

Erdos Denies Homosexual Act Triggered Slaying

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Foreign service officer

Alfred J. Erdos denied a government assertion yesterday that his slaying of an aide in a U.S. chancery in West Africa grew out of a quarrel over a homosexual act involving the two men.

"I have never taken part in any homosexual acts with anybody," Erdos testified under cross-examination by U.S. Attorney Brian P. Gettings in

the third day of his trial in U.S. District Court in Alexandria.

Erdos, 47, the former American charge d'affaires in Equatorial Guinea, is charged with the murder last Aug. 30 of Donald J. Leahy, 47, his administrative assistant at the chancery in Santa Isabel.

A pathologist testifying for the prosecution on Monday said that Leahy died of a stab wound inflicted in a homosexual attack.

Erdos, who is married, testi-

fied on Tuesday that he fatally stabbed Leahy because he had deluded himself into thinking his aide was a Communist agent engaged with other American foreign service personnel and the Equatorial Guineans in a plot against the U.S. and his family.

Defense lawyers have said they will prove that Erdos was legally insane at the time of the killing, suffering from acute paranoid psychosis.

Yesterday, the defense called as witnesses four nurses from

the psychiatric ward at George Washington University Hospital, where Erdos was treated after the slaying.

All testified that he showed signs of extreme nervousness, fear, and distrust of everyone around him during his hospital stay, especially during the first week or two. They said these were signs they had frequently observed in other patients whose illnesses had been diagnosed as acute paranoid psychosis.

Erdos said under cross-examination that during the course of his treatment at the hospital he realized what he had done and that Leahy was not a Communist agent.

The issue of Erdos' sanity is expected to be fully explored for the first time in the trial today when the defense plans to call two psychiatrists and the prosecution two others in rebuttal.

Other witnesses yesterday included the defendant's wife of four years, Jean; Lewis Hoffacker, the U.S. ambassador to Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea, and other State Department officials.

All said that Erdos' actions and diplomatic cables from Santa Isabel began to show signs of incoherence in mid-August of last year. They said this change followed a period of harassment by the Equatorial Guinean government, including the arrest of African employees of the American embassy.

Hoffacker said he had sought Erdos for the post because of his "steady, reliable" record. He said that when he saw him shortly after the slaying, "he was not the same fellow I had met before or the man I see across the way here today."

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