

Radford Says He Was Ordered By 2 Admirals to Pilfer Papers

NYTimes

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Special to The New York Times

FEB 9 1974

DENVER, Feb. 8—Navy Yeoman 1st Cl. Charles E. Radford, publicly named as the key figure in alleged military snooping activities, declared today that he had been specifically instructed by two admirals to pilfer top-secret documents from the White House.

In an airport interview here, Yeoman Radford named the officers as Rear Admirals Rembrant C. Robinson, now deceased, and Robert O. Welander. He began taking documents, he said, shortly after he was assigned in September, 1970, as a stenographer-clerk to the military liaison unit in the White House.

The Yeoman, who is 30 years old, named Admiral Robinson as the officer who first approached him in the fall of 1970. At the time, Admiral Robinson was serving as the military liaison officer attached to the National Security Council—then headed by Henry A. Kissinger. Yeoman Radford was his chief clerk and aide.

"I did what I was to do and what was expected of me to the very best of my ability," Yeoman Radford said. "I've always done whatever I was asked to with complete dedication and loyalty to the government."

Welander Was Successor

After Admiral Robinson—who was later killed in Southeast Asia—was reassigned in March, 1971, the yeoman said, he continued to pilfer documents at the urging of the admiral's successor, Rear Admiral Welander.

Today's interview took place during a stopover in Yeoman Radford's flight to Washington from his home in Salem, Ore. He was summoned by the Navy yesterday to meet privately in an unusual Saturday meeting with Senator John C. Stennis, Democrat of Mississippi, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee. The committee has been investigating the alleged military spying activities.

Yeoman Radford said the Navy had told him that he would be reassigned for 30 days on temporary duty to the Washington area.

The yeoman acknowledged that he had pilfered hundreds of documents while serving with the military liaison unit. Most of these, he said, were funneled to the office of Admiral Thomas H. Moorer, chair-

man of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Yeoman Radford also confirmed that at least three other high-ranking officers, along with Admirals Welander and Robinson, knew about and were involved in the activity, although he added, "It was a very surreptitious operation."

Yeoman Radford's assertions contradicted the thrust of recent statements by Admiral Moorer and Secretary of Defense James R. Schlesinger, both of whom had minimized the spying incident.

In the airport interview, Yeoman Radford said that he had always believed that Admiral Moorer was aware of his activities. He said that fact was conveyed to him on a number of occasions by Admiral Robinson.

The White House is known to have first learned of the military spying while investigating the leak of sensitive documents in December, 1971, on the India-Pakistan war to Jack Anderson, the columnist.

Moorer Was Reappointed

Although a later report on the spying activities by David R. Young Jr., then a member of the White House "plumbers" unit, concluded that the unauthorized documents had been funneled to Admiral Moorer's office, the admiral was reappointed by President Nixon to a second-year two-year term as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in mid-1972.

Admiral Welander was banished from the White House, and the liaison office, which had been in existence inside the National Security Council since the early nineteen-sixties, was abolished overnight.

In his public statements, Admiral Moorer has acknowledged receiving two batches of documents from Yeoman Radford in 1971 but has publicly described them as worthless and unnecessary. The admiral also has denied published reports that he had in any way authorized or approved of the funneling of the unauthorized material.

Yeoman Radford was accompanied today by his attorney, William J. Claussen of Salem, who told a reporter his client had received "outstanding" commendations during his 11-year Navy career, including at least one from Gen. Alexander M. Haig Jr., who served as Mr. Kissinger's chief deputy in the National Security Council in 1971.