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(S//SI) 25X1, 6 relationship, split for many years between 25X1, 6 and the NSA relationship with the 25X1, 6 was linked up in the early 1980s when NSA took over the liaison with 25X1, 6 By 1988 NSA had 25X1, 6 by far its largest Third Party mission, and the financial account stood at \$8 million worth of aid in the form of equipment and technical assistance.<sup>123</sup>

(S//SI) The relationship with 25X1, 6 was important primarily because of the remote collector 25X1, 6 its efficiency had been impaired by an overly strict 25X1, 6 In 1981 25X1, 6 lifted the lid a little. The next year NSA concluded an agreement 25X1, 6 and this arrangement expanded constantly throughout the 1980s.<sup>124</sup>

25X1, 6

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## (U) Chapter 22 The Second Cold War

### (U) THE SIGINT SYSTEM AND THE SOVIET PROBLEM

(~~TS//SI~~) By the end of the 1970s, the SIGINT system was optimized for its principal target, the Soviet Union. It had never before operated so effectively against the threat. This optimization owed much to the overhead satellite system, and a great deal in addition  
25X1

(~~TS//SI~~) What distinguished the system, however, was the way that it all knitted together. Analysis of Soviet force posture was a complex weave of HF command and control status, out-of-schedule radioprinter activations, Soviet nuclear submarine out-of-area movements, aircraft movements tracked through Soviet Air Defense facilities, ground forces 25X1 logistics nets, and other sources. Exploitation of the best source, 25X1 was prioritized for processing based on an assessment of all the other indicators.

(~~S//SI~~) This system had been employed in an analysis of Soviet and Warsaw Pact exercises beginning in the early 1970s. By the waning days of the Carter administration, NSA had become very proficient at analyzing Forward Area forces through the analysis of communications.<sup>1</sup>

### (U) *The Polish Crisis*

(U) The entire system was employed effectively in 1980 and 1981 in a watershed event from an intelligence perspective, the Polish Crisis. It began in the summer of 1980 with spontaneous strikes in Polish heavy industry to protest deteriorating economic conditions. The strikes were reminiscent of earlier labor protests over the slow-motion collapse of the Polish economy, but this time they were to have a different outcome, largely because of a stolid, square-jawed unemployed electrician. Lech Walesa was a long-time labor agitator whose goal was an independent union. The labor unrest at the Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk was about to burn itself out in mid-August when Walesa revived it by the dramatic act of clambering onto a steam shovel and imploring the strikers to stand fast. The workers responded with a sit-down strike and were soon followed by workers in other cities. Soon the industrial strength of the country began to melt, and the government was forced to negotiate. On August 31 the Polish government signed the historic Gdansk Accords, ratifying the first independent labor union behind the Iron Curtain. The workers' committee that formed around Walesa became known as Solidarity.<sup>2</sup>

(~~TS//SI-UMBRA~~) Events in Poland did not seem critical until an obscure indicator appeared in SIGINT – the Soviets had set up a new command post at Rembertow in Germany. Although clearly a contingency facility, the Rembertow CP was ominously like

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(U) Lech Walesa, center

one that had been set up a month earlier in the Southern TVD, at Baku. That exercise had alarmed the intelligence community because the objective, as exposed primarily through SIGINT, was a play against the Middle East. Rembertow looked just like the Baku facility. The comparison was made through traffic analysis, <sup>25X1</sup>

~~(TS//SI-UMBRA)~~ As autumn bumped along, the Soviet presence in the vicinity of Poland increased. In November the Soviets <sup>25X1</sup> and set up a TRA (temporary restricted area). Communications showed heightened levels of Soviet activity. By mid-November, initial CIA complacency had given way to unease, but on November 21 CIA reassured the president that "We feel confident that preparations for an imminent invasion of Poland are not under way." Despite the increasing military activity, this accorded with SIGINT, which seemed to indicate a posture of getting ready, but not getting set.<sup>4</sup>

~~(S)~~ But in fact, SIGINT was not all that CIA had. They had an "asset" in Warsaw. Colonel Ryszard Kuklinski worked high on the Polish General Staff, directly with Jaruzelski and Warsaw Pact officers. He was in a position to know what the plans were, both from the Polish and Soviet directions, and, in an operation highly unusual for the Cold War, was able to get timely information to CIA. As Soviet forces readied, Kuklinski kept a running account flowing back to Langley.<sup>5</sup>

~~(TS//SI-UMBRA)~~ At the beginning of December, Stansfield Turner noted to the president that "I believe the Soviets are readying their forces for military intervention in Poland. We do not know, however, whether they have made the decision to intervene, or

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are still attempting to find a political solution.”<sup>6</sup> This conclusion, made primarily on the basis of SIGINT, accorded completely with NSA's views. But three days later everything changed. Kuklinski got word to CIA that the invasion was on for December 8. Brzezinski met with the president on Sunday, December 7, to discuss the impending invasion. Carter agreed to issue a public statement, coupled with a direct message to Soviet premier Brezhnev and overtures to Allied governments. Monday came and went, without movement by Soviet forces. On December 19, Kuklinski sent word that the invasion had been postponed, and he alleged that the principal reason was worldwide reaction to the impending move.<sup>7</sup>

~~(TS//SI-UMBRA)~~ NSA, looking only at the SIGINT, did not know what the Soviets planned, but did not believe that they ever issued the final orders. The communications patterns were not right for an invasion, and NSA experts believed that the entire thing was an exercise to put pressure on the Poles. NSA reporting was consistent and unwavering – no invasion was in the offing. There would be no second Czechoslovakia.<sup>8</sup> This was either a prescient view of events based on a healthy helping of reality or a myopic view of the world based on incomplete information.

~~(S//SI-SPOKE)~~ Even before Kuklinski's December 19 report, SIGINT depicted a calming of the waters. Contingency communications were closing down and troops were being taken off alert.<sup>9</sup>

~~(TS//SI-UMBRA)~~ The Polish crisis was left over for the incoming Reagan administration. In the spring of 1981 Warsaw Pact exercise patterns and troop movements put NSA on alert, but this subsided without Soviet invasion. But the issue continued to bubble in the East Bloc. The Soviets applied pressure on Jaruzelski to take a harder line – Jaruzelski stalled for time, hoping for a breakthrough with Solidarity that would forestall a Soviet military move. The long-running crisis continued through the summer.<sup>10</sup>

~~(TS//SI-UMBRA)~~ The Soviets wanted the Poles to declare martial law and suppress Solidarity. Jaruzelski continued to resist, but drew up plans for the inevitable. During the fall of 1981, Kuklinski managed to smuggle the document out of Poland, and CIA had a copy of it in November. Meanwhile, SIGINT showed what it had shown a year before: Warsaw Pact forces appeared prepared, but no final orders appeared to have been issued. When martial law was finally issued on December 12, the Reagan administration found out about it through the press.<sup>11</sup>

~~(TS//SI-UMBRA)~~ The imposition of martial law hardly ended the chaos in Poland. Solidarity and the government continued to confront each other across frequent picket lines; in some ways the situation in January was worse than in December. But the Soviets had washed their hands of it. It was up to the Polish government to work its way out of the situation; the USSR would not be coming to its rescue. Warsaw Pact communications subsided, and military forces simply went back to garrison. No amount of confrontation in Poland reversed the process.<sup>12</sup>

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~~(TS//SI//UMBRA)~~ Based on an intensive analysis of Soviet communications, NSA contended through the crisis line that the Soviets were not ready to invade. This turned out to be right, but in this case it was not the best source on Warsaw Pact thinking. Kuklinski was the best source, and Langley had the martial law plan almost as soon as it was drafted. It was one time when HUMINT provided the best information.<sup>13</sup>

~~(S)~~ Many analysts felt that Afghanistan played a critical role in the Soviet decision. Certainly no country relishes a two-front war. But in any case, American intelligence, through judicious use of both HUMINT and SIGINT sources, had about as good a handle on the Polish crisis as could have been obtained. It is conceivable that the Politburo itself did not have any better idea of what Brezhnev's next move would be during the crisis.

### **(U) The Second Cold War**

(U) The most distinguishable characteristic of American foreign policy during the Reagan administration was hard-line anticommunism. Reagan's views were so well-known that they apparently induced great consternation in Moscow. The Soviet view of Reagan was confirmed when, barely two months into his first term, Reagan referred to the USSR as the "focus of evil," and seized every opportunity to brand the Soviet Union as an international outlaw. The Soviets reciprocated by launching a propaganda blitz, at one point comparing Reagan to Hitler. This was not in the spirit of detente.<sup>14</sup>



**(U) Yuri Andropov**

(U) Militarily, the Reagan administration opened a campaign of psychological military warfare. American aircraft, especially from the Strategic Air Command, probed East Bloc borders in increasingly provocative flights. SAC sent B-52 flights over the North Pole to see what the Soviet reaction would be. The Navy was by all odds the most daring, however. Two huge naval exercises – one near the Murmansk coast in 1981, the other in the Sea of Okhotsk in April of 1983 – served notice that Allied naval forces would intrude into what the Soviets had come to regard as their own private lakes. The Navy also delighted in using sophisticated evasion techniques to elude the USSR's ocean reconnaissance systems. These techniques would frequently be turned against the Soviets in high-tech sub-shadowing exercises.<sup>15</sup>

(U) These actions were calculated to induce paranoia, and they did. In early 1981, KGB chief Yuri Andropov, who had apparently come

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to believe that the U.S. had decided to launch a first nuclear strike, launched Operation Ryan. Ryan was an attempt to get as much information as possible about this supposed attack. The scare peaked in 1983. In February of that year the U.S. began the deployment of nuclear-armed Pershing missiles. In March, Reagan made his famous "evil empire" speech, and only two weeks later he announced the inauguration of his Strategic Defense Initiative, later dubbed "Star Wars."<sup>16</sup>

(U) Cold War hysteria reached a peak in the autumn of the year with two events: the Soviet shootdown of KAL-007 (see page 320) and the NATO exercise Able Archer. The latter was an annual NATO command post exercise of a distinctly nonthreatening nature. But in 1983 the scenario was changed to involve the secretary of defense, the chairman of the JCS, the president, and the vice president. Moreover, Able Archer 1983 added a practice drill that took NATO forces from the use of conventional forces through nuclear release. This, says Gordievsky, was interpreted in Moscow as the possible initiation of a preemptive strike, and this extremely dangerous postulation was used as a spur to intensify intelligence collection. It also, according to the same source, resulted in a very high state of KGB alert.<sup>17</sup>

(U) A last bit of melodrama was provided by the "Bogus War Message" of 1984. This bizarre episode had its origins in Reagan's penchant to ham for the microphones. Just prior to his weekly radio address on August 11, 1984, he was asked to do a voice check. Not content to do a routine countdown, he said "My fellow Americans. I'm pleased to tell you today that I've signed legislation that will outlaw Russia forever. We begin bombing in five minutes." Although this was supposedly off the record, it was overheard by all three networks and was broadcast over NBC and ABC. The Soviets took a very dim view of the incident, calling it "unprecedentedly hostile toward the USSR and dangerous to the cause of peace."<sup>18</sup>

~~(S//SI SPOKE)~~ Just four days later, USN-39 at Kami Seya intercepted a strange message<sup>25X1</sup> informing the Soviet Pacific Fleet and probably a strategic military audience that "war has begun with the United States of America." By the formatting, it was clearly practice traffic, and a cancellation message was intercepted four hours later. NSA's summary of the incident two days later stated that "All available evidence suggests that both the codewords and the plain language alert notification were unauthorized actions." In a twisted way, it seemed to be retaliation for Reagan's remarks.<sup>19</sup>

~~(S//SI)~~ Project Ryan appears to have been primarily a KGB phenomenon. According to NSA officials watching events in 1983, it did not result in a general state of readiness in the armed forces, nor did it come down through SIGINT sources in any stark shape.<sup>20</sup> But even if Ryan had never existed, rumors of it accurately depicted the psychological state of the new superpowers in the early 1980s.

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 TO USN-39, ~~PL~~  
 ZEM 86 36/  
~~SECRET SPOKE~~  
 XXMMENP01FI984229

SERIAL: 2/19/2515-84 SPOT REPORT

TAGS: 25X1

SUBJ: BOGUS NOTIFICATION OF WAR BETWEEN SOVIET UNION AND UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

REQS: OR000

TEXT:

(set) AT 25X1 ON 15 AUGUST 1984, 25X1

25X1 INFORMED A SOVIET PACIFIC OCEAN FLEET, AND PROBABLY A STRATEGIC MILITARY AUDIENCE THAT "WAR HAS BEGUN WITH THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA."

(set) THE STATEMENT WAS CANCELLED BY 25X1

DECL: OADR

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SEE CHANGE ONEUSN-39 170827Z AUG 84 FOR TEXT CHANGE

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~~(S//SI SPOKE)~~ Product report from USN-39

(U) KAL-007

(U) Shemya

~~(S//SI SPOKE)~~ Late in the evening of August 31, 1983, a lone EC-135 Cobra Ball aircraft took off from Shemya. Its mission was to monitor the re-entry telemetry of a Soviet SSX-24 missile that, according to DEFSMAC, would be launched before dawn the next day to impact off the Kamchatka coast. Soviet air defense facilities first picked it up at about 2245 local and tracked it routinely throughout its flight along the Kamchatka periphery. It left Soviet radar coverage just before 0200 the next morning, August 31, and got back to Shemya at 0322 Japan time, 1 September.<sup>21</sup>

~~(S//SI SPOKE)~~ Meanwhile, at 0051 Japan time, the Soviets began tracking a second aircraft. Confused, they first identified it as a probable RC-135 SIGINT collection aircraft. This new track headed southwest parallel to the Soviet coastline. But, in a highly unusual move, it continued on a direct flight path, over the southern tip of Kamchatka Peninsula.

