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ENVOY'S WIFE ANN PATTERSON
A tearful statement in Mexico

Wife's Plea for Kidnaped Husband

Hermosillo, Mexico

Struggling to hold back tears, Ann Patterson pleaded yesterday with the terrorist kidnapers of her diplomat husband, John, to "please let me know that he is well."

Her voice breaking, Mrs. Patterson appeared at a news conference to read a statement expressing her concern that news of her husband's abduction a week ago had been made public, apparently in contradiction to instructions from the kidnapers.

"I am here to appeal to the people who have my husband that I am desperately sorry that the news of his disappearance has been made public," she said.

"I will do everything I can to assure his safety."

"Please let me know that he is well. Please contact me and I will do everything I can to assure his safety."

A consulate spokesman Robert Milton, expressing hope that Patterson is still alive, said payment of the ransom "depends on word from the other side."

Indicating that the kidnapers had threatened to kill the 31-year old vice consul if news of his abduction was leaked to the press, Milton added:

"When we finally show you the ransom note you will see why we have been so careful about this. We hope the kidnapers will take the five-day news blackout as a demonstration of good faith."

The blackout was broken in Washington last Wednesday when U.S. Attorney General William Saxbe let word slip out while talking with newsmen,

Local police sources, meantime, speculated that the kidnapers — whom they believe to be members of the "September 23 Communist league"—might have

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abducted Patterson "by mistake."

They said —without elaborating on the basis for their reasoning — that the terrorists may have taken Patterson for the newly-appointed consul general here, Edward Stellmacher.

Patterson has been assigned here only since last January and is not widely known. Stellmacher was supposed to arrive last week but was delayed.

The newspaper El Imparcial said it was informed by "good sources" that \$250,000 — which the sources described as "half of the ransom" — was paid the kidnapers in the Arizona border city of Nogales last Saturday.

Hermosillo is 150 miles south of the border.

Milton reiterated earlier U.S. officials statements that Washington is not putting up an ransom money in this case.

"The family and friends of Mr. Patterson will pay it," he said without revealing how much ransom is being demanded.

United Press