



~~TOP SECRET DINAR~~

NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY  
FORT GEORGE G. MEADE, MARYLAND

*dir*

Serial: N 1948  
12 July 1961

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SUBJECT: COMINT Requirements (e)

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence  
U. S. Air Force  
The Pentagon  
Washington 25, D. C.

Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence  
Department of the Army  
The Pentagon  
Washington 25, D. C.

Director, Naval Intelligence  
The Pentagon  
Washington 25, D. C.

Director, Central Intelligence Agency  
2430 E Street, N. W.  
Washington 25, D. C.

1. I am concerned over the broad implications inherent in the acceptance and fulfillment by the National Security Agency of the type of requirements represented by inclosure 1 and 2. It does not seem appropriate that intelligence requirements which would cause so extensive a reallocation of NSA's processing effort should be submitted as supplementary guidance. I am also concerned with the jurisdictional problem posed by the requirement for NSA to provide a large volume of semi-processed COMINT information to your organizations for purposes of further processing. To be specific:

a. NSA acceptance of inclosure 2 would require the provision by this Agency to your organizations of large masses--millions of items--of incompletely processed COMINT. Such action would require virtually complete duplication within

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the community of expensive COMINT analysis functions which NSA would have to continue to perform in order to discharge its responsibilities in responding to other SIGINT requirements of the intelligence community.

b. The utilization of resources by other elements of DOD and the CIA is basically of no concern to NSA. However, I feel that I must point out that provision of the material requested would require extensive utilization of DOD machine resources in separate parts of DOD, and between DOD and CIA, to achieve the same result, i.e., a COMINT product. Although there might be some differences in the final product in each case, I believe use of resources in this manner to be unnecessarily duplicative and wasteful.

c. NSA acceptance of inclosure 2 would result in increased and unreasonable demands against NSA manpower and machine resources in order to resolve questions that must necessarily arise from diverse attempts in the intelligence community to analyze incompletely validated COMINT material. Requirements of the type represented by inclosures 1 and 2 (i.e., stating how NSA should respond rather than stating intelligence requirements), result in a cumulative degradation of the total capabilities of NSA to effectively respond to overall intelligence community SIGINT requirements.

d. NSCID #6 specifically places all COMINT processing activities of the United States under the control of the Director, NSA. This action was taken because of the necessity to centralize the COMINT activities of the United States for reasons of "efficiency and economy in the use of technical resources". Provision by NSA of the material requested in the subject requirements would jeopardize the central control of the Director, NSA as assigned under NSCID #6.

3. COMINT information contributing to the basic intelligence need underlying the inclosed requirements (i.e., information which might contribute to the knowledge about [redacted]) may be derived from several possible sources of high potential, among which are [redacted] operational cipher systems and plain language communications, both printer and voice.

PL 86-36/50 USC 3605  
EO 3.3(h) (2)

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The requirements which are being discussed here, viz., the voluminous number of messages dealing with [redacted]

[redacted] represent a relatively low-grade source of COMINT which may help call attention to possible locations having [redacted] associations. To accelerate and improve the sifting of this mass of data for analysis purposes made desirable, among other programs, the development by NSA of an advanced machine aid. NSA has recently developed such an aid which has been designated SNOWFLOW.

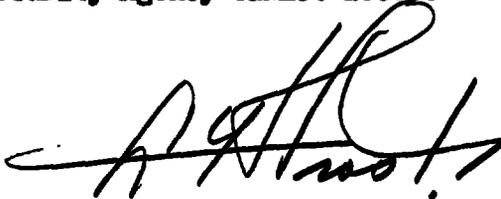
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605  
EO 3.3(h)(2)

3. Representatives of your organizations were recently briefed on the concept and potential of SNOWFLOW. A desire by CIA and AFCIN analysts to work with our analysts in application of this concept is evidenced by inclosure 3. We have recently replied to this proposal indicating our willingness to arrive at a mutual arrangement in this area. To this end we have proposed a meeting with CIA and AFCIN representatives on 20 July to discuss specific arrangements. I believe an arrangement of this type will foster a better understanding on the part of your analysts of the various problems associated with the exploitation of this material. This in turn will enable your personnel to express their intelligence problems/questions in a manner which will allow the most effective employment of the technical expertise which is concentrated in NSA. Unnecessary duplication will thereby be obviated.

4. In view of the above facts, I have found it necessary to arrive at the following conclusions:

a. The National Security Agency cannot take any further action in fulfillment of inclosure 1.

b. The National Security Agency cannot accept inclosure 2.



L. H. FROST  
Vice Admiral, USN  
Director

3 Incls:  
a/s

Copy Furnished to:  
General G. B. Erskine, USMC-Ret,  
Asst to SecDef, Sp Opns

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PL 86-36/50 USC  
 EO 3.3(h)(2)

The above letter explains why NSA can no longer continue work in satisfaction of inclosure 1 and why inclosure 2 cannot be accepted. The most important reason is the fact that provision of the type information requested will result in the establishment of duplicate COMINT processing activities within DOD and CIA. This would be contrary to the responsibilities of the Director, NSA as established in NSCID #6. The concept suggested in inclosure 3 is endorsed by NSA. Approved by A/DIR PROD (Dr. Sinkov).

*J. D. Butler*  
 J. D. BUTLER, P012, 3643, ajg, 10 July 1961

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