



(C) NSA Linguist Performs Quality Control on a Transcript... From 1958!

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(C) As part of a response to a Freedom of Information Act request, the Office of Policy & Records Staff recently received unusual linguistic support from [REDACTED] a member of the Special Language Support branch in the Office of Russia. In 1958, a USAF C-130A reconnaissance aircraft went astray and was tragically shot down over Armenia while performing a COMINT mission. At that time, tapes and transcripts were made of Soviet fighter air-to-ground communications reflecting the shoot-down. The shoot-down, which resulted in the death of all on board, precipitated an international incident. After the Soviets repeatedly denied shooting down the C-130, the US gave copies of the shoot-down transcripts to UN ambassadors, including the Soviet ambassador.*

[REDACTED]

C-130 aircraft

(C) More than ten years ago, while doing research for his book, "*Price of Vigilance*," which describes the circumstances of the shoot-down, Larry Tart, who had flown with [REDACTED] in the same USAF unit which had lost the C-130, attempted to obtain a copy of the tape and transcripts from NSA. At that time, the Office of Policy & Records asked [REDACTED] to make copies of the old transcripts, but subsequently denied Mr. Tart's request for release of the material.

(C) During a recent, casual conversation, Larry happened to mention to [REDACTED] that he had gotten a call from someone in the Office of Policy & Records who said he was re-reviewing Larry's FOIA request, but was not sure he could locate the tapes and transcripts. Luckily, [REDACTED] had kept copies of the tapes and transcripts in his desk and he contacted the reviewer at the Office of Policy & Records, who then requested that he verify the accuracy of the tapes and transcripts.

(C) After checking the audio intercept and the transcript, [REDACTED] passed his findings to the Office of Policy & Records for use in its FOIA review. He probably now holds the record for term QC (quality control) -- reviewing intercept almost 50 years old!

(U//FOUO) There is one more twist to the story. While researching his book, Larry worked with NSA Director General Kenneth Minihan to arrange for the acquisition of the C-130A that is now in National Vigilance Park, refurbished to look exactly like the aircraft which was shot down over Armenia in 1958.

*(U//FOUO) Note: More details on the shoot-down incident can be found on Intelink at the [Intellipedia article Flight 60528](#).

(U) Readers: Do you have any comments on the shoot-down incident? If so, please post them on the [SID today blog](#).

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