

MAY 21 1968

Use of Drugs Cited

Widow of CIA Applicant Sues Agency over Husband's Death

NORFOLK (UPI) — The Central Intelligence Agency said in Washington Friday there is no basis for charges against the organization by the widow of a Marine colonel who said Friday the CIA caused the death of her husband.

Mrs. Edith M. Christensen of Virginia Beach, filed charges in U. S. District Court here saying the CIA "administered certain drugs" to retired Marine Col. James R. Christensen, her husband, during a Jan. 18 job interview in Washington.

ATTORNEYS for the 48-year-old woman said she and her 17-year-old daughter had filed three suits against the federal government asking \$800,000 in damages as a result of the incident.

The interview was one of two sessions Christensen had with CIA officials in an effort to gain employment with the Intelligence Agency after his retirement from the Marine Corps.

Eight days after the second interview, he killed himself with a pistol outside the home of

Mrs. Christensen charged the CIA administered "drugs of toxic substances" to her 49-year-old husband and was negligent in that it knew, or should have known, "they could and probably would affect him adversely."

Attorney for the woman and her daughter, Lina Anne, a high school student, said Christensen was allergic to the drugs.

THE ATTORNEYS said Mrs. Christensen noticed "a definite change" in her husband following the Jan. 18 session with the CIA.

Mrs. Christensen reported her husband was in "a very upset state emotionally and thought people were trying to poison him."

The attorneys reported Christensen was in a state of "deep depression until the time of his death."

The three suits asked \$500,000 for Mrs. Christensen as administratrix of her husband's estate, \$250,000 for Mrs. Christensen as

Christensen retired from the Marine Corps June 10, 1965. At the time of his retirement he was Director of Joint Operations on the staff of Commander-in-Chief Atlantic Fleet at Norfolk.

As a Marine aviator he had served duty tours at Marine posts at Pensacola, Fla., and at Cherry Point, N. C. His only intelligence experience had been a post as Wing Intelligence Officer while on duty in Japan with a Marine Corps Group.

IN FILLING out an employment application with the CIA, Christensen had reported "I feel strong and vigorous and have no complaints."

The suits were the latest in a deepening sea of hot water for the ultra-secret Central Intelligence Agency.

Recently the agency was blasted for recruiting on college campuses; charged with using Michigan State University as a front for operations in Viet Nam; and forced to reveal the identity of an agent involved in a New York court case.

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