

3 January 1969

NSA Declassification/Release Instructions on File.

MEMORANDUM FOR: Assistant Deputy Director for
Intelligence

SUBJECT : Senator Russell's Remarks on
Soviet Exploitation of USS
Pueblo

1. At your request we have examined Senator Richard Russell's remarks, as reported in the 31 December Daily News, on Soviet exploitation of equipment from the USS Pueblo. (Attached) We cannot establish when or through what channel he received the information, which differs to some extent from our knowledge.

2. Senator Russell reportedly stated that the day after the Pueblo seizure on 23 January "a couple" of the largest Soviet "freight planes" flew to North Korea, and returned to the USSR loaded with equipment from the Pueblo. Our information [redacted] indicates that a Soviet military transport flew to North Korea on 27 January. The aircraft was a naval AN-12 which arrived at Pyongyang that day and left the next. NSA

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3. This aircraft may have brought Soviet technicians to study equipment and material from the Pueblo, and to advise the North Koreans on exploitation of the take. We doubt, however, that the Soviets were permitted to take any of the gear back to the USSR then. All the evidence we have--including recent testimony from the returned crew--indicates that the North Koreans undertook to exploit the take themselves. All the interrogations were conducted by the North Korean personnel. At some later stage the North Koreans might have sought Soviet assistance and supplied equipment and documents to them.

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4. We do not know when or from whom Senator Russell got the information on which he based his statements, although he was kept generally aware of major developments during the crisis. The only publication in which the 27 January flight was mentioned by CIA was Pueblo Sitrep No. 14 of 28 January 1968. In the Sitrep, we speculated that the aircraft was bringing Soviet personnel to assist in exploiting the take.

BRUCE C. CLARKE, Jr.
Director
Strategic Research

Attachment: a/s

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