Re-Interview with Rear Admiral Robert O. Welander, USN, Assistant for National Security Affairs to the Chairman's Staff Group, Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Senior Member of the National Security Council Staff

On January 7, 1972, Rear Admiral Welander was re-interviewed by Mr. J. Fred Buzhardt, General Counsel, OSD, and by Mr. W. Donald Stewart.

Admiral Welander advised that he had been assigned to Admiral Moorer's office on May 3, 1971, and assumed his present position on June 1, 1971. He had no familiarity with his present position prior to taking the job and had the opportunity to be given some guidance by his predecessor, Rear Admiral Rembrandt C. Robinson, from the period of May 3 to June 1, 1971.

In regard to his duties in his present assignment, Admiral Welander stated he handles staff papers and prepares comments for those papers requiring action by the Chairman. Additionally, prior to December 23, he handled National Security Council (NSC) affairs matters relative to the Chairman's office and also served as liaison between the Chairman's office and NSC and the State Department.

Admiral Welander stated that his particular position does not actually have a job description per se and his basic guidance came from Admiral Robinson during their overlap period. In the matter of assistance, Admiral Welander advised that YN1 Charles E. Radford had been assigned to him.

Radford was a carry over from Admiral Robinson's office. One of the problems that Admiral Robinson had was that because of the heavy work load he (Admiral Robinson) was unable to get any leave for approximately 7 months prior to June 1. The same condition existed for Radford. Therefore, Admiral Welander on or about July 1 had Chief Yeoman Sessoms cleared for the same access that he and Radford had so Radford could have leave occasionally.

Admiral Welander advised that he has office space in the Chairman's Staff Group suite and is supported somewhat by approximately 6 other officers who have individual geographic areas of responsibility. Each of these officers has a young military enlisted man assigned for clerical purposes. Colonel Bennie L. Davis, USAF, has the specific responsibility for the Southeast Asia area and is supported by SF5 Floyd G. Hagar, USA. Normally, if a problem in that area develops, Admiral Welander looks toward Colonel Davis for "expert" guidance and also provides Colonel Davis with information relative to his area so that Colonel Davis can assess and assemble the information and brief the Chairman accordingly as the "expert".

Admiral Welander further advised that he has an office located in the Executive Office Building (EOB). His duties there require him to provide background data for Dr. Kissinger or the President relative

to matters concerning the JCS. He stated that he has never been given any formal job description by Dr. Kissinger or General Haig relative to his duties there, but developed guidance relative to his duties from his predecessor, Admiral Robinson.

In regard to Radford, Admiral Welander stated that Radford has no job description per se but he too received his guidance from Admiral Robinson. Admiral Robinson advised Admiral Welander in general detail what Radford's duties were. Admiral Welander stated that when Radford became assigned to him, Admiral Robinson did not tell him (Admiral Welander) what specifically he could expect of Radford in the way of obtaining information which was not normally routed to them. Admiral Welander, of course, was aware that Radford travelled with General Haig on trips to Southeast Asia, but Robinson had never specifically informed Admiral Welander of any information Radford brought back.

In regard to a question concerning office files, Admiral Welander stated that he maintained files in his office in the Pentagon and also in his office in the EOB. These files, according to Admiral Welander, overlapped to some extent. For the most part, they contained information pertinent to his business in the particular office that they are kept. Occasionally, the overlap results from the fact that he has a problem with which he is dealing with both in the Pentagon and at the White House. Admiral

Welander stated that since he has assumed these files he has become thoroughly familiar with them out of necessity. Radford is entirely familiar with the files because he was the individual who set them up.

Admiral ~~Robinson~~ Welander stated that only himself, Radford and Chief Sessoms had the combinations to his White House safes. In regard to his safes in the Chairman's suite, all of the officers and their enlisted aides have the combinations to these safes.

Admiral Welander said that on December 23, 1971, he was instructed to close his office at the EOB. In the course of doing so, Mr. Russell Ashley, the NSC Security Officer, assisted him in separating the NSC materials from the JCS materials. The latter he brought back to the Pentagon and the former Mr. Ashley took control of. The material that Admiral Welander returned with to the Pentagon was reviewed by him (some 10 cartons) and some of the old operational material was destroyed while other material deemed of pertinence was integrated into his Pentagon files. Admiral Welander stated it took approximately 3 or 4 days to handle the reorganization of these files and the destruction of the unwanted material. During this period, he was assisted by Chief Sessoms.

In regard to a question relative to his access, Admiral Welander stated that both he and Radford had virtually unlimited access in the

Chairman's office with the exception of one or two intelligence matters. At the White House office they also had very broad access. In particular, he received numerous matters as an NSC staff member.

