

CENTER FOR CRYPTOLOGIC HISTORY

21 Apr 92

Dave Hatch

Some notes & reactions to [redacted]
[redacted] memo. When he dropped
the original off w/ me, he took
pains to reiterate that he admired
Bob's work & didn't want to seem
hypercritical. I told him I knew
Bob would apprec any & all useful
feedback and not be offended. Some
time when I'm out there, let me
scan [redacted] handwritten notes - I
didn't take time to read them.

Dave H.

(b) (3) - P.L. 86-36

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14 April 1992

TO: Dave Hatch, D93

From:

(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36

Via: Dave Gaddy *✓ 16/4/92*

Subject: Draft of Pueblo Papers

1. (U) Pursuant to our conversations over the past several days, I want to send my comments to you in writing concerning Bob Newton's draft manuscript on the seizure of the Pueblo. In discussions with Dave Gaddy, he suggested that I also might wish to schedule another oral interview so we could "bounce a few of these ideas around". I am very eager and willing to do this, but would find the following comments useful as a starting point. I also would like to see a copy of the transcript from the oral interview I had with Bob Farley to refresh my memory. Mr. has seen an earlier draft of this note and generally agrees with the contents; I have tried to incorporate his thoughts as well.

2. (U) Bob Newton's research paper is extremely well done and, as I have indicated, brought back some memories that were a little disturbing to me personally. I think that parts of the paper are a bit harsh on the Navy, but I will leave the tone of your work to those better qualified. My purpose in writing this note is to bring to light some facts that may be worth including in the manuscript. I think if some of this is included it may bring a bit more balanced picture to the events surrounding the Pueblo, so it doesn't appear to be such a one-sided story, i.e., "we did things right and the Navy did everything wrong." I think if we include some of the data that follows, it will be clear that we in the USSS also made some basic mistakes that should be told in fairness to this historical account.

(b)(1)
(b)(3)-50 USC 403
(b)(3)-18 USC 798
(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36

4. ~~(see)~~ Since most of the personnel assigned to the new NKN section were drawn from within B71, we had exposure to the North Korean attitude concerning U.S. reconnaissance and were involved with reporting a number of NKAH hostile reactions to air reconnaissance missions off the coast of Korea over the Sea of Japan. When the Banner was scheduled to deploy earlier in the year, several of us were prompted to write a message outlining our concerns. This message was sent to a fairly wide distribution in Navy channels. So we were actually on record about these type of missions long before the Pueblo was being considered for deployment. It may be useful to pull the SIGINT product

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we had been issuing on NKAF hostilities [redacted] before the deployment of the Pueblo to give some better measure of the [redacted] North Korean sensitivity which caused us to write both messages concerning the Banner and the Pueblo. I think it may be wise to capture this prevailing attitude on pages 4/8/11/160. I also believe Bob gives too much credence to the theory that the North Korean actions were somehow linked or even coordinated with the PRC and Soviet harassments. Scattered throughout this paper (pages 22/58/161 are examples) we seem to make a fairly strong case for this and I think the evidence is very limited. I would be more inclined to show the [redacted] NK sensitivity as a pattern [redacted]. It is possible that the North Koreans acted without outside influence from either the Chinese or Soviets. Certainly their attitude toward reconnaissance was much more aggressive.

✓
common
perception
of attitude
toward
VN

5. (see) In December 1967, drawing on our experience on the NKAF target, we felt comfortable in drafting the "warning message". It was originally addressed as the previous message was concerning the deployment of the Banner. During the coordination of this message, it was thought to be prudent to merely address our concerns to the JRC/JCS. I am not sure that it would have made any difference in light of the way the Navy handled the earlier Banner deployment, but the frustration level was very high at the analytic level, since no one seemed to have "read our product." In fairness, this feeling was perhaps magnified by the [redacted] NKAF hostile intent in SIGINT, reporting on this activity, and then watching the Pueblo incident unfold in front us. Perhaps the lesson best learned was that we (all of us who knew of this at NSA) did not "market" what we had at the right level. A skill which we now seem have in abundance just wasn't there at the time, viz., making sure our assessment of what we are producing finds the right level. It was for this reason the NSOC was built and still functions. I believe that another mistake we made was in not sanitizing the "warning message" [redacted]. This would have given at least the senior [redacted] officials a better sense of our concern and help them orchestrate the crisis in the aftermath of the incident itself. Some of this could be included in either the summary or the conclusion portion of the document or on page 31.

