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Lawyer for Green Berets Is 'Shocked' at C.I.A.

By JOSEPH B. TREASTER

A lawyer for three of the eight Special Forces soldiers being held in the alleged murder of a Vietnamese said yesterday that a Congressional investigation into the United States Central Intelligence Agency would be in the public interest.

In an interview at his West End Avenue office a few hours after returning from Saigon, Henry B. Rothblatt said he was "shocked, as a citizen and a lawyer," by developments concerning the Central Intelligence Agency during a United States Army hearing in South Vietnam last week.

"The C.I.A. distorted information to precipitate the hearing; then in cross examination a representative of the agency was caught in lies and hid behind executive privilege," Mr. Rothblatt said.

Mr. Rothblatt said he would be "delighted" to testify at a Congressional inquiry. He added, however, that he doubted the opportunity would arise.

"It would probably embarrass many agencies," he said. "including the Army."

The hearing was ordered by Maj. Gen. George L. Mabry, the commander of United States Army support troops in South Vietnam, to determine whether seven officers of the Special Forces, or Green Berets, and a sergeant should be tried by court-martial on charges of murder of a Vietnamese said to have been a double agent.

Relaxing in sandals and sports clothes after the flight, Mr. Rothblatt said he was confident that the Army would announce in a few days that the case had been dropped. "They just don't have any evidence," he said.

Mr. Rothblatt said he could not discuss the details of the case since they were classified as secret by the military.

He suggested, however, that the information on which high-ranking Army officers had based their decision to arrest the men had been provided by the Central Intelligence Agency and that it had been presented in such a way as to shift any possible blame away from the civilian agency.

No official version of the event has been made public, but according to informed sources in Vietnam the Special Forces men discovered late in May or early in June that an agent in their employ was also working for North Vietnamese intelligence.

The sources said that the double role of the agent, by them as Chu Ven identified as Thai Khac — although a Vietnamese woman has said she believes that the missing man

may be her husband, Thai Khac Chuyen—was confirmed by the Central Intelligence Agency, which was said to have advised that he be "eliminated."

On June 20, the sources said, the man was shot. His body was said to have been placed in a weighted bag and dropped into the South China Sea.

A few days later the directive from the Central Intelligence Agency was rescinded, the sources said, and there was a new order that Mr. Khac—or Mr. Chuyen — should be spared. If anything did happen to him, it was to be reported immediately to Gen. Creighton W. Abrams, the commander of American forces in Vietnam.

General Abrams ordered an investigation into the incident and the eight soldiers, includ-

ing Col. Robert B. Rheault, the commander of all Special Forces in Vietnam, were arrested.

Mr. Rothblatt said that if the murder case were dropped the soldiers hoped to resume their duties in the Special Forces. He said they would feel they had been exonerated.

"I think once these charges are dismissed the public is prepared to say whoever preferred these charges made a terrible mistake," Mr. Rothblatt said.

He said that while Colonel Rheault had "naturally been somewhat disturbed" by the arrest and confinement, the others had been more "philosophical and matter of fact."

"Their attitude," Mr. Rothblatt said, "was 'Well, anything can happen in war.'"