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DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE
SIGINT Committee

Office of the Chairman

24 March 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR: Acting Director of Central Intelligence

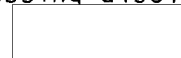THROUGH: Director, Intelligence Community Staff   5 APR 1983

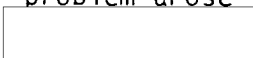SUBJECT: Definition of Signals Intelligence

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1.   Action Requested: This memorandum contains an interpretation, recently formulated by the SIGINT Committee, of the definition of Signals Intelligence (SIGINT) and related activities and the relationship between these and other intelligence collection and processing disciplines. Your concurrence in this interpretation is requested.
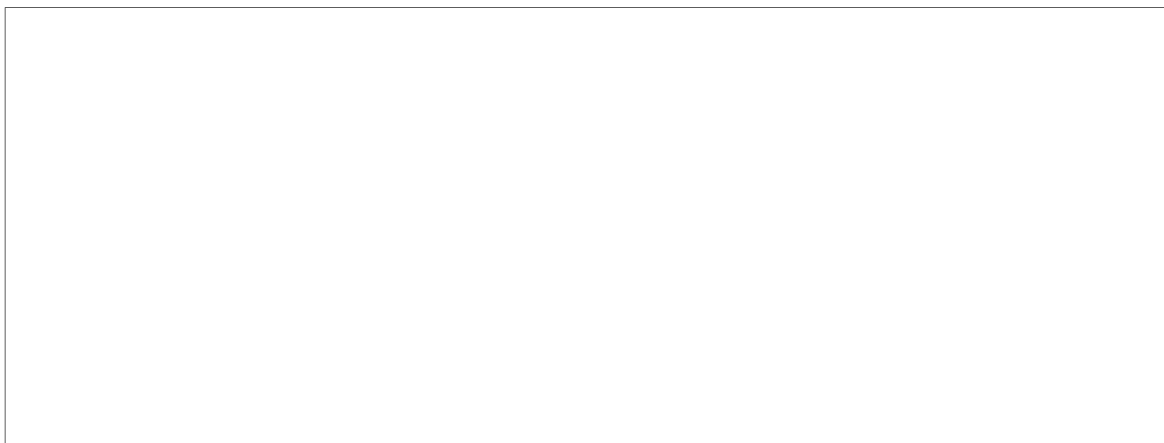
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2.   Background: A new interpretation was necessitated by changing and expanding technological capabilities for transmitting, collecting, and processing information in today's environment. The SIGINT Committee has had to deal with several issues recently which have involved identifying distinctions between SIGINT and other forms of intelligence information. The most immediately pertinent were discussions of the propriety of retaining in the SIGINT Committee Charter the function of developing statements of requirements for collection and exploitation of non-imaging infrared, coherent light, and non-nuclear electromagnetic pulse (EMP) data. Also included was the determination of an appropriate mechanism for tasking the US SIGINT System (USSS) to collect such data as EMP or unintentional radiations if the sources have been defined as not within the general purview of "SIGINT" require- ments. The former problem was raised by the Director, DIA, and AFIN. The latter problem arose in the SIRVES in the context of an MIA request for EMP data.

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3.   Discussion: The SIGINT Committee used the primary definition of SIGINT which is contained in the Glossary of Intelligence Terms and Definitions as a starting point for deliberation:

Signals Intelligence (SIGINT): Intelligence information comprising either individually or in combination all communications intelligence, electronics intelligence, and foreign instrumentation signals intelligence, however transmitted.

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4.   The Committee reaffirms that definition. However, the Committee also believes that the complexity of the subject requires inclusion of an expanded description of the relationships between the components of SIGINT and other collection and processing disciplines, including the components of what the Department of Defense refers to as Measurement and Signature Intelligence (MASINT). (As a matter of interest, audio surveillance operations were defined as not being components of SIGINT.) With your concurrence the material in the attachment will be used as a basis for changing the Signals Intelligence Security Regulations and the SIGINT Committee DCID when they are next revised.

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5.   Specification of the relationships between the components of SIGINT and other collection and processing disciplines suggests that the structures for managing such requirements at the national level require review and possible modification. The Committee has developed a range of options which I will forward to the D/ICS for consideration.

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6.   Recommendation: Your concurrence with the definition of SIGINT and the SIGINT Committee interpretation of the relationship between SIGINT and other collection and processing disciplines is recommended.

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Attachment:
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SUBJECT: Definition of SIGINT

CONCUR: _____   ⟨ 11 APR 1983
        Acting Director of Central Intelligence   _____
                                                          Date

NON-CONCUR: _____   _____
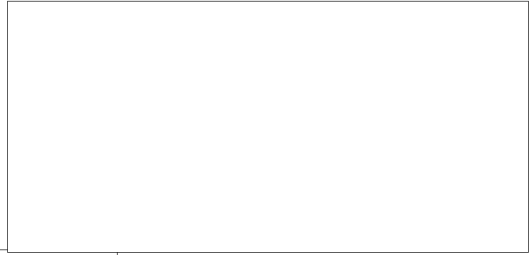   Acting Director of Central Intelligence   Date

⟨ This makes sense to me but I feel that we should get NFIB's chop. Please send out & stick it on NFIB agenda for vote

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