

~~TOP SECRET~~

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CODEWORD MATERIAL~~

18 April 1955

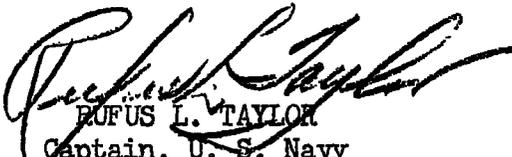
~~TOP SECRET~~MEMORANDUM FOR THE MEMBERS OF USCIB:

Subject: Compromises of COMINT Information.

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

1. The enclosed summaries of eighteen (18) 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.



RUFUS L. TAYLOR
Captain, U. S. Navy
Executive Secretary, USCIB

Enclosure
a/s

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CODEWORD MATERIAL~~

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~~HANDLE VIA COMINT CHANNELS ONLY~~

Declassified and approved for release by NSA on 02-10-2014 pursuant to E.O. 13526

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COMPROMISES OF COMINT INFORMATION

1. On 1 June 1954, a COMINT compromise occurred at the 6910th Security Group, Landsberg, Germany, during on-line PYTHON operation. On that date a portion of a 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 presumed vulnerable to interception. The compromised information is believed to be chatter on a Satellite link, from which little can be inferred except that information from some communications link is being intercepted and reported. This clear text transmission resulted from failure of the transmitting operator to switch his equipment to the "cipher" position before beginning his transmission. A contributing factor to this occurrence was the fact that, on the very morning of the violation, a modification, specifically designed to prevent such plain language transmission, was removed from the cryptographic equipment. Remedial action taken by the Commander, 6910th Security Group consisted of the immediate reinstallation of the modification and issue of instructions to the operators placing greater emphasis on the use of proper operating procedures by all on-line operators. Statements from the individuals concerned were included in the report of investigation received from the violating station, and support the facts as presented by the Commanding Officer. However, a description of the station's training program for communication security as applied to COMINT has not been received, due to the fact that the final report was prepared prior to receipt of the National Security Agency Circular which requires this information.

2. On 16 August 1954, a COMINT compromise occurred at the 501st Communications Reconnaissance Group, Yongsan, Korea, during on-line DAPHNE operation. On that date a portion of a CONFIDENTIAL message was transmitted in the clear over communication facilities composed of wire and underwater cable links vulnerable to interception. The compromise of this information revealed one unidentified call sign, and its association with the National Security Agency. This clear text transmission resulted from failure of the transmitting operator to adhere to existing procedures. While transmitting a message to the Army Security Agency, Far East, the operator at the 501st CRG was informed by the distant operator that he was garbling, and was instructed to switch to the "text" position for the purpose of a circuit test. Upon resuming transmission, after the test was completed, the 501st Communications Reconnaissance Group operator neglected to switch back to the "cipher" position, and transmitted plain language until stopped by the operator at the Army Security Agency, Far East. The Commanding Officer, 501st Communications Reconnaissance Group, in order to reduce the likelihood of a recurrence, has taken action to orientate all communications personnel thoroughly in the use of proper operating procedures, and impress upon them the possible consequences of becoming lax while performing their duties.

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Statements from the individuals concerned have been received, and support the facts as presented by the Commanding Officer. The Commanding Officer, 501st Communications Reconnaissance Group, reports that an extensive local training program has been conducted whereby Communication Center personnel have received review instructions from the Officer in Charge, concerning the proper handling of COMINT via cryptographic communications facilities.

3. On 2 September 1954, a COMINT compromise occurred at Vint Hill Farms Station, Warrenton, Virginia. On that date a portion of an International Commercial Radio Daily Coverage Report (ICR DCR) was transmitted in the clear to the National Security Agency over a landline circuit vulnerable to interception. The information compromised reveals our knowledge of ICR call signs, frequencies, and schedules. This compromise occurred while the Vint Hill Farms operator was utilizing circuit terminal equipment to produce additional copies of the report for courier delivery to the National Security Agency. During the process, the line/local switch was inadvertently changed to the line position, placing the equipment on-line with the National Security Agency. The clear text transmission continued until it was broken by the NSA operator. The Commanding Officer, Vint Hill Farms, stated in the final report of the violation that all communications center personnel have been directed not to use circuit terminal equipment for any purpose other than authorized transmissions. In addition, further training has been given to communications personnel in the proper use of the installed equipment. Statements from the individuals concerned have been received, and support the facts as presented by the Commanding Officer. The station's training program has been described as consisting of a scheduled study of all publications applicable to the cryptosystems held, with written tests to determine comprehension. Training also includes practical application of communication principles by such means as practice enciphering and deciphering.

