

1984-90

May 7, 1990

Brian Lamb

MAY 11 REC'D
MAY 24 ANS'D

Re - Call in Show aired in Portland Oregon
6AM - today - You Easterners did it again -
a very important trial was ignored because
it was held here. The Federal Govt. leaders
must be very comfortable with the lack of
national attention on this issue. It is one
more time that Iran-Contra is not being
exposed. Mr. Richard J. Brenneke was part
of that effort because he worked for the CIA
and in his trial was believed by the jury.

Inclosed are excerpts of today's paper
& my plea that you air this issue nationally.
I'm a constant viewer - thank you Sincerely,
for being there.

Portland Or. 97219

Brenneke told truth to judge

□ Everyone on the panel believed he was not guilty of lying, and government policy contributed to that decision, jurors say

From staff and wire reports

The jurors who decided that Richard J. Brenneke didn't lie to a federal judge two years ago believe the government's own policy of creating "deniability" contributed to their verdict. And their verdict was unanimous, the foreman said.

"It was 100 percent," said Mark Kristoff, 30, of Beaverton. "There never was a guilty vote."

The panel of eight women and four men returned its verdict Friday after five hours of deliberation.

Brenneke was indicted on five counts of lying to a federal judge in Denver in 1988, when he appeared as a character witness for a man accused of bank fraud. In that trial, Brenneke said he and defendant Heinrich Rupp worked for the CIA and helped arrange a series of secret Paris meetings in which top Reagan-Bush campaign officials negotiated illegally with Iranian officials to delay the release of 52 American hostages until after the 1980 presidential election.

The government denied those meetings ever took place and accused Brenneke of lying about his CIA connections. But that accusation was flawed, said one juror.

"The thing about the CIA, they have a lot of options," said Evelyn J. Richardson of Northeast Portland. "They have 'deniability.' They have 'layering,' where something can be in one place and yet not be in another. So they have options."

For example, Richardson said, a CIA personnel specialist testified during the trial that he had failed to find any records that showed Brenneke had been a CIA employee. She said she believed the testimony.

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Brenneke: Jurors 'comfortable' with their verdict, foreman says

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ny did not mean that Brenneke definitely had not worked for the CIA. She said it meant only that a CIA official was claiming that he had not been able to find any records that proved Brenneke's employment.

"It came up," she said of the CIA official's testimony, "that there are some records that he doesn't even get to."

That made it easier for the jury, Kristoff said.

"We all came away extremely comfortable with the verdict and extremely convinced that Mr. Brenneke was not guilty of any of the charges," he said.

Thomas M. O'Rourke, U.S. assistant district attorney, portrayed Brenneke as a rejected CIA job applicant who operated on "the fringes," trying to make arms deals,

trying to get into intelligence gathering, but always reduced to playing at the edges of action, never getting involved in the real thing.

Defense lawyers tried to show the federal government had buried evidence of Brenneke's work for the CIA.

Former CIA agent Frank Snapp testified about the agency's front organizations, telling the jury that "cutout individuals and cover com-

panies" were routinely used to conceal government involvement in any number of operations.

Kristoff said those policies were key in the jury deliberations.

"The main thing we kept coming back to was the term 'deniability,'" Kristoff said.

"We were all extremely convinced that government does have that policy of deniability," Kristoff said. "There are cutout companies

and cutout people who are not involved directly and cannot be traced back to the agency."

Kristoff said the jury did not consider whether delaying the hostage release might have sabotaged President Carter's re-election effort.

"We kept it simple," said Kristoff, an inventory control auditor for a sportswear manufacturer. "We didn't want to get involved in the presidential election."

Jurors agreed Brenneke told truth to judge

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