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The Man Who 'Knew Too Much'

By Lewis H. Diuguid

WHEN A free-spirited American filmmaker disappeared and later turned up dead in the aftermath of the 1973 Chilean coup, no one could — or would — answer why.

But the New York family of Charles Horman refused to take "We don't know" for an answer. Their dogged search, along with recent related developments, have brought the case to a climax.

At the least, it is now clear that the U.S. and Chilean governments knew a great deal about Horman's fate at the time they were telling the family they knew nothing. That was during the full month when he was "missing," when the father, full of hope, went to the Santiago soccer stadium where hundreds of prisoners were herded and called for his son to come forward. "This is your father," he shouted over the bullhorn. "You have nothing to fear."

But Charles had been dead since the day after he was taken off by a uniformed patrol. There is ample evidence that Chilean authorities knew this. Now, evidence is accumulating that the U.S. government did, too, and that perhaps it played a role in his death.

Diuguid is an assistant foreign editor and former Latin America correspondent of The Washington Post.

The father, Edmund Horman, 70, a businessman who started his search more content than most with his government, now declares:

"Considering the information I have been gathering and what I have seen and heard, the only conclusion I can draw is that the United States fingered him."

What has grown into Horman's adversary proceeding against the State Department is gathering supporters. When a former Chilean intelligence agent declared recently that he was present when a Chilean general ordered Charles killed "because he knew too much," several U.S. congressmen demanded a new investigation.

An Enforced Vacation

ON SEPT. 11, 1973, the day of the coup that toppled President Salvador Allende's experiment in socialism, Charles Horman was showing an American visitor Chile's seaside resort of Vina del Mar.

The coup began in the neighboring port of Valparaiso, where admirals later conceded they had been plotting for months. Down the long shank of Chile, military control was so complete that, as one officer put it, the takeover "was a cup of milk."

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United Press International

Santiago's National Stadium was used to hold thousands after the 1973 coup in Chile.

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As part of that control, internal travel was halted. Horman, 31, and Terry Simon of New York took up an obligatory four-day vacation at the Miramar Hotel, where the Pacific crashes onto rocks below a sunny deck and pelicans flap by in lazy vees.

Horman's wife Joyce had passed up the trip and was at home in Santiago, normally 90 minutes away. She would not venture out beyond the corner grocer's in the curfew of the next four days.

At the Miramar, Horman and Simon met several other stranded Americans. They received most of their news of the coup from Marine Lt. Col. P. J. Ryan, head of the five-man U. S. Naval Group in Valparaiso. Simon quotes Ryan as describing mass arrests then going on in the capital as "search-and-destroy" missions a la Vietnam.

The general glee of the other Americans with the coup dismayed Horman and Simon, who were enthusiastic supporters of Allende. They were further disconcerted when a friend of Ryan's, Arthur P. Creter, who described himself as a retired naval engineer based in Panama, told them: "We came down to do a job, and it's done."

Simon recalls Creter's bearing as thoroughly conspiratorial and in retrospect feels he probably was posturing for effect. The incident is important for two reasons:

First, Horman and Simon took the remark, along with others, to indicate a U.S. role in the coup. On return to Santiago they passed it to American journalists who reported it in the same vein.

Second, U.S. embassy officials, denying the implication absolutely, later used the allegedly false report to question the reliability and motives of Horman and Simon.

However, U.S. Navy Capt. Ray E. Davis eventually verified — in a document the Horman family obtained under the Freedom of Information Act — that Creter did indeed make the quoted statement to the two men.

The document also supports the con-

clusion that Creter was exaggerating his importance. The Navy said the job he did related to repair of fire extinguishers on U.S. surplus ships sold to Chile and his presence at the time of the coup was coincidence.

No direct U.S. role in the coup has ever been proven, despite later revelations of American efforts against Allende.

Return and Arrest

ON SEPT. 15, Horman and Simon rode back to Santiago with Capt. Davis, head of the U.S. military advisory group in Chile. The naval mission had already helped them by radioing parents of both, via Panama, that they were alive and well.

Davis dropped them at the embassy in Santiago, where the streets were coming back to life, with a promise to help if he could in the next days.

Simon and Horman returned to the Hormans' rented house on the edge of downtown, burned some Marxist literature by then known to be a target of the search squads, and decided that they should leave Chile as soon as possible.

