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21 **UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**  
22 **NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**  
23 **SAN FRANCISCO DIVISION**

24 CAROLYN JEWEL, *et al.*, )  
25 ) No. 08-cv-4373-JSW  
26 Plaintiffs, )

27 v. )

28 NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY, *et al.*, )  
29 )  
30 Defendants. )

31 VIRGINIA SHUBERT, *et al.*, ) No. 07-cv-693-JSW  
32 )  
33 Plaintiffs, )

34 v. )

35 BARACK OBAMA, *et al.*, ) No Hearing Scheduled  
36 ) Courtroom 11, 19<sup>th</sup> Floor  
37 Defendants. ) Judge Jeffrey S. White

1 I, James R. Clapper, do hereby state and declare as follows:

2 **INTRODUCTION**

3  
4 1. I am the Director of National Intelligence (DNI) of the United States. I have held  
5 this position since August 9, 2010. In my capacity as the DNI, I oversee the U.S. Intelligence  
6 Community (IC) and serve as the principal intelligence adviser to the President. Prior to serving  
7 as the DNI, I served as the Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency from 1992 to 1995, the  
8 Director of the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency from 2001 to 2006, and the Under  
9 Secretary of Defense for Intelligence from 2007 to 2010, where I served as the principal staff  
10 assistant and advisor to the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Defense on intelligence,  
11 counterintelligence, and security matters for the Department of Defense. In my capacity as the  
12 Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence, I simultaneously served as the Director of Defense  
13 Intelligence for the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI).  
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15  
16 2. The purpose of this declaration is to formally assert, in my capacity as the DNI  
17 and head of the IC, the state secrets privilege and a statutory privilege under the National  
18 Security Act of 1947, as amended, *see* 50 U.S.C. § 3024(i)(1), in order to protect intelligence  
19 sources and methods that are at risk of disclosure in the above-captioned cases. This assertion of  
20 privilege updates and modifies my prior assertions of privilege in this litigation. As discussed  
21 below, I am no longer asserting privilege over the existence of various presidentially authorized  
22 National Security Agency (NSA) intelligence activities, later transitioned to authority under the  
23 Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA). I continue to assert privilege over still-classified  
24 information concerning the scope and operational details of these intelligence activities,  
25 including but not limited to information that would tend to confirm or deny that particular  
26 persons were targets of or subject to NSA intelligence activities or that particular  
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1 telecommunications service providers assisted NSA in conducting intelligence activities.

2 Disclosure of this still-classified information regarding the scope and operational details of NSA  
3 intelligence activities implicated by plaintiffs' allegations could be expected to cause extremely  
4 grave damage to the national security of the United States.

5 3. The statements made herein are based on my personal knowledge as well as on  
6 information provided to me in my official capacity as the DNI. I am also submitting a classified  
7 declaration, solely for the Court's *in camera*, *ex parte* review, which further sets forth the basis  
8 for my privilege assertion. See *Classified In Camera, Ex Parte Declaration of James R. Clapper*,  
9 Director of National Intelligence (Dec. 20, 2013).  
10

### 11 SUMMARY

12 4. In the course of my official duties, I have been advised of this lawsuit and the  
13 allegations at issue in the plaintiffs' complaints in the *Jewel* and *Shubert* actions. In personally  
14 considering this matter, I have executed a separate classified declaration dated December 19,  
15 2013. Moreover, I have read and personally considered the information contained in the Public  
16 and the *In Camera, Ex Parte Declaration of Frances J. Fleisch*, National Security Agency (NSA),  
17 executed on December 20, 2013 (hereafter "Classified NSA Declaration"). Disclosure of the  
18 information covered by my and NSA's privilege assertions reasonably could be expected to  
19 cause exceptionally grave damage to the national security of the United States and, therefore, the  
20 information should be excluded from any use in this case.  
21

