

Child Used to Whet Parents' Buying

By Jack Anderson

In the constant campaign to separate the customer from his cash, small children are now used as guinea pigs to find out how to whet their appetites and, through the children, to influence the buying habits of their parents.

Millions are spent on motivational research to stimulate youngsters, so they will pester their parents into buying advertised brands. A typical research group, describing its sophisticated operations, boasts: "Our new offices have four large focus rooms, a complete laboratory, rooms with one-way mirrors for observing children, video tape and recording facilities, test kitchen, commercial viewing rooms, etc."

One outfit even uses moisture detectors, placed in contact with the children's hands, to measure their subconscious responses to advertising.

Consumer advocate Robert Choate is asking the Federal Trade Commission to investigate the child-manipulation

techniques as an unfair business practice.

Incident in Havana

The bizarre story can now be told of what happened in Havana after Pat Gray, the bullet-headed boss of the FBI, ordered his agents to shoot out the tires of a skyjacked Southern Airways jetliner last November in an attempt to keep it from taking off from Orlando, Fla.

The details were gathered by Rep. John Murphy (D-N.Y.) as part of his research on skyjacking legislation.

As he pieced together the story, FBI sharpshooters punctured all the tires except on the nose wheel. This enraged the sky pirates who shot co-pilot Billy Harloyd Johnson and held a grenade at the head of chief pilot William R. Haas.

Despite the flat tires, Haas was forced to attempt a take-off. An "act of God," he told Murphy, provided an airpocket that lifted the crippled craft into the air just as the runway ran out.

In Havana, Cuba's mercurial dictator Fidel Castro heard the news and hurried down to the airport to direct the landing from the control tower. He

ringed the area with combat troops, 27 ambulances and seven fire trucks. Thousands of Cubans also gathered to watch the drama unfold.

Haas miraculously brought the huge jet to a shuddering halt at the end of a long slide.

The skyjackers, meanwhile, piled out of the plane and raced in opposite directions for the nearby woods. They left behind \$2 million in ransom, which they had handed out to the passengers with abandon.

The air pirates didn't get far before they were collared by Fidel's finest. At first, they threatened the Cuban soldiers with hand grenades. Castro himself was close enough to the action to have been killed or injured. They were subdued, however, to the accompaniment of cheering Cubans.

Then the jubilant Castro grabbed the chief pilot, hugged him and lifted him into the air crying "Magnifico, Magnifico!" Haas was driven to a Havana hotel in Castro's private jeep by army aides.

Asked what would happen to the skyjackers, an aide said: "We don't need bandits in this country. These two will be put in a 4-by-4 prison cell for life."

Atlanta Tragedy

A tragic Atlanta apartments-for-the-elderly fire, which cost the lives of 10 residents last fall, could have been avoided by the installation of a simple smoke-detection device costing about \$50 per apartment.

This will be charged at hearings, which Sen. Harrison Williams (D-N.J.) has scheduled this week into faulty nursing home construction.

Witnesses will blame the Baptist Towers fire in Atlanta partly on FHA officials who winked at their own regulations and permitted construction without modern fire protection equipment.

The FHA manual on property standards requires that buildings such as Baptist Towers "of eight or more stories having more than 15 living units per floor shall be equipped with an automatic fire detection system." The requirement, however, was waived for the Atlanta construction. Explained officials later: "We didn't have enough money for everything."

The devices, which could have saved the lives of the Atlanta victims, would have cost the contractors a total of \$15,000, if will be charged.