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(See map) It never got within seventy-five nautical miles of the Cobra Ball, which crossed the new track on its way back to base.<sup>22</sup>

~~(S//SI SPOKE)~~ The Soviets launched two fighters in pursuit of what they thought was a U.S. reconnaissance aircraft. Possibly surmising that the new aircraft would fly east out of Soviet airspace as soon as fighters were launched, the ground controller vectored the pilots in the wrong direction. Instead, the intruder continued south in a straight line, seemingly unconcerned about Soviet reaction. It left Soviet airspace only a few minutes later and proceeded south across the Sea of Okhotsk.<sup>23</sup>

~~(S//SI SPOKE)~~ The ESC unit in Elmendorf, Alaska, intercepted the Soviet tracking. The intruder was reflected as a hostile raid, number 6065, with negative IFF. But Elmendorf was unconcerned, believing it to be practice tracking.

(U) But it was a real aircraft. Early on September 1, Korean Airlines flight 007 had taken off from Anchorage, Alaska, on its way to Seoul. It was programmed to fly commercial track R20, which skirted Soviet airspace along Kamchatka. It was obviously off course.

~~(S//SI SPOKE)~~ At 0246 local it was redetected by Soviet air surveillance facilities, this time just north of Sakhalin Island. This time it was not identified except as a "negative IFF" target. Fifteen minutes later two SU-15 air defense fighters took off from Sokol, a fighter base on southern Sakhalin Island, and headed straight for the intruder. Fifteen minutes after that, a Soviet radar station reported that the aircraft had crossed into Soviet airspace over Sakhalin, even as one of the SU-15s maneuvered behind it.<sup>24</sup>

(U) While the SU-15 maneuvered, the airline pilot was engaged in routine conversations with the tower at Narita airport, outside Tokyo. At 0320 the tower controller gave KAL-007 permission for an altitude change, and three minutes later the pilot reported that he had climbed to the new altitude and had leveled off. At 0327 the controller tried to contact KAL-007, but the answer was lost in a haze of static. Tokyo tower never heard from KAL-007 again.<sup>25</sup>

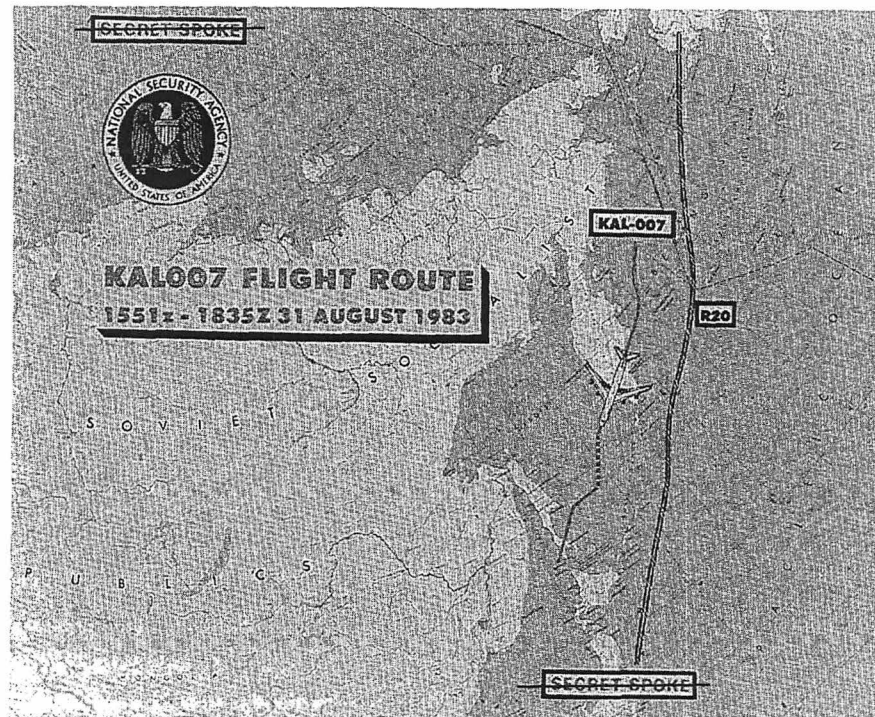
#### (U) Misawa

~~(S//SI SPOKE)~~ It had been a typically slow mid shift on the ground at the Air Force collection site at Misawa, Japan. But sometime after 0300 an analyst raced to the plotting board with a fist full of intercepted traffic and began frantically plotting a tangle of air defense raids in the vicinity of southern Sakhalin. She tapped on the plexiglass plotting board, a clue to the reporting supervisor that she had something hot. Everyone turned to look at the activity. The raid was identified as a "border violator" at 9,000 meters. Beginning at 0328 it began a spiral descent, and at 0330 it had plummeted to 5,000 meters. Eight minutes later the Soviet facilities stopped reflecting it altogether. At the time, at least five Soviet fighters were shown in reaction.<sup>26</sup>

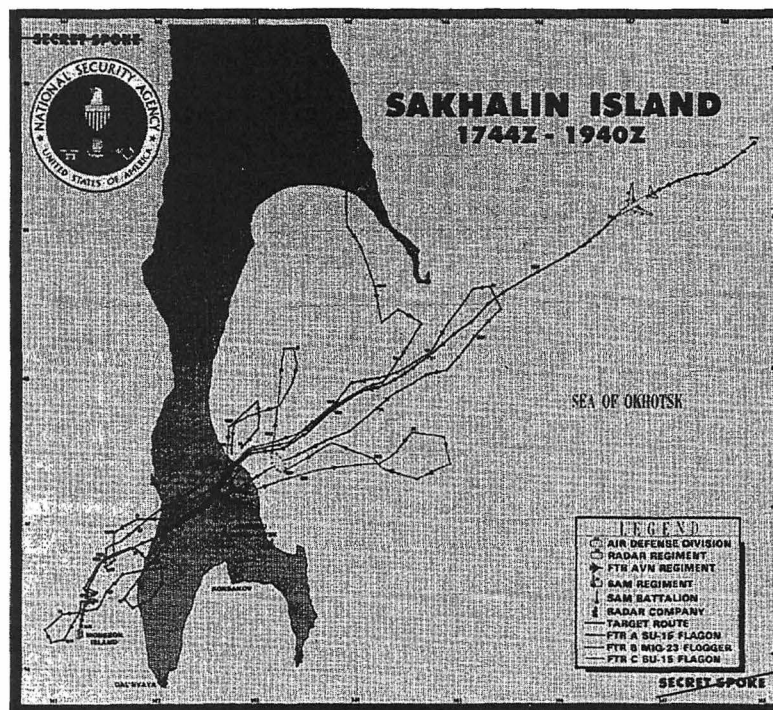
~~(S//SI SPOKE)~~ PL 86-36/50 USC 3605 the senior analysts on duty, briefly discussed the possibility of practice tracking, but they discovered that more than

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~~(S//SI SPOKE)~~ KAL-007 flight route



~~(S//SI SPOKE)~~ Tracking details of the shootdown

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one radar site was reporting the same tracking, a strong indication that they had valid traffic. Calls to 5th Air Force produced no information. So <sup>PL</sup>86-36/50 got in touch with USA-34. Elmendorf reported that they had intercepted tracking of the same raid, 6065, earlier in the morning, but thought that it was practice tracking and had not reported it.<sup>27</sup>

(S//SI) <sup>PL</sup>86-36/50 contacted NSOC with his concerns, but was advised that it was practice tracking. A Klieglight series was sufficient; no product report should be issued. <sup>PL</sup>86-36/50 argued, but was overruled by the A Group Senior Coordinator. Still, he was convinced: "...there was no doubt in my mind that it was actually valid tracking. I still had absolutely no idea who it was."<sup>28</sup>

(S//SI) Four hours passed. The day shift relieved mids, and <sup>PL</sup>86-36/50 briefed the new reporting team on the activity. Then, just before eight in the morning, 5th Air Force was on the phone. A Korean civil airliner had disappeared near Hokkaido and was reported to be two hours overdue in Seoul. Misawa people knew what they had, and at 0905 local the day shift surveillance and warning supervisor, <sup>PL</sup>86-36/50 USC 3605 issued their first Critic of the year.<sup>29</sup>

(S//SI SPOKE) A bitter long-range argument ensued between NSOC and Misawa about the Critic. The SOO believed that the incident did not meet Critic criteria and demanded cancellation. Instead of cancelling the Critic, Misawa issued a follow-up. This provoked more arguments over the Opscomm. An hour later Misawa cancelled the Critic. But almost immediately they received information that Soviet SAM controllers had been overheard discussing the incident and confirming that a Soviet pilot had shot down the aircraft. With this iron-clad confirmation, Misawa issued a second Critic.<sup>30</sup>

#### (U) Wakkanai

(S//SI SPOKE) There is a <sup>25X1, 6</sup> intercept site at Wakkanai, on the northernmost tip of Hokkaido, which is itself the northernmost point of land in Japan. The wind constantly blows across the frozen, stubby hills surrounding Wakkanai - a Japanese Siberia. It was originally a Security Service unit placed there to copy VHF communications from southern Sakhalin Island. In 1983 the successor command, ESC, had been given approval to reopen temporarily for a hearability test under the name of <sup>PL</sup>86-36/50 USC 3605

(S//SI SPOKE) The <sup>25X1, 6</sup> operators worked only days and eves; when they left for the night, they kept the recorders on and the receivers tuned to the standard Soviet air-to-ground frequency. But <sup>PL</sup>86-36 linguists routinely worked around the clock, and early on the morning of September 1 they were transcribing tapes. The receivers were active, and when the oscilloscope spiked on the air-to-ground frequency, the transcriber reached over, switched on the tape recorder, and kept transcribing. What he heard in the background from the speaker on the intercept position was apparently a live missile firing of some sort, followed by Soviet pilots returning to base. The conversations sounded normal, but a live

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missile firing at night was highly unusual. Since their secure phones were down because of a crypto problem, they could not call Misawa to ask for further information.<sup>32</sup>

~~(S//SI-SPOKE)~~ At about eight that morning the weary mid-shift workers were packing to go back to the barracks when they received a phone call from Misawa. (It appears that Misawa was making the call at the request of Major General James O'Donnell, commander of 5th AF.) The analyst at Misawa began reading a just-published UPI dispatch:

A Korean Air Lines jumbo jet flying from New York to Seoul Wednesday with 269 people aboard, including a U.S. congressman, was forced to land on Sakhalin, a Soviet-occupied island north of Japan. The congressman was identified as Larry MacDonald, Democratic representative of Georgia....

The transcriber who had overheard the Soviet voices knew immediately what they had been talking about. He had overheard the Soviets in the act of shooting down a civilian airliner.

~~(S//SI)~~ With that, all semblance of normality vanished. Every linguist at the site was called to listen to the tape. They then called Misawa back with the word "Roger, we have an LMF" (live missile firing). No one went to bed - they spent the rest of the day transcribing that small section of tape, readying it for the inevitable avalanche of questions.<sup>33</sup>

~~(S//SI-SPOKE)~~ Wakkanai continued to monitor Soviet communications, and that afternoon they intercepted the conversation that sealed the matter. Two Soviets at a SAM unit in southern Sakhalin were talking:

Station a: (They) shot down (1-2 words garbled) an RC-135 (1 garbled) at Moneron.

Station b: I don't understand

Station a: At Moneron (they) shot down as RC-135.

Station b: Really?

Station a: Yes

Station b: Who?

Station a: Who? We (1 garbled) from Sokol....

