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WARNING

This document contains information affecting the national security of the United States within the meaning of the espionage laws U. S. Code Title 18, Sections 793, 794 and 798. The law prohibits its transmission or the revelation of its contents in any manner to an unauthorized person, as well as its use in any manner prejudicial to the safety or interest of the United States or for the benefit of any foreign government to the detriment of the United States. It is to be seen only by personnel especially indoctrinated and authorized to receive information in the designated control channels. Its security must be maintained in accordance with regulations pertaining to the [redacted]nd Communications Intelligence Controls. No action is to be taken on any communications intelligence which may be contained herein, regardless of the advantage to be gained, if such action might have the effect of revealing the existence and nature of the source, unless such action is first approved by the appropriate authority.

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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL INTELLIGENCE DIRECTIVE NO. 6[1]

SIGNALS INTELLIGENCE

(Effective 17 February 1972)

Signals Intelligence (SIGINT), which comprises Communications Intelligence (COMINT) and Electronics Intelligence (ELINT), and the activities pertaining thereto are national responsibilities and must be so organized and managed as to exploit to the maximum the available resources of the Government, to satisfy the intelligence needs of the National Security Council and the departments and agencies of the Government, and to provide for efficiency and economy in the use of technical resources. Therefore, pursuant to the National Security Act of 1947, as amended, the National Security Council authorizes and directs that SIGINT activities shall be conducted as prescribed herein.

1. *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.

COMINT activities shall be construed to mean those activities that produce COMINT by the collection 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. Collection 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 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.

2. *The Director of Central Intelligence*

Consistent with his responsibilities as set forth in NSCID Nos. 1, 2 and 3, the Director of Central Intelligence shall:

a. Establish with the advice of the United States Intelligence Board and issue appropriate intelligence objectives, requirements and priorities to guide the conduct of all United States SIGINT activities.

[1] This Directive supersedes NSCID No. 6 dated 15 September 1958, revised 18 January 1961.

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b. Review the needs and performance of United States SIGINT activities as a basis for preparing a consolidated intelligence program budget.

c. Establish policies and procedures for the conduct of SIGINT arrangements with foreign governments with the advice of the United States Intelligence Board.

d. Develop and establish policies and procedures for the protection of SIGINT including the degree and type of security protection to be given SIGINT activities through the protection of information about them or derived from them.

3. *The Secretary of Defense*

a. The Secretary of Defense is designated as Executive Agent of the Government for the conduct of SIGINT activities in accordance with the provisions of this directive and for the direction, supervision, funding, maintenance and operation of the National Security Agency. The Director of the National Security Agency shall report to the Secretary of Defense and shall be the principal SIGINT adviser to the Secretary of Defense, the Director of Central Intelligence, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The Secretary of Defense may delegate in whole or part authority over the Director of the National Security Agency within the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

b. The Secretary of Defense may determine, after consultation with the Secretary of State and the Director of Central Intelligence, that a SIGINT matter forwarded by the Director of Central Intelligence 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.

4. *The National Security Agency*

a. There is established under the Secretary of Defense and subject to his authority and control a National Security Agency with a Director who shall be head thereof and a Deputy Director who shall act for, and exercise the powers of, the Director during his absence or disability. The Director and Deputy Director shall be designated by the Secretary of Defense subject to the approval of the President. The duration of their appointments shall be at the pleasure of the President. The Director shall be a commissioned officer of the armed services, on active or reactivated status and shall enjoy not less than three star rank during the period of his incumbency. The Director shall have a Deputy who shall be a career civilian with SIGINT experience.

b. It shall be the duty of the Director of the National Security Agency to provide for the SIGINT mission of the United States, to establish an effective unified organization and control of all SIGINT collection and processing activities of the United States, and to produce SIGINT in accordance with objectives, requirements and priorities established by the Director of Central Intelligence with the advice of the United States Intelligence Board. No other organization shall engage in SIGINT activities except as provided for in this directive.

c. Except as provided in paragraphs 5 and 6 of this directive, the Director of the National Security Agency shall exercise full control over all SIGINT collection and processing activities, except the operation of mobile SIGINT platforms which will normally be exercised through appropriate elements of the military command structure. The Director of the National Security Agency is authorized to issue direct to any operating elements engaged in SIGINT operations such instructions and assignments as are required. 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.

