

divided between radical reactionaries whose backward vision often drew on the principles of the old republic and an adaptive libertarian wing that privileged the 'free market.' As Bjerre-Poulsen explains, both elements were necessary to the growth of the conservative movement – though the contradictions between them were so severe for many years that the leading journal of the movement, the *National Review*, sponsored a semi-official 'fusionist' position designed to hold the movement together. The *National Review* became the voice of a self-appointed 'sane' and respectable conservatism, effectively purging the movement of its most extreme elements – those like Robert Welch, founder of the John Birch Society, who saw a communist conspiracy deep inside the ranks of the American political class. In effect, what Bjerre-Poulsen's work points the way toward is a larger study of precisely how the conservative movement prepared itself for taking power. Bjerre-Poulsen has given us one part of that narrative of preparation – as the politically and institutionally dysfunctional elements of conservatism were weeded out to produce an ideology that, despite being contradictory and unpalatable to many, could in fact permit its adherents to govern.

Mark Luccarelli

University of Oslo

Daniel Ellsberg, *Secrets: A Memoir of Vietnam and the Pentagon Papers*. New York: Viking, 2002. x + 498 pp., notes, works cited, index, and photos; ISBN: 0-670-0303-9; \$29.95, cloth.

In the Preface to his book Daniel Ellsberg states that 'the focus of this memoir' (viii) was the background of his decision to copy and make public the top secret study later known as *The Pentagon Papers* (hereafter *The Papers*). The focus, however, has a wide lens and captures three subjects: the personal story; the case of *The Papers*; and the system of secrecy and lying at the top of the executive branch of government.

I

In describing the events, atmospheres, and analyses that resulted in his fateful decision, Ellsberg narrates his transformation from a cold-war warrior to a Vietnam dove, becoming perhaps the 20th century's most famous American whistle blower. Millions of Americans experienced the same transformation, many of them earlier and more quickly, but few if any had Ellsberg's wealth of first-hand information.

Ellsberg's decision to copy and give to the *New York Times* the seven thousand-page study of decision-making regarding Vietnam led to a federal court-order to stop publication. The court order was the first-ever under the constitution. David Rudenstine documents well that story's importance in his *The Day the Presses Stopped: A History of the Pentagon Papers Case* (1996). Within the White House, Ellsberg's decision to leak to the press led to illegal wiretaps and to the creation of a secret team, later known as the Plumbers, to prevent future leaks. In an attempt to discredit Ellsberg and discourage would-be whistle blowers, the Plumbers burglarized the office of Ellsberg's psychiatrist. On June 17, 1972 police arrested some of the Plumbers in the

Watergate building office of the Democratic National Committee. The cover-up of that burglary and its exposures led to the first presidential resignation.

The third theme of Ellsberg's book, in addition to his personal transformation and the case of *The Papers*, appears on most of the book's pages and provides the apt title *Secrets*. Starting in 1964, when he became special assistant to John McNaughton, then assistant Secretary of Defense, Ellsberg observed consistent deception, misrepresentation, hypocrisy, and lying within the executive branch of the government. Cloaking this broad pattern of behavior was a policy of secrecy to keep Congress and the public from learning of military actions in Southeast Asia and the decision-making process behind those actions. The secrecy and deception included top-level officials unwilling to tell the truth to the President, who, in turn, distorted, misled and lied to Congress and the public about decisions and policies.

II

Ellsberg serves as an example of the shattering of the liberal Cold War foreign policy consensus. A native of Detroit whose high school hero was labor leader Walter Reuther, Ellsberg won a scholarship to any college in the country. He chose Harvard, married, started graduate school, and then enlisted in the Marine Corps as an alternative to the draft. After three years as a Marine, the last two as a company commander, Ellsberg used a fellowship to earn a PhD in economics from Harvard. In 1959 he joined the economics department of the Rand Corporation, a think-tank whose primary client was the federal government. At one point Defense Department contracts accounted for three-quarters of its budget.

On August 4, 1964 Ellsberg, on leave from Rand, became McNaughton's special assistant. The events of that day led Congress to pass the Tonkin Gulf Resolution authorizing President Lyndon B. Johnson to take whatever military action he deemed necessary in Southeast Asia. Two years later Ellsberg volunteered to serve in Vietnam as a member of an inter-agency liaison team headed by Edward G. Lansdale, a retired air force general. Once in Vietnam, officially as a State Department representative, Ellsberg observed and evaluated pacification programs and other military and civilian operations. In the summer of 1967 Ellsberg returned to the Defense Department and started to work on the recently-launched study of Vietnam decision making. He chose to work on President John F. Kennedy's 1961 decision making.

After five years of intense, varied governmental experience with Vietnam, Ellsberg returned disillusioned to the Rand Corporation. This experience, plus 'the system of secrecy and lying' (205) at the top levels of the executive branch of government combined with the growing anti-war movement, had convinced him that Vietnam 'had been wrong from the start.' The war's continuation, therefore, was 'A crime. An Evil' (257).