Station a: Then our pilots told us that it was not an RC-135, but it was a passenger (plane).<sup>34</sup>

(U) Tokyo

~~(S//SI)~~ In downtown Tokyo, Terry Lantz, <sup>25X1, 6</sup> [REDACTED] got a call from Hugh Erskine, the NCRJ operations officer, soon after he arrived at 0800. Erskine had a Klieglight from <sup>25X1, 6</sup> [REDACTED] about the Soviets shooting down "an aircraft of unknown nationality" using a MiG-23. Obviously the Japanese had information on the

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same activity, and Lantz was told to get permission to get the voice tapes. Lantz reported back two hours later that 25X1, 6 did have intercept, but getting copies of the tapes would be a very bureaucratic process.<sup>35</sup>

(S//SI) At Yokota Air Base, NCRJ people were told to get both Japanese and American tapes back to Fort Meade - to pull out absolutely all the stops, that they were wanted at the White House on Saturday. Somehow, the people in Japan needed to make a Pan Am flight departing Narita at 1300 the next day. That morning, September 2, 25X1, 6 gave his permission. At Wakkanai, the American director, Joseph Sausnock, walked over to the Japanese site across the street from the American facility. After drinking a couple of ceremonial cups of Japanese green tea, the Japanese site commander handed over the tapes, which Sausnock put into a flowered Japanese shopping bag and, as casually as he could, walked back to his office.<sup>36</sup>

(S//SI) Meanwhile, a U.S. Navy courier flight was on its way to Wakkanai for the tapes. It barely hit the runway and was off again with the flowered shopping bag full of tapes. At Misawa the bag of tapes was whisked to the far end of the runway in a black sedan, where a Navy jet fighter was waiting with engines running. The tapes were thrown into the back seat and the plane shot down the runway. An hour later it landed at the Naval Air Station at Atsugi, south of Tokyo, where it was hoisted into a helicopter for the ride to Narita, the international airport north of Tokyo. There, NCRJ people were waiting with the Pan Am representative. Pan Am delayed the flight about fifteen minutes while the crucial tapes were taken by an NSA official who had been designated to courier them back to Fort Meade. After takeoff, the Pan Am flight crossed the international dateline, and so landed on the East Coast that same afternoon. The tapes were at NSA that evening, September 2, having come all the way from Wakkanai in a single calendar day.<sup>37</sup>

#### (U) Washington

(S//SI) PL 86-36/50 senior Russian linguist on the Soviet problem, was on the golf course Saturday morning, September 3, when he got a call. "Something has happened; you've got to come in." The tragedy of a lost Saturday was made more acute because he was having a very good round.

(TS//SI) When he arrived in the Ops-1 transcription area, all was chaos. There were PL 86-36 tapes, there were 25X1, 6 tapes, some with the pilot voice conversation, some with conversations by ground personnel, all mixed up, each in multiple copies. The shipment had arrived at

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

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midnight, and linguists had been up all night processing them. PL 86-36/50 had to be at the White House with the air-to-ground tapes by 1700 that day. So they concentrated on sorting the tapes and finding the ones that they had to take.<sup>38</sup>

(S//SI SPOKE) What PL 86-36/50 heard when he first listened to the air-to-ground tapes was the cold voice of an experienced pilot performing a maneuver he had practiced many times. (Note: all intercepts are of pilot billet suffix 805. The voices of two other pilots were on the tapes, as they maneuvered astern of 805, who was being vectored toward the intruder. The ground controller was out of range and was not intercepted, either by the Japanese or the Americans. Not all of 805's transmissions are included here. Times are in Zulu.)

18:19:02 I am closing on the target.  
 18:20:08 Fiddlesticks. I'm going, that is, my Z.G. (indicator) is lit (missile warheads are already locked on).  
 18:30:30 I'm turning lock-on off and I'm approaching the target.  
 18:20:49 I have broken off lock-on. I am firing cannon bursts.  
 18:21:34 Yes, I'm approaching the target, I'm going in closer.  
 18:21:35 The target's (strobe) light is blinking, I have already approached the target to a distance of about two kilometers.  
 18:21:40 The target is at 10,000 (meters).  
 18:22:02 The target is decreasing speed.  
 18:22:17 I am going around it, I'm already moving in front of the target.  
 18:22:23 I have increased speed.  
 18:22:29 No. It is decreasing speed.  
 18:22:42 It should have been earlier. How can I chase it, I'm already abeam of the target.  
 18:22:55 Now I have to fall back a bit from the target.  
 18:23:10 The target's altitude is 10,000 (meters).  
 18:23:18 From me it is located at 70 degrees to the left.  
 18:23:37 I'm dropping back, now I will try rockets.  
 18:24:22 Roger, I am in lock-on.  
 18:25:11 I am closing on the target, am in lock-on. Distance to target is 8 (kilometers).  
 18:25:16 I have already switched it on.  
 18:25:46 Z.G. (missile warheads locked on).  
 18:26:20 I have executed the launch.  
 18:26:22 The target is destroyed.

(S//SI SPOKE) Going through the voice tapes, PL 86-36/50 heard nothing about either aircraft identification or warning. Ground controllers variously identified the raid as

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either an RC-135 or an unidentified intruder. The pilot apparently was not asked to identify or warn. Said PL 86-36/5 ater,

I never heard course changes and parallel flying, wagging their wings, blinking their lights, notification, nothing; I heard nothing....when I first turned to one of the senior people, I said 'This sounds a lot like point to point to me.' That's jargon for point to point intercept, you know that you wish to shoot down a drone, you have the identification of the target and your intent when you take off is to destroy the target.<sup>39</sup>

~~(S//SI-SPOKE)~~ Comparing the voice tapes with the air defense tracking, it was clear to PL 86-36/50 and to his analysis counterpart, PL 86-36/50 USC 3605 that the identification did not matter. The aircraft had flown through Soviet airspace over Kamchatka unhindered. Air defense controllers were concerned that it not happen a second time. It took several minutes to maneuver the SU-15 into position, during which time miscommunication between the pilot and controller caused the Sukhoi to overrun the target. By the time he had once again dropped astern and readied his weapons (this time missiles), KAL-007 was exiting Soviet airspace. There was just barely time to launch the weapons, and that was what the pilot was concerned with. At no time was he concerned with either identifying the target or warning it.

~~(S//SI)~~ When KAL-007 went down, the director, General Lincoln Faurer, was on leave in Maine. His deputy, Dick Lord, organized the response. As soon as he was sure that the 25X1, 6 had voice tapes of the shootdown, he notified the White House. His memo explained that 25X1, 6 and that the language factor might slow down the translation process.<sup>40</sup>

~~(S//SI)~~ Saturday afternoon an outraged secretary of state, George Shultz, who was the ranking administration official in Washington that day, accused the Soviets of shooting the aircraft down in cold blood. He stated that the the Soviets had tracked KAL-007 for 2 1/2 hours, and quoted the pilot as saying, "The target is destroyed." Later, on ABC *Nightline*, the presidential press secretary, Larry Speakes, used Dick Lord's memo to explain why the voice tapes were not yet ready, including the information about working through Japanese language difficulties. Before the day was out, 25X1, 6 and the involvement of the Japanese, a most retiring group of 25X1, 6 was public knowledge.<sup>41</sup>

~~(S//SI)~~ PL 86-36/50 USC 3605 arrived at the White House just before 1700 that Saturday. They met in the Situation Room with NSC officials John Poindexter, Ken de Graffenreid, Bob Kimmel, and Oliver North and went over the material piece by piece. The NSC people wanted to know especially if any attempt had been made to warn the aircraft. PL 86-36/50 USC 3605 contended that none had. PL 86-36/50 stuck to his contention that it was a point-to-point intercept, with no thought given to warning. They also asked about the aircraft identification, but the NSA people reiterated that the voice transcripts indicated no attempt at all to identify. The NSC people informed them that they would be briefing President Reagan the next morning.<sup>42</sup>

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(S//SI) PL 86-36/50 USC 3605 and Lord returned to the White House at 0800 Sunday, and were ushered into the Cabinet Room, where they briefed the president. PL 86-36/50 played the tape and gave the English translation, while PL 86-36/50 explained what was going on and what the significance of it was. The briefing lasted only ten minutes, but the questions that followed went on for almost forty. Following that, the president conducted a highly unusual Sunday morning press conference to condemn the Soviets and demand an admission of guilt.<sup>43</sup>



(U) Briefing President Reagan. Clockwise: President Reagan, George Shultz, Robert McFarlane, William Casey, and Caspar Weinberger.

(U) On Monday evening Reagan went on television again to repeat his charges and outline a program of sanctions against the USSR. To back up his charges, he played part of the tape. At the same time, administration officials were appearing on TV talk shows to condemn the Soviet shootdown. The State department frantically rounded up support for sanctions from friendly capitals. It was a full-scale propaganda blitz.<sup>44</sup>

#### (U) Moscow

(U) The Soviets went into public denial. In the first official press release from Moscow, almost twelve hours after the shootdown and some nine hours after debris was confirmed floating on the ocean, *Tass* reported an encounter with an unidentified plane, which, it was alleged, failed to respond to queries and continued on its way. The next day *Tass* still denied any knowledge of the fate of the aircraft, but began hinting that it might have been some sort of "spy flight." It was not until Sunday, September 3, that Soviet official sources

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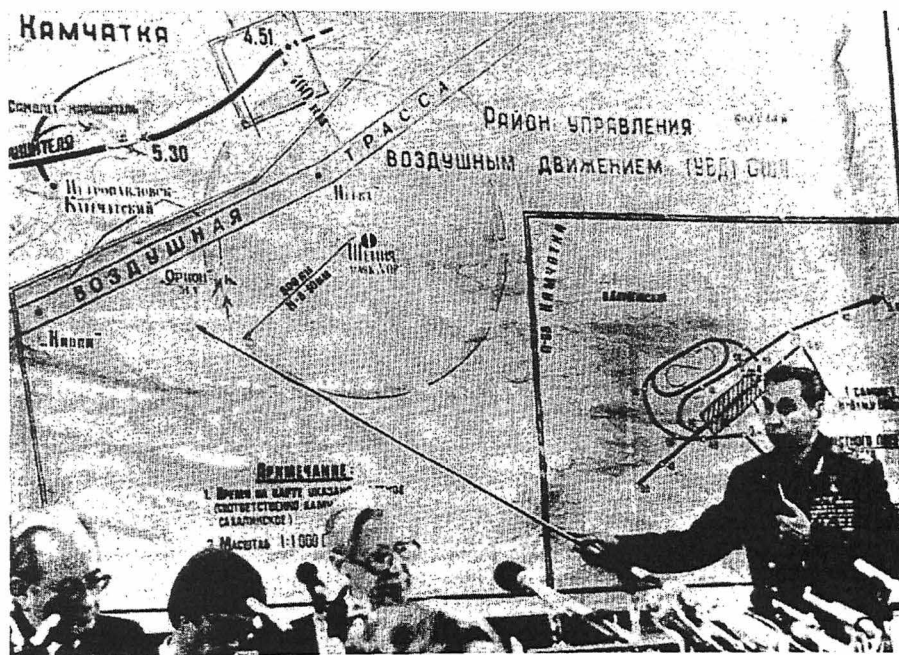


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admitted that it might have been the missing KAL flight; but they reiterated that it was undoubtedly on an espionage mission.<sup>45</sup>

(U) The spy scenario was one that the Soviets repeated and embellished. A writer in the *Moscow Literaturnaya Gazeta* for September 7 alleged that KAL-007 was "...a provocation hatched a long time ago and carefully prepared by the US CIA." He went on: "It is universally known that Boeing passenger aircraft are equipped with modern control instruments and also that they can be fitted with the most advanced intelligence gathering instruments to carry out highly secret assignments."<sup>46</sup>

(U) The Soviets did not finally admit that they had shot the aircraft down until September 6, three days after President Reagan had played the incriminating tapes. They expressed regret that it had proved to be a civilian aircraft, but held the U.S. "fully responsible," in line with their contention that its flight course had been charted by the CIA.<sup>47</sup>



(U) Nikolay Ogarkov

(U) On September 9, with worldwide criticism mounting, the Soviets took the unprecedented action of putting the chief of their general staff on television to explain the Soviet side of the story. Nikolay Ogarkov proved to be an articulate spokesman for the Soviet story, gesticulating at the flight route on the map and hammering away at the spy theme: It has been proved irrefutably that the intrusion of the South Korean airlines plane into Soviet airspace was a deliberately, thoroughly planned intelligence operation. It was directed from certain centers in the territory of the United States and Japan. A civilian plane was chosen for the mission, deliberately disregarding or, possibly, counting

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on the loss of human life. American radars, he asserted, tracked the flight (ignoring the laws of physics which prevented that) and would have warned the plane had it not been a spy flight. He contended that it flew in tandem with the RC-135, in a pattern designed to confuse Soviet air defense, then broke off into Soviet territory, deliberately evading pursuit.<sup>48</sup>

~~(S//SI SPOKE)~~ A by-product of the press conference was Ogarkov's assertion that the Sukhoi pilot fired cannon bursts at the airliner. This line had originally been omitted from the official transcript because the pilot voice had been badly hit by static at that point, but when <sup>PL</sup> 86-36/5 heard Ogarkov use the Russian words he immediately knew what had been in the garbled sentence. NSA corrected the translation after it had been released, an embarrassment which proved to be only temporary.<sup>49</sup>

~~(TS//SI UMBRA)~~ The Soviet postmortem had begun immediately. Within two hours of the shootdown, the Soviet Far East Military District had released a full report to Moscow. This began a series of urgent meetings in the capital from 2 to 6 September, following which a high-level investigative team was dispatched to the Far East to interrogate everyone involved and report back to the general staff. This team delivered its report on September 13, four days after Ogarkov had already given a "full report" to the world. In many ways it contradicted his press conference.

~~(TS//SI UMBRA)~~ The "facts" in the report <sup>25X1</sup> pretty much matched <sup>25X1</sup> as had been originally established in NSA <sup>25X1</sup> reporting, but offered significant new information. When KAL-007 approached Kamchatka, it flew into a Soviet radar zone that was under wholesale reconstruction and refitting, and not a single fighter direction post was operable on the entire peninsula that night. Because of the fragmentary radar reporting, the position of the aircraft was not known for sure until it was too late to make an intercept over Soviet territory. But air defenses on Sakhalin were alerted, and fighters were launched as soon as it crossed back into Soviet airspace.

