NSA's Version

SHAMROCK

It is factual to say that the U.S. Government was provided substantial amounts of telegraphed information by a number of private companies over the years, beginning in World War II and continuing through the Korean period, the Cold War era, and the SE Asian wars. This information was asked for by the Government, under the authority and with the knowledge of the highest levels, and freely provided by a number of firms.

The firms did not ask about nor know the use to which the information was put, but they had our assurance that it was needed for legitimate national security purposes -- which in fact it was.

The question of possible impropriety in NSA's use of some of the information provided by the companies should be addressed, in my view, without reference to the source of the information. The procedures used by the companies to provide the information were dictated by the technology they employed in going about their own business, and these procedures were not influenced by the subsequent use of the information. In other words, nothing they did was designed to provide NSA access to private U.S. citizen communications. It was designed to support the U.S. in pursuit of legitimate national security activities.

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NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY
CENTRAL SECURITY SERVICE
FORT GEORGE G. MEADE, MARYLAND 20755

October 23, 1975

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Dear Madam Chairwoman:

I appreciate your taking the time to meet with Assistant Secretary Hall and me yesterday concerning the hearing which you plan to hold this morning. As I mentioned to you, there are matters of importance to the national security of the United States which could come up during this hearing. They involve "communications intelligence activities" as defined in 18 U.S.C. 798.

I share your deep concern that our legitimate collection efforts in the national security area not be used to violate the rights of American citizens which are protected by the Fourth Amendment. As you know, we have discussed our activities concerning, in your words, "intervention in non-verbal communications", with the Select Committees of Congress which are now investigating the intelligence community. We have given these committees and their staffs access to information concerning this subject under procedures designed to prevent disclosure of this information to unauthorized persons.

I respectfully request that any discussion of this subject avoid public disclosure of communications intelligence activities. I believe that this is in keeping with 18 U.S.C. 798 wherein Congress expressed its intent that such information be kept secret and not made available to actual or potential enemies of the United States.

Thank you very much for your consideration of my views on this critical subject.

Sincerely,

Lew Allen, Jr.
Lt. General, USAF
Director, National Security Agency

Honorable Bella S. Abzug, Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Government Information
and Individual Rights
Committee on Government Operations
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

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NINETY-FOURTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

GOVERNMENT INFORMATION AND INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS
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OF THE
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS
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October 24, 1975

Lt. General Lew Allen, Jr., USAF
Director
National Security Agency
Central Security Service
Fort George G. Meade, Maryland 20755

Dear General Allen:

This is to request your presence before the Subcommittee on Government Information and Individual Rights on Tuesday, October 28, 1975, at 10:00 a.m., Room 2247 of the Rayburn House Office Building, to explore with the Subcommittee your reasons for requesting that we not hold open hearings regarding our examination of the National Security Agency's and the Federal Bureau of Investigation's monitoring and interception of cable and telex traffic.

At the Subcommittee hearing yesterday, the Members specifically requested that you be invited to appear to develop more fully your private assertion to me on Wednesday of this week that national security was involved in this matter. When I asked you to specify just what area or areas were concerned, you replied that the national security questions were so intertwined with the entire subject of the inquiry, that, though the inquiry was valid, it should either not continue or, at least, be closed to the public and press.

Sincerely,

Bella Abzug

BELLA S. ABZUG
Chairwoman

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