

government to convict those who leaked and those who printed these documents. The government's case must have been very tenuous if even *in camera* it made such a poor impression on these judges. Judge Gesell found no compromise of intelligence, despite all the nonsense spilled to the press in backgrounders about the danger to U.S. secret codes. He found the government failed to show that the documents "at the present time and in the present context are Top Secret." Nonetheless, whatever the outcome, the case creates serious precedents for the future. Publication has been held up, editors have been hauled into court. What happens next time when the government's case is less flimsy and more marginal? We need a firm ruling that the risks to "national security" are outweighed by the advantages of a free press.

### A Means of Seduction and Brainwash

But the press, too, has been corrupted in its own way by the web of secrecy woven by imperialism. One aspect of the whole system of classification has not had sufficient attention. The volume of classified material gives elected officials and bureaucrats a ready means of seducing and brainwashing the press. Selective declassification becomes a means of manipulation. A half-truth may be more deceptive, because less easy to rebut, than a whole lie. The system of "leaks" makes it easy to mislead the public and to make reporters beholden to officials for these phoney "scoops." To be excluded from those cozy backgrounders whence so much falsification is generated represents one of the basic advantages of heretical reporters like myself. It also explains why the establishment press, despite so much first rate reporting from Vietnam, has taken so long to disengage from the "party-line" on the war.

So while we find ourselves truly proud of the American press for closing ranks against the government in defense of freedom, and to the editors of the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post* and (at press time) the *Boston Globe* for printing the Pentagon papers, we wish they had started earlier. Neil Sheehan of the *New York Times* deserves a special salute, and whoever leaked the documents will go down in history as a hero.\* It is nevertheless true that no small part of what is now coming to light was visible years ago, for those who cared to look, as my own readers in the *Bi-Weekly* and the *New York Review of Books* are aware.\*\* If the big

\* Hisses to Sidney Zion for naming Daniel Ellsberg as the source of the leak to the *New York Times*, and to Rep. Paul McClosky for telling the press he got copies from Ellsberg.

\*\* The Columbia Journalism Review in a special Vietnam issue last winter said, "One American journalist who raised continuing doubts about the veracity of the Administration's accounts was I. F. Stone. In his small, outspoken sheet, Stone reported the South Vietnamese attacks on Hon Me and Hon Ngu. He was the only one to cover in detail the charges

### Drafting For Soldiers—Or Servants?

During our debate on the draft extension, the Department of Defense has admitted that projected manpower shortfalls during fiscal year 1972, depending on the size of the pay increase, will range from 20,000 to 40,000 in the absence of the draft. Shortfalls of such minor proportions, in a force level of 2.4 million men, have raised serious questions about the need for any continuation of the draft, much less a 2-year extension of the induction authority . . . Gen. George I. Forsyth, Special Assistant to the Army Chief of Staff, noted in the May 17, 1971 edition of *Armed Forces Journal*, that there are 35,000 GI's engaged in KP, and another 60,000 cutting grass and engaged in similar nonmilitary household chores. This means that we have 95,000 men doing jobs that should be performed by civilians . . . These 95,000 slots are what this debate is all about. In the name of national security we are being asked for a 2-year extension, so that men in uniform can provide domestic service to their superiors.

—Schweiker (D. Pa.) in the Senate, June 4.

press had examined the original hearings on the Tonkin Gulf and printed Senator Morse's two speeches revealing all that the censor had taken out of the transcript, they would have known much of the truth seven years ago (as would the Senators who voted like sheep for the resolution, only Morse and Gruening dissenting). Instead the *New York Times* swallowed the prefabricated Tonkin Gulf incidents and saw

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raised by Senator Morse about the incidents, and he even raised questions about whether the second attack even occurred. While Time and Life were adding embellishments to the nineteenth-century theme of "they've sunk one of our gunboats," I. F. Stone was asking the crucial questions. One of the major shortcomings of opinion writers was their failure to ask: does the punishment fit the crime? The total damage in both attacks was one bullet hole in the Maddox. No U.S. ships were sunk, no American boys were even wounded. In turn, we not only claimed to have sunk four North Vietnamese vessels but went on to the bombing of the North, sinking the major part of the North Vietnamese Navy, and wiping out more than 10 percent of its oil storage tanks. The overwhelming response of the editorialists was that President Johnson should be commended for his restraint in limiting the bombing. Among Washington journalists, only Stone opined that indeed the American response was 'hardly punishment to fit the crime.' His small circulation sheet received little attention."—Don Stillman, "*Tonkin: What Should Have Been Asked.*"

### Gen. Ridgway For Unconditional Withdrawal Of All US Forces

It is difficult to see how a war can be ended unless all participants agree to terminate it. And in the light of our announced intention that residual forces, including but not limited to American airpower, will remain until such agreement is reached and captives are released, it is still more difficult to reconcile these statements with the promise that the war is nearing its end. For my part I must conclude that so long as U.S. armed forces remain on the mainland of South Vietnam, if only to provide logistical support for the South Vietnamese Army (ARVN), our men will be mortared, shelled or otherwise attacked; and that so long as they are attacked they will counterattack with fire and movement, and the war will drag on, not end. . . .