~~(TS//SI UMBRA)~~ Far East military authorities offered up only one bald-faced lie. They alleged that the civilian airliner and the Cobra Ball rendezvoused over the Pacific, and after one pilot reported to the other that "all was in order," they departed in different directions. An intercept of such a conversation was no more plausible than the Ogarkov assertion that American radar could track the flight throughout its route.

~~(TS//SI UMBRA)~~ The Far East Military District commander was involved in the incident before the firing order was given, and at one point reported the situation to the commander in chief of the Far East Forces, his immediate superior. Despite this level of detail <sup>25X1</sup> establish exactly who gave the order to fire, or if this order received prior approval from authorities in Moscow.<sup>50</sup>

~~(S//SI SPOKE)~~ Soviet reactions to KAL-007 were a product of history. The insular nature of the regime had produced over years an obsessive concern with safety and secrecy, a concern that NSA had documented many times. The 1983 shootdown was, in fact,

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preceded by a similar incident involving a Korean Airlines commercial flight five and a half years earlier. On April 20, 1978, a KAL 707 flying from Paris to Seoul by way of Anchorage strayed into Soviet airspace over the Kola Peninsula. Soviet Air Defense launched several fighter sorties in an effort to catch the errant plane. Flagon E out of Afrikanda was first to catch up with the intruder. First thinking it to be a possible U.S. reconnaissance flight, the pilot discovered it to be a Korean Airlines passenger flight (which he incorrectly identified as a 747). The controller demanded that he shoot it down. The pilot protested, pointing out that he was equipped with air-to-air missiles, not cannons – a single shot was much more likely to destroy the plane. The controller insisted. Finally the pilot launched a missile that exploded close to the flight, killing two passengers and injuring several others. His controller demanded a second shot, but the pilot again demurred, contending that the aircraft was descending too rapidly for that. The Flagon pilot broke off the attack and returned to Afrikanda.

~~(S//SI SPOKE)~~ Meanwhile, the crippled airliner dropped like a stone from 35,000 feet to 3,000 feet. It then flew an erratic pattern across northern Russia, finally crash-landing more than an hour later on a frozen lake south of the White Sea. The Soviets sent waves of helicopters to the site, where they picked up the passengers and took them to a nearby town. After a few days they were returned to the West by a Pan American rescue flight. Although NSA had detailed information on the incident, there was no demand to release information in 1978.<sup>51</sup>

~~(S//SI SPOKE)~~ The Soviet concern for border security had escalated to paranoid intensity by August of 1983. The Reagan administration's campaign of psychological warfare and border probing had been bringing up the temperature for two years. Soviet tempers boiled over in April of 1983 as a result of the U.S. naval exercise in the Sea of Okhotsk. By Soviet accounts, the U.S. Navy flew bombing runs on April 4 that penetrated deeply into Soviet airspace in the militarily sensitive Kuril Chain area, and led to an Andropov-issued shoot-to-kill order. Following the April exercise, Soviet reactions to U.S. reconnaissance almost went through the roof.<sup>52</sup>

#### (U) New York

(U) U.S. ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick represented the United States at the UN. The Reagan administration intended to lay the wood to the Soviet Union, and she was well equipped to do this. Acerbic even in calm seas, she could be ferocious in a fight.

(U) After listening to denials from the Soviet ambassador, she launched an attack reminiscent of Adlai Stevenson's charge during the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962. She played the tape<sup>25X1, 6</sup>

<sup>25X1, 6</sup> following which she made a point-by-point refutation of Soviet denials and evasions: Contrary to Soviet statements, there is no indication whatsoever that the interceptor pilot made any attempt either to communicate with the

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airliner or to signal it to land....at no point did the pilots raise the question of the identity of the target aircraft....At a distance of two kilometers, under the conditions prevailing at the that time, it was easily possible to identify a 747 passenger airliner. Either the Soviet pilot did not know the Korean plane was a commercial airliner, or he did not know what he was firing at [sic].<sup>53</sup> Her interpretation of what had happened was near perfect, and her language was supported by the voice transcript. Her more general charge later in the speech about historic Soviet brutality and disregard of international law had much less to do with the evidence, and was part of the Reagan administration's diplomatic offensive against the USSR. KAL-007 simply opened the door of opportunity.



(U) Jeane Kirkpatrick

**(U) *The Postmortems***

(U) When it was all over, the intelligence community, as well as the journalistic world, had some reassessing to do. What did the Soviets know, and when did they know it? What did the intelligence community know, and how did they use it? And what contributions did the White House make to the situation?

(U) To answer the last question first, the White House pounced on the shootdown and squeezed it dry of propaganda value. It was one of those opportunities that comes but once in a lifetime. There is no question that the Reagan administration made the very, very most of it. In years following the collapse of the Soviet Union, a Russian journalist assessed it as the single most disastrous propaganda defeat they ever suffered.<sup>54</sup>

~~(S//SI)~~ It would not have been such a great coup, however, but for the stubborn insistence of some key NCOs at Misawa. When they first reported the information, they were ignored. They protested. They were told to forget it. They reported it anyway, and were told to cancel the report. They delayed for almost an hour, hoping that something would turn up. It did, just minutes after they had finally cancelled the report. So they reported it again. The NSA assessment tried to be even-handed: "Some interpretive problems surface dealing with the initial decision-making stages of the activity....no definite error in either's decision is apparent." Looking back on it four years later, General Faurer mused that the SOO's decision to have Misawa cancel the first Critic was "within what ought to be the expected envelope of human fallibility."<sup>55</sup>

~~(S//SI)~~ This was exculpatory but wrong. Misawa's stubbornness put the intelligence community ahead of a curve that it absolutely had to be ahead of. To have missed the shootdown, and to have been jerked back into the picture by some outside, inquiring force,

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would have besmirched NSA's reputation and called into question its capability to warn. While no one in NSOC was technically on a blacklist, the real heroes were in Misawa.

~~(S//SI)~~ Once set in motion, the cryptologic system performed more than passably well. From the executive leadership of Dick Lord, to the seat-of-the-pants innovativeness of the cryptologic people in Japan who got the voice tapes back to NSA, to the contributions of PL 86-36/50 USC 3605 [REDACTED] in the White House, the people in the system responded extremely well. It was an example of how quickly a large and far-flung bureaucracy could move once pricked. It is hard to see how anyone could have done better. Seymour Hersh, one journalist who got most of the story right, singled out NSA for excellence and for a non-political approach. (He did not, however, have kind words for the Reagan people.)<sup>56</sup>

~~(TS//SI//TK)~~ How did the cryptologic community fare concerning the amount of classified material released? Considering only the voice tapes and flight tracking, the incident resulted in virtually no damage. The Soviets had known for years exactly what the U.S. capability was, and the KAL-007 shootdown told them nothing. It had a far more serious impact on NSA's relations <sup>25X1, 6</sup> [REDACTED] received instructions which hamstrung it in future cases of this nature, much like the restrictions that the <sup>25X1, 6</sup> [REDACTED] Heavy governmental interference did nothing for the cause of cryptologic cooperation, and had a lasting effect on the closeness of those ties.<sup>57</sup>

~~(TS//SI-UMBRA)~~ The most damaging were the persistent leaks from the White House following the release of the voice tapes, <sup>25X1</sup> [REDACTED]  
<sup>25X1</sup> [REDACTED]  
<sup>25X1</sup> [REDACTED]

William Casey decreed on September 21, 1983, that "...it is now time to circle the wagons and stop talking." But the Reagan administration, in some ways the most porous in memory, could not seem to stop talking.<sup>58</sup>

~~(S//SI-SPOKE)~~ And, finally, how culpable were the Soviets in the incident? No question, ground controllers thought they were tracking an RC-135. Given the paranoia that had existed since April, it was unthinkable that such a penetration could be permitted without action. A scenario like that would place everyone's jobs at stake.

(U) The Soviet SU-15 pilot claimed that he did not recognize it to be a civilian airliner. Flying in the dim light of an early dawn, with the cabin blacked out so passengers could sleep, it could have looked like a military aircraft from a distance. The size of the silhouette, the rotating beacon, argue the opposite case. But far more egregious errors of visual identification are made every day, and were made during the attack on the *Liberty* in 1967, to name just one case.

~~(S//SI-SPOKE)~~ The entire shootdown proceeded like a pilot working through a checklist. The identification part of the checklist was long past - he was concerned only

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with altitude and angles, with preparing missiles and launching before the intruder left Soviet airspace. That was his job.

~~(S//SI)~~ NSA reporting, once it got going, was right on the mark. It dispassionately recounted the incident from the Soviet perspective, from their own communications. It was the Reagan people who insisted that the Soviets could not have mistaken a 747 for a 707. That was their value judgment. It was wrong, but not so wide of the mark that one can impute anything more sinister than righteous wrath. It was the height of the Second Cold War.

#### (U) VERIFICATION

(U) SALT II was never ratified by the Senate, thus leaving a huge question mark about the fate of strategic arms limitation. In the absence of a ratified treaty, however, both sides decided independently to abide by the provisions of the draft. When Reagan became president, that was how matters stood.

(U) Reagan, too, continued the informal arrangements that the Carter administration had left him. But under Reagan there was much less trust. The issue of a "Soviet strategic breakout" from the treaty was never far from anyone's mind, and the intelligence work to discover such a "breakout" was intense. In late 1982 intercepted telemetry from a Soviet missile test showed 95 percent encryption, the first time Soviet telemetry encryption had ever hit that level. The intelligence community assessed that above 70 percent amounted to denial of capability to monitor treaty compliance. The next year, as the debate of telemetry encryption continued to rage, an advisory committee reported to the president on a long history of Soviet arms control treaties, including SALT I. The report reinforced Reagan's natural tendency to distrust the Soviets anyway.<sup>59</sup>

~~(TS//SI//UMBRA//TK)~~ SIGINT and photography were the two primary forms of "national technical means of verification." Both were in high gear, thanks to generous funding over the years. From the SIGINT side, the main sources were three satellite systems: ~~25X1~~  
~~25X1~~ In addition, the U.S. site in Sinop, Turkey, provided valuable information on launches of short- and medium-range missiles from Kapustin Yar Missile Test Range. The most critical gap was the loss of the Tacksman sites in Iran. When Reagan came in, this had not yet been solved except ~~25X1~~ This was pretty much the story of the effort against missile launches.<sup>60</sup>

~~(S//SI)~~ Reentry was a different story. For that, several collectors were used: the Cobra Dane phased array radar on Shemya, the Cobra Ball EC-135 collection platform flying out of Shemya, and USNS Observation Island (the Cobra Judy program).

~~(S//SI)~~ Cobra Judy was a floating collection platform in the Pacific Ocean configured specifically for downrange missile shots. But it was the strangest ship in the Navy. Although it was piloted and operated by the Navy's Military Sealift Command, Observation Island was actually owned by the Air Force Ballistic Missile Defense

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Organization. The program was conceived in 1975 as a way to replace ships with a similar mission, the *Vandenberg* and the *Arnold*, with something specifically configured for the collection of intelligence from Soviet ballistic missile reentry vehicles. The Air Force selected an aging cargo vessel originally launched in 1953. It had bounced around between drydock, mothball and operational status for years. When the Air Force found it, the vessel was serving as a launching platform for Poseidon missiles undergoing test. To convert it to intelligence uses, the Navy had to remove four missile launch tubes. Then it had to install a 250-ton phased array radar in the rear, and various other collection systems. The SIGINT component went by the name of Cobra Judy.

~~(S//SI)~~ Cobra Judy's primary function was telemetry collection, with COMINT being an additional mission. It became operational in 1981 and added considerably to the collection capability against Soviet missile tests.<sup>61</sup>

25X1

~~(S)~~ In 1983, the Reagan administration decided that all future U.S. ICBMs would have encrypted telemetry, partly in retaliation for the earlier Soviet decision to encrypt theirs. Within NSA the debate raged hot. The INFOSEC side argued that it was better to deny Soviets the national technical means of verification, but DDO argued in return that the Soviets did not need to analyze telemetry to keep up with American missile technology - there were plenty of other sources. The U.S., on the other hand, possessed only telemetry as a source and should continue to press the Soviets to use unencrypted telemetry. To encrypt U.S. telemetry would be to give up the argument. In this case the defense won, and U.S. telemetry became unreadable.<sup>62</sup>

#### **(U) The Relocatable Targets Problem**

~~(S//SI)~~ Monitoring the Soviet operational force was the key to SALT verification. This was done, with varying levels of success, through a combination of technical sensors, in which SIGINT played a large role.

