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EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

14 Dec 67

General Carter -

Attached Memo to SECDEF from DIRDIA subject: Release of COMINT Pertaining to Gulf of Tonkin Incidents of 2 and 4 August 1964, dated 13 Dec 1967, was forwarded by NSA/DO [redacted] who indicated the distribution as follows:

- Cy 142 - SECDEF
- Cy 3 - DEPSECDEF
- Cy 4 - CJCS
- Cy 5 - NSASO
- Cy 6 - DIAPL-4
- Cy 7 - DIASO-SA

P.L. 86-36

Also, [redacted] forwarded the attached DSSCS Memo for Mr. Coyne from Col. Morrison, USAF, Military Assistant in OPSD/A. Note: Attempted to burn copy of this for Col. Bolstridge but would not take.

↑ get [redacted] correct



~~TOP SECRET~~  
DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301

C  
13 DEC 1967

SI-TS-61/PL-4

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: Release of COMINT Pertaining to Gulf of Tonkin  
Incidents of 2 and 4 August 1964

1. I have reviewed the intelligence pertaining to the incidents in the Gulf of Tonkin on 2 and 4 August 1964 and reaffirm that our intercept of encrypted North Vietnamese Naval Communications did in fact provide the basis for prior warning given to the USS MADDOX on 2 August and again on 4 August. As the result of a cryptanalytic breakthrough into the cryptosystem employed by North Vietnamese MTB's, this intercepted information was deciphered, translated and reported to the USS MADDOX twelve hours in advance of the actual attack on 2 August and one hour in advance on 4 August. All of the information concerning the attacks came from manual morse intercept and was copied on a typewriter by the intercept operator as heard. All of the information was encrypted and there was no clear text voice traffic which could be associated with the attacks. The original intercepted traffic which is in storage at the National Security Agency Respository at Fort Holabird, Maryland can be provided; however, permanent transcriptions of the original cypher messages, together with the decryption and translations thereof, are immediately available.

2. The system used by the NVN Navy to pass the enciphered messages has changed several times since the August and September 1964 events in the Gulf. Each new encipherment has been from the same system "family" and because of our technical continuity, it has been possible to maintain our ability to decipher messages passed in each new system. We retain that capability today and are still able from this SIGINT source to provide NVN Naval intentions in the use of their torpedo patrol boats.

cc: DepSecDef

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3. Current SIGINT of high value regarding the movement of POL, supplies, ammunition and foodstuffs from NVN into LAOS and SVN is available from enciphered morse messages presently being passed in NVN voice communications facilities. These messages are enciphered in systems similar to those used by NVN Naval elements and other entities of the NVN military and para-military forces. Disclosure of our success in exploiting enciphered NVN Naval messages would undoubtedly betray our success with similar systems and deny us access to this vital information.

4. The consequences of any public disclosure of U.S. SIGINT capability against North Vietnam/Viet Cong communications would seriously degrade not only the Naval aspect of the problem, but the successful prosecution of both the air war over North Vietnam and operations within South Vietnam. The application of major U.S. technical intelligence resources enables us to provide adequate information to allow U.S. forces to direct most, if not all, of their operations against hostile forces. In the North, SIGINT provides us a collection base upon which to design equipments to deceive enemy defenses and to provide self protection to individual aircraft. Further, SIGINT provides a means to evaluate the effectiveness of these electronic warfare devices. Additionally, extensive SIGINT coverage of North Vietnam allows us the capability of following enemy units deploying from the North to the South and thereby provides a continuing input to the order of battle data base. SIGINT also provides us an insight into the command and control structure, emanating from Hanoi, which directs the Communist war effort in the South. In day-to-day tactical operations within South Vietnam, SIGINT provides the "eyes" for the tactical unit and gives forewarning of enemy attack, of ambush, and enemy groupings within the various areas of U.S. elements.

5. The majority of U.S. operational successes on the ground have been due in large measure to the SIGINT provided to the appropriate commanders. Without this intelligence, the success of our ground effort would be seriously degraded and the resultant losses in personnel and equipment resources would undoubtedly be quantitatively increased.

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6. The collection of useful SIGINT information by airborne direction finding (ARDF), readable communications, and traffic analysis has resulted in the development of a series of SIGINT indicators of Communist intent to initiate tactical activity and has successfully given forewarning of enemy preparation to launch large scale attacks. During the past year and a half, every attempt by a Vietnamese Communist Division and front echelon headquarters to mount a major offensive has been detected via SIGINT and reported to the appropriate military commanders.

7. As you are aware, the United States Intelligence Board and the Joint Chiefs of Staff have previously strongly urged against the public release of any indication of our SIGINT capabilities. Public disclosure of the U.S. capability to exploit Communist communications in Southeast Asia would place in jeopardy the aforementioned day-to-day tactical operations of our forces in both the North and South. In addition, it could negate a large expenditure in time, money and resources, that has occurred over the past years, not only against the Asian Communist Nations but in other areas of the world. Public disclosure, therefore, would seriously impact at the policy making level but the brunt of the effects would be borne particularly by the commanders and the men of our operating forces engaged in the Southeast Asian hostilities.

SIGNED

JOSEPH F. CARROLL  
Lieutenant General, USAF  
Director

3

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\* SIGINT, COMINT, ELINT never used in report. Only "communications intelligence, intercepts, and radar information" used.

<u>PAGE</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>REMARKS</u>
166	Closed door discussion of SIGINT	Content missing. Do not know what form or how much SIGINT was shown to committee members.
19, 20, 80,83	Mc's descriptions of SIGINT	Mc systematically used overkill language with SIGINT (highly classified, unimpeachable, incontrovertible, conclusive). ALL SIGINT surrounding Ton Kin flexible for interpretation, but Mc took extreme stance on its use as proof.
136	Mc refers to 9 intercepts	Cannot further identify
39-41, 141	Mc lists items of info leading to retaliation	Of 11 items cited, 8 are operations, 3 SIGINT: 1. attack warning message - equatable 2. involved in attack message - non-equatable 3. 2 boats lost message - equatable (see p. 37 below)
203-205	Best description of SIGINT shown to committee	Mc here paraphrases FOUR messages 1. warning message - equatable 2. IRV preparations for attack - equatable 3. and 4. two boats lost and downing two U.S. aircraft equatable to just one message (see p. 37 below)
21, 22, 37, 114	Separate references to attack warning message	Equatable to available SIGINT
147	Mc overstates warning message	In replying to leading question from SEN MORSE, Mc lends greater strength to this message than is contained therein.
23, 37	under attack message	Cannot equate - Mc's interpretation of whatever this message contained was severely criticized by SEN GORE
37	2 a/c, 2 PTs lost message	Can equate to message A.J. Austin claimed belonged to 2 Aug evidence. Later, page 203-205, Mc seemed either to split this message into two, or group several into just two (see p. 136 - "9 messages")

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*Pls file  
under  
Memo's*



NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY  
FORT GEORGE G. MEADE, MARYLAND 20755

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Subject: Interview with Mr. Arthur McCafferty, White House Staff, on the use of SIGINT in shaping W.H. decisions on Southeast Asia

Present: Miss Jeanne-Renee Jones, Dr. David Y. McManus, and Mr. Arthur McCafferty

Direct White House Use of SIGINT

SIGINT reaches the W.H. in two forms: as a direct product from NSA and as "finished" intelligence -- CIB's, USIB Watch Reports, and other documents produced as a joint effort of the Intelligence Community. Although the sum of these is necessary to provide the President with a foundation upon which to base his decisions on Southeast Asia, the President and his Intelligence Advisory Staff have felt reluctant to depend heavily on "finished" intelligence. A number of reasons exist for this reluctance. "Finished" intelligence does not and probably never will succeed in producing the quick reaction capability needed by the President. The "finished" intelligence disseminated by the Washington community, moreover, obscures the sense of urgency often felt in Saigon, and also obscures the identity of the sources of information. It does not reveal the large volume of data on which the intelligence judgments have been made, and volume of data is frequently indicative of the validity of the intelligence. Finished intelligence, finally, is always at best second hand.

