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SIGINT REFLECTIONS OF NORTH KOREAN CAPUTRE OF USS PUEBLO

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THE FOLLOWING SUMMARIZES CURRENTLY AVAILABLE SIGINT ON THE NORTH KOREAN CAPTURE OF THE USS PUEBLO ON 23 JANUARY 1968. ACCORDING TO REPORTS FROM THE USS PUEBLO, SHE WAS JOINED BY THREE NORTH KOREAN NAVY (NKN) P-4 PATROL CRAFT (601, 604, 606) AND MIG AIRCRAFT WERE CIRCLING OVERHEAD AT 230408Z, SHE WAS BEING BOARDED BY NKN PERSONNEL AT 230445Z, AND SHE WAS ORDERED TO FOLLOW INTO WO'NSAN (39-10N 127-26E) AT 230502Z. THE USS PUEBLO WENT OFF THE AIR AT 230532Z.

THE INITIAL SIGINT INDICATION OF THIS ACTIVITY OCCURRED ON NKN SHIP TO SHIP AND SHIP TO SHORE COMMUNICATIONS DURING THE PERIOD 0310-0323Z WHICH INDICATED THAT A NKN SUBMARINE CHASER (34) AND A NKN TORPEDO BOAT (11) WERE APPROACHING A "300 TON AMERICAN VESSEL NAMED EAR-1/ (PROBABLY AGER 1) WHICH IS USED FOR RADAR OPERATIONS AND WHICH IS NOT ARMED". SUBSEQUENT COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN A KUKCHI-BONG RADAR STATION (38-42N 128-17E) AND A NKN PATROL CRAFT AT 0335-0337Z STATED THAT NKN SUBMARINE CHASER 34 HAD CAPTURED THE U.S. VESSEL AND IT WAS BEING ESCORTED BACK TOWARD WO'NSAN. BETWEEN 0405-0408Z SUBMARINE CHASER 34 REPORTED TO KUKCHI-BONG RADAR STATION THAT SHE WAS GOING TO USE A SMALL BOAT AND GO ABOARD THE AMERICAN VESSEL, "SILENCE THE VESSEL'S COMMUNICATIONS", AND TOW THE U.S. VESSEL INTO

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NORTH KOREAN AIR FORCE (NKAF) AND AIR DEFENSE COMMUNICATIONS INDICATED THAT AT LEAST EIGHT NKAF 2ND FIGHTER DIVISION PROBABLE MIG-17'S CONDUCTED DEFENSIVE PATROLS BETWEEN 0406Z AND 0610Z OVER THE AREA WHERE THE USS PUEBLO WAS CAPTURED BY NKN VESSELS. THE NKAF FIGHTER AIRCRAFT ORBITED WITHIN AN 18 NAUTICAL MILE RADIUS OF 39-23N 127-33E. NKAF COMMUNICATIONS ALSO REVEALED A MINIMUM OF FOUR NKAF AIR TRANSPORT BATTALION (ATB) PROBABLE LI-2 TRANSPORT AIRCRAFT FLYING FROM T'AECH'O'N AIRFIELD (39-54N 125-29E) TO SO'NDO'K AIRFIELD (39-45N 127-29E) BETWEEN 0716Z AND 0731Z. SIGINT DID NOT DISCLOSE WHETHER THIS NKAF TRANSPORT ACTIVITY WAS DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE CAPTURE OF THE USS PUEBLO.

NORTH KOREAN ARMY (NKA) COMMUNICATIONS DURING THE PERIOD 222340Z AND 230021Z REVEALED INSTRUCTIONS TO ASSUME BATTLE PREPARATIONS, BUT THE EXTENT OF THIS READINESS POSTURE IS STILL UNCLEAR. IT IS NOT KNOWN WHETHER THIS IS DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE NKN CAPTURE OF THE USS PUEBLO.

ADDITIONAL SUMMARY REPORTS WILL BE RELEASED AS INFORMATION BECOMES AVAILABLE.

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