4. On 12 September 1954, a COMINT compromise occurred at the 6961st Communications Squadron, San Antonio, Texas, during on-line GALATEA operation. On that date a portion of a TOP SECRET codeword message was transmitted in the clear to the 6920th Security Group, Shiroy Air Base, Japan, over a circuit composed of radio and wire links vulnerable to interception.

[Redacted] The cleartext transmission resulted from failure of the operator responsible to adhere to the existing on-line break procedure. The subject message was actually being transmitted from the 6920th Security Group to the 6961st Communications Squadron. The two stations lost cipher contact and switched to the "text" position. After cipher contact had been regained, the receiving operator, not realizing his equipment was still in the "text" position, transmitted a portion of the message to indicate



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to the distant operator from which point to resume transmission. The Commander, 6961st Communications Squadron, reports that the operator involved has been disciplined under Article 15 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice. Statements from the individuals concerned have been received, and support the facts as presented by the Commanding Officer. The responsible operator was experienced and ordinarily very capable. A comprehensive description of the station's training program for communication security as applied to COMINT has also been received, and provides sufficient training in that phase of circuit operation applicable to this particular type of violation.

5. On 12 September 1954, two COMINT compromises occurred at the 3rd Radio Squadron, Mobile, Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska, during on-line PYTHON operation. In each instance a portion of a message, one classified CONFIDENTIAL and the other SECRET codeword, was transmitted in monoalphabetic substitution cipher to the National Security Agency over a landline circuit vulnerable to interception. One compromise,



Both of these violations resulted from the one-time key tape sticking over the sensing pins of the transmitter distributor. The torn tape stop mechanism, which would have prevented these compromises, had been temporarily removed from the circuit for repair and adjustment. The Commander, 3rd Radio Squadron, Mobile, reports that the responsible operators have been disciplined under Article 15 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice. In addition, all operators were cautioned to be on the alert for this type of occurrence, and maintenance personnel have completed a thorough check and adjustment of the equipment involved. Statements from the individuals concerned have been received, and support the facts as presented by the Commanding Officer. The violating station has provided a complete outline of the training program for communication security as applied to COMINT. That phase of circuit operation applicable to this particular type of violation is adequately covered.

6. On 17 September 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 10th Radio Squadron, Mobile, Chicksands Priory, England, over a circuit composed of radio and wire links vulnerable to interception.



Taken by itself, however, this information is meaningless, since it is an arbitrary National Security Agency designation. The subject message

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was actually being transmitted from the 10th Radio Squadron, Mobile, to the 6961st Communications Squadron. The two stations lost cipher contact and switched to the "text" position. The receiving operator, after cipher contact was regained, failed to realize that his equipment was still in the "text" position and transmitted a portion of the message to indicate to the distant operator from which point to resume transmission. The Commander, 6961st Communications Squadron, reports that the importance of adhering to the prescribed on-line break procedure has been stressed to all squadron operators. The operator responsible has been disciplined under Article 15 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice. Statements from the individuals concerned have been received, and support the facts as presented by the Commanding Officer. A detailed breakdown of the station's training program for communication security as applied to COMINT has also been received, and indicates that sufficient emphasis is being placed on that phase of circuit operation applicable to this particular violation.

