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UNCLASSIFIED TRANSMITTAL OF MATERIAL



Type: OMAL



Submitted: 20220722

TO MR. JOHN GREENEWALD, JR. 27305 W. LIVE OAK ROAD SUITE #1203 CASTAIC, CA 91384	FROM (RETURN ADDRESS) DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY 9800 SAVAGE ROAD FORT MEADE MARYLAND 20755-6000 ATTN: RAMSEY,VICKI LYNN SUITE: 6881	This transmittal may NOT be downgraded upon removal of the enclosure(s). This transmittal may NOT be declassified upon removal of the enclosure(s).	
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LN#	UNCLASSIFIED TITLE/DESCRIPTION OF ITEM	QTY	TOT COST	MFG SERIAL#	BARCODE	CLASS. OF ITEM
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CPOENP	NO	NA	Not Applicable	

SPECIAL HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS (UNCLASSIFIED)

REQUESTED BY RAMSEY,VICKI LYNN (VLRAMSE)	SIGNATURE <i>Vicki Ramsey</i>	ORG P133	PHONE (667)812-8002
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Request ID: 0001136405			Type: OMAL
RETURN TO DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY 9800 SAVAGE ROAD FORT MEADE MARYLAND 20755-6000 ATTN: RAMSEY,VICKI LYNN SUITE: 6881	FROM MR. JOHN GREENEWALD, JR. 27305 W. LIVE OAK ROAD SUITE #1203 CASTAIC, CA 91384	Receipt is hereby acknowledged for the material or documents listed under this Request ID	
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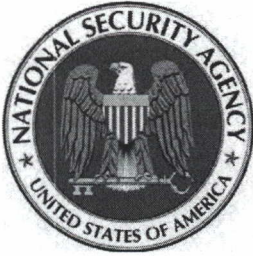
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NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY
CENTRAL SECURITY SERVICE
FORT GEORGE G. MEADE, MARYLAND 20755-6000



Serial: MDR-113289
21 July 2022

John Greenewald, Jr.
27305 W. Live Oak Rd.
Suite #1203
Castaic, CA 91384

Dear Mr. Greenewald:

This responds to your request of 27 November 2021 to have Richard A. "Dick" Chun, A Bit on the Korean COMINT Effort, 1971 reviewed for declassification. The document has been reviewed under the Mandatory Declassification Review (MDR) requirements of Executive Order (E.O.) 13526 and is enclosed. We have determined that some of the information in the material requires protection.

Some portions deleted from the document were found to be currently and properly classified in accordance with E.O. 13526. The information denied meets the criteria for classification as set forth in Section 1.4 subparagraph (c) and remains classified SECRET, as provided in Section 1.2 of E.O. 13526. The withheld information is exempt from automatic declassification in accordance with Section 3.3(h) (2) of the Executive Order.

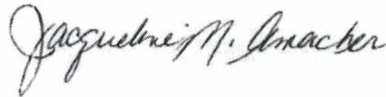
Section 3.5 (c) of E.O. 13526, allows for the protection afforded to information under the provisions of law. Therefore, information that would reveal NSA/CSS functions and activities have been protected in accordance with Section 6, Public Law 86-36 (50 U.S. Code 3605, formerly 50 U.S. Code 402 note).

Since your request for declassification has been denied you are hereby advised of this Agency's appeal procedures. Any person denied access to information may file an appeal to the NSA/CSS MDR Appeal Authority. The appeal must be postmarked no later than 60 calendar days after the date of the denial letter. The appeal shall be in writing

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addressed to the NSA/CSS MDR Appeal Authority (P133), National Security Agency, 9800 Savage Road, STE 6881, Fort George G. Meade, MD 20755-6881. The appeal shall reference the initial denial of access and shall contain, in sufficient detail and particularity, the grounds upon which the requester believes the release of information is required. The NSA/CSS MDR Appeal Authority will endeavor to respond to the appeal within 60 working days after receipt of the appeal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jacqueline M. Amacher".

Jacqueline M. Amacher
Chief
Declassification Services

Encl:
a/s

A BIT ON THE KOREAN COMINT EFFORT

By Dick Chun B34

Until the outbreak of hostilities in Korea on 25 June 1950, Korea was an almost unknown country to the average American. The course of the conflict since that time and the effect that it has had on the world for the past 20 years have brought greater familiarity, especially to those who were intimately involved. To those who may be concerned with the present stalemated, but nonetheless potentially explosive situation in Korea, here is a thumbnail sketch of the Korean COMINT effort (less the KORCOM Air problem) when it began.

