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# Rand Aides Say Security Relied Largely on Trust

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SANTA MONICA, Calif., July 2—Officials at the Rand Corporation believe that their security has been better than at most Government facilities, but, as one source said, "If you want to reduce the possibility of a leak to zero, you would have to hermetically seal the whole Defense Department."

These comments were made before the Defense Department today ordered stricter security precautions at the huge research organization here. But they indicate the dismay felt by many at Rand when it was disclosed that a secret Pentagon study on Vietnam in the corporation's custody had been leaked to the press.

Rand was organized in 1948 as an independent, nonprofit research organization, but for the first 10 years it worked exclusively for the Air Force and the Atomic Energy Commission, primarily on new weapon systems. Although the corporation has gradually taken other clients, the Federal Government still provides 86 per cent of Rand's \$27-million annual budget. About three-quarters of the budget comes from the Defense Department.

Rand's major projects include studies of military manpower requirements, techniques of counterinsurgency, alternative methods of arms control and evaluation of Soviet moves in Eastern Europe.

## 500 Staff Members

Rand headquarters here — there also are offices in Washington and New York — houses about 500 professional people with dozens of skills, from computer science to physics to sociology.

The sprawling office building is only a block from the beach, but it retains a stiff and sober atmosphere. It probably contains more crewcuts per capita than any other structure in California. Visitors are greeted by guards in white shirts and dark, narrow ties, and only persons with a secret clearance are allowed into most areas without an escort.

Virtually all Rand employes have such a clearance, and have thus been free to consult the many classified documents available at the headquarters. Taking the documents out of the building is prohibited, but sources say that employes are not checked every day and could easily removed classified material if they wished. This might be changed under the new regulations.

"There's a practical limit beyond which you can't go in protecting security," said sources close to Rand. "Otherwise the costs become horrendous and you impose conditions

people would not work under. As it is, the costs of security are enormous."

Because of this, the sources said, the security system "depends a great deal on trust, not institutional trust but on an individual basis."

The sources concede, however, that there is no established procedure for reviewing security clearances. "If there is no real cause to look into it, no overt attempt is made to track a man and, in effect, to update his clearance," they said.

Even before the Defense Department reprimanded Rand today, the corporation had been deeply disturbed by the disclosure of the secret Pentagon study. "You can say," said one source, "that there were quite a few unhappy people around here." A friend made a joke to a Rand staff member and was cut off with the icy retort, "it ain't funny."

One reason for the concern here is that Rand could lose some Federal contracts, particularly while the defense budget is under increasing attack and the economy remains sluggish.

More important, most of the men who work at Rand are committed to the value of defense research, and as one source put it, "play by the rules." Those rules stress secrecy, anonymity and "going through channels."

## 'Fairly Conservative Place'

"Basically Rand is a fairly conservative place in its attitudes toward politics certainly in respect to what responsible behavior entails," said one man.

Twenty-one months ago six Rand experts on Vietnam — including Dr. Daniel Ellsberg, who says he gave the Pentagon papers to the press — wrote a letter to The New York Times urging a unilateral withdrawal of American forces from Southeast Asia. The men wrote the letter only after becoming convinced that repeated attempts to influence policy "through channels" had failed.

But many Rand researchers continue to support the Vietnam war, which some of them helped plan and promote. "A lot of mistakes have been made, some very tragic," said one source, "but the final verdict is not in."

Of the organization's purpose, a reliable source said: "We have no particular desire to pursue the cold war for its own sake, but there are serious military and international issues the United States has to deal with, and excellent people have to do hard work on these problems."