

# DECEIT IN '64 RACE IS DENIED BY RUSK

No Attempt at Deception on  
Vietnam War in Johnson's  
Campaign, He Asserts

JUL 3 1971

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Special to The New York Times

ATLANTA, July 2 — Dean Rusk former Secretary of State, said today that there was no "deliberate attempt to deceive anybody" about American involvement in Vietnam during the 1964 presidential campaign of Lyndon B. Johnson.

Mr. Rusk is the highest-ranking members of the Kennedy Johnson and Administrations to enter the debate provoked by the publication of parts of the secret Pentagon study on Vietnam. He made the remarks in an interview broadcast by the National Broadcasting Company.

"As far as general policy is concerned, there was no deception," Mr. Rusk said. "I can't myself find any justification for the charge of deceit."

Mr. Rusk, now a law professor at the University of Georgia, said that President Johnson had "made it very plain that we did not want a bigger war, but that we would fulfill our commitments."

During the interview, Mr. Rusk said that he had underestimated the strength of the North Vietnamese commitment

Continued on Page 8, Column 5

Continued From Page 1, Col. 4

to the conflict and overestimated the willingness of this country to sustain a protracted engagement there. When asked whether he agreed with indications in the Pentagon study that "colossal miscalculations" had helped to involve this country heavily in the war, he declined to respond.

He said that he had decided to speak publicly on the issues raised by the Pentagon study, after previously refusing interviews, because he could not "remain silent forever."

The lengthy interview with Edwin Newman and Barbara Walters, recorded for broadcast on N.B.C. this evening, took place here in Atlanta, 40 miles from the campus where Mr. Rusk is now a professor of international law.

## 'Never Heard of Study'

It was part of an extremely busy day for Mr. Rusk, a native Georgian. Earlier he had participated in an interview for the Columbia Broadcasting System and after his conversation with Mr. Newman and Miss Walters he spoke at some length with other reporters.

Mr. Rusk said that after reading the first installment of a series of articles in The New York Times based on the Pentagon study, he had telephoned President Johnson at his ranch in Texas "because I'd never heard of the study."

He said that Mr. Johnson had told him that a copy of the study had been delivered to the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library on the campus of the University of Texas in Austin a few

weeks before. "But I don't know whether Mr. Johnson has read the study," he said.

Mr. Rusk said he had also called Robert S. McNamara, the former Secretary of Defense, who ordered the controversial study. "He said he'd started the idea, but I don't think he has read it, either," Mr. Rusk said.

Dressed in a dark gray suit and wearing a maroon tie, Mr. Rusk appeared at ease during the interview as he expressed doubts that the Pentagon study had been intended to take on its present prominence.

"It is not my impression," he said, that he [Mr. McNamara] had in mind a 40-volume study." He said that he thought it had been intended "more as an informal study of the type placed in loose-leaf notebooks" and used by Government officials for briefing purposes.

"I'm rather curious about why the analysts who put this study together did not interview us," he said, "particularly when they were attributing attitudes and motives to us."

He suggested that The New York Times should publish the names of the approximately 30 persons who prepared the study. "In a certain sense, these [papers] have the characteristics of an anonymous letter," he said.

Throughout the day, as he discussed the Pentagon study with reporters, Mr. Rusk consistently defended the two Administrations he served and the decisions made by them.

But he said that he was unable to describe the "tremendous sense of relief" he felt following the inauguration of President Nixon in January, 1969, "to be relieved of those enormous responsibilities."



Associated Press

DISCUSSES PENTAGON PAPERS: Dean Rusk, former Secretary of State, as last night's TV program was taped.