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information produced by NSA includes political, economic, scientific and military data which is of immeasurable value to the President, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of State and other policymakers. Obviously, if a COMINT source used by the Agency becomes unavailable, policymakers must operate without the information that source produced. Sometimes it is impossible to establish a new and equivalent intercept and the source is lost permanently. Those losses are not only extremely harmful to the national security but also impose a heavy burden on the limited resources of NSA which must attempt to recover the old source or establish an equivalent source of information.

15. Even after targeting only a small proportion of all available electromagnetic communications for interception the number of messages intercepted is

extremely large. NSA thus is faced with a considerable task in selecting out those messages that will be reviewed for possible intelligence interest. The manner in which NSA does this selection and the degree of reliability and success its methods enjoy are subjects about which virtually no authoritative information has ever been released to the public. Information about these subjects would enable foreign observers to further assess, and thus take steps to defeat, the capabilities of NSA's intelligence gathering techniques.

RELEASE OF COMINT REPORTS

16. The COMINT reports being withheld from the plaintiff are all based on intercepted foreign communications. The disclosure of these records would identify the communications that had been successfully intercepted and processed for intelligence purposes. No meaningful