

Radford Contends Moorer Knew About His Snooping

Yeoman Says 4 Officers on Admiral's Staff Got Pilfered Material

By SEYMOUR M. HERSH

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Yeoman 1st Cl. Charles E. Radford contends that he has sufficient information to persuade the Senate Armed Services Committee that Admiral Thomas H. Moorer knew the yeoman was funneling "eyes only" White House documents to the admiral's Pentagon office.

In a series of interviews, Yeoman Radford acknowledged that among the documents he pilfered were copies of Henry A. Kissinger's personal reports to President Nixon after his secret history-making trip to China in July, 1971. Mr. Kissinger, then President Nixon's national security adviser, is now the Secretary of State.

Yeoman Radford was interviewed before his closed meeting yesterday with Senator John C. Stennis, Democrat of Mississippi, who is chairman of the Armed Services Committee. The yeoman freely conceded in the interview that during his 15-month tenure inside the White House he funneled literally "hundreds" of documents to Admiral Moorer's office.

"It was a perfect thing," he said. "I had everybody's confidence."

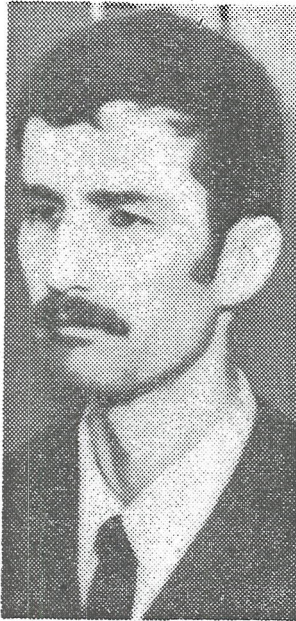
Says Officers Knew

During those months, the Yeoman was a stenographer-clerk on the military liaison unit inside the White House. His function was to facilitate the coordination of paperwork between the National Security Council and Admiral Moorer, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

In previously published interviews, Yeoman Radford has stated that his superior officers on the military liaison unit, Rear Admirals Rembrandt C. Robinson and Robert O. Welander, both urged him to take the material covertly.

Asked about Admiral Moorer's personal involvement, the yeoman explained that at least four different officers assigned to Admiral Moorer's office received the documents during his activities in late 1970 and throughout 1971. Those documents, he said, were "sanitized"—that is, all identifying marks were clipped off and the material pasted on a white sheet of paper.

The yeoman said, however,



Associated Press

Yeoman 1st Cl. Charles E. Radford after private meeting with Senator John C. Stennis.

that he did not sanitize documents intended personally for Admiral Moorer's attention. "He got them with all the markings," the yeoman said.

Introduced to Moorer

Furthermore, Yeoman Radford said, he was always encouraged by superior officers to believe that Admiral Moorer was grateful for his efforts. He quoted Admiral Robinson, who was killed in Southeast Asia in 1972, as telling him repeatedly that "Admiral Moorer was pleased with the information. I always got feedback."

Yeoman Radford said that he was once personally introduced to Admiral Moorer by Admiral Robinson, but that there was no discussion of his clandestine pilfering.

The yeoman acknowledged that he was in an awkward position, at best, as an enlisted man challenging the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. But he declared that he had much more specific information about Admiral Moorer's involvement that he would tell the Senate.

"He's not afraid and he's ready to tell the truth," said William J. Claussen of Salem, Ore., Yeoman Radford's attorney. **FEB**

Both Mr. Claussen and Yeoman Radford were interviewed Friday while en route from Portland, Ore., to Washington for their meeting with Senator Stennis. No details of that 2½-hour session could be learned

today, but the Senator told newsmen yesterday that Yeoman Radford was "cooperatively" and that he was subpoenaed to appear before the full committee Feb. 18. The Senate will be in recess this week.

'Routine Operation'

The yeoman repeatedly noted that he had begun his spying operations at the request of others. "The thought never occurred to me until Admiral Robinson suggested it to me," he said. "We never made a big deal about it. It was just a simple routine operation."

"This was a constant thing," he said of the pilfering. "I took things whenever the opportunity provided itself."

As with all aspects of his 11-year Navy career, he noted, he did that facet of his job well. "I was so sticky-fingered," he said.

Yeoman Radford said that throughout his White House tenure, which ended in December, 1971, when he was suspected of leaking documents on the India-Pakistan war to Jack Anderson, the columnist, he received the highest ratings from his superiors.

In March, 1971, he said, he was named administrative assistant to Gen. Alexander M. Haig Jr., then Mr. Kissinger's chief deputy and now White House chief of staff.

During the airplane interview, Yeoman Radford repeatedly expressed concern over a seven-page letter submitted by Admiral Moorer to the Armed Services Committee last week and subsequently released to the press. In the letter, the admiral indicated that a Pentagon investigation had all but concluded that Yeoman Radford had, in fact, leaked the India-Pakistan documents to Mr. Anderson.

The Yeoman said he would rebut the admiral's contention on a point-by-point basis to the Senate committee, but he refused to do so with a reporter. He did, however, deny leaking any material to Mr. Anderson, with whom, he said, he had a social relationship based on their Mormon church activities.

In his statement last week, Admiral Moorer acknowledged receiving two batches of documents that had been obtained by Yeoman Radford—one of them after the China trip. But the admiral described them as "containing no new information."

As chairman of the joint chiefs, Admiral Moorer is a statutory member of the National Security Council and is entitled to see all of its working papers and documents. Well-informed sources have told The New York Times, however, that the documents pilfered by Yeoman Radford were not official council material, but included private reports and memorandums that were intended solely for President Nixon and key White House aides.