For these reasons, the W.H. staff personally reviews "raw" intelligence (a term defined as being the original source intelligence material as it is received from the collector before undergoing the digestive processes of the Intelligence Community). By reviewing the raw product, the President can gain the sense of the material, form his own informal opinion, formulate alternative courses of action, compare his opinion with the formal net judgment of the Intelligence Community when this is received, and finally make his formal decision, which is then the result of his own consideration of the raw product combined with the judgment of the Intelligence Community.

Declassified and approved for release by NSA on 11-21-2005 pursuant to E.O. 12958, as amended

172

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NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY  
FORT GEORGE G. MEADE, MARYLAND 20755

An example of this process occurred during the Tet offensive of early 1968. Before the offensive and before receiving "finished intelligence, the President had formed an opinion based on raw product that the Viet Cong would change their tactics from a war of attrition to assaulting key cities and thus achieve a better press, if nothing else. The Tet offensive therefore came as no surprise, and the President gained insight into this change of tactics on a very timely basis by reviewing SIGINT provided directly to the WH.

Mechanics of SIGINT transmittal to the WH

The transmittal of the raw SIGINT product from NSA to the WH is regulated through quasi-formal liaison. When originally requested by the National Security Council to provide SIGINT support to the WH in this direct fashion, NSA assigned a civilian staff member as liaison officer with the WH. This liaison officer currently ascertains the needs of the WH and, as required, serves as an advisor on questions concerning the interpretation, clarification, and safeguarding of SIGINT product being transmitted directly to the WH. In some cases, the requirement calls for routine or periodic reports, in some cases it is for aperiodic reports, and in still other cases the need may be for a one-time report.

SIGINT product is currently passed directly to the WH by four secure communications systems: CRITICOMM (teleprinter); LSX (Long-distance Xerography) relayed through the National Military Command Center, Pentagon; Presidential Secure Voice Network (KY-3); and AUTOSEVOCOM (Automated Secure Voice Communications).

Normally NSA has responsibility for selecting the subject matter of the SIGINT material transmitted to the WH, but WH retains the prerogative of requiring NSA responses on SIGINT in the NSA inventory that may relate to a developing situation or to events observed by the WH in other sources of intelligence.

WH Processing of SIGINT

The President's Intelligence Advisory Staff has the function of reviewing SIGINT, along with other sources of intelligence, for items meriting Presidential attention. The Advisory Staff finds SIGINT more

-2- 173

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readily assimilable than other forms of "raw" intelligence since it comes to the WH accompanied by a NSA technical assessment of the content. Items selected for Presidential attention are analyzed and summarized for presentation to the President in the form of oral or written briefings. If there should be SIGINT data of outstanding significance, it is passed to him in its original form.

From time to time, and often stimulated by SIGINT received, the WH intelligence staff prepared "think pieces." These are transmitted to the President clearly designated as "think pieces" so that the President will withhold a formal decision until receiving the Intelligence Community assessment. The WH "think" document is circulated among members of the Community either to generate a community evaluation in the case of a subject not yet under community consideration or to stimulate the community to quicker response in the case of a subject already under community review. The use of the WH "think pieces" is in addition to, not in disharmony with, the normal Community assessment procedures conducted in response to WH requirements.

Examples of WH use of SIGINT

Direct use of SIGINT at the WH began at the time of the Gulf of Tonkin incident in August 1964. The significance of this event was such that the WH minutely scrutinized all available intelligence having even the most remote relevance. The decision to retaliate or not to retaliate lay in determination of DRV intent or nonintent to attack. SIGINT alone provided the positive evidence of DRV premeditation and was instrumental in shaping the President's decision to retaliate. In September 1964, another "incident" took place in the Gulf of Tonkin. Absence of SIGINT in this case led to the WH conclusion that the DRV had not preplanned any deliberate action in the Gulf of Tonkin at that time. Based on this NSA negative position voiced by DIRNSA, the President decided that the U.S. forces would not retaliate after the September incident.

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Violation of CHICOM air space by U.S. aircraft

SIGINT influenced Presidential statements answering the aperiodic Communist Chinese claims of U.S. violations of its border. In response to Communist Chinese public complaints, the U.S. military forces concerned, on occasion, denied the violations on the basis of pilot statements, and other sources. To resolve doubts SIGINT, in the form of intercepted [redacted] [redacted] North Vietnamese tracking of hostile (U.S.) aircraft, served

- 174

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to adjudicate the opposing claims and to guide the President on issuing statements on this issue, enabling the President to accept or deny U.S. culpability. The WH considered that SIGINT has helped to prevent the unintentional involvement of Communist China officially in the Vietnam war.

North Vietnamese Infiltration

SIGINT on North Vietnamese infiltration of South Vietnam has become a routine input to the WH. Before and during the 1964-65 infiltration of the North Vietnam (NVN) 325th Division into South Vietnam, the WH had not been following pure SIGINT; rather, at that time the WH was using two sources: MACV reports from the field and the "finished" product of the Intelligence Community incorporating SIGINT. At that time the WH was dependent upon the formal Washington intelligence community for assessment and was also just beginning to become acquainted with individual types of primary intelligence such as SIGINT. In addition, at that time WH interest in infiltration was in the fact of infiltration and SIGINT was only one of several sources that demonstrated this fact. Between the time of the 325th Division infiltration and the infiltration of the 304th and 320th Divisions in late 1967 and early 1968, the WH accepted the infiltration figures established by MACV. During the infiltration of the 304th and the 320th Divisions, the WH learned to use SIGINT and the cryptologic agencies achieved success in exploiting the NVN infiltration communications. As a result, the WH came to rely solely upon SIGINT in assessing the number of infiltrators coming into South Vietnam from the north.

The advances of SIGINT technology of 1968 also have provided a sizeable input to White House Order-of-Battle bookkeeping. Prior to the Tet Offensive of early 1968 SIGINT had been producing a sizeable input concerning location, identification, and numbering of enemy forces within SVN. Following the Tet Offensive, the cryptologic success during March 1968 increased White House dependence upon SIGINT for Order-of-Battle to 90%.

Other Uses of SIGINT

SIGINT serves the WH in a number of other ways. [redacted]

[redacted] traffic is scanned for information on the NVN internal economic situation and for the extent of North Vietnam's dependence on the Eurasian Communist bloc countries. Content of exploitable [redacted] communications and traffic analytic results from unexploitable [redacted] communications provide valuable insights into peace probes. At times, SIGINT fills gaps

175

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in intelligence coverage normally provided by other sources such as photographic intelligence (PHOTOINT) and human intelligence (HUMINT). In the Spring of 1968, SIGINT evidence of an enemy road-building project between Ashau and the sea, with its implied threat to the city of Hue, was a case in point. SIGINT information on occasion helped the U.S. avoid politically embarrassing situations. Upon learning through SIGINT of the proposed visit [redacted] to Hanoi, the WH directed a cessation of bombing until departure of the delegation could be ascertained. Finally, SIGINT helped the WH deal with Congress during the early 1968 Congressional investigation of the Gulf of Tonkin affair. Relevant SIGINT was exhumed and presented to Congress. The WH viewed this presentation of SIGINT as having been instrumental in satisfying Congress as to the incontestability of North Vietnam's preplanning the attacks on U.S. forces in the Gulf of Tonkin in August 1964.

