

Black Fugitive Williams Returns, Vows to Press Separatist Drive

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DETROIT, Sept. 12—Robert F. Williams, a homesick black who fled into exile more than eight years ago, came home today vowing to continue his part in the black separatist struggle. He was immediately arrested as a fugitive from North Carolina justice, but was soon free on personal bond.

"I never wanted to leave in the first place," Williams said when asked at a press conference why he returned from Tanzania. Before Tanzania, he lived in Cuba and China. "I resented every minute that I was out and I resented the people who forced me out."

Dressed in a Chinese-style suit adorned with a simple red ribbon that said in Chinese, "Serve the People," Williams bounded off Trans World Airlines Flight 6715 at six minutes past noon, looking thin but fit.

Alone on the flight with airline personnel and his lawyer and friend Milton Henry of Pontiac, Mich., Williams found a changed America. He said his treatment upon arrival convinced him some things in this country have improved. He credited black militancy.

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Associated Press

Black-nationalist Robert F. Williams arrives in Detroit.

Black Separatist Returns, Vows to Continue Struggle

WILLIAMS, From A1

The changes, Williams said, were manifested in the way he was treated by the courts here. In a well-orchestrated series of legal moves that took less than three hours, Williams was whisked from Federal Court where he was freed on \$1,000 personal bond on a charge of unlawful flight to avoid prosecution to a county court where an obviously friendly proceeding ended with his release on a personal bond of \$10,000 pending a hearing on North Carolina's request that he be sent there to stand trial on a kidnaping charge.

It is the kidnaping incident that began Williams' lonely chaotic journey. It made him a cause celebre around the world. A mill worker in Monroe, N.C., Williams also was president of the local chapter of the NAACP. Unlike other chapters that were concerned with legal redress of discrimination grievances, the Monroe chapter under Williams adopted the position that white violence should be answered with guns.

Soon shooting incidents between the Ku Klux Klan and blacks took place. On Sunday, Aug. 27, 1961, a near-riot occurred in Monroe, and in the aftermath a white couple claimed to have been kidnaped by Williams, some of his Negro followers and a white supporter.

Williams now says he tried to save the couple, Mr. and Mrs. G. Bruce Stegall, from being killed by angry blacks. "That was a humanitarian mistake I made," Williams snapped today.

After Williams fled, four other persons were tried on the kidnaping charge and convicted in 1964. The North Carolina Supreme Court overturned the convictions on the ground that blacks were systematically excluded from the grand jury that indicted them. New indictments were obtained for the four but not for Williams; no new trial of the four others has been held.

The night of the alleged kidnaping, Williams, who says he was fearful that white vigilantes and police were out to kill him, fled Monroe. For days his whereabouts were unknown. Then, he surfaced in Havana, where he lived for several years, moving on to China and finally, for the last two years, Tanzania.

It was soon after his arrival in Tanzania that the Republic of New Africa was born in Detroit. An avowedly separatist group, it demands that five states in the South be provided for black people to create their own nation. Williams agreed to become the president in exile.

"I am back here," Williams told the news conference, "to serve the cause of justice, and whatever that requires, I am willing to do."

Refused Passage

Returning contained its own horrors for Williams. After being assured by his American friends that he would be treated generously by Michigan officials in pre-trial proceedings and that North Carolina's case seemed shaky, Williams set out from Cairo only to be refused passage through London on TWA. He spent six days in a London jail while

Henry worked out his release and passage, courtesy of a nervous and embarrassed airline.

"It was service reserved only for a president," Henry quipped about the transatlantic flight on TWA, "and we appreciate it." The menu was the basic seven-course meal served in first class sections of transatlantic flights.

Eager to erase the memory of earlier unpleasantness, TWA officials denied published reports that the flight was costing the airline \$20,000. "We ferry airplanes around the world all day, 40,000-to-50,000 miles a day," said spokesman Frank Gillespie. "We'll send this one on to New York this afternoon for a charter flight back to London and that is the kind of thing we are doing all of the time."

Williams' followers in the Republic of New Africa turned out 100 strong and followed him through legal appearances and on to his press conference, where he said he would continue to struggle to realize the goals of the Republic.

Treated Best in China

He said he was treated best in China of all the places he went, but he said he would remain and fight for justice in America, even if he is ultimately extradited to North Carolina. "But if I go back to North Carolina," he said, "I'm going back for war, to fight."

His low opinion of America has not been tempered by time and absence.

"America," he said, "is on her way out. America is sick, and all over the world, people are laughing at America."