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Press Release
June 8, 2011

National Archives and Presidential Libraries Release Pentagon Papers

Washington, DC...On June 13, 2011, the National Archives and the Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon Presidential Libraries will release in its entirety the official Report of the Office of the Secretary of Defense Vietnam Task Force (commonly referred to as the Pentagon Papers). This is the 40th anniversary of the leak of these Papers by the *New York Times*. Approximately 2,384 pages or 34% of the Report will be opened for the first time as compared to the Senator Gravel Edition of the Pentagon Papers, the most common benchmark used in Pentagon Papers discussions.



Opening Information:

Beginning June 13, each library and the Research Room at the National Archives facility in College Park, MD will have hard copies of the papers available for review, beginning at 12 noon EDT in College Park and at the Kennedy Library, 11 AM CDT at the Johnson Library, and 9 AM PDT at the Nixon Library. The materials will also be available online [http://www.archives.gov/research/pentagon-papers/] June 13, at 12 noon EDT.

Locations:

John F. Kennedy Library:
Columbia Point
Boston MA 02125
(617) 514-1629
www.jfklibrary.org/

Lyndon Johnson Library
2313 Red River Street,
Austin, Texas 78705
(512) 721-0212
www.lbjlibrary.org/

Richard Nixon Library
18001 Yorba Linda Boulevard
Yorba Linda, California 92886
(714) 983-9120
www.nixonlibrary.gov/

National Archives at College Park
8601 Adelphi Rd.
College Park, MD 20740-6001
(301) 837-3510

Background Information

The 7,000 page report was commissioned by Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara in 1967. He appointed Defense Department officials John McNaughton, Morton Halperin, and Leslie Gelb to lead the task force. Mr. Gelb's organization published a 47 volume document known as the Report of the OSD (Office of Secretary of Defense) Vietnam Task Force and given the title *United States-Vietnam Relations 1945-1967*. The entire report was classified at the Top Secret level, although certain volumes of the report contained public statements that were considered unclassified. The Department of Justice and OSD investigations into the leak of the classified report determined that at least fifteen original copies were made (it's not clear if more than fifteen were printed). The National Archives has one complete set and multiple copies of various volumes of the report located in two record series from Record Group 330, Records of the Office of the Secretary of Defense, and Record Group 60, Records of the Department of Justice. Complete original sets are also at the Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon Libraries.

The *New York Times* published the first unauthorized release of what it termed the Vietnam Archive on June 13, 1971. The source document of that leak, along with the leaks to more than a dozen other media outlets, was a copy of the Report created by Daniel Ellsberg and Anthony Russo. That copy of the Report which was well documented in Mr. Ellsberg's 2002 work, *Secrets: A Memoir of Vietnam and the Pentagon Papers*, was not the pristine document created by Leslie Gelb's task force. The conditions under which the copies of the Report were made and distributed, coupled with the speed with which the copies were distributed and the urgency to publish the material, meant that the newspaper and magazine releases of the Papers covered only a very small portion of the 7,000 page Report.

The subsequent copies of the Report that were leaked to the U.S. Congress ultimately had more of the report published. Senator Mike Gravel (D, Alaska) made available his copy of the Report to the publishing house of Beacon Press, located in Boston. The Beacon Press edition was published in 1971. However, Beacon Press had its own reproduction problems that led to words, paragraphs, and even full pages of the Report being deleted, possibly due to the quality problems in the copy received from Senator Gravel. In addition, the Beacon Press editors completely rearranged the volumes of the original Report they received. The House Committee on Armed Services also published its version in 1971. This version follows the same arrangement as the original report, but had some text removed during declassification review.

Ellsberg and Russo did not leak Part VI of the Report, which describes various negotiating initiatives. The State Department declassified Part VI in 2002 at the Johnson Library.

This current release by the National Archives and the Presidential libraries will present the American public with the first definitive look at this historic document.

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For press information, contact the National Archives Public Affairs staff at 202-357-5300.

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