Outlook for continued SIGINT utilization by WH

The WH expects that SIGINT will be a prime source of intelligence if and when agreements are produced as a result of present peace negotiations. It will be necessary to confirm Viet Cong/North Vietnamese de-escalation. Here again, absence of SIGINT on Vietnamese Communist planning and movements, may provide the needed negative indicator that the Vietnamese Communists are, in fact, de-escalating.

*James - Derek Jones*

176

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27 December 1971

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MEMORANDUM FOR MR. J. FRED BUZHARDT,  
GENERAL COUNSEL, OSD

SUBJECT: Request from Senator Fulbright

The letter of 8 December 1971 from Senator Fulbright refers to the possibility of a mix-up in the dates of intercept of North Vietnamese messages bearing on events in the Gulf of Tonkin. Mr. Fulbright asks that members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee staff be allowed to examine the originals of the intercepts involved.

I have no objection to allowing a staff member to see NSA record copies of the "originals" of pertinent traffic here in secure spaces at NSA. I propose not to show him any evaluative or supplementary materials, as that is beyond the scope of Senator Fulbright's request.

My own estimate is that a perusal of "original" intercepts will not resolve the specific issue to which Senator Fulbright refers. I am not privy to how the Secretary of Defense at that time may have interpreted them.

NOEL GAYLER  
Vice Admiral, U.S. Navy  
Director

Declassified and approved for release by NSA on 11-09-2005 pursuant to E.O. 12958, as amended

~~HANDLE VIA COMINT CHANNELS~~

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## United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

/ January 24, 1972

CARL MARCY, CHIEF OF STAFF  
ARTHUR M. KUHL, CHIEF CLERK

~~SECRET~~

Dr. Louis W. Tordella  
Deputy Director  
National Security Agency  
Fort Meade, Maryland

Dear Dr. Tordella:

Thank you for your courtesy in seeing me on Friday and in giving me access to the Tonkin intercepts as Secretary Laird had arranged.

I have now prepared the memorandum which I mentioned and which I plan to send to Senator Fulbright. I enclose a draft of that memorandum and before sending it to the Senator I want to be sure it is accurate in its references to our conversation and the intercepts which you showed me. I hope you will feel free to note any changes which you think should be made in this draft and call to my attention any misrepresentations that may inadvertently have crept in.

It would also be most helpful if I could have a photocopy of the one-page message you showed me -- which I called a "reconstruct" (I welcome a better word). I would like to send that as an attachment to my memorandum to the Senator. If you are agreeable to sending me a copy of this message, it would be helpful if it might be footnoted to interpret those symbols showing time of receipt, time of destruction, etc.

*distribution*

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As you will note, I have taken the liberty of expressing my personal opinion on several points. I tried not to describe any opinion you expressed except if related to your technical knowledge on the subject of communications and intercepts.

I take the occasion in this letter to note that you did make the point several times that in your view there was no doubt that the skippers of the MADDOX and the TURNER JOY thought they were under attack on August 4th and I expressed the view that on a dark night in a scary situation I could well understand that condition.

Sincerely yours,



Carl Marcy

CM:mmm

Enclosure

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CARL MARCY, CHIEF OF STAFF  
ARTHUR M. KUHL, CHIEF CLERK

## United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

January 20, 1972

~~SECRET~~

DRAFT

SENATOR FULBRIGHT:

Subject: Tonkin Incident

Last December 8th you wrote Secretary Laird asking if he could arrange to have a member of the staff examine "the originals of the intercepts" of communications which Secretary McNamara had testified were conclusive proof that the August 4, 1964 attack in the Gulf of Tonkin had indeed occurred. (See attached letter).

The reason for the request was that a carefully researched book by Anthony Austin entitled The President's War had offered the hypothesis that the significant intercepts which were received by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the President on August 4th were in fact related to the admitted incident of August 2nd and not to the alleged incident of August 4 which precipitated retaliation and the Tonkin resolution. There was no allegation in the book that there had been any connivance in misreading the intercepts but that there had been confusion in the dates.

Today I went to the National Security Agency and met with Dr. Louis W. Tordella, Deputy Director of NSA, and with the General Counsel, Roy Banner. They showed me all the intercepts relating to the incidents of August 2 and 4. Dr. Tordella went over with me in detail the method by which these intercepts are obtained, interpreted, and transmitted to NSA and then distributed to the intelligence community.

*which they had*

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DRAFT

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The intercepts of August 2 leave no doubt that the attack on the destroyer Maddox occurred substantially as reported at the time and that two or three of the attacking North Vietnamese patrol boats had been damaged or destroyed.

The one significant intercept with the date of August 4th reported that the North Vietnamese had attacked the enemy (the United States) and damaged him. (Full message attached?). Secretary McNamara had testified that this message was received in the Pentagon while our ships "were actually under attack." He also said that the message was coming in "twelve minutes after our ships reported they were being attacked."

The significant thing to me was that this August 4th intercept was not in the same form as the August 2 intercepts which I was shown. While it indicated that it had been received in NSA on August 4th during the attack and had been passed on to the Pentagon, this intercept was not an original. It was in the nature of a one paragraph summary or reconstruct of the intercept. I asked for the original or a clear copy of the original as I had been shown of the August 2 intercepts. Dr. Tordella said they did not have the original. He had searched for it without success; he was showing me all they had on the two incidents because he had thought some questions might be raised. So far as the intercept reconstruct dated August 4, he assumed that the original teletype communication received by NSA had been destroyed as being no longer necessary to retain because it had been used to produce the August 4 reconstructed or summarized message.

I told Dr. Tordella that on the basis of what I had seen I felt I had to report to Senator Fulbright substantially as follows:

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*before the  
decision  
of the  
president  
to retaliate*



DRAFT

~~SECRET~~

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"I (Marcy) had not seen any intercept that showed conclusively that the August 4th attack had occurred. The relevant intercept of August 4th showed only that the message described above (copy attached) had been received in NSA and passed on on August 4 but there was nothing in the message which indicated the actual day or time when the message had been transmitted and intercepted as was true with respect to other intercepts of August 2.

"Dr. Tordella agreed there was nothing in the message he showed me that would give one assurance that the actual transmission and interception had taken place on August 4th. I hypothesized from the content of the message that it might as easily have been a summary of events that took place on August 2 as an intercept taken during the time of the August 4 alleged action. Dr. Tordella said there was nothing in the document dated August 4 and nothing in the files of NSA that would rebut that hypothesis."

It is my conclusion that the principal intercept which the Administration in 1964 honestly thought proved the August 4 attack on the Maddox and Turner Joy was, in fact, a message either intercepted on August 2 or, if in fact intercepted on August 4th, referred to the attacks on August 2.

Carl Marcy

CM:mmm

Attachments

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~~SECRET~~

I (Marcy) was shown conclusively that considerable SIGINT evidence was ~~not~~ available ~~to me~~ on 2 August to the effect that the North Vietnamese had intended to and had attacked the MADDOX on that date. This evidence consists of numerous intercepts of North Vietnamese traffic by several U.S. field intercept stations. I was told that their substance and at times their exact wording had been incorporated in electrical messages (dispatches) sent to the JCS and selected field commanders, among others, at high-priority precedence.

