

Information Review & Release (IRR) News for 8-12 March 2004 Executive Summary

Future Planning Calendar

(U//~~ATUO~~) **23 March 2004:** Interagency Security Classification Appeals Panel (ISCAP): Next Principals' meeting at EEOB in Washington, DC.

(U//~~ATUO~~) **13 April 2004:** Interagency Security Classification Appeals Panel (ISCAP): Next Liaisons' meeting at site TBD.

(U//~~ATUO~~) **31 December 2006:** The Automatic Declassification Date per Executive Order 12958, as amended.

Overview of IRR Activities--Last Week

(U//~~ATUO~~) FOIA Requests

(U//~~ATUO~~) Seeking Records on US-Taliban Discussions

(U//~~ATUO~~) The National Security Archive is requesting all records concerning any United States discussions with the Taliban or their representatives, from January 1997 through October 2001.

- *The FOIA case manager advised the requester that relations and/or discussions with foreign governments, or organizations that purport to be governments, fall under the purview of the Department of State. The CIA is not authorized to release records originated by other government agencies even if such records can be located.* [redacted]

Editor: Requesters often persist with a specific topic in the hope that they will receive a more welcome response. In 2002, this same Archive requester asked for all records pertaining to "United States discussions with the Taliban, or their representatives [in Afghanistan, Pakistan, or the United States] from 1994-1996." The response remains the same.

(U//~~ATUO~~) Interest in the Phoenix Program

(U//~~ATUO~~) A student from Lafayette, Louisiana, sent in 32 separate request letters concerning various aspects of the Phoenix program. These letters ranged from requests for very specific documents to unspecified records pertaining to the attack on Viet Cong Infrastructure, the Phoenix program, the Accelerated Pacification Program, ICEX (Intelligence Coordination and Exploitation Structure), internal security in South Vietnam, as well as a copy of a comic book depicting the Phoenix operation.

- *The FOIA case manager has aggregated all 32 letters into one request due to the similarity of the subjects. The requester was informed that the requests were received and assigned a case number.* [redacted]

Editor: Phoenix – a CIA program in Vietnam designed to identify and root out the Viet Cong's secret apparatus from the countryside.

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~~(U//ATUO)~~ Request for Released SIGINT, COMINT, and ELINT Documents

~~(U//ATUO)~~ A requester is seeking a listing of all documents in the MORI (Management of Officially Released Information) system pertaining to SIGINT (Signals Intelligence), COMINT (Communications Intelligence) and ELINT (Electronics Intelligence). He contends that he deserves a fee waiver because disclosure of the information would primarily benefit the public.

- The FOIA case manager prepared Requester Reports on the appropriate subjects from which the requester may select items he considers useful. The request for a fee waiver is denied. In this case, the requester acknowledges that he is authoring a book. Thus, he appropriately falls into the "commercial" fee category. [Redacted]

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Editor: For a fee waiver to be granted, the disclosure must: (1) be in the public interest by virtue of making a "significant" contribution to the public's understanding of government operations or activities (i.e., have informational value with respect to "specifically identified" government operations or activities; constitute meaningful information with regard to the subject; contribute to the understanding of more than a narrow segment of interested persons), and (2) not be primarily in the interest of the requester. Regarding the latter, two factors must be considered: a) The 'magnitude' of any commercial interest, and b) its 'weight' against the public interest in disclosure.

~~(U//ATUO)~~ CDC Declassification Center

~~(U//ATUO)~~ Researcher Use of the CREST System

~~(U//ATUO)~~ The CIA Records Search Tool (CREST) is the automated system used by the CIA Declassification Center (CDC) to provide public access to released documents. The CREST system has four workstations at the National Archives (NARA), College Park, MD. Currently, there are 8.7 million declassified pages from both CIA and the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency (NGA—formerly NIMA) available on the system. (NGA declassification personnel, by joint agreement, are integrated into the CIA 25-Year program.) CDC estimates that the public will print over 100,000 pages from the CREST System in FY04. The pie chart (see link: [Redacted]) depicts "CREST Printing by Directorate in FY04" (through mid-February). Note: STAR GATE was an Intelligence Community program using paranormal psychology that was declassified by the CDC. The two surprising things from this chart, from our perspective, are the high interest in NGA documents (e.g., older photo-interpretation reports) and the lack of interest in STAR GATE (though media interest in this effort seemingly remains high.) [Redacted]

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~~(U//ATUO)~~ From The Archives:

~~(U//ATUO)~~ North Vietnamese Hippies

~~(U//ATUO)~~ From the Johnson Library comes a CIA finished intelligence document (3 December 1969) dealing with events in Vietnam. It includes information from a "recent interrogation of young North Vietnamese captured in South Vietnam." According to the interrogation, "two youths who left Hanoi in March 1969 claim they belonged to organized bands of juvenile delinquents—street gangs.' Such groups in Hanoi and Haiphong listened to the BBC and South Vietnamese radio broadcasts, adopted hippy styles, and were generally devoted to parties and pleasure. Occasionally, they resorted to petty crimes and violence to finance these good times. Members, armed with knives, stole livestock to sell to restaurants, and were known to attack police or security patrols on night duty." The report notes that the Vietnamese press in early 1969 was full of "finger-shaking exhortations to young people." However,

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by December, there were few press reports on the problem. Hanoi's efforts to bring delinquents under control may have succeeded.

- (U) *The capture of these two former delinquents suggests that Hanoi may have resolved the problem by drafting the miscreants into the North Vietnamese Army. During the Vietnam war period, local courts in our own country sometimes gave draft age males charged with petty crimes and misdemeanors the choice of either a police record or a stint in the US military. Many young Americans elected the latter option. A similar choice probably was not offered to North Vietnamese delinquents.* [redacted]

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~~(U//ATUO)~~ **When All Heck Breaks Loose**

~~(U//ATUO)~~ An unusual *Current Intelligence Bulletin* (CIB-6 November 1956) offers insight into the reality of concurrent crises with multiple players and perspectives. The CIB that day ran more than 20 pages—in an era when seven pages was typical. The content explains the length: Reports on the Suez crisis, including an assessment of whether the Soviet Union would intervene, and if so, whether nuclear weapons would be employed; an assessment of the options and intentions of the British and French; a detailed report on the progress and consequences of the fighting; and a report on the threat of war on the Jordanian front. In addition, the CIB reported on the Soviet invasion of Hungary and the Chinese Communist endorsement of that invasion.

- (U) *Dealing with multiple complex and dangerous problems is (unfortunately) standard fare for the Intelligence Community and the policymakers we support. This is readily apparent when one reads the range of issues addressed day after day in the current intelligence publications that CIA delivers to US policymakers.*

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~~(U//ATUO)~~ **Pity the Watch Office Night Shift**

~~(U//ATUO)~~ A Department of State incoming telegram (October 1959) from the 39th Air Division, Japan, noted the radar sighting of an undetermined number of high speed/high altitude Russian aircraft crossing the southern Kurile islands en route to the North Pacific. In the "Action taken" portion of the telegram, the State Duty Officer noted, "Worried." [redacted]

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