Concerning "Talking Papers" Admiral Welander advised that he had seen numerous such papers prepared for Dr. Kissinger because of a specific interest he (Admiral Welander) might have. This particular interest would stem from information he may later be called upon to furnish or a question which may be put to Admiral Moorer. Frequently, Admiral Welander would get copies of drafts of memoranda to Dr. Kissinger or General Haig and, according to Admiral Welander, he would xerox some of these papers if the matter therein was too complicated to orally digest and inform Admiral Moorer. He reiterated it was his job to alert Admiral Moorer as to questions he may be asked and as to topics which might be discussed in future meetings so that the Admiral could be appropriately prepared. In regard to the particular papers that would be routed to him for his interest, Admiral Welander stated that normally the NSC Administrator would make the determination as to what should be furnished him (Admiral Welander) or on occasion one of the NSC staff officers might furnish him a document to obtain his comments or reactions.

Admiral Welander stated that he had almost complete access to everything in OJCS and, in response to a question, he advised that he would normally have access to proposals from the Chiefs to the Secretary of Defense and frequently he would have to provide some comment. When asked whether he submitted these proposals to the White House, Admiral Welander stated he had. This action was generally taken in response to a request from Dr. Kissinger or General Haig as to the Chiefs' position in a particular matter. On some occasions, he would orally provide the information. In other occasions, he would show the Chiefs' proposal to the Secretary of Defense.

Welander Both Ways

Admiral Welander was asked whether or not Radford at any time furnished him a document or information which he (Admiral Welander) did not normally have access. Admiral Welander said "yes". He cited a particular occasion that a memorandum was prepared apprising Dr. Kissinger of facts relative to "home porting a carrier group in Greece". He had seen this particular memorandum because a comment was requested from him. However, he had never been advised of the final action and had a need to follow this matter. Approximately a week later, he asked Radford if he could ascertain what the final action was on that document. Radford was able through some contact unknown to Admiral

Bowles

Welander find out the desired information. As an aside Admiral Welander commented that Radford had great contacts amongst White House people and on one occasion was able to arrange to have a telegram sent from President Nixon to his (Admiral Welander) 105-year-old grandfather.

Admiral Welander cited other occasions which he received material from Radford to which he (Admiral Welander) would not normally have access. He advised that when Radford delivered material from him to General Haig, Radford would ask any of the secretaries in General Haig's office or other offices in the West Wing of the White House whether they had mail which had to be delivered to the EOB. If so, he would volunteer to deliver it. Admiral Welander described this mail as inter-staff NSC memoranda for the secretariat. Radford would show him these memoranda and if he felt they were of interest he would on occasion have the document xeroxed. The specific occasion he recalls doing this was relative to a memorandum concerning "offset negotiations".

In response to a question Admiral Welander stated that he normally would personally brief the Chairman on matters, but on some occasions he would provide information he developed to one of his "area experts" who would later brief the Chairman because the "expert" could provide the greater detail and answer any questions.

Dr. Kissinger's Trip to China - July 1971

Admiral Welander was asked about Dr. Kissinger's trip to China and Radford's related activities. Admiral Welander advised that Radford accompanied Dr. Kissinger throughout this trip. However, he stayed in Pakistan when Dr. Kissinger went to China. Prior to the trip, he recalls Radford asking "What are you interested in?". He informed Radford that he would be interested in any specific observations made by Dr. Kissinger during the trip and also any information relative to troop withdrawals. Admiral Welander informed that Radford was selected for these trips as a result of Admiral Robinson having to fill a request made by General Haig for administration support. General Haig liked Radford and preferred him to a female secretary because Radford was able to provide many more administrative services. As a result, Radford was automatically selected for the Kissinger trip and again for General Haig's September 1971 trip to Southeast Asia.

Admiral Welander was asked what type of material did Radford provide him upon return from Dr. Kissinger's trip. Admiral Welander advised that Radford obtained flimsies of messages, and rough drafts of material he was assigned to type and also drafts of meetings Dr. Kissinger held in Southeast Asia. Admiral Welander stated that none of these drafts appear to be those which would be used for a memorandum from Dr. Kissinger to the President.

In regard to the disposition he made of the material, Admiral Welander stated he reviewed all of the material, absorbed it and analyzed it and later orally discussed some of the data with the Chairman and left some of the material with the Chairman. The particular material which Radford provided is still in Admiral Welander's possession and is maintained in his safe in his office in the Chairman's suite.

