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New Inquiry on Czech's '62 Death Here

By EDITH EVANS ASBURY

Law-enforcement officials here are searching old records for new clues to a mysterious murder that occurred in the Czechoslovak Mission to the United Nations here. The search is being undertaken as a result of testimony in Washington by Joseph Frolik, a former Czech intelligence agent, to a closed session of the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee.

Mr. Frolik told the subcommittee, which released the testimony yesterday, that the murder victim, Vera Zizka, was not, as announced by a Czech spokesman, Col. Milow Vejvoda, killed by her husband, Karel. Rather Mr. Frolik said, she was killed on orders from Prague because she and her husband were planning to defect.

Mr. Frolik also told the committee that Colonel Vejvoda, now a deputy administrator of foreign affairs for Czechoslovakia, "is probably the murderer responsible for the death" of Mrs. Zizka.

"I cannot prove this is true," Mr. Frolik testified, "I am only saying what I heard from numerous people in the Czech service."

Records Searched

A spokesman for the New York City Police Department said a search was being made for the records of the murder, which occurred Oct. 18, 1962, at the Czech Mission at 83d Street and Madison Avenue. Reopening of the case, however, would be "up to the District Attorney," he said.

Manhattan District Attorney Robert M. Morgenthau said yes-

terday that he was "looking into it," but believed it "highly doubtful that we have any jurisdiction if it occurred on Mission property."

According to contemporary news accounts, Mrs. Zizka's body was reported found in the kitchen of her apartment in the Czech mission after her husband had been apprehended in Pennsylvania following a wild 110-mile-an-hour ride from Manhattan with the police in pursuit.

The car Mr. Zizka was driving crashed outside Easton, Pa. He emerged from the wreckage to be shot in the shoulder by a state trooper, then shot himself in the head, was taken to a hospital, and died the next day.

Explanation to the Press

About eight hours after Mr. Zizka embarked on his wild ride, Colonel Vejvoda, in a statement read to the press, said members of the mission, after hearing of Mr. Zizka's "inexplicable" ride, checked the Zizka apartment. They found Mrs. Zizka dead, the apartment "in a terrible state," and "on the table a report by Mr. Zizka explaining that he had killed his wife and that he will commit suicide."

The couple's "family life had been happy and quiet and this tragic happening can only be explained by a sudden mental breakdown," Colonel Vejvoda said.

In his testimony before the Senate subcommittee, Mr. Frolik said Mr. Zizka did go mad, but that it happened after he returned home from night duty as a code clerk, "opened the door and saw his wife."

The message referred to by Colonel Vejvoda was written on a tablecloth, in English, Mr. Frolik said, although Mr. Zizka was "of Czech origin, Czech-born."

"For whom was this message?" Mr. Frolik asked rhetorically. "It was for the American police." L

Confusion Over Language

The police reported at the time that they saw the message, but it was written in Czech, according to news account. Dr. Milton Helpert, then the Chief Medical Examiner, was permitted to examine the body and reported that Mrs. Zizka had died of "multiple lacerations of the head, knife wounds of the chest and a possible gunshot wound of the left temple."

Mr. Frolik, described as "one of the most senior Eastern intelligence agents to defect to the West since World War II," was in the Czech intelligence service for 17 years, according to the subcommittee transcript released yesterday.

Mr. Frolik told the subcommittee that Mr. and Mrs. Zizka's tour of duty was coming to an end when they died. They were planning to bring their son and daughter here from Czechoslovakia for Christmas, then defect to the United States, Mr. Frolik said.

Russian intelligence learned of the plan, notified Prague, and Colonel Vejvoda was ordered "to prevent the Zizkas' defection by any means necessary," Mr. Frolik testified. He added that "Vejvoda should first try to deport these people to Czechoslovakia, and if there is no chance to deport them, to assassinate them."