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Question 1.

A complete description of the intelligence collection plans which included the use of the Pueblo and other vessels.

When was this plan approved?

Who participated in the decision?

Did the missions differ from area to area?

The name of the highest official in the United States Government who is aware of the day-to-day operations of such ships as the Pueblo.

How many United States vessels are now capable of this type of activity, including vessels such as the Maddox which acquired such a capability in short order?

Answer

Beginning in 1961, the Navy fitted our several large auxiliary ships called Technical Research Ships (TRS) for the specialized functions of electronic and communications intelligence. (There are now six of these TRS.) The results of these efforts were useful, and early in 1965 a proposal was made to develop a number of smaller intelligence collectors (AGERS) which would be responsive to the collection requirements of fleet headquarters. The objective was to expand on a promising program while freeing for their primary functions the expensive and heavily committed combat vessels which the fleet had been using for electronic intelligence. The USS Pueblo was the second of these AGERS.

Although these intelligence collection efforts had been actively pursued in a number of areas, a relatively low priority had been for some years assigned to North Korea. As indicated in the response below to Question 4, the USS Banner, the first of the AGERS, had passed by North Korea on several occasions but had not concentrated on North Korean activity. Beginning in late 1966, however, the attitude of the Pyongyang regime became steadily more belligerent. The threatening language long used by the North Koreans grew even more threatening. On October 5, 1966 the North Korean President, Kim Il Sung, called for a step-up in the "revolutionary movement" in South Korea by means of "properly combining ... violent and nonviolent struggles, legal and illegal struggles ..."

State Department review completed

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In April 1967, Pyongyang announced sharply increased military expenditures. Our intelligence indicated new Soviet weapons were arriving in North Korea in substantial volume. And, as detailed below in the response to Question 11, North Korean military and subversive activities across the Military Demarcation Line (MDL) increased at an alarming rate. Despite all this bellicosity, we did not conclude that Pyongyang intended or wanted a renewal of the Korean War; but we were concerned, and we felt it our duty to remedy, where we could, the serious gaps in our intelligence picture of military developments and resources north of the MDL. The collection of electronic intelligence on North Korea was therefore given a higher priority in the fall of 1967; and in late 1967, the Pueblo was assigned a share of this task.

The "approval cycle" for the Pueblo mission of January 1967 is detailed below in the response to Question 4. The operation plan for this mission was developed by Commander-in-Chief Pacific Fleet. The Committee's questions about which individual officials participated in the development of the operations plan and in the approval cycle and which officials are aware of day-to-day operations of this type were discussed in the covering letter transmitting these answers.

The precise missions assigned to a particular ship depend on the electronic environment of the areas where it is to operate and the requirements of the Intelligence Community in that region. These variations are, however, technical in character and in a general sense the missions do not differ from one area to another.

Any naval ship, including one as small as a sea-going tugboat, can be made capable of collecting communications intelligence by installing the appropriate receivers and antennas aboard and assigning a qualified detachment to operate the equipment.

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Question 2.

Why is it necessary to send a ship so close to the territorial waters of another state in order to collect intelligence information?

Answer

Radio and radar transmissions in the UHF and VHF ranges do not conform to the curvature of the earth and collection must be accomplished within range of the transmitter. Such "line-of-sight" transmission is directly comparable to reception of television. In addition, some transmissions in the regular HF ranges (which conform to the earth's curvature) are so low in power that close-in collection is required; many transmissions tend to be directional because of antenna configuration and can be collected only in a small area. Experience has shown that our ships are operating about on the fringes in many respects when they are 12-15 miles from land and that to require them to maintain 20 miles, 25 miles, or any larger stand-off distance would substantially degrade the effectiveness of their operations.

Ships provide a good platform for such collection because they are stable and can linger in their areas of operation where wanted signals can be heard and collection can be accomplished.

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Question 3.