In regard to where Radford obtained the material, Admiral Welander stated that Radford had been assigned to the "burn detail" and apparently, while unsupervised, went through the burn bag and extracted material considered of interest. Some of this material Radford had arranged to send back in the diplomatic pouch to Admiral Welander through a friend of his in the American Embassy in New Delhi. The remainder of the material Radford handcarried to him. In response to a question as to whether or not he would normally have access to this material, Admiral Welander said "no". When asked who else in the Chairman's office would have known about this, Admiral Welander stated no one, not even Captain Knoizen, USN, (Executive Aide to Admiral Moorer). Admiral Welander stated that he had an arrangement whereby that he could see Admiral Moorer alone whenever he desired and that the material he provided him on occasion of Dr. Kissinger's trip and and later General Haig's trip was so sensitive that the Chairman did not keep it overnight. Therefore,

Admiral Welander concluded that no one but he and the Chairman were aware that he was furnishing the Chairman this information.

Admiral Welander was asked whether or not he prepared a memorandu of transmittal to the Chairman for the material. Admiral Welander stated he did not prepare a transmittal memorandum as such. He advised that he organized the material, tabbed it and prepared a hand-written index for it along with hand-written parenthetical comments he had to offer. Admiral Welander was asked if he had complimented Radford for Radford's service in furnishing him this unauthorized material. Admiral Welander said he did not compliment him directly, but probably informed him how important he felt the information was.

General Haig's trip to Southeast Asia - September 1971

In regard to General Haig's trip to Southeast Asia in September 1971, Admiral Welander was asked if he gave Radford any particular guidance. Admiral Welander stated that he had been personally informed by General Haig of General Haig's missions but that he did ask Radford to provide him (Admiral Welander) with any information he might learn concerning "troop withdrawal rates".

In regard to information that Radford furnished him upon return from this trip, Admiral Welander stated that again he was furnished with rough drafts and flimsy copies of memoranda of conversations with various people.

Admiral Welander was asked what sensitive material he was provided and he stated that he received a document relative to General Haig's conversation with President Thieu. He informed that he did not make a copy of this but provided the particular document to the Chairman and after the Chairman read it he took it back and locked it in his safe.

Again Admiral Welander stated that he sorted out all of the material that Radford had furnished him, absorbed it, analyzed it, tabbed it, indexed it, and affixed the hand-written comments and thereafter provided the data to the Chairman.

Again Admiral Welander stated that no one knew Radford was conducting his clandestine operation; that Captain Knoizen was not aware of the content of the material that he (Admiral Welander) was furnishing the Chairman; and that he had not praised Radford directly but had told him that the material he provided was important and significant and made many things understandable.

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After Admiral Welander provided the above information, because of his extreme cooperativeness and candidness throughout the interview, he was asked whether he might provide anything else which could be considered helpful.

Admiral Welander stated that on the morning of December 14 when he read Anderson's column, he felt that possibly Radford might be Anderson's source and, until such time that he had brought it to the attention of higher authority, he realized the personal impact on him that his reporting of the matter might have. He also theorized to himself that if Radford were, in fact, the source to Anderson "what else might Anderson have". He stated that Radford would have a tremendous amount of information because he had tasked Radford to personally review much of the material forwarded him and to analyze it and prepare a brief summary. He felt Radford was a highly intelligent individual and had the necessary capability to comprehend the material he had seen.

Admiral Welander was asked whether or not Radford could be the source for Anderson's exposures in his columns during March, April and May of 1971. Admiral Welander recalled that Mr. Stewart had let him review, during his interview on December 16, 1971, a summary of some 10 or 11 "leaks" Anderson published, and at that time he informed Mr. Stewart that all this material was contained in his files. He could not specifically recall any information relative to the "Rain Maker" leak by Anderson. During the interview with Radford, the same material was reviewed with Radford and he admitted having seen all of the material which appeared in Anderson's disclosures during the March - May period,

but he also stated that he did not see anything on "Rain Maker". (It is believed Anderson obtained his information on "Rain Maker" from a member of his Church who is employed in the Department of Agriculture and has been associated with that project.)

In regard to any discussion in which he and Radford may have engaged, Admiral Welander stated that he really never had much time to sit down and discuss political situations with Radford or obtain his impressions in general about activities in Southeast Asia.

Admiral Welander, in retrospect, now has the feeling that perhaps he was "set up" by Radford and that Radford, perhaps with guidance, may have been involved in a very clever operation to obtain information under the guise of doing it for Admiral Welander.

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Prior to terminating the interview, Admiral Welander was asked whether or not he ever provided any document relative to ecology and nuclear ships to Admiral Zumwalt. Admiral Welander stated that approximately 6 weeks ago around December 1st Mike Doolin, an NSC Staff Member, provided him a copy of such a document and wanted his comments. He did not transmit this document anywhere and, in fact, did not even provide comments because the matter was overtaken by

events. He had intended to give a copy of the document to the CNO and ascertained the Navy's position, but because he did not have the opportunity to do so nothing was ever done on the matter. He believes that Radford could have easily made a copy of the document and, if he so desired, could have provided it to Anderson.

The above interview commenced at 10:11 a.m. and was terminated at 11:32 a.m.