

# The Man Behind the Papers

By Caroline Drewes

"The issues have been covered," said the editor. "Get the man . . . his life."

How can you separate a man like Daniel Ellsberg from the issues, from what he describes as "my obsession"?

And it is a slice of wry then when you ask, in the bright Fairmont Hotel room, how he feels about the media coverage of his case — what has been called "the battle over the right to know" — and he answers, "The focus is more on the personalities than on the issues."

"Nearly every issue involved," he says, "is quite unprecedented. No one ever has been charged with giving information to the American public. At the time I didn't know anything about the law. The more I have learned, the more baffling it becomes."

The 41-year-old onetime government adviser awaiting trial for leaking the top-secret Pentagon Papers, is a man of medium height, with an intense, sensitive face. He has charisma, but it is a quiet understated charisma, like his voice. And the mind dominates. There is force in the man. He has an air of candor.

in Vietnam. They observed their second wedding anniversary August 8. He says her father is conservative. So is her sister's husband, Professor Wayne Barnett of the Stanford School of Law.

Their disagreement over Vietnam, says Dr. Ellsberg, a former hawk, ended their engagement initially. "We met in 1964. She was an interviewer in Washington and she invited me to a party, despite mixed feelings, as I was working for the Pentagon at the time."

"She came to Vietnam to visit me twice when I was serving there, and we argued so much about the war, it broke us up. I didn't see her again until three years later."

The telephone rings and it's journalist Paul Jacobs. Ellsberg, it transpires, admires Moroccan food and he winds up the brief conversation with his friend, "An early dinner would be fine, I've had a long day."

Returning to the subject, "Pat was scheduled to work for educational television in Boston, but since last May we've been involved with the pre-trial stuff. Before that was the real torture for her — being the wife of an author finishing a book. After that, the trial was something of a vacation." ("Papers on the War" has just been published by Simon and Schuster).

What about a marriage involved in trauma almost from the beginning? "She goes through crises when she says 'What am I doing with my life?'" The Ellsbergs have a house in

The navy suit with discreet pin stripe, the blue shirt and red and blue foulard tie are restrained. He wears a gold wedding ring. He is left handed.

You ask about his wife, the former Patricia Marx, daughter of a millionaire toy manufacturer, and long an outspoken opponent of U.S. involvement



**Daniel Ellsberg**

Cambridge, still maintain her apartment in New York, more recently have occupied an apartment near the courthouse in Los Angeles. "Our life couldn't be more uncertain."

A television crew has turned off the air conditioning in Ellsberg's room. He removes his coat. A housekeeper pokes her head in the door to apologize for the faint smell of wool in the air. The rug had just been cleaned. Ellsberg smiles absently.

He talks about his son, nearly 17, and his daughter, 13, who live with his

ex-wife in Brentwood. "Both children are very much with me. My son has just gone to England as an exchange student. He may have to come back to testify. He helped me Xerox some of the papers. Of course I didn't have to involve him, but I wanted him to see what I was doing, what a deliberate thought-out thing it was, and to know my motives."

He talks about Henry Kissinger. "Have you ever heard his voice? He rarely appears in anything but still photos. It's because of his German accent. An interesting thing . . . his brother came from Germany at the same time he did, and now has no accent at all. When you ask his brother about this, he says, 'I am the one who listens.'"

And the future? Is he adjusted to the idea of prison? "No, and I don't suppose I would be during or after the fact." If he is acquitted, "I probably will remain in academic life. I've always been a researcher."

Pat's reaction to the two years of strain and tension? His wife has an increasing interest in meditation, he says. "She doesn't complain of being bored. She does complain

that we never have time for more fun. An acquittal wouldn't necessarily mean more fun, but it might mean we'd finish our honeymoon. Two years ago I brought her back early so I could have an interview

with Kissinger. I wanted him to read the papers. I suppose he has by now . . . I'm still apologizing to her for that."

Finally, you ask Dr. Daniel Ellsberg if he dreams. He looks sur-

prised and says "Yes, of course." And you ask what are his dreams, and now he looks into space with a quizzical smile which broadens into a grin, the first and only grin of the interview. He

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says "I'm not going to tell you." Then he says "Do you always ask this question?" And you say you never have before.