Joyce Horman remembers destroying all the notes she could find to a study by her husband that she now feels may have led someone to conclude that he "knew too much." Or simply to decide that in the polarization between "them" and "us" that led up to the coup, he was clearly one of "them."

Horman had studied the assassination of Chile's army chief, Gen. Rene Schneider, by extreme rightists in a futile attempt to prevent Allende from coming to power in 1970.

According to Joyce Horman, her husband's study showed a CIA role in the attempted kidnaping that ended in Schneider's death. A Senate report subsequently has shown that the CIA was involved, although it was not found to be directly responsible.

On Monday, Sept. 17, a uniformed patrol that the neighbors took to be army troops stopped near Horman's house, asked a merchant some unrelated questions, entered the Horman house and was seen taking him away.

One witness said she followed the truck to the soccer stadium. Mrs. Horman says that she was caught downtown by the curfew that evening, returning the next morning to find the house empty, ransacked and robbed. She reported to the U.S. consulate and turned to friends for help. Two friends said they received calls that day from Chilean military intelligence asking them to explain why Horman had their names.

These calls alone were clear indication that Horman was in the hands of the military and not, as Chile consistently contended, outside the reach of "the law." Mrs. Horman states that she informed the consulate of the calls. One recipient of the calls did also; the consul later denied this call was received, the Hormans' records show.

Then came a series of increasingly tense and rancorous meetings between U.S. officials and Joyce Horman, joined on Oct. 5 by Edmund Horman, who flew down from New York.

The Hormans found most of the officials uncooperative, ill-disposed to act, evasive and, on occasion, untruthful and rude.

Looking back, the Hormans say they are convinced that they were witnessing a coverup. "Why go to elaborate efforts to conceal unless there was something to conceal?" asks the father.

Whatever the cause, there was a clear failure to communicate. From Ambassador Nathaniel Davis to Consul Frederick D. Purdy, there seemed to be a disbelief that the generals who threw out Allende could also harm an American citizen.

Or, alternatively, that if he was harmed, he must have provoked it. For some in the embassy, to have supported Allende was a provocation. A favored conjecture was that Horman was in hiding.

Exeter and Harvard

YET HORMAN, despite his beard, was no far-out revolutionary. His decidedly upper-class education began at the Allen-Stevenson School for boys, two blocks from the family's East 76th Street apartment. The school has recently established an annual award in his honor.

"I followed up his career and was tremendously impressed with his character," said the headmaster, Desmond Cole. "We give the award for the most

original thinker at Allen-Stevenson. The citation is "for independence of spirit."

Charles went on to Exeter and was magna cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa in English at Harvard. He filled his service obligation with six years of weekend duty in the Air National Guard while he worked as a writer, editor and filmmaker. One of his films was on napalm. He participated in anti-Vietnam and civil rights demonstrations. For a time he was what his mother describes as "the pet liberal" for the management magazine *Innovation*.

In 1971, Joyce and Charles Horman decided to travel to Latin America. They learned some Spanish at the Cuernavaca linguistics center in Mexico. In traveling, Joyce recalls, they were shocked by the poverty they encountered. They settled in Chile the following year after being attracted by Allende's programs to abate that poverty.

In the Hormans' sessions at the embassy, officials insisted they had no prior record on Charles. He had not registered at the consulate, as Americans abroad are asked to do.

As for CIA surveillance, the father quotes Ambassador Davis as assuring him there was no such activity in Chile. But an official close to the case recently has acknowledged that the CIA had considerable information on him.

With the perspective afforded by State Department documents released to Edmund Horman — often illegible or insubstantial Xeroxes at first, but, at his insistence, some important records later — it is obvious that the embassy

knew far more than it was telling the family.

By Oct. 1, 13 days after the arrest, embassy officers had interviewed witnesses and submitted a report fully agreeing with the family's account of the seizure of Horman.

But no evidence appears of any determined effort to have Chile square its denial that troops were involved with this clear indication that they were. The basic human rights questions did not seem to be an issue.

By this time a second American, Frank R. Teruggi, had disappeared. Ambassador Davis cabled to Washington: "At lunch today with ambassador designate [to the United States Gen. Walter] Heitman, I raised the Teruggi and Horman cases, pointing out the

public relations implications of any continuance of the present situation where circumstances of the disappeared remain unexplained."