Prior to 25 June 1950, when the North Korean armed forces crossed the 38th parallel, there was virtually no COMINT effort on the North Korean communications. A U. S. Army Security Agency unit in Tokyo (USM-89) began intercepting North Korean traffic and this effort was augmented by South Korean intercept (ROKN Group "M"). By the end of September 1950, ~~Headquarters, ASAFAC~~ *25 Jan 54*
and adding
summary
(Tokyo, Japan) had established an advanced element in Taegu, Korea and in mid-October the 60th Signal Service Company [] from Fort Lewis, Washington landed in Pusan. The total intercept was increased to 20 positions when [] became operational in the midst of a golf course located in the outskirts of Seoul City.

EO 3.3(h)(2)
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

With the availability of intercepted North Korean communications came the need for traffic analysts, cryptanalysts and linguists. There were no Korean linguists assigned to the Armed Forces Security Agency (AFSA, forerunner of NSA). One civilian who had studied the language while hospitalized and a female civilian of Korean descent both employed by AFSA, together with several Japanese linguists, established the first Korean language unit. It was possible to convert Japanese linguists due to the similarity of the grammar of both languages. To augment this language unit, reserve officer personnel with previous Korean language background were recalled to active duty and the Army Language School at Presidio of Monterey, California (now DLIWC) began to

~~SECRET~~

accelerate its program of training U. S. Army personnel in the Korean language.

In the interim, one of the two U. S. Army officers of Korean ancestry stationed as instructors at the Army Language School was immediately sent to Japan and assigned to ASAPAC. He was later joined by the remaining instructor and several other AFSA linguists in both Japan and in Korea.

Concurrently with the shortage of Korean linguists, there was an almost total lack of suitable Korean dictionaries and knowledge of North Korean military and technical terminology. In the beginning, terminology appearing in North Korean military communications was compiled and definitions were determined by context or by referring to Japanese and Chinese dictionaries. Other sources of terminology were derived from North Korean prisoners-of-war interrogation and captured documents. During this period, the conduct of prisoner-of-war interrogation was virtually left up to the imagination of the ASA linguists assigned to interrogate the subject. The interrogator was normally given only the military occupation speciality of the prisoner he was to interrogate.

At this point, we cannot continue with this topic without some appreciation of the cryptanalytic aspects of the North Korean COMINT effort. In the beginning phase of the conflict, North Korean encrypted messages used simple cryptosystems in large volumes and the cryptanalytic effort in the field and at NSA enjoyed high success. The North Koreans changed their systems frequently, but since the basic simplicity of the systems was retained, cryptanalytic exploitation was not a major problem. Therefore, the end-product translations produced during the latter part of 1950 and through the spring of 1951 were large in number and of extreme value to the customers. High echelon North Korean messages revealed much information about the capabilities and intentions of the North Korean forces and were considered by the U. N. High Command and field commanders to be a vitally important source of intelligence.

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Exploiting North Korean cryptosystems and producing translation reports was not hampered so much by a complex problem as by the large volume of highly significant messages which had to be published with critically limited qualified linguistic personnel. However, by the spring of 1951, North Korean cryptosystems became more sophisticated and exploitation became increasingly more difficult. This is often attributed to the intervention of Soviet advisors who apparently became alarmed over the lack of communications security by the North Koreans. But U. S. cryptanalysts successfully hurdled each obstacle until the fall of 1951 when the North Koreans first introduced high grade or "pad" traffic. The percentage of exploitable messages dropped, less plaintext was used and the overall intelligence gained through COMINT decreased. This situation continued until the truce agreement was signed in July 1953.

After the truce agreement was signed, another marked effort was made by the North Koreans to tighten up their communication security by introducing further sophistication of cryptosystems and communications procedures. Since open hostilities had ceased and the situation was becoming static, the North Koreans began less use of radio communication and more use of landline and courier or mail services.

In 1952, North Korean communications targets other than military were intercepted. North Korean internal civil communications, which in many respects resembled the Western Union, produced plaintext messages passed between major North Korean cities and industrial complexes. These messages contained a large variety of subjects ranging from personal messages to coal, lead, zinc and other mining statistics. Order of Battle information was also available when these messages were passed to or from members of the military forces.

The trend since the cessation of hostilities in Korea through late 1959, the North Korean COMINT problem became more complex in that communications procedures became more secure, cryptosystems became more complex and in turn made access to the underlying language more difficult to recover.

We have seen a COMINT problem finding its beginning with the North Korean forces crossing the 38th parallel on 25 June 1950 and developing into a full fledged problem during the hostilities; then with the end of the conflict gradually changing into a peace time COMINT effort except for couple of intense periods following the capture of the PUEBLO and shootdown of a U. S. reconnaissance aircraft. However, there is one difference - the North Koreans are not the North Koreans of 1950. They are now a modern, better equipped, better trained and experienced military machine. In addition, there are thousands of well trained and well armed Chinese Communist forces across the Yalu River just waiting to come to the aid of their North Korean friends. So, there should be no less requirements for continued watchfulness today than that which existed during the Korean War.

EO 3.3(h) (2)
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605