7. On 20 September 1954, a COMINT compromise occurred at the Army Security Agency, Europe, located in Frankfurt, Germany, during on-line DAPHNE operation. On that date a portion of a SECRET codeword message was transmitted in the clear to the 502nd Communications Reconnaissance Group, Heilbronn, Germany, over a landline circuit vulnerable to inter-

[REDACTED]

COMINT information can be inferred from this compromise only by recovery of our system of assigning case notations, but since case notations have been so frequently compromised in the past, our system of allocation may be at least partially recovered. The subject message was actually being transmitted from the 502nd Communications Reconnaissance Group to the Army Security Agency, Europe. The operator at the Army Security Agency, Europe, upon receiving a garble, switched his equipment to the "standby" position and stopped the transmission. Not realizing that the equipment was still in the "standby" position, he proceeded to transmit a line of the message to indicate to the distant operator from which point a retransmission was required. The Chief, Army Security Agency, Europe, reports that appropriate disciplinary action has been taken against the operator responsible, and that all communication center personnel have been reappraised of the importance of strict adherence to prescribed regulations. Statements from the individuals concerned have been received, and support the facts as presented by the Commanding Officer. The operator responsible was considered fully qualified by his superiors, and upon questioning stated that he was aware of the proper procedures, but was not mentally alert at the time of the occurrence. A comprehensive description of the station's training program for communication security as applied to COMINT has also been received, and the training in that phase of circuit operation involved is adequate.



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8. On 24 September 1954, a COMINT compromise occurred at the Army Security Agency, Europe, located in Frankfurt, Germany, during on-line DAPHNE operation. On that date a portion of a SECRET codeword message was transmitted in the clear to the 502nd Communications Reconnaissance Group, Heilbronn, Germany, over a landline circuit vulnerable to interception. This compromise revealed analysis of Russian communications, and some knowledge of the order-of-battle of Russian military problems. The subject message was actually being transmitted from the 502nd Communications Reconnaissance Group to the Army Security Agency, Europe, while the cipher component (ASAM 2-1) of the Army Security Agency, Europe, transmit side of the circuit was out for repair. The Army Security Agency, Europe, operator received a garble, and not realizing that the ASAM 2-1 was missing from his send position, transmitted a portion of the message to indicate to the distant operator the point at which the garble appeared. A contributing factor to this occurrence was the lack of proper supervision, due to the fact that a shortage of communication center personnel necessitated the use of supervisory personnel to operate crypto positions. The Chief, Army Security Agency, Europe, reports that appropriate disciplinary action has been taken against the personnel responsible, and that in the future supervisory personnel will perform only supervisory duties, and will not be used as operators. Statements from the individuals involved have been received, and support the facts as presented by the Commanding Officer. The violating station has submitted a copy of the current communication security training program. It provides adequate training in the phase of circuit operation which is applicable to this particular compromise. As a result of this specific occurrence, all communications personnel have been tested to redetermine their capabilities.

9. On 24 September 1954, a COMINT compromise occurred at the Army Security Agency, Europe, located in Frankfurt, Germany during on-line PYTHON operation. On that date a portion of a SECRET codeword message was transmitted in monoalphabetic substitution cipher to the National Security Agency over a circuit composed of landline and underwater cable links vulnerable to interception.

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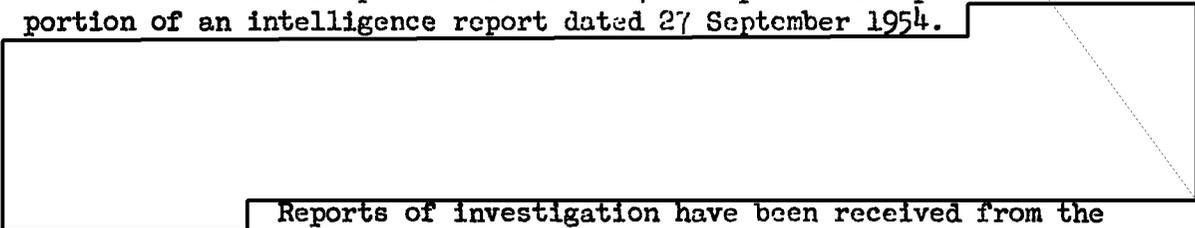
In this instance the compromise may be attributed to negligence of the transmitting operator in permitting the one-time key tape to run through the last segment, and to become stuck over the sensing pins of the transmitter distributor. The circuit operator left his position temporarily to perform other duties. Such absence from his position was in direct violation of a communication center Standing Operating Procedure, which requires constant observation of the equipment while the transmitter distributor is operative. The Chief, Army Security Agency, Europe, reports that the operator responsible has been reduced in grade, and that closer supervision will be given to all operating personnel by the Trick Chief and the Duty Officer. Since this occurrence the torn tape

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stop mechanism, which is specifically designed to prevent violations of this nature, has been installed on all equipment of the type involved. Statements from the individuals concerned have been received, and support the facts as presented by the Commanding Officer. The operator responsible was fully qualified, having had nine months cryptocenter experience. The station's training program for communication security as applied to COMINT has been submitted, and provides adequate training in the proper operation of on-line circuits.

