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NAVY DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
WASHINGTON

Op-20-G
Serial 051220

25 July 1940

SECRET

MEMORANDUM FOR OP-20.

Via: Op-20-A

Subject: Coordination of Intercept and Decrypting Activities of the Army and Navy.

1. Colonel Akin and myself are unable to reach an agreement as to division of cognizance of intercept and decrypting activities. What I have proposed has been unacceptable to Colonel Akin, and vice versa. Detailed comments are appended.

2. I believe that the only satisfactory basis of division is nationality. I recommend the following division of diplomatic radio traffic:

Army	Navy
German	Orange
Italian	Russian
Mexican	
Latin American	

3. I believe the best solution of the matter would be for yourself and General Mauborgne to make such division as may appear equitable to you both and then issue appropriate orders.

Respectfully,

/s/ L.F. Safford

L.F. Safford,
Op-20-G.

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COORDINATION OF INTERCEPT AND DECRYPTING ACTIVITIES OF THE ARMY AND NAVY.

1. It is mutually accepted by the Army and Navy that all naval radio traffic should be handled by the Navy and all military radio traffic by the Army. The only point of disagreement is on diplomatic traffic. Military traffic is practically impossible to copy at long distances because of the low power used. Therefore, the Army finds very little to work on except diplomatic traffic. Last fall General Mauborgne and Admiral Noyes made an agreement, in my presence, that diplomatic traffic would be divided between the two services on the basis of nationality. Orange was to go to the Navy and German to the Army. Apparently, this agreement was never communicated to Colonel Akin or his subordinates because instead of turning work on the Orange "B" machine over to the Navy, the Army commenced translating Orange diplomatic systems which the Navy had been previously translating, thereby making a direct duplication of effort. Colonel Akin states that the Signal Corps had received orders from their General Staff to work on Orange, German, Italian and Mexican diplomatic systems, and felt that such orders overruled any agreement which might have been made between the Chief Signal Officer and the Director of Naval Communications.

2. There are four ways in which diplomatic traffic may be divided, namely:

I. By Nationality. This is the best and, in fact, the only satisfactory basis of division as it automatically eliminates all possibility of duplication. Colonel Akin felt that the General Staff would not authorize such an arrangement.

II. By cryptographic Systems. This is the next best method as it guarantees that the two services will not submit duplicate translations to the President. It was not acceptable to Colonel Akin as it required duplication of indexing.

III. By Office of Origin. This was tentatively agreed to by Colonel Akin and myself and immediately disapproved by General Mauborgne. It would require the services of two people in each office to prevent duplication of translation.

IV. On the basis of radio transmitting stations. This is favored by General Mauborgne. I think that the General contemplated a 50-50 split of all diplomatic traffic, but we have never been offered any of the German, Italian or Mexican systems, and I would not want them on a shared basis. I think such a division the poorest of all because it is desirable to consider decryption separately from interception. Duplication between Army and Navy interception amounts to only 25% and is improving monthly.

3. Last week, General Mauborgne instructed Colonel Akin to make a joint study of Plan IV. I agreed to assist in the study but not to commit the Navy to anything without the approval of the Director of Naval Communications. A sub-committee of the following members was designated to conduct this study:

Lieut. Comdr. E.R. Gardner, U.S.N.
Lieut.(jg) J.A. Greenwald, U.S.N. (Ret.)
First Lieut. E.F. Cook, U.S.A.
First Lieut. R.E. Schukraft, U.S.A.

At the first meeting of this committee it developed that the Army had changed their mind again and wanted to make an immediate decision on Plan III. There the matter rests.

4. From my conversation with you earlier this week, I realize that both you and General Mauborgne wish to get an efficient coordination of effort between the Army and Navy and reduce cuplication as far as practicable. This is a very different matter from making an impression on the General Staff. The most efficient division of interception or decryption is on a basis of nationality (Plan I).

5. At the present time the Army is working on German, Italian and Mexican diplomatic traffic with some degree of success for each nationality. (The Navy is not attempting to solve the diplomatic traffic for these countries and I would prefer not to start it.) The Navy has furnished the Army the cipher keys or codes for all current Orange systems except the "B" machine. All translations made by the Army are being done from this material. There is no longer an "exchange" of recovered values. The Army could eventually dig out a large percentage of this material but it would involve delay and considerable cryptanalytical work. The most important information of the Orange diplomatic service is being enciphered in the Orange "B" machine. It is very important that the attack on this machine be prosecuted more vigorously. I cannot claim that we would have more success than the Army, but we would like to tackle it.

6. The following plan is recommended:

A. The Army will handle all military radio stations and military messages, regardless of nationality.

B. The Navy will handle all naval radio stations and naval messages, reagardless of nationality.

C. Commercial radio circuits and diplomatic messages will be divided on the basis of nationality, as follows:-
Army: Germany, Italy, Mexico, Latin America
Navy: Japan, Russia.

D. Diplomatic (and military or naval) messages which may be intercepted in connection with regular circuit coverage will be turned over to the service responsible for their decryption.

E. Each service will supply the other service a copy of the English translations of all decrypted diplomatic messages.

7. The following alternative plans should be considered:

I. The Army continue with the "B" machine and the Navy take over all other Orange diplomatic systems.

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II. The Army take over all Orange diplomatic systems and the Navy will continue to furnish them the complete codes and ciphers involved (when obtainable) provided the Director of Naval Intelligence will approve ONI's continued effort under the circumstances.

/s/ L.F. Safford
L.F. Safford,
Op-20-G.

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