Acting Chief, Security Division — 5 December 1952

Acting Chief, Physical Security Branch

Security Violation - Unlocked Safe.

1. On 18 November 1952 at 9:25 P.M. and 9:30 P.M. respectively, Safes #7525 and #5847, each containing material classified through SECRET, Rooms 2709 and 2711, "I" Building, were found unlocked by Guard Moses Kinard. The dial of each safe was in the opening position and all the drawers were closed. Night Security Officer [redacted] responded to the telephone call from the Guard Office and secured the safes, after placing an explanatory note in each.

2. On 19 and 28 November 1952, Mr. Harry R. Dugan, of this Branch, investigated the violation, after contacting Mr. C. J. King, Security Officer, I&S. During the course of the investigation Miss [redacted] 03, Stenographer, Mr. Arthur Avignone, Assistant Project Desk Chief, and Mr. James P. O'Connell, Project Desk Chief, all of SSD, I&S, were interviewed.

3. Miss [redacted] 03 advised that she was not custodian of either safe on the date in question. She stated that she had departed at about 7:20 P.M., that Mr. O'Connell had re-opened Safe #7525 and that she had stored her material in the safe at about 7:15 P.M. She indicated that it was her belief that she had properly locked and checked this safe, although she had not initialed the Safe Check Sheet.

4. Mr. Avignone advised that he was custodian of Safe #5847 on the date in question. He stated that it was his belief that he had properly secured and checked it before departing at about 5:05 P.M. He stated also that Mr. O'Connell and Miss [redacted] 03 had worked late. He stated further that he had checked with all other personnel in the area and none had returned to the office after Mr. O'Connell had departed.

5. Mr. O'Connell advised that he is in possession of the combinations to all safes in Rooms 2709, 2711, and 2713. He stated that he had assumed responsibility for the Staff Duty Officer inspection of the area on the date in question, that he had departed at about 8:20 P.M., and that the area was vacant at that time. He stated also that he had re-opened Safe #7525 at about 7:15 P.M. to enable Miss [redacted] 03 to secure material in it, but that he had not re-opened Safe #5847. He stated further that he had observed Miss [redacted] 03 securing Safe #7525, that he felt certain that she had secured it properly, and that, for this reason, he had not checked it. He advised that he had not checked Safe #5847 because it was his belief that it had been secured. He indicated that the employees who had access to the combination to the safe had been contacted, but that there was nothing to indicate that any of them had returned to the office after his departure.

6/PW

6. Mr. King advised that he and Mr. Edward J. Kane, of SSD, had checked on the possibility that someone had re-opened the instant safes after Mr. O'Connell's departure, but that there was no indication that anyone had done so.

CONCLUSION:

7. The circumstances in this case indicate that Miss [redacted] 03 Mr. Avignone and Mr. O'Connell are jointly responsible for the security violation.

SECURITY HISTORY:

8. No previous security violations have been charged to Miss [redacted] 03 Mr. Avignone, or Mr. O'Connell.

JOHN D. SALB