*Signals Intelligence*  
*can be related to the events 2/11*  
I was shown only one piece of SIGINT evidence that ~~supports~~ ~~the claim of a planned attack by the North Vietnamese on 4 August.~~

This was an NSA publication as a formal piece of SIGINT end product of a translation of a North Vietnamese message intercepted by a U.S. field station on 4 August. I was told that this intercepted message was issued as serialized end product rather than incorporated with other ~~material~~ <sup>material</sup> in dispatch because of the events of 2 August and its apparent importance in connection with events in the Gulf of Tonkin. ~~I also was told that the copy I was shown was the hard (record) copy issued to back up an electrical release of this SIGINT end product.~~ A copy of the electrical release was available but a copy of the intercepted enciphered traffic on which the release was based was not available. Copies of the enciphered intercept messages of 2 August had been shown me as I noted

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above. Dr. Tordella said that he believed the issuance of formal end product accounted for the nonretention of the worksheets and raw material in the NSA files in contrast to the 2 August intercepts which were not issued as serialized formal end product. Dr. Tordella said that he could not certify that the events reported in the message actually occurred on the 4th vice the 2d but he pointed out the consistency of the internal North Vietnamese date/time group (4 Aug 2242G ~~1548Z~~), time of intercept (4 Aug 1059Z) and time of issuance by NSA (5 Aug 1933Z) as

*1042 P.M. Torben*  
*1059 P.M. Torben*  
*2:33 am Torbin*

conclusive evidence of transmission by the North Vietnamese, intercept and issuance by the U.S. on 4 August,

*To the U.S. on 4 August, 3:33 E.D.T.*  
*by the U.S. on 4 August at 3:33 PM E.D.T.*  
*or 5 Aug*

~~Dr. Tordella's view is that the Secretary of Defense clearly~~

*2:33 AM*  
*Tobin*

~~relied upon SIGINT in deciding that an attack was intended on 2 August.~~

~~He knows that the commanding officer of the MABDOX reported an attack~~

~~on that day and that this report was sent to the JCS among other addres-~~

*A. Tordella*

~~see.~~ He cannot determine, from the evidence of the message available, the extent to which the Secretary relied upon SIGINT in deciding that an attack on the TURNER JOY was intended or actually took place on 4 August but he does know that her commanding officer reported to the JCS that he was being attacked. He was told that the Secretary had ~~the~~ report that the TURNER JOY was under attack, as well as the translated message

~~SECRET~~

issued as SIGINT end product which he understood was received by  
the Secretary in the same time frame as ~~the~~ report from the TURNER JOY.

~~SECRET~~

31 Jan 1972

I (Marcy) was shown conclusively that considerable SIGINT evidence was available on 2 August to the effect that the North Vietnamese had intended to and had attacked the MADDOX on that date. This evidence consists of numerous intercepts of North Vietnamese traffic by several U.S. field intercept stations. I was told that their substance and at times their exact wording had been incorporated in electrical messages (dispatches) sent to the JCS and selected field commanders, among others, at high-priority precedence.

I was shown only one piece of signals intelligence (SIGINT) evidence that can be related to the events of 4 August. This was an NSA publication as a formal piece of SIGINT end product of a translation of a North Vietnamese message intercepted by a U.S. field station on 4 August. I was told that this intercepted message was issued as serialized end product rather than incorporated with other material in dispatch because of the events of 2 August and its apparent importance in connection with events in the Gulf of Tonkin. A copy of the electrical release <sup>of the translation</sup> was available but a copy of the intercepted enciphered traffic on which the release was based was not available. Copies of the enciphered intercept messages of 2 August had been shown me as I noted above. Dr. Tordella said that he believed the issuance of formal end

1 Feb 1972

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Banner to deliver to Marcy. Bughardt said "No" to release the message. *h*

~~SECRET~~

product accounted for the nonretention of the worksheets and raw material in the NSA files in contrast to the 2 August intercepts which were not issued as serialized formal end product. Dr. Tordella said that he could not certify that the events reported in the message actually occurred on the 4th vice the 2d but he pointed out the consistency of the internal North Vietnamese date/time group (4 Aug, 10:42 p.m. Tonkin time), time of intercept (4 Aug, 10:59 p.m. Tonkin time), and time of issuance by NSA (5 Aug, 2:33 a.m. Tonkin time), as conclusive evidence of transmission by the North Vietnamese, intercept and issuance by the U.S. on 4 August at 3:33 p.m. E.D.T. or 5 August, 2:33 a.m. Tonkin time.

Dr. Tordella cannot determine, from the evidence of the message available, the extent to which the Secretary relied upon SIGINT in deciding that an attack on the TURNER JOY was intended or actually took place on 4 August but he does know that her commanding officer reported to the JCS that he was being attacked. He was told that the Secretary had reports that the TURNER JOY was under attack, as well as the translated message issued as SIGINT end product which he understood was received by the Secretary in the same time frame as reports from the TURNER JOY.

~~SECRET~~

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION REPORT

NOTE: This document contains information affecting the national defense of the United States within the meaning of the espionage laws, Title 18, U.S.C., Sec. 793 and 794. The transmission or the revelation of its contents in any manner to an unauthorized person is prohibited by law.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
(Classification and Control Markings)

This report contains unprocessed information. Plans and/or policies should not be evolved or modified solely on the basis of this report.

<p>1. COUNTRY: NVN, COMMUNIST CHINA, U.S.S.R.</p> <p>2. SUBJECT: (U) Gulf of TONKIN Incident; Two Soviet Sponsored Air-fields</p> <p>3. ISC NUMBER:</p> <p>4. DATE OF INFORMATION: Early 1965 - Jan 66</p> <p>5. PLACE AND DATE OF ACQ: SAIGON, 24 Feb 68</p> <p>6. EVALUATION: SOURCE INFORMATION</p> <p>7. SOURCE: Captive NGUYEN THANH CONG; aka NAM CONG</p>	<p>8. REPORT NUMBER: IR 6028 1216 68</p> <p>9. DATE OF REPORT: 25 Mar 68</p> <p>10. NO. OF PAGES: 1</p> <p>11. REFERENCES: DIRM: 1A, 1C, 1Q <i>1216 13</i></p> <p>12. ORIGINATOR: COMUSMACV (Combined RVNAF/USMACV Military Interrogation Center) SAIGON</p> <p>13. PREPARED BY: National Interrogation Center <i>Phillip B. Davidson, Jr.</i></p> <p>14. APPROVING AUTHORITY: PHILLIP B. DAVIDSON, JR Brigadier General, USA Assistant Chief of Staff, J2</p>
--	--

REC-0303 APR 1968

15. SUMMARY: This report forwards National Interrogation Center (NIC) Interrogation Report No 270/68. Source provides information concerning the Gulf of TONKIN incident which source states was provoked by two NVN patrol craft which attacked a U.S. warship in international waters. MACJ-263

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148

303605-VN/CH  
306104-VN/CH  
351205-VN/CH  
351255-VN/CH

*1- Serie  
1-vc copy  
1-NAVM ACTY copy 2  
1-loc copy 2*

16. DISTRIBUTION BY ORIGINATOR	17. DOWNGRADING DATA	18. ATTACHMENT DATA
DIA 1 Copy w/1 Incl CINCPAC " " CINCUSARPAC " " COMUSMACHTAI " " J2, ID, MACV " " J2, IOD, MACV " " CIGV " " CDEC " " FILE " "	<p><del>DOWNGRADED AT 12 YEAR INTERVALS NOT AUTOMATICALLY DECLASSIFIED DOD DIR 5200.10</del></p>	1 Incl: (U) NIC INTERROGATION REPORT No 270/68. SUBJ: Gulf of TONKIN Incident; Two Soviet Sponsored Air-fields dtd 5 Mar 68 1 Copy - 2 Pages  REQUEST ENC FROM DIAAP-10A  <i>Si</i>

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
(Classification and Control Markings)

DD FORM 1396 1 SEP 62

REPLACES DA FORM 1048, 1 AUG 60, OPNAV FORM 3820 (Rev 10-61), AF FORM 112, JUL 61, WHICH MAY BE USED UNTIL 1 JAN 63.

