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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

Executive Registry  
65-3863/1

June 30, 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR THE HEADS  
OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

I am strongly opposed to the interception of telephone conversations as a general investigative technique. I recognize that mechanical and electronic devices may sometimes be essential in protecting our national security. Nevertheless, it is clear that indiscriminate use of these investigative devices to overhear telephone conversations, without the knowledge or consent of any of the persons involved, could result in serious abuses and invasions of privacy. In my view, the invasion of privacy of communications is a highly offensive practice which should be engaged in only where the national security is at stake. To avoid any misunderstanding on this subject in the Federal Government, I am establishing the following basic guidelines to be followed by all government agencies:

- (1) No federal personnel is to intercept telephone conversations within the United States by any mechanical or electronic device, without the consent of one of the parties involved, (except in connection with investigations related to the national security).
- (2) No interception shall be undertaken or continued without first obtaining the approval of the Attorney General.
- (3) All federal agencies shall immediately conform their practices and procedures to the provisions of this order.

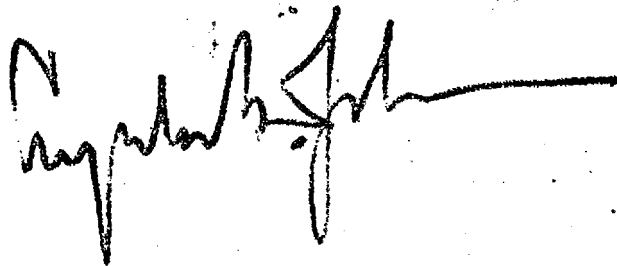
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- 2 -

Utilization of mechanical or electronic devices to overhear non-telephone conversations is an even more difficult problem, which raises substantial and unresolved questions of Constitutional interpretation. I desire that each agency conducting such investigations consult with the Attorney General to ascertain whether the agency's practices are fully in accord with the law and with a decent regard for the rights of others.

Every agency head shall submit to the Attorney General within 30 days a complete inventory of all mechanical and electronic equipment and devices used for or capable of intercepting telephone conversations. In addition, such reports shall contain a list of any interceptions currently authorized and the reasons for them.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Richard M. Helms", written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

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