(b) (1)
(b) (3)-50 USC 403
(b) (3)-18 USC 798
(b) (3)-P.L. 86-36

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interesting point
NSOC?

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7. (TSCCO) Since we were [redacted]

these inconsistencies in recoveries and analysis, [redacted] was prompted to establish a "Pueblo Task Force" consisting of analysts from all sections in B11. This little unit worked for about a month and was charged with the responsibility of reviewing all SIGINT material collected during the time that the Pueblo was off the coast of Korea (10-23 January 1968). The task force results were fully documented in a SIGINT review: "The Voyage and Capture of the USS Pueblo". Twenty copies were printed and ten were given to the archives for storage, along with a safe filled with all the technical data and traffic that supported our conclusions. [redacted] was not inclined to give this document wide distribution because the title included the word "capture", indicating some wrong doing on our part and he (wisely, I believe) thought it should have read "seizure". Nonetheless, the document and supporting files contain all relevant SIGINT information on the incident itself. I was surprised to learn that this material was not referenced in some way during the course of the Bob Newton research. A draft copy of the report is included in the attachments to this note. It is titled "Review of the Pueblo Incident". I am not sure if this is the final version that was printed.

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"Milt Zaslow",
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(No cause effect
could be shown on
damage inflicted)

(b) (3)-P.L. 86-36

8. (TSCCONF) During the course of the Pueblo Task Force review, we implemented a very detailed accounting system and learned that several voice tapes of NKN communications collected [redacted] were missing from the transcripts we had on hand. This was about 3 weeks after the seizure of the Pueblo! When [redacted] finally forwarded these to us (we feared they had been erased), the transcripts revealed early voice discussions by the NKN radar station and controlling entities discussing what actions to take regarding the "enemy" vessel approximately one hour before the Pueblo had actually been approached by the patrol vessels. This transcript (containing obvious warning information) was finally published about a month after the incident itself. There had been no [redacted] reporting on this critical voice material previously or knowledge [redacted] of this information, even though we had repeatedly asked [redacted] if all relevant material had been forwarded. It has never been clear to me why these early [redacted] voice tapes had been overlooked [redacted] until we found them missing in the post mortem Pueblo Task Force review.

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(b) (1)
(b) (3)-50 USC 403
(b) (3)-18 USC 798
(b) (3)-P.L. 86-36

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9. (S) [] and I have talked about the draft and had some success in remembering a bit more detail than if we tried to do it alone. As you may know from other sources, [] constituted the NSA team that was sent to New York to assist Ambassador Goldberg in his presentation to the UN concerning the seizure of the Pueblo. We think it is probably worth expanding pages 84/85 to include a bit more detail on the support we provided during this period of the crisis. While fairly commonplace in today's world, real time NSA support to this level at the State Department was a new experience. The NSA team was personally involved in advising Ambassadors Goldberg and Pedersen, including editing some key portions of the Ambassador's speech. [] contribution to this was critical, giving first hand interpretation of the tapes taken to the UN. [] also played a very important role throughout the crisis, having been called out of semi-retirement to give expert transcription/translation support. Bernie and I agree that his linguistic contribution to NSA analytic and reporting response to the Pueblo seizure was critical and probably should be mentioned in the historical account. Attached you will find the notes that [] kept (which were passed to [] when [] retired). These notes may be useful in sorting out what happened in New York and NSA's contribution. Also inclosed is a copy of the official UN record of the Security Council's deliberations on 26 January 1968, when Ambassador Goldberg made his presentation.

(b) (3) - P.L. 86-36

10. (S) Perhaps as elaboration to page 122 on the draft, it should be mentioned that the Navy's change of attitude regarding NSA's role in the debrief of the crew may have been in part caused by the way [] personally handled the privacy to General Carter. Because Dick had trouble "communicating with his Director", he chose to take the first message to a secure facility in []. I accompanied him on the trip to LA and learned that he had told the Navy he and I were going "up north to visit relatives" or "his niece". When they questioned Dick and I the next day about our trip and learned that we had sent the privacy via communications from [], the Navy became much more cooperative across the board. Soon after the early "privacy message" incident, [] hosted a New Year's Eve party for the Navy at one of the major hotels in San Diego. This brilliant stroke of liaison work also helped in smoothing over the early tension between the Navy and NSA people.