Since a witness had said Horman was taken to the stadium, and since thousands of other prisoners had been, his wife pleaded with the embassy to check there. Consul Purdy said there was no use as the name was not on the computer printout of prisoners.

At a meeting with the ambassador, Joyce Horman asked to be accompanied there. She says that Davis asked what she would do, "look under the benches?" When he told her to be patient, she cried and said she had been.

The consulate's performance in the case later resulted in a General Accounting Office investigation that found other legations notably more effective in protecting their nationals. At least one diplomat, from a country far less influential than the United States, personally found a countryman in the stadium and some Americans found help only from other embassies.

On at least four occasions during the torment of the month when Horman was missing, the father turned up promising leads through pressures brought to bear on the Chilean military.

A banker friend in New York knew an officer disposed to help, for instance. Two such episodes raised false hopes with reports that Horman was seen alive. Capt. Davis, who had been assigned to the case, followed these and other leads less easily dismissed. Two sets of influential Chilean officers who had promised that Horman's status could be quickly determined returned with no news after meeting with Capt. Davis.

A Report Withheld

RECENT INTERVIEWS, however, make clear that no later than the first week in October, a well-known, respected Chilean informed a ranking embassy official that Horman was killed "on or before Sept. 20" — information from a credible source that would prove to be correct.

The embassy official has acknowledged receipt and reporting of the in-

formation, which included the allegation that those taking the decision had a dossier on Horman including information about his anti-Vietnam and civil rights activity in the United States.

Although by early October the Horman family was desperate for leads to his fate, the embassy gave no word on

receipt of the Chilean's report. The Chilean thereupon gave the information to another embassy. A diplomat of that embassy told a member of the Ford Foundation office in Santiago, as well as the U.S. embassy. The Ford employee passed the report to the embassy, too, as well as to the father. It thus reached him approximately two weeks after the embassy was first informed.

Late that same day, Oct. 18, Consul Purdy informed the Hormans that the Chileans had found a body with fingerprints matching those of Charles. The Chilean military confirmed the report to the father.

A curious discrepancy attended the final word of death.

Horman insists that Purdy and the Chilean officers both said records until then mislaid showed Charles was shot in the stadium Sept. 18 and buried unidentified in the wall of the national cemetery on Oct. 3.

Purdy insists that he repeated only what he was told, that Charles' bullet-riddled body was found on the streets on Sept. 18. The official Chilean version is the same. Horman sticks to his version. The account of the Chilean who reported to an embassy officer early in October also had said death came at the stadium.

The question, like so many, remains open.

"Leftist Movements"

EDMUND HORMAN returned to New York. By then, civil liberties groups throughout the world were outraged by reports of brutalities in Chile.

Later cables from Ambassador Davis show other representations were made as complaints from U.S. congressmen multiplied. The ambassador's statements did not focus on the humanitarian questions but suggested that Chile's access to military assistance might be affected in Congress if the Horman and Teruggi cases were not cleared up.

Perhaps in response to such nudgings, the Chilean government presented the embassy a memo on Oct. 30, 1973.

Although Chile had disclaimed any knowledge of the two men, beyond the bare facts of an overnight arrest in Teruggi's case, it now declared:

"Available information on both persons leads to the conclusion that they were involved in extreme leftist movements in our country, which they supported both materially and ideologically." The memo said they had links to a group in the United States "to help extremists and political leaders of the former government" leave Chile.

No evidence was offered, none has appeared in the public record, nor is there indication in the documents released that the embassy followed up the allegations with the Chileans.

The Horman family is convinced that the Chilean memo is referring obliquely to a venture in which both men had collaborated, along with other young Americans. It was called the North American News Sources, aimed at translating and distributing in San-

tiago stories from U.S. newspapers that they felt were favorable to their point of view.

"We were the sources, here in New York," says Elizabeth Horman, Charles' mother. "We would clip the New York Times and the Christian Science Monitor and mail a packet to Charlie."

Mrs. Horman is convinced that her mailings in early 1973 were being intercepted by the CIA and that the information was later passed on to the coup-makers. She said her son had reported receiving the mail resealed.

