

19 CUBANS FLY IN FOR SUGAR TALKS DESPITE U.S. BAN

They Enter New Orleans on Russian-Built Plane and Refuse to Leave

WASHINGTON REBUFFED
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Delegates Finally Are Allowed to Remain Overnight— They Stay at a Motel

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Special to The New York Times

NEW ORLEANS, Oct. 26 —

Nineteen Cubans aboard a Russian-built plane flew into New Orleans without United States authorization today to attend an international meeting on sugar cane production, then rejected a State Department order that they immediately return to Havana.

They spent the day on United States soil and finally won permission to stretch their visit overnight at a motel.

Harried State Department officials in Washington had no assurance that they would be able to persuade the Cubans to go home tomorrow.

The Cubans came to attend a conference of the International Society of Sugar Cane Technologists. The State Department had told them Sept. 24 that they could not come because the conference was not sponsored by an official international body.

[The return of a Boeing 747 hijacked to Cuba Monday night was delayed Tuesday by the arrival in Havana of Soviet Premier Aleksei N. Kosygin.]

An Unexpected Arrival

About 10 this morning the pilot of the plane carrying the sugar experts radioed from over the Gulf of Mexico and said he was approaching the Louisiana coast and wanted clearance to land. The astonished air traffic controllers at the New Orleans International Airport brought the plane in.

Once on the ground, the Cubans not only declined to be sent home, the pilot also refused even to allow his plane, a twin-engine turoprop, to be refueled for a return flight without direct orders from the Cuban Government.

Late this afternoon the State Department asked the Czech Embassy in Washington to ask the Swiss Embassy in Havana

Continued on Page 12, Column 4

19 Cubans in U.S. for Talks Despite Ban

Continued From Page 1, Col. 1

to ask the Cuban Government to send word to the pilot to take the Cubans home.

The department said the visitors—three crew members and the 19 passengers—could leave the airport customs area and spend the night in a motel near the airport under the supervision of the Immigration Service.

When the Cubans first requested permission to come to the conference, they relayed the request through the Czechoslovak Embassy in Washington, which handles such matters for the Cubans in the absence of regular diplomatic channels between the United States and Cuba.

After the State Department refused permission, nothing more was heard of the Cuban sugar delegation until 8 A.M. today.

At that hour, the Federal Aviation Administration in Houston received a flight plan for an inbound Cuban plane on its Telex equipment. The flight plan said the plane planned to leave Havana at 9 A.M. and arrive at New Orleans about 11 A.M.

The Houston F.A.A. office asked Havana for more details but was told the plane had already taken off.

Houston notified the Senate Department at 8:45 A.M., and the department asked the Swiss Embassy in Havana to find out what was going on. The Swiss checked and reported that the Cuban Foreign Ministry knew nothing about it.

About 10 A.M. the air traffic control tower at New Orleans received a radio message from the pilot saying he was over the Gulf and would arrive at the

New Orleans airport in a few minutes.

"So the tower brought them in," said the airport manager, Paul Stoulig. They landed about 10:20 A.M. and were promptly ushered into the Customs office. The plane was placed under guard.

"The Government's got guards all around it," Mr. Stoulig said. "We can't get near it."

The Houston F.A.A. office reportedly was not particularly surprised at receiving the flight plan because it handles flight plans for about 10 flights a day of planes carrying refugees from Cuba to the United States.

Because the plane was civilian and had filed a flight plan, it was not considered a military threat and was not placed under Air Force surveillance, a State Department spokesman said.

Some State Department people reportedly were wondering whether there might be a connection between the Cuban sugar delegation and the hijacked American airliner still in Havana.

If the Cuban Government hoped to force its sugar delegation into the New Orleans meeting by holding the American airliner, that word had not made its way back through the Swiss and Czechoslovak Embassies by this evening.

The sugar conference, which began yesterday, is a two-week session being attended by about 600 sugar technologists from 54 nations.

747 Held in Havana

MIAMI, Oct. 26 (UPI) — The return of a hijacked Boeing 747 with 221 passengers aboard, held overnight in Havana, was further delayed today by the

arrival at Jose Marti Airport of Soviet Premier Aleksei N. Kosygin.

"They're apparently reluctant to let any planes in or out while Kosygin's in the area," a spokesman for American Airlines, owners of the 747, said.

The plane, American Airlines Flight 98 bound from New York to Puerto Rico, was hijacked last night by a lone gunman about an hour after the plane left Kennedy International Airport.

Among the passengers were three sky marshals and an off-duty agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Marshals' Role Explained

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Oct. 26—A spokesman for the Government's anti-hijacking program said today that officials had long anticipated the capture of a plane with sky marshals aboard.

No one should be surprised, the spokesman said, that the Federal law officers did not prevent the forced flight of the Boeing 747 to Cuba.

"Their training includes, first off, when not to do anything at all," said the press officer for the Transportation Department's security office. "All the sky marshals are there for is to get the fellow if he makes a mistake. Apparently this fellow today never dropped his guard."