10. On 30 September 1954, a COMINT compromise occurred at the 6920th Security Group, Shiroy Air Base, Japan, during on-line PYTHON operation. On that date a portion of a TOP SECRET codeword message was allegedly transmitted in the clear to the 29th Radio Squadron, Mobile, Clark Air Force Base, Philippine Islands over a radio circuit vulnerable to interception. The information presumed exposed was a portion of an intelligence report dated 27 September 1954.



Reports of investigation have been received from the 6920th Security Group and the 29th Radio Squadron, Mobile, and are in direct conflict. The report from the 6920th Security Group concludes that a clear text transmission did not occur since the one-time key tape was at all times being fed through the transmitter distributor, and was constantly being mixed with the clear text tape. It is the opinion of the 6920th Security Group that the operator at the 29th Radio Squadron, Mobile, while attempting to break the transmission after receiving garble, switched to the "ready" position rather than the "standby" position, as claimed by the 29th Radio Squadron, Mobile. By switching to the "ready" position, which is a cipher position, it might appear that the message was being received in the clear, while actually it was being properly enciphered, and good copy was being received. In the report from the 29th Radio Squadron, Mobile, however, the operator involved and the trick chief on duty at the time definitely state, in their sworn statements, that the receive equipment was in the "standby" position at the time clear text was received, in which case the transmission itself would have to have been in the clear. Since the true facts surrounding this occurrence could not be resolved, there was no recourse but to compromise the information. Statements from the individuals concerned at both stations have been received, and support the facts as presented by the respective Commanding Officers. A complete and comprehensive description of the 6920th Security Group's training program for communication security as applied to COMINT has also been received, and provides adequate training in the proper operation of on-line circuits.

11. On 6 October 1954, a COMINT compromise occurred at the 33rd Communications Reconnaissance Company, Fort Bragg, North Carolina. On that date a message was enciphered in the DAPHNE cryptosystem using a message rotor arrangement and message rotor alignment identical to those used for enciphering a message on the previous day. As a result, two messages, each containing 125 groups, were enciphered in depth.

[Redacted]

The direct cause of this occurrence was failure of the operator who enciphered the earlier message to cross from the key list the rotor arrangement and the rotor alignment he had used, as required by the Standing Operating Procedure of the cryptocenter, as well as the operating instructions applicable to the DAPHNE cryptosystem. The Commanding Officer, 33rd Communications Reconnaissance Company, reports that a triple check log for Trick Chiefs has been established to insure the deletion of all rotor arrangements as they are used, and Trick Chiefs are now required to sign for all rotor arrangements used during their shift. In addition, a daily check is performed by the Communications Chief and the Officer in Charge. Statements from the individuals concerned have been received, and support the facts as presented by the Commanding Officer. A brief description of the Communication Center's training program for communication security has also been received, and it states that all communications personnel receive continuous training and instruction in cryptographic and message-handling procedures under the supervision of the Communications Chief. As a result of this specific compromise, renewed emphasis has been placed upon the importance of protecting COMINT information.

12. On 8 October 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 3rd Radio Squadron Mobile, Kirknewton, Scotland, over a landline circuit vulnerable to interception.

[Redacted]

The direct cause of this occurrence was non-compliance with the 10th Radio Squadron, Mobile, Standing Operating Procedure for on-line correction requests, which requires reference by line number rather than by words contained in the text. In this instance the receiving operator had run out of tape, and stopped the transmission. After changing tape reels, he proceeded to transmit the last correctly received line, while in the "text" position, to indicate to the distant operator from which point to resume transmission. The Commanding Officer, 10th Radio Squadron, Mobile, reports that the operator responsible has been relieved from duty in the Cryptographic Section, and after receiving additional training will be assigned to the Teletype Section. In the future more attention will be placed upon assignment of personnel after they have completed the Communications Training Course. Statements

from the individuals concerned have been received, and support the facts as presented by the Commanding Officer. The operator responsible for this violation had completed the communications course, but his experience as an on-line operator was limited to only ten days. A very detailed outline of the communication center training program for communication security has been received, and that portion dealing with on-line circuit operation is adequate.

