Ex-agent defies CIA, tells of Viet withdrawal

By SHIRLEE IDEN

There's a "gone with the wind" syndrome at work in the United States that Frank Snepp doesn't like at all.

"When it comes to Vietnam, we'd like to think it happened 100 years ago," he said in a Southfield interview. Greek, and the state of the sta

Sepp told how he served almost five years in Vietnam as an officer of the Central Intelligence Agency. He was the agency's chief strategic analyst in the Saigon section. Following his two tours there, the C1A gave him the Medal of Merit for his performance. He was born in Charlotte, N.C., son of a former Murine who is now a superior court judge. He worked in radio from Columbia University. He earned a master's degree in international relations there.

"WHEN I was about to graduate in 1988, one of my professors recruited me for the CIA," he said. "I hadn't known he was an agent but he'd been watching me. One of the reasons he gave for joining was to avoid the draft."

Snepp thus joined the CIA to avoid

draft."

Snepp thus joined the CIA to avoid going to Vietnam and ended by serving almost five years there. He was in Sagon when the end came on April 29, 1975 and he was one of the last American

1975 and he was one of the last Americans to leave.

"I was hauled off the roof of the embassy onto a helicopter and shot at all the way up." he recalled. Snepp said the government, particularly Henry Kissinger, had "impecable intelligence" that the communists would move into Saigon in force and there would be no negotiated settlement.

"Yet Kissinger and the government turned their backs on that intelligence and it was tragic. They forgot to plan and it was tragic. They forgot to plan

and it was tragic. They forgot to plan for the evacuation of our friends and ultimately, the leave-taking became a free-for-all." he said. Snepp estimates that 30,000 Vietnam-

free-for-all." he sau.
Stepp estimates that 30,000 Vietnamsee had been trained by U.S. agencies
including the ICA and they were just
cut off and massacred by the incoming
communist armies.
"Some young embassy officers and
others mounted their own evacuation
using cargo planes and they got thousands of people out," he said. "130,000
were finally evacuated but the
embassy was only responsible for
about half of those saved. The U.S.

MANY OF those who were not saved were people Snepp knew well. And even today he explains: "Over 100,000 boat people are afloat on the ocean trying to find a country to take them in or crammed into hellholes called 'refuge camps' in Thailand. Congress should liberalize the immigration vestrictions."

restrictions."
He said the administration has just made a statement which he endorses which will admit 25,000 boat people and other refugees into this country

and other retugees into two countries, each year.

"We owe them this and they should be helped." he said.

The anguish of the evacuation and its tragic overtones moved Snepp to write "Decent Interval" but other incidents following compelled him to write it.

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SNEPP'S publisher moved secretly with the book because they had been burned before. They dealt with the CIA when publishing Victor Marcheti's book. "The CIA and the Oult of Intelligence." The agency managed to delay its publication for more than two years and imposed its right to alter the text. Legal costs alone were nearly \$150,000 to Random House.

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The secrecy surrounding the evolution of Snepp's book is the only secret thing about it, he says.

"I didn't reveal any classified information and I haven't been accused of this "the sail.

mation and I haven't been accused of this," he said. Nevertheless, he is accused of breach of contract with the Justice Department which has filed suit against him. Random House has been

Department which has filed suit against him. Random House has been subpoensed. Snepp is accused of having breached the secrecy agreement that every agent signs upon joining the Cla. "When I resolved to write my book, and the secretary of the Cla. However, and the secretary of the Cla. However, and the secretary of the Cla. However, it is and I went through channels while still a member of the Cla. I wanted to do an after-action report, but it was squelched."

'More than 100,000 boat people are afloat on the ocean trying to find a country to take them in or crammed into hellholes called 'refuge camps' in Thailand.

-Frank Snepp, ex-CIA agent

the legal moves against him is that the government wants to charge him with a breach of fluidicary obligation.

"This is a common law concept of the obligation of a servant to his master." he said.

"IF I LOSE, then any employee of a sloss using to get all the profits from

his book and a yet undecided amount of punitive damages.
"It they win, I would be restrained from writing anything, ever. They got an injunction on Marchetti and he's still under it. He can't write poetry, novels or anything without checking with the CIA. Or course, Marchetti did leak classified information in his book."

Additionally. -Snepp charges the secrecy standards of the intelligence community are being applied selectively. Other agents who have written haven't been bothered either, because they were complimentary only mildly critical or influential.

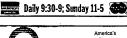
"John Haldeman unquestjonably leaked information in 'The Ends of the second of the

Power' especially when he talks about conflicts between the Russians and Chinese and no one's suing him," he said. "His profits have been massive Stepp charges that part of his probability of the said of the said of the said of the said. The said of the said



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- their waiting rooms at 3 p.m.
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