# INTERROGATION REPORT

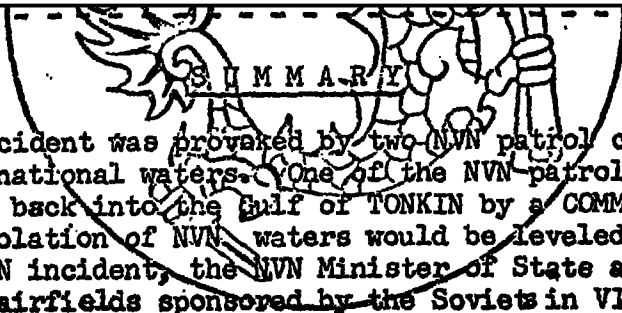


COUNTRY : NORTH VIETNAM (NVN)      NIC REPORT NO : 270/68  
 COMMUNIST CHINA      NIC CASE NO : 169/6/68  
 U.S.S.R.

SUBJECT : Gulf of TONKIN Incident; Two DATE OF REPORT : 2/2/68  
 Soviet Sponsored Airfields      25X1

DATE OF INFO : Early 1965 - January 1966      NO. OF PAGES : 2

DATE AND PLACE : 24 February 1968 (X-N)      REF: CIO Report 091/68 (PIR)  
 OF ACQUISITION : SAIGON, Vietnam



**SUMMARY**

The Gulf of TONKIN incident was provoked by two NVN patrol craft which attacked a U.S. warship in international waters. One of the NVN patrol craft, crippled in the attack, was towed back into the Gulf of TONKIN by a COMMUNIST CHINA submarine so that charges of violation of NVN waters would be leveled against the U.S. At the time of the TONKIN incident, the NVN Minister of State announced the construction of two more NVN airfields sponsored by the Soviets in VINH PHUC and THANH HOA Provinces.

DISTRIBUTION:  US MACV  US EMBASSY (OSA)	CLASSIFICATION K I N <del>CONFIDENTIAL</del> <del>EXCLUDED FROM AUTOMATIC</del> <del>DOWNGRADING AND</del> <del>DECLASSIFICATION</del>	ATTACHMENTS:  None
--	---	--------------------------

1716  
15/3/68

6028 12/6/68



~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Page 2

1. In early 1965, an article appeared in the NHAN DAN newspaper (NVN) telling of the U.S. attempt to infiltrate NVN at the Gulf of TONKIN. The U.S. had been turned back by NVN patrol ships at great loss of life.
2. In April/May 1965, UNG VAN KHIEN, son of former NVN Minister of Foreign Affairs UNG VAN KHIEN, had said that the incident at the Gulf of TONKIN had been provoked by NVN. The U.S. warship CO-DUC was in international waters at the time two NVN patrol boats sighted her. The NVN believed the U.S. Navy was weak and so without orders had attacked the U.S. ship while it was still in international waters. One NVN patrol boat was sunk and the other was driven off. After the U.S. ship withdrew, a Communist Chinese submarine went out and towed the crippled patrol boat back into the Gulf of TONKIN, out of international waters, so that the U.S. could be blamed for violating NVN waters and trying to infiltrate NVN.
3. At the time of the TONKIN incident, the NVN Minister of State GIAP stated that the NVN Air Force and Navy was weak, NVN was going to build two more airfields with Soviet sponsorship. One was located in NGOC LAC District, THANH HOA Province and the other in DA PHUC District, VINH PHUC Province NVN. The latter airfield was completed in January 1966 and used the code name, Worksite 105 (Source did not know the location). It was NVN's largest airfield and the field where most of the Mig 17's and 21's landed.

1 - Navy acty  
1 - LOC

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ - K I N

0

13 August 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Subject: Church Committee Interest in Gulf of Tonkin Incident

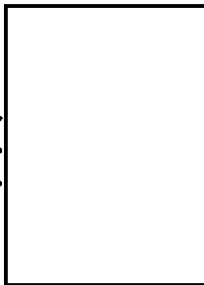
1. In a telephone conversation with Mr. Frank Foster on 13 August, a member of the Church Committee, Mr. Betts, said he had heard that a Mr. Gerhard or Dr. Howe of NSA had put together a number of cryptologic studies in which the staff might be interested. Mr. Foster and Mr. Lowman subsequently arranged a Gerhard - Betts phone conversation.

2. During this latter conversation, Betts began by asking about our studies generally. I tried to interest him in our most innocuous and non-CW work, Deadly Transmissions, but was unable to arouse much interest in COMSEC. He soon began to ask a number of pointed questions about draft materials he thought I had concerning the Gulf of Tonkin incidents of 1964. I acknowledged I had some materials. I said I had not examined them in over 4 years and would have to review them before saying anything definite, particularly about draft materials. I told him flatly 4 or 5 times that I did not have any finished or published work on this subject.

3. The above exchange and the Newsweek item attached suggest that we may be asked to provide Gulf of Tonkin - related materials to the committee.

*Bill G.*  
William D. Gerhard  
D4, Staff Research Element

Incl:  
a/s



cc: ESS, Mr.  
ESS, Mr.  
ESS, Mr.  
D4, Mr.

less incl)  
" " )  
" " )

P.L. 86-36



GULF OF TONKIN



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

18 August 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR General George B. Brown  
Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

The attached request for information from the Chairman of the Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with respect to Intelligence Activities is forwarded for preparation of an appropriate response. Please return your response by 29 August 1975 as an attachment to a draft letter of transmittal to the Committee for my signature and coordinate your response with NSA.

*Thomas K. Lacy*  
Thomas K. Lacy  
The Special Assistant

Attachment

The attached request for information from the Chairman of the Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with respect to Intelligence Activities is forwarded for preparation of an appropriate response. Please return your response by 29 August 1975 as an attachment to a draft letter of transmittal to the Committee for my signature and coordinate your response with NSA.

PROPERTY OF NSA, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE,  
ON LOAN TO SENATE SELECT COMMITTEE TO STUDY  
GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS WITH RESPECT TO  
INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES.

P.L.  
86-36

TELECOPIER ITEM  
DTG: 15 1445  
FROM: D7  
DIST: Ms. [ ]

*Signature: 26 August*

*CD* [ ]

755874

*Special Op Div, JS*



TOKIN GULF INQUIRY

KEY QUESTIONS

1. What key individuals were involved in planning the 34-A and DE SOTO programs? What provisions were there for coordination of specific covert operations and intelligence collection missions, if any?
2. What was the role of NSA in the DE SOTO patrols? Was the special communications contingent which reported aboard the USS Maddox on 30 July 1964 a "department" (completely under jurisdiction of Cmdr. Herrick) or a "detachment" (with separate reporting channels to the Naval Security Group and/or NSA)?
3. How did Operation SHROCKBACK affect development of OPLAN 34-A? What form did CIA participation in MAC/SOG take? Was MAC/SOG informed of the schedule and patrol routes of DE SOTO patrols?
4. What were coordination procedures between CIA and military personnel in the execution of 34-A actions? Who were the action officers in Saigon and Danang for the 34-A operations of 30 July 1964 (attacks on Hon Nieu and Hon Me islands) and 3 August 1964 (bombardment of Hon River estuary and Vinh Sonh radar installation)?