22 5. I reach this conclusion, and make these assertions of privilege, mindful of the  
23 public disclosures of information about classified NSA intelligence programs, both authorized  
24 and unauthorized, that have taken place since June 2013. The wave of unauthorized public  
25 disclosures of classified information regarding NSA intelligence activities that began in June  
26 2013 has been extremely damaging to the national security of the United States, threatening the  
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1 ability of the IC to conduct operations effectively and keep our country safe. At the same time,  
2 these disclosures have generated great public interest in how the NSA uses its special tools and  
3 authorities to gather intelligence, and whether they have been used appropriately. At the  
4 President's direction, I have therefore declassified and publicly released numerous documents  
5 disclosing the existence of, and a number of details about, the NSA's collection of bulk  
6 telephony and Internet metadata under sections 402 and 501 of FISA, and the content of  
7 communications of non-U.S. persons located abroad under FISA section 702. I did this to  
8 facilitate informed public debate about the value and appropriateness of these programs with full  
9 understanding of what they allow, the oversight mechanisms in place, and the contribution these  
10 programs have made to the Nation's security and safety. These documents were properly  
11 classified and the decision to declassify and release them was not taken lightly. But I concluded,  
12 in consultation with elements of the IC, that in light of the unauthorized disclosures, the public  
13 interest in the documents outweighed the potential for additional damage to national security.  
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16 6. On December 20, 2013, under authority of the President, the existence of  
17 collection activities authorized by President George W. Bush in October 2001 was also  
18 declassified. Specifically, starting on October 4, 2001, President Bush authorized the Secretary  
19 of Defense to employ the capabilities of the Department of Defense, including the NSA, to  
20 collect foreign intelligence by electronic surveillance in order to detect and prevent acts of  
21 terrorism within the United States. President Bush authorized the NSA to collect (1) the contents  
22 of certain international communications, a program that was later referred to and publicly  
23 acknowledged by President Bush as the Terrorist Surveillance Program (TSP), and (2) telephony  
24 and Internet non-content information (referred to as "metadata") in bulk, subject to various  
25 conditions.  
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1           7.       President Bush issued authorizations approximately every 30-60 days. Although  
2 the precise terms changed over time, each presidential authorization required the minimization of  
3 information collected concerning American citizens to the extent consistent with the effective  
4 accomplishment of the mission of detection and prevention of acts of terrorism within the United  
5 States. The NSA also applied additional internal constraints on the presidentially authorized  
6 activities.

7  
8           8.       Over time, the presidentially authorized activities transitioned to the authority of  
9 the FISA. The collection of communications content pursuant to presidential authorization  
10 ended in January 2007 when the U.S. Government transitioned TSP to the authority of FISA  
11 under orders of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court (FISC). In August 2007, Congress  
12 enacted the Protect America Act (PAA) as a temporary measure. The PAA expired in February  
13 2008 and was replaced by the FISA Amendments Act of 2008, which was enacted in 2008 and  
14 remains in effect today. Today, content collection is conducted pursuant to section 702 of FISA.  
15 The metadata activities also were transitioned to orders of the FISC. The bulk collection of  
16 telephony metadata transitioned to the authority of FISA in May 2006 and is collected pursuant  
17 to section 501 of FISA. The bulk collection of Internet metadata was transitioned to the  
18 authority of FISA in July 2004 and was collected pursuant to section 402 of FISA. In December  
19 2011, the U.S. Government decided not to seek re-authorization of the bulk collection of Internet  
20 metadata under section 402.

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23           9.       As a result of the declassification of the information described above, the U.S.  
24 Government is no longer asserting privilege over the existence of these programs, whether  
25 conducted under presidential authority or FISC authorization. It has remained necessary,  
26 however, to withhold certain information about these programs, even from the publicly released  
27 documents, to protect sensitive sources and methods, such as particular targets and subjects of  
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1 surveillance, and methods of collecting and analyzing intelligence information, because public  
2 disclosure of this information would likely cause even graver damage to national security than  
3 has already been done by the unauthorized disclosures that have occurred since June 2013. As  
4 explained in great detail in my classified, *in camera*, *ex parte* declaration, and in the Classified  
5 NSA Declaration, the same is true with respect to the highly sensitive and still-classified  
6 information that is implicated by the plaintiffs' allegations in this litigation. For example,  
7 litigating plaintiffs' claims would likely risk or require the disclosure of information that would  
8 tend to confirm or deny whether particular telecommunications carriers have assisted with the  
9 NSA activities at issue. Therefore, notwithstanding the unauthorized disclosures and the official  
10 declassification and release of information about NSA intelligence programs that have taken  
11 place since June of this year, it is my judgment that disclosure of the classified, privileged  
12 national security information described herein, and in greater detail in my classified *in camera*,  
13 *ex parte declaration*, and the Classified NSA Declaration, will risk further and exceptionally  
14 grave damage to the national security of the United States.  
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18 10. Accordingly, as set forth further below, I am asserting the state secrets privilege  
19 and the DNI's authority to protect intelligence sources and methods pursuant to 50 U.S.C. §  
20 3024(i)(1) to protect against the disclosure of highly classified and important intelligence  
21 information, sources and methods put at issue in this case, many of which are vital to the national  
22 security of the United States, including: (a) information concerning the specific nature of the  
23 terrorist threat posed by al-Qa'ida and its affiliates and other foreign terrorist organizations to the  
24 United States; (b) information that would tend to confirm or deny whether particular individuals,  
25 including the named plaintiffs, have been subject to any NSA intelligence activities; (c)  
26 information concerning the scope or operational details of NSA intelligence activities that may  
27 relate to or be necessary to adjudicate plaintiffs' allegations, including plaintiffs' claims that the  
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1 NSA indiscriminately intercepts the content of communications, and their claims regarding the  
2 NSA's bulk collection of telephony and Internet communications records ("metadata"); and  
3 (d) information that may tend to confirm or deny whether AT&T or Verizon (and to the extent  
4 relevant or necessary, any other telecommunications carrier) has provided assistance to the NSA  
5 in connection with any intelligence activity.

