

D R A F T

STATEMENT BY THE USCIB COORDINATOR ON USCIB 13/195  
(MEASURES FOR THE INCREASED SECURITY OF COMINT)

1. The Coordinator is in complete accord with the objectives sought by the Security Committee, but does not agree completely with the proposed method of accomplishing them. The necessity for dividing COMINT into categories is thoroughly recognized if this can be accomplished with no loss of source protection in the lower categories.

2. The principal objection to the proposal made in the report is that it would decrease the security safeguards around virtually every current source of COMINT in bulk without increasing safeguards around those sources which are currently producing an insignificant amount of so-called "high-level" COMINT.

3. The current report resulted from recommendations made to USCIB by the Coordinator on 22 December 1950 (USCIB 13/134), that a Security Committee review of all phases of COMINT security was warranted by the need for increased protection of all COMINT sources. The Coordinator divided the problem of COMINT security into four segments, two of which he considered to be of prime interest to the Security Committee; namely (a) format of final products (in its relation to revelation of source) and (b) accounting control of production of copies and of their dissemination to consumers. The Committee report touches briefly upon the first of these, but does not consider the second.

4. The Coordinator believes that the problem will be solved only by:

- a. Reducing the number of people aware of COMINT operations.
- b. Reducing the number of pieces of paper containing COMINT and insuring careful accounting for each.

c. Disguising the source of COMINT wherever possible.

d. Maintaining at least current standards of clearance and levels of classification for all categories of COMINT except the very highest, which must be raised.

e. Taking advantage of the opportunities afforded by the present framework to insure effective and secure operational use of COMINT in actual hostilities.

5. The current report falls short of meeting any one of these requirements.

6. There is no means of guaranteeing even the current flow of COMINT. This flow certainly will not continue if we relax our efforts to prevent our enemies from learning what COMINT sources we are exploiting.

7. To cite a simple but convincing case: The committee recommends that plain-text military messages of a tactical nature (now permissively considered SECRET CODEWORD Traffic Intelligence in an emergency) shall be excluded from special COMINT regulations. If the enemy learns that we are using these messages for intelligence, he will begin enciphering them, possibly in a low-grade system. If he learns we are reading the low-grade system, he will begin using more secure systems. Eventually, all significant traffic would be carried in the most secure systems, insofar as the enemy's capabilities permit.

8. The question which the Security Committee and the intelligence-agency members of USCIB must decide is whether they desire the continued flow of COMINT from all COMINT sources (high-grade, medium-grade, low-grade, plain text). Evidence is accumulating that current security practices are inadequate to protect these sources, and that recent relaxations of standards may be drying up some important sources of COMINT.

9. The USCIB Coordinator believes it possible to:

- a. Revise current format and accounting practices so as to provide greater protection to COMINT sources.
- b. Strengthen the application of current regulations so as not to increase the possibility of "leaks."
- c. Establish stand-by emergency regulations, within current policies, to insure the most effective operational use of COMINT consistent with good security practices.

10. It is therefore recommended that USCIB return the report to the Security Committee with instructions to re-draft the report so as to:

- a. Bring the security safeguards for the so-called Categories "C" and "D" at least up to present standards.
- b. Make specific recommendations regarding the format of all COMINT products (in its relation to revelation of source).
- c. Make specific recommendations regarding accounting control of copies of COMINT products, to include provisions for reducing the number of copies.