

# ELLSBERG TELLS OF SHIFT IN VIEWS

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Tells Jury About 'Sights in  
Vietnam That Turned Him  
Against U.S. Role There

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By MARTIN ARNOLD  
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LOS ANGELES, April 11—

Dr. Daniel Ellsberg testified today at the Pentagon papers trial that his feelings about the Vietnam war had been changed by such experiences as standing a mid burning huts or watching schools built with American supplies turn to dust and "blow away" on the wind.

He said that at first he had been a hawk in 1964, while working for the Defense Department, he said, he helped to plan "covert actions" against North Vietnam, such as the shelling of that country and the program to arrest and interrogate North Vietnamese fishermen.

Dr. Ellsberg said that he had participated in the planning of the bombing of the North from the air and that he had helped gather the official signatures necessary to put the bombing operation into effect.

## Became a Dove

But after he got to Vietnam, he said, he began to change to a dove, and he told the jurors of incidents that lead to this change.

In his second day on the witness stand, he said:

"I saw school after school in which if you poked your heel down in the floor of the school your heel went through what was called cement. If you took a coin you could scrape away the wall."

"In a high wind it would blow away because they were mostly sand, the cement supplied by American aid," he said. "We were building schools not

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only being destroyed by the Vietcong, but they were blowing away in the wind, dissolving under the eyes of the people, making them furious."

The cement that the United States had supplied, he said, had been turned mostly into sand by Vietnamese officials who then sold the cement extract on the black market or used it to build apartment houses that made them rich.

Dr. Ellsberg appeared tense and spoke in whispers. At the noontime recess he wept at the defense table, apparently overcome by the emotions of the day.

He again testified in a jammed courtroom. In the audience was his wife, Patricia; his father and his brother, both named Harry, and his two teen-age children by a previous marriage, Robert and Mary.

Most of his testimony was devoted to his background as an employe of the Rand Corporation and of the Defense and State Departments and to his visits to Vietnam where in 1965 he participated in a study group led by Maj. Gen. Edwin Lansdale of the Air Force, formerly of the Central Intelligence Agency.

The purpose of the Lansdale group was to make the South Vietnamese regime attractive to people and perhaps to win the war politically, "without the bombing," Dr. Ellsberg said.

## Repeated Objections

Over the repeated objections of the chief prosecutor, David R. Nissen, Dr. Ellsberg was largely able to tell the jury what he had seen in Vietnam. The defense strategy appeared to be to use such testimony to set the background for Dr. Ellsberg's conversion from a hawk to a dove and his consequent disclosure of the Pentagon papers.

"I wanted to compare what I would see with my own eyes and hear with my ears along the roads and in hamlets, to find out on my own, and to compare what was coming up to headquarters through official cables," he said, explaining why he had volunteered for the Lansdale mission.

He said he would ask village officials "what the conditions of security were, what they feared, what they saw as their problems."

At one point, in answer to a question from Leonard B. Boudin, one of the defense attorneys, he explained that his job in writing Government reports was to indicate "what we should tell the President on how he should bet on a particular plan's being achieved."

## Burning Village

Dr. Ellsberg said that he had come upon a burning village near Saigon that had been occupied by the Vietcong. "About 100 or 200 yards away," he said, there was a bridge under which a South Vietnamese battalion had its headquarters.

The village had been "mortared and rocketed, but not one squad or platoon had ventured into it to protest its occupation by the Vietcong," he said. "It was a very bad scene that could only be understood by being on the road. You couldn't get that from advisers."

Dr. Ellsberg and his co-defendant, Anthony J. Russo Jr., are charged with six counts of espionage, six counts of theft and one count of conspiracy.

Dr. Ellsberg's testimony on the 68th day of the trial was frequently interrupted by objections, many of which were sustained.

On occasion, Federal District Court Judge William Matthew Byrne Jr. took over the questioning himself to speed the proceedings.

## Returned in 1967

Dr. Ellsberg testified that he returned from Vietnam in May, 1967, and after making reports to various Government officials, including the Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara, he joined the Rand Corporation.

Late in September or early in October, 1967, he said, he was invited by Morton Halperin, who was then a Defense Department official and is now a consultant to the defense in this case, to join the team that was to put together the Pentagon papers.

Dr. Ellsberg said he wrote the first draft of a portion of the papers dealing with President Kennedy's early decisions in Vietnam, completing it in late December, 1967.

After that, employed by Rand, he worked on and off during the next three years on a project entitled "Lessons from Vietnam."

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