

Congress Gets Pentagon Papers, Locks Them Up

By MARJORIE HUNTER
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WASHINGTON, June 28 — The Pentagon papers, packed in cardboard boxes marked "top secret," were delivered to Congress today and quickly placed in locked vaults.

In sending the report to Congress, Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird issued a warning that disclosure of information in the secret study would pose "grave and immediate dangers to national security."

Members of Congress will be allowed to read the multivolume study of the Vietnam war but will be barred from taking notes or divulging the contents.

Pentagon spokesmen said that many of the documents would be made public, probably within 45 days. However, Secretary Laird said that some of the documents were still so sensitive that they must remain secret indefinitely.

One set of volumes will be kept in the Capitol office of Francis R. Valeo, Secretary of the Senate, until the Senate determines whether to refer them to the Foreign Relations Committee, the Armed Services Committee or both.

Joint Hearing Possible

The Senate Democratic leader, Mike Mansfield of Montana, said that tentative agreement had been reached for a joint hearing by the two committees on publication of the papers in The New York Times and other newspapers. The suggestion for a joint hearing was endorsed by the Republican Senate leader, Hugh Scott of Pennsylvania.

The first Senator to ask permission to examine the volumes was Harry F. Byrd Jr., independent of Virginia, a member of the Armed Services Committee. He is owner of two Virginia newspapers, The Winchester Star and The Harrisonburg News Record.

Later in the day, Senator Charles H. Percy, Republican of Illinois, asked to examine the documents.



The New York Times/George Tames

Boxes of the Pentagon papers being wheeled into Senate yesterday. At left is Hugh Scott, Republican leader.

A duplicate set of volumes was sent to the House Armed Services Committee in the Rayburn Building. The committee, in a mid-afternoon meeting, authorized its chairman, F. Edward Hébert of Louisiana, to set up rules under which House members could examine the documents.

Mr. Hébert said he would issue the rules in a day or two. Among them, he said, will be the bans on taking notes and divulging contents.

Mr. Hébert also said that guards would be on duty around the clock.

But while members of Congress have been cautioned some leaders in the Senate and House appeared dubious that the contents of the papers would be kept secret.

"I don't think you could keep a secret in Washington if you told it to a mirror," Representative Hébert said.

Senator Allen J. Ellender of Louisiana, President pro tem of the Senate, when asked if he thought the papers would remain secret, replied: "If I'm to judge from past experience, the answer is no."

Others Seeking Copies

Meanwhile, seven members of the House Government Operations Committee, acting under a rarely used law, demanded that the Pentagon give members of the committee copies of the study, along with a study of the Gulf of Tonkin affair.

The Tonkin study was conducted by the Institute of Defense Analyses, a Pentagon "think tank." The Senate Foreign Relations Committee has long sought a copy but has been rebuffed by the Pentagon.

The new demand was disclosed today by Representative

One set was taken to the office of Senator Ellender, the Senate President pro tem. Pasted on one box was a piece of white paper, lettered "Top Secret, Volumes 1-30; on the other & "Top Secret, Volumes 31-47."

Senator Ellender signed a receipt handed to him by Rady Johnson, Secretary Laird's legislative aide, then turned the boxes over to the Senate leaders, Mr. Mansfield and Mr. Scott. Mr. Scott opened one volume, thumbed through it, but made no comment. The boxes then were wheeled to a vault in the office of the Secretary of the Senate.

At about the same time, a duplicate set was wheeled into the Capitol by other Army personnel, accompanied by David O. Cooke, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Administration.

Speaker Carl Albert, summoned from the House chamber, received the documents and signed a receipt. The boxes then were rolled to the House Armed Services Committee offices.

By late today, only one House member, Robert R. McClory, Republican of Illinois, had asked to see the documents.

Rostow Charges Distortions

Prof. Walt W. Rostow, former White House adviser, said yesterday there were systematic distortions in The New York Times's account of the Pentagon's study of American involvement in Vietnam.

He said that the papers were an incomplete record and did not reflect discussions between the President and his advisers or Congressional leaders. He also complained some of the authors of the Pentagon study had "felt free to draw conclusions about what was in the President's mind."

Mr. Rostow, who is teaching at the University of Texas, charged that the greatest distortion was the "gap" between the evidence and the conclusions reached by headline writers, columnists and editorial writers. He added: "If any student of mine presented a paper with such a wide gap between evidence and conclusions he'd be flunked and expect to be flunked."

Professor Rostow, speaking at a Foreign Policy Association luncheon at the New York Hilton, insisted that a search of President Johnson's statements on Vietnam would show "the simple truth that the President did not lie or deceive anyone" and that no nuance of the decision-making process was not reflected in public statements at the time.

His remarks were made in reply to questions after he and Senator Birch E. Bayh of Indiana had exchanged views on American withdrawal from Vietnam.

William S. Moorhead, chairman of a House government operations subcommittee that is holding hearings on information policies.

Mr. Moorhead said that he and six other members were acting under a law requiring any executive agency to submit "any information requested of it in relation to any matter within the jurisdiction" of the Government Operations Committee when requested by at least seven members of the committee.

Joining him in requesting the information from Secretary Laird were four other Democrats—Henry S. Reuss of Wisconsin, Bill Alexander of Arkansas, John E. Moss of California, and John Conyers Jr., of Michigan—and two Republicans — Ogden R. Reid of Westchester and Paul N. McCloskey Jr., of California.

Guarded by several Army majors and sergeants, the Pentagon papers were rolled into the Capitol on wheeled carts shortly after noon.