

Professor, 65, Who Killed Himself May Have Been Oswald Confidant

PALM BEACH, Fla., March 30 (UPI)—A Russian-born professor who committed suicide, apparently when he learned that a House investigating committee wanted his testimony concerning President Kennedy's assassination, may once have been an operative for the Central Intelligence Agency and a confidant of Lee Harvey Oswald, sources familiar with the case said today.

The body of George de Mohrenschildt, 65 years old, was found yesterday in a second-floor study of a Palm Beach waterfront mansion by his daughter, Alexandra, 33, who had just returned from a shopping trip.

His death came shortly after he learned that an investigator for the House assassinations committee was seeking him to testify before the committee about his connections with Mr. Oswald, Mr. Kennedy's assassin.

The timing of Mr. de Mohrenschildt's death immediately became a factor in the House committee's request to extend its investigations of political assassinations. Representative Richardson Preyer, Democrat of North Carolina, said the committee had linked Mr. de Mohrenschildt to "new evidence" that indicated "de Mohrenschildt may have been closer to Lee Harvey Oswald than appeared on the surface."

A source who investigated the Kennedy assassination for three years asserted that Mr. de Mohrenschildt, who held degrees in international commerce, petroleum geology and engineering, was serving as a C.I.A. agent in Haiti in 1963, the year that Mr. Kennedy was killed in Dallas.

Mr. de Mohrenschildt denied in published testimony before the Federal commission that investigated the Kennedy death that he had ever been an agent of any government. He said his wide travels on several continents were solely business-connected. However, the com-

mission, headed by Chief Justice Earl Warren, also took off-the-record testimony from him that has never been made public.

Mr. de Mohrenschildt talked last month in Dallas with a Dutch journalist, Wilhelm Oltmans, who told the House assassination committee that the professor had made a "shocking confession" that he knew in advance what Oswald was going to do.

According to the Warren Commission report, published in October 1964, Mr. de Mohrenschildt and his wife met Oswald and his wife Marina in Dallas in 1962.

Mr. Preyer said Mr. de Mohrenschildt "was a crucial witness for us, based on the new information he had."

The Palm Beach County sheriff's office withheld an official ruling on Mr. de Mohrenschildt's death until results of an autopsy and further investigation were made public. But Lieut. Richard Sheets said there was "no reason to suspect anything other than suicide."

Mr. de Mohrenschildt, who was a French-language teacher at Bishop College in Dallas at the time of his death, arrived from Brussels a week ago with his daughter to visit Mrs. Charles Tilton 3d.

Deaths Called 'Unusual'

HAMPTON, Va., March 30—Former Representative Thomas N. Downing of Virginia, who retired from Congress last year and gave up the chairmanship of the House Select Committee on Assassinations, said today, "It is awfully unusual for these people to be erased before anyone has a chance to interview them."

Mr. Downing said that he was referring to the death of George de Mohrenschildt, and those of Sam Giancana and John Roselli, underworld figures who had been asked to testify before other Congressional investigating panels.