

First Amendment Shields Author's Data on Kennedy

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A federal judge in Alexandria ruled yesterday that author Tad Szulc does not have to reveal who told him that convicted Watergate burglar E. Howard Hunt Jr. was the CIA's acting chief in Mexico City when President Kennedy's assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald, was there.

Hunt contended that Szulc's source

is essential to his \$2 million libel suit against Alan J. Weberman, who attributed the statement to Szulc in his own book. Weberman's book alleges a Hunt link to a Kennedy assassination plot.

U.S. District Court Judge Albert V. Bryan Jr. said from the bench that Hunt should be able to get the information from other sources and that his case is civil, not criminal.

"The First Amendment gives the journalist a privilege insofar as his informants are concerned," Bryan said. "I think that only be overcome in very compelling circumstances. I don't think there's been any compelling evidence" presented to overcome that privilege.

Hunt, a former Central Intelligence Agency employe, has denied any connection with Kennedy's assassination or that he was in Mexico City when Oswald was allegedly there in 1963.