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USCSB Comments on Pertinent Portions of Part I, Appendix I, of the Report of
the Hoover Commission Task Force on Intelligence Activities

RECOMMENDATION #4

"THAT THE MILITARY SERVICES AND NSA CONTINUE TO STRIVE FOR A HIGHER DEGREE OF CRYPTOGRAPHIC SECURITY; THAT THE PROBLEM OF COMMUNICATIONS SECURITY, INCLUDING PLAIN TEXT MESSAGES AND TRAFFIC ANALYSIS OF ENCRYPTED MESSAGES, BE RESTUDIED BY USCSB (OR THE COMBINED BOARD AS RECOMMENDED IN THIS REPORT) WITH A VIEW TOWARD REDUCING TO THE LOWEST PRACTICABLE LEVEL THE QUANTITY OF INFORMATION RELEASED THROUGH TELECOMMUNICATIONS; AND THAT NSC 168 BE REEXAMINED TO ASCERTAIN IF THE DIRECTOR, NSA, HAS SUFFICIENT AUTHORITY TO CARRY OUT HIS COMSEC RESPONSIBILITIES."

COMMENTS:

With regard to the first part of this recommendation, USCSB notes that the Military Services and NSA continually strive for a higher degree of cryptographic security and, as a matter of routine, keep this problem under thorough review at all times.

With reference to the second part of this recommendation, viz, "That NSC 168 be reexamined to ascertain if the Director, NSA, has sufficient authority to carry out his COMSEC responsibilities", USCSB concurs, noting that, in essence, the recommendation calls for a restudy of matters which are already under review in accordance with the provisions of NSC 168.

RECOMMENDATION #5

"THAT A SINGLE BOARD WITH APPROPRIATE TECHNICAL SUBCOMMITTEES HAVE POLICY COGNIZANCE OVER COMMUNICATIONS INTELLIGENCE AND COMMUNICATIONS SECURITY. IF THE RECOMMENDATION TO PLACE THE EVALUATION AND ANALYSIS OF ELINT UNDER NSA IS ADOPTED, THEN POLICY GUIDANCE FOR ELINT AS WELL AS COMINT AND COMSEC SHOULD BE EXERCISED BY THE PROPOSED SINGLE BOARD."

COMMENTS:

USCSB is at present unwilling to recommend establishment of the single Board referred to in this recommendation, both because of the difficulties involved in its implementation, and the fact that USCSB is operating under a provisional charter. In connection with its review of NSC 168, USCSB will give further consideration to this problem.

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With regard to the second part of this recommendation, USCSB considers that the proposal regarding policy guidance for ELINT has been overtaken by the issuance of National Security Council Intelligence Directive No. 17 and the related Department of Defense Implementing Directive of 13 July 1955.

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USCSB Comments on Pertinent Portions of Part 2, Appendix I, of the Report of
the Hoover Commission Task Force on Intelligence Activities

RECOMMENDATION #8

"THAT THE PRESENT BASIC COMMUNICATIONS (CRYPTOGRAPHIC) SECURITY PLAN, PROVIDING FOR CENTRALIZED CONTROL WITH EFFECTIVE DECENTRALIZATION OF OPERATIONS, BE CONTINUED; THAT EACH AGENCY AND SERVICE MAINTAIN EFFECTIVE INSPECTION AND VIGOROUS TRAINING PROGRAMS TO REDUCE TO THE MINIMUM CRYPTOGRAPHIC OPERATIONAL SECURITY VIOLATIONS."

COMMENTS:

USCSB concurs in this recommendation, noting that the Communications Security Plan referred to represents, in reality, a number of Communications Security arrangements each of which is considered satisfactory.

RECOMMENDATION #9

"THAT NSC DETERMINE WAYS AND MEANS TO CONTROL MORE EFFECTIVELY RELEASE OF VALUABLE INTELLIGENCE TO POTENTIAL ENEMIES VIA CLEAR TEXT MESSAGES BEING TRANSMITTED OVER GOVERNMENT AND CIVIL COMMUNICATION NETWORKS."

COMMENTS:

USCSB considers that the policy responsibility for effective control of governmental clear text messages transmitted over civil or governmental networks falls within the charter of USCSB. USCSB has long recognized this problem and is working toward its solution. Progress is considered satisfactory and the problem does not appear to be one for NSC consideration.

With respect to the transmission of civil clear text messages over civil communications networks, USCSB considers this problem to be outside its purview.

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RECOMMENDATION #10

"THAT THE GENERAL TENDENCY WITHIN THE COMMUNICATIONS INTELLIGENCE AND THE COMMUNICATIONS SECURITY AGENCIES TO OVEREMPHASIZE THE SPECIAL SECURITY FACETS OF THEIR OPERATIONS WITH RESPECT TO BASIC COMMUNICATIONS AND ELECTRONICS FEATURES BE EXAMINED OBJECTIVELY AND COMPREHENSIVELY BY COMPETENT, TECHNICALLY QUALIFIED AUTHORITY TO INSURE THAT SUCH OVEREMPHASIS IS NOT PRODUCING UN-NECESSARY DUPLICATION OF FACILITIES AND OPERATIONS IN PEACETIME WHICH WILL GROW TO COMPLETELY UNREALISTIC FIGURES IN WARTIME, AND PRODUCING A SYSTEM WHICH MAY FAIL IN AN EMERGENCY BECAUSE IT WILL REQUIRE CONSIDERABLE READJUSTMENT OF BASIC OPERATIONAL PRACTICES AT A CRITICAL TIME. (THIS SERVICE COULD BE ACCOMPLISHED BY THE SUBCOMMITTEE PROPOSED IN RECOMMENDATION #1 ABOVE.)"

COMMENTS:

USCSB considers that this recommendation falls within the scope of the study referred to in the Special Recommendation.

SPECIAL RECOMMENDATION

"THAT THE PRESIDENT SET UP A SPECIAL COMMISSION COMPOSED OF TECHNICALLY QUALIFIED CIVIL AND MILITARY COMMUNICATIONS AND ELECTRONICS REPRESENTATIVES, TO SURVEY AND PRODUCE RECOMMENDATIONS AS TO WAYS AND MEANS TO INSURE THE MORE EFFECTIVE UTILIZATION OF ALL COMMUNICATIONS AND ELECTRONICS RESOURCES OF THE UNITED STATES IN THE NATIONAL INTERESTS IN CASE OF WAR OR NATIONAL EMERGENCY."

COMMENTS:

Although comments on this recommendation were not requested, USCSB considers that active participation of COMSEC and COMINT representatives would be advantageous, should such a study be approved.

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