

Rand Corp. Alters Research Direction

By Richard Saltus

SANTA MONICA, Calif. (AP)—The Rand Corp., the so-called "think tank" whose future was threatened in recent years by the Ellsberg affair and congressional skeptics, seems to be on solid footing again. Its mission has changed, too.

In the past, the institute was devoted largely to military research, but now about half its research is nonmilitary.

With the conclusion of the Pentagon papers trial last spring, the shadow of former Rand researcher Daniel Ellsberg has been lifted from the institute.

— And Congress, which had been expressing serious doubts about continuing to foot Rand's bills, has committed funds for at least two years and probably longer.

President Don Rice says there is at present "no foreseeable threat" to Rand's continued existence. The 34-year-old former assistant director of the federal Office of Management and Budget took over in March 1972 when Rand was still suffering embarrassment over the Pentagon papers.

After Ellsberg admitted he had taken the secret Pentagon papers war study from Rand in 1969 and copied it, the institute's security system was questioned.

The Air Force, which organized Rand at the end of World War II, took charge of the institute's classified materials, and hundreds of Rand staff members lost their security clearances.

Added to this was the skepticism that had flared in Congress from time to time over Rand and the other think

tanks.

Was it desirable to keep supporting institutions that did high-level planning outside of government itself, and which were turning toward increasing research in domestic areas?

Rice's predecessor, Harry S. Rowen, who resigned in the wake of the Ellsberg affair, had been guiding Rand toward more studies of domestic issues.

Now, says Rice, "national security research is still slightly more than 50 per cent" of Rand's activities. A year ago it was more than 70 per cent.

Rand receives 91 per cent of its \$26 million budget from the federal government, 5 per cent from local governments, including school districts, 3 per cent from private foundations and 1 per cent from state governments.

With the Vietnam war officially over, Rand's military researchers have turned to such matters as ways of maintaining an all-volunteer armed force, strategies for limited

wars, implications of the Strategic Arms Limitations agreements and political analyses of events in China and the Soviet Union.

The newer domestic concerns of Rand, Rice said, include these main areas: health policy and sciences, education, communications policy, energy and transportation, urban studies and housing.

Rice, a solemn, bespectacled specialist in management and economics, is the third president in Rand's 26-year history.

The Air Force set up Rand as an independent corporate entity to conduct research on air warfare and related problems of national security. Since then it has trained its analytical talents on a wide range of military concerns, some of which have earned it a reputation among the left as a war plan factory.