6  
7 11. I specifically concur with the NSA that public speculation about alleged NSA  
8 activities above and beyond what has been officially disclosed does not diminish the need to  
9 protect intelligence sources and methods from further exposure, and that official confirmation  
10 and disclosure of the classified, privileged national security information described herein, in my  
11 classified *in camera*, *ex parte* declaration, and in the Classified NSA Declaration, can be  
12 expected to cause exceptionally grave damage to the national security. For these reasons, as set  
13 forth further below, I request that the Court uphold the state secrets and statutory privilege  
14 assertions that I make herein, as well as the statutory privilege assertion made by the NSA  
15 pursuant to Section 6 of the National Security Agency Act, see 50 U.S.C. § 3605 (note), and  
16 protect the information described in this declaration from disclosure.  
17  
18

19 **BACKGROUND ON DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE**

20 12. The position of DNI was created by Congress in the Intelligence Reform and  
21 Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004, Pub. L. 108-458, §§ 1011(a) and 1097, 118 Stat. 3638, 3643-  
22 63, 3698-99 (2004) (amending sections 102 through 104 of Title I of the National Security Act  
23 of 1947). Subject to the authority, direction, and control of the President, the DNI serves as the  
24 head of the IC and as the principal adviser to the President, the National Security Council, and  
25 the Homeland Security Council for intelligence matters related to the national security. *See* 50  
26 U.S.C. § 3023(b)(1), (2).  
27  
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1           13.     The IC includes the ODNI; the Central Intelligence Agency; the NSA; the  
2 Defense Intelligence Agency; the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency; the National  
3 Reconnaissance Office; other offices within the Department of Defense for the collection of  
4 specialized national intelligence through reconnaissance programs; the intelligence elements of  
5 the military services, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Department of the Treasury, the  
6 Department of Energy, the Drug Enforcement Administration, and the Coast Guard; the Bureau  
7 of Intelligence and Research of the Department of State; the elements of the Department of  
8 Homeland Security concerned with the analysis of intelligence information; and such other  
9 elements of any other department or agency as may be designated by the President, or jointly  
10 designated by the DNI and heads of the department or agency concerned, as an element of the  
11 IC. *See* 50 U.S.C. § 3003(4).  
12

13  
14           14.     The responsibilities and authorities of the DNI are set forth in the National  
15 Security Act of 1947, as amended. *See* 50 U.S.C. § 3024. These responsibilities include  
16 ensuring that national intelligence is provided to the President, the heads of the departments and  
17 agencies of the Executive Branch, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and senior military  
18 commanders, and the Senate and House of Representatives and committees thereof. *See* 50  
19 U.S.C. § 3024(a)(1). The DNI is also charged with establishing the objectives of, determining  
20 the requirements and priorities for, and managing and directing the tasking, collection, analysis,  
21 production, and dissemination of national intelligence by elements of the IC. *Id.* §  
22 3024(f)(1)(A)(i) and (ii).  
23

24  
25           15.     In addition, the National Security Act of 1947, as amended, provides that “[t]he  
26 Director of National Intelligence shall protect intelligence sources and methods from  
27 unauthorized disclosure.” 50 U.S.C. § 3024(i)(1). Consistent with this responsibility, the DNI  
28 establishes and implements guidelines for the IC for the classification of information under

1 applicable law, Executive orders, or other Presidential directives, and access to and  
2 dissemination of intelligence. *Id.* § 3024(i)(2)(A), (B). In particular, the DNI is responsible for  
3 the establishment of uniform standards and procedures for the grant of access to Sensitive  
4 Compartmented Information (SCI) to any officer or employee of any agency or department of  
5 the United States, and for ensuring the consistent implementation of those standards throughout  
6 such departments and agencies. *Id.* § 3024(j)(1), (2).

8 16. By virtue of my position as the DNI, and unless otherwise directed by the  
9 President, I have access to all intelligence related to the national security that is collected by any  
10 department, agency, or other entity of the United States. *See* 50 U.S.C. § 3024(b); section 1.3(a)  
11 of E.O. 12333, as amended. Pursuant to E.O. 13526, the President has authorized me to exercise  
12 original TOP SECRET classification authority.

