

What the CIA Saw in Ellsberg

Washington

The Central Intelligence Agency's initial psychological assessment of Daniel Ellsberg concluded that he was motivated by "what he deemed a higher order of patriotism" in turning over the Pentagon Papers to the press in 1971.

The study, a copy of which was made available to the New York Times, described Ellsberg as a brilliant and highly motivated man who saw "himself as having a special mission, and indeed as bearing a special responsibility" regarding the Vietnam war.

It was this study, prepared in early August, 1971, that was rejected by the special White House investigating unit that requested it. Members of this unit later broke into the office of Ellsberg's psychiatrist in Los Angeles.

Asked for comment, Ellsberg noted that the report, favorable as it was, did not discuss his motives in terms of the Vietnam war and added, "I guess as late as August, 1971, it just wasn't acceptable to suggest that an American citizen could conscientiously be impelled to take action that would help bring truth to his fellow citizens."

In testimony before the



DANIEL ELLSBERG
'A special mission'

Senate Watergate committee, John D. Ehrlichman, the former White House adviser, acknowledged that the break-in into the office of the psychiatrist, Dr. Lewis I. Fielding, had been prompted by the desire to obtain more psychological data about Ellsberg.

Last week the committee released a memorandum to Ehrlichman from David R. Young Jr., a co-director of the special investigations unit, noting that "we have received the CIA preliminary psychological study which I must say I am dis-

appointed in and consider very superficial."

According to the memo, Young subsequently requested and received authority from Ehrlichman to undertake "a covert operation... to examine all the medical files still held by Ellsberg's psychoanalyst covering the two-year period in which he was undergoing analysis."

The break-in, staged over the Labor Day weekend by E. Howard Hunt Jr., and G. Gordon Liddy, who subsequently participated in the Watergate break-in, was unsuccessful.

MOTIVE

A memo from Young to Ehrlichman introduced at the Senate committee hearings suggested that one motive behind the California break-in was to find adverse information that could be provided to the press as part of an anti-Ellsberg campaign that was being mapped in mid-1971 in the White House.

In addition, Ehrlichman repeatedly testified during his five days before the committee that the government had information that Ellsberg may have provided copies of the Pentagon Papers to the Soviet Embassy in Washington.

Nothing in the CIA study provided the investigating unit, often referred to as the Plumbers team, because it was trying to plug leaks of information, with any adverse information about Ellsberg, who had served as a Defense Department analyst and Marine Corps officer.

SUBJECT

The study, prepared by Dr. Bernard Malloy, a CIA staff psychologist, noted that "there is no suggestion that subject (Ellsberg) thought anything treasonous in his act."

"Rather," it added, "he seemed to be responding to what he deemed a higher order of patriotism. His exclusion of the three volumes of the papers concerned with the secret negotiating would support this."

The exclusion referred to Ellsberg's decision not to release four — not three — volumes of the Pentagon Papers dealing with the various U.S. attempts to negotiate an end to the war through third parties and neutralist governments.

MISSION

Concluding that Ellsberg seemed to view himself as having a special mission, the study noted that "on several occasions he castigated himself for not releasing the papers earlier" because of the continuing toll of the war.

But elsewhere, the study maintained that Ellsberg might have been motivated by "some of his long-standing personality needs" in deciding to release the highly classified Pentagon Papers.

His early academic brilliance had instilled in him the notion that "he was special and destined for greatness," the study said. Thus, there subsequently were problems in what was referred to as his "mid-life" — the age period between 35 and 45 — when he did not achieve full success.

"One can only sustain the role of 'bright young man' so long," the study noted.

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