

# Ellsberg Tells How He Changed

Associated Press

**Los Angeles**

A tense, solemn Daniel Ellsberg told jurors yesterday how he stood among the burning huts of a South Vietnamese village destroyed by its own army and began to lose his conviction that U.S. policies were right and that the Communists would be beaten.

As he finished his emotional description of his Vietnam experiences, Ellsberg left the witness stand for the noon recess, sat down at the counsel table and sobbed. Jurors were not present. His wife, Patricia, came to his side to comfort him and he regained his composure.

**CLEARANCES**

Ellsberg, in a prelude to his explanation of why he copied the Pentagon Papers study of the Vietnam war, told how he traveled the roads of Vietnam, talking to villagers, seeing destruction and observing the misuse of U.S. aid efforts by South Vietnamese officials.

The slender, graying Ellsberg told first how he became privy to secret war information that even the President had not seen and how he was called in by the Defense Department, State Department and White House to advise on war plans and executive decision-making. His clearances to see classified information were much higher than top secret, he said.

**VIETNAM**

Later, Ellsberg told jurors how he was called in to write one volume of the war report requested by then Secretary of Defense Robert

McNamara. That report became known as the Pentagon Papers.

He said he wrote a section on the 1961 decisions of President Kennedy, but the section was incorporated into a volume not mentioned in the trial indictment.

Then, leaning forward intensely in the witness chair and turning to face jurors, he told how he volunteered to accompany onetime CIA superspy Major General Edward Lansdale to Vietnam in 1965 to assess the success of U.S. nonmilitary efforts to keep villagers in the countryside from defecting to the Communists. "I was to learn about a type of political warfare," said Ellsberg.

On that trip, he said, he

*See Back Page*

**From Page 1**

began to see the false reports that had been made about potential success and the true prospect of failure. "On my own initiative, wanting to understand . . . so we could improve our policies and, I hoped, win this war and beat the Communists," Ellsberg recalled, "I began to drive the roads of Vietnam . . . I wanted to compare what I saw with my own eyes with the (reports) that were coming up."

**DIVERGENCE**

He said he found a great "divergence" in the two. "The divergence from the reality one could see with eyes and ears got larger and larger as it went higher up militarily," he said.

"I personally witnessed close to Saigon . . . a burning village near a bridge . . . The village was still burning. It had been occupied peacefully the previous night by the Viet Cong." But under the bridge, he said,

the South Vietnamese army had a headquarters.

"Within sight of the village, as I stood among the burning huts, the bridge was visible. I took a picture of it to show how close the bridge was.

"The reason the village was burning, was that when the village was occupied, it was mortared and shelled by the (South) Vietnamese army. Just by occupying it, the Viet Cong had caused the (South) Vietnamese army to destroy the village."



AP Wirephoto

**DANIEL ELLSBERG AND WIFE, PATRICIA**  
After he testified in Los Angeles U.S. court

**ADVISER**

"It was a very bad scene," Ellsberg said quietly. "I checked to see if the incident had been reported by our adviser there." Ellsberg implied that it wasn't.

Ellsberg, 42, is on trial on espionage, conspiracy and theft charges, along with Anthony Russo. The Government says they endangered the country by releasing the Pentagon study of the Vietnam war.