

Probers Sift Wreckage Of Chicago Jet Crash

CHICAGO, Dec. 9 (AP)—Investigators working in 13-degree weather and intermittent snow flurries today combed through the wreckage of a jetliner that crashed into a residential neighborhood in sleet and snow Friday.

The plane carried 61 persons. There were 45 known dead—two of them believed to be residents of the neighborhood. Eighteen of those aboard the plane survived.

The 15-man investigation team of the National Transportation Safety Board imposed tight security at the crash scene half a mile from Midway Airport. Intersections within a two-block radius were blocked to traffic. Pedestrians were stopped a block away.

A spokesman for the board said the cause of the crash was unknown.

The two-engine United Air Lines Boeing 737, Flight 553 from Washington, D.C., to Omaha with a scheduled stop at Midway on Chicago's southwest side, skimmed over the roof of one house in the neighborhood and slammed through five other houses.

A safety board spokesman said the flight data recorder and cockpit voice recorder were taken from the plane and sent to Washington in their unopened steel containers.

"The containers were pretty badly smashed, but they are made to take a lot of beating," he said.

He said that it would take about two days to filter from the air traffic control tapes the conversations between the pilot of the stricken plane and the Midway control tower.

The Federal Aviation Administration said earlier that there were no irregularities in the conversation between the pilot, W. L. Whitehouse of Springfield, Va., believed among the dead, and the Midway tower during flight approach.

Rescue workers found two more bodies in the smoldering rubble. A huge crane was used to pick off the roof and other large debris from one of the homes in the plane's path. Firemen with heavy duty steel saws cut away twisted wreckage.

The plane split on impact, with the tail section extending from a demolished bungalow and the shattered nose coming to rest in an alley after slicing through a home.

A survivor, Harold Metcalf, 34, supervisor for the U.S. Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs, said he sat alone in a seat in the rear of the plane.

"I first realized the plane was in trouble when I looked out the window and saw how low it was," he said. "And then the pilot accelerated wide open and tried to gain power. But the plane still kept going down. Then I saw a rush of things fly by, then darkness, then silence and I felt something wet seeping into my shoes."

Metcalf said he tried to help

two stewardesses open a left rear side door, but when it was opened flames came into the cabin. He said he and the stewardesses then opened a right rear door and there was no fire.

"We yelled for people to come to the door and get out," he said. "But nobody came forward so we knew many were dead. There wasn't any screaming. It was quiet."

Robert Villarreal, 25, was several blocks away from the crash.

"I heard the plane coming," he said. "It was really low. Then the engines accelerated. But the plane wouldn't go up. It just kept coming down. And then the sky turned red and it crashed with its nose pointing up."

Among the identified dead was U.S. Rep. George W. Collins, 47, (D-Ill.).

Among bodies tentatively identified was that of Michelle Clark, 29, a CBS television news correspondent.

Ugandan Moslems Get Libyan Aid

NAIROBI, Dec. 9—Libya has donated about \$3.3 million to aid Moslems in Uganda, radio Uganda reported today.

The report, monitored here, said the donation was announced in Kampala yesterday by Major Himid Kiwildi, Libyan interior minister and member of the ruling Revolutionary Command Council.