

Through Politics

Hunt Crash, Chile, Weathermen and Fascism

By Carl Oglesby

1. *The Dorothy Hunt crash is still working.* According to LA researcher Donald Freed (*Executive Action*), "the Skolnick part of the story (see *Phoenix* 15 May) is now a colorful corner of a much larger canvas." The National Transportation Safety Board conducting the crash investigation published its final conclusions last month, naming *pilot error* as cause of crash and ignoring speculation that the cause rather was Watergate-related sabotage. The NTSB did not take up or meet the circumstantial but powerful arguments for continuing the crash probe at the congressional level:

a. Inner White House cadre Egil Krogh, Alex Butterfield and Dwight Chapin, all of whom were ranking officers of the secret White House police, were immediately deployed to positions of vantage around the United 553 crash investigation. Krogh went to the NTSB itself the second day after the crash (a Sunday), Butterfield to the FAA a week later, and Chapin to United Airlines in January, where he was assigned to United's in-house crash investigation. These movements prove nothing, and all they indicate is that the Nixon group had a strong interest in the crash, not that it caused it; but that's interesting by itself, that

strong interest, and the motives of it ought to be cleared up in the Congress so we can all see with our own eyes what was going on.

b. Within an hour of the crash, some 50 FBI agents materialized on the crash scene and took it over. The FBI also hit the airport tower and commandeered the tower tapes. The largeness of their number and the quickness of their arrival were both totally unprecedented and their purpose, on the scene and in the tower still have not been explained.

c. The 553 passenger manifest is a sensation in itself: Dorothy Hunt of CREEP and the CIA, Michele Clark of CBS, hot on a Watergate lead, and executives of a gas company involved in a pipeline antitrust action worth hundreds of millions in which then Att. Gen. Mitchell is supposed to have disgraced his office for a fee.

d. There is a residue of technical uncertainties, none of which is fatal to the pilot-error theory of the crash, but which at the same time stand out from it and do not support it. The flight-data tape recorder jammed eight minutes before the crash. The cabin crew failed to react to the preemphory instrument warning that the airplane was in a stall condition: a loud clacker goes off overhead and the control sticks shake in a function

expressly designed to wake all but the dead to the danger, yet the cabin voices incongruously continue humming in for the landing, for a solid 18 seconds, until finally comes the stillness of the crash (*Washington Post*, 12 June). Unusually high levels of cyanide were found in the bodies of the pilot, Hunt, and others. The electronic landing beacon called the Kedzie marker malfunctioned moments before the crash.

e. The sudden incarceration last spring of Skolnick's main assistant, Alex Botos, on a trumped-up charge of impersonating a federal officer is especially suspicious. One moment Botos was being groomed as the Justice Department's star witness in a case against the Sarelli mob for airplane robberies. The next moment he told Strike Force lawyers that Sarelli was involved also in the crash of the Hunt plane. And the moment after that he woke up in Springfield, whence he was extricated more than a month later only through the interventions of a local watchdog commission. The Sarelli case was dropped.

More than this is known and more yet is shortly to emerge about the Hunt crash. But I do not understand why Congress should not already be

aroused. Botos was abducted at a critical moment on a trumped-up charge. There is an aura of technical uncertainty, leading from established facts, about the crash itself. The passenger list was extraordinarily Watergate-heavy. The movements of the White House secret police and the FBI were violent and conspicuous. These are all publicly established, well documented facts, not hard to see. Why should a full congressional inquiry be delayed?

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2. *Politica and Chile.* A former Cambridge Abt Associates tankthinker named Daniel del Solar says he helped Abt design the political simulation game, *Politica*, which the US used in the overthrow of Allende.

