

'Camelot' Figures Join Pentagon Papers Cast

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LOS ANGELES, March 13 —This is Camelot week at the trial of Daniel Ellsberg and Anthony J. Russo Jr., and the curious of Los Angeles, many of whom have paid little attention to the trial until now, have been flocking to the federal courthouse downtown. They have been filling every courtroom seat and even spilling out into the hallway, eager to have a glimpse and hear a few words at a gathering of the famous men from the Kennedy White House.

They look a good bit older —McGeorge Bundy, Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. and John Kenneth Galbraith (Ted Sorensen is yet to come)—but they can still tell some appealing stories in conjuring up the good old days.

There is Bundy, telling how he controlled the flow of paper to John F. Kennedy; Schlesinger, recalling that the President's door was always open in the evening; and Galbraith, relating that his advice was far more relevant than that which came from the State Department bureaucrats.

Sometimes it is a little frustrating for the star witnesses, who are quite accustomed to talking when and as they please.

U.S. District Court Judge W. Matt Byrne Jr. prevented Galbraith from telling the jury about the top-secret information he leaked to the press while he was ambassador to India. Byrne wouldn't let Bundy talk about

"statutes," and he stopped them all from expressing the view that release of the Pentagon Papers was of great "advantage" to the American public.

The parade of witnesses serves different purposes for different parties to this controversial case.

There is, above all, a fundamental distinction between the strategies of the prosecution and defense attorneys in dealing with the charges of conspiracy, espionage and theft of government property.

While chief prosecutor David R. Nissen used only two military witnesses to discuss the disputed relationship to the "national defense" of the 20 top-secret documents involved in the indictment against Ellsberg and Russo, the defense is bringing in separate testimony on each document—sometimes two or three witnesses on a single volume.

Galbraith, it is conceded, is not the country's greatest current expert on "national defense" issues, but since he was once sent to Vietnam by President Kennedy to evaluate the "strategic hamlet" program, he, for example, is presented as a qualified commentator on the volume discussing that subject.

Defense strategists hope that the jury will be impressed with the views of men who were once at the center of power that disclosure of the documents could not have aided any foreign nation's intelligence establishment.

For prosecutor Nissen, this stage of the case seems to serve a far different function.

With his unrelenting cross-examination, he appears to be trying to show that the defense is substituting glamor for substance, that these witnesses are not experts at all.

The prosecutor aims for their weakest flanks, demanding today, for example, that Galbraith define the difference between "substantial" and "insubstantial" military damage. The economics professor was ultimately unable to answer, blurring out in exasperation that "many things cannot be defined, Mr. Nissen, but they still convey meaning."

For the witnesses, this is a unique opportunity to explain themselves and their past actions on the public record.

Schlesinger, after he left the witness stand today, confided to a reporter that he was "a bit disappointed with the brevity of my testimony." But still he had an opportunity to explain that President Kennedy, on the basis of his advice and others, would have withdrawn American forces from Vietnam.

Bundy used the chance to say that he still believed that his policy recommendations—including the "reprisal bombing" of North Vietnam—had been sound, but that he understood why others disagreed "passionately."