PROPERTY OF NSA, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE,  
ON LOAN TO SENATE SELECT COMMITTEE TO STUDY  
GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS WITH RESPECT TO  
INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES

FRANK STANLEY, SENATE CLERK  
2200 S. WING, 3100 S. WING  
FRANK STANLEY, SENATE CLERK  
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FRANK STANLEY, SENATE CLERK  
2200 S. WING, 3100 S. WING

# United States Senate

SELECT COMMITTEE TO  
STUDY GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS WITH  
RESPECT TO INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES  
(SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION)  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

August 8, 1975

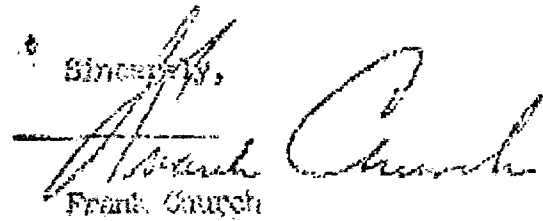
The Honorable James R. Schlesinger  
Secretary of Defense  
32000  
The Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20301

Dear Secretary Schlesinger:

The Select Committee is investigating the relation of U.S. covert operations and intelligence collection to the Gulf of Tonkin incidents of August 1964. We are particularly interested in the planning and coordination of "B-1" operations and DE SURF patrols, and the general command and control procedures for Southeast Asia covert operations.

Attached is a more detailed description of the Committee's questions and a document request. Your assistance in this matter is very much appreciated.

Sincerely,

  
Frank Church

Attachments

PROPERTY OF NSA, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE,  
ON LOAN TO SENATE SELECT COMMITTEE TO STUDY  
GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS WITH RESPECT TO  
INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES.

11850

Document Request

PROPERTY OF NSA, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE,  
ON LOAN TO SENATE SELECT COMMITTEE TO STUDY  
GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS WITH RESPECT TO  
INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES.

NSA25X3

1. The complete classified version of the DOD study, "United States-Vietnam Relations 1965-1967" (publicly known as the Pentagon Papers).
2. The IDA/WSAG study "Command and Control of the Gulf of Tonkin Incidents of 4 August 1964," by John Ponturo.
3. CTHUPAC OPLAN 34-63 (submitted September 1963, concerning covert operations in Southeast Asia).
4. OPLAN 34-A (annex developed by MACV and [redacted], submitted December 1963).
5. Minutes from the Vietnam policy conference at Honolulu, 20 November 1963, and/or any reports or documents issuing from the conference which pertain to discussion of OPLAN 34-63.
6. The Krulak Committee Report of 2 January 1964 which recommended authorization of certain activities from OPLAN 34-A.
7. Any minutes, reports, or documents mentioning 34-A operations, DE SOTO patrols, or Operation SWITCHBACK from the office of the Special Assistant to the JCS for Counterinsurgency and Special Activities (SACSA), for the period 1 September 1963 - 30 December 1964.
8. Any directives to COMUSMACV from DOD, and/or reports from COMUSMACV to DOD, concerning Operation SWITCHBACK (which occurred in late 1963 or early 1964, and involved transfer of covert action programs in Vietnam [redacted]).
9. Directives or reports concerning coordination between MACV and COMNAVFLT on the matter of DE SOTO patrols in the Gulf of Tonkin, especially the patrol of USS Maddox which began 31 July 1964 (IN 72, and 72.1).
10. Any internal NSA directives, reports, or documents concerning NSA's role or interest in DE SOTO patrols of 1964, especially the Maddox patrol of 31 July.
11. Mission directives to Lt. [redacted] USNR (head of the USS Maddox) special communications contingent during the patrol of 31 July 1964) from Naval Security Group, [redacted] and/or from NSA.
12. CINCPACFLT message 021104Z, August 1964 (to CTO 72.1).
13. Detailed organization charts of the Studies and Observations Group (MAC/SOG) under COMUSMACV from 1963-65, and names of key personnel in MAC/SOG during that period.

P.L. 86-36

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OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10  
MAY 1962 EDITION  
GSA FPMR (41 CFR) 101-11.6

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

P.L.  
86-36

*Subj*

Serial: D4/SRE-016-75  
DATE: 28 August 1975

TO : DDO (Mr.  /Mr. )

FROM : D4/SRE

SUBJECT: Tonkin Gulf Inquiry Key Questions/Document Request

Responses below relate to questions numbered similarly in the Church Committee staff request.

① a. Key individuals. NSA individuals with knowledge of planning aspects of the 34-A and DeSoto programs are Dr. Louis Tordella, Milton Zaslow, Donald Oliver, David Gaddy, Delmar Lang, Fred Cole, Renee Jones, and William Gerhard. These individuals would have knowledge of communications intelligence measures taken in support of these programs. They did not plan, however, the 34-A or DeSoto missions themselves.

b. Coordination. Normally, NSA received advance information that 34-A or DeSoto operations would take place and used that information to adjust the SIGINT production process to support the operations.

† ② a. Role of NSA in DeSoto patrols. NSA worked, ~~as noted already,~~ in an intelligence-support capacity. This is to say, NSA and associated field units obtained intelligence on North Vietnamese and Chinese military forces affecting the safety of the missions and providing a measure of the reaction, if any, of these forces to the U.S. missions.

b. Special communications unit aboard Maddox. Referred to as a "direct support unit" (DSU) or "supplemental radio detachment" (SUPRAD), the element in question was under the operational control of Maddox commander. The DSU emphasized intelligence collection which would yield information affecting the ship's safety. It also maintained communications with Naval Security Group, other associated shore-based units, and NSA in order to facilitate exchange of intelligence and technical information pertaining to the ship's mission.

NSA25X3

③ a. SWITCHBACK. No information available.



④ c. MAC/SOG's knowledge of DeSoto patrols. NSA has no evidence that MAC/SOG was or was not aware of the DESOTO schedules and routes. CINCPAC controlled DESOTO patrols; MAC/SOG, the 34-A operation.

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Buy U.S. Savings Bonds Regularly on the Payroll Savings Plan



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NSA25X3

[REDACTED]  
NSA has no specific information on this subject.

10. NSA reports/documents on DeSoto patrols of 1964. NSA has in some volume message traffic, reports with chronologies and resumes, and intelligence product relating to 1964 DeSoto patrols, including the one of 31 July. For the most part in microform, these will require some time for processing and reproduction.

11. Mission directives to Lt. [REDACTED] NSA believes it has both general and specific instructions/directives and is currently searching its microform files for them.

