

# Elsberg Says Escalation Was Part of Nixon's Plan

NYTimes

By R. W. APPLE JR. AUG 22 1972

Special to The New York Times

MIAMI BEACH, Aug. 22 — Dr. Daniel Ellsberg said today that escalation of the war in Southeast Asia was part of President Nixon's strategic blueprint almost from the moment he took office in January of 1969.

Dr. Ellsberg, who is under Federal indictment for having given the secret Pentagon papers to several newspapers, appeared at a joint news conference with Representative Paul D. McCloskey Jr. of California, an antiwar maverick Republican. They said they wanted to make Mr. Nixon's war policies clear before the Republican National Convention renominated him.

Dr. Ellsberg said the President's secret plan to end the war, which he discussed during the 1968 campaign, had two elements: Gradual withdrawal of American ground troops and simultaneous escalation of certain aspects of the war to prevent the collapse of the regime in Saigon.

Discussing the contents of a memorandum he prepared in December, 1968, at the request of Henry A. Kissinger, Mr. Nixon's national security adviser, Dr. Ellsberg said it detailed seven alternative courses in the war. But Mr. Nixon had chosen seven unilateral war draws, abandoned from the list almost at once, he asserted.

On many occasions during the campaign, Mr. Nixon made it clear that he wanted to posture unilateral withdrawal.

The former Peace candidate said that the President embarked "on a course which precluded any possibility of peace that would bring security to the region."

tion of ground troops and to convince Hanoi and its allies that he was "not going to be constrained" by the limitations imposed by his predecessor, Lyndon B. Johnson.

Dr. Ellsberg said that Mr. Kissinger warned the Soviet Ambassador, Anatoly F. Dobrynin, shortly after Mr. Nixon took office, that the bombing of North Vietnam would resume if a settlement of the war was not achieved at the Paris talks.

During the first 10 weeks of his Administration, Dr. Ellsberg said, Mr. Nixon took three overt steps to convince the enemy of the "credibility" of American support for Saigon, none of which were announced at the time.

The steps, according to Dr. Ellsberg, were these: a prolonged Marine ground operation in Laos, called Dewey Canyon I, raids by B-52 heavy bombers in Cambodia and a reconnaissance mission by frogmen in Hanoi, none of which the North Vietnamese were permitted to detect.

Word of the first two has since leaked out, but the operation by the frogmen, of which Dr. Ellsberg was chief, has remained unknown until today.

The intended bombing of North Vietnam and the marine withdrawal, abandoned from the list almost at once, he asserted.

Mr. McCloskey, who appeared with Dr. Ellsberg at the news conference, said that the plan to bomb North Vietnam was a "strategic error" and that the plan to withdraw ground troops was a "strategic blunder."