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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL INTELLIGENCE DIRECTIVE NO. 6*

COMMUNICATIONS INTELLIGENCE AND ELECTRONICS INTELLIGENCE

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1. Communications Intelligence (COMINT) and Electronics Intelligence (ELINT) and the activities pertaining thereto (as defined in paragraph 3 of this directive) are national responsibilities whose importance to national security requires an organization and management which will:

a. Exploit to the maximum the available resources in all participating departments and agencies to satisfy legitimate requirements for foreign intelligence relating to the national security, including those of the departments and agencies concerned;

b. Provide for efficiency and economy in the use of technical resources; and

c. Insure the necessary degree of protection.

Therefore, pursuant to the National Security Act of 1947, as amended, the National Security Council authorizes and directs that COMINT and the COMINT activities of the United States, as well as ELINT and ELINT activities, shall be conducted as prescribed herein. COMINT and ELINT and their associated activities shall be treated as being within the framework of general intelligence activities except as otherwise established under this directive.

2. Only those departments or agencies represented on the U. S. Intelligence Board (USIB) are authorized to engage in COMINT or ELINT activities and only in accordance with the provisions of this directive.

3. Definitions.

For the purpose of this directive, the terms "Communications Intelligence" or "COMINT" shall be construed to mean technical and intelligence information derived from foreign communications by other than the intended recipients.

* This directive supersedes NSCID No. 9, revised 29 December 1952, and NSCID No. 17, dated 16 May 1955.

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COMINT activities shall be construed to mean those activities which produce COMINT by the interception and processing of foreign communications passed by radio, wire, or other electromagnetic means, with specific exceptions stated below, and by the processing of foreign encrypted communications, however transmitted. Interception comprises search, intercept, and direction finding. Processing comprises range estimation, transmitter/operator identification, signal analysis, traffic analysis, cryptanalysis, decryption, study of plain text, the fusion of these processes, and the reporting of results.

COMINT and COMINT activities as defined herein shall not include (a) any intercept and processing of unencrypted written communications, press and propaganda broadcasts, or (b) censorship.

ELINT activities are defined as the collection (observation and recording), and the technical processing for subsequent intelligence purposes, of information derived from foreign, non-communications, electromagnetic radiations emanating from other than atomic detonation or radioactive sources. ELINT is the technical and intelligence-information product of ELINT activities.

4. The United States Intelligence Board (USIB).

In addition to its responsibilities as set forth in paragraph 2 of NSCID No. 1, the United States Intelligence Board shall:

a. Study, in connection with its responsibilities for communications intelligence security, the standards and practices of the departments and agencies in utilizing and protecting COMINT; and establish procedures whereby departments and agencies not members of the U. S. Intelligence Board are enabled to receive and utilize COMINT.

b. Determine the degree and type of security protection to be given COMINT activities through the protection of information about them or derived from them; taking into full account that different levels of sensitivity obtain and applying balanced judgment between the need for exploitation of the COMINT produced and the need to protect the specific producing activity or activities. Procedures for special handling will include treatment of the information in its initial stages and also as it may be included in finished intelligence.

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c. Determine the degree and type of security protection to be given ELINT activities through the protection of information about them or derived from them. Special COMINT security standards and procedures generally shall not apply to ELINT and ELINT activities.

5. The Secretary of Defense.

The Secretary of Defense is designated as executive agent of the Government for the conduct of COMINT and ELINT activities in accordance with the provisions of this directive and for the maintenance and operation of the National Security Agency.

a. The Secretary of Defense may determine, after consultation with the Secretary of State and the Director of Central Intelligence that a COMINT or ELINT matter forwarded by the U. S. Intelligence Board to the National Security Council for decision presents a problem of an emergency nature and requires immediate action. His action will be implemented and will govern, pending a decision by the National Security Council.

b. The responsibility to conduct those ELINT collection and processing activities which the Secretary of Defense determines are essential to provide direct support to commanders who plan and conduct military operations, will be delegated by the Secretary of Defense to those commanders, or to the cryptologic agencies which support them.

c. The Secretary of Defense may delegate in whole or part authority over the Director of NSA within his department as he sees fit.

6. The National Security Agency.

a. The COMINT and ELINT missions of the National Security Agency (NSA) shall be to provide an effective, unified organization and control of the (1) COMINT and (2) ELINT intercept and processing activities of the United States, to provide for integrated operational policies and procedures pertaining thereto and to produce COMINT information and ELINT information in accordance with objectives, requirements and priorities established by the U. S. Intelligence Board.

b. NSA shall be administered by a Director, designated by the Secretary of Defense after consultation with the Joint Chiefs of Staff, whose appointment shall

be for a term of four years. The Director shall be a career commissioned officer of the armed services on active or reactivated status, and shall enjoy at least 3-star rank during the period of his incumbency. The Director shall have a civilian Deputy.

