

Sabotage Is Ruled Out in Crash That Killed Mrs. Howard Hunt

WASHINGTON Sept. 27 (AP) — The Chicago plane crash that killed a Congressman and the wife of E. Howard Hunt, the convicted Watergate defendant, was caused by pilot error, not by sabotage, the National Transportation Safety Board said today.

Forty-three of the 61 passengers and crew members died last Dec. 8 when the United Air Lines jet crashed into a residential area near Chicago's Midway Airport. Two persons on the ground were also killed in the crash and in the resulting fire. Five homes were destroyed. Among the passengers killed were Representative George W. Collins, Democrat of Illinois, and Michele Clark, a correspondent for CBS News.

Captain's Role

The safety board said the probable cause of the accident was "the captain's failure to exercise positive flight management." This resulted, the board concluded, in the plane's losing air speed and going into a stall on a landing attempt.

The board said it found no evidence of sabotage or foul play in connection with the crash. A Chicago legal researcher, Sherman Skolnick, had alleged that the plane was sabotaged because 12 of the passengers were directly linked with Watergate. He said some

of the passengers had documents on them that linked President Nixon and former Attorney General John N. Mitchell with Watergate. Mrs. Hunt had \$10,000 in \$100 bills in her purse when she died.