What agency or agencies have operational responsibility for the Pueblo? Does the Navy determine the ship's track? Does the National Security Agency have overall responsibility for the Pueblo? What is C.I.A.'s role?

Answer

The USS Pueblo was under the operational control of the Commander in Chief Pacific (CINCPAC).

The Navy determined the areas in which the ship was to operate, but the captain of the ship had the responsibility for concentrating his efforts in the most useful of these areas. The operation areas of the Pueblo's mission (Ichthyic I) were defined by Commander in Chief Pacific Fleet (CINCPACFLT) as follows: western boundary was 13 NM from land mass/off shore islands; eastern boundary was 60 NM seaward of western boundary. Northern and southern boundaries of the three subdivisions of the general operating area were: Pluto 42-00 N, 41-00 N; Venus 41-00 N, 40-00 N; Mars 40-00 N, 39-00 N. The track of the Pueblo within this general operating area can only be determined when its personnel and log are recovered.

The National Security Agency did not have overall responsibility for the Pueblo. The Central Intelligence Agency had no responsibility for the Pueblo but did utilize the intelligence collected.

"in common with other members of the intelligence community would have used some of the intelligence collected."

Suggested change paried to State and accepted by State Korean Task Force

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Question 4.

Was the Pueblo the first such intelligence ship to go into waters off North Korea? If not, what were the dates and missions of its predecessors? What individual or individuals made the decision to send the Pueblo into waters off Korea? When was that decision made? Were you as Secretary of State, aware of the timing of the mission?

Answer

The USS Banner, while on intelligence gathering missions similar to that of the Pueblo, passed through the international waters off the North Korean coast en route elsewhere. These transits occurred on 14-16 March 1966, 5-7 February 1967, and 15-16 May 1967. The Pueblo mission of January 1968 was the first such mission to operate for an extended period off North Korea.

The approval cycle for the Pueblo mission was as follows:

On 17 December 1967, CINCPACFLT submitted the proposal for the Pueblo operation.

On 23 December 1967, CINCPAC requested JCS approval.

On 26 December 1967, the Monthly Reconnaissance Schedule for January 1968 (which included the Pueblo proposal) was submitted to the Washington agencies having responsibility in these matters.

On 29 December 1967, the JCS, the Department of State, and the other agencies concerned approved the Monthly Reconnaissance Schedule.

On 2 January 1968, the JCS notified CINCPACFLT and CINCPACFLT notified COMNAVFOR Japan that the operation was approved.

On 5 January 1968, COMNAVFOR Japan issued sailing orders to the USS Pueblo.

The designated representative of the Secretary of State who approved the Monthly Reconnaissance Schedule on behalf of the Secretary together with other appropriate officers of this Department were aware of the schedule of the USS Pueblo.

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Question 5.

The Committee would like to have copies of all operational instructions and mission concepts relating to the Pueblo. If any cable or other communication concerning the Pueblo contains reference to prior messages and instructions, the Committee wishes to have such messages. For example, the copy of a communication sent to the Pueblo provided by Assistant Secretary Macomber contains reference to four additional messages or instructions. The Committee wishes to have these as well.

Answer

The Pueblo's Sailing Orders are attached as Enclosure 1.

The four references cited in the Sailing Orders comprise over 900 pages of technical, sensitive military documents. As indicated in the covering letter, the Dept. of State will, if the Committee desires, discuss with the Dept. of Defense what arrangement might be made to meet any needs for information beyond that being provided herewith.

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Question 6.

The press, and particularly certain magazines, have given purported verbatim texts of messages coming from the Pueblo during the hours of the harassment and attack. Presumably this information was received at Naval and other communication centers in the Japan-Korea area. The Committee would like to have all such messages on (SIC) "intercepts."

Answer.

Attached is a copy of the communications sent and received by the USS Pueblo after it broke radio silence on 23 January 1968.