d. In consonance with the aims of maximum overall efficiency, economy and effectiveness, and to the extent he deems necessary and desirable, the Director shall centralize and consolidate the performance of SIGINT functions for which he is responsible. To this end, there is established a Central Security Service under the Director of the National Security Agency, which shall be organized in accordance with a plan approved by the Secretary of Defense. It shall be principally collection oriented and shall include SIGINT functions previously performed by various Military Department and other United States governmental elements engaged in SIGINT activities. The Director of the National Security Agency shall determine the appropriate division of responsibilities among the elements under his direction.

e. The Armed Forces and other departments and agencies often require timely and effective SIGINT. The Director of the National Security Agency shall provide information requested, taking all necessary measures to facilitate its maximum utility. As determined by the Director of the National Security Agency or as directed by the Secretary of Defense, the Director of the National Security Agency shall provide such SIGINT either through the direction of activities under his control or through the delegation to an appropriate agent of specified SIGINT facilities and resources from among the elements under his direction for such periods and for such tasks as appropriate.

f. Specific responsibilities of the Director of the National Security Agency include the following:

(1) Formulating necessary operational plans, policies and procedures to provide for integrated operations.

(2) Managing SIGINT resources, personnel and programs.

(3) Conducting research and development to meet the needs of the United States for SIGINT.

(4) Determining and submitting to the authorities responsible for logistic support for activities under his control requirements together with specific recommendations as to what each of the responsible departments and agencies of the Government should supply.

(5) Prescribing within his field of authorized operations requisite security regulations covering operating practices, including the transmission, handling and distribution of SIGINT material within and among the elements under his control; and exercising the necessary monitoring and supervisory control to ensure compliance with the regulations.

(6) Providing the Director of Central Intelligence with such information as he may require on the past, current and proposed plans, programs and costs of the SIGINT activities under the control of the Director of the National Security Agency.

g. The intelligence components of individual departments and agencies may continue to conduct direct liaison with the National Security Agency in the interpretation and amplification of requirements and priorities within the framework of objectives, requirements and priorities established by the Director of Central Intelligence.

h. It is the intent of this directive that the National Security Agency not engage in the production and dissemination of finished intelligence, but be limited to the production and dissemination of COMINT and ELINT.

5. *Relationship to other SIGINT Activities*

a. The Director of Central Intelligence with the advice of the United States Intelligence Board shall determine the requirements and priorities for collection by SIGINT satellites that shall be developed, launched and maintained in operation by the National Reconnaissance Office. The Director of the National Security Agency, with respect to his technical and operational control of the intercept payload, and the Director of the National Reconnaissance Office, with respect to his control of spacecraft operations, shall provide for the tasking of these satellites based on guidance provided by the Director of Central Intelligence. The National Security Agency shall process the collected data.

b. Nothing in this directive shall be construed to encroach upon or interfere with the unique requirements for clandestine operations covered under NSCID No. 5. Those SIGINT collection and processing activities (other than cryptanalysis) that are specifically designated by the Director of Central Intelligence to be essential and integral to the operation of clandestine espionage and counterintelligence activities abroad, including arrangements with foreign clandestine services, shall be conducted under the provisions of that directive. To the extent practicable, however, information pertaining to the activities and derived therefrom shall be handled so as to give suitable protection to related SIGINT activities. Material collected under these circumstances that would have been considered COMINT or ELINT will be passed to the National Security Agency to the extent desired by the Director of the National Security Agency as soon as special security requirements of the collector have been satisfied.

c. The Director of the National Security Agency shall conduct such COMINT and ELINT activities as are required to support electronic warfare activities. The conduct of such search, intercept, direction-finding, range-estimation, and signal analysis of non-communications electromagnetics radiation as must be undertaken to permit immediate operational use of the information in support of electronic measures and countermeasures and rescue operations, if delegated by the Director of the National Security Agency, shall be the responsibility of the Military Departments or Commands, as appropriate. The responsibility

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for such activities with respect to electromagnetic radiations of COMINT interest shall normally not be delegated and shall remain the responsibility of the Director of the National Security Agency.

6. *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 Federal Bureau of Investigation in connection with its functions.

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