

# SOCIEDAD MATEMATICA DE CHILE

## CONFIDENTIAL REPORT ON THE STAY AND DISAPPEARANCE OF DR. BORIS WEISFEILER. EXTRAOFICIAL BACKGROUND.

1. Dr. Boris Weisfeiler entered the country on December 25<sup>th</sup>, 1984, at the International Airport Comodoro Arturo Merino Benítez, aboard Flight 141 de LAN, from New York. He presented passport 40.033.331 issued by the U.S. Consulate in Spain.
2. On December 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> he is registered at Hotel Alcazar in the city of Los Angeles. He slept there and payed with a Visa credit card. The passenger lists of all the hotels in the city of Los Angeles where checked and Dr. Weisfeiler does not appear as registered in all the rest of December. Therefore, it can be assumed that he went into the mountains on December 26<sup>th</sup>.
3. On January 4<sup>th</sup>. 1985 approximately 20 Km south of the point where the river Los Sauces meets river Ñuble, on the east shore of the latter, Dr. Weisfeiler met the chilean citizen Juan López Benavides, who lives in the area. They spoke and spent the night of January 4<sup>th</sup> together.

According to Mr. López Benavides, they spoke very little because Dr. Weisfeiler was not fluent in Spanish, but that he informed him of the state of the area and told him the existence of an outpost of Carabineros (police) a few kilometers from the place and the convenience of registering there. Moreover, Mr. López Benavides states that when he left in the morning, Dr. Weisfeiler was wearing green military type jeans and boots.

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4. After midday January 5<sup>th</sup>., Dr. Weisfeiler is seen by one of Mr. López Benavides' brothers. This person could not be interviewed because he was on a trip lasting for several weeks, looking for cattle. He said that Dr. Weisfeiler was walking North on a trail. The fact that the shore of river Ñuble is very uneven in that area seems to be the reason for his presence on the trail.
5. According to trustworthy information one of the brothers López Beva-vides informed Carabineros at the frontier outpost mentioned above, of the presence of a foreigner in the area, walking north on the trail. According to Carabineros, for security reasons, they have asked the people living in that area, to inform them of the presence of strangers. After the report, on January 5<sup>th</sup>., two policemen on horse back followed Dr. Weisfeiler's trail to check his identity papers. They reached river Los Sauces approximately 8 meters before the point where it meets river Ñuble and found foot prints, presumably made by Dr. Weisfeiler, going towards to river. They followed and crossed river Los Sauces but they could not find his trail. They followed to the Comisaría (Police Station) in San Fabián de Alico, where they informed Captain Fernández who went early in the morning of January 6<sup>th</sup>., and could not find any traces that might permit him to find him. After that he gave up the search. When questioned, Captain Fernández stated that his procedure was normal since every person who does not live in the area who is seen in that area of the mountains is checked as to where he comes from, where he is going and what he is doing in the area.
6. Afterwards, nothing is known about Dr. Weisfelier till January 15<sup>th</sup>. when the chilean citizen Segundo Contreras Contreras who was fishing in the area of Lagunilla, approximately 2 Km north of the point where river Los Sauces meets river Ñuble, found a green back pack submerged in the river Ñuble, and informed police at San Fabián.

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7. Carabineros checked the back pack and found papers in Dr. Weisfelier's name, including a Visa card, a map of Chile issued by Pennsylvania State University and the following objects: a compas, an inflatable sleeping bag, a small tent, a pair of boots, a pair of sneakers, pants (among them the green army type jeans) and \$ 137 in chilean currency. It should be noted that his passport and plane ticket werent found. The above mentioned objects were turned to the local police court in San Fabián.

