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Wilson Linked to Sale of Nuclear Arms to Libya

By Philip Smith
Washington Post Staff Writer

HOUSTON, Feb. 3—A former employe of ex-CIA agent Edwin P. Wilson testified today that Wilson attempted to sell nuclear weapons, nuclear fuel, plans and equipment to Libya in 1980 and later boasted the deal would "make millions and we could retire for life."

The testimony by John Heath, a former Army weapons expert who said he was recruited by Wilson to

train Libyan terrorists, bolstered prosecutors' claims in Wilson's conspiracy trial here that the onetime career spy was involved in lucrative business deals with Libyan ruler Col. Muammar Qaddafi for personal profit.

Defense lawyers for Wilson, who completed their case at midday after presenting only three witnesses, have maintained the deals were a cover for Wilson, who they said was gathering intelligence for the United

States. A senior Pentagon official, Maj. Gen. Richard V. Secord, testified on Wilson's behalf today that Wilson once offered to procure a Soviet made MiG25 jet for American intelligence purposes during a meeting in Brussels in March, 1980.

"I was interested," Secord testified, but he did not say if the jet was delivered.

Secord acknowledged on cross-examination, however, that Wilson also had discussed "various business opportunities" during the private sessions.

The jury is expected to begin deliberations Friday. Wilson is charged with smuggling 20 tons of high explosives from Houston to Libya in 1977 in violation of U.S. export laws. If convicted, he faces up to 17 years in prison.

Prosecutors say he made a profit of about \$300,000 on the deal.

Wilson, 54, was convicted last fall

on gun smuggling charges in Alexandria, Va., and is serving a 15-year sentence stemming from that case.

Although chief defense lawyer Herald Price Fahringer told the jury last week he would prove Wilson was asked by a senior CIA official in 1976 to set up a business front in Libya, the defense rested today without presenting any testimony in support of that claim.

Attempts by the defense to call former attorney general Ramsey Clark and CIA critic and author Victor L. Marchetti to testify about alleged past CIA misdeeds were rejected today by District Court Judge Ross N. Sterling as irrelevant.

Wilson did not take the stand in his own defense.

Heath, the arms expert, testified he attended a meeting in Libya with Wilson, a Belgian arms dealer and members of the

Libyan Nuclear Committee, a Libyan government agency, at which the group discussed the sale to Libya of fissionable material and plans for nuclear weapons and reactors.

Heath, who said he had 21 years' Army experience in disarming nuclear weapons, described the plans as useless. "It was not worth anything. It was a hoax," Heath testified.

Asked by prosecutor Karen Morrisette whether Wilson had offered the plans for sale for any reason other than money, Heath replied, "No."

Heath testified that the Libyans were "not convinced." They regarded Wilson's nuclear weapons proposal as "incomplete and not valid," and the deal never went through.

Wilson then shifted gears, Heath said. He attempted to alert the Americans that the Libyans were after a nuclear bomb. Heath said Wilson told him he sent word through Peter Malatesta to Vice President Bush "in an attempt to solve his legal problems" after Wilson was indicted by a federal grand jury in Washington in 1980.

Malatesta, a former aide to former vice president Spiro Agnew, interviewed Wilson in Libya for People magazine in 1981. Malatesta told The Washington Post last year

Heath testified, "It was understood between us what his legal problems were. There were Interpol warrants against him [following his indictment]. He couldn't travel or make money."

A Washington lawyer, John Keats, also testified while the jury was out of the room today that he had been asked by Wilson during a visit to Libya to take part in Wilson's legal defense and that Wilson later forwarded a copy of the nuclear weapons plans to Keats in Washington.

Keats said Wilson "first wanted to get the plans back" to alert U.S. authorities that Libya was seeking atomic weapons. But Keats said under questioning that he later took the plans to a Justice Department lawyer in an attempt to plea bargain on Wilson's behalf.

CIA analysts later declared the plans worthless.

Wilson was arrested by federal agents last summer after being tricked into leaving Libya through an elaborate Justice Department ruse.

Secord, deputy assistant secretary of defense for the Near East and South Asia, testified he was introduced to Wilson about 10 years ago by a mutual friend, Thomas G. Clines. At that time Clines was a CIA official and, according to Wilson's lawyers, Wilson's former case supervisor at the CIA. Wilson left the CIA the same year he met Secord.

During subsequent meetings with Wilson in Iran and Belgium in the late 1970s and in 1980, Secord said, Wilson offered data about Libyan military activities, including information that North Korean pilots were flying Soviet-supplied jets in Libya.

On cross-examination, prosecutors sought to show that Wilson was involved primarily in business ventures rather than espionage.