

Misc II - CURRANS

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Lucky Find of Bomb on Plane

Miami

A maintenance man stumbled over a live time bomb in a jetliner restroom just before the plane was to begin boarding passengers yesterday.

Explosives experts disarmed it. "If it had gone off, it would have taken the whole plane," an investigator said. "The plane was completely loaded with fuel."

An hour and a half after the bomb was discovered at 8:45 a.m., a man identifying himself as "Ernesto" of "Cuban Power 76" called United Press International's Miami bureau and said he had planted the explosive device aboard the Bahamasair BAC 1-11. He said the bombing attempt

was to protest the ban of Cuban exile fishermen from Bahamas waters and of the relationship between the Bahamas and Fidel Castro's regime in Cuba.

Coral Gables police said another explosive device, a pipe bomb, was found at a University of Miami apartment complex at about the same time. Police said they did not know if the two incidents were related.

Police said Bahamasair maintenance supervisor James F. O'Conner was repairing some plumbing when he discovered a "suspicious package" behind some paneling in a restroom.

The 41 passengers waiting to board were kept in the waiting room, the crew was taken off the plane and the Dade county bomb

squad was called.

The small jetliner was then towed to an isolated area in the middle of the airport complex.

Bomb squad member Newton Porter disarmed the bomb, which investigators said consisted of two pounds of plastic explosive attached to a watch and a detonating device.

The plane then taxied back to the terminal, picked up its passengers and flew to Nassau.

The man who called UPI said twice, "I don't want no innocent Americans killed."

He said he plans to plant other bombs and will issue warnings before they explode. He said he wants to discour-

age travel to the Bahamas because of that government's fishing ban and its relations with Cuba.

Coral Gables police said the pipe bomb in a hallway of the university apartment complex was found when a Cuban exile who is a student at the university opened his apartment door yesterday.

A university spokesman said the incident had "political overtones."

"The occupant is a Cuban student who has written for a Cuban magazine in the past and talked about peaceful coexistence with Cuba," the spokesman said.

United Press