

~~SECRET - U.S. EYES ONLY~~FINAL  
~~TENTATIVE~~SUBJECT NUMBERUSCIB: 13.1/9      Item 2 of the Agenda for the 116th Meeting of USCIB,  
held on 10 June 1955.

Subject:            COMINT Personnel Security Standards (USCIB 13.1/7).

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (General Cabell) informed the members that this item is based upon recommendations made by Captain Taylor prior to his departure as Executive Secretary. He added his opinion that the Board owed Captain Taylor a vote of thanks for his initiative in this regard, and he asked Captain Taylor, whom he had invited to attend this meeting, if he had any comments to make.

CAPTAIN TAYLOR referred to paragraph 7b of his paper (CIB #000119) and asked that it be corrected to read "...periodic reinvestigations at intervals of not more than three years...etc." He then commented that his principal reason for recommending interviews with working associates and social acquaintances not listed on a subject's personal history statement was to reach areas outside the subject's chosen circle of references, which could be presumed to be friendly.

GENERAL CANINE commented at some length on the recommendations in Captain Taylor's paper, his main objection being against the principle of investigating one's self. He said that he thought it would be difficult for a group representing the member agencies to perform an objective investigation and produce an objective report. He recommended that a qualified "outside" agency, namely, the Department of Justice, be asked to make a study of the status and efficiency of our COMINT personnel security procedures and practices and report its findings.

CAPTAIN TAYLOR referred to the extremely large number (42,000) of personnel currently cleared and indoctrinated for Category III COMINT and said that he thought a lack of discrimination as to degree of access is largely to blame for this high figure.

MR. ELLIS, referring to General Canine's proposal, said that he considers the existing Board standards proper, and that the answer to the problem lies in tighter control and closer supervision of existing procedures by the individual member agencies rather than in expanded investigations.

MR. GODEL, associating himself with Mr. Ellis' remarks, suggested that we address ourselves to the problem of reducing to a reasonable figure the number of people authorized access to Category III, thereby permitting more effective application of existing standards and procedures.

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GENERAL CANINE, reiterating his belief in having such a study performed by someone who does not work for him, pointed out that an important aspect of the personnel security problem is to obtain assurance that an employee who is "pure" when first taken on the rolls remains that way throughout his employment.

The CHAIR then suggested that a solution to this problem might be reached by having the senior security representatives of the various agencies sit together to compare notes, using the Petersen case as a starting point, in an effort to determine what lessons can be learned individually and collectively from the procedures and practices now in use among the member agencies.

MR. GODEL, commenting upon General Canine's desire for study by an independent group, stated that there is a very high level Presidential group, headed by Governor Brucker, which is charged with looking into the overall security policy and practices of the Department of Defense. He said that he could probably arrange for a study to be made by this group if the Board so agreed.

MR. ARMSTRONG recalled Captain Taylor's earlier mention of the fact that on two occasions Petersen had been found to meet the standards of the Board. He said that this would seem to indicate the possibility that the basic criteria applicable to all members are not sufficiently high, and that the outside study prepared by General Canine would be most likely to produce an impersonal and objective recommendation as to whether changes should be made.

MR. GODEL, agreeing with General Canine's and Mr. Armstrong's view that members of the COMINT community would be "prophets without honor" in the conduct of an investigation of this kind, pointed out that their proposals had the added advantage of recognizing the President's concern and interest in overall security practices.

ADMIRAL CAVENAGH suggested that, in view of the fact that an outside committee would require facts to work with, it might be best to have our own people study the problem with a view to determining whether advice of an outside group will be necessary.

The MEMBERS engaged in a brief further discussion on the need for a committee to study this problem, ultimately agreeing that a committee study is desirable. The discussion then turned to a consideration of terms of reference for, and composition of, the proposed committee.

The CHAIR suggested that terms of reference first be considered, commenting that agreement on this point might help simplify the problem of composition. He invited comments by Mr. Armstrong.

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MR. ARMSTRONG recommended that the committee be asked, among other things, to review the degree of close supervision, control, and inspection maintained by each member agency; to review USCIB Directive Number 5 in light of our experience in the Petersen case; and to study the feasibility of establishing different levels of clearance for different categories of access.

These proposed terms of reference were generally acceptable; however, the members agreed that they would be prepared in draft form by the Executive Secretary and circulated for comment prior to final approval.

The CHAIR observed that the proposed terms of reference indicate a need for a rather broad study by knowledgeable representatives. He suggested that each member appoint one representative, using his own discretion as to whether that person should be his top security officer. He suggested, further, that the Chairman of the USCIB Security Committee sit as a member of the committee, and informed the members of his belief that the CIA representative would be their senior security officer.

MR. GODEL stated that OSD representation probably would be appointed from the Office of the Assistant Secretary (Governor Brucker).

GENERAL CANINE again proposed that an outside group be asked to make the study. He noted that Attorney General Brownell is fundamentally charged with internal security and suggested that he be asked to handle the matter.

The CHAIR asked if the FBI member would be willing to accept the chairmanship of this committee.

MR. ELLIS replied that it would be necessary for him to check with his principal before making a commitment. He continued by commenting that the discussion seemed to imply some aura of mystery with regard to techniques employed by his Bureau. He assured the members that there is nothing mysterious about their investigations, stating that their results depend primarily upon thoroughness. He repeated his originally-stated opinion that the problem before the Board is not so much the standards themselves, but continued and effective inspection, supervision and control of them.

The CHAIR stated that there appear to be two possible courses of action, namely, (1) to ask the Attorney General to conduct a study of the problem, and (2) to establish a committee of one representative from each member agency, plus the Chairman of the USCIB Security Committee, requesting that the FBI member accept the chairmanship of such a committee.

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A poll of the members revealed the Director, NSA in support of (1) above and the remaining members in support of proposal (2). Subsequently, the Director, NSA expressed his willingness to accede to the majority view.

DECISION: (10 June 1955) USCIB agreed:

a. To establish a committee to study the COMINT personnel security standards and practices of the USCIB member agencies with a view to making recommendations and/or suggestions to USCIB with respect thereto.

b. That the committee should be chaired by the FBI member, subject to FBI concurrence, with membership consisting of one representative appointed by each member of the Board, plus the Chairman of the USCIB Security Committee.

c. That the committee would operate under terms of reference reflecting the Board's discussion at this meeting. Such terms of reference to be prepared by the Executive Secretary and circulated for approval by USCIB.

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