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Widow of retired CIA aide may win a look at papers held by Senate unit

By Michael D. Davis
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Six years ago, the body of John Paisley, who had retired from the CIA as deputy director of the Office of Strategic Research, was discovered floating in Chesapeake Bay one week after his 31-foot sloop, the Brillig, was found aground off Point Lookout in Calvert County, Md.

Maryann Paisley, who lives in McLean, has tried unsuccessfully for several years to see the confidential reports on her husband's death that have been held by the Senate Intelligence Committee.

She would like the circumstances of his death made public, hoping it will dispel any speculation that he may have been a double agent or compromised his position.

The former high-ranking CIA official was found shot to death on Oct. 1, 1978, his body strapped in weights. Mrs. Paisley may soon be allowed to review classified documents that could reveal if her husband committed suicide or was killed by covert agents of a foreign government.

Extensive investigations by the CIA, the FBI and the Maryland State Police failed to determine how Mr. Paisley was shot in the back of the head by a bullet fired from a 9 mm automatic or why his body had been wrapped with two lead-weighted diving belts.

There was speculation at the time that the 55-year-old intelli-

gence official's death may have been related to consultant work he did for the CIA after he retired in 1974.

At the time of his death, he was a CIA consultant on assessing Soviet military strength and had access to highly sensitive intelligence information.

There was also speculation that Mr. Paisley may have been a double agent and may have been killed by agents of a foreign government.

The U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia last

The courts now hold that the documents are subject to FOIA requests because they were generated not by the Senate committee, but by the FBI, and the CIA and can not be shielded as congressional records.

The Senate committee had requested the FBI to gather and assess information about Mr. Paisley's death and said in April 1979 it would issue a public report. No report was ever issued.

The courts apparently have cleared the way for the committee

"If Paisley was anyone but a former high-ranking CIA official, his death would have been classified as a suicide."

July sent the request for the documents filed by Mrs. Paisley back to the U.S. District Court for further proceedings on whether the CIA and the FBI could legally withhold documents she sought under the Freedom of Information Act.

Most of the documents in dispute were generated by the FBI and CIA in response to the Senate committee's requests.

If the committee intended to control the documents, that would make them congressional records and exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, which would allow the FBI and the CIA to withhold them.

to release the information Mrs. Paisley has requested, and many unanswered questions about Mr. Paisley's death may now be resolved.

The government has never explained why specialized radio equipment was found on Mr. Paisley's sloop or the nature of documents recovered from his boat and from his Washington apartment.

There has never been an official explanation of why Mr. Paisley, after separating from his wife, left their McLean home and rented an eighth-floor apartment in a

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