here, ah...for, ah, [Redacted] I mean, he's got quite ((clicking)) the background [Redacted] And he said that, [Redacted] right now reman...reminds him of Pakistan in the '80s: You know, a breeding ground for this ((acknowledgment)) sort of thing. So ((click; clink))...

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

**Maneki:**

[Redacted]

So is the Agency gonna be ready?  
No. ((He sighs; sifting sound.)) No, it's as simple as that. Ah, honestly, I think we made a ((clink)) mistake. I understand why we made it. ((Clacking.)) Let me give you a ((thump))...a little bit of background here. Originally, the [Redacted] mission was being worked ((clack)) at the Fort. This is my personal opinion--but I'll state it to anyone. Ah, the reason that ((click)) we ended up with the mission...Initially, the reason we ended up with the mission was because there was 24-hour support being requested by customers. And so, the Fort...the folks up there let us be the after-hours and weekend folks ((clack)) to work the mission. Of course, if we're going to be reporting on these guys, we need to know who with...they are. We started ((clacking)) working up the mission same as anybody would. And what ended up happening was we were working it better than they were up at the Fort. I don't think there's any doubt of that. I believe, personally, that the reason we were given the mission is because people up there...Cause I would talk with them from time to time. And, ah, they gave us all their files when the mission was turned over to us--which was awfully nice of them. ((Thump.)) I don't they thought there were "terrorists"--and I put that in quote marks--to be found. ((Sifting sound.)) And you know ((clack)) what? If you don't think it's there to find, you're not going to find it. ((Door closing.)) And we were perfectly willing to believe there were at least extremists to be looked at. ((Clack.)) And we ended up with the target, and they didn't. However, down here, we've got, ah, out of our...our [Redacted] workforce ((thump)) that we've got...Ah, I'm no longer a linguist because I spend all of my time on reporting. I don't have time to be a linguist. Ah, we can keep our linguists long enough that our linguist side is pretty healthy. ((Thump; click.)) But...but we've got a [Redacted] QC'er ((clicking)) at the division level. She's our division language advisor. ((Clacking.)) So obviously, she can still help out whenever necessary. But she doesn't normally work...ah, doesn't normally ((thump)) work in the language at this point. But, she's, ah...She's a native-level linguist. She can pick it up whenever she needs to. We have a couple of...Ah, we've got three very good military QC'ers. ((Faint thump.)) I don't know how long we'll be able to keep them. I don't know if they'll stay in or get out. And other than that, our QC'ers ((thump))

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

are contractors. There are a whole bunch of ((clack)) people at NSAW ((click)) with [redacted]

[redacted]

We don't have the right workforce to work it. That's my personal opinion. ((Thump.)) I don't think management will back me up on that. But that's all right. They don't have to. I'm still allowed to have an opinion. Um, if we need help, all the people that would help are at the Fort. ((Clacking.)) VTC's are fine. You know, this one's being very good. But as far as being able to run over and ask a question, it doesn't work too well. ((Click.)) If they're going to say, "Hey, we're," you know, "we're helping you out ((audio skip)) from up here. We have a question. Who is this guy?" I mean, you can get on the phone, but it's not the efficient way to get work done. You need the people there together. You know, your augmentees need to be with the permanent people that they're augmenting. ((Sifting sound.)) It's, ah...It's not the way to do it. And I'll be honest with you, ah...If, ah...If I can get a job at Homeland Security or maybe FBI, I very likely will do so, because, ah, I ((stutters))...I'm sorry. I'm...I'm getting burned out ((click)) at this point. And I don't have a whole lot of answers. Ah, if I can resign from the Agency and get another Federal job, I will probably do it. And I don't mean to be sounding really negative here, but let me put it this way. Six months ago, I...they, ah...they saw how burned out I was and let me work a, ah...a detail here at ((phone ringing)) NSA Texas. ((Click.)) Until then, ((clicking)), I did a PLUS pull out of curiosity ((phone ringing)). From the time that we started our [redacted] effort here, I have written or edited or in a couple cases ((click)) been the linguist on seventy percent of all our reporting from three years' worth of [redacted] ((Clacking.)) Only thirty percent of our reports from here have gone out without me needing to work on (B% it). ((Acknowledgment.)) And ((clack)) that is what I mean by the wrong ((click)) workforce. You know, ah...I'll work at the limit of my ability, but I am already ((clack)) doing it. If things get worse ((clicking)), I don't know what we're going to do. ((Clack.)) ((He pauses.)) Sorry about that "downer" note, but what can I tell you? I mean, it's, ah...I...I really think that if they were going to shut down the evolving mission and only have one ((thump; clack)), they probably should have shut us down. We only have a few NSA civilians. The rest are military. It's not that big a deal to move us around or something. Ah...They should have, ah...They should have given the [redacted] mission back to the folks up at NSAW instead of us. ((Clacking.)) I mean, we're doing a great job with it ((clacking)), but we are not in a position to do anything more with it than we're going already.

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

Maneki:

[redacted]

Maneki:

Mmm hmm.

And that's not the answer. Not long term. ((Click.)) Not in my opinion.

Well, do you think, um...n...((She pauses.)) All the talk about lessons learned, are there any really lessons learned? ((She laughs.))

