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U. S. LISTENING UNIT TO HAVE NEW HOME

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

WASHINGTON, June 8—The Defense Department has started a \$30,000,000 building program at Fort Meade in Maryland to house the National Security Agency, the operations of which are about as secret as those of the Central Intelligence Agency.

The National Security Agency, which functions under the Defense Department, runs a super-communications network, monitoring and translating broadcasts from all parts of the world. Its services are used not only by the Defense Department, but also the State Department, the C. I. A., the White House and other Government units.

It developed out of the Unification Act of 1947, which integrated the military radio monitoring services. Lieut. Gen. Ralph J. Canine

currently heads it. The directorship is being rotated among the military services.

The agency now has headquarters in Virginia at Arlington Hall, at one time a girl's school. It has supporting radio facilities in Washington and in other parts of the country.

A spokesman at the Defense Department said today that the agency had found that "it needed more space." At first it was suggested that the center of operations be moved to Fort Knox, Ky. It was estimated that a staff of "several thousand" would be moved from Arlington Hall to new facilities at Fort Meade.

Last month the Army Engineers opened bids for the first \$3,000,000 construction at Fort Meade, although it was understood that designs for the whole project had not been completed.

The \$30,000,000 cost of the project is expected to cover expensive electronics equipment.