



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
 OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF OF STAFF, G-2, INTELLIGENCE  
 WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

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CY-2

16 DEC 1953

MEMORANDUM FOR: DIRECTOR, NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY

SUBJECT: Converters, M209

1. Reference is made to telephone conversation between Colonel Davis, NSA, and Lt. Colonel Long, OACofS, G-2, Department of the Army, 14 December 1953, pertaining to requests by Foreign Governments to purchase or procure converters, M209, from the Department of the Army.

2. A summary of the various requests, by countries, is listed below as follows:

a. Philippines. By letter to Department of the Army, dated 4 April 1951, JUSMAG, Philippines, recommended that a total of 229 converters, M209, be supplied to the Philippines. At that time, the Philippine Armed Forces had on hand 369 converters, M209, which were cryptographic backbone of the communications systems between the Armed Forces General Headquarters and the units in the field, including BCTs and/or battalion headquarters. The use of converters, M209, and the security of the system was exactly the same as prescribed by the U.S. Training in the use of converters, M209, was conducted at the Philippine Signal Corps Schools by instructors who had previously been trained at the U.S. Army Signal School. On 12 June 1951, approval was given by the Department of the Army, with the concurrence of AFSA, to release a total of 209 converters, M209, to the Philippines via MDAP channels.

b. Uruguay. By a letter, dated 6 October 1952, to Chief of Foreign Liaison, OACofS, G-2, General Guillermo Murdock, Uruguayan Military Attache, Washington, stated that the Uruguayan Government was interested in purchasing 36 converters, M209. On 14 October 1952, Uruguayan Military Attache, Washington, was informed that the item of equipment was not available for sale.

c. India. By letter, dated 16 March 1951, to the Foreign Liaison Officer, OACofS, G-2, Brigadier F.C. Banerji, Indian Military Attache, Washington, stated that India was interested in the procurement of converters, Models 209, 209a and 209b and that India was endeavoring to procure these items from commercial sources. However, in order to insure that correct equipment was procured and in accordance with specified requirements, he requested two copies of TM 11-380, along with related drawings and specifications. By letter, dated 17 April 1951, OACofS, G-2, suggested that

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the Indian request be handled on a Governmental level stating that this request should be submitted to the Office, Internal Security Affairs, Department of State, in accordance with established Mutual Defense Aid arrangements.

d. France. On 23 September 1952, MAAG France, requested an addition of 450 M209 converters, MDA Program for France. MAAG France was further informed that France had on hand 1,850 converters, M209. Department of the Army, on 2 April 1953, recommended disapproval to the releasing of M209s to France because of the following reasons: (1) future quantities of M209s would not permit large issue of this equipment to foreign nations and still retain an adequate supply for our own forces in event of mobilizations; (2) no advantage was seen in training foreign communications personnel in the use of M209 if spare parts and equipment could not be made available because the tools, dies and fixtures used in the manufacture of this equipment had been destroyed; and (3) to release such would require an exception to existing national disclosure policy.

On 22 September 1953, the French in Indochina requested an addition of 350 converters, M209, for the FY 1954, Indochina MDA Materiel Program for use in expanding Associated Forces communications networks. This request was not considered favorably by the Department of the Army because the release of such equipment might jeopardize current negotiations being conducted between NSA and Mr. Hagelin in Sweden.

e. Portugal. By letter, dated 23 June 1953, Chief, Army Section MAAG, Portugal requested clearance for a supply of modified converters, M209b. The Chief of Army Section MAAG stated that Portugal requested a supply of converters, M209b, to be used with their forces destined for assignment to SACEUR. The basis for this request was in accordance with SHAPE Signal Directive No. 4, Revision 1. In accordance with this Directive, the M209b is the only device which may be used by Portuguese units operating wit in the allied command for handling SECRET traffic. On 9 December 1953, the Chief of MAAG was informed by Department of the Army that the modified converter, M209b, was not a U.S. item of issue, pointing out the modification referred to was developed by the French Government and that this is a version which has been approved for third level NATO use, and that the release of such was prohibited by National Disclosures Policy implemented by Paragraph 7a(5) DA-DCMI.

f. Turkey. By letter, dated 16 August 1950, Chief of TUSAG, Turkey, requested procurement of M209 converters for the Turkish Army and if the supply of such equipment was denied, it was requested Department of the Army initiate action to obtain the equipment from commercial sources available, particularly in Sweden. Eighty thousand seven hundred and fifty dollars had been budgeted and approved in the FY 1950, MDA<sup>2</sup>

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Program for Turkey to institute procurement of M209s from any source available. Actions from 5 September 1950 through 8 February 1951, reaffirmed this request for M209 converters for the Turkish Army and the decision was finally made that in lieu of M209 converters, ASA and AFSA would produce and provide strip cipher devices for low-level use in the Turkish Army. Action was taken with SD-MIC to obtain the release of strip cipher devices, CSF 845, to Turkey. The classification of the strip system was SECRET. The M209 was not made available to Turkey for the following reasons: (1) limited supply available, post-war destruction of tools, dies and fixtures, precluding the manufacture of this equipment only on an economical basis; and (2) the method of operation is U.S. and the commercial equipment (Sweden) is not so secure as the U.S. method. TUSAG, Turkey, by letter, dated 22 May 1953, requested 600 converters, M209, for the Turkish Army. The Department of the Army disapproved the release of M209, converters to Turkey based on the fact it would require an exception to DA-DCMI, and that to issue the quantity requested would deplete the reserves required for U.S. Army and no spare parts were available and that sufficient equipment to completely replace M209 equipment would not be available for approximately 6 months.

g. Latin American Use of M209. By letter, dated 26 January 1951, from U.S. Army CARIB, OACofS, G-2, was informed that converters, M209, are in the possession of the Governments of Argentina, Colombia and Peru, and that converters were obtained by Ecuador in July 1947 and Venezuela in December 1948. Some of the Mission Chiefs in the Latin American countries, particularly in Peru, have given instruction in the operations of the M209 converters. By letter, dated 17 February 1953, to CG, U.S. Army, CARIB, OACofS, G-2, reaffirmed policy that instruction by MAAGs on M209s to foreign nationals were prohibited.

FOR THE ASSISTANT CHIEF OF STAFF, G-2

SIGNED

THOMAS M. LARNER  
Colonel, GS  
Chief, Policy and  
Coordinating Office, G-2

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