

Convicted drug dealer faces life behind bars

ALBANY — A Vietnam veteran who prosecutors said terrorized a small upstate town will likely spend the rest of his life behind bars after being convicted yesterday of 21 drug and gun charges.

David J. Lindsay, formerly of Whitehall, faces a mandatory minimum of 50 years in prison and up to a life term when sentenced by U.S. District Judge Con G. Cholakis Oct. 23 in Albany.

The 12-member federal jury deliberated for two days and rejected

claims by the defense that when the crimes were committed, the 54-year-old veteran suffered from a mental defect stemming from his war experiences. An insanity finding could have kept Lindsay out of prison and had him hospitalized instead.

He was convicted of all 21-counts at about 5:15 p.m. yesterday in connection with the cocaine ring. Prosecutors said that more than 11 pounds of cocaine were sold since 1983 from Lindsay's 132 Broadway, Whitehall, tavern.

He was also convicted of possess-

ing several loaded guns, boxes of ammunition and silencers and operating a continuing criminal enterprise as defined by the so-called "drug kingpin" laws.

The drug kingpin conviction will net Lindsay a mandatory minimum

pieces of evidence. Jurors were allowed to take notes during the trial.

A surprise witness called by federal prosecutors last week rebutted Lindsay's claims that he was a war hero. The Army expert testified that Lindsay falsified records and took credit for a medal that was awarded to a veteran who was killed in battle.

McCann said Lindsay was an administrative expert in Vietnam who had little or no combat experience.

Prosecutors said Lindsay waged "a calculated campaign of terror against a small community."

McCann said, "It started in 1983 when he got a 17-year-old girl to sell drugs for him."

Many Washington County teens took the stand during the trial and testified that they went to D.J.'s Lounge, which is owned by Lindsay, because they could buy alcohol.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Henry M. Greenberg, who prosecuted the case with McCann, portrayed Lindsay as the Pied Piper of Whitehall who lured teen-agers to his tavern and paid them in cocaine and cash to work as bartenders.

Testimony showed that Lindsay kept a dish of cocaine at the bar for the teens he employed to dip into like a bowl of candy.

Lindsay has been in jail for 18 months since his arrest and was put back behind bars after his conviction. He was denied bail shortly after his