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# DAILY ENTERPRISE



(U) HISTORY TODAY - February 3, 2016

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## (U) Classic Operations Security (OPSEC): Korean War

(U) Operations Security (OPSEC) practices have impacted the outcome of military operations since well before the Vietnam War and the birth of the PURPLE DRAGON reports of 1966-67. PURPLE DRAGON surveys served to clearly articulate the ability of the enemy to take advantage of poor OPSEC practices and negate the effectiveness of U.S. military operations in Vietnam. Eventually these reports led to the process for improving OPSEC practices that remains in use today.



(U) Use of the M-209 tactical encryption device during the Korean War

(U) In 1950, U.S. and United Nations forces found themselves regaining some of the ground lost during the disastrous entrance into the Korean conflict of the People's Republic of China. At this time, the Army Security Agency (a direct predecessor to NSA) was actively producing communications security analysis reports of communications as part of its protective analytic function in Korea. In November 1951 the 6971st Communications Security Flight (CSF) issued the first Communications Security Analysis report (CSA) in the Far East (CSA No. 9, 6971st CSF) for the Headquarters Fifth Air Force.

(U) During its time in Korea the communications monitoring activities of the 6971st resulted in numerous CSAs. The following represent some of the unit's findings:

- A. Data pertaining to impending bomber missions was being transmitted in the clear between front line radar control points as much as 10 hours in advance of airstrikes. Data included time over target, target coordinates, course, speed, altitude, and check points.
- B. Several incidents of unclassified messages regarding maintenance of combat aircraft revealed combat readiness of tactical units.
- C. A study of the 351st Air Division (Combat Cargo) revealed that information pertaining to surprise moves was subject to compromise since build-up of personnel and materiel was readily available through analysis of combat cargo messages.
- D. A special unit assigned to associate tactical communications security monitoring and communications intelligence intercept from a point behind enemy lines monitored communications between Ground Controlled Intercept Centers and F-86 aircraft operating in the vicinity of the Yalu River. A report of the classified contents of this analysis was provided to Fifth Air Force Headquarters with personal briefings to the Deputies of Operations and Intelligence.

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(U) Of the four examples provided above, which represent classic OPSEC concerns? The answer will be in tomorrow's *History Today*.

(U) Learn more about the [history of OPSEC and PURPLE DRAGON here](#): scroll to the Vietnam War section. [Note: this link connects to the CCH Intelink page. You may also request a copy of this by emailing CCH staff at: [DL cch](#) or

(U) To discuss historical topics with interesting folks, visit the Center for Cryptologic History's blog, [History Rocks](#) ("go history rocks").

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