

portion of any of the records could be segregated and released without identifying the communications underlying the communications intelligence report. Also disclosed would be the communications lines, channels, links, and systems targeted and intercepted and NSA's capabilities to successfully process the underlying communications. These communications targets and the processing techniques are current intelligence sources and methods. Disclosing them would permit foreign intelligence officials to draw inferences and make assessments about this nation's COMINT collection and processing activities that would enable them to take counter-measures, as described above, to defeat the capabilities of NSA's intelligence gathering techniques.

17. The COMINT reports being withheld from the plaintiff are classified in

their entirety to protect intelligence sources and methods. When originated, certain of the records were properly classified Top Secret pursuant to Executive Order 10501, Section 1(a), providing for the application of that classification to information, the unauthorized disclosure of which could result in exceptionally grave damage to the nation, such as the "compromise of ... intelligence operations ... vital to the national defense." Other documents were properly classified Secret pursuant to Executive Order 10501, Section 1(b), providing for the application of that classification to information, the unauthorized disclosure of which could result serious damage to the nation, such as by "compromising...information revealing important intelligence operations." The rest, which were originated after June 1, 1972, were properly