~~(TS//SI-UMBRA//TK)~~ The most difficult part of the process was keeping track of Soviet ballistic missile submarines. Through a combination of overhead photography and SIGINT, the U.S. kept a fairly accurate picture of how many "boomers" were out on patrol from each fleet (Northern and Pacific). Once on patrol, however, boomer location was a very difficult problem. Through occasional hits from the SOSUS array and by geolocating submarine  
25X1 the intelligence community kept tabs on generalized SSBN locations. This was periodically supplemented by special Navy 25X1 projects, which

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25X1

But except for the latter, this was hardly accurate enough for targeting. What it yielded was threat warning information – too many boomers on patrol might be a cause for alarm – that was about all. Submarines were the most difficult part of the Soviet strategic threat to keep track of.<sup>62</sup>

~~(TS//SI-UMBRA//TK)~~ The strategic bomber picture was a little clearer. Through photography and SIGINT, the U.S. could keep tabs on bomber locations. Once bombers were in the air, however, photography was useless,<sup>25X1</sup>

25X1

~~(TS//SI-UMBRA//TK)~~ At the time, DIA was intensely interested in trying to intercept and exploit Soviet IFF <sup>25X1</sup> DIA called the project Sudden Dawn and proposed to demonstrate the concept at <sup>25X1, 6</sup> NSA was cool to the possibilities of IFF exploitation, but realized that the same equipment and concept could

25X1, 6

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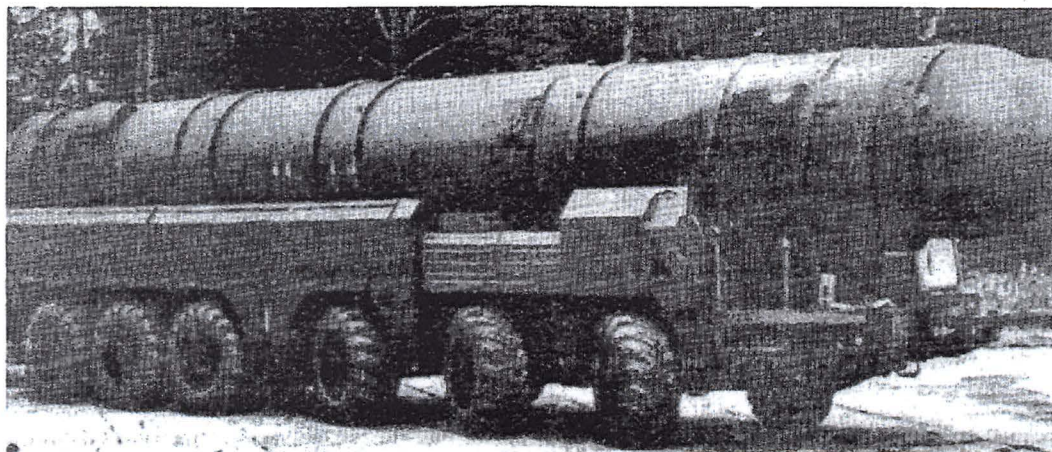


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25X1

~~(S)~~ The Soviet bomber force was aging and did not represent the main threat – missiles were the threat. Again through a combination of technical systems – photography, SIGINT, and infrared detection satellites – the silo-based missile force could be monitored with great accuracy. But by 1981 these, too, represented a declining threat. The real threat was the relocatable missiles.

(U) The Soviets introduced the SS-20 in 1977. The SS-20 was an IRBM with a range of 5,000 kilometers, and it carried three nuclear warheads, each with a 150-kiloton weapon. This made it a threat to NATO forces. But the real news about it was its mobility. The SS-20 was the first relocatable strategic missile in the inventory.<sup>67</sup>



(U) SS-20

~~(S)~~ SS-20 units moved into former SS-4 and SS-5 sites in the western USSR, and in the Far East they occupied former SS-7 complexes. By the mid-1980s the Soviet SRF had ten SS-20 divisions composed of 48 regiments and 405 launchers. Units in garrison were not fully operational – to achieve that, the unit had to go to the field.

~~(TS//SI//UMBRA//TK)~~ It took about an hour to tear down a garrison unit and get ready to roll. The unit would proceed to a geographical point (preset in order to improve missile accuracy) and set up again, requiring another hour for the set-up procedure. It would then be ready to fire.

~~(TS//SI//UMBRA//TK)~~ There were too many possible locations for overhead photography to find operational units more than occasionally. (The U.S. tried for several years with no success beyond an occasional lucky accident.) But the intelligence

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(S) Following on the heels of the SS-20 was a new threat – the SS-25 ICBM. With a range of 10,500 kilometers and a deployment MO similar to the SS-20, the SS-25 soon became the highest priority in the intelligence community. The first units became operational in 1985.<sup>69</sup>

25X1  
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25X1

~~(S)~~ The relocatable target problem continued to be a research effort until 1985. Then, in July of that year, the intelligence community got its marching orders, in the form of NSDD-178. The directive was specific and unambiguous. It directed the Department of Defense "to develop a program to provide a capability to attack relocatable targets with U.S. strategic forces...." Soviet relocatable targets would be placed at risk and kept that way beyond the year 2000. "At risk" was defined as having the ability to destroy at least 50-75 percent of the force.<sup>76</sup>

~~(S)~~ NSDD-178 generated money and priority. Essentially, the intelligence community was to remove all stops to find relocatable targets. The effort was headed by the Mobile Missile Task Force, a multi-agency committee set up within DoD to direct the effort.<sup>77</sup>

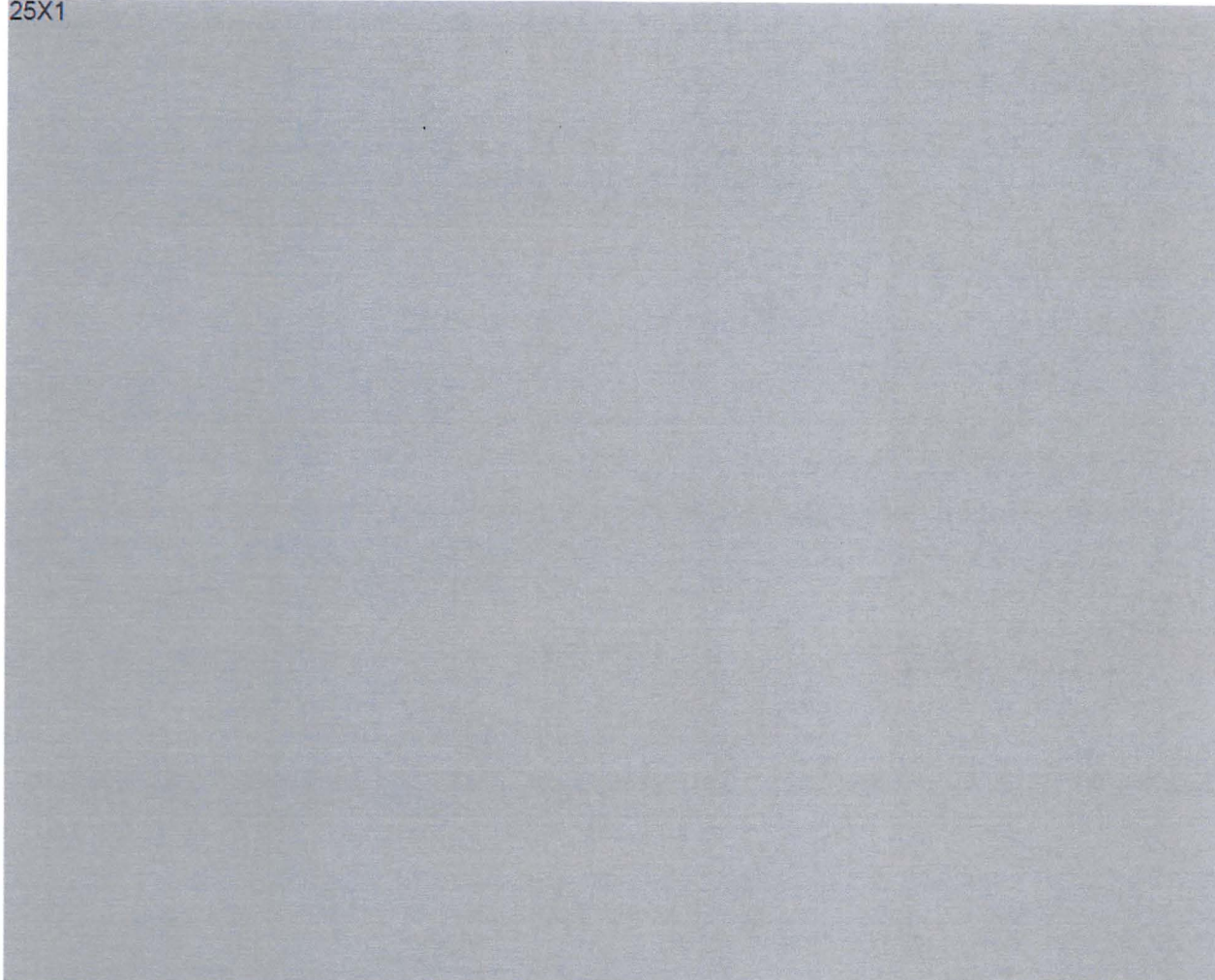
~~(TS//SI-UMBRA//TK)~~ From NSA's perspective, this meant a period of very intensive research. It would be essential to zero in on all possible communications associated with SS-20 and SS-25 deployments, and this meant being able to commandeer overhead systems almost at will. Using NSDD-178 as justification, NSA designed a test under the name Project <sup>25X1</sup> [REDACTED]. The starting point would be the three SIGINT satellites - <sup>25X1</sup> [REDACTED] and the test would be divided into two periods in 1986. Photographic satellites would be brought into the test using <sup>25X1</sup> [REDACTED] techniques.

25X1

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25X1



## (U) Notes

1. (U) Interview, **PL 86-36/50 USC 3605** by Tom Johnson and **PL 86-36/50 USC 3605** 16 September 1997, OH 15-97, NSA.
2. (U) Carl Bernstein and Marco Politi, *His Holiness: John Paul II and the Hidden History of Our Time* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 238-45.
3. (U) Interview, **PL 86-36/50 USC 3605** by Vera Filby, 20 July 1992, OH 1-92, NSA.
4. (U) **PL 86-36/50 USC 3605** interview. Carter Presidential Library, NSF, in CCH Series XVI.I., "Poland."
5. (U) *Washington Post*, 27 September 1992. Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Power and Principle: Memoirs of the National Security Advisor, 1977-1981* (New York: Straus, Giroux, 1983), 465-68. Bernstein and Politi, 259.
6. (U) Carter Library, NSF, PDB, 2 December 1980.
7. (U) Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, 465-68. Sidney I. Ploss, *Moscow and the Polish Crisis: An Interpretation of Soviet Policies and Intentions* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1986), 47. Carter Library, NSA, in CCH Series XVI.I.,

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"Poland." Stansfield Turner, *Secrecy and Democracy: The CIA in Transition* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1985), 208.

8. (U) PL 86-36/50 USC 3605 interview.

9. (U) CCH Series XII.M, Filby papers, "Polish Crisis."

10. (U) Ibid. Ploss, Moscow and the Polish Crisis, 76.

11. (U) CCH Series XII.M.

12. (U) Ibid.

13. (U) Inman interview.

14. (U) Ben B. Fischer, "The 1983 War Scare in U.S.-Soviet Relations," *Studies in Intelligence* (1995), Vol. 39, #4, 61-72.

15. (U) Ibid.

16. (U) Ibid. John Prados, "The War Scare of 1983," *Military History Quarterly* (Spring 1997), 9: 63-73. Anatoly Dobrynin, *In Confidence: Moscow's Ambassador to America's Six Cold War Presidents (1962-1986)* (New York: Times Books Division of Random House, 1995), 522-23.

17. (U) Fischer, "The 1983 War Scare." Andrew, *For the President's Eyes Only*, 475. Prados, "The War Scare of 1983," 68.

18. (U) Facts on File, 604.

19. (U) CCH Series XII.D.

20. (U) PL 86-36/50 interview.

21. (U) ESC, *A Historical Monograph of the KAL 007 Incident* (San Antonio: Kelly AFB, 1984), in CCH Series X.J.

22. (U) DDIR files, Box 2, "KAL-007"; Box 2, "Hersh Book Assessment, Briefing for Senator Ted Stevens."

23. (U) CCH Series VIII.35 (2/AA/24155-83); A2505 Memo 27 June 1984.

24. (U) ESC, *Historical Monograph*....

25. (U) Tower conversations quoted in Amembassy Tokyo message 051354Z September 1983, as provided from Japanese authorities. Typewriter barMessage contained in CCH Series VIII.35.

26. (U) ESC, *Historical Monograph*....

27. (U) PL 86-36/50 interview. ESC, *Historical Monograph*.

28. (U) Interview PL 86-36/50 CMSgt Paul Johnson, PL 86-36/50 by Tom Johnson, 12 June 1986, OH 18-86, NSA.

29. (U) ESC, *Historical Monograph*....

30. (U) ESC, *Historical Monograph*. To add to the mix, South Korean television reported shortly after 0900 that the flight had been forced down by the Soviets and had landed safely on Sakhalin Island. This appeared to have

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been pulled out of thin air and may have been done to calm families waiting at Kimpo Airport for the flight to arrive, according to PL 86-36/50 USC 3605 See interview, PL 86-36/50 by Robert Farley and Tom Johnson, 15 April 1986, OH 14-86, NSA.

31. (U) ESC, *Historical Monograph*....

32. (U) Interview, PL Johnson, and PL ESC, *Historical Monograph*....  
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33. (U) ESC, *Historical Monograph*.... Interview, PL Johnson and PL  
86 36/5 86-36/

34. (U) CCH Series XI.4, from a USA-38 product report repeated in NSA 2/OO/14582-83, 041020Z Sep 83.

35. (U) Terry Lantz, "The KAL 007 Shootdown: A View from Tokyo," in CCH Series VIII.35.

