

ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT UPON THE CRYPTOLOGIC EFFORT BY THE
LOSS OF THE PUEBLO

1. Assessment of the impact upon the overall cryptologic effort by the PUEBLO loss is difficult to make at this time and promises to be so in the future. Factors which bear on the problem are: the knowledge held by the personnel; the cryptographic equipment; the SIGINT equipment; and the technical support material on-board the PUEBLO. From the fragmentary operational traffic and SIGINT available on the PUEBLO incident, the extent of emergency destruction accomplished cannot be determined.

2. The overall probable cryptologic loss to the U.S. SIGINT effort is assessed to be very severe.

3. It has been determined that some 33 individuals of the Navy Security Group Detachment were cleared and indoctrinated for SIGINT. In general it can be stated of the NSG personnel aboard the PUEBLO were fully qualified Signals Intelligence Technicians and that their past assignments have covered a wide range of geographic areas and targets in the field of SIGINT. Collectively these men would be able to describe the worldwide mission of the SIGINT collection and production effort including most of the overt collection sites and their subordination, as well as many key personnel in the NSA and service cryptologic agencies efforts worldwide. Collectively they could be expected to be completely knowledgeable of the state of the art in the fields of SIGINT collection, processing, reporting techniques and successes including the Soviet Union, Communist China, and North Korea.

4. Similarly the entire U.S. SIGINT collection processing and reporting procedures would be compromised through the depth of the technical support material carried. These documents exposed our SIGINT objectives, our techniques in attacking those objectives, the results (at least in part) of our years of effort, provides a broad insight into the entire operating structure of the U.S. and some allied SIGINT establishments, and the intelligence interests of the U.S.

5. The SIGINT equipment configuration of the PUEBLO made it capable of fulfilling an ELINT and COMINT mission. Its SIGINT gear could indicate its ability to intercept manual Morse, radioprinter, radiotelephone, [REDACTED]

6. The capture of the PUEBLO would place in the hands of the North Koreans compromising material/information of a TOP SECRET codeword including especially sensitive compartmented materials. A separate message is being forwarded to you addressing the impact on compartmented SIGINT and other intelligence activities.

7. In summary, with the total data presented by the capture of the PUEBLO, the North Koreans, alone or in concert with other Communist nations, could reveal the extent of the U.S. worldwide SIGINT and other intelligence operations. Any conservative estimation of the possible and long term affects on U.S. intelligence must be classed as very severe.

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