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Uris' Spy Novel in Court

LOS ANGELES (UPI) — The former head of French intelligence operations in the United States told a court Tuesday how an American author came to write a best-selling spy novel based on the Frenchman's memory of a real cloak-and-dagger drama during the Cuban missile crisis.

Phillipe De Vosjoli said the book "Topaz," by Leon Uris, was based on De Vosjoli's experiences in the Deuxieme Bureau, the French equivalent of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency.

In the novel "Topaz," a French agent stationed in Washington undertakes a delicate intelligence mission to Havana during the Kennedy-Khrushchev showdown over Russian missiles in Cuba, and discovers that

a high-ranking French government official is a Communist agent.

De Vosjoli is suing Uris for breach of contract, contending the American author owes him \$450,000 worth of royalties and film rights.

De Vosjoli testified before Superior Court Judge Howard Schmidt Tuesday that he met Uris in Acapulco, Mexico in 1964 and told the novelist he had written a book based on his experiences titled "Le Reseau Topaz." However, Uris made an agreement with him to allow Uris to fictionalize the story, De Vosjoli testified.

Attorneys for Uris, who has not appeared in court, argued that De Vosjoli broke the agreement first by selling his life story to other publication, including Life, Look and the London Sunday Times.