36. (U) Interview, H. Judd Berry, by Robert Farley and Tom Johnson, 20 February 1986, OH 9-86, NSA. Interview, PL 86-36/50 USC 3605 by Robert D. Farley and Tom Johnson, 10 October 1986, OH 24-86, NSA.

37. (U) Berry interview, PL 86-36/50 USC interview, PL interview. CCH Series VIII.35, message series in II.B. 86 36/

38. (U) Interview, PL 86-36/50 by Tom Johnson and Robert D. Farley, 10 April 1986, OH 13-86, NSA. Berry interview. Interview, USPL 86-36/50 USC 3605 by Tom Johnson, 1 September 1998, OH 1998-19, NSA.

39. (U) PL interview.  
86 36/

40. (U) DDIR Memo to William Clark, William Casey, and others, 1 September 1983, in CCH Series VIII.35.

41. (U) Schultz press conference, 1 September 1983, in CCH Series VIII.35. CCH Series XI.R. Dobrynin, *In Confidence*, 536.

42. (U) PL summary of events can be found in CCH Series VIII.35.  
86-36/

43. (U) IWO Press Review, in CCH Series XI.R. Interview, PL 86-36/50 USC 3605 by Robert D. Farley, 18 December 1985, OH 19-85, NSA.

44. (U) IWO Press Review, 6 September 1983, and State Department KAL Working Group Report #3, in CCH Series VIII.35.

45. (U) FBIS Bulletins in CCH Series VIII.35.

46. (U) CCH Series VIII.35. According to Soviet ambassador to Washington Anatoly Dobrynin, Andropov, though convinced that the CIA had used the aircraft for espionage, was highly upset that it had been shot down and wanted to "come clean" with the foreign press. He was talked out of it by Defense Minister Ustinov. See *In Confidence*, 537-8.

47. (U) IWO Press Review for 7 September 1983, in CCH Series XI.R.

48. (U) FBIS item 118 from Moscow domestic service, in CCH Series VIII.35.

49. (U) PL 86-36/50 USC interview.  
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50. (U) ~~PL 86-36/50 USC 3605~~ in CCH Series VIII.35. All important Soviet sources confirm that the decision was made in the Far East. See, for instance, Dobrynin, *In Confidence*, 538. (Dobrynin also confirms that the radar system on Kamchatka was basically inoperative that night.)
51. (U) This incident was wrapped up in 2/00/444-78, 1 August 1978; a copy can be found in CCH Series VIII.35. Other facts about the incident came from *Facts on File*, 28 April 1978.
52. (U) NSA/CSS message 261419Z August 1983, in CCH Series VIII.35. ~~PL 86-36/50~~ "The 1983 War Scare...."
53. (U) *New York Times*, 7 September 1983, 15, in CCH Series VIII.35.
54. (U) *Washington Post*, September 1, 1996, in CCH Series VIII.35. Reagan Library, NSF, in CCH Series XVI.J, "KAL 007."
55. (U) P05 critique, undated, in CCH Series VIII.35. Faurer interview.
56. (U) Seymour M. Hersh, *The Target is Destroyed: What Really Happened to Flight 007 and What America Knew About It* (New York: Random House, 1986).
57. (U) DIRNSA message to NCRJ, 7 March 1985, in CCH Series VIII.35.
58. (U) DCI memo, 21 September 1983, in CCH Series VIII.35.
59. (U) Reagan Library, NSF, in CCH Series XVI.J, "SALT Monitoring."
60. (U) Folder on arms control and SIGINT, in CCH Series XII.D.
61. (U) Ch A2 files, Box 3, "RT Location Project." DEFSMAC papers, paper dated 1994. QMR, 1/79. NSA Archives, acc nr 25759, CBOL 16. ~~PL 86-36/50 USC 3605~~ "The Cobra Judy Acquisition," *Cryptologic Quarterly* (Winter 1983), 79.
62. (U) Ch A2 files, Box 3, "RT Location Project."
62. (U) Interview, ~~PL 86-36/50 USC 3605~~ by Tom Johnson, 27 July 1998, OH 13-98, NSA. SISR Vol IV, Foreign Instrumentation Signals, June 1987, in CCH Series XII.D.
63. (U) Ibid.
64. (S//SI) ~~PL 86-36/50 USC 3605~~ *Cryptologic Quarterly* (Spring 1997), 75-89.
65. (U) NSA Archives, acc nr 420-83Z, H03-0503-1.
66. (U) Informal interview with ~~PL 86-36/50 USC 3605~~ by Tom Johnson, 4 February 1997.
67. (U) *Jane's Strategic Weapon Systems*, 1989, issue 0.
68. (U) Ch A2 files, Box 2, ~~PL 86-36/50 USC 3605~~
69. (U) Ch A2 files, Box 3, "RT Location Project."
70. (U) Interview, ~~PL 86-36/50 USC 3605~~ by Tom Johnson, OH 12-96, NSA Interview, ~~PL 86-36/50 USC 3605~~ by Tom Johnson, 23 May 1996, OH 15-96, NSA.
71. (U) ~~PL 86-36/50 USC 3605~~ interview. Ch A2 files, Box 3, "RT Location Project."

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72. (U) PL 86-36/ interview. *Jane's Strategic Weapon Systems*, Issue 22, September 1996.
73. (U) PL 86-36/50 interview.  
USC 3605
74. (U) CCH Series VI.FF.7.1.
75. (U) Ibid.
76. (U) Ch A2 files, Box 3, "RT Location Project"; "Relocatable Targets Master Plan"; Box 4, "A2 Ops, General."
77. (U) CCH Series VI.FF.7.1.
78. (U) Ch A2 files, Box 2, PL 86-36/50 Box 3, PL 86-36/50 Final Report"; Box 3, "RT Location Project"; Box 3, "Project Illustration." PL 86-36/50 interview. PL 86-36/50 interview.  
USC 3605 86-36/
79. (U) PL 86-36/50 interview.  
USC 3605
80. (U) Ch A2 files, Box 3, "RT Location Project"; Box 4, "CSPAR Steering Group."
81. (U) PL 86-36/ interview.

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## (U) Chapter 23

### The Rise of Terrorism and Unconventional Targets in the 1980s

(U//FOUO) The U.S. SIGINT system had developed a *modus operandi* in dealing with military targets which drove the functioning of the system for many years. When faced with other types of targets, however, the system tended to become unstuck and dysfunctional. Paradoxically, the Reagan period, with its focus on Soviet strategic forces, became the time when the system was first wrenched into a response to unconventional targets.

~~(S//SI)~~ They had been there all the time, of course. One of the earliest targets of the post-World War I period were the rumrunners, a target that virtually defined the successful Coast Guard SIGINT effort in the interwar period. The establishment of NSA was due partly to CIA's insistence that the SIGINT system respond to economic, as well as military, targets. But resources were hard to come by, and most of the money went to watching the Soviets and fighting the Vietnam War.

~~(S//SI)~~ In the late 1960s, as SIGINT budgets began to slide, some of NSA's prime contractors, like LTV, HRB-Singer and Sylvania, attempted to sell their wares on the international market. CIA brought this to the attention of the SIGINT Committee and thus forced NSA to pay attention to economic targets.<sup>1</sup>

~~(S//SI SPOKE)~~ <sup>25X1</sup> required the diversion of SIGINT resources to international economic targets. This, and the grain deal with the Soviets during the Nixon administration, forced NSA's compass to swing around to economic issues. SIGINT provided the best insight into <sup>25X1</sup>  
25X1

#### (U) TERRORISM

(U) The single biggest factor in nonmilitary targeting, however, was the rise of international terrorism. Originating in the Middle East as an Arab reaction to successive military defeats at the hands of Israel, the disease spread to Northern Ireland in 1969, to the Basque country of northern Spain in the 1970s, and elsewhere. From 1968 to 1970 terrorist incidents worldwide increased 113 percent each year, and 24 percent from 1970 to 1972. The infamous Palestinian assault at the 1972 Munich Olympics was followed by a brief decline in incidents, but in 1976 they began to rise again – 41 percent each year from 1975 to 1978. Moreover, terrorists shifted their attention from property to people. In 1970 half the incidents were directed against people, but in 1981, 80 percent were.<sup>3</sup>

~~(TS//SI)~~ NSA's response was delayed by organization and methodology. From the latter standpoint, international terrorism did not use dedicated communications. Isolated

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plotches of information tended to appear on <sup>25X1</sup> [REDACTED] links, but <sup>25X1</sup> [REDACTED] volumes were huge, and NSA did not have enough information to pick out specific links. CIA and FBI had that sort of information, but kept it very close to the vest, and NSA had a very poor connection with the two. Moreover, these <sup>25X1</sup> [REDACTED] links had such low priority that, in the absence of specific CIA or FBI targeting information, they tended to fall below the collection threshold. Other information would appear in the communications of foreign government, police, internal security and intelligence organizations, but collection depended largely on covert sites, which quite literally did not know what they should be looking for. Moreover, without corroborating evidence, it all sounded like "COMINT HUMINT," low grade ore whose validity was constantly suspect.<sup>4</sup>

~~(S//SI)~~ The other problem was organizational. It was not until after the Munich Olympics that NSA created an organization whose task was, specifically, international terrorism. In 1973 G Group established a branch-level organization, G77, known as "Designated Topics." In addition to terrorism, G77 was responsible for security for Secret Service protectees, nuclear proliferation, alternate energy, advanced technology, and others. It owned no collection resources, and received short shrift from those who did. It was dissolved in 1976. All that survived was a recently created centralized terrorism reporting effort, the *Summary of International Terrorism Activity*, or SITA. Created in 1976 by Richard Kern, the chief of G, it resided in an organization called G11, the Synthesis Reporting Division.<sup>5</sup>

~~(TS//SI-UMBRA)~~ Despite methodological and organizational problems, there were enough actual successes to indicate potential. In 1973, for instance, a terrorism bomb plot in New York was thwarted through SIGINT. A Black September cell in Turkey planned to blow up Israeli-associated offices in New York. CIA obtained the post office box number of the organization and asked NSA to watch for it <sup>25X1</sup> [REDACTED] <sup>25X1</sup> [REDACTED] USN-16 in Cyprus intercepted information related to the box number, <sup>25X1</sup> [REDACTED] and the FBI found and defused the bombs. The next year USN-16 intercepted information that an attempt would be made to assassinate Secretary of State Henry Kissinger during a trip to Damascus. This information was relayed to the Secret Service, which rerouted Kissinger's car, and a bomb was later found by Syrian police and the Secret Service. When, in 1976, Palestinian terrorists hijacked an Israeli airliner to Entebbe (an incident made more famous by movies and docudramas), GROF followed the hijacking live, allowing NSA to provide the most up-to-date coverage of the hijacking and the destination of the aircraft, as well as the situation on the ground once it was in Uganda.<sup>6</sup>

~~(TS//SI-UMBRA)~~ In 1981, following the conclusion of the Iranian hostage crisis, Dick Lord, who was then chief of G, commissioned a study to see if NSA could do better than it had been doing on the terrorist problem. At about the same time the fledgling Reagan administration directed that all intelligence agencies devote more resources to counter-terrorism. The result was the establishment of yet another terrorism shop, G713. But the effort fell into immediate trouble. It still relied on derivative collection, and got the collection scraps. It did not have enough resources to work the voice problem, which was what most terrorist organizations used in those days. Finally, it was severely hampered

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by USSID 18, which prohibited collection of communications with both terminals in the United States. This was relaxed briefly in late 1981 when the Libyan leader Gaddhafi announced his intention to send a hit team to the United States to assassinate President Reagan. <sup>25X1</sup>

<sup>25X1</sup>

It turned up nothing, but did give NSA valuable experience.<sup>7</sup>

**(U) The Dozier Kidnapping**

(U) On December 17, 1981, an American NATO officer, Brigadier General James Dozier and his wife Judy returned to their apartment in Verona, Italy. Within a few minutes the doorbell rang, and some "plumbers" coaxed their way into the apartment, alleging that there was a leak in the ceiling. Once inside, they pulled out guns, announced themselves as members of the Red Brigade, and forced Dozier into a box. Mrs. Dozier was bound and gagged and put in another room. The terrorists carried the box to a waiting vehicle, which drove to Padua. Mrs. Dozier managed to alert neighbors by banging on a washing machine. Two hours went by until police broke into the apartment and rescued the distraught Mrs. Dozier.<sup>8</sup>



(U) Dozier with Italian officer after rescue

(U) The Red Brigade had, for almost a decade, been one of the world's most active terrorist organizations. Formed in the early 1970s from a radical wing of the Italian labor movement, it operated in small urban cells under tight security, and professed Marxist ideology. After directing a number of high profile terrorist incidents, including kneecapping, kidnapping and murder, a Red Brigade cell kidnapped the Italian prime

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minister, Aldo Moro. He was murdered after being held three months.<sup>9</sup> Beside the murder of a prime minister, Dozier was small potatoes, and his survival was seriously at issue.

~~(TS//SI)~~ Although unprepared, SIGINT was immediately brought into the picture.  
25X1, 6

~~(S//SI)~~ NSA immediately decided to do a name search 25X1 but the current interpretation of Reagan's new executive order, 12036, prohibited searching on the name of an American citizen without his or her permission. Fortunately, Acting Attorney General Edward Schmults ruled that Dozier would have given permission if he were available, and the name search was permitted to proceed. Unfortunately, it turned up nothing.

