

CRYPTOLOGIC ALMANAC  
The Death of Dr. Eugene Fubini

(U) Last week's newspapers reported the death of Eugene G. Fubini, who passed away on 5 August. Dr. Fubini, 84, was a physicist and Defense Department official who played an important part in U.S. national security affairs and NSA operations in particular.

(U) Dr. Fubini was born in Italy, but came to the United States in 1939, when his father, a professor of mathematics, received an appointment to the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, N.J. He took his doctorate in physics, with an interest in microwave technology.

(U) During World War II, he helped develop new technology and set up operations for jamming enemy radar. He worked first at the Harvard University Radio Research Laboratory, then as a consultant to the U.S. Army and Navy in the European Theater. He helped establish techniques which jammed Axis radar systems during the Allied invasions of Italy and southern France; later, he worked with the Eighth Air Force to frustrate Axis radar during bombing operations.

(U) In 1961, Dr. Fubini joined the Office of Defense Research and Engineering. President John F. Kennedy, in June 1963, appointed him assistant secretary of defense, with responsibility for research and development. Among his duties, as the New York Times remarked, was "overseeing the National Security Agency, the ultra-secret organization with the missions of devising and breaking codes and operating an electronic espionage network."

~~(TS-000)~~ The Pentagon under the Kennedy administration, with its emphasis on "more bang for the buck," paid closer attention to cryptologic programs, forcing NSA, among others, to justify programs more stringently than had the previous administration. Dr. Fubini, with his scientific and operational background, required NSA officials to defend their budget or R&D requests in greater detail, leading to leaner budgets and hard feelings that the Pentagon was micromanaging the Agency. In one early instance, Dr. Fubini directed a study of theater-level processing, which resulted in the consolidation of processing centers in Germany. Dr. Fubini also chaired a high-level committee which sorted out NSA's role in processing the take from the various satellite collection programs.

(U) Among his other duties, Dr. Fubini served as chairman of the U.S. Communications Security Board.

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(U) His role in cost-cutting and overseeing sensitive programs led Dr. Fubini into conflict with many of the defense and intelligence officials of the day, including NSA's then director, Marshall Carter. As Dr. Fubini observed upon his retirement in 1965, "I have become a controversial character." After leaving the Pentagon, he rose to become a group vice president at IBM, and later worked as a private engineering consultant.

(U) In 1996, Secretary of Defense William Perry established an award named for Dr. Fubini for distinguished service in the Department. Its first recipient was Dr. Eugene G. Fubini.

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