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CODEWORD MATERIAL~~

24

17 June 1955

~~TOP SECRET~~

MEMORANDUM FOR THE MEMBERS OF USCIB:

Subject: Compromises of COMINT Information.

Reference: CIBD #9 (Revised) dated 4 February 1954.

1. The enclosed summaries of fourteen (14) hitherto unreported compromises of COMINT information due to ineffective communications security is circulated for information.

2. A brief study of all compromises occurring during 1954 will be prepared and circulated as soon as all final reports are received.

William R Colman

for H. D. JONES

Acting Executive Secretary, USCIB

Enclosure
a/s

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COMPROMISES OF COMINT INFORMATION

1. On 14 August 1954, a COMINT compromise occurred at Detachment 2, 1st Radio Squadron, Mobile, Wakkanai, Japan, during off-line PYTHON operation. On that date a portion of a CONFIDENTIAL message was transmitted in monoalphabetic substitution cipher to the 1st Radio Squadron, Mobile, Misawa Air Base, Japan, over a landline circuit presumed vulnerable to interception. The compromised information involves [redacted]

[redacted] but is not considered a serious disclosure. While the message was being enciphered the one-time key tape became torn, and stuck over the sensing pins of the transmitter distributor. The operator failed to completely check decrypt the message, and the last seven lines were subsequently transmitted in monoalphabetic substitution. A contributing factor to this occurrence was a shortage of communication center personnel which necessitated encryption and check decryption by the same operator. The Commander, Detachment 2, 1st Radio Squadron, Mobile reports that the operator responsible has been reprimanded, and has received additional training in proper communications procedures. The training program has been revised with particular emphasis on the use of proper procedures, and a formal requisition submitted for additional personnel to alleviate the existing shortage. Statements from the individuals concerned have been received, and support the facts as presented by the Commanding Officer. A brief description of the station's training program for communication security as applied to COMINT has also been received, and appears to provide adequate training in the cryptographic procedures applicable to this particular type of violation.

2. On 25 October 1954, a COMINT compromise occurred at the 6910th Security Group, Landsberg, Germany, during on-line PYTHON operation. On that date a portion of a TOP SECRET codeword message was transmitted in the clear to the 6961st Communications Squadron, San Antonio, Texas, over a circuit composed of radio and wire links vulnerable to interception. This compromise reveals some [redacted]

[redacted] but is not considered a serious disclosure. Radio interference interrupted the transmission of the message. The receiving station, 6961st Communications Squadron, then requested a circuit test in "open-uppers". The transmitting operator switched the cipher switch off, and jammed the "tot head" to hold the circuit open. At this point he neglected to replace the plain text tape with a test tape, and proceeded to switch the cipher switch to the "on" position. Before the plain text tape was removed the interference was overcome, and since the circuit was being held open, a portion of the message was transmitted in the clear before the operator could turn off the cipher switch. The Commander, 6910th Security Group reports that the operator responsible has been disciplined under Article 15 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, and supervisory personnel responsible for establishing operating procedures have received written reprimands. In addition, proper circuit testing procedures have been made known to all communications personnel, and regular checks are made

by trick chiefs to insure that all operators adhere to these procedures. Statements from the individuals concerned have been received, and support the facts as presented by the Commanding Officer. A summary of the station's training program for communication security as applied to COMINT has also been received, and is considered to provide adequate training in that phase of circuit operation applicable to this particular type of violation.

3. On 30 October 1954, a COMINT compromise occurred at the 8606th Administrative Area Unit, Herzogenaurach, Germany. On that date an operator's note, containing SECRET information, was transmitted in the clear to the Army Security Agency, Europe over a wire circuit presumed vulnerable to interception. This compromise indicates our cooperation

[redacted] In this instance, [redacted] was being received in garble at the 8606th Administrative Area Unit. An informal note, asking the transmitting operator to check the tape, was prepared by the supervisor. The circuit operator, upon receiving the prepared tape from his supervisor, held down the transmitter distributor armature in order to transmit the request in the clear. The equipment involved had been modified to prevent clear text transmissions via the transmitter distributor, but by holding down the armature the operator bypassed this modification, and clear text was transmitted. The Commanding Officer, 8606th Administrative Area Unit reports that appropriate disciplinary action has been taken against the operator responsible. In addition, all operators have received further instruction emphasizing the necessity for adhering to prescribed procedures, and have been cautioned against making clear text transmissions of any nature, except those required to establish cipher contact. Statements from the individuals concerned have been received, and support the facts as presented by the Officer in Charge. A brief description of the instructions given communications personnel in regard to on-line correction requests has also been received, and appears to adequately cover this phase of communication security.