14 **ASSERTION OF STATE SECRETS PRIVILEGE**

15 17. After careful and actual personal consideration of the matter, based upon my own  
16 knowledge and information obtained in the course of my official duties, including the  
17 information contained in the public and classified *In Camera, Ex Parte* Declarations of Frances  
18 J. Fleisch, NSA, I have determined that sensitive state secrets concerning NSA sources, methods,  
19 and activities are implicated by allegations that lie at the core of plaintiffs' claims, and that the  
20 disclosure of this information—as set forth herein and described in more detail in the Classified  
21 NSA Declaration—can be expected to cause exceptionally grave damage to the national security  
22 of the United States, and therefore that information must be protected from disclosure and  
23 excluded from this case. Thus, as to this information, I formally assert the state secrets privilege.

26 **ASSERTION OF STATUTORY PRIVILEGE UNDER NATIONAL SECURITY ACT**

27 18. Through this declaration, I also hereby invoke and assert a statutory privilege held  
28 by the DNI under the National Security Act of 1947, as amended, to protect the information



1 described herein, in my classified *in camera, ex parte* declaration, and in the Classified NSA  
2 Declaration, *see* 50 U.S.C. § 3024(i)(1). My assertion of this statutory privilege for intelligence  
3 sources and methods is coextensive with my state secrets privilege assertion.

4 **INFORMATION SUBJECT TO ASSERTIONS OF PRIVILEGE**

5 19. In general and unclassified terms, the following categories of still-classified  
6 information are subject to my state secrets and statutory privilege assertions:  
7

8 A. *Threat Information*: information concerning the specific nature of  
9 the terrorist threat posed by al-Qa'ida and its affiliates and other  
10 foreign terrorist organizations to the United States, including actual  
11 intelligence information collected from intelligence collection  
12 activities;

13 B. *Persons Subject to Intelligence Activities*: information that would  
14 tend to confirm or deny whether particular individuals, including  
15 the named plaintiffs, have been subject to any NSA intelligence  
16 activities;

17 C. *Operational Information Concerning NSA Intelligence Activities*:  
18 information concerning the scope and operational details of NSA  
19 intelligence activities that may relate to or be necessary to  
20 adjudicate plaintiffs' allegations, including:

21 (1) *Communications Content Collection*: information concerning  
22 the scope or operational details of NSA intelligence activities  
23 that may relate to or be necessary to adjudicate plaintiffs'  
24 claims that the NSA indiscriminately intercepts the content of  
25 communications, *see, e.g., Jewel* Complaint ¶¶ 9, 10, 73-77;  
26 *Shubert* SAC ¶¶ 1, 2, 7, 64, 70, including:

27 a) *TSP information*: information concerning the scope and  
28 operation of the now inoperative TSP regarding the  
interception of the content of certain one-end-international  
communications reasonably believed to involve a member or  
agent of al-Qa'ida or an affiliated terrorist organization;

b) *FISA section 702*: information concerning operational  
details related to the collection of communications under  
FISA section 702; and

c) any other information related to demonstrating that the NSA  
has not otherwise engaged in the content-surveillance  
dragnet that the plaintiffs allege, and



1 (2) *Communications Records Collection*: information concerning  
2 the scope or operational details of NSA intelligence activities  
3 that may relate to or be necessary to adjudicate plaintiffs'  
4 claims regarding the NSA's bulk collection of telephony and  
5 Internet communication records (or "metadata"), *see, e.g.,*  
*Jewel* Complaint ¶¶ 10-11, 13, 73-77, 82-97; *Shubert* SAC  
6 ¶ 102;

7 and

8 D. *Telecommunications Provider Identities*: information that may  
9 tend to confirm or deny whether AT&T or Verizon (and to the  
10 extent relevant or necessary, any other telecommunications  
11 carrier), has provided assistance to the NSA in connection with any  
12 intelligence activity, including the collection of communications  
13 content or non-content transactional records alleged to be at issue  
14 in this litigation.

15 **DESCRIPTION OF INFORMATION SUBJECT TO PRIVILEGE**  
16 **AND HARM OF DISCLOSURE**

17 **A. Information Concerning the Threat Posed by al-Qa'ida, Its**  
18 **Affiliates, and Other Foreign Terrorist Organizations**

19 20. The intelligence activities, sources, and methods that are implicated by this  
20 lawsuit, and put at risk of disclosure in further proceedings, must be viewed and understood in  
21 the context of the threat faced by the United States. In unclassified terms, more than a decade  
22 after the September 11, 2001 attacks, we remain in a global conflict with al-Qa'ida and we face  
23 an evolving threat from its affiliates and adherents. America's campaign against terrorism did  
24 not end with the mission at Bin Ladin's compound in May 2011. Indeed, the threats we face  
25 have become more diverse.

