DOCID: 3978320

D R A F T

October 4, 1940.

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Secretary of War.

It is strongly recommended as absolutely essential to National Defense and particularly to the Army that an immediate exchange of information concerning military, military attache and diplomatic codes, ciphers, cipher devices and apparatuses and code and cipher systems employed by Germany, Italy and Japan, together with all information concerning the methods employed to solve messages in codes or ciphers of the classes mentioned be arranged between the Governments of the United States and Great Britain.

Information which can be furnished by the United States will include among other things the details of the solution of the most difficult Japanese machine cipher system used for "utmost secret" diplomatic correspondence, which has just been completed by Army cryptanalysts after eighteen months of intensive work. This exchange is believed absolutely essential to National Defense for the following reasons:

First, it would provide technical solution information of the code and cipher systems employed by the Armies and Air Forces of the powers in question. Intercepted material pertaining thereto is not now available. Even if the intercepted material were obtainable, a long period of intensive study would be necessary before solutions could be achieved. In the present emergency, the saving of time is of the greatest importance. The experiences gained by the British in operations against the forces of the powers in question should provide invaluable information, including captured codes, cipher devices, ciphers and related documents.

Second, it would provide technical solution information of the systems employed by the military attaches, foreign offices, diplomatic and consular representatives of Germany and Italy. This information is of the highest importance at this time, especially for the disclosures it might yield in connection with Axis' intentions, plans and operations in the Canal Zone, Caribbean area and Central and South America. It may also disclose espionage, sabotage plans and fifth column activities in this country and its possessions. Additional items that might be disclosed are the plans and intentions of Germany and Italy with respect to the Far East, Russia and the French possessions in the Western Hemisphere. Although it might be possible for this Government to solve the code and cipher systems in this connection without the aid of information expected to be gained by this exchange, the time necessary to obtain such results might extend from half a year to two years. The exigencies of the present emergency forbid such delay.

Approved for Release by NSA on 09-16-2005 pursuant to E.O. 12958, as amended

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Mr. The exchange would be of [illegible] to the British Govt

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