

SFChronicle

APR 1 1974

# The Missing Envoy Case

## --U.S. Printing Handbills

### Hermosillo, Mexico

Nine days after his reported kidnaping, the mystery surrounding the disappearance of U.S. Vice Consul John Patterson continued unsolved yesterday.

With hopes for a quick break in the case apparently diminishing, U.S. officials disclosed they are planning to have thousands of handbills printed and distributed in an effort to get leads on the whereabouts of the 31-year-old Patterson.

The text of the handbills — which will bear a picture of the missing diplomat — asks in both Spanish and English: "Have you seen this man?" The handbills carry telephone numbers of local

police offices and the consulate.

Although authorities have pushed an intensive search for the diplomat since the day after his disappearance, they are really still uncertain as to whether he was kidnaped by Mexicans or Americans or if, indeed, he was kidnaped at all.

The federal district attorney for the state of Sonora, Jose B. Michel, told newsmen: "At this point there are no leads—period. He (Patterson) has just disappeared."

In a further indication of the mystery surrounding the case, the chief of the federal police in Sonora state, Francisco Sahagun Baca, said:

"The kidnaping of Patterson was not carried out by any Mexican subversive group, but rather by common criminals seeking money."

There has been no word from Patterson—who was assigned to the consulate here only two months ago—since the original kidnap note he wrote himself, official sources said.

That note, described as "very lengthy," demanded payment of \$500,000 in two stages as the price for Patterson's life, these sources said. Half of the money was immediately obtained by Patterson's wife, Anne, but it was apparently never paid.

United Press