

# Text of Ford Plan on Intelligence Units and Excerpts From

## His Executive Order

WASHINGTON, Feb. 18—Following are the text of President Ford's message to Congress outlining proposed changes in the structure and authority of the intelligence community and excerpts from his executive order, effective immediately, placing new restrictions of intelligence activities and establishing a new oversight aspect.

### Ford Message

To the Congress of the United States:

By virtue of the authority vested in me by Article II, Sections 2 and 3 of the Constitution, and other provisions of law, I have today issued an executive order pertaining to the organization and control of the United States foreign intelligence community. This order establishes clear lines of accountability for the nation's foreign intelligence agencies. It sets forth strict guidelines to control the activities of these agencies and specifies, as well as those activities in which they shall not engage.

In carrying out my constitutional responsibilities to manage and provide for the nation's defense, I believe it essential to have the best possible intelligence about the capabilities, intentions and activities of governments and other entities and individuals abroad. To this end, the foreign intelligence agencies of the United States play a vital role in collecting and analyzing information related to the national defense and foreign policy.

It is equally as important that the methods these agencies employ to collect such information for the legitimate needs of the Gov-



President Ford after signing his message to Congress.

ernment conform to the standards set out in the Constitution to preserve and respect the privacy and civil liberties of American citizens. The executive order I have issued today will insure a proper balancing of these interests. It establishes Government-wide direction for the foreign intelligence agencies and places responsibility and accountability on individuals not institutions.

I believe it will eliminate abuses and questionable activities on the part of the foreign intelligence agencies, while at the same time permitting them to get on with their vital work of gathering and assessing information. It is also my hope that these steps will help to restore

public confidence in these agencies and encourage our citizens to appreciate the valuable contribution they make to our national security.

Beyond the steps I have taken in the executive order, I also believe there is a clear need for some specific legislative actions. I am today submitting to the Congress of the United States proposals which will go far toward enhancing the protection of true intelligence secrets as well as regularizing procedures for intelligence collection in the United States.

Protecting Sources My first proposal deals with the protection of intelligence sources and methods. The Director of Central Intelligence

is charged, under the National Security Act of 1947, as amended, with protecting intelligence sources and methods. The act, however, gives the director no authorities commensurate with this responsibility.

Therefore, I am proposing legislation to impose criminal and civil sanctions on those who are authorized access to intelligence secrets and who willfully and wrongfully reveal this information. This legislation is not an "official secrets act" since it would affect only those who improperly disclose secrets, not those to whom secrets are disclosed. Moreover, this legislation could not be used to cover up abuses and improprieties. It would in no way prevent people from reporting questionable activities to appropriate authorities in the executive and legislative branches of the Government.

It is essential, however, that the irresponsible and dangerous exposure of our nation's intelligence secrets be stopped. The American people have long accepted the principles of confidentiality and secrecy in many dealings—such as with doctors, lawyers, and the clergy. It makes absolutely no sense to deny this same protection to our intelligence secrets. Openness is a hallmark of our democratic society, but the American people have never believed that it was necessary to reveal the secret war plans of the Department of Defense, and I do not think they wish to have true intelligence secrets revealed either.

I urge the adoption of this legislation with all possible speed.

Second, I support proposals that would clarify and set statutory limits, where necessary, on the activities of the foreign intelligence agencies. In particular, I will support legislation making it a crime to assassinate or attempt to conspire to assassinate a foreign official in peacetime. Since it defines a crime, legislation is necessary.

Third, I will meet with the appropriate leaders of Congress to try to develop sound legislation to deal with a critical problem involving personal privacy—electronic surveillance. Working with Congressional leaders and the Justice Department and other executive agencies, we will seek to develop a procedure for undertaking electronic surveillance for foreign intelligence purposes. It should create a special procedure for seeking a judicial warrant authorizing the use of electronic surveillance in the United States for foreign intelligence purposes.

### Supervised Mail Openings

I will also seek Congressional support for sound legislation to expand judicial supervision of mail openings. The law now permits the opening of United States mail, under proper judicial safeguards, in the conduct of criminal investigations. We need authority to open mail under the limitations and safeguards that now apply in order to obtain vitally needed foreign intelligence information.

This would require a showing that there is probable cause to believe that the

sende or recipient is an agent of a foreign power who is engaged in spying, sabotage or terrorism. As is now the case in criminal investigations, those seeking authority to examine mail for foreign intelligence purposes will have to convince a Federal judge of the necessity to do so and accept the limitations upon their authorization to examine the mail provided in the order of the court.

Fourth, I would like to share my views regarding appropriate Congressional oversight of the foreign intelligence agencies. It is clearly the business of the Congress to organize itself to deal with these matters. Certain principles, however, should be recognized by both the executive and legislative branches if this oversight is to be effective. I believe good Congressional oversight is essential so that the Congress and the American people whom you represent can be assured that the foreign intelligence agencies are adhering to the law in all of their activities.