26 21. In addition, to the extent classified information about the al-Qa'ida threat, from  
27 September 11, 2001 to the present, or the many other threats facing the United States, would be  
28 at issue in attempting to litigate this case (for example, to demonstrate the reasonableness of the  
intelligence-gathering activities initiated in the wake of the September 11, 2001, attacks, and

1 those that remain in place today), such information could not be disclosed without revealing  
2 intelligence sources, methods, and information of the United States and thereby causing  
3 exceptionally grave damage to the national security. Therefore, I assert the state secrets and DNI  
4 statutory privilege to protect such information from disclosure. By way of illustration, set forth  
5 below is an unclassified discussion of al-Qa'ida and several of its principal affiliates. My *ex*  
6 *parte, in camera* declaration discusses some of the classified threat information pertaining to  
7 these terrorist organizations that is subject to this assertion of privilege.  
8

9         22. Al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) remains of particular concern to the  
10 United States. The National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC) assesses that this is the most  
11 likely entity to attempt attacks in the West. Even in the wake of Anwar al-Aulaqi's death in  
12 September 2011, this group maintains the intent and capability to conduct anti-United States  
13 attacks with little to no warning. In its three attempted attacks against the U.S. Homeland -- the  
14 airliner plot of December 2009, an attempted attack against U.S.-bound cargo planes in October  
15 2010, and an airliner plot in May 2012 similar to the 2009 attempt -- AQAP has shown an  
16 awareness of the capabilities of Western security procedures and demonstrated its efforts to  
17 adapt. AQAP continues to exploit Yemen's inability to disrupt its operations on a consistent  
18 basis to secure safe havens in the country and mount attacks against the U.S. Embassy in Sanaa.  
19

20         23. AQAP has also continued to publish the English-language *Inspire* magazine—  
21 previously spearheaded by now-deceased al-Aulaqi and Samir Khan—in order to mobilize  
22 Western-based individuals for violent action, and the publication continues to reach a wide  
23 global audience of extremists.  
24

25         24. Al-Qa'ida's affiliate in Iraq has demonstrated its capacity to mount coordinated,  
26 country-wide terrorist attacks is growing, as it continues at an increasing pace to kill Iraqi  
27 civilians by the scores, even hundreds, with near-daily car and suicide bombs over the past year,  
28



1 while also publicly acknowledging the group had established an affiliate in Syria, the al-Nusrah  
2 Front, with resources diverted from its operations in Iraq. In April, AQI declared its merger with  
3 al-Nusrah Front to form the “Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant.” However, al-Nusrah Front’s  
4 leader rejected the merger and pledged allegiance directly to al-Qa’ida leader Ayman al-  
5 Zawahiri. Zawahiri in June 2013 recognized al-Nusrah Front as an al-Qa’ida affiliate,  
6 independent of AQI/ISIL and primarily responsible for operations in Syria. Despite his  
7 differences with al-Qa’ida leadership over roles insides Syria, AQI/ISIL’s leader last year  
8 espoused support for violence against the United States, and continues to support al-Qa’ida’s  
9 global ideology.  
10

11           25. While al-Nusrah Front and AQI/ISIL at times openly have fought, both groups  
12 share the near-term goals of removing the Syrian regime from power, and creating a government,  
13 favorable to them, based on a strict interpretation of Sharia law. Al-Nusrah Front and AQI/ISIL  
14 subscribe to a global jihadist ideology, and each group probably has ambitions beyond the  
15 conflict in Syria. The groups potentially have access to thousands of foreign fighters, including  
16 some Americans, who since 2012 have traveled to Syria to participate in the conflict for a variety  
17 of reasons. Additionally, the groups probably have established training camps, familiarizing  
18 recruits with combat tactics, as well as the handling of firearms and explosives. Al-Nusrah Front  
19 and AQI/ISIL’s access to foreign fighters, and the permissive operating environment in Syria,  
20 raise the IC’s concerns that such individuals, Americans among them, could be leveraged and  
21 trained to conduct terrorist attacks in their home countries.  
22

23           26. AQI/ISIL leadership also continues to make public statements inciting violence  
24 against governments outside of Iraq and Syria. In an August 2013 statement, the group’s  
25 spokesman called on Egyptians to attack the Egyptian military and follow the example of  
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1 extremists in Iraq and Syria. Both the group's spokesman and its overall leader last year  
2 threatened future efforts to target Americans.

3 27. For the first time, AQI/ISIL in 2013 began releasing propaganda openly recruiting  
4 Westerners, including Belgian and French speakers, highlighting its intent to build a capability to  
5 mount attacks against the West. AQI/ISIL's spokesman in mid-2013 publicly stated the group  
6 plans to conduct attacks from eastern Iraq to western Lebanon, and the group's vitriolic rhetoric  
7 and hard-line agenda suggest the group poses a broader threat outside the region than at any time  
8 since it was pushed into decline by U.S. coalition forces during the Iraq conflict.  
9