[Redacted]

Um, you know ((creaking)), not (B% the way) ((audio skip)) I'd like them be. I think ((thump)) everyone who worked [Redacted] during that time, came away with personal lessons learned. But when I th... When I talk to people that are [Redacted] up at the Fort and... The... the... the common theme that I keep hearing is that they keep augmenting with more people, but they're not really trusted as being the ones who have [Redacted] from, you know, the early days--the pre 9/11 ((TR NOTE: spoken as 9-1-1)) days. And so, they're just kind of shunted off to being junior people, and just work on whatever you can. I haven't talked to a representative sample. This is just... You know, consider this anecdotal. ((Sift.)) Ah, it... It's not something I'm trying to present as, you know, "I have drawn ((clack)) a conclusion from it." But I just keep ((audio skip)) hearing that, you know, they won't let people leave. And you saw how that worked out for us. Ah, eh, they won't let people leave. If they do leave, they drag them back after not that long a time period. ((Snap.)) It's not the way to do it. ((Thump; click.)) It's not the way to do it. We ended with that terrible reputation. And the things that I'm hearing is [Redacted] at, ah... up at NSAW has the exact same reputation for the exact same reason. ((Creaking.)) You want to make a place like that some place people want to go. Where they can go and work, you know, the hardest target with the highest-level people and, you know, really help contribute on things. And instead, it's some place people don't want to go to because you're going to be overworked; you're going to be ((audio skip)) shunted aside; ah... you're, ah... you're not going to be allowed to leave. ((Click.)) That's not the way to do it. I mean, that's... that's... That's repeating the failures that we had on [Redacted] not learning any lessons from them.

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

**Murdock:** ((Click.)) Sharon, we just got the "ten minutes remaining" notice from the VTC folks.

**Maneki:** Okay. ((Clack.)) Do you have any questions that you want to ask? ((Clacking.))

**Murdock:** No, you've covered...

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

[Redacted]

No, I, ah... I... I think I've, ah... I... I think I've... I've said everything that, ah, ha... has been on my mind for years now, ((audio skip)) at least. ((Clicking; perhaps slight chuckle.)) But you know, let me... Let me not end on a negative note too much. Ah, I learned a ton from working [Redacted] I've become, ah... You know, I've, ah... I've since written a reporting course that's used throughout, ah ((clack))... throughout NSA. The, ah... The, ah, SIGINT, eh, U... eh... "USSID 18 for Reporters" course. I wrote that. Ah, it's from working with people like [Redacted] It's from, ah, you know, [Redacted] Fred Shermer, [Redacted] --with... with all the great people I work with. Being held to a very high standard, learning how to do all the different kinds of reports, and, ah, learning to work fast, and yet with quality. I, ah... That... Working [Redacted] has been the high point of my career. Ah, of course, for my career history, it's also been the bulk of my career. But still ((clacking))... Ah, I learned a ton from it. I've,

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

ah...I've become the SIGINTer that I am now. I take a lot of pride in my abilities, and I've picked up almost all of them from working [redacted] So it's been a great experience for me. I wish we could take the things that we did right from it, and get those extended out because, ah...Y...You know, as I said, anecdotal...The things that I'm hearing...It...It's kind of depressing. We...we figured out some good and bad things from that and I ((creak))...I don't think they got it out ((audio skip)) to the rest of the Agency unfortunately. But, ah for me, it was a high point. Ah, I...I've never had single regret that I went in there and worked it. ((Creak.)) I'm glad I did. Ah, ((clacking)), yeah, it...it's made me who I am. ((Foot steps or thumping; clacking.)) ((Click; faint clinking; faint phone ringing.))

**Maneki:** ((Pause.)) ((Clicking.)) Well, thank you very much, [redacted] I'm...Certainly appreciate that. I think you're...You know, it's been good information for us. And, um...And we'll see what we can do about talking to some of...some of the other people that you mentioned. Ah, deeh...

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

[redacted] Okay, great. And thank you for listening to me. It's nice to have my voice heard.

**Maneki:** ((Click.)) Do you have anything else that you want to add in, ah...in ah...? What's next for you?

[redacted] What's next for me? Well, ah, I have one more week. This is my last week on my detail here. Then I go back to [redacted] I'm not sure what I'm going to be doing. But I don't want ((clack)) to be going back and doing what I did. I want to see if I can find some way to institutionalize, ah, working with quality. It...It's hard to do with so much workforce turnover ((squeak)), but it's got to be possible. Maybe I can take charge of training or something. I'll be talking with the leadership--ah, hopefully today--about exactly what I'll do when I come back. ((Background voices.))

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

EO 1.4.(c)  
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

**Maneki:** But I mean, how long...?

[redacted] (B% This, ah...I know...What...?) ((Audio skip.))

**Maneki:** H...How long more will you be in Texas?

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

[redacted] Um, given how expensive it's gotten at Fort Meade, ah, ((click)), I'll be here ((close)) for at least five years. I can't afford to come back, or I would have already.

**Maneki:** ((Chuckling heard.)) Okay. Well, good luck to you, [redacted]

[redacted] Thank you. And again, thanks for listening to me.

**Murdock:** Okay. [redacted] on behalf of the Center for Cryptologic History and Sharon and myself, I'd like to thank you ((clacking)) very much for getting up this early in the morning and tackling the technology of a VTC to share your stories with us. For...

[redacted] I was glad to. Thank you. ((Creak noise.))

**Murdock:** For the final f...classification of this interview, it'll be ~~TOP~~

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

~~SECRET//COMINT//GAMMA.~~

[redacted] ((Clacking.)) Correct.

**Murdock:** Okay. Thank you again.

[redacted] ((Clacking.)) Thank you. ((More clacking.))

**Maneki:** Bye. ((Thumping; clack.))

[redacted] Bye, bye.

////End of Interview OH-2007-25.////