4. On 31 October 1954, a COMINT compromise occurred at the Army Security Agency, Europe, during on-line DAPHNE operation. On that date portions of two SECRET codeword messages were transmitted in monoalphabetic substitution cipher to the Army Security Agency, Austria, over a wire circuit presumed vulnerable to interception. This compromise is considered serious since the information involved contained [redacted]

[redacted] The violation, in this instance, resulted from a malfunction of the ASAM 2-1, which allowed the rotors to stop stepping. It has been determined that this malfunction was due to excessive wear on parts of the ASAM 2-1, which resulted in failure of the

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main operating shaft to step the rotors. The Chief, Army Security Agency, Europe, has recommended that an interlock mechanism, to detect malfunctions of this type, be developed as a modification to the ASAM 2-1. The feasibility of such a modification is now under study by this Agency. Statements from the individuals concerned have been received, and support the facts as presented by the Commanding Officer. Since this violation involved an equipment malfunction, a copy of the station's maintenance program has been reviewed, and found to insure adequately regular inspections of cryptographic equipment.

5. On 20 November 1954, a COMINT compromise occurred at the 10th Radio Squadron, Mobile, Chicksands Priory, England, during on-line DAPHNE operation. On that date a portion of a SECRET codeword message was transmitted in the clear to the 37th Radio Squadron, Mobile, Kirknewton, Scotland, over a landline circuit presumed vulnerable to interception. This compromise reveals a possible [redacted] but does not seriously affect COMINT efforts. The clear text transmission, in this instance, resulted from use of an uncontrolled power source. The cryptographic equipment involved was wired so that the power to the transmitter distributor motor was controlled by the teletypewriter repeater-mixing set (AN/FGQ-1M). This wiring arrangement precluded the possibility of a clear text transmission through the transmitter distributor. Sometime prior to this compromise, some unknown person removed the power cord of the transmitter distributor from the AN/FGQ-1M power source, and connected it to an uncontrolled source of power so that a test tape could be run through the transmitter distributor. The power cord evidently was not returned to the proper power source after the test was completed. The operator on duty at the time of the compromise, after receiving a break from the distant operator, switched his equipment to the "text" position, which would ordinarily render the transmitter distributor inoperative. Since an uncontrolled source of power was being utilized, however, a portion of the message was transmitted in the clear before the operator could manually shut off the transmitter distributor. The Commander, 10th Radio Squadron, Mobile reports that the power cords of the transmitter distributors have been shortened to allow access only to controlled power outlets. In addition, instructions have been issued to the effect that only maintenance personnel will send test tapes. Statements from the individuals concerned have been received, and support the facts as presented by the Commanding Officer. Since the facts indicate that this violation resulted from an error by maintenance personnel, the final report received from the violating station did not contain the local training program for communication security. The remedial action described above appears adequate to prevent a recurrence.

6. On 10 December 1954, a COMINT compromise occurred at the 327th Communications Reconnaissance Company, Kyoto, Japan, during on-line DAPHNE operation. On that date a portion of a SECRET codeword message was transmitted in the clear to the Army Security Agency, Far East, over a landline circuit presumed vulnerable to interception. This compromise

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does not seriously affect COMINT efforts, but does reveal a

In this instance the message was being transmitted from the Army Security Agency, Far East, to the 327th Communications Reconnaissance Company, when cipher contact was lost. In an effort to regain cipher contact, the receiving operator sent a test tape with the equipment in the "text" position. After being informed by the transmitting station that the test was being properly received, the operator at the 327th Communications Reconnaissance Company transmitted a portion of the message, while still in the "text" position, to indicate from which point a retransmission was required. The Commanding Officer, 327th Communications Reconnaissance Company, reports that the operator responsible has been reprimanded, transferred to a less responsible position, and has received additional instruction in communication center operations. In addition, the equipment involved is now modified to prevent clear text transmissions through the transmitter distributor while the equipment is in the "text" position. Statements from the individuals concerned have been received, and support the facts as presented by the Commanding Officer. A short summary of the station's training program for communication security as applied to COMINT has also been received, and appears to include sufficient training in the proper operation of on-line circuits.

7. On 11 December 1954, a COMINT compromise occurred at the National Security Agency Communications Center, during on-line PYTHON operation. On that date a portion of a SECRET codeword message was transmitted in the clear to the 3rd Radio Squadron, Mobile, Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska, over a landline circuit presumed vulnerable to interception. This compromise revealed the title "Russian Military Technical Summary", which in itself is not considered a serious disclosure. During transmission of the message by the 3rd Radio Squadron, Mobile, a garble appeared on the National Security Agency receive side of the circuit. The receiving operator, not realizing that the send side of the circuit was in the "text" position, transmitted four words of the message to indicate to the distant operator at which point the garble had occurred. The Chief, Operations Division reports that all communications personnel have been cautioned against a recurrence, and have been reminded of the proper operating procedures. Statements from the individuals concerned have been received, and support the facts as presented by the Officer in Charge. The Communications Center's training program for communication security as applied to COMINT has also been reviewed, and it furnishes operators with adequate instruction in the correct procedures for on-line communication.