Ellsberg's discussion of his transformation of his views toward Vietnam raises the question of why the change took five years. Ellsberg recounts that during the summer

of 1965 he asked McNaughton what his wife thought about Vietnam. McNaughton replied that his wife 'thinks we're out of our minds. She thinks what we're doing is insane' (87). In October 1967 President Johnson's press secretary, Bill Moyers, told Ellsberg that he wished for Johnson's defeat. Along with Vice President Hubert Humphrey, whom he admired, Ellsberg stayed the course. The best rationale he offers is that being an insider was addictive.

III

For years that addiction made palatable to Ellsberg and the policy-makers the consistent lying, secrecy, distortion, and hypocrisy that characterized United States involvement in Southeast Asia. This included Johnson's 1964 campaign theme that 'we seek no wider war' (50), while he already had planned escalation, and Johnson's criticism of his Republican opponent, Barry Goldwater, for his willingness to use tactical nuclear weapons while Johnson concealed the fact that his commanders already had such authority. Officials withheld from the President any disagreement with policies. Military and civilian reports from Vietnam often rested on false information and dishonest analyses. Ellsberg found especially disturbing the 1948 State Department document that reflected opposition to self-determination for Vietnam although Ho Chi Minh had the support of 'considerable majority of the Vietnamese people....' (252). In his 1963 memoirs former President Dwight D. Eisenhower wrote that had Vietnam held a free election in 1954 Ho Chin Minh possibly would have won eighty percent of the vote. Until the end of the involvement, under Republican and Democrats presidents, the United States opposed self-determination in Vietnam. Looking back more than three decades later, Ellsberg summarized that he viewed Vietnam 'first as a problem, next as stalemate, then as a moral and political disaster, a crime' (vii). For the United States, the moral disaster started during the Harry S. Truman administration and its opposition to an independent Vietnam with a leader who enjoyed popular support.

IV

Once his addiction wore off, Ellsberg realized that only pressure from the public and from Congress could change the president's policies. In October 1969 he secretly copied the completed *Papers* and then attempted to enlist the support of Senators J. William Fulbright, George McGovern, Gaylord Nelson, and Charles Mathias to use the information to expose the system of lies and secrecy surrounding Vietnam. They opposed the war but declined to offer significant help.

Finally, in late winter 1971 Ellsberg gave copies of *The Papers* to Neil Sheehan of the *New York Times*. On June 13, that paper published the initial installment. Two days later, after the third installment appeared, Attorney General John Mitchell demanded the Federal district court to issue an injunction and stop further publication. On June 18, however, the *Washington Post* started publication of its own series, but soon fell under an injunction. So, too, did the *Boston Globe* when it started publication of *The Papers*. Seventeen other papers started their own series. In response to the *New York Times* appeal the Supreme Court lifted the injunctions.

Ellsberg, meanwhile, had gone underground for twelve days while the FBI searched for him as the source of leaking the top-secret *Papers*. If convicted of a dozen Federal felony charges Ellsberg faced a possible 115 years in prison. When the FBI issued a warrant for his arrest, Ellsberg reported to Federal court for arraignment. The judge presiding over Ellsberg's trial eventually dismissed the government's case in light its suppression of evidence, its destruction of relevant documents, and its invasion of the patient-physician relationship. While the trial was going on, newspapers revealed that weeks earlier the judge had met with President Nixon and his adviser John Ehrlichman. The judge and Ehrlichman even met a second time. Ironically, the Attorney General who had indicted Ellsberg, John Mitchell, went to prison for his crimes in the Watergate affair.

V

'This book,' Ellsberg explains, 'represents my continuing effort – far from complete – to understand my country's war on Vietnam, and my own part in it...' (vii-viii). Of the book's three subjects, one, *The Papers*, is straightforward but a second, the system of secrecy and lying that dominated the formulation and execution of Vietnam policy, because of its complexity, continues to attract a multitude of scholarly examinations. Thirty years after the events, Ellsberg still does not understand fully his transformation from supporter to opponent of the war. Many Americans likewise still wonder how a generation of national leaders could have made so many decisions that produced such disastrous results. Ellsberg's book reads easily but its descriptive nature cannot provide the answer to why responsible leaders acted the way they did and devised the policies they did. As early as the summer of 1965 John McNaughton's wife understood clearly.

Keith W. Olson

University of Maryland, College Park

Kirse Granat May, *Golden State, Golden Youth: The California Image in Popular Culture, 1955-1965*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002; xi + 243 pages, 12 black and white illustrations; ISBN: 0-8078-5362-3, paper, \$18.95; 0-8078-5362-3, cloth, \$49.95.

That few if any American states have received as much attention as California is hardly surprising. Its size, history and influence; its status as both host to many leading educational institutions and source of much of the nation's media and cultural output; and its correspondingly distinctive place within the public imagination – all have helped attract scholarly and popular concern. Carey McWilliams' *California: The Great Exception* (1949) and Kevin Starr's multi-volume history, *Americans and the California Dream* (1973 to date), are only some of the most renowned works in what is therefore a sizeable field. An appreciative blurb from Starr features on the back cover of Kirse Granat May's *Golden State, Golden Youth: The California Image in Popular Culture, 1955-1965* and does so deservedly, since hers is an insightful addition to a distinguished literature.