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← The initial damage assessment phase concluded, the team members were directed to gather.

gathered again at Naval Security Group headquarters in Washington, ^{on 20 January} to

prepare a final assessment. ⁹⁹ The Breeches Buoy files, consisting

of a large ~~lot~~ ^{memoranda} magnet audio tapes, ~~paper~~ files, messages and intelligence

card files, were flown by Air C131 aircraft to Washington,

where they were to be transferred to NSG headquarters. ¹⁰¹

(FOUO) Prior to the *Pueblo* seizure, there had been no ~~parallel or~~ similar situation that could be drawn upon as a model or example to aid in planning for the repatriation and debriefing of personnel detained by a hostile power. With the termination of Breeches Buoy, however, there now existed a body of experience that might serve to guide contingency planners for any such future incident. The final administrative report prepared on the Breeches Buoy intelligence debriefing recognized that there were lessons to be learned from this activity and devoted a section of the report to that topic. ¹⁰⁰ Lessons learned ~~could~~ ^{were} be divided into two principal categories, i.e., (1) staffing and logistic matters and (2) debriefing interview procedures. The following is the substance of these ~~team concluded~~ lessons learned: ~~that~~!

A. Staffing and logistics

1. A unified team working in close harmony ^{could} can be forged among professional personnel, representing agencies with divergent missions and orientation. Such a group must be carefully selected from mature, highly motivated individuals, with the initiative to resolve problems.

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This is some stuff!

2. Although large numbers of support personnel were assigned to the team, the debrief would have been facilitated by initial assignment of additional experienced clerical and tape transcription personnel. For planning purposes, three hours of transcription time ^{would be} required for every hour of interview.

3. There should always be a knowledgeable full-time assistant, or deputy, to any future Intelligence Debrief Coordinator. This assistant might then shoulder some of the coordinator's work load and take routine actions during the coordinator's absence at required staff meetings, conferences, and other commitments.

4. The need to revise work procedures ^{could} be expected. In spite of the detailed Breeches Buoy planning carried out for eleven months, it became necessary to devise additional work procedures for the orderly handling of documents by various agency representatives with different objectives, to expedite work flow, and to ensure the priority review of material and accountability.

5. The efficiency of the analytical process ^{was} reduced by long hours of work over a protracted period in extremely over-crowded conditions filled with the noise of transcribing machines.

6. Intelligence information derived from debriefing activities must always be reported separately from other pertinent information concerning the repatriation process (i.e., medical, public affairs, welfare, reunion with next of kin, etc.).

7. Debriefing aids ^{were} an invaluable tool in the conduct of intelligence interviews and should be on hand at the very beginning of the debriefs.

8. Intelligence and reliable tape recording of interview sessions required use of identical pieces of equipment with multi-directional recording microphones obtained specifically for such projects. Recorders used by transcribers must be equipped with earphones and a foot control with playback capability.

9. Large debriefing operations ^{were} costly, not only in the numbers of specialized personnel, but also in terms of the financial expenses for travel, per diem and procurement of recording equipment. Contingency funds should be earmarked to underwrite possible recurring debrief operations.

10. Upon conclusion of the intelligence debrief, returnees should be given a defensive security briefing that includes applicable parent service guidance and instructions concerning potential "hostage" attempts against them or their families by Communist elements.

11. A well-established service hospital complex ^{was} a preferred debriefing site because intelligence debriefings ^{could} be successfully accomplished concurrently with medical examinations and treatment given to interviewees.

D. Debriefing interview procedures

12. Detailed debriefing of returnees at a delivery site (for other than an immediate military tactical purpose) prior to completion of medical/psychological examination ^{is} almost certain to be unproductive, confusing and often misleading.

13. Briefings of returnees by senior officers to explain the purpose of the intelligence debrief, the rights of the individuals, and the various phases of the repatriation process ^{will} have a salutary effect upon the attitudes of the individuals undergoing debriefing and their willingness to cooperate.

14. The debriefing of persons who ^{have} endured Communist captivity requires specialized knowledge of the physical and psychological pressures that

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were applied during detention. Intelligence personnel, or other persons who debrief future returnees, should be trained in these techniques.

15. ~~Even~~ After medical/psychological clearances, the responses of *Pueblo* crew members to questions asked during intelligence debriefing often were rambling, non-specific and included related/non-related classified/sensitive information. ~~It is believed that this tendency is almost inevitable in returnees who have experienced more than a brief period of captivity. It should be recognized not only in intelligence debriefing but, also in other situations, such as public appearances of returnees, legal proceedings, etc.~~

16. ~~The~~ The scenario for future debriefings should anticipate and program for an initial period during which the returnee could relate his story in his own fashion prior to specific questioning in accordance with EEI. The interview process would be accelerated as a result, since the interviewer would have a greater insight into his returnee early in the process.

17. ~~When time is a constraint in the interview process, it is essential that the manhours devoted to analysis match the output of interview transcripts. Immediate analysis and feedback of interview direction from session to session eliminated duplication of questions concerning areas developed earlier in the interview process.~~

18. ~~Whenever a homogeneous group is being debriefed, there should be a careful evaluation of any characteristics of group solidarity and loyalty to the group leader or senior member.~~

(C) From San Diego, the scene now shifted to Washington, D.C. where the CNO directed that the CCDA Team convene at 9:00 A.M. on Tuesday, 21 January 1969 at the Naval Security Station.¹⁰⁵ Accordingly, twenty-two NSA personnel assembled on that date at Building 20, NSS to begin their task. The NSA team was augmented by NSG with additional analysts integrated under the direction of the NSA team chief, [redacted].¹⁰⁶

(C) Early in the week, [redacted] learned that draft terms of reference for the Special *Pueblo* Intelligence Damage Assessment Team (SPIDAT) had already been forwarded to CNO for signature before he had an opportunity to review them. This was discussed by [redacted] with [redacted], the ACNO representative at NSS, who accepted some modification in wording. In substance, the terms of reference stated that the reconstituted CCDA Team would be comprised of representatives of the Naval Intelligence Command, Naval Investigative Service, Naval Security Group Command, and National Security Agency plus such other intelligence commands or agencies as might from time to time be necessary. The team was to operate under the coordination of a representative of the Assistant Chief of Naval Operations (Intelligence). The following tasks were to be performed:

- a. Review all intelligence material developed during the Phase I intelligence debrief of USS *Pueblo* crewmen.
- b. Prepare a factual report of the intelligence damage resulting from the capture of the USS *Pueblo* and subsequent internment of her crew.
- c. Provide the U.S. intelligence community with reports of intelligence and counter-intelligence on North Korea developed during the debrief.
- d. Recommend follow-on contact with individual crewmen of the USS *Pueblo* for further exploitation.
- e. Respond to written requests from authorized requestors.

The ACNO (Intelligence) was charged with maintaining continuous physical security of all tapes, transcripts, intelligence files and notes returned to the

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Station on Hebrides
Avenue (NSS)

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