13. On 22 October 1954, a COMINT compromise occurred at the Army Security Agency, Europe, during on-line DAPHNE operation. On that date a portion of a SECRET codeword message was transmitted in mono-alphabetic substitution cipher to the 502nd Communications Reconnaissance Group, Heilbronn, Germany, over a landline circuit vulnerable to interception.

[redacted] The violation, in this instance, may be attributed to a malfunction of the ASAM 2-1, which caused the rotors to stop stepping. Maintenance personnel at the Army Security Agency, Europe, have determined that screws on the main shaft support bracket worked loose from the base of the ASAM 2-1, causing the clutch throw-out lever to bind on its cam. This in turn prevented the rotor drive bar assembly from functioning. The Chief, Army Security Agency, Europe, reports that a new maintenance program, which requires a daily check of on-line ASAM 2-1 equipment, has been initiated to prevent future malfunctions of this nature. 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 rather than an operator inadvertency, a copy of the station's revised maintenance program was submitted in lieu of the training program for communication security as applied to COMINT. This maintenance program is adequate to insure regular checks of on-line equipment.

14. On 27 October 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 Two Rock Ranch Station, Petaluma, California over a landline circuit vulnerable to interception. This compromise, which is not considered serious, [redacted]

[redacted] The violation, in this instance, occurred when the National Security Agency operator, after receiving a garble and switching to the "text" position, transmitted a portion of the message in the clear to indicate to the distant operator at which point the garble appeared. The Chief, Operations Division, reports that the operator responsible has been verbally reprimanded and advised of the seriousness of his error. In addition, he has been reindoctrinated in the use of proper on-line break procedure. Statements from the individuals concerned have been received, and support the facts as presented by the Officer in Charge. A comprehensive outline of the Communication Center's training program for communication security as applied to COMINT has also been received, and includes sufficient training in the proper operation of on-line circuits.

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15. On 30 October 1954, a COMINT compromise occurred at the 8603rd Administrative Area Unit, Okinawa. On that date portions of two CONFIDENTIAL messages were enciphered in depth as a result of the use of an incorrect message rotor alignment during ORCUS cryptographic operation. The length of depth involved in each message was 1/35 characters.

[redacted] In this instance, after enciphering a message correctly, the operator misread the final message rotor alignment and entered it incorrectly on the cryptolog. This error was reflected in the following message since the incorrectly entered alignment was used to derive the beginning message rotor alignment of the new message. The Commanding Officer, 8603rd Administrative Area Unit, reports that a revision to the enciphering procedure requires the enciphering operator to carefully check, letter for letter, all alignment entries made in the cryptolog. In addition, the check-decrypting operator is now required to derive his own rotor alignments, not only for the original decipherment, but for any subsequent decipherments, regardless of the number. Statements from the individuals concerned have been received, and support the facts as presented by the Officer in Charge. A summary of the station's training program for communication security as applied to COMINT has also been received, and appears to include adequate training in that phase of cryptosecurity applicable to this particular violation.

16. On 2 November 1954, a COMINT compromise occurred at the 6920th Security Group, Shiroy Air Base, Japan, during on-line PYTHON operation. On that date a portion of a 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 consists only of unrelated call signs. The direct cause of this occurrence was non-compliance with the station's existing on-line break procedure. While receiving the subject message from the 6961st Communications Squadron, cipher contact was lost. The operator at the 6920th Security Group, after cipher contact was regained, failed to realize that his equipment was in the "text" position, and quoted a portion of the message to indicate to the transmitting operator from which point a retransmission was required. The Commander, 6920th Security Group, reports that the operator responsible has been severely reprimanded, and realizes the serious nature of his error. In addition, the proper method of referring to points of correction is being constantly emphasized. Statements from the individuals concerned have been received, and support the facts as presented by the Commanding Officer. A comprehensive description of the station's training program for communication security as applied to COMINT has also been received, and provides sufficient training in the proper operation of on-line circuits.

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