

OEL-019-73

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Science and  
Technology

SUBJECT: Policy Regarding Assistance to Agencies  
Outside the Intelligence Community on  
Speech Processing Problems

1. Recent public concern over Agency affiliations with law enforcement activities has made me wary of offering speech processing assistance to various other government agencies. My concern here is restricted to government activities outside the intelligence community. Because of a scientific community awareness of the expertise of members of OEL in speech processing problems, we are often asked by individuals in government for help on various speech problems. The requests are usually informal on a person-to-person basis. While most of these contacts involve only an exchange of unclassified information, several have involved the use of laboratory resources.

2. Contacts have come from the FBI, Attorney General's office, Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs (BNDD), Post Office, and the Treasury Department. Of the above, assistance to BNDD had been specifically sanctioned by Mr. Helms. In one recent instance where a noisy tape was to be used in a court case, care was taken to insure that the processing of the tape was done entirely by a BNDD employee even though it was done in an Agency laboratory using the Agency's Coherent Spectrum Shaper equipment.


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3. Providing services of this kind to other agencies has not as yet imposed a significant workload on us and there is a benefit to us in that such contact enables the staff to test techniques and equipment on a variety of speech problems. Informal interactions at the technical level are fruitful in terms of helping us to accomplish Agency goals. Hence we would be willing to continue to support other departments on an ad hoc basis, but would appreciate your guidance re the wisdom of OEL's involvement in "domestic" activities.

  
JOHN N. McMAHON  
Director of ELINT  
DD/S&T

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