8. On 13 December 1954, a COMINT compromise occurred at the Army Security Agency, Europe, during on-line PYTHON operation. On that date a portion of a SECRET codeword message was transmitted in the clear to the National Security Agency over a circuit composed of landline and under-water cable links presumed vulnerable to interception. This compromise reveals our knowledge of the

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and is considered a serious disclosure.

[redacted] The violation, in this instance, resulted from failure of the transmitting operator to switch to the "cipher" position before resuming transmission. The equipment had previously been switched to the "text" position for the purpose of a circuit check. After being informed by the receiving station that the circuit was functioning properly, the operator at the Army Security Agency, Europe, began transmission of the message while still in the "text" position. The Chief, Army Security Agency, Europe, reports that the operator responsible has been reprimanded for negligence in the performance of assigned duties, and all communication center personnel are constantly reminded of the need for observing operating procedures and exercising extreme caution in the handling of classified material. In addition, the equipment has been modified so that the transmitter distributor is inoperative while the equipment is in other than the "cipher" position. Statements from the individuals concerned have been received, and support the facts as presented by the Commanding Officer. A complete copy of the station's training program for communication security as applied to COMINT has also been received, and that portion dealing with the operation of on-line circuits provides operators with adequate training in that phase of communication security.

9. On 16 December 1954, a COMINT compromise occurred at the 84th Radio Squadron, Mobile, Shiroi Air Base, Japan, during on-line PYTHON operation. On that date a portion of a TOP SECRET codeword message was transmitted in the clear to the 29th Radio Squadron, Mobile, Clark Air Force Base, Philippines, over a radio circuit vulnerable to interception. Although this compromise is not considered a serious disclosure, it does reveal the fact that we are [redacted]

[redacted] While transmitting the message to the 29th Radio Squadron, Mobile, cipher contact was lost. Both stations then switched to the "text" position in an effort to regain cipher contact. The operator at the 84th Radio Squadron, Mobile, upon receiving a request for a partial retransmission, transmitted a line of the message without switching back to the "cipher" position. The Commander, 84th Radio Squadron, Mobile reports that the operator responsible has been verbally reprimanded, and that a new trick chief notice, emphasizing the proper procedures for handling correction requests, has been circulated to all communications personnel, and added to the on-the-job training program. Statements from the individuals concerned have been received, and support the facts as presented by the Commanding Officer. A brief description of the station's revised training program for communication security as applied to COMINT has also been received, and the instruction given operators in the proper method of requesting on-line corrections appears adequate.

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10. On 22 December 1954, a COMINT compromise occurred at the 2nd Radio Squadron, Mobile, Darmstadt, Germany, during on-line DAPHNE operation. On that date a portion of a CONFIDENTIAL message was transmitted in the clear to the 6910th Security Group, Landsberg, Germany, over a landline circuit presumed vulnerable to interception. [redacted]

[redacted], but does not seriously affect COMINT efforts. In this instance the message had been completely transmitted from the 6910th Security Group to the 2nd Radio Squadron, Mobile. The operator at the 2nd Radio Squadron, Mobile was asked to query the 6910th Security Group in order to verify a portion of the message. To accomplish this he prepared a tape to establish contact, a tape giving his rotor set, and a tape containing the classified query. Using the first tape, the operator contacted the 6910th Security Group. At this point he inadvertently picked up the query tape rather than the tape giving his rotor set, and transmitted it in the clear. The Commander, 2nd Radio Squadron, Mobile reports that the following action has been taken to prevent similar violations:

- a. The operator responsible has received a written reprimand for negligence.
- b. No classified tapes will be prepared at the on-line position, and all classified tapes will be stamped with the proper classification.
- c. All informal on-line conferences will be supervised by the trick chief.

Statements from the individuals concerned have been received, and support the facts as presented by the Commanding Officer. A brief description of the station's training program for communication security as applied to COMINT has also been received, and seems to adequately cover the phase of circuit operation applicable to this particular type of violation.

11. On 23 December 1954, a COMINT compromise occurred at the 6961st Communications Squadron, San Antonio, Texas, during on-line PYTHON operation. On that date a portion of a SECRET codeword message was transmitted in the clear to the 3rd Radio Squadron, Mobile, Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska, over a landline circuit presumed vulnerable to interception. This compromise [redacted]

[redacted] but does not involve the complete notation. This disclosure does not seriously affect COMINT efforts. While the message was being transmitted from the 3rd Radio Squadron, Mobile, a garble appeared on the 6961st Communications Squadron receive side of the circuit. The receiving operator, failing to realize that his send side of the circuit was in the "text" position, transmitted a portion of the message to indicate to the distant operator at which point the garble had occurred. The standing operating procedure for handling on-line correction requests