I found a xerox of del Solar's piece recently in Madison. Published in the Sept. 14-20 *Berkeley Barb*, it is more important than the routine thinktank expose because:

a. *Politica* is putatively the actual computerized scenario-generating model of reality in use now at the Pentagon and the NSA (this is of course between us), or is at least close enough to it in key design features that we can easily make out the actual assumptions of policy and the complexity of the scenario

models employed.

b. Occurring in the hour of Watergate, the Chilean coup impresses us especially with the shamelessness of Nixonian magalomania. Even with the whole world watching him wriggle on the pinhead which is his actual base in American society, he dares send his dogs on a job so bloody and plan. Do you suppose he and his don't care what people know?

c. In view of the lurching rocks and rolls Nixon is subjecting our system of government to, and the show of police force he dared make in the aftermath of the Cox firing, sending FBI agents to occupy the offices of the Cox staff, plus the melodramatic pre-dawn general alert he ordered on October 25, there is no reason to be timid about wondering if the same game, the *Politica* scenario, could not be played out here, soon.

"The job," writes del Solar, "was to create a game model of Latin America. That meant we had to create a 'game' with players and rules that would copy or mimic the situation in Latin America. That way, having people take the roles of the players, Pentagon and CIA planners could observe or read about how the 'game' went. The aim was to create histories of each play of the

game, and then look those over to pick the most desirable . . .

"In general terms, we decided that 35 groups and individuals were responsible for most political change in Latin American nations . . . In a specific situation the number may be larger or smaller, but for the creation of the original model, 35 was right. They were: the Government, the military, the rich, three political parties, and workers in four different regions — the Capital City, Provincial City, Agricultural Region, and Industrial Region. Additional players were the middle class, landowners in the Capital, students in the two cities, the Embassy of the foreign capitalists, and foreign managers in the Industrial Region. Enough players were included so that *Politica* could become a very realistic copy of the real situation of any particular nation. *Politica* could be made more 'real' as a planning simulation by having the same number of players as actually existed in any particular nation, say Chile.

"The players in a specific playing of *Politica* would be given a description of the individual or group they were to represent, so they could do things in a realistic way. To quote the game-plan for *Politica*, 'any of the above player categories may be duplicated, expanded or eliminated to suit the aim of any particular simulation.' All players could vote for any person, vote for any political party, enter into coalitions with any other groups, attempt to communicate with other players in their region or in any other region, engage in business transactions, attempt to revolt (in coalitions), go on strike, engage in terrorism, lie, bribe,

deceive. The Government could in addition tax, open or close the University, order the military into action, negotiate with any other player, or 'govern' — that is, force other players to act or to refrain from acting in a particular manner.

"Finally, the Military could revolt against the government on its own initiative, enter into coalitions with other groups to pressure the government, refuse to obey the government's orders, and act on its own initiative to suppress strikes or terrorist activity."

Del Solar continues with a brief history of *Politica* from the point of its creation in 1965 by Abt and its subsequent sale to the Pentagon's Advanced Research Projects Agency which started preparing it for play on big computers and made it classified. "By mid-1966," he writes, "definite plans existed to have the *Politica* model played by a computer . . . In order that the computer could play realistic versions of *Politica*, I created a preliminary list of 'social variables and personality characteristics.' The list included such traits as cohesiveness, economic group interest patterns, political-economic goals, social weaknesses, perception of need for standing alone or in coalition, group style or ways of doing things in regard to violence/persuasion, honor/opportunism, unity/individualism, and so forth. The list included more than forty different characteristics.

"The aim of *Politica* was to provide training to military men in how political change occurs, or could be made to occur, in specific Latin American nations. *Politica* was used, perhaps in a more sophisticated ver-

sion, to determine whether the situation in Chile would be 'stable' after a military takeover if Allende were still alive," which del Solar says he knows through friends in the field. "It was determined by analysis based on *Politica* that Allende should not be allowed to live. This game plan was carried out by *Politica* planners and their counterparts in the Chilean army. Allende died . . .

"Who directly ordered the killing of Allende? I did not, but I made an intellectual tool that was part of it. ITT's Harold Geneen began offering the CIA one million dollars to remove Allende in 1969. ARPA paid for the 'pure' research that led to the creation of *Politica* . . .