Afterwards, Carabineros informed their superiors who informed the U.S. Embassy and by request of the American Consul, the disappearance of Dr. Weisfeiler is reported to the Segundo Juzgado del Crimen (Criminal Court) in San Fabián. This was inscribed with N° 3302 in the above mentioned court.
8. By the Court order, several search operations where made in the area of river Ñuble by Carabineros from San Fabián, a fireman and people from the area without any results. On February 16, 17 and 18, 30 Carabineros from Chillán, Navy frogmen and a Police helicopter, continued the search with the help of military personnel who happend to be in the area in campaing training.
9. Through conversations with the staff of Departamento de Riego de la Municipalidad de Chillán (Water Department of the Municipality of Chillán) it was informed that the rivers in the area are quite dangerous and difficult to cross even though their level was 90 cm lower than at the beginning of January. They explained that those rivers had circular undercurrents very difficult to observe from the surface and that the bottom of river Ñuble has holes where an object can be held in its interior till the water reaches its minimum level.

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Mr. Ricardo Garrido, a fireman from San Fabián de Alico who participated in the search, told us that the frogmen had serious difficulties with the undercurrents in the river Ñuble.

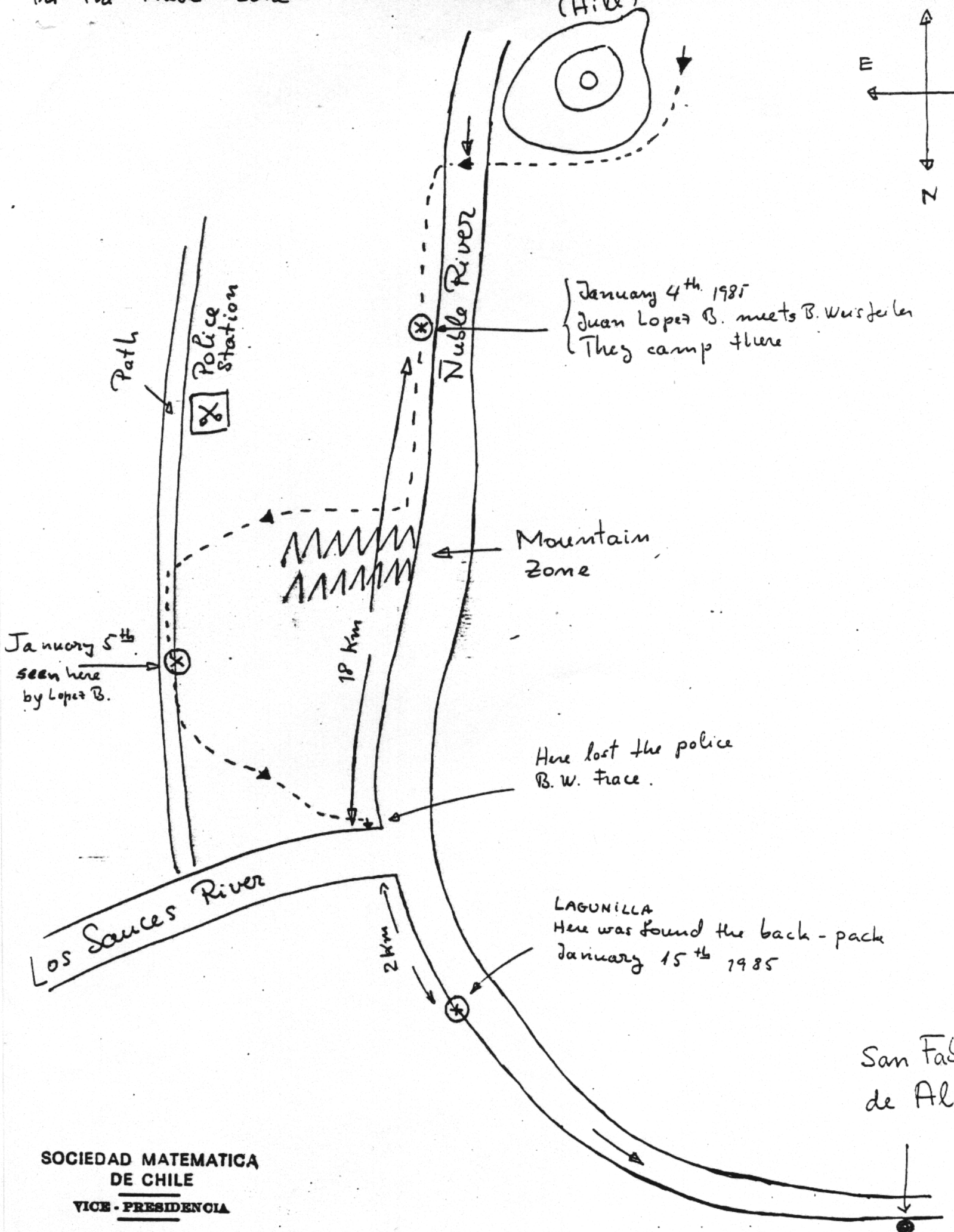
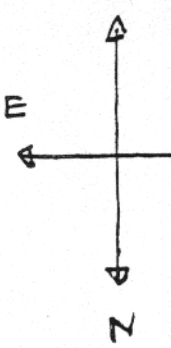
10. It should be mentioned that the footprints mentioned in 5., could not be observed later, probably due to the time elapsed.
11. An investigation of the private life of the people who were in contact with Dr. Weisfeiler and the person who found the back pack, proved that they are well known in the area as honest and incapable of criminal activities. They have no police record.
12. It was also found out that there are no criminal nor political armed groups in the area where Dr. Weisfeiler was lost.
13. The possibility that Dr. Weisfeiler entered Dignidad Colony can be discarded since it is more than 100 Km. from the place where he was last seen.

