

Post 7-10-68

## Backlog of U.S. Intelligence Data Linked to Such Setbacks as Pueblo

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A House subcommittee reported yesterday that U. S. spies were collecting information so fast their bosses don't have time to read it. The backlog, it said, may have contributed to recent intelligence failures such as capture of the USS Pueblo.

The Defense Appropriations Subcommittee said unprocessed reports on Southeast Asia alone recently filled 517 linear feet of file drawer space at the headquarters of the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), created in 1961

five months after the disastrous Cuban invasion attempt at the Bay of Pigs.

Committee members, in published testimony on DIA operations, said the undigested information may have contributed to the Pueblo seizure, the Israeli attack on the USS Liberty and the lack of advance information about the Communist Tet offensive in Vietnam.

"Within DIA it takes an average of eight workdays from the time of receipt for a document to reach the analysts," the subcommittee reported.

"One could only conclude

that the management of your intelligence assets is in a state of complete disarray," Rep. Jamie L. Whitten (D-Miss.) told DIA officials.

The report said testimony showed that a warning message intended to divert the spy ship Liberty from its position in the Mediterranean in June 1967 was misrouted to the Philippines. It was finally sent back to the Pentagon and relayed to the Liberty after the ship had been fired on and 34 members of its crew killed.

As for the Pueblo, captured by North Korea while on an off-shore intelligence mission, Whitten said, "There are a number of areas where it looks as if somebody has fallen down."

He said proper intelligence should have provided forewarning that an attack was likely, making possible a response by South Korean air force planes which he said were only 15 or 20 minutes away.

"It has been evident from witnesses that it did not dawn on our top leaders that the Tet offensive was going to happen when it did," Whitten said, referring to the surprise Vietcong attack on Saigon and other South Vietnamese cities.

Lt. Gen. Joseph F. Carroll, DIA director, conceded the need for improvement, but insisted no "hot" information had been lost.

Carroll testified that the unprocessed data on Southeast Asia had since been cut to two feet. This could not be considered a backlog, he said, since the daily inflow amounts to three feet.