10 28. During the past two-to-four years, American and Canadian authorities have  
11 arrested several North America-based AQI/ISIL associates, highlighting the potential threat  
12 posed to the United States. In May 2011, the FBI arrested Kentucky-based Iraqi nationals Waad  
13 Alwan and Shareef Hamadi for attempting to send weapons and explosives from Kentucky to  
14 Iraq and conspiring to commit terrorism while in Iraq. Alwan pled guilty to supporting terrorism  
15 in December 2011. In January 2010, Canadian authorities arrested dual Iraqi-Canadian citizen  
16 Faruq 'Isa who is accused of vetting individuals on the Internet for suicide operations in Iraq.  
17  
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19 29. The IC continues to monitor al-Shabaab and its foreign fighter cadre as a potential  
20 threat to the U.S. Homeland, although the group is mainly focused on combating African Union  
21 Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) forces battling the group in Somalia. The group, which formally  
22 merged with al-Qa'ida in February 2012, also remains intent on conducting attacks against  
23 regional and Western targets in East Africa, especially in countries contributing to the AMISOM  
24 mission. Al-Shabaab associated militants in September 2013 conducted an attack on a shopping  
25 mall in Nairobi, Kenya. Al-Shabaab leaders in the past have publicly called for transnational  
26 attacks, including threatening to avenge the January 2012 death of British national and al-  
27 Shabaab senior foreign fighter Bilal Berjawi.  
28

1           30.     Al-Qa'ida in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and Boko Haram have  
2 shown minimal interest in targeting the U.S. Homeland, but remain focused on local and regional  
3 attack plotting, including targeting Western interests through kidnap-for-ransom operations and  
4 other means. AQIM is actively working with local extremists in northern Mali to establish a safe  
5 haven from which to advance future operational activities. Al-Murabitun, the extremist group  
6 formed in August 2013 through the merger of two AQIM offshoots – Mohtar Belmokhtar's al-  
7 Mulathamun Battalion and Tawhid wal Jihad in West Africa (TWJWA) – likewise appears  
8 focused on plotting against Western interests in North and West Africa. Boko Haram probably  
9 has an emerging awareness of U.S. persons or entities in the United States with connections to  
10 Nigeria. The group's spokesman publicly threatened to find a way to attack a U.S.-based news  
11 organization if its coverage of Islam did not change.  
12

14           31.     In addition, while most Pakistani and Afghan militant groups pose a more direct  
15 threat to U.S. interests and our allies in that region, the IC continues to watch for indicators that  
16 any of these groups, networks, or individuals are actively pursuing or have decided to  
17 incorporate operations outside of South Asia as a strategy to achieve their objectives. Tehrik-e  
18 Taliban Pakistan (TTP) leaders have repeatedly threatened attacks against the United States,  
19 including after the death of Bin Ladin. NCTC assesses that TTP's claim of responsibility for the  
20 failed New York Times Square bombing in May 2010 demonstrates its willingness to act on this  
21 intent.  
22

24           32.     In sum, a variety of entities continue to pose a significant threat to the nation's  
25 security. The U.S. Government is utilizing all lawful intelligence gathering capabilities,  
26 including those set forth in the Classified NSA Declaration, to meet these threats and to protect  
27 the American people. I set forth this information not only to provide the Court with background  
28 information necessary to understand why the intelligence activities implicated by or directly at



1 issue in this case are being undertaken, but also to assert a claim of privilege over classified  
2 threat information. The U.S. Government cannot disclose classified threat information in  
3 addressing plaintiffs' allegations or other issues in this case, or even in publicly supporting its  
4 assertion of privilege, because to do so would disclose to our adversaries what we know of their  
5 plans and how we may be obtaining information about them. Such disclosures would lead our  
6 adversaries not only to alter their plans, but also to implement greater security for their  
7 communications, thereby increasing the risk of non-detection. In addition, disclosure of threat  
8 information might reveal human sources for the United States, compromise those sources, and  
9 put their or their families' lives in danger. Accordingly, because I believe that classified threat  
10 information is crucial to understanding the importance to our national security of the NSA  
11 intelligence activities, sources, and methods implicated by the plaintiffs' allegations, I must  
12 assert the state secrets privilege and the DNI's statutory privilege over this classified threat  
13 information because of the exceptionally grave danger to national security that could reasonably  
14 be expected to result from its disclosure.  
15  
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17  
18 **B. Information That May Tend To Confirm or Deny Whether Particular**  
19 **Individuals, Including the Named Plaintiffs, Have Been Subject to NSA**  
20 **Intelligence Activities.**

21 33. Next, I am also asserting privilege over information that would tend to reveal  
22 whether particular individuals, including the named plaintiffs in this lawsuit, have been subject  
23 to NSA intelligence activities implicated by plaintiffs' allegations. Disclosure of such  
24 information can be expected to cause exceptionally grave damage to the national security,  
25 because actually demonstrating whether particular individuals have or have not been targeted by  
26 or subject to intelligence activities would require the disclosure of sensitive and classified details  
27 about NSA intelligence-gathering methods. Accordingly, I assert the state secrets and DNI  
28 statutory privilege as to this information.



