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ABC Network

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SUBJECT National Security Agency

TED KOPPEL: It is not nearly as well known as the CIA or the FBI, but the National Security Agency is the biggest intelligence organization run by the U.S. Government. And there is good reason why it is not as well known as some of the others. The activities of the NSA are so secret that even the original directive by President Harry Truman which established the agency, that directive is still classified.

We do know that one prime function of the NSA is monitoring international communications. Nightline correspondent James Walker tells us how it works.

JAMES WALKER: Every day Americans, private individuals and corporations, send or receive over one million international calls or cables. And every day the U.S. Government's National Security Agency is listening in and recording some of those communications. They do it in the name of national security. They don't get anyone's permission.

It's happened to actress Jane Fonda, to lawyer Abdin Jabara, to Billy Carter, and to former New York Times journalist Harrison Salisbury.

HARRISON SALISBURY: The NSA has almost all-inclusive power to surveil, through electronics or maybe other means, anyone in this country, and certainly any American citizen who's abroad. I just think it's universal. I don't think there's any limit to it.

WALKER: What is this NSA? Many Americans have never heard of it, but it is in fact the nation's largest and most secret intelligence agency, with a budget bigger than the CIA and



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