~~(S//SI)~~ On January 19, 1982, with the kidnapping a month old, the Italians received a tip indicating that the Red Brigade might be communicating on the citizens band frequencies. Just three days later USA-62 in San Vito, a site without qualified Italian linguists, intercepted a voice conversation in the citizens band indicating that Dozier might already have been killed. This generated a series of Critics containing more details concerning the supposed elimination of the general. Just two days later, however, another intercept seemed to indicate that he was alive after all. NSA sent one of its most qualified Italian linguists to the site. He contended that the intercepted tapes, of very bad quality, did not represent Red Brigade communications at all. (However, this conclusion remains in contention to this day.)

~~(TS//SI)~~ Direction finding was critical, and NSA offered the use of GUARDRAIL V from Germany, as well as Army heliborne DF and a Chevrolet Trailblazer with DF equipment installed. The Italians rejected the Trailblazer, partly because they felt they would not be in complete control of the operation. They did, however, approve the GUARDRAIL V and the helicopter efforts, but the flights did not come in time for the rescue of Dozier. They were employed after the rescue to search for and locate Red Brigade communications. The airborne SIGINT effort intercepted a welter of possible Red Brigade communications, all indicating considerable confusion following the successful rescue. Italian police raided several Brigade hideouts and intercepted arms shipments to the Venice vicinity. (The cell in Venice was responsible for the kidnapping.) But they never confirmed for NSA whether or not U.S. efforts contributed to the rolling up of Red Brigade assets.<sup>10</sup>

(U) Dozier was rescued based on Italian HUMINT. Italian police captured and interrogated various Red Brigade members, and learned of the hideout where he was being kept. In the early morning hours of January 28, police burst into the apartment and captured five Brigade members, while rescuing Dozier, who was secured in a back bedroom.<sup>11</sup>

~~(S//SI)~~ The Dozier rescue was, to say the least, a learning experience for NSA. Large fixed sites contributed, but the prospects for the future rested on mobile assets like GUARDRAIL. It was clear that NSA needed a better coordinating mechanism, more

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resources, and better databases. Most important, such an effort could not proceed in isolation, but would rely on a heavy infusion of HUMINT, from both U.S. and Third Party sources. From a broader perspective, it highlighted the lack of a counterterrorism structure in the U.S. intelligence community, and resulted in the establishing of an interagency task force on terrorism which still operates as the forty-six-member Interagency Intelligence Committee on Terrorism. It also highlighted the difficulties of operating without good language capability.<sup>12</sup>

~~(S//SI)~~ The Dozier kidnapping led directly to the establishment of G1 in the spring of 1982. G1 consolidated the effort, established a focal point, and created an organization responsible for budgeting for counterterrorism. G1 brought new methods to the game, including such unconventional options as following airline manifests and bank accounts. It was the beginning of what would become a highly successful new mission for the cryptologic community.<sup>13</sup>

#### **(U) The Sabana Seca Incident**

(U) Cryptologists were brought face to face with terrorism on December 3, 1979. A bus transporting Navy cryptologists from the support base to the operations site for USN-19 at Sabana Seca, Puerto Rico, was proceeding down the road when a truck pulled in front of it. The truck drove ahead for about 3/4 mile, where it unexpectedly stopped. Off to the side of the road a white van was parked. As soon as the bus stopped behind the truck, firing erupted from the van. Of the fourteen people aboard the bus, two were killed, and eight were wounded. The truck and the van drove off, leaving the shattered bus with its ravaged occupants.

~~(S)~~ No one was ever arrested for the shootings, which were apparently the work of Puerto Rican nationalists opposed to U.S. sovereignty over the island.<sup>14</sup> It was the only such incident involving cryptologists during the Cold War.

#### **(U) Airline Hijackings**

~~(S//SI)~~ Terrorism in the 1980s was dominated by a series of high-profile hijackings. Most, though not all, were orchestrated by Middle Eastern political organizations like Amal and Hezbollah. President Reagan, like President Carter before him, was seized by these incidents, and each in turn claimed the total attention of his NSC staff until it was resolved. Likewise, most of the intelligence available to the NSC during the course of hijacking operations came from NSA. Using its capability to collect air control communications so effectively employed during the drama over the release of the diplomatic hostages in Iran, NSA became the source of most of the available information about an on-going event.

(U) Typical of these support operations was the reporting series on TWA 847. Hijacked by Islamic terrorists on a flight from Athens to Rome on June 14, 1985, the flight was diverted to Beirut. Over the ensuing three days it played hopscotch across the

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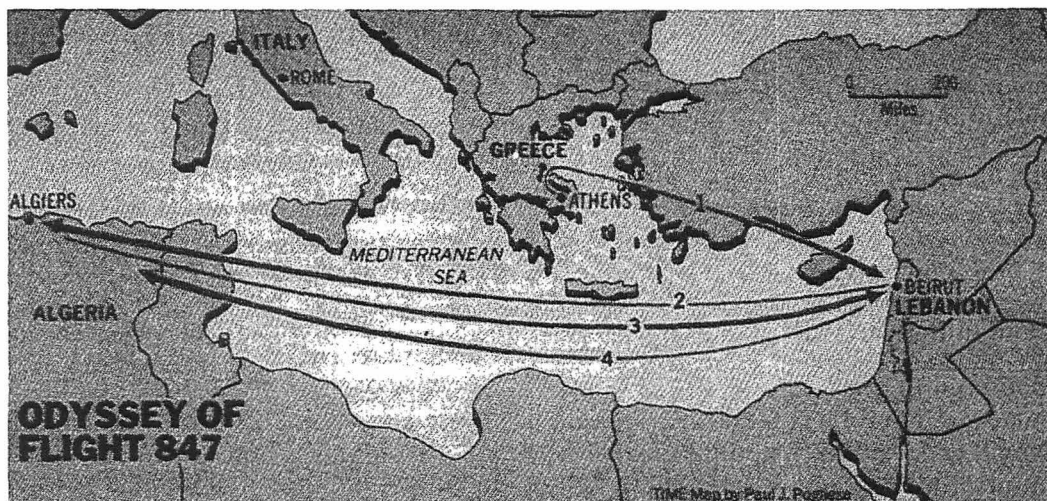


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(U) Trans World Airlines 847

Mediterranean between Algiers and Beirut. At one of its Beirut stops the terrorists executed an American naval enlisted man, Robert Stethem, and threw his body on the tarmac beside the plane. They threatened to execute many more. On June 16 the plane departed Algiers for the last time and came to rest in Beirut. There ensued two weeks of diplomatic negotiations among the United States, Israel, Syria and the Amal organization under Nabih Barri. Ultimately, Syrian president Hafez al-Assad of Syria obtained the release of the American hostages from TWA 847, in return for the Israeli release of several

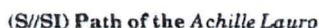


(U) The flight of TWA 847

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(S//SI-SPOKE) NSA reporting came primarily from intercept of HF international communications between air traffic controllers and the pilot of the hijacked aircraft as he described the demands of the hijackers and the conditions on board the aircraft. Some of the product reports were released within ten minutes of intercept at overseas field sites, in an unexcelled display of SIGINT system integration. Knowing exactly what was happening on board the aircraft gave the NSC and the State Department considerable confidence in their actions to resolve the crisis. Moreover, during the negotiations phase NSA intercepted telephone calls between 25X1 [REDACTED] thus giving the State Department a better understanding of the negotiating posture of these reluctant partners. In this and other such hijacking dramas, NSA made a substantial contribution to national security policy.<sup>15</sup>

~~(S//SI)~~ On October 7, 1985, NSOC learned from State Department sources that an Italian cruise ship sailing in the eastern Mediterranean had been captured, apparently by Palestinian terrorists. The ship was now drifting somewhere in the Mediterranean, its fate unknown.<sup>16</sup> The incident would become a spectacular SIGINT success story.



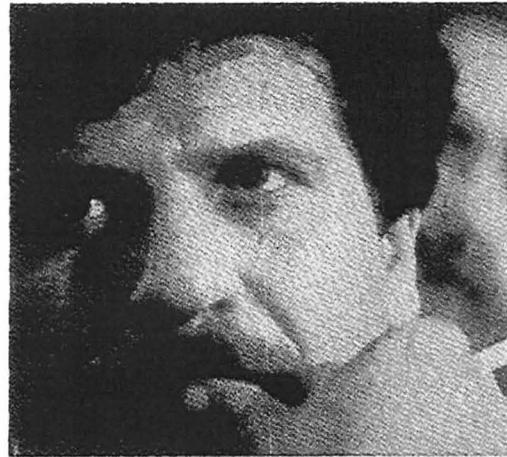
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~~TOP SECRET//COMINT-UMBRA/TALENT KEYHOLE//X1~~

from the captain of the ship to a shore station saying that he had been hijacked and one passenger had been killed.<sup>17</sup>

~~(S//SI SPOKE)~~ As the ship drifted in the Mediterranean, NSA continued to follow its communications. <sup>25X1</sup> [redacted] intercepted voice communications between the terrorists on board and Abu Abbas, leader of a pro-Arafat wing of the Palestinian Liberation Front, giving them directions. NSA lost contact with the vessel for several hours, but picked it up again, and followed it as it meandered toward the Egyptian coast. It was good information, but SIGINT could not provide a location, and a rescue operation could not be mounted. Secretary of State George Shultz later complained about the lack of the ability of intelligence to locate the vessel on the high seas.<sup>18</sup>

~~(TS//SI-UMBRA)~~ The Reagan administration mounted a fierce diplomatic offensive to close off neutral ports to the terrorists. It was clear from the intercepts of Abu Abbas and the terrorists on board the *Achille Lauro* that their first option, landing in Syria, had been closed off because of this. But as the ship headed for the Egyptian town of Port Said, it was also clear that the Egyptian government was not cooperating with the United States. NSA learned that the terrorists would be permitted to land, the passengers would be taken off and returned to their respective countries, and the terrorists would be given an unimpeded, if surreptitious, trip to Tunisia, home of the PLO.<sup>19</sup>

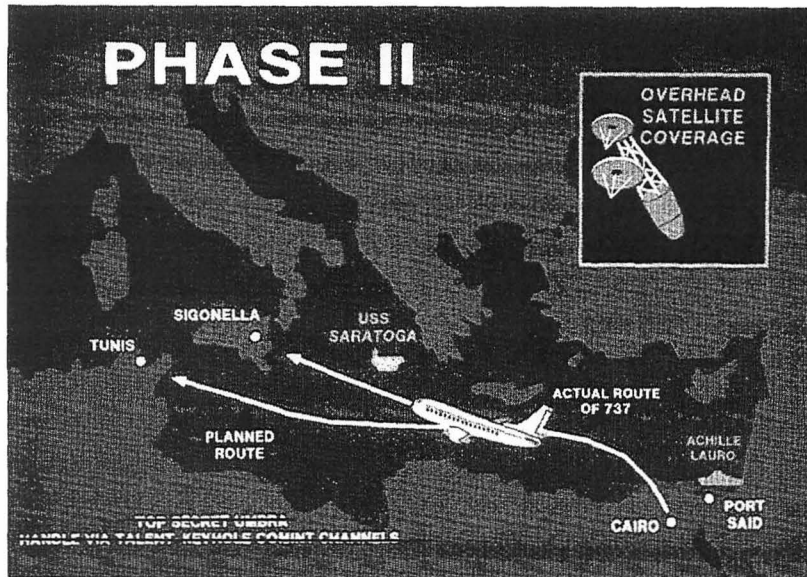


(U) Abu Abbas

~~(TS//SI-UMBRA)~~ The same source yielded impeccable information about the covert flight that would take the hijackers to Tunis. The White House was able to follow Egyptian government discussions about the disposition of the hijackers. The National Security Council staff knew the takeoff time and routing of the aircraft, and the president was informed on the night of 10 October while returning to Washington aboard Air Force One. The information was explicit and credible – it stemmed from discussions between <sup>25X1</sup> [redacted] President Reagan discussed the options – then he authorized an operation to hijack the hijackers. An intercepting force of four Navy F-14s and supporting aircraft was flown to an aircraft carrier waiting in the Mediterranean south of Crete. The unsuspecting Egyptian commercial pilot found himself with armed company, and was forced to fly to the Navy base in Sigonella, Italy. There, the hijackers were turned over to Italian justice. Abu Abbas was among them, but the Italians spirited him out of the country, while keeping the others locked up.<sup>20</sup>

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~~TOP SECRET//COMINT-UMBRA/TALENT KEYHOLE//X1~~~~(TS//SI-UMBRA//TK)~~ The hijackers are hijacked.

~~(S//SI)~~ The *Achille Lauro* affair, planned to be one of the most spectacular terrorist events ever, turned out to be the most spectacular failure. The summary execution of one of the hostages, Leon Klinghofer, was a blow to their reputation worldwide, and caused Egyptian president Mubarak to hold them at arm's length. But the operation would have been considered passably successful had not the terrorists themselves wound up in an Italian jail. The operation that put them there was planned and executed entirely on the basis of SIGINT.<sup>21</sup> It put counterterrorist SIGINT on the map.

