

U.S. Errors Laid to Glut Of Spy Data

WASHINGTON, July 9 (UPI)

— A House subcommittee reported today that spies for the United States were collecting information so fast that their chiefs did not have time to read it. The backlog, the panel said, may have contributed to recent intelligence failures such as capture of the intelligence ship—U.S.S. Pueblo off North Korea.

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. The agency was created in 1961 five months after the failure of the Bay of Pigs invasion.

Committee members, in published testimony on D.I.A. operations, said the undigested information might have contributed to the Pueblo seizure, the Israeli attack on the Liberty, another intelligence ship, and the lack of advance information about the Communist Tet offensive in Vietnam.

"Within D.I.A. 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," Representative Jamie L. Whitten, Democrat of Mississippi, told D.I.A. officials.

The report said testimony showed that a warning message intended to divert the Liberty from its position in the Mediterranean last June 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, Mr. Whitten said: "There are a number of areas where it looks as if somebody has fallen down."

Proper intelligence, he said, would have provided warning that an attack was likely and made it possible for a response by South Korean planes 15 or 20 minutes away.

Turning to the surprise Vietcong attack on Saigon during the Tet holidays early this year, Mr. Whitten declared: "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."

He said it was "inconceivable for 'grown and experienced men' to 'come before this committee and say it did not cross their minds that we would be hit on a holiday.'"

Lieut. Gen. Joseph F. Carroll, D.I.A. director, conceded the need for improvement but insisted no "hot" information had been lost. The unprocessed data on Southeast Asia, he said, have been cut to two feet.

General Carroll and other officials described the file material as "low grade or," all of which is studied by experts in due time. Current, emergency matter, he said, is analyzed when received.