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Falsified data helped lose Viet: Ex-CIAer

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A former CIA analyst testified yesterday that "a massive falsification of statistics" about the enemy's strength during the Vietnam War partly "explained why we lost that war."

Sam Adams, 51, testified at the Manhattan Federal Court trial of a \$120 million libel suit brought by retired Gen. William Westmoreland against CBS and the producers of a 1982 documentary about the Vietnam War.

Adams, one of three individual defendants in the suit, was largely responsible for launching the documentary project, which accused Westmoreland of having participated in a conspiracy to suppress the true strength of the enemy in Vietnam for political reasons. Adams was a paid consultant for the documentary project and was also an on-camera source for the allegations of an intelligence conspiracy.

"We in intelligence tried to fool the Congress, the American people and, in part, the (Lyndon Johnson) administration," Adams testified yesterday as a defense witness. "And we ended up, I think, fooling ourselves... That in part explained why we lost that war."

ADAMS FORCEFULLY supported the accuracy of the broadcast and said "it demonstrated how politics could affect military intelligence."

He said he was "proud" of his association with the documentary, "The Uncounted Enemy, a Vietnam

Deception," which aired Jan. 23, 1981.

The documentary maintained that Westmoreland, who commanded allied troops in Vietnam from 1964 to 1968, had imposed a "ceiling" of 280,000 on intelligence estimates of the enemy's strength. Adams and other analysts had insisted that the strength was about 500,000.

In response to questions from CBS lawyer David Boies, Adams said that if the higher figures had been accepted by Westmoreland, the U.S. would have had to change its policy in Vietnam prior to the 1968 enemy Tet offensive. He said the President and others would have been faced with either "bringing up the reserves or pulling out."

ADAMS SAID Westmoreland may have imposed the ceiling because of "political pressure" from Washington to show that the enemy was being reduced by the massive American effort. The higher intelligence statistics would have demonstrated that the costly buildup and loss of American lives had not shrunk the enemy, the documentary had argued.

Adams added that he was "particularly disturbed" that while U.S. officials were "playing numbers," American soldiers "were getting shot and kids were stepping on booby traps fighting that war."