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U.S.-Soviet

A 10

Monday, March 1, 1976 THE WASHINGTON POST

Double Agent Found Dead

SOUTHBURY, Conn., Feb. 29 (AP) — A former Mobile Oil Co. engineer who reportedly sold important oil industry know-how to the Soviet Union before turning double agent for the FBI died today of what authorities said was a self-inflicted gunshot wound.

Norman John Rees, 69, admitted accepting money for information he gave to Soviet intelligence agents and said that from 1971 to 1975 he acted as double agent for the FBI, according to a published interview. His work was considered so important that the Kremlin gave him medal, and, beginning in 1971, a \$5,000 annual pension, according to the interview published in today's editions of the Dallas Times Herald.

Rees said in the interview that he agreed to work as a double agent in 1971 when he was confronted by the FBI, and continued in that capacity until 1975. He continued to meet Soviet contacts at FBI instructions, allowing the agency to observe and identify a number of Soviet intelligence officers, he said.

Rees' son, John, 31, of Ashfield, Mass., said his family knew nothing of his father's alleged connections with either the Soviet Union or the FBI. The son said he believed Rees killed himself because of an illness.

The Dallas Times Herald,

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Associated Press

John Rees arrives at apartment complex where his father was found dead.

Former Double Agent Is Found Fatally Shot

REES, From A1

quoted Rees as saying his most significant industrial espionage act was the passing in 1950 of a Mobile design for a newly developed catalytic cracking converter. He won a Soviet medal for that act, he said. Mobil had no immediate comment.

The converter, now a standard of the industry, increases the percentage of gasoline that can be derived from crude oil.

The paper also quoted an "intelligence source" as saying that Rees was "the single most important individual in the development of the Russian oil and gas industry during the relevant period (1945-1960)."

"FBI director Clarence Kelley confirmed that the FBI was aware of Norman Rees' contacts with foreign officials in the U.S. and had in fact interviewed Rees on a number of occasions concerning these contacts," an FBI spokesman said.

"Mr. Kelley state that the FBI would be unable to make additional comments on a matter related to foreign intelligence activities in this country," the spokesman added Saturday. The bureau said today it would stand on that statement.

The Dallas paper reported that the Sicilian-born Rees told the paper that he "was a Communist sympathizer" during World War II —



NORMAN JOHN REES
... apparent suicide

When the United States and Russia were allies — and began helping the Soviets and "just never got out."

"Looking back on it now, it's enough to make me sick," Rees was quoted as saying. He denied ever passing military information to the Soviets.

The Times Herald said it had interviewed Rees several times in the past month.

Rees claimed the Soviets paid him a total of \$30,000, the newspaper reported. The Times Herald said it had

learned that Rees maintained an account in the Salik Bank in Basel, Switzerland, and that in 1968 he transferred \$20,000 into the account. Rees said he turned the pension money over to the FBI for tracing, the newspaper reported.

After Rees' suicide, the Times Herald said in a statement: "Norman Rees requested on several occasions that the Dallas Times Herald withhold publication of the story and refrain from identifying him. We did not feel that we could repress the story and proceed with publication."

Assistant Examiner Marcus Cox said here it appeared the gunshot wound to Rees' head was self-inflicted. An autopsy was begun.

Cox said Rees was found shot to death on a couch in his study in his apartment about 7:30 a.m. Rees' wife was in the apartment at the time but did not hear the shot, officials said.

Rees was found with a .38-cal snubnosed revolver clinched in his fist, officials added. No note was found.

Chilean Miners Killed

Agence France-Presse

RIO GALLEGOS, Argentina, Feb. 28—Seven miners were killed and seven others injured when a coal mine in Rio Turbio in southern Argentina, caved in early today, officials said. The bodies of the dead were Chile.