



NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

Serial: 0620

26 June 53

~~CONFIDENTIAL - SECURITY INFORMATION~~

Professor Stewart S. Cairns  
Head, Department of Mathematics  
University of Illinois  
Urbana, Illinois

Dear Professor Cairns:

I have carefully read the minutes of the two-day conference held on 11 and 12 June 1953 by the National Security Agency Scientific Advisory Board and am grateful to the members of the Board for devoting time and thought to a consideration of some of the Agency's problems.

In the minutes of the morning meeting of 11 June I note that the Board raised the question of whether I might consider it desirable to request the Board to inaugurate a study of the problem of evaluating the contribution which COMINT can or could make to the warning of an impending attack on the United States.

My purpose in writing you now is to indicate not only that I would very much like to have the Board undertake such a study but also that I hope it could be initiated at once and will be glad to place immediately at the disposal of the Board whatever facilities, personnel and records the Board deems necessary or useful for conducting the study and for producing the final report thereon as soon as practicable.

I note also that Professor Robertson indicated that he could spend about a month during the summer on the study, and that other members indicated they could spend some time when or if the study touched on their individual fields. In this connection I wish first of all to ask that you convey to these members of the Board my thanks for volunteering their services. I think that they are admirably qualified to undertake a study of the sort contemplated. Moreover, Professor Robertson's first-hand experience as former Director of the Research for the Weapons System Evaluation Group of the Department of Defense should be of special assistance in the study; if agreeable to you I would be very pleased if you would ask him to serve as the Chairman of the Study Committee.

I note further that the Board feels that the numerous COMINT reports and studies already in existence would be useful in making the present study and that a considerable part of the problem

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involved would be to coordinate and summarize those reports and studies. I have accordingly authorized Mr. Friedman to assemble for the Special Study Committee all the Agency's reports and studies which we think might be useful to the Committee. In order to conserve the Committee's time this material can be briefed and summaries prepared for the Committee's examination by mid-July.

Since the intelligence agencies, as the most important consumers of the COMINT product, would naturally be vitally interested in any study of the type now contemplated and could render valuable technical assistance therein, I would be glad to request, on behalf of the Committee, the temporary assignment to the Committee of technical assistants from each of the consumer agencies and departments, or from other agencies of the Department of Defense that might be able to render assistance and advice.

While I naturally do not want to volunteer any guidance to the Board as to how the study can best be conducted, I do think it might be useful if Professor Robertson, assuming he accepts the chairmanship of the Committee, could come to Washington soon, for the purpose of organizing the study project and determining its broad outlines. I would like you to telephone him without delay to ask him to do so, if you have no objection, and to let me know his decision. Travel orders can be issued and, of course, the members of the Committee would receive the usual fee for consultant's services while engaged in this project.

Sincerely,

*See A70-2 (3) NSASAB Sp. Study Rep.  
for req. file copy.*

RALPH J. CANINE  
Lieutenant General, US Army  
Director

Copies furnished:  
Members of NSASAB ✓

66: AG  
C/S  
S/ASST  
R/D - Dr. Leibler

letter thanks

M/R: This/the Chairman and members of NSASAB who participated in the 11-12 June Conference. The Director indicates that he would like the Board to undertake a study of the problem of evaluating the contribution which COMINT can

or could make to warn the US of an impending attack (the Board suggested this study be made), and that Prof. Robertson be invited to serve as Chairman of the Study Committee. The Director requests that Prof. Robertson come to Wash. as soon as possible, if he accepts the chairmanship, to organize and determine the broad outlines of the study.

Ltr to Prof. Stewart S. Cairns

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COPIES FURNISHED:

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Mr. J. C. McPherson:

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