~~(S//SI)~~ From a security standpoint, however, *Achille Lauro* ended badly. Administration sources could not resist telling journalists about the details of the operation. (The source for the information, it turned out later, was Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North, the NSC's expert on counterterrorism.) On October 8, NSA learned that *CBS News* Pentagon correspondent David Martin had learned about the Burning Wind coverage of the mid-ocean hijacking, but was persuaded not to make the information public. Only four days later, however, George Wilson of the *Washington Post* disclosed the same information, negating the effort that went into keeping Martin quiet. But worse was



(U) Egyptian president Mubarak

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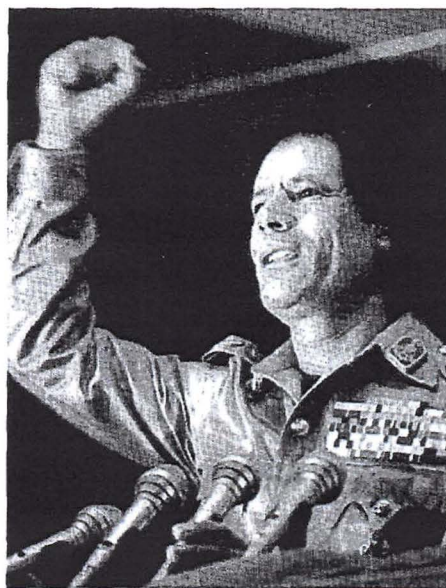
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to come. In the October 12 edition of the *New York Post* and the October 21 issue of *Newsweek*, was the full story of the snatch operation, replete with details of the covert intercept of Mubarak's voice communications. According to the *Post*, "Between NSA and the Israelis the entire area was wired." The newspaper went on to describe in breathless voice the decision to go ahead with the aerial intercept of the Boeing 737. "The intelligence picked up by NSA's hi-tech vacuum cleaners was so accurate that at 4:00 P.M., while he was returning to the White House aboard Air Force One McFarlane [National Security Advisor Robert McFarlane] was able to give Reagan fifteen minutes' advance warning that the Egyptian plane was taking off. At that time Reagan gave the green light for the operation to begin." <sup>22</sup>

**(U) La Belle Discotheque**

(U) The Reagan administration's campaign of vilification against the Soviet Union was almost matched by its campaign against the Libyan state of Muammar Gaddafi. The war of words began almost as soon as the new president took office, and continued unabated throughout his presidency. There was a special personal animus that made the anti-Gaddafi offensive into something resembling a fight to the death. But the struggle was unequal from the beginning.

~~(S//SI SPOKE)~~ The campaign began with psychological operations close to Libya's coast which resembled those that tormented the Soviet Union. In August of 1981, the Navy's Sixth Fleet announced a large-scale exercise in the Gulf of Sidra, a body of water which Gaddafi regarded in the same way that the USSR regarded the Sea of Okhotsk. Libyan radio loudly declaimed the exercise and threatened interference, and Libyan planes and ships began mucking about in the exercise area. On August 19 a flight of two Libyan SU-22s attacked Navy F-14s in the Gulf - within two minutes the Navy had shot down both fighters. <sup>25X1</sup>



**(U) Muammar Gaddafi**

~~(S//SI SPOKE)~~ In December of 1984 someone in the Libyan Peoples' Bureau (what Gaddafi called his embassy) fired at a crowd of noisy Libyan dissidents demonstrating outside their offices in St. James Park in London, killing a British policewoman. <sup>25X1, 6</sup>

~~TOP SECRET//COMINT-UMBRA/TALENT KEYHOLE//X1~~



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25X1, 6

had intercepted an 25X1

25X1

25X1

It was a tragic case of inadequate resources, though the decryption did isolate the culprits and heightened the feeling in the Reagan administration that "something" had to be done about Gaddhafi." <sup>24</sup>

~~(TS//SI-UMBRA)~~ The Reagan administration's campaign against Gaddhafi appeared to have the effect of egging him on. In late December 1985 the Abu Nidal group attacked innocent passengers in the airports of Vienna and Rome. There was substantial evidence of Libyan involvement, and the JCS began sharpening contingency plans relating to Libya. NSA expanded coverage of Libyan air, air defense and navy entities through a mix of overhead, conventional and airborne assets. <sup>25</sup>

~~(S)~~ Within the White House, a covert planning group formed to map a strategy against Libyan terrorism. Regarded as the most secret of all NSC planning, it was covered by layered codewords, the most famous of which was Veil, which journalist Bob Woodward used as the title of his 1987 exposé of William Casey and the covert actions program. The Veil group was a heavy user of SIGINT, which was the best and most timely source on Gaddhafi's activities. <sup>26</sup>

(U) In 1986, the JCS conducted another series of freedom of navigation exercises in the Gulf of Sidra, with the singularly uninspiring name of "Attain Document." Gaddhafi had proclaimed a "Line of Death" in the Gulf, and during the exercise series in March there were incidents of attempted Libyan interference. The Navy sank two Libyan vessels - presidential spokesman Larry Speakes said later, "We don't let them get that close." After a Libyan SA-5 site fired at Navy aircraft, the Sixth Fleet attacked the site, not once, but twice. <sup>27</sup>

25X1

~~(TS//SI)~~ During the Attain Document series, NSA mounted intensive coverage of Libyan communications. 25X1 but through a network of 25X1 sites, 25X1

25X1

NSA had the collection that it needed. To avoid the processing problems that had bedeviled the 1984 policewoman shooting, G6 threw everything it had into a processing and reporting operation. After the destruction of the two Libyan vessels in the Gulf, the Libyans indicated that they would retaliate. G6

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directed the field sites to forward their Libyan traffic via immediate precedence, and speeded up processing operations at Fort Meade.<sup>29</sup>

~~(TS//SI-UMBRA)~~ The stage was set for three of the most significant Cold War messages ever intercepted. The first, collected by a covert site and published by NSA on March 26, indicated that the Peoples' Bureau in East Berlin would carry out an attack against Americans using Palestinians. The second, on April 4, was sent by the al-Marafiq representative in East Berlin back to Libya alerting Libyans to watch for "results tomorrow morning." The information was vague, and could not have been used to thwart an attack, but it was clear that something was about to happen.<sup>30</sup>

~~(TS//SI-UMBRA)~~ April 5 was Friday; the bars in West Berlin would be crowded with American servicemen. Early Saturday morning, with the bars still lively, a powerful bomb exploded at La Belle Discotheque, a late-night hang-out popular with Americans. One American soldier was killed, along with a Turkish woman, and 230 people were injured, most of them Americans. USM-5 at Teufelsberg sent out a Critic.<sup>31</sup> Once again, the covert site had intercepted a Libyan message; it was forwarded to NSA for decryption.

~~(TS//SI-UMBRA)~~ At NSA, a team of cryptanalysts and linguists was called in to work on the new message. Toiling through the early morning hours, they decrypted it by machine and translated it into English. The information they had was almost as explosive as the bomb itself. The al-Marafiq representative in East Berlin claimed that the operation had been successful, and boasted that Libyan involvement was undetectable. It was henceforth referred to as the "smoking gun" intercept.<sup>32</sup>

~~(TS//SI-UMBRA)~~ The resulting product report got a good bit of attention before it was transmitted. NSA already knew that the administration had threatened military retaliation if it could be proved that Libya had initiated a terrorist attack against Americans. Here was the proof. The product was released to a special distribution (which initially included only Washington area customers) just before noon on April 5.<sup>33</sup>

~~(S)~~ John Poindexter, the national security advisor, wired the evidence of Libyan complicity to President Reagan, who was vacationing at his California ranch. Sunday morning, April 7, the president met with his top advisors in the Oval Office. Poindexter set up the agenda. On the menu was just one item - the timing of military action against Gaddhafi.<sup>34</sup>

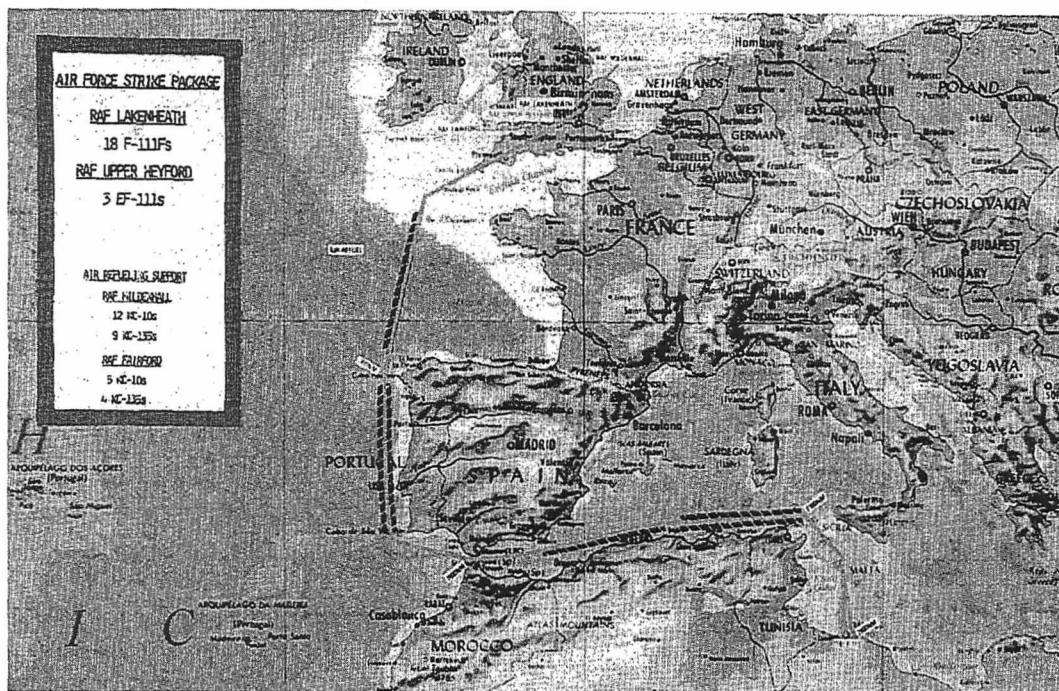
~~(S//SI)~~ The retaliation, called El Dorado Canyon, came in the form of a complex air strike launched from British bases on April 14. NSA threw every available SIGINT asset into the support operation. All SIGINT satellites were tasked, every collection site in the region participated, and virtually every airborne asset in the Mediterranean helped out. NSA collection concentrated on Libyan internal military communications, including

25X1

25X1

Special analysis,

processing and reporting cells were established all over the Agency.<sup>35</sup>~~TOP SECRET//COMINT-UMBRA/TALENT KEYHOLE//X1~~

~~TOP SECRET//COMINT UMBRA/TALENT KEYHOLE//X1~~

(U) El Dorado Canyon

(TS//SI UMBRA//TK) This was a mission that the SIGINT system could handle. Overhead systems produced 72 percent of the tactical reporting, while conventional came in with only 20 percent. Of all the producers SILKWORTH was the most fruitful. But the support was costly. NSA diverted virtually every satellite it had, resulting in severe constraints on Soviet and PRC collection, as well as diminished G Group collection of Persian Gulf communications.

(S//SI) SIGINT support to El Dorado Canyon had the usual weak spots. Most significant was lack of information about U.S. military operations – this hampered NSA's understanding of the operation, and undoubtedly constrained product reporting. Sixth Fleet refused to report to NSA its tasking for its own SIGINT assets, thus continuing a long-standing dispute with the Navy over the employment of SIGINT fleet support assets. There was some confusion and resulting ill will between G group reporting cells and NSOC, which was doing wrap-up reporting, a situation which had been endemic to the SIGINT system since NSOC was created in 1973.<sup>36</sup>

(S//SI) Once again, NSA's capability became a victim of its own success. When President Reagan went on television on April 14 to announce the attacks against Libya, he justified the operation as resulting from Libyan culpability for the La Belle bombing:

The evidence is now conclusive that the terrorist bombing of La Belle Discotheque was planned and executed under the direct orders of the Libyan regime. On March 25, more than a week before

~~TOP SECRET//COMINT UMBRA/TALENT KEYHOLE//X1~~

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(U) Briefing President Reagan

the attack, orders were sent from Tripoli to the Libyan People's Bureau in East Berlin to conduct a terrorist attack against Americans....On April 4, the People's Bureau alerted Tripoli that the attack would be carried out the following morning. The next day they reported back to Tripoli on the great success of their mission. Our evidence is direct, it is precise, it is irrefutable.<sup>37</sup>

World War II military operations carried out on the basis of SIGINT had plausible cover. This had none, and it did not require overpowering astuteness to sniff out the origins of the information. It could only have been SIGINT.

~~(TS//SI)~~ In order to convince Western alliance leaders of the justification for the bombing, the president dispatched special emissaries to European capitals. Each was armed with a letter of introduction, explaining that the representative would share verbally the intelligence information with the head of government. The SIGINT information was thus shared at very high levels.<sup>38</sup>

~~(TS//SI)~~ The first leak was not, in fact, the televised statement. An April 7 *U.S. News and World Report* article contained background information indicating that the U.S. was reading Libya's mail. (The source of this information was reputed to be the American ambassador in Bonn.) But following Reagan's press conference the news became widespread. For instance, the *Financial Times* of London published an article three days after the news conference alleging that the information came from Libyan communications between Tripoli and England, intercepted in England and broken by NSA. Leaks continued until there was no aspect of the NSA operation that had not been

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