

Patty Hearst's Case: Victim or Accomplice?

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SAN FRANCISCO, April 20—Is Patricia Hearst somehow in league with her Symbionese Liberation kidnapers?

For weeks, that question was the subject of only timid speculation. On April 3, however, it started to become the focus of a national debate and last Wednesday it was presented to a federal grand jury.

It was on April 3, that the 20-year-old newspaper heiress announced in a tape-recorded communique that she was now "Tania," and that she had "chosen to stay and fight" with the clandestine terrorist group which two months earlier had dragged her screaming from her Berkeley apartment.

Then, 12 days later, in a move apparently designed to substantiate her "decision," Miss Hearst was photographed carrying a semi-automatic carbine in an SLA bank robbery here. The FBI obtained a warrant

for her arrest as a material witness, and bail was set at \$500,000.

The grand jury was asked to decide whether Miss Hearst was indeed a willing participant in the robbery. U.S. Attorney James L. Browning Jr. conceded that it "is clear from the photographs she may have been acting under duress." Still, he said, if the jury finds that her participation was voluntary, "we're going to charge her as a bank robber."

The question was now so clear that it even appeared as a front-page headline in the San Francisco Examiner, a newspaper of which her father, Randolph, is both editor and president. "Did Patty 'Mean Business,'" the Examiner asked, "or was she playing role?"

There have been reports that until only recently the FBI suspected Miss Hearst

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or her finance, Steven Weed, might have had something to do with plans for her abduction. Close friends of the couple have found such suspicions absurd, and Weed may have finally put them to rest when he took an FBI lie detector test some two weeks ago.

Randolph Hearst said an SLA notebook seized at an abandoned headquarters three weeks before the kidnapping provides "unquestionable proof" that his daughter was an SLA target, "and in no way" a participant in her own kidnapping. The notebook, the existence of which was discovered by the San Francisco Chronicle, included Miss Hearst's full name, along with cryptic references to "action," "teams" and "guns" on the night of the full moon of Jan. 7." Authorities have declined com-

ment on the Chronicle report, except to say that "it was not totally accurate."

In any case, it now seems unlikely that Weed or Miss Hearst was involved with the SLA before her kidnapping. What remains mysterious is the evolution of a revolutionary "Tania" who would renounce her parents and finance, to voluntarily join a murdering, bank-robbing group of revolutionary terrorists.

There are three prevalent theories for explaining "Tania": conversion, brainwashing, and play-acting at the point of a gun. Each theory has prominent proponents.

Attorney General William B. Saxbe apparently believes the conversion theory. He said he is convinced that Miss Hearst "was not a reluctant participant" in the bank robbery. He called the SLA "common criminals," said Miss Hearst "is part of it," and said the FBI would be justified if it broke into the SLA's hideout.

Surprising support for the conversion theory came from the Rev. Cecil Williams, a minister popular in San Francisco leftist circles. "It's possible," he said, "that Patty may be having a love affair."

Bank guard Edward C. Shea, a witness of the robbery described Miss Hearst as "pretty wild." He said, "she let it be known that she meant business ... giving out vindictives and orders and all that, saying she would shoot the first guy that moved."

Randolph Hearst, who tends to believe the brainwashing theory, termed Saxs at the moment," he said after listening to her April 3 tape. "If that's brainwashed psychological pressure time and she responded."

Mental health professionals tend to support ideas closely akin to the brainwashing theory. Dr. Frederick Hacker, a University of Southern California psychiatrist whom Hearst has frequently consulted about the kidnapping, pointed out that "coercion can wind up as consensus that appears to be free and can lead to psychological changes. These changes can cause a decision which may be totally free, but which in fact is the result of coercion."

A University of California psychiatrist put it another way: "The girl deserves all our sympathy. At her age, her identity may be a terribly vulnerable thing. And in

her situation, perfectly normal guilt feelings and a need for love and acceptance may have been subject to extraordinary stress. Probably what has happened to her lies somewhere between conversion and putting on a show for her own safety."

Weed believes Miss Hearst is putting on an act "because of threats to her own safety or the safety of those she cares about." He said he discounts the brain-washing theory because the SLA probably would have provided additional communications if "some sort of weird conversion" had taken place.

Ironically the FBI, which has been subject to some sharp criticism from Weed, tends to agree with his interpretation of Miss Hearst's behavior. FBI Director Clarence Kelley said bureau investigators "choose to take the lesser of the evaluations that she is a material witness (to the robbery) and could have been coerced."

Miss Hearst, described as precociously independent, strong and mature, seemed forceful and convincing on last tape and in the bank. Friends nonetheless observed that she still is young and somewhat impressionable. "As strong as she is, it's hard to believe she still has all her wits

about her now," said one of them. Weed said she looks "terrified" in the bank photo, and appears to have lost "more weight than anyone five feet two can afford to lose." Weed and others maintain she is capable of great presence of mind and probably would do what she has to do in order to survive.

Of course, only Miss Hearst herself knows the secret of her new identity as "Tania." Despite growing pessimism, her family and her fiance still cling to the hope that she will someday come home to share it with them.

Hearst Kin Says He Was Kidnaped

SAN FRANCISCO, April 20 (AP) — The roommate of a cousin of Patricia Hearst says he was kidnapped and held for three hours by three black men who mistook him for William R. Hearst II, police said today.

The roommate, Van R. Bush, 31, said he was kidnapped Thursday morning as he left his apartment and was released after he convinced his abductors he was not Hearst.

He was gagged and blindfolded but not harmed, he told officers.

Police Inspector Ralph Brown said Bush was hazy on key details, including his abductors' description, and would be asked to take a lie detector test.

William R. Hearst II is the son of the late John Randolph Hearst, a brother of Randolph A. Hearst. Randolph's daughter Patricia was dragged from her apartment Feb. 4, and the terrorist Symbionese Liberation Army has claimed it kidnapped her.