

Bishop a Spy, Friends Think: Bishop Gave Friends Idea He Was Spy

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The mystery surrounding the disappearance of Bradford Bishop Jr., whose wife, mother and three sons were found beaten to death last week, deepened yesterday as friends of the missing foreign service officer recalled that he had told them of intelligence work in the Army and "very sensitive assignments" in the State Department.

Laurence Long, who was both a classmate of Bishop's at Yale and is now a neighbor in the Carderock Springs section of Bethesda, said Bishop told him how, as

an Army officer, he once was assigned to "spy" on an Eastern European ski team that was appearing in a meet in Italy.

Stephen Wilson, a New York City businessman who was a roommate of Bishop at Yale, recalled that after graduation Bishop told him he was "in Army intelligence. It was 'the thing to do,' Brad said, and besides, it was good duty."

Wilson and Long also talked to a third former roommate yesterday who told them that about five years ago Bishop called him at the bank in Manhattan where he works and said he

had used him as a reference for a "very sensitive position" he was seeking at the State Department.

The banker, who would not talk about the incident to a reporter, told Long and Wilson that he subsequently received a letter from the State Department that asked for "very candid" answers about Bishop.

When the banker saw Bishop about three years ago, he asked about his job and Bishop told him, "I can't talk about it."

Told of such speculation by friends, Robert Weis,

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brother of Bishop's slain wife, Annette, said yesterday that "the thought has crossed our minds" also that Bishop is, or was, a spy.

But officials at State said that nothing in Bishop's record would indicate that he was anything but what he said he was—a middle-level foreign service officer working in international trade.

Montgomery County police, who have questioned Bishop's co-workers at State, also said they had no reason to believe Bishop is, or was, a spy. "But even if he is, how does that help us solve this thing?" asked one policeman.

Two Montgomery County detectives were expected to return today from North Carolina, where the bodies of the five victims were discovered March 2 burning in a shallow grave in a desolate swamp.

Dr. Page Hudson, the chief medical examiner for North Carolina, who performed the autopsies, said yesterday that further studies of the victims, bodies indicated that "if there was a struggle, it wasn't much of one."

He said Bishop's sons, Brad III, 14; Brent, 10, and Geoff, 5, were beaten repeatedly on one side of the head. The boys were dressed in pajamas, and Judson said a theory that they were sleeping "is compatible with my findings." Hudson said Bishop's wife, Annette, 37, and mother, Lovellia, 68, also were struck with multiple blows. "All of them died quickly," the pathologist said.

Missing along with Bishop is the family's 1974 rust-colored Chevrolet station wagon and their golden retriever, Leo.

Bishop, who graduated from Yale in 1959, lived for two years in the Calhoun College dormitory in a set of rooms dubbed the "presidential suite" by its occupants, because among the nine young men living there were a Lincoln, Wilson, Polk and Franklin Pierce.

When he read about the Bishop killings, Wilson began telephoning the other seven ex-residents of the suite. He said yesterday they had reached a consensus that possible involvement in intelligence activi-

ties might explain away "the preposterous notion that Brad could have done this."

The banker, Wilson said, "is convinced that Brad is a spy for the CIA."

George Hefferan, a Portland, Maine, lawyer who was one of the roommates, said he spent a week with Bishop and his wife when they were living in Monterey, Calif. in 1960.

"Brad was studying Serbo-Croatian at the government's language school," Hefferan said. "We didn't talk about it, but I assumed everyone there was in intelligence work."

Long, the Yale classmate and neighbor, said that it was Bishop's knowledge of Serbo-Croatian that got him the job of "infiltrating the Yugoslavian skiing team." Long said Bishop was stationed in Verona, Italy, at the time. "He said the spy assignment was a good break from the routine of listening to Yugoslavian radio stations."

Another of the "presidents" at Calhoun, Frank L. Polk, isn't sure Bishop was an Army spy. Polk, a New York City insurance executive, said Bishop stopped in Manhattan about

15 years ago, and the two men had lunch.

"He said he was en route from California to Washington, but I didn't get the idea he was in intelligence. Of course, it was a long time ago, and just a brief meeting over a beer."

Long said he was reunited with Bishop in the fall of 1974 when Bishop's son, Brent, tried out for a neighborhood football team Long was coaching in Carderock Springs.

The two men resumed the friendship they had shared at Yale, and discovered they both had lived in Verona in the intervening years.

"Although Brad liked to play down the intelligence stuff, he did talk about how he posed as a student of Serbo-Croatian literature in an attempt to spy on the ski team."

While their families became close, Long said, "Brad never really told me what he did at State. He was supposedly specializing with a trade group, but I know I have some suspicions about that." The assistant chief of the State Department's international trade of the bureau of economic and business affairs.

A State Department official said the official job description means that Bishop is the number two officer and in a five-officer division, who represents the U.S. government at international trade agreement meetings in Geneva, Switzerland and elsewhere.

That explanation fits what Bishop told Long, who recalled that Bishop was complaining last Christmas of "the high cost of trying to get by in Geneva on the government's per diem allowance."

State Department records also indicate that Bishop has a top secret clearance, which every foreign service officer must have, but no additional special clearances, such as given to persons assigned to work with atomic secrets or cryptographic missions.

The request to the Manhattan banker for " candid answers" and a "very sensitive job" could apply to a routine update of a security investigation on Bishop, one State Department official said.