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Sabotage Hinted in 'Bug' Plane

CHICAGO (UPI) — A former congressman's aide testified Thursday at a special hearing into a fatal airliner crash last December that an associate told him he saw a man wearing a jump suit and identified as a CIA agent get off the plane after the crash.

The witness was Jean-Pierre Guilmant, who said he formerly was a public relations director for Rep. George Collins (D., Ill.), one of those killed in the crash.

He testified at a National Transportation Safety Board hearing called to hear legal researcher Sherman Skolnick back up accusations that the plane was sabotaged.

Skolnick, in testimony Wednesday, said the plane was carrying 12 persons connected with the Watergate affair.

Guilmant said that when the crash occurred last Dec. 8, killing 45 persons, he deployed seven members of his staff, two at the crash site. One, who he said had military intelligence identification, got through the lines because he was only about 12 blocks from the scene at the time of the crash and got there rapidly.

Guilmant said this man saw a person wearing a flight suit step off the plane. He recognized the man as a CIA agent, Guilman said.

Board members asked Guilman to identify the man who carried the military intelligence credentials. He said he could not give the name because the man apparently feared reprisals from other government officials.

Mrs. Howard Hunt, wife of convicted Watergate conspirator Howard Hunt, was among those killed in the crash. She was carrying \$10,000 in cash.

However, Skolnick charged she was actually carrying \$50,000 in cash and nearly \$2 million in American Express and postal money orders and negotiable securities. He said Mrs. Hunt and her husband had "ripped off" the Committee to Re-elect the President.

Skolnick, who said his occupation was a legal researcher and that he was chairman of the Committee to Clean Up the Courts, charged, "Those that screwed up the plane had the means. They knew how much voltage it would take to overload the system."

Skolnick refused to disclose the names of persons he said could support his contention that the plane was sabotaged to cover up the Watergate affair.