

Slain German Admiral Revealed as Spy Suspect

Post 10/23/68

Reuters

KARLSRUHE, W. Germany, Oct. 22—A senior West German NATO official found shot to death two weeks ago was suspected of spying for a foreign power, the federal prosecutor said today. The evidence was photographed NATO documents.

Prosecutor Ludwig Martin told a news conference that no evidence so far suggested a link between the death of Rear Adm. Hermann Luedke and the suicides of two other senior West German military men—all within 10 days.

He also said no positive proof of espionage was found against the admiral. The three deaths sparked speculation about a possible spy ring.

The admiral, 57, was found dead in a wood Oct. 8. Until his retirement a week before, the admiral was deputy chief of the logistics department at NATO's Supreme Allied Headquarters at Casteau, Belgium.

The deputy head of West Germany's intelligence and counter-intelligence service, Gen. Horst Wendtland; 56, shot himself Oct. 8 in Munich. Ten days later, Lt. Col. Johannes Grimm, 54, a Defense Min-

istry logistics official, shot himself in Bonn.

Martin said suspicion of Luedke centered on a roll of 33 photographs from his camera. The first nine showed secret NATO documents from the Casteau headquarters.

Questioned about the film, the admiral answered in inconsistencies that hardened suspicions, the prosecutor said.

A darkroom assistant processing the film in a Bonn photographic shop Sept. 23 spotted the "secret" stamp on the documents and alerted police.

The other pictures on the

roll were on the admiral's family and car. When questioned, Luedke claimed the camera was stolen from his house in Casteau and the secret photographs taken by someone else, Martin said.

The prosecutor said investigations would continue. He said he was not on the Wendtland and Grimm cases but was in touch with police who were.

Martin said it was not known how important Luedke was, if he was a spy. Recent press reports have said he had access to NATO documents of "cosmic"-level secrecy, the highest classification.