All communications to and from the Pueblo were enciphered radio-teletype: there was no voice traffic. The radio operators' chatter, reproduced in the attached, can be identified by call signs -- NDT 39, for the station in Japan and NDV 6 for Pueblo.

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What is the nearest estimated nautical mile distance the ship was from North Korea, at any time, including the point of seizure? Give a complete description of the attack on the Pueblo.

Answer

Until the Pueblo's crew, its log, and other navigation documents have been returned to us, it will not be possible to state positively its Closest Point of Approach (CPA) to North Korean territory. The North Koreans had asserted a claim to territorial waters out to 12NM and the Pueblo was under strict order not to go closer than 13NM to the land mass or offshore islands. (See Enclosure 1 of the response to Question 5.) All evidence indicates that the ship, when attacked, was at least 15NM from the nearest Korean territory, a small island named Ung Do, and 16NM from the mainland. The positions of the Pueblo as indicated in her reporting between the time she broke radio silence at 230150Z to her capture shortly after 230430Z are as follows:

102100Z	Jan 68	Departed Sasebo, Japan
121430Z	Jan 68	Arrived in Operations Area
200850Z	Jan 68	39-47.0N 128-25.5E 15.4NM from nearest land (mainland)
220600Z	Jan 68	39-14.8N 128-07.0E 15.0NM from Nan Do Island
222330Z	Jan 68	39-12.0N 128-21.4E 17.0NM from Nan Do Island
230100Z and 230150Z	Jan 68	39-24N 127-59E 18.2NM from Ung Do Island
230300Z	Jan 68	39-25.2N 127-55E 16.2NM from Ung Do Island
230426Z	Jan 68	39-25.5N 127-54.9E 15.9NM from Ung Do Island
230428Z	Jan 68	39-25N 127-54.3E 15.2NM from Ung Do Island

There follows a description of the attack on the Pueblo based on her communications to Japan. The complete text of these communications was attached as the response to the preceding question.

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Question 8. Copies of radio communication of the North Korean Government prior to the attack relating to United States or South Korean attacks or harassments against North Korea.

Answer. There is attached a file of FBIS translations of broadcasts from Radio Pyongyang which are related to alleged intrusions into North Korean territorial waters by the UN side. The file from November 1966 to the present is, to the best of our knowledge, complete. The file before that date is selective but, we believe, representative.

A review of this material indicates that such North Korean warnings have been issued routinely for a number of years. There was a step-up in these charges in 1966 at about the same time Pyongyang began increasing its overall belligerence, thus adding to the psychological and military pressures which North Korea had been applying against South Korea. The charges were registered against the backdrop of the program Pyongyang itself has been conducting for some time of sending agents across the seaward extensions of the Military Demarcation Line (MDL) to land in South Korea.

The United States is viewed by North Korea as the perpetrator of all these "crimes" and the boats are described as belonging to the "US side." However, when precise enough descriptions are given, it is evident that the vessels belong to South Korea which, according to Pyongyang, is simply a US puppet.

Since November 1966, claims of maritime intrusions have increased in frequency, along with charges of other nefarious activities, in order to support Pyongyang's developing propaganda thesis that the US is planning to renew the Korean war. This step-up in North Korean charges followed a North Korean Workers' Party plenum in October which marked the beginning of a much more militant policy in effecting Korean reunification on Pyongyang's terms.

Charges of intrusions by "spy vessels" or "vessels carrying spies" were broadcast on January 9 and 11, 1968. In the incident mentioned on January 11 Pyongyang claimed to have detained some boats out of the "hundreds" of boats allegedly involved, and declared that its naval craft would take "determined counter-measures" as long as "the US imperialist aggressor troops" sent spy boats to conduct reconnaissance. There was nothing to indicate that Pyongyang was referring to anything other than the fishing vessels; it would have been too soon to hint of retaliation against the Pueblo, which did not actually begin its mission until January 12. Nor was there any allusion to the Pueblo's activity on January 20 when the latest allegations were reviewed by the North Korean general before the MAC. The subsequent North Korean broadcast did not mention detaining any vessels, and the general's threat of retaliation for all types of provocations was routine and less specific than it had been in December.