The disquieting factor to me is the openly expressed threat of the use of force in an attempt to compel release of captive U.S. personnel. The recovery of these men demands and deserves, of course, unceasing effort on the part of our government. We owe them and their families and kin no less, and no less can serve the nation's honor. But whether stepped up bombing of North Vietnam targets, including

population centers, will accomplish that result is open to serious question. There is further uncertainty in our present course which gravely concerns many of our people. How can we reconcile retention of a "residual force," of which the Secretary of Defense speaks, with "complete withdrawal" to which the President is publicly committed? And does "complete withdrawal" mean exactly that—the removal of all ground, naval and air forces? . . .

The prisoner question is a torturing one, which should be examined from every angle, as I have no doubt is being done constantly. It is conceivable that an offer to Hanoi, made under the tightest possible cloak of secrecy, that we would agree to complete withdrawal from the mainland of all U.S. armed forces personnel by a stated date, in return for the release unharmed of every captive American now held, would be accepted.

—Gen. Ridgway in Foreign Affairs for July, proposing that within six to nine months, "regardless of developments" we withdraw all U.S. Army, Navy, Marine and Air Force personnel "except Embassy guards" from Vietnam.

## When Agnew Defends Johnson: Imperialism's Birds of A Feather

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them as "the beginning of a mad adventure by the North Vietnamese Communists" while the *Washington Post* assailed Morse as a "reckless and querulous" dissenter.

### Even the AP Was Ignored

When the Associated Press three years later, in an extraordinary feat of reporting, interviewed three dozen crew members and began to expose McNamara's lies about the Tonkin Gulf incidents, neither the *Times* nor the *Post* ran the 5,000-word expose by Harry Rosenthal and Tom Stewart. The *Arkansas Gazette* seems to have been the only paper to publish the full report. A year later the *Times* and the *Post* were equally remiss in failing at all adequately to cover the fumbling but revealing new Fulbright hearings on the Tonkin Gulf incidents and the sensational revelations made by Morse about them in three great Senate speeches, Feb. 21, 23, and 29, 1968. Nor did any of these big papers bother to look when in the *New York Review of Books*, Feb. 13, 1969 I presented evidence that the second Tonkin Gulf incident never occurred nor when in the *Bi-Weekly* April 21 of that year I called attention to "*The Best Kept Secret of the Vietnam War*." This was the revelation in Westmoreland's final report on the Vietnamese war that the South Vietnamese government in 1964 and 1965 resisted the introduction of U.S. combat troops and that McNamara backed Westmoreland in ignoring Saigon's wishes. The Pentagon Papers, prepared by McNamara's men, draw a veil over both these stories damaging to McNamara's reputation.\*

I believe the reason, the Nixon Administration is so desperately anxious to stop the *New York Times* is because the *Times* has in its possession a summary of the Command and Control report on the Tonkin Gulf incidents which Fulbright has been trying to get for seven years. I believe this will show that the second Tonkin Gulf incident, used by Johnson to unleash his first big bombing of the North, never occurred. I also believe that the Pentagon Papers covering the Eisenhower years may throw fresh light on the part Nixon played with Dulles and Radford in trying to bring about U.S. intervention at the time of Dien Bien Phu, if necessary with tactical nuclear weapons as well as U.S. ground troops. But the overriding reason for trying to suppress the documents is that they show the continuity of policy and conduct. Nixon is still

\* They may be found in my book *Polemics and Prophecies*.

### Simple Question Meets Slippery Fellow

In Paris Jan. 6 Laird told a news conference that the U.S. would terminate its "combat responsibility" in South Vietnam by mid-summer 1971.

—*Facts on File* page 10C2 Jan. 7, 1971.

George Herman (CBS News)—Secretary Laird, you said that American troops would have a combat role for several months to come. When is it going to end?

Secretary Laird: Well, as long as there are American troops stationed in Vietnam, and as we move forward to transfer the air, the logistics, the artillery roles to the South Vietnamese under Vietnamization, we will have combat forces stationed in a security role in Vietnam. These particular forces will carry on security missions, and will be involved in combat . . .

Bob Schieffer (CBS News): Well, Mr. Secretary, when are we going to be able to say that the U.S. has turned over ground combat responsibility to the South Vietnamese? I know you said earlier this year it would be some time this summer—

Laird: Yes—

Schieffer: Are we on schedule?

Laird: We are on schedule . . . but I don't want to give the impression to anyone listening to this program that the Americans that are there, in the logistics role, in the air roles, in the artillery roles . . . that those Americans will not be engaged in any combat activities in this security role, because they will. And I don't want to raise any question as far as credibility on that issue with anyone listening to this program.

—On CBS Face The Nation, June 13.

looking for the same unattainable victory Kennedy and Johnson sought, and is as unwilling as they were to let the public know what he is really doing in Southeast Asia. *Newsweek* reports that Lyndon Johnson feels "the danger now is that President Nixon will be pressured to get out of Vietnam before achieving the main objective—getting South Vietnam in shape to protect itself." *Time* reports that Johnson feels it was a mistake not to impose censorship. Is it any wonder Agnew in Los Angeles criticized the *New York Times* for printing the Pentagon Papers and denied that Johnson had misled the American people in 1964-65? This is the bi-partisan solidarity imperialism breeds. June 21

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I. F. Stone's Bi-Weekly. 2d Class Postage Paid at Washington, D.C. Published every other Monday except in August at 4420 29th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. An independent bi-weekly published and edited by I. F. Stone; Circulation Manager, Esther M. Stone. Subscription: \$6 in the U.S.; \$6 in Canada; \$10 elsewhere. Air Mail rates: \$17 to Europe; \$20 to Israel, Asia and Africa.