



(U//FOUO) InSIDer's View of History: SIGINT Appearing in the Press

FROM: Deborah Maklowski
NSA/CSS Senior Intelligence Authority and IA Skill Community Advocate
Run Date: 05/28/2004

FROM: Deborah Maklowski
NSA/CSS Senior Intelligence Authority and IA Skill Community Advocate

(U//FOUO) Note from SIGINT Communications: In the course of an interview with Deborah Maklowski, we asked the question, "What was the most memorable experience you've had during your career?" Ms. Maklowski's response follows:

(S//SI) The one that comes to mind occurred in the mid-80's, when I was working Polish Military Trade & Aid, and President Reagan was trying hard to convince a reluctant Congress to fund the Contras in Nicaragua.

(S//SI) I'd been following a deal in the making between Cenzin, the Polish government entity that handled foreign military sales, and the pro-Soviet Sandinista government of Nicaragua for a (one) helicopter (the Sandinistas were NOT big spenders). Poland manufactured and sold a lot of helicopters, mostly for crop-dusting, and I didn't track those sales, but when I got the specs on this one and saw that it would be equipped with rocket launchers, I put out a report.

(S//SI) When I got back into the office the morning after the report was released, my branch chief asked me how much money I'd gotten for my Washington Post article: he then showed me my SIGINT report reproduced as an article in the Post. The only change to the text I'd written and released was the lack of classification. My guess is that the White House, which was looking for anything that would help make a case with Congress for support for the Contras, just unilaterally decided to release the SIGINT to the press, without asking and without sanitization, as yet one more piece of evidence of Soviet (well, sort of) support for the Sandinistas.

(S//SI) Twenty-some years later, I have to admit that my outrage at having a fragile SIGINT source put at risk so cavalierly was tempered by a guilty sense of pride that the Post had not seen fit to edit my text at all!

(U//FOUO) See other editions of *InSIDer's View of History* :

- [A Lesson in Personal Accountability](#)
- [How a Four Star General Once Waited for a Lowly Captain to Finish Eating Lunch](#)
- [In SHAPE, In France](#)
- ["Soviet Rocket" Strikes Chicksands](#)
- [Onboard Air Force 2 Bound for Moscow](#)
- [Testifying Before Congress... Who Turned Out the Lights?](#)
- [Resourceful NCOs at Goodfellow](#)
- [Desert One - The Iranian Hostage Rescue Mission](#)



SERIES:

(U) InSIDer's View of History '04

1. [InSIDer's View of History ... A Lesson in Personal Accountability](#)
2. [InSIDer's View of History : How a Four Star General Once Waited for a Lowly Captain to Finish Eating Lunch](#)
3. [InSIDer's View of History : In SHAPE, In France](#)
4. [InSIDer's View of History : 'Soviet Rocket' Strikes Chicksands](#)
5. [InSIDer's View of History: Onboard Air Force Two Bound for Moscow](#)
6. [InSIDer's View of History : Testifying Before Congress... Who Turned Out the Lights?](#)
7. [InSIDer's View of History : Resourceful NCOs at Goodfellow](#)
8. [InSIDer's View of History : Desert One - The Iranian Hostage Rescue Mission](#)
9. [InSIDer's View of History : SIGINT Appearing in the Press](#)
10. [InSIDer's View of History : Meeting President Reagan](#)
11. [InSIDer's View of History : 'Local Support' as Stress Management](#)

(U//FOUO) Do YOU have a story to tell? We want to hear it! Please see [the kickoff article](#) for details.

12. [In *SID* er's View of History : Quite a Welcome!](#)
13. [In *SID* er's View of History : The Adventure Continues -- Evacuation from Belgrade](#)

"(U//FOUO) *SID*today articles may not be republished or reposted outside NSANet without the consent of S0121 ([DL sid comms](#))."

DYNAMIC PAGE -- HIGHEST POSSIBLE CLASSIFICATION IS
TOP SECRET // SI / TK // REL TO USA AUS CAN GBR NZL
DERIVED FROM: NSA/CSSM 1-52, DATED 08 JAN 2007 DECLASSIFY ON: 20320108