

Viet Papers Useless Abroad—Schlesinger

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LOS ANGELES, March 12—Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., who was special assistant to President Kennedy, told a federal court jury here today that he hopes foreign nations spent time reading the Pentagon Papers, because this would divert them from genuinely valuable intelligence information.

"The more they read material like this, the better it is for us," he said.

Appearing as the fifth defense witness in the Pentagon Papers trial of Daniel Ellsberg and Anthony J. Russo Jr., the former White House aide observed that the documents "would be of interest, but not of use, and certainly not of advantage" to foreign nations.

Questioned by defense attorney Dolores Donovan, Schlesinger also said that disclosure of the Pentagon Papers could not have injured the U.S. "national defense."

Now Albert Schweitzer Professor of the Humanities at the City University of New York, he was called by the defense as an expert witness on one volume of the documents which traces American policy in Vietnam between 1962 and 1964, when Schlesinger was in the White House.

He stressed repeatedly that during this time the Kennedy administration was planning a

withdrawal of American forces from Vietnam, a plan he said was cancelled by President Johnson after President Kennedy's assassination.

Schlesinger attempted several times to tell the jury of ten women and two men that it is his personal view that disclosure of the Pentagon Papers was of "great advantage to this country" and should have occurred sooner.

But each time, U.S. District Court Judge W. Matt Byrne Jr. cut him off, pointing out that the only issues under the Espionage Act are "injury to the U.S. national defense" and "advantage to a foreign nation."

Ellsberg and Russo are charged with violations of the Espionage Act—and with conspiracy and theft of government property—as a result of their duplication of the Pentagon Papers and other top-secret documents in 1969.

Saying that he was drawing on his own experience as an intelligence analyst for the Office of Strategic Services, forerunner of the Central Intelligence Agency, during World War II, Schlesinger explained that most intelligence officers suffer from "an overload, a glut of information."

"Everything is grist for their mill," he said, but promptly added that material like the Pentagon Papers would be readily rejected by a competent intelligence analyst as useless.

This was especially true of the volume that he studied for the defense, Schlesinger added, because the plan for withdrawal from Vietnam which it detailed became obsolete during the events of 1964, including the clash between American and North Vietnamese vessels in the Gulf of Ton-

kin, the witness, however, and told him to confine his long statements to the questions that were posed.

Earlier in the day, defense and prosecution attorneys completed their questioning of McGeorge Bundy, who was national security adviser to Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, and of another defense witness at the trial.

Bundy asserted that there was more likelihood of "damage to the national defense" from newspaper reports in March 1968 about a Joint Chiefs of Staff memorandum assessing the effects of the Vietnamese Communists' Tet offensive than from Ellsberg's and Russo's photocopying of that document more than a year later.

By revealing that the U.S. military had requested an additional 206,000 troops for Vietnam duty, before President Johnson had made a decision about that request, Bundy said, the newspaper accounts "prejudiced the privacy" of the presidential decision-making process.

Pressed by Chief Prosecutor David R. Nissen to evaluate the potential effects if the North Vietnamese had obtained access to the joint chiefs of Staff report, Bundy continued to insist that this would have had no impact.

He rejected as irrelevant Nissen's comparison of how interested U.S. intelligence authorities would have been in a similar document from North Vietnam.

With a lecturing tone, Bundy—now president of the Ford Foundation—told the prosecutor, "The North Vietnamese society is one of the most tightly closed in the world... The American society is one of the most open in the world."

That openness, he said, would eventually make some information about the United States available to other countries, whereas American authorities would be able to find out about the North Vietnamese decision-making process. The disclosure of the papers and pieces of information would be a loss of information.

There is no serious analysis of the damage to the United States which would be done by the disclosure of the papers and pieces of information.