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Former analyst pressed on fees he gets from CBS

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NEW YORK — For the first time in five days on the witness stand, former CIA analyst Samuel A. Adams was pressed yesterday about his personal finances and his paid relationship with CBS.

Adams, answering grudgingly, told the jury in the trial of Gen. William C. Westmoreland's \$120 million libel suit against CBS that he was paid \$25,000 as a consultant for a disputed documentary on Vietnam. He also said he has been paid \$200 a day plus expenses in connection with Westmoreland's suit against the network, Adams and two CBS employees.

David M. Dorsen, an attorney for Westmoreland, pressed Adams on his finances as he tried to prove that Adams had a financial motive to discredit Westmoreland. Adams, who has contended since 1966 that Westmoreland's command falsified enemy strength estimates in Vietnam, was not identified in the 1982 documentary itself as a paid consultant in the preparation of the program.

That program, *The Uncounted Enemy: A Vietnam Deception*, accused Westmoreland of deceiving his superiors about the size of the enemy as listed in the official "order of battle" in 1967 and 1968 to make it appear that the war was being won. Adams, 51, was a Vietnam analyst for the CIA at the time.

Adams' finances were well-known to the litigants in the case, but they were revealed in detail to the jury for the first time yesterday as Dorsen completed a three-day cross-examination. Reminding Adams that he has testified that he was "proud" to have taken part in the broadcast, Dorsen asked, "Hasn't this whole controversy over the order of battle been rather profitable to you as well?"

"Profitable?" Adams asked, visibly annoyed.

"Yes, profitable," Dorsen repeated.

"No," Adams said harshly. "It has not."

But under persistent questioning, Adams said he had been paid a \$20,000 advance for a book on Vietnam intelligence, with \$20,000 more due upon publication. He said he had been paid \$12,000 by CBS so far during the more than two years of litigation, although he has not billed CBS for all of the approximately 100 days he has worked on the case.

The jurors, who sat bundled in coats, scarves and gloves because the heating system had failed, watched with puzzled looks as Dorsen then asked what hotels Adams has stayed at during the trial. Adams listed the Plaza, Essex House and the Hilton — all expensive hotels.

Dorsen asked Adams about a letter he had written four days before the broadcast to Col. Gains Hawkins, one of Westmoreland's chief accusers on the program. Adams wrote of the broadcast:

"Overall, I think it's reasonably good, but, as I mentioned before, there's a major problem; The documentary seems to pin the rap on General Westmoreland, when it probably belongs higher than that."

In a tape-recorded conversation with a TV Guide reporter after the broadcast, Adams said of the program's use of the term *conspiracy* to describe Westmoreland's actions: "I was uneasy with the word *conspiracy* in the sense that you have a bunch of villains sitting around a table conspiring together."

Asked to explain the references, Adams clung to his belief that the broadcast was accurate.

"I am clear there was a conspiracy," he told Dorsen. He added: "I indicated there was a major problem ... that it did not tell the full story [but] it was accurate in that it portrayed the massive falsification of intelligence" by Westmoreland's command.

Adams said he believed that Westmoreland may have been under pressure by top officials in the administration of President Lyndon B. Johnson to distort enemy troop estimates, "but that was a separate story."

Dorsen also confronted Adams with his testimony before a 1975 congressional committee. In that testimony, Adams said Westmoreland's command had underreported enemy infiltration in South Vietnam only "a little bit" and had been "fairly honest." The broadcast accused the command of suppressing intelligence estimates in late 1967 and that there were about 125,000 more infiltrators than Westmoreland was reporting back to Washington.

Adams said he was referring to the reporting of Westmoreland's command from 1968 to 1975 — and not the five-month period in 1967 discussed in the broadcast.

Adams said he relied, in part, for his infiltration estimates on a West Point book about the Vietnam War giving infiltration estimates much higher than Westmoreland's command had reported in late 1967. Asked if he had been aware that the book had been dropped from the curriculum, Adams replied, "I didn't feel there was any reason for me to find out."

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He added that he learned after the broadcast that the book was dropped because it described the enemy's Tet offensive of early 1968 as the "biggest (military) surprise since Pearl Harbor." The broadcast said Westmoreland's alleged deceit left the U.S. unprepared for the scope of the offensive.

Asked by Dorsen to interpret the Pearl Harbor reference, Adams said, "If it was the biggest surprise since Pearl Harbor, it was certainly a big surprise."

Later, Dorsen questioned Adams repeatedly about different numbers he has given over the years about the ratio of enemy killed to enemy wounded, and about enemy guerrilla strength. Both subjects were discussed in the broadcast.

Under questioning, Adams conceded that he had told a CBS producer before the broadcast that Gen. Joseph McChristian, a key accuser of Westmoreland, "loathed" Gen. Philip Davidson, his replacement as Westmoreland's intelligence chief. Davidson, who was implicated in the reported deceit by the broadcast, has testified on Westmoreland's behalf.

Dorsen's strategy appeared to be to persuade the jury that McChristian's accusations stemmed from a personal vendetta.

Dorsen ended his cross-examination by asking Adams if he had ever met Westmoreland prior to the trial.

"No," Adams replied.