Congress should seek to centralize the responsibility for oversight of the foreign intelligence community. The more committees and subcommittees dealing with highly sensitive secrets, the greater the risks of disclosure. I recommend that Congress establish a joint foreign intelligence oversight committee. Consolidation of Congressional oversight in one committee will facilitate the efforts of the Administration to keep the Congress fully informed of foreign intelligence activities.

It is essential that both the House and the Senate establish firm rules to insure that foreign intelligence secrets will not be improperly disclosed. There must be established a clear process to safeguard these secrets and effective measures to deal with unauthorized disclosures.

### Secrecy Emphasized

Any foreign intelligence information transmitted by the executive branch to the oversight committee, under an injunction of secrecy, should not be unilaterally disclosed without my agreement. Reference to the integrity of the Constitution requires adherence to the principle that no individual member, nor committee, nor single house of Congress can override an act of the executive. Unilateral publication of classified information over the objection of the President, one committee or one house of Congress, not only violates the doctrine of separation of powers, but also effectively overrules the actions of the other house of Congress and perhaps even the majority of both houses.

Finally, successful and effective Congressional oversight of the foreign intelligence agencies depends on mutual trust between the Congress and executive. Each branch must recognize and respect the rights and prerogatives of the other if anything is to be achieved. In this context, a Congressional requirement to keep the oversight committee fully informed is more desirable and workable as a practical matter than formal requirements for notification of specific activities to a large number of committees. Specifically, Section 662 of the Foreign Assistance Act, which has resulted in over six separate committee briefings, should be modified as recommended by the Commission on the Organization of the Government for the Conduct of Foreign Policy, and reporting should be limited to the new oversight committee.

Both the Congress and the executive branch recognize the importance to this nation of a strong intelligence service. I believe it urgent that

we take the steps I have outlined above to insure that America not only has the best foreign intelligence service in the world, but also the most unique—one which operates in a manner fully consistent with the constitutional rights of our citizens.

### Executive Order

Foreign intelligence agencies shall not engage in any of the following activities:

- (1) Physical surveillance directed against a United States person, unless it is a lawful surveillance conducted pursuant to procedures approved by the head of the foreign intelligence agency and directed against any of the following:
  - (A) present or former employee of such agency, its present or former contractors or their present or former employees, for the purpose of protecting foreign intelligence or counterintelligence sources or methods or national security information from unauthorized disclosure;
  - (B) A United States person, who is in contact with either such a present or former contractor or employee of a foreign intelligence or person, who is the subject of a foreign intelligence or counterintelligence inquiry, but only to the extent necessary to identify such United States person; or
  - (C) A United States person outside the United States who is reasonably believed to be acting on behalf of a foreign power or engaging in international terrorist or narcotics activities or activities threatening the national security.
- (2) Electronic surveillance to intercept communication which is made from, or is intended by, the gender to be received in, the United States, or directed against United States persons abroad, except lawful electronic surveillance under procedures approved by the Attorney General, provided that the United States person who is the subject of a foreign intelligence or counterintelligence search, search directed against United States persons abroad, except lawful searches under procedures approved by the Attorney General.
- (3) Opening of mail, or examination of envelopes or mail in United States postal channels except in accordance with applicable statutes and regulations.
- (4) Examination of Federal tax returns or tax information, except in accordance with applicable statutes and regulations.
- (5) Infiltration or undisclosed participation within the United States in any organization for the purpose of reporting on or influencing its activities or members, except such infiltration or participation with respect to an organization composed primarily of non-United States persons which is reasonably believed to be acting on behalf of a foreign power.
- (6) Collection of information, however acquired, concerning the domestic activities of United States persons except:
  - (A) Information concerning corporations or other commercial organizations which constitutes foreign intelligence or counterintelligence.
  - (B) Information concerning present or former employees, or their present or former employers, or applicants for any such employment or contracting, necessary to protect foreign intelligence or counterintelligence sources of methods of national security information from unauthorized disclosure; and the identity of persons in contact with the foregoing or with a non-United States person who is the subject of a foreign intelligence or counterintelligence inquiry.
- (7) Information concerning persons who are reasonably believed to be potential sources or contacts, but only for the purpose of determining the suitability or credibility of such persons.
- (8) Foreign intelligence or counterintelligence gathered abroad or from electronic surveillance conducted in compliance with section 5(b) or (2), or foreign intelligence acquired from cooperating sources in the United States.
- (9) Information about a United States person, who is reasonably believed to be acting on behalf of a foreign power or engaging in international terrorist or narcotics activities.
- (10) Information concerning persons or activities that pose a clear threat to foreign intelligence agency facilities or personnel, provided that such information is retained only by the foreign intelligence agency threatened and that proper coordination with the Federal Bureau of Investigation is accomplished.
- (11) Dissemination and storage of this order shall prohibit of this order shall prohibit to the appropriate law enforcement agencies or individuals gathered information indicating involvement in activities which may be in violation of law.
- (12) Storage of information required by law to be retained.
- (13) Dissemination to foreign intelligence agencies of information of the subject matter types listed in section 5 (b) (7).

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