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Hijacker Safe in Cuba; Jet Returns to Toronto

Gunman Diverts Flight Out of Here

TORONTO (CP) — A hijacked Air Canada DC-9 returned to Toronto from Havana today leaving behind in Cuba a "very rational" hijacker who, although armed with a handgun and a grenade, told the six-man crew he didn't want to do them any harm.

The aircraft returned here at 5:43 a.m. EST, about 10 hours after a passenger handed a stewardess a note advising the crew that he was diverting the plane from its Thunder Bay-to-Toronto route and demanding that he be flown to Cuba.

Mrs. Helga Weterings, 32, of Toronto, one of the plane's four stewardesses, told a news conference the man said he "had a mission to fulfil," but he did not elaborate.

Mrs. Weterings was accompanied at the news conference by Captain Donald Glendenning, 42, of Winnipeg; First Officer Hugh Reid, 33, Winnipeg and another stewardess, Ruth-Anne Snell, 21, of Woodstock, Ont.

WASN'T WORRIED

Miss Snell said she wasn't worried after the hijacker permitted the other 83 passengers to leave the plane when it first

She said the man, described earlier as relaxed but careful and watchful, showed her a picture of his wife and a little boy of about three.
Mrs. Weterings said he was "very rational."
She was in the galley working

with Miss Snell and stewardesses Virginia Harnadeck, 21, and Jeanne Keldson, 27, both of Toronto, when a passenger handed Miss Keldson a note.
"Jeanne did what she was told," Mrs. Weterings said. "She went into the cockpit and gave the note to the captain."
The plane completed its flight to Toronto, and after the passengers disembarked the hijacker lined up the steward-

She described the hijacker, in his early 20s, as "small and fine-featured with dark-rimmed glasses."

The note handed to Miss Keldson at 7:50 a.m. said:
"Think. We have fragmentation grenades and a .38 calibre

revolver. Take me to the captain. We are going to Havana. This is no joke."

PLANE REFUELLED

The 96-seat aircraft, flying a holiday trip from Toronto Thunder Bay on the north shore of Lake Superior and return, landed at Toronto International Airport at 7:55 p.m. and was refuelled after the passengers left.

It took off for Cuba at 8:45 p.m., arriving in Havana three hours later.

Canadian diplomatic representatives had it released by Cuban officials at 2:45 a.m. and the return flight to Toronto began almost immediately.

Miss Snell said the hijacker at one point asked for a deck of cards.

"He only knew how to play blackjack and we didn't, so we didn't play any games," said the stewardess. "He had a tin of soda before we landed."

Another stewardess brought

"He showed us a picture of his wife and son. His boy will be three in April and his wife is pretty. He loved his family. He talked mostly about his family."

But the hijacker, who never mentioned his name or where he was from, said he would never see his family again.

First Officer Reid said he was flying the aircraft when the hijacker came into the cockpit to announce he wanted the plane to go to Cuba. He said there was no conversation with the man as the plane began its descent on approach to Toronto International Airport.

SAT IN FIRST CLASS

On the trip to Havana the hijacker sat in the first-class compartment and was not seen again by Capt. Glendenning until he was left at the Cuban airport.

There were "no problems in Cuba," the captain said. The crew were interviewed by people they did not know, and then Cuban officials took the man away.

"I was happy when we got there," Glendenning said.

Miss Snell said the hijacker told her he had been to Cuba before, two years ago, but did not say why.

None of the crew members

During the hijacking, the man kept his back to other passengers, and most of them were unaware of what was happening. Many of those who got off the plane at Toronto said they first learned of the hijacking from radio broadcasts or from friends who called after they reached their destinations.

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