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8 October 1953

MEMORANDUM FOR BRIGADIER TILTMAN

SUBJECT: Program to Improve the Communications Security of NATO Countries

1. Reference is made (a) to USCIB 29.1/1 of 21 September 1953; and (b) to the first meeting of the US-UK Combined Working Group on 8 October 1953 during which it was agreed that the US members would provide to the UK members a more detailed description of the use of the Tripartite Security Working Group (TSWG) in the initial approach to the French than was contained in USCIB 29.1/1.

2. The intent of USCIB in suggesting phase 2 of the initial approach to the French for the transition of this matter from the diplomatic level to the technical working level (see paragraph 6b of USCIB 29.1/1) was to insure that:

a. The US-UK-French technical discussions will not be established within intelligence channels (see paragraph 5a of USCIB 29.1/1).

b. These technical discussions will be established among COMSEC authorities selected so as to provide the maximum general security and will be conducted under conditions of optimum physical security.

c. The US and UK will participate in this transition as a prerequisite to obtaining the foregoing assurances.

3. It was felt that to obtain these assurances would require only that this phase involve the selection of technical personnel and the establishment of secure physical arrangements for the technical discussions.

4. USCIB has suggested that the TSWG is the most suitable instrumentality for this purpose on the following bases:

a. That the TSWG is the only mechanism extant in the security field and at the government level in which US-UK-French participation has already been established.

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b. That, being an existing mechanism, the TSAG is the least conspicuous means of insinuating US-UK participation in this transition.

c. That the TSAG is an instrumentality in which the French have already demonstrated their confidence and with which they have cooperated fully.

5. If the TSAG is used as proposed by USCIB, it is believed that (a) this new matter need not be added to the formal terms of reference of the TSAG or become a formal agenda item for the TSAG; and (b) the TSAG would not deal with this matter in plenary session or render a formal, full report on it. Instead, it is proposed that the existing liaison channels between the senior TSAG members of each Government be used on an ad hoc basis.

6. The US envisages that, under phase 1 of the initial approach to the French, USCIB and LSIB will have arranged for the US and UK Ambassadors to obtain agreement from the French Government to the designation of a French member of the TSAG who then would be informed of this matter. Similarly designated US and UK members of the TSAG would then make contact with their designated French counterpart and inform him of the US and UK COMINT authorities selected to participate in the working level technical discussions. The designated French member would handle — and inform the US and UK members of — the selection of the French technical authorities. The three designated TSAG members then would establish the indispensable physical security arrangements for the technical discussions. Upon completion of these arrangements, the TSAG members would be withdrawn and they would not be concerned further with this matter unless unforeseen developments should indicate that the TSAG must be reinserted in order to maintain security control.

7. If this proposal is not acceptable to you, the US members of the Combined Working Group would appreciate a counter-proposal designed to accomplish the purposes described in paragraph 2 above.

T. Achilles Polyzoides  
Chairman, USCIB Ad Hoc Committee  
For NATO Communications

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