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South Korean fishermen, with patrol boats to protect and monitor their movements, have been fishing in these international waters for many years, sometimes north of the extension of the MDL, but there has been no sudden increase in activity to provoke the North Korean reaction. Our best judgment is that Pyongyang's protest campaign was a part--and a relatively small one-- of its generally belligerent propaganda posture and that its concern and more aggressive response to the presence of the vessels themselves was a reflection of Pyongyang's own intensified infiltration effort which was being conducted in large part by sea.

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Question 9. The text of any statements made by the North Korean representative to the Korean Armistice Commission concerning provocation by either the United States or South Korea. It is the Committee's understanding that on or about January 20 the North Korean representative warned the United States representative about such activities as the Pueblo's mission. Was that information made available to the Department of State? At what time?

Answer. The summary report on the January 20 meeting of the Military Armistice Commission had not reached the Department of State at the time of the Pueblo incident. For the reasons explained below, it was transmitted in the normal fashion through military channels and reached the Department only after the seizure of the Pueblo. Highlights of MAC meetings are transmitted, when they seem to be of an urgent or unusual character, by a telegram from our Embassy in Seoul to the Department. Since the meeting of January 20 appeared quite routine, no such telegram was sent. An analysis of North Korean charges at these MAC meetings follows. 1/

* * * * *

During the past fourteen years the North Korean representative at the Korean Military Armistice Commission have frequently charged the UN Command with incursions of naval craft into North Korean waters. Since September 11, 1964, North Korea has also alleged the intrusion of numerous "spy boats" and has specifically demanded that such intrusions stop. These references to "spy boats" have usually been made during North Korean propaganda attacks on South Korean fishing vessels in North Korean waters, an indication that Pyongyang's warnings have been directed at alleged South Korean intelligence operations.

Naval Intrusions a Common Theme. During the meetings of the Korean Military Armistice Commission (MAC), North Korea has frequently charged the United Nations Command (UNC) with incursions into North Korean waters. Charges of naval incursions,

1/ This analysis is based on a review of the minutes of the 22 MAC meetings for 1967 and for a number of the meetings from 1954-66. We believe that this review gives an accurate indication of North Korean views for this period.

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as opposed to land-based operations through the DMZ, were mentioned infrequently during the 1954-1960 meetings of the MAC. (The only one noticed in our selective survey occurred in 1958.) In 1961, however, North Korea began to voice frequent charges of naval intrusions, probably in order to give substance to Pyongyang's thesis that the UNC was acting in "flagrant violation" of the Korean Armistice Agreement. Details of such intrusions were usually sparse, but North Korea generally claimed that ships of "your side" had intruded into North Korean waters, and that in some cases they had attacked North Korean fishing boats or taken part in bombardments of the North Korean coast.

More recently, on January 21, 1967, the North Korean delegate protested strongly over an incident involving PCE No. 56, a South Korean vessel sunk on January 19 by Communist guns while allegedly in North Korean waters. The North Korean delegate demanded that the "other side" issue an apology, give a guarantee against a recurrence, punish the "culprits," and make a report to the MAC. He referred to earlier North Korean warnings regarding naval intrusions and concluded that new intrusions "will only bring nothing but death to you." In subsequent meetings of the MAC, the North Korean delegate frequently referred to the fate of the PCE No. 56 in charging alleged new naval incursions, citing it as a "lesson" which the UNC should heed in the future.

Naval Incursions Adduced As Evidence UNC Wants New War.
At various times, North Korea used alleged sea intrusions to support its general charge that the US was attempting to wreck the Korean armistice and planned to start a new Korean War. As early as December 15, 1961, the North Korean representative charged that "Making frantic preparation for war, however, your side dispatched its naval vessels into the coastal waters of our side to perpetrate the usual hostile provocations again on November 26 and 27, on December 2 and 5, 1961....."