An NSA publication of 1969 (inclosure) gives in summary form NSA actions in support of 34-A and DESOTO operations. See the following pages of inclosure for additional information on subjects listed:

P.L.  
86-36

DeSoto patrols	pp 50, 138
OPLAN 34-A and NSA's KIT KAT Support Plan	pp 110-113, 116, 119-20, 127-28, 134-35, 137

*Bill Gerhard*  
W. D. Gerhard

D4, Staff Research Element

Incl:

Cryptologic History Series publication, In the Shadow of War  
(NSA, 1969)

cc: D4, Mr. [REDACTED]

SF ←

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~~SECRET~~

~~HANDLE VIA COMINT CHANNELS ONLY~~

*Return to Director*

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
WASHINGTON 25, D C

*To*

11 AUG 1964

*hw*

Lt. General Gordon A Blake, USAF  
Director, National Security Agency  
Fort Meade, Maryland

Dear General Blake:

I have noted with great pride and satisfaction the outstanding performance of U.S. SIGINT units in connection with recent events in the Gulf of Tonkin. I wish, therefore, on behalf of the Secretary of Defense and myself, to express the deep appreciation of the Department of Defense for a job well done.

Please convey our gratitude and congratulations to the personnel of the National Security Agency and the Service Cryptologic Agencies for the vigilance and skill which they have once again demonstrated so clearly. In particular, I wish to commend the officers and men of the SIGINT units in Southeast Asia for their great contribution to the protection of U.S. lives, property and interests in that area.

Sincerely,

[ SIGNED ]

*Cy and R Vance*

Copy 2 of 5 Copies

Page 1 of 1 Pages

*Orig to ADP*

~~SECRET~~

Declassified per E.O. 12958, as amended by WHS Declassification on 07-13-2005

~~HANDLE VIA COMINT CHANNELS ONLY~~

564336



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

P.L. 86-36

*File*

19 SEP 1975

Dear Bill:

This is in response, in part, to Senator Church's 8 August 1975 letter to Secretary Schlesinger requesting certain information and documents relating to the Gulf of Tonkin incident.

The National Security Agency has prepared a specific response to Key Question 2 and has forwarded the documents mentioned in items 10 and 11 of the request. These materials and documents are extremely sensitive, to be handled in COMINT CHANNELS ONLY. I would like to make these materials available to appropriately cleared staff members in my office, according to established procedures.

Sincerely,

*Tom*  
Thomas K. Latimer  
The Special Assistant

Mr. William G. Miller  
Chief of Staff  
Senate Select Committee  
on Intelligence  
Room G308  
Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D. C. 20510

Copy furnished:  
Director, NSA

Declassified and approved for release by NSA on 11-30-2005 pursuant to E.O. 12958, as amended



UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

Serial: D4/SRE 018-75  
DATE: 3 September 1975

TO DDO (Mr. [redacted] / Mr. [redacted])

FROM D4/SRE

SUBJECT Tonkin Gulf Inquiry Key Questions/Document Request

P.L.  
86-36

Information given herein is in response to a request from the staff of the Church Committee.

f. Key question 2 on Role of NSA in DESOTO Patrols

NSA25X3

NSA operated in an intelligence support capacity. That is to say, NSA and associated field units (including those aboard DESOTO vessels) obtained intelligence on North Vietnamese and Chinese military forces which related to the safety of the vessels or which contributed to U.S. intelligence on those forces.

The Naval Security Group, the Navy's cryptologic agency, provided SIGINT direct support units (DSU's) with personnel and equipment, primarily from a shore station (USN-27) in the Philippines, for the DESOTO series of destroyer patrols. [redacted]

[redacted] the DESOTO patrols lasted from 1962 through the spring of 1965. The unit's primary mission was to provide, through intercept, early warning of attack and tactical intelligence in support of the operational requirements of the embarked commander.

A letter of instruction issued by the commander of the Seventh Fleet outlined the missions of the DESOTO patrols. The patrols would assert the right of the freedom of the seas in international waters and collect intelligence for both the commander of the Seventh Fleet and Washington-level consumers. The objective was two fold - operational and intelligence. To achieve the operational goals, the patrols were to familiarize themselves with the areas patrolled and determine [redacted] or North Vietnamese response to the patrols. To achieve the intelligence goals, the patrols were to collect - through SIGINT, photography, and visual sightings - information on such subjects as enemy seaward and air defense postures, including disposition and capability of forces, merchant shipping activity; and other topics as the opportunity presented itself.

The patrol of the USS Craig (DD 885) from 25 February through 12 March 1964 was representative of the DESOTO operations. Aboard the Craig was the SIGINT direct support unit - designated USN-467Y - whose mission it was to provide direct support for the embarked commander and to attempt unique intercept of communications and electronic intelligence



~~SECRET~~

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~~SECRET~~

(ELINT) signals unobtainable at land-based intercept sites. In addition, the patrol expected to stimulate [redacted] and North Vietnamese communications and perhaps even reactions from [redacted]. From such responses the intelligence community could add to its SIGINT knowledge of the surrounding area. The Craig would receive support from U.S. stations in the Philippines (USN-27 and USA-57), [redacted] through special reporting on various intercept targets.

The Craig [redacted]

[redacted] The destroyer proceeded west to the coast of North Vietnam and then northward, coursing the Gulf of Tonkin until 9 March. Its return track was by way of [redacted]

[redacted] The USS Ingersoll (DD 652), which served as back-up vessel for the patrol, apparently was not detected until the latter part of patrol. [redacted]

[redacted] At the time, the Craig was considerably beyond the 12-mile limit.

Special Communications Unit Aboard Maddox

A DSU, USN-467N, was aboard the DESOTO patrol destroyer USS Maddox in the Gulf of Tonkin when North Vietnamese PTF boats attacked the destroyer in early August 1964. The DSU was under the operational control of the Maddox commander. It maintained communications with the Naval Security Group, other associated shore-based units, and NSA in order to exchange intelligence and technical information pertaining to the ship's mission.

2. Documents pertaining to items 10 and 11 (Document Request) are appended.

William D. Gerhard  
D4, Staff Research Element

Incl:  
a/s

SF 

NSA25X3

~~SECRET~~

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

SF

ROUTING AND COORDINATION		ACTION
1	TO	CIRCULATE
	MR. <input type="checkbox"/> MR. <input type="checkbox"/> MR. <input type="checkbox"/>	COORDINATION
2	INITIALS	FILE
	DATE	INFORMATION
3	INITIALS	NOTE AND RETURN
	DATE	PERSON VERSION
4	INITIALS	SEE ME
	DATE	SIGNATURE

**REMARKS**  
 Following for information concerning attached request/response:

1. Down through the years since Tonkin, the Fulbright Committee repeatedly sought info and documents on the G of T incidents. Dr. Tordella, I am aware, was very much involved. Risk of possible embarrassment, exists in giving to Church what we may have refused Fulbright.
2. Documents being provided form only a selection of what is available. Two notable omissions:
  - a. A black notebook on the mid-September G of T incident
  - b. The KIT KAT support plan (SI) for OPLAN 34-A.

Do NOT use this form as a RECORD of approvals, concurrences, disapprovals, clearances, and similar actions.

