

McNamara Unaware

Ellsberg Tells of Viet Intrigue

Washington

Danie Ellsberg, who turned over the secret Pentagon papers to newspapers, said yesterday that intrigue in the Pentagon

was such that even then—Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara was unaware of some things that were going on in connection with the Vietnam war.

Ellsberg, interviewed at an informal breakfast gathering, referred to one study on the Gulf of Tonkin incident which he said was withheld from McNamara by the Joint Chiefs of Staff until McNamara had been asked about it in testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

"The study was deliberately withheld from the Secretary of Defense," Ellsberg was quoted as saying by Paul Hope of the Evening Star.

"The Joint Chiefs didn't want the secretary to see it ... it had tapes of all the secretary's conversations overseas."

ATTENTION

Hope said Ellsberg told his interviewers that all conversations that went through the Pentagon's "war room" were taped and that the chiefs did not want to call this to McNamara's attention.

Hope said the specific study to which Ellsberg referred apparently was the Command and Control Study which the Rand Corp. was commissioned to do after the Tonkin Gulf incidents. Its aims, Hope said, was to analyze communications between the destroyers involved and distant communication centers, particularly during the second of the incidents in August 1964.

At a February, 1968, hearing by the Senate committee on the handling of the incidents, McNamara was pressed by Chairman J. W. Fulbright (Dem-Ark.) on the contents of the report.

READ

McNamara replied that he had not read all of it and added: "I first learned of it a few days ago when you asked for it."

Ellsberg said he had access to the study when he was working for Rand as a consultant to the Pentagon, but that he did not have access when he later worked fulltime for the Pentagon.

Ellsberg, Hope said, also accused McNamara of deliberately misleading Congress in hearings that led to Congress' passage of the Gulf of Tonkin resolution under which President Johnson drew his authority for much of his Vietnamese operations.

"He (McNamara) testified with far more certainty than the case justified," Ellsberg said. "His testimony was highly misleading. He did give a very misleading impression of his conviction and the degree of evidence."

Hope said Ellsberg raised the Tonkin study to bolster questions on who could see or talk about what within the government are as severe as those on communicating with his contention that restrict the public.

LEAK

Ellsberg is facing prosecution for leaking the Pentagon papers to newspapers.

Ellsberg said that, when he gave his copies of the documents to newspapers and some congressmen, he "took for granted I would go to prison."

But, since studying further the legal ramifications of his actions, he is not now certain that he will wind up in jail.

Associated Press

See "Dole Says Trials Might Harm G.O.P."

NYTimes 16 Jul 71