During 1967 North Korea often reiterated the "new war" theme, accompanying it with various vague threats. On April 8, the North Korean delegate warned that if the UNC was going to "play with fire, we will control you with fire....." He then referred once again to the PCE No. 56 incident, citing it

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"your side systematically infiltrated thousands of South Korean fishing boats in October and November last alone." The North Korean delegate noted that his side had already detained several such ships and warned that if such acts were repeated, "you must be ready to receive due blows." Similar charges of "spy boats" were made during the December 1967 and January 1968 meetings of the MAC.

North Korean representatives routinely referred to the boats or ships of "your side," whether such vessels were Korean ships under UN command or not, since in the view of the Korean Communists the ROK is only a puppet subservient to the U.S. At no time prior to the Pueblo incident was there a specific citation of an American vessel (though the North Korean representatives have specifically accused the U.S. of introducing modern weapons into Korea).

Despite the absence of such specific citations, it might be asked whether the timing of the "spy-boat" charges might not be related to the transits of the USS Banner through the waters off North Korea (see the answer to Question 4). These transits do not, in fact, correlate well with the "spy-boat" charges. After the first Banner transit in March 1966, the next reference which could reasonably be said to perhaps apply seems to have come in October, a seven-month gap, and it only said "naval craft," not "spy-boats." Between the second and third Banner transits (February and May, 1967) there was not even a "naval craft" charge. This vague and fairly frequent charge did reappear in the meeting in late May, the only occasion on which its timing was closely associated with a Banner voyage. However, the "naval craft" charge, and the naval bombardment charge as well, continued to appear through the summer and autumn of 1967 even though there were no more Banner voyages.

Thus, the timing of these "spy-boat" charges, the language of the charges, the absence of any reference to US ships, the association of these charges with "bombardments" and other alleged activities of South Korean fishing ships and naval craft --all these make it evident that it was not electronic intelligence ships which the North Koreans had on their minds. The North Korean charges may well have been made simply to intimidate South Korean fishermen and discourage them from entering fishing grounds north of the DMZ.

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as evidence that "the warning of the Korean people to aggressors has never been an empty word in history." Later, on October 2, while charging additional naval intrusions, he commented at length on the theme that the UNC was attempting to wreck the Armistice and reiterated the notion that the other side would be responsible "for all the consequences arising therefrom."

Emphasis Shifts to "Spy Boats." Since 1964, Pyongyang has also charged the UNC with the infiltration of "spy boats" into North Korean waters. Such charges have coincided with North Korean allegations that the "other side" is using South Korean fishing boats as a screen for intelligence operations. At the 188th session of the MAC on September 11, 1964, the North Korean delegate claimed that "your side again recently committed a hostile act of infiltrating naval craft and armed espionage vessels into our coastal waters." At the 204th meeting of the MAC on March 30, 1965, the North Korean representative claimed that a group of South Korean agents had been captured after landing in North Korea and asked: "How will your side deal with your violations of having infiltrated as armed spy group into our coastal waters?" On February 3, 1966, the North Korean delegate returned to the same theme, charging that "your side committed in the past provocative acts of incessantly dispatching numerous armed bandits and espionage and sabotage elements disguised as fishermen to our coastal waters in a devious attempt to commit espionage and subversive acts against our side and to deleberately create tension in both eastern and western coastal waters....."

During the first ten months of 1967, the North Korean delegate made no further mention of "spy boats." However, beginning with the November 7, 1967, meeting of the MAC, he made this subject a major theme of his discourse by charging that the other side had dispatched "large numbers of armed espionage bandits to our coastal waters." Although he was imprecise regarding the nationality of such ships or their exact type, he suggested that they were South Korean intelligence ships by again charging the UNC with using Korean fishermen to commit espionage. Further evidence that he meant South Korean vessels is indicated by his November 7 statement that