



**(U//FOUO) White House Official Visits NSA to Learn About SIGINT Production**

FROM: [REDACTED], Chief, Levant and North Africa Division (S2E3), and [REDACTED], Account Manager for the White House (S112)  
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*(U//FOUO) National Security Council official makes special weekend visit to SID, gets a taste of how SIGINT analysts do their jobs.*

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(U//FOUO) On Saturday, February 4, the Signals Intelligence Directorate hosted Dr. Michael S. Doran, Senior Director for Near East and North African Affairs for the National Security Council (NSC), The White House, for an orientation of the SIGINT process and demonstrations of SIGINT capabilities. Dr. Doran was accompanied by his associate, Mr. Michael Singh, Director for Syria, Lebanon, Egypt and North Africa.



*(U//FOUO) Dr. Doran (first from the left) and others meet with President Bush at the President's ranch, August 11, 2005. From left to right: Dr. Doran, Senior Advisor to the Secretary of State Jim Wilkinson, Vice President Cheney, President Bush, Secretary of State Rice, Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs Dina Powell, then-Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Liz Cheney, and Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Karen Hughes (photo from Washington Post)*

(S//SI//REL) Dr. Doran arrived in the NSC last August, straight from academia, where he was an associate professor of Near Eastern studies at Princeton. With no government or intelligence background, **Dr. Doran found himself fascinated by SIGINT, especially intelligence produced on Syria and Lebanon.** The SIGINT reporting was voluminous, but suggested possible conflicting opinions by various principal targets. Dr. Doran asked for a SIGINT assessment report to help him better understand the current situation between Syria, Lebanon, and the UN Independent International Investigation Commission regarding the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri.

(S//SI//REL) During a feedback session with Dr. Doran and Mr. Singh to discuss that SIGINT assessment, they asked several questions about how NSA produces its SIGINT reports. **They readily accepted an invitation to visit NSA to see the process first-hand.** As Dr. Doran was only available to visit on a weekend, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Product Line kindly agreed to that request.

(TS//SI//REL) Upon their arrival at NSA, Messrs. Doran and Singh were welcomed by Mary Jo Coyner, MENA Global Capabilities Manager; [REDACTED] Chief of the Levant and North Africa Division; [REDACTED] Chief of the Levant Branch; [REDACTED], SIGINT National Intelligence Officer for Near East and South Asia (SINIO NESA); Deputy SINIOs for NESA [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] Account Manager for the White House. Following an NSA orientation briefing, they were escorted into operational spaces, where they received various demonstrations and experienced a day in the life of an NSA analyst:

- Senior Arabic language analyst and team chief [REDACTED] provided an overview of her team's focus and a demonstration of various analytic tools, including call chaining and telephony tasking.
- Senior Arabic voice language analyst [REDACTED] gave Dr. Doran and Mr. Singh the opportunity to listen to several high-level Syrian government conversations, while giving additional insight that only one with years of voice target experience could provide. Both visitors were exposed to the variances in intercept quality and gained an appreciation for how challenging transcription can be.

- Senior Arabic language analyst and team chief ██████ demonstrated fax processing and viewing tools, provided insight into scanning and determining priorities, and gave examples of the variety of reporting vehicles, including web-based reporting, used to tell the Levant intelligence story.
- ██████ demonstrated Syrian ELINT databases and near-real-time PROFORMA depictions of the ██████.

(TS//SI//REL) That morning, Dr. Doran's visit coincided with the torching of the Danish embassy in Damascus. This provided an unexpected opportunity to show our guests how NSA responds to such time-sensitive international situations. In this case, senior analyst ██████ demonstrated how NSA-Washington analysts interacted with their NSA/CSS Georgia counterparts, who had the lead in monitoring the Syrian internal security situation, and with SCS Damascus personnel who were already monitoring Syrian police frequencies.

(TS//SI//REL) Dr. Doran and Mr. Singh next paid a courtesy call to Acting Deputy SIGINT Director Jim Cusick. Dr. Doran praised NSA analysts for their ability to integrate several intercepted communications into a single SIGINT report, providing context and likening it to a story well told. Mr. Singh reported that he had been present at a National Security Principals Committee meeting, and **heard the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense and others praising the "amazing" quality of the SIGINT reporting on the Levant situation.**

(U//FOUO) As you can see, our products and services directly touch and affect actions and decisions at the highest levels of the White House and the Executive Branch. We hope that their visit to NSA will make them even stronger users of SIGINT.

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