1           34.     The NSA cannot publicly confirm or deny whether any particular individual is  
2 subject to intelligence-gathering activities, no matter how likely or unlikely it might appear that  
3 the individual would be subject to surveillance. If the NSA were to reveal that an individual is  
4 the target or a subject of intelligence-gathering, the collection capability relating to that  
5 individual would certainly be compromised. On the other hand, if the NSA were to reveal that  
6 an individual is not the target or subject of intelligence-gathering, adversaries would know that a  
7 particular individual has avoided scrutiny and is a secure source for communicating. Moreover,  
8 providing assurances to those individuals who are not targets or subjects quickly becomes  
9 unworkable when faced with a situation in which an individual has in fact been a target or  
10 subject. If the NSA were to confirm that any specific individual is not a target or subject of  
11 intelligence-gathering, but later refuse to confirm or deny that fact in a situation involving an  
12 actual target or subject, it would be apparent that intelligence-gathering was occurring in the  
13 latter case. The only recourse for the NSA is to neither confirm nor deny whether someone has  
14 been targeted by or subject to NSA intelligence-gathering activities, regardless of whether the  
15 individual has been a target or subject or not. To say otherwise when challenged in litigation  
16 would result in the frequent, routine exposure of NSA information, sources, and methods, and  
17 would severely undermine surveillance activities in general.

21           **C.     Information Concerning the Scope or Operational Details of NSA**  
22           **Intelligence Activities, Including NSA Sources or Methods.**

23           35.     Furthermore, I am asserting privilege over any other still-classified facts  
24 concerning the scope or operational details of any NSA intelligence activities that may relate to  
25 or be necessary to adjudicate plaintiffs' allegations. As noted above, my privilege assertion  
26 encompasses (1) facts concerning the operation of the now-defunct TSP, including any facts  
27  
28

1 needed to demonstrate that the TSP was limited to the interception of the content<sup>1</sup> of one-end  
2 foreign communications reasonably believed to involve a member or agent of al-Qa'ida or an  
3 affiliated terrorist organization, (2) facts concerning the operation of the collection of  
4 communications under FISA Section 702; (3) any other information related to demonstrating that  
5 the NSA has not otherwise engaged in the content-surveillance dragnet that the plaintiffs allege,  
6 and (4) still classified information concerning the scope or operational details of NSA  
7 intelligence activities involving the collection of bulk communications metadata, as discussed in  
8 greater detail in the Classified NSA Declaration.  
9

10 36. As the NSA indicates, *see* Public NSA Declaration, the NSA's collection of the  
11 content of communications under the TSP was directed at international communications in which  
12 a participant was reasonably believed to be associated with al-Qa'ida or an affiliated  
13 organization. Thus, as the U.S. Government has previously stated, plaintiffs' allegation that the  
14 NSA has indiscriminately collected the content of millions of communications sent or received  
15 by people inside the United States after September 11, 2001, under the TSP is false. I concur  
16 with the NSA that to the extent it must demonstrate in this case that the TSP was not the content  
17 dragnet plaintiffs allege, or demonstrate that the NSA has not otherwise engaged in the alleged  
18 content dragnet, highly classified details about the scope and operation of the TSP and other  
19 NSA intelligence activities would be disclosed, including NSA intelligence sources and methods,  
20 thus risking exceptional harm to national security.  
21

22 37. As explained in further detail in the Classified NSA Declaration, the United States  
23 faced urgent and immediate intelligence challenges after the September 11, 2001, attacks, and  
24 undertook signals intelligence activities pursuant to presidential authorization that were designed  
25 to meet those challenges and to detect and prevent future terrorist attacks. In addition to the  
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<sup>1</sup> The term "content" is used herein to refer to the substance, meaning, or purport of a communication, as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 2510(8).



1 TSP, those activities have included the bulk collection of telephony and Internet non-content  
2 metadata that was also later transitioned to FISA authority.

3 38. Based on my personal consideration and judgment as to the harm disclosure can  
4 be expected to cause to national security, my privilege assertion includes, but is not limited to,  
5 the following information, discussed in greater detail in the Classified NSA Declaration.  
6

