

A Writer Denies C.I.A. Influenced His War Reports

Robert Shaplen, the New Yorker magazine correspondent in Asia, has denied a published allegation that he and other newsmen in South Vietnam had their reporting "shaped" or in other ways manipulated by the Central Intelligence Agency and the American Embassy in Saigon.

The allegation was made on a television news program Nov. 20 by Frank Snepp, the former C.I.A. analyst in Saigon who has published a book on the last days of the war.

Mr. Snepp asserted that Mr. Shaplen and three other American journalists had been "favored" by the C.I.A. station in Saigon and he added:

"We would leak to them on a selected basis, draw them into our trust and into our confidence, and then we could shape their reporting through further leaks because they trusted us."

Information 'Double-Checked'

In a statement provided to The New York Times in Hong Kong, where he is based, Mr. Shaplen said, "I, at no time, accepted at face value what anyone in the agency, Snepp included, told me about anything. When I did use agency information—and I discarded or discounted most of much of it—I always double-checked what I obtained with other American and other foreign sources."

Mr. Shaplen said that Mr. Snepp was on an "ego trip" and said he found "his whole performance shocking and reprehensible."

The New Yorker writer also said that earlier he was asked by Mr. Snepp to write an introduction for his book, "Decent Interval," and added, "I turned Snepp down because I did not want to

involve myself in agency affairs or contravene in any way."

"Whatever I thought of the book," Mr. Shaplen added, "I find it inordinately strange that Snepp should have wanted me to write such an introduction if I was one of those to whom he was allegedly passing phony information. How immoral can you be?"