

6/21/82

Dear Jim,

Thanks for the Times story on Snapp's travails. I think I'd heard before that he is working on a JFK assassination novel and I think I asked you to speak to him or Lynch and suggest that he might want to check with me to determine whether his concept can be within what we know without reasonable doubt. I also feel rather strongly that he ought not want to produce something that can be hurtful, as much has been. So, would you please phone him or, if you prefer, Lynch, and suggest that he might want to explore his concept with me? Or if he can afford to, phone me and discuss it.

Thanks also for the Times article on the German use of injected enzymes to dissolve heart clots. You marked the place where it says that there has been some use of injected enzymes to dissolve leg clots. But you did not mark the place where the hazard to those who have been operated on or have bled is stated. My local doctor is extremely conservative about this and I'm not second-guessing him. Today's protime, for example, is lower than I can remember, 15.4, based 10.0. He told me to take only an extra .5 mg of coumadin and that is all I've taken. However, I know ~~XXX~~ from the past that this has never resulted in any significant change and that I feel better when it takes closer to 19 for the blood to clot. I bled once and he does not forget it or want it to happen again.

For about 3 months after the last operation Dr. Hufnagel had me on some enzyme pills. I've forgotten their name.

It may not have occurred to Snapp, but he can hurt himself by publishing a novel with a doctrine the evils of which he may not be able to perceive. He also may not have thought of the assassination in terms of its consequences or as the most subversive of crimes in this land.

Best,

Ex-C.I.A. Aide Gloomy About Curb on Writing



The New York Times/George Tamas

Frank Snepp working on a book at his home in Arlington, Va.

By B. DRUMMOND AYRES Jr.

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, June 10 — "Sometimes," said Frank Snepp, "I think I'm living out a Kafka story. Or maybe it's '1984.'"

Two years have passed since the Central Intelligence Agency obtained a court order forbidding Mr. Snepp, a former employee of the agency in Vietnam, to publish information about the agency without prior approval from its officials. As the months have dragged by, life under the landmark order has become harder and harder.

Mr. Snepp wants to make a second career as a writer and lecturer, dealing primarily with intelligence matters. But he says many publishers, film makers, broadcasters and university employment offices now avoid him and his work "like the plague."

He debts amount to \$50,000; there is \$37 in his bank account. Some days, he reports, he has been so short of cash that he has eaten only one meal.

The court order that is the root of Mr. Snepp's troubles was obtained by the C.I.A. after he wrote "Decent Interval," a book highly critical of agency activities in Vietnam. Under the order, C.I.A. officials get a pre-publication look at any of Mr. Snepp's manuscripts that deal with information he obtained as an employee of the intelligence agency. Every paragraph, sentence, word and comma is subject to censorship.

'I'm a Patriotic Fellow'

Mr. Snepp, who is 39 years old, finds the order repressive, confining, chilling and an egregious violation of the concept of free speech. He says he has been singled out and that some writers with C.I.A. connections who are less critical of the agency are not

required to get pre-publication clearance, assertions the agency vehemently denies.

"I don't want to reveal any state secrets or any agents' names," Mr. Snepp said. "I'm a patriotic fellow who believes in a strong America and the need to have a good intelligence agency. All I ask is that I be allowed to write uncensored novels or honest analytical pieces and criticism about the world of intelligence, without Big Brother looking over my shoulder."

Mr. Snepp's lawyers are as gloomy as he is about finding any light at the end of his long legal tunnel. "Frank has to be very careful with every move he makes," said one of them, Mark Lynch of the American Civil Liberties Union. "The whole thing is an outrage, the way they've treated him. But you don't fool around with court orders."

"Decent Interval" was written by Mr. Snepp after he came home from Vietnam in 1973, one of the last Americans to flee Saigon by helicopter from the roof of the United States Embassy. Published after he had resigned from the C.I.A., it charges that American officials bungled intelligence activities during the war and that they abandoned many secret files and many loyal South Vietnamese agents during the panicky flight at the end.

When the book went on sale, the intelligence agency took Mr. Snepp to court, charging that he had violated an agreement, signed when he was hired, in which he assented to get agency approval before publishing any intelligence information he acquired as a C.I.A. employee, even if the publication should take place after

he left the agency. The agency did not raise the secrecy issue. But Mr. Snepp fought the case all the way to the United States Supreme Court with the argument that he had disclosed no secrets, an argument the Court found unpersuasive.

Mr. Snepp was also ordered by the courts to give the Government his profit of \$170,000 from "Decent Interval." As a result, he says, his income these days is meager, coming mainly from a few speeches to college groups.

His writing, other than the first book, has not yet brought in any money. At the moment, he is struggling to finish two books, one a nonfiction work about his problems with the C.I.A. and the other a novel about the assassination of President Kennedy. The novel has been approved by the C.I.A. publication board with only one hitch, he reports.

"They wanted to cut out something they contended was sensitive but which I argued had already been in print elsewhere," he said. "They asked me to delete it voluntarily and not give it any more publicity and I agreed. I could appeal their decisions, but I don't have the money to do it, which means, in effect that I'm forced to think twice every time I put down a word, which means they win."

'Producers Are Scared'

Mr. Snepp is also working on a screenplay about his problems with the agency. "It's been cleared, too," he says. "But producers are scared of it. They say all scripts inevitably are revised, and that would involve endless negotiations with the agency."

All agency employees sign the same employment agreement that Mr. Snepp signed, which covers only written material, not speeches. Speeches are covered by laws regarding disclosure of secret information.

Besides Mr. Snepp, several other former employees have been ordered by courts to abide by the agreements. But Mr. Snepp contends that some former workers have ignored agreements with impunity and he asserts, bitterly, that "nobody else, nobody, has been ordered to turn over every single penny of profit like I have."

"They've singled me out because I spoke out of school and embarrassed them," he said.

C.I.A. officials deny Mr. Snepp's charge. They say their only aim is to protect agency secrets, specifically the identities of agents and details of operations. They contend that they do not censor material that is critical of the agency as long as security is not involved.

As for Mr. Snepp's charge that some employees ignore the agency's hiring agreement and get away with it, Dale Peterson, an agency spokesman, said that the Snepp case had, if anything, increased compliance.