7. The Director, National Security Agency.

a. The Director of NSA shall be responsible for accomplishing the mission of NSA. For this purpose all COMINT and ELINT intercept and processing activities of the United States are placed under his operational and technical control. When action by the Chiefs of the operating agencies of the Services or civilian departments or agencies is required, the Director shall normally issue instructions pertaining to COMINT and ELINT operations through them. However, because of the unique technical character of COMINT and ELINT operations, the Director is authorized to issue direct to any operating elements under his operational control task assignments and pertinent instructions which are within the capacity of such elements to accomplish. He shall also have direct access to, and direct communication with, any elements of the Service or civilian COMINT or ELINT agencies on any other matters of operational and technical control as may be necessary, and he is authorized to obtain such information and intelligence material from them as he may require. All instructions issued by the Director under the authority provided in this paragraph shall be mandatory, subject only to appeal to the Secretary of Defense by the Chief of Service or head of civilian department or agency concerned.

b. Specific responsibilities of the Director of NSA include the following:

(1) Formulating necessary operational plans and policies.

(2) Conducting research and development to meet the needs of NSA and the departments and agencies which are engaged in COMINT or ELINT activities; and coordinating the related research and development conducted by such departments and agencies.

(3) Determining and submitting to the authorities responsible for logistic support for NSA, requirements together with specific recommendations as to what each of the responsible departments and agencies of the Government should supply.

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(4) Within NSA's field of authorized operations prescribing requisite security regulations covering operating practices, including the transmission, handling and distribution of COMINT material within and among the COMINT elements under his operational or technical control; and exercising the necessary monitoring and supervisory control, including inspections if necessary, to ensure compliance with the regulations.

(5) Making such reports and furnishing such information from time to time to the Board, either orally or in writing, as the Board may request, and bringing to the attention of the Board either in such reports or otherwise any new major policies or programs in advance of their adoption by him.

(6) Except on matters which have been decided by the Board, the Director of NSA shall discharge his responsibilities in accordance with his own judgment, subject to the direction of the Secretary of Defense.

c. To the extent he deems feasible and in consonance with the aims of maximum over-all efficiency, economy, and effectiveness, the Director shall centralize or consolidate the performance of COMINT and ELINT functions for which he is responsible. It is recognized that the Armed Forces and other departments and agencies being served require direct COMINT and ELINT support of various kinds. In providing this support, operational control of specified COMINT and ELINT facilities and resources will at times be delegated by the Director, for such periods and for such tasks as are determined by him, to an appropriate agent. Each member department or agency is responsible for stating to the Director, NSA its requirements for direct support.

d. The Director shall make provision for participation by representatives of each of the Board members in those offices of NSA where the Director, NSA establishes priorities of intercept and processing.

e. It is the intent of this directive that NSA not engage in the production and dissemination of finished intelligence, as distinguished from intelligence information. The production and dissemination of finished intelligence are the responsibilities of departments and agencies other than NSA.

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b. Other provisions of this directive are not applicable to those intercept and processing activities (other than cryptanalysis) undertaken under the authority of NSCID No. 5, whether by the Central Intelligence Agency or by the military departments, which are specifically excepted by the Director of Central Intelligence. However, to the extent practicable, information pertaining to these activities and derived therefrom shall at all times be handled as to give suitable protection to related COMINT activities or COMINT activities in general. Material which may be collected under these circumstances and which otherwise would have been considered the product of COMINT or ELINT activities will be passed to the National Security Agency to the extent desired by the Director, NSA, as soon as special security requirements of the collector have been satisfied.

9. The Military Departments. The Military Departments shall be responsible for:

a. The establishment, maintenance, operation and administration of COMINT and ELINT intercept and processing facilities as authorized and directed by the Secretary of Defense.

b. The conduct of those intercept and processing activities (other than cryptanalysis) undertaken under the authority of NSCID No. 5 as specifically excepted from other provisions of this directive (NSCID No. 6) by the Director of Central Intelligence. However, to the extent practicable, information pertaining to these activities and derived therefrom shall at all times be handled as to give suitable protection to related COMINT activities or COMINT activities in general. Material which may be collected under these circumstances and which otherwise would have been considered the product of

COMINT or ELINT activities will be passed to the National Security Agency to the extent desired by the Director, NSA, as soon as special security requirements of the collector have been satisfied.

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c. The conduct, outside the scope of paragraphs 6 and 7 of this directive, of such search, intercept, direction finding, range estimation, and signal analysis of communications and non-communications electromagnetic radiations as must be undertaken to permit immediate operational use of the information in support of electronic measures and countermeasures and rescue operations.

10. The Federal Bureau of Investigation. Nothing in this directive shall be construed to encroach upon or interfere with the unique responsibilities of the Federal Bureau of Investigation in the field of internal security, including such intercept and processing activities as may be undertaken by the FBI in connection with its functions.