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at the 6961st Communications Squadron requires reference by line number. A contributing factor to this occurrence was a shortage of operating and supervisory personnel, which necessitated the use of a relatively inexperienced operator on an on-line circuit. The operator responsible, although he had no formal crypto training, had completed the minimum on-the-job training requirements. If closer supervision had been available, this compromise might not have occurred. The Commander, 6961st Communications Squadron reports that additional personnel have been requested, that, whenever possible, formal training will be provided for all new operators, and that on-the-job training requirements have been revised to extend over a longer period of time. Statements from the individuals concerned have been received, and support the facts as presented by the Commanding Officer. A copy of the station's training program for communication security as applied to COMINT has also been received and it places particular emphasis on the proper method of making on-line correction requests.

12. On 29 December 1954, related COMINT compromises occurred at the 6961st Communications Squadron, San Antonio, Texas, and Headquarters, Special Security Office, Strategic Air Command, Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska, during on-line GALATEA operation. On that date portions of two TOP SECRET codeword messages were transmitted in the clear over a landline circuit presumed vulnerable to interception. These compromises, while not considered serious, reveal our intercept of tactical air communications and interest in and analysis of airborne and transport air activity, but do not identify the nationality of the intercepted information. After the first of the messages had been completely transmitted from the 6961st Communications Squadron to the Strategic Air Command, operations were temporarily discontinued while maintenance was being performed at the Strategic Air Command end of the circuit. When maintenance had been completed, the operator at the Strategic Air Command, while in the "text" position, transmitted a portion of the previous message to indicate to the distant operator which parts of the message required correction. The operator at the 6961st Communications Squadron, not noticing that his equipment was in the "text" position, transmitted the requested correction and the heading of the next message before realizing his error. Remedial action taken by the Special Security Officer, Strategic Air Command consisted of appropriate disciplinary action and additional training of the operator responsible in the correct method of making on-line correction requests. The Commanding Officer, 6961st Communications Squadron has limited corrective action to a verbal reprimand, since the operator involved has had three years cryptographic experience with no record of having committed a previous violation. Statements from the individuals concerned at both stations have been received, and support the facts as presented by the Officers in Charge. A complete outline of the training program now in effect at the 6961st Communications Squadron has been received, and provides sufficient instruction in the proper operation of on-line circuits. The Special Security Officer, Strategic Air Command has forwarded a brief description of the local training program, and it appears to adequately

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cover the communication procedures violated by this occurrence.

13. On 2 January 1955, a COMINT compromise occurred at the 3rd Radio Squadron, Mobile, Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska, during on-line PYTHON operation. On that date a portion of a CONFIDENTIAL message was transmitted in the clear to the National Security Agency, over a landline circuit presumed vulnerable to interception. The compromised information

[redacted] but does not seriously affect the COMINT effort. The violation, in this instance, resulted from failure of the torn tape stop mechanism to deactivate the equipment after the one-time key tape had stopped advancing through the transmitter distributor. Maintenance personnel at the 3rd Radio Squadron, Mobile have determined that this malfunction was caused by improper adjustment of the torn tape stop mechanism. The Commanding Officer, 3rd Radio Squadron, Mobile reports that the torn tape stop mechanism will be checked periodically to insure correct adjustment. Statements from the individuals concerned have been received, and support the facts as presented by the Officer in Charge. Due to the nature of this occurrence, the station's training program for communication security as applied to COMINT was not required. It is felt that regular maintenance inspection of the torn tape stop mechanism constitutes satisfactory preventive action.

14. On 4 January 1955, a COMINT compromise occurred at the 84th Radio Squadron, Mobile, Shiroi Air Base, Japan, during on-line PYTHON operation. On that date a portion of a COMINT message was transmitted in the clear to Detachment 1, 29th Radio Squadron, Mobile, Kadena Air Base, Ryukyu Islands over a radio circuit vulnerable to interception. While this compromise does not seriously affect the COMINT effort, it does [redacted] This violation resulted from failure of the receiving operator to adhere to the existing procedure for requesting message corrections. Upon receiving a garble from Detachment 1, 29th Radio Squadron, Mobile, the operator at the 84th Radio Squadron, Mobile interrupted the transmission, and, not realizing that his send side of the circuit was in the "text" position, quoted a portion of the message to indicate to the distant operator at which point the garble had occurred. The Commanding Officer, 84th Radio Squadron, Mobile reports that the operator responsible has received a written reprimand, and further states that the feasibility of installing lights over the cryptographic equipment to constantly remind the operator of the position of the "text/cipher" switch is being investigated. Statements from the individuals concerned have been received, and support the facts as presented by the Officer in Charge. A comprehensive outline of the station's training program for communication security as applied to COMINT has also been received, and contains adequate instruction in the proper operation of on-line circuits.

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