

COL. AND MRS. MICHAEL G. SMITH, USA RET.
930 DUNBARTON BOULEVARD
BARNWELL, SOUTH CAROLINA

Mar. 13, 1957

Dear Pat: -

Your letter received and I am sorry to state that I do not know any of the officers on the Court Martial. Also as you know I retired nearly twelve years ago and at that time the atomic missiles program and all the allied guided missiles were in their infancy and I know very little about them except what I read in the papers, and a few articles, so I surely could not qualify as an expert. As for the life of me I do not know of any help I could render you or the Colonel. I can only state that

I was president of the
general court martial at Ft
Bragg for several years and
Trial Judge Adv. for many
more as well as defense
counsel during my services
(many years) ~~and~~ it has been
my experience that: -

1. The T.J.A. of a Gen. C. M.
brings out all the facts both
pro. + con. (It is his duty.)
2. That you must remember
that all the members of the
G.C.M. are college graduates
(not like the ordinary jury) and
are not swayed too much
by spell bound speeches but
only by cold facts.
3. That they will be
able to understand most facts
however complicated you, are
your experts may present.
4. That the best court
room manner is one of extreme

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Courtesy, never "betittling" the
intelligence of the Court,
and always trying to create
a favorable impression on all
the members by catering to
your knowledge of their undertakings
and above the average intelligence.

So Pat as much as
I would like to be of assistance
to you + "Buster" I really do not
know how. I saw a complete
writeup of the trial in the Army
a.c. navy journal naming "Buster"
as defence counsel. In my opinion
(from the very meagre facts I have
read) you have a very hard
case. If he had not sent these
facts (otherwise) to columnist
like Drew Pearson he would
have had a better chance. You
must somehow be able to
justify this. I am speaking
only Pat of the impression

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an impartial man might
already have formed as a
result of past publicity. I
imagine the members of the court
have read what I have and
may have the same first
impression. You know all
personnel of the army, navy & a.c.
are impressed from the very
start of their service that
they must obey superior orders,
and this is so fixed in the
minds of the average officer
that he has very little patience
with those who do not, even
if he is right. That is something
else you & Buster must
understand & somehow
overcome in this case, Billy
Mitchell notwithstanding. You
can understand why this must
be so, for if it wasn't you would

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shortly have a cop's Army, with
no discipline or smooth
running. Frankly Pat from
what I have read and if
nothing else was was
brought out in the trial
I would be inclined to vote
"Guilty." and I do not even
know your Colonel. I do
know how the average officer's
mind works however, so it is
a better than even bet that
some on the Court will have
read as much as I and
have the same opinion, so be
sure and question about their
opinions and challenge any
that have read all about it,
unless you believe they
think as the Colonel does.
Best of luck to you & Buster,
I hope everything turn out O.K.

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Give my best to Martha
and Sue Buster and all
I come to see us just as
soon as you can. Zelma
I will come sometimes
soon.

Love
Mike