7 39. I assert privilege over still-classified facts concerning: the scope and operation of  
8 the TSP and any other NSA intelligence activities needed to demonstrate that the TSP was  
9 limited to the interception of international communications reasonably believed to involve a  
10 member or agent of al-Qa'ida or an affiliated terrorist organization; the collection of  
11 communications content under FISA section 702; and the fact that the NSA does not otherwise  
12 conduct a dragnet of content surveillance as the plaintiffs allege. Such facts include those  
13 concerning (a) how targets were selected under the TSP; (b) the specific sources methods used  
14 under the TSP to intercept telephone and Internet communications; (c) the nature and identity of  
15 the targets under the TSP; (d) any additional classified details about the operation of the TSP that  
16 would be necessary to litigate the plaintiffs' allegations; and (e) other NSA surveillance  
17 activities, including collection of communications content under FISA section 702, that may be  
18 needed to address and disprove the content dragnet allegation. *See* Classified NSA Declaration.  
19  
20 In my judgment, revealing or risking disclosure of the foregoing NSA intelligence activities,  
21 sources, and methods in order to show that the NSA is not conducting the "dragnet" on the  
22 content of communications that plaintiffs allege can reasonably be expected to cause  
23 exceptionally grave harm to national security by disclosing to our adversaries the ability of the  
24 United States to monitor and track their activities and communications.  
25  
26

27 40. I also assert privilege over still-classified facts that would describe the scope or  
28 operational details of other NSA intelligence activities, including but not necessarily limited to

1 metadata collection activities, that may relate to or be necessary to adjudicate plaintiffs' claims.  
2 *See Classified NSA Declaration.* In my judgment, the NSA is unable to disclose information  
3 about the scope or operation of the NSA's bulk collection or targeted analysis of Internet or  
4 telephony metadata (whether conducted under presidential or FISC authority), beyond that which  
5 has already been officially acknowledged by the U.S. Government, without risking exceptionally  
6 grave harm to national security. Disclosing or confirming further details about these activities  
7 could seriously undermine an important tool—metadata collection and analysis—for tracking  
8 possible terrorist plots; and could reveal methods by which NSA has targeted and continues to  
9 target its intelligence-gathering activities, thus helping foreign adversaries evade detection, and  
10 otherwise undermining ongoing intelligence operations conducted under E.O. 12333 and FISC  
11 authorization.  
12

13  
14 41. In my judgment, disclosure of still-classified details regarding these intelligence-  
15 gathering activities, either directly or indirectly, would seriously compromise, if not destroy,  
16 important and vital ongoing intelligence operations. After personal consideration of the matter,  
17 it is my judgment that disclosing the information described herein and by the NSA would  
18 compromise important and critical activities, sources, and methods, thereby helping our  
19 adversaries evade detection and causing exceptionally grave damage to the national security of  
20 the United States.  
21

22 **D. Information That May Tend To Confirm or Deny Whether AT&T, Verizon,  
23 or any Other Telecommunications Carrier Has Provided Assistance to the  
24 NSA in Connection With any Intelligence Activity.**

25 42. In addition, I am asserting privilege over information that may tend to confirm or  
26 deny whether or not AT&T, Verizon, or to the extent necessary, any other particular  
27 telecommunications provider, has assisted any NSA intelligence activity, including but not  
28 necessarily limited to the alleged intelligence activities. The disclosure of any information that



1 would tend to confirm or deny allegations of such assistance can be expected to cause  
2 exceptionally grave harm to the national security, for a variety of reasons.

3 43. Confirming or denying such allegations would reveal to foreign adversaries  
4 whether or not the NSA utilizes particular intelligence sources and methods and, thus, either  
5 compromise actual sources and methods or disclose that the NSA does not utilize a particular  
6 source or method. For example, revealing that a particular company assists the NSA would  
7 compromise a range of intelligence activities by providing confirmation that certain channels of  
8 communications are vulnerable to NSA interception. Confirmation or denial of a carrier's  
9 assistance would replace speculation with certainty for hostile foreign adversaries who are  
10 balancing the risk that a particular channel of communication may not be secure against the need  
11 to communicate efficiently.  
12

14 44. This remains so, in my judgment, notwithstanding the U.S. Government's  
15 declassification of a now-expired April 25, 2013, FISC order directing Verizon Business  
16 Network Services (VBNS) to produce bulk telephony metadata to the NSA. Although the U.S.  
17 Government, in acknowledging the existence of the telephony metadata program carried out  
18 under FISC authorization, also confirmed the participation of VBNS in that program for the time  
19 period covered by that order (April 25 through July 19, 2013), it has never confirmed or denied  
20 the identities of any other carriers that previously participated in that program, or the identities of  
21 any carriers that continue to participate in the program today.  
22

### 23 CONCLUSION

25 45. In sum, I am asserting the state secrets privilege and the DNI's statutory privilege  
26 set forth in 50 U.S.C. § 3024(i)(1) to protect the classified national security information  
27 described herein and in the Classified NSA Declaration. I respectfully request that the Court not  
28 only protect that information from disclosure, but take all steps necessary to protect the

1 intelligence information, sources, and methods described herein in order to prevent exceptionally  
2 grave damage to the national security of the United States.

3 I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

4 Executed on: December 20, 2013

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7 JAMES R. CLAPPER  
8 Director of National Intelligence  
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