"Why was Allende killed at this time? One clue is to be found in the fact that US copper users have become desperate for copper, and our strategic stockpile, with which the world price of copper has been held down (by dumping our reserves), has been committed as well as depleted . . . Individuals who know more about US military planning should make their information known. *Politica* suggests that foreign policy is being made at the Pentagon and at the Citadel (the armed forces advanced training school) with little or no reference to Congress or to any other public body."

Anyone now for *Politica*-USA?

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3. The recent development in the *Detroit Weatherman trial* raises this question another way.

Recall that 15 Weatherpeople were under federal indictment on bomb conspiracy charges (*Phoenix*, Aug. 21). They came to trial last summer

in the court of US District Judge Damon Keith, a black liberal, who astonished the world by ordering the prosecution to make available to the defense the totality of data collected over the past ten years on SDS and the Weathermen by illegal espionage means, whether by the FBI, the CIA, the Plumbers, the IRS, the Treasury, or any other state police agency.

Simply, this meant that the pretrial evidentiary hearing originally set for mid-September could easily turn into a Watergate Left with the Weatherpeople and their lawyers sitting in the place of Ervin & Co., but examining the same witnesses: Mitchell, Colson, Segretti, Sullivan, Mardian, McCord, Hunt, Chapin and the rest. Since the intuition is strong these days that the government has much more domestic espionage to hide than Watergate, the question was put: Could the government hand the Left such an opportunity to probe the operations of the FBI's infamous Division V?

The answer came October 15 when the prosecution returned from the postponement it had won in September to say that even though there was no such illegal surveillance as the defense had charged, still it could not produce the stipulated records without compromising "national security," and so would not, and so could not present its case, and so was dropping charges.

We rejoice for the Weatherpeople already liberated by this turn, including especially the fugitives Jaffe, Fliegelman, and Wilkerson, who are now free and clear. We rejoice as well in this new hope for Weatherpeople still underground. Some are wanted on a separate Chicago indictment for

the 1969 "Days of Rage" fiasco. Others are wanted on Tucson and Cleveland indictments for possessing destructive weapons. But these are the kind of charges that the government has never made stick in the past conspiracy cases, and now with the Keith ruling of June '72 and the late dropping of charges (with pre-judice), maybe there is a chance the core Weatherpeople, chastened by their incredible experience, can begin to think of coming back to life in the open.

Yet this escape is perplexingly legalistic. The *political* question of this trial, which is social and historical and cannot be dropped, is in suspense. What is the White House trying to hide?

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4. Two current articles offer deceptive but enlightening tours, quite guided, of the suburbs of this vast question: *What is Nixon hiding?*

One author, writing in the 9/14 and 10/26 *National Review*, is Miles Copeland. The other is Andrew St. George, writing in the November *Harper's*. Both are old-hand type insiders of the Atlantic intelligence community. Copeland is on St. George's right and St. George is on Copeland's left, like the two magazines, but on the fundamental question of what Watergate is about, they are saying much the same thing, namely, that since the advent of Nixon if not Johnson, the structures of a national police-state organization have been forming within the leadership of the presidential bureaucracy. Copeland sees this as happening because it is good and

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necessary while St. George takes the shorter view that it is an evil of what he calls "techno-totalitarianism." Both paint a picture of internecine struggles among the host of state and military police empires: ugly, mean, wretched, vainglorious little wars, scarring, dangerous mortally to us all, insignificant; but neither exhibits the least interest in naming the domestic forces raging away behind the phony national security estimates on one side and the blind forces of administrative technology on the other. They leave out the Rockefeller and the Murchisons. But more clearly than I ever thought I would hear such established voices say, they tell us that as of the time of Watergate, this country is an implicit police state already, and that it is idle to think of going back. They tell, in other words, the story underlying the Dorothy Hunt crash, the Chilean coup, the repression of the left. Read 'em and weep.