

~~TOP SECRET~~

6 April 1955

~~TOP SECRET~~EO 3.3(h)(2)
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605EO 3.3(h)(2)
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605

Aide Memoir:

Subject: Resolution of NSA-GCHQ Technical Differences on French COMSEC.

1. As a result of the informal conversations carried on in London and Washington between and among members of NSA, GCHQ and the ICBA with COMSEC, it has become apparent that there are no serious technical differences between NSA and GCHQ on the technical evaluation of the present position of French COMSEC.

2. There are, however, certain misunderstandings which it would be well to lay to rest. These are:

a. Without digging up too many corpses, there is the possibility that the British delegation to the CIG was handicapped by a lack of competent GCHQ technical advice. This resulted in essentially technical decisions being taken by persons not fully qualified to make such decisions. Therefore, it is suggested that GCHQ might wish to instruct COMSEC to have [redacted] meet informally with equivalent members of NSA for the purpose of laying preliminary, technical ground work for any future meetings with the [redacted]. This is a precautionary measure and the suggestion is made in anticipation of another meeting with the [redacted].

b. Another area of possible technical misunderstanding pertains to the nature of the remedies which can be applied to the French COMSEC problem. During the informal discussions it became quite clear that the GCHQ and ICBA participants felt quite strongly that any kind of action which would improve French COMSEC would be desirable, even if such small increments of action would not fully solve the problem. The NSA members are willing to agree to this approach only if the improvements can be

EO 3.3(h)(2)
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~EO 3.3(h)(2)
PL 86-36/50 USC 3605~~TOP SECRET~~

g. This raises a problem general to many of the NATO nations, in addition to the [redacted]. If the UKUSA nations try to improve, piecemeal, the communications and cipher procedures and operations of relatively vulnerable NATO nations, all we will be doing is forcing [redacted] on those nations and yet not denying the same intelligence to the Soviets. It is not believed that the Soviets would have to make the same decisions as we do (UKUSA), to concentrate our limited resources and specialists against Soviet communications, because most of the intelligence the Soviets desire is either obtainable through open sources or secondarily through communications of our vulnerable allies. Hence, for the ultimate resolution of the problem we seem to be driven inevitably to providing the vulnerable NATO nations with secure and fool-proof cipher gear.

h. Unfortunately, neither the position of the US nor the UK is unassailable in that both nations are guilty of some practices which we deplore in the [redacted]. In order to get around this weakness it is possible that an "indirect disclosure" approach be taken, to wit, providing the [redacted] with the COMSEC data sheets on the gear to be provided to them for their use.

MARION G. FULLING
Colonel, U.S. Air Force
Senior U.S. Liaison Officer, London

*g.

Mr. Friedman
Mr. Haven
Mr. Shaw
Mr. Shinn
Mr. Stukay
Mr. Douglas

~~TOP SECRET~~