NOTE: My personal opinion based on the investigation is that it can be discarded that Dr. Weisfeiler was a victim of theft or assault by common thieves, and that if he was murdered it was done by professionals who do not operate in the usual way of Chilean criminals, and that the motive was not theft since the objects found in his back pack were very valuable.

I must also add that, on the basis of the investigation, one can deduce that Dr. Weisfeiler was the victim of an accident due to his ignorance of the conditions in the rivers Los Sauces and Ñuble.

Oscar Tapia Durán

Santiago March 4<sup>th</sup>, 1985.



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REPORT ON PROF. BORIS WEISFEILER'S CASE BY THE CHILEAN MATHEMATICAL SOCIETY.

Santiago, March 1985.

As is well known, Prof. Boris Weisfeiler disappeared on January 5<sup>th</sup>, 1985 in a mountain zone near Chillán in Chile, and only a back-pack was found by the river Ñuble.

The financial support of his U.S. colleagues enabled the Chilean Mathematical Society to hire a private detective. These investigations support the hypothesis that Prof. Weisfeiler drowned himself when he tried to cross the river Los Sauces. Indeed the report issued by the detective states that in this river there are, under a seemingly quiet surface, strong currents that force bodies or objects to stay at the bottom in deep zones. Thus his opinion is, and we have every reason to trust him, that Prof. Weisfeiler suffered an accident. Any kind of theory based on political motives does not have a real basis and the only vague possibility left was a common homicide. However, there are few persons inhabiting that zone and all are known, honest people; the back-pack when found contained many valuable objects. The fact that neither the passport nor any money were found can be reasonably justified since many tourists carry them in small bags hanging from their necks. There is no doubt as to the existence of those strong currents since, as can be seen in the enclosed newspaper articles and in the report, there were vast search operations undertaken by both police and army personnel with a helicopter and three navy deep sea divers. On several occasions they had severe difficulties due to the currents. The depth of the river was found to

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be at those points of around 7 meters (21 feet).

Finally the report dismisses the possibility of a homicide perpetrated by agents of a foreign agency since the presence of a foreigner is noticed immediately by the inhabitant of the place. Hence the detective's report coincides with the preliminary official conclusion, claiming an accident, and we believe this to be true.

The Chilean Mathematical Society will continue looking for any kind of information concerning Prof. Weisfeiler's disappearance.

Meanwhile, the official investigation will end soon and the legal conclusion will be known; it is to be noted that they remain classified up to now (as in any legal process in Chile). We tried to contact the U.S. Embassy for their support, but they referred us to the State Department in Washington and did not help us in any way.

The Chilean Mathematical Society wishes to express here its deep sorrow and concern in Prof. Weisfeiler's case.



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