11. (S) There may be a bit of supporting information for pages 136/137 concerning the Pike Committee investigation. When I appeared before the legal counsel to this committee (accompanied by Roy Banner) we learned that an Air Force enlisted man, who earlier had been assigned to our section at NSA, had apparently written to the Pike Committee. He intimated there was much more of this story that needed to be told. The Pike Committee counsel was upset that we had "mislead" them, but through some excellent persuasion by Roy Banner, was assured

NSA Action

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that this kind of work, viz., assessing the SIGINT which was produced on any given subject or target area, was routinely accomplished by desk analysts and first line supervisors throughout at NSA. It was a masterful piece of work by Roy banner, which supports some of Bob Newton's earlier conclusions regarding Roy Banner's contribution in sorting out NSA's image downtown. I know I was very glad that he was with me during that session.

12. (TSCCONF) Here are a few minor problems in the draft that should be looked at a little closer:

a. On page 29: Why don't we include the verbatim text of the "warning message"?

b. On page 39: I don't believe either of the Marine Sergeants had any experience with Korean communications. They had rudimentary language training, with no analytic, i.e., target, experience.

c. On page 45: It looks like we had [redacted] on this, which I find hard to believe, given our posture at the time.

d. On page 58: As indicated, I believe that this conclusion is grossly overstated. It needs to be balanced with the overall attitude of the North Koreans toward any foreign activity near their coast over a long period of time.

e. On page 66: While he might have been in the watch center with General Morrison, I don't think Frank Smead was ever assigned to B11.

f. On page 67: The date of the message to JCS is incorrect; it should read 29 December 1967.

(b) (1)
(b) (3)-50 USC 403
(b) (3)-18 USC 798
(b) (3)-P.L. 86-36

i. On page 94: I do not believe that the collection platform used for the enhanced ACRP missions was the C130. I think there were RC135s flown in from other parts of the world.

j. On page 106: I believe that the CIA assessment of North Korean COMSEC was based on a [redacted] report that we later asked to be canceled. Thus, it may be useful to move the last paragraph on this page to precede the CIA statement.

k. On page 114: Since the SI crew's personnel jackets were aboard the Pueblo, along with SI "diaries" that Navy analysts routinely kept about their experiences, it is possible that this information gave the Koreans details to influence their questioning.

l. On page 116: I think it would be advisable to use the word "interviewers" versus "interrogators" when referring to the U.S. debrief team that helped gather information for the damage assessment.

Have interviewers stated this!
Good point!
Used "debriefers" to describe U.S. team in all cases except one and this one instance was a slip.
RN

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m. On page 126: Concerning the GOPI traffic: While reviewing material that was aboard the Pueblo as part of the Breeches Bouy team at Nebraska Avenue in January/February 1969, I discovered that a copy of our message concerning the Banner deployment was aboard the Pueblo. Therefore, NSA's concerns regarding U.S. reconnaissance in this area was apparently known to at least the Pueblo SI crew. I brought this to the personal attention of the Chief of the Breeches Bouy Team [redacted], who asked that a copy of this message be included in the final ~~final~~ damage assessment documentation that you should have in the archives. //

(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36

n. On page 133: As indicated, I believe this is one place we are being more than a little harsh on the Navy. It just isn't going to do us any good to talk about their "embarrassment" or "attitude" in this historical account. ✓

o. On page 157: The Banner made a pass in Sea of Japan some time earlier in 1966 or 1967, which prompted us to write the earlier warning message I have referred to in paragraph 13 item 1 above. ✓

(b)(1)
(b)(3)-50 USC 403
(b)(3)-18 USC 798
(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36

p. On page 158: It bears mentioning here that the voice reflections collected [redacted] contained warning information almost two hours before the Pueblo was actually approached. It is very probable that the Pueblo copied these same transmission but did not have the linguistic capability on board to translate the voice in support of decisions on the bridge. It is also very probable that if the Captain had this information earlier, he may have chosen other tactics.

Do not believe this B.N.

(primitive state of comms, secure comms, warning caps)

13. (U) I hope the above helps the process. Please take all of this as constructive and not in any way diluting all the hard work that has gone into the documentation thus far. If I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to call. I will be leaving for PCS assignment overseas on 4 June 1992, so it will be a little tough getting to me first hand, but I can be reached on the grey line 995-7202 or on PLATFORM [redacted]. I would like to have a copy of the final version sent to me at SUSLO London. Finally, please accept my expression of sorrow for the loss of your co-worker Bob Farley; he was always gracious in carrying out this very important work in D9 and a source of personal encouragement to me. //

(b)(3)-P.L. 86-36

Very Respectfully

[redacted]

Incl: a/s

cc: [redacted] (less enclosures)