"Two Roads Diverged"

THE PARENTS, the widow and the friend, Terry Simon, gather often at the apartment on 76th Street to go over the record they can recite in by-the-hour detail. It took six months and \$900, they note, to have the body brought back.

Edmund Horman is less active in his heavy-machinery business. Mostly he is interested now in human rights — the last of many subjects his only child had brought home to him.

Sen. Jacob Javits (R-N.Y.), to whom Horman turned early in the ordeal, is calling for the case to be reopened and resolved. "If it were not for Edmund Horman we would not have found out anything," said the senator.

Like Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) and Rep. Dante B. Fascell (D-Fla.), Javits has called for the State Department to assure safe passage to this country of the former Chilean intelligence agent who spoke up recently on the case. The Chilean's most explosive charge: that a man he took to be an American intelligence agent was present when the decision on Horman allegedly was taken.

"This does not surprise me," said the father. "I am only surprised it was allowed to come out."

Charles Horman's widow brought back from Chile a memento of her husband, a volume they had carried of Robert Frost's poems, presented to him at Exeter in 1953 "for excellence in social studies."

Among the poems is one that reads:

*Two roads diverged in a yellow
wood,
and sorry I could not travel
both ...
I took the one less travelled by,
and that has made all the dif-
ference.*

From "The Road Not Taken," from THE POETRY OF ROBERT FROST, copyright 1916, © 1960 by Holt, Rinehart & Winston, copyright 1944, by Robert Frost.



The odyssey of Charles Horman: from Harvard, left, to Chile, a few days before his death.



THE ONLY other, American killed in the wake of the 1973 coup in Chile was Frank R. Teruggi Jr., 24, a student in economics at the University of Chile. Like Charles Horman, Teruggi was an enthusiastic backer of Chile's socialist experiment, but his friends say he was not an activist.

A Chilean friend put it this way: "When the rest of us were marching and shouting at the rallies, I knew I would find Frank back at the edge of the crowd, observing."

According to the Chilean government, Teruggi was detained Sept. 20, 1973 (nine days after the coup), on a curfew violation, taken to the Santiago soccer stadium with other prisoners and released the next day. His machine-gunned body was found on the streets the following day, the junta says, a victim of anonymous vigilantes.

No release was signed at the stadium, and the body was not identified at the morgue until Oct. 2. Teruggi's roommate was arrested with him but released later to the U. S. consulate on condition that he leave Chile.

Teruggi's father, Frank R. Teruggi Sr. of Des Plaines, Ill., is convinced that a Chilean officer tortured his son brutally and then killed him

with a submachine gun in the soccer stadium. A Belgian who was in the stadium at the same time recently gave this account in an affidavit at the U. S. consulate in Brussels, citing fellow prisoners as his source.

A State Department official said the Chilean government has been asked to respond to the new information.

The elder Teruggi, a printer, said that from what he has learned of the CIA's activities in Chile, he cannot accept that it was not at least aware of what happened. He said that the CIA responded to a request under the Freedom of Information Act by acknowledging the existence of a June, 1972, document relating to his son. But the document was not pertinent to his death, the CIA said.

The father went to Santiago in 1974 with a large group of civil liberties activists from the Chicago area who later issued a blistering report on rights violations in Chile. In seeking reasons for his son's death, Teruggi recalls asking Ambassador Nathaniel Davis and Consul Frederick D. Purdy if the embassy was not aware that several American students were at the university. He quotes Purdy as saying, "We knew

they were out there but the CIA did not investigate Americans."

"I served 40 months in the infantry," Teruggi, 61, told the Chicago Tribune recently. "I used to have a lot of respect for our men in Washington, but now..."

His son was a graduate of the University of California at Berkeley who had taken part in anti-Vietnam demonstrations. He came to Chile in January, 1972. As far as the record shows, he violated no norms, let alone laws. He was one of perhaps 6,000 foreigners in Chile at the time of the coup, most of them supporters of the Allende government.

Although the exact manner of his death is still uncertain, the government's frequently used explanation — street vengeance — is regarded in numerous international reports as a euphemism for summary military executions.

After Teruggi's death, I visited the modest house where he lived, not far from the university. In the rubble left by the ransacking arrest squad was Teruggi's backpack and a well-thumbed copy of "How To See South America on \$5 and \$10 a Day."

— LEWIS H. DIUGUID

A Student's Disputed Death