

# TWA to Return Black Fugitive To U.S. Today

9/11/69 By George Lardner Jr.  
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Trans World Airlines said yesterday that it has arranged a special \$20,000 flight to bring black revolutionary Robert F. Williams back to the United States.

The airline, which had refused to give him even an economy-class seat last week, said "a request by the U.S. Government changed its mind."

The expensive solution, a Boeing 707 with only two paying passengers—the 44-year-old Williams and his attorney—is scheduled to leave London this morning and arrive in Detroit at 11:30 a.m. (EST).

Williams, who faces a kidnaping charge in North Carolina, has been trying, unsuccessfully, to get past the Statue of Liberty since last month.

In the process, he has gone on a hunger strike in a British prison, accused TWA of breach of contract, and denounced the Central Intelligence Agency as somehow being at the bottom of it all.

TWA said it was picking up the tab for the special flight except for the tickets of the black militant and his lawyer, Milton Henry of Pontiac, Mich. Aside from them, airline official said, the plane will carry a TWA security guard, supervisory personnel and perhaps a Government escort.

The airline defended its earlier refusal to fly Williams back as a regular passenger. It reiterated that the decision was "its own and was not di-

rected or encouraged by any agency of the U.S. Government."

Under the Federal Aviation Act, any carrier can refuse to carry anyone when, in its opinion, "such transportation would or might be inimical to safety of flight."

TWA officials alluded to fear of hijacking and an Aug. 28 FBI advisory that "a civil disturbance could be anticipated on (Williams') arrival in Detroit."

A fugitive from the kidnaping charge for the past eight years, Williams has hopped from Cuba to North Vietnam, Communist China and Tanzania.

Recently he decided to return to face the criminal charges, including a federal warrant accusing him of interstate flight to avoid prosecution. He chose Detroit, Henry has said, because "we feel he will get a better chance" there.

The city is headquarters of the black separatist Republic of New Africa which elected Williams its president in absentia last year. Henry is first vice president.

Williams arrived last Friday in London where he was booked on TWA for the final hop, but the airline refused to honor his \$283 ticket.

Other airlines followed suit and Williams was imprisoned by British officials who classified him as an undesirable alien.

After days of jockeying and an abortive attempt to ship him to Cairo, the special flight was arranged. TWA said all its "conditions"—a flight of its choosing, a written request from the U.S. government, and an escort of "appropriate" U.S. officials—had been met.

Late yesterday, however, a TWA spokesman was uncertain about the escort.

In a telephone interview with The Washington Post from London, Henry called it "unbelievable that they (TWA) would spend all of that money to fly Robbie and me across the ocean in a great big 707, but anyway it's a great victory."

If nothing else, the imbroglio pointed up the broad discretion claimed by the airlines in bumping passengers it considers undesirable.

A TWA spokesman in Washington affirmed that Williams' rejection was solely for what it considered safety's sake, but in tariffs filed with the Civil Aeronautics Board, all airlines also reserve the right to turn down any passenger whose "conduct, status, age or mental or physical condition make such refusal or removal necessary for the reasonable safety or comfort of other passengers."