FROM: Bill Gerhard

DATE: 3 Sept 75

**SECRET**

FOR INFORMATION CALL 4656a

Attachments to DA/SRE 018-75 dtd 3 Sep 75

1. notebook (minus decrypts)

m/R: Chronology of Events of 2-5 Aug 64  
in the Gulf of Tonkin

2. Reports

a. Serial 00044P94

rpt # 10-65

dated 26 May 65

b. serial 00044P94

rpt # 11-65

dated 26 May 65

c. serial 00044P94

rpt # 12-65

dated 26 May 65

3. microfiche

a. sma 5 Aug 64

POSS-239-64

b. sma 7 Aug 64

STR J3-08130

c.	smi	15131	JCS 7947
d.	fmi	041554Z	CINCPAC
e.	smi	041718Z	CINCPAC
f.	smi	042014Z	CINCPACFLT
g.	smi	14 Aug 64	[redacted]
h.	rpt	042052	3/01 [redacted] /R18-64
i.	sno	5 Aug 64	POSS-238-64
j.	USM-626J	050435Z	2/G11/VHN/R18-64
k.	sno	1 Aug 64	B205-241-64
l.	sno	2 Aug 64	B205-243-64
m.	sno	2 Aug 64	B205-245-64
n.	sno	5 Aug 64	POSS-238-64
o.	smi	102339Z Sep 64	JCS 8515
p.	smi 54434	110354Z Sep 64	DIRNAUSECGRUPAC
q.	sno	12 Sep 64	P21-0354
r.	smi	041433Z	fm JCS
s.	sno	16 Sep 64	P214-0374
t.	sno	16 Sep 64	B205-316-64
u.	sno	25 Aug 64	B22-505
v.	rpt	021628Z	3/01 [redacted] /R15-64

NSA25X3

*KITKAT*

*Answered  
8-28-75*

*Paul  
file?*

P.L.  
86-36

TONKIN GULF INQUIRY

KEY QUESTIONS

1. What key individuals were involved in planning the 34-A and DE SOTO programs? What provisions were there for coordination of specific covert operations and intelligence collection missions, if any? *Gaddy  
Lang  
Oliver*
2. What was the role of NSA in the DE SOTO patrols? Was the special communications contingent which reported aboard the USS Maddox on 30 July 1964 a "department" (completely under jurisdiction of Cmdr. Herrick) or a "detachment" (with separate reporting channels to the Naval Security Group and/or NSA?)
3. How did Operation SWITCHBACK affect development of OPLAN 34-A? What form did CIA participation in MAC/SOG take? Was MAC/SOG informed of the schedule and patrol routes of DE SOTO patrols? *Oliver*
4. What were coordination procedures between CIA and military personnel in the execution of 34-A operations of 30 July 1964 (attacks on Hon Nieu and Hon Me islands) and 3 August 1964 (bombardment of Rhon River estuary and Vinh Sonh radar installation)?

NSA25X3





Document Request

10. Any internal NSA directives, reports, or documents concerning NSA's role or interest in DE SOTO patrols of 1964, especially the MADDOX patrol of 31 July.
11. Mission directives to Lt. [redacted] USNR (head of the USS Maddox special communications contingent during the patrol of 31 July 1964) from Naval Security Group, [redacted] and/or from NSA.

NSA25X3

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[Redacted]

**M. J. IN MARIETTA CORPORATION**

5/14/71

AEROSPACE HEADQUARTERS, 1800 K STREET, N.W., WASHINGTON, D.C. 20006 TELEPHONE (202) 833-1900

ALBERT C. HALL  
VICE PRESIDENT, ENGINEERING

LT

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

September 1971

*Crowell*

[Redacted]

File:  
Dr [Redacted]

Dear Noel,

This is a belated note of thanks for the enjoyable luncheon on the fourteenth. It was very helpful to have the informal discussion with you and your staff.

I appreciate your arranging to have me briefed in the various areas of your activity. I have spent a very useful afternoon with Dr. Tordella, and I am looking forward to the periodic briefings that you have suggested.

With best regards,

*al*

ACH:lw

Vice Admiral Noel Gayler, USN  
Director  
National Security Agency  
Fort George G. Meade, Maryland 20755

Recd 1229 4 Oct 71

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Serial Number 00044P94  
Report Number 10-65

Operational History

1. Subject: DESOTO PATROL, Gulf of Tonkin; USS MADDOX (DD-781)/USN-467N
2. Time Frame: 28 JUL - 23 AUG 64
3. References: Proposed by CINCPAC 100342Z JUL 64  
Approved by JCS 7506 DTG 221930Z JUL 64
4. Enclosures: None
5. Responsibility of action personnel: Op-94G (G54)
6. Background narrative: This was 18th DESOTO type patrol (each with NSG DET embarked) conducted since 1962. Itinerary of this patrol similar to the one conducted earlier in 1964. Primary purpose of the patrol was "to determine DRV coastal activity". On 02 AUG, MADDOX attacked by 3 DRV PT boats, repelled attack assisted by carrier aircraft and retired. CINCPACFLT 021104Z AUG 64 ordered MADDOX and TURNER JOY to resume track "to assert right of freedom of the seas". JCS 021745Z AUG 64 7680 approved. Second attack by DRV PT boats executed on 4-5 AUG. Embarked NSG DET effectively warned CO of both impending attacks.
7. Conclusions and Lessons: Use of Marines in NSG DETS questioned, but finally resolved in favor of their use. CRITIC reporting procedures revised for DESOTO patrols to insure immediate availability of information in Washington. OPINTEL broadcast monitored on board plus three intercept positions appeared satisfactory.
8. Recommendations: None

~~HANDLE VIA COMINT CHANNELS ONLY~~

*Duplicate*

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ENCLOSURE (4)

~~HANDLE VIA COMINT CHANNELS ONLY~~

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26 MAY 1965

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Serial Number 00044P94  
Report Number 11-65

Operational History

1. Subject: DESOTO PATROL, Gulf of Tonkin; USS MORTON (DD-748)/USN-467P
2. Time Frame: 14 SEP - 21 SEP 64
3. References: Proposed by CINCPAC 080155Z AUG 64  
Disapproved and later approved by JCS
4. Enclosures: None
5. Responsibility of action personnel: Op-94G (G54)
6. Background narrative: 19th DESOTO type patrol, similar previous MADDOX patrol. USS EDWARDS in Company. 18 SEP: DESOTO patrol ships opened fire on fast closing targets. Little definite COMINT or visual confirmation of actual DRV attack.
7. Conclusions and Lessons: None
8. Recommendations: Three intercept positions plus OPINTEL terminal appear optimum COMINT configuration to insure early warning tip-off to embarked commander.

ENCLOSURE ((5))

8 8 MAY 1965

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Serial Number 00044P94  
Report Number 12-65

Operational History

1. Subject: ~~DESOTO Patrol; Gulf of Tonkin~~
2. Time Frame:

01 OCT - 15 OCT	USS EDWARDS	USN-467R-1
15 OCT - 14 NOV	USS MORTON	USN-467R-2
08 NOV - 14 NOV	USS EDWARDS	USN-467S
14 NOV - 27 DEC	USS EDWARDS	USN-467R-3
08 FEB - 14 FEB	USS TOWERS	USN-467D
15 FEB - 19 MAR	USS BUCHANAN	USN-467D
19 MAR - 21 APR	USN-27/USS BUCHANAN	USN-467D
3. References: Above DESOTO Patrols on ready duty/standby duty as proposed by COMSEVENTHFLT/CINCPACFLT and by CINCPAC 050255Z FEB 65. JCS 161737Z APR 65 returned patrol forces to normal status.
4. Enclosures: None
5. Responsibility of action personnel: Op-94G (G54)
6. Background narrative: Above patrols remained alerted and active in training operations in the general vicinity of DA NANG. No hostile reaction or enemy contact noted. Intercept portion of embarked DET occasionally stayed ashore with communications personnel remaining embarked.
7. Conclusions and Lessons: Increasing reliability of OPINTEL broadcast indicated communication team vice on-board intercept team may provide best all around support.
8. Recommendations: None

ENCLOSURE (6)

26 MAY 1965

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