

TURDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 1969

Wife Advises Acquitted Hijacker to Avoid Planes

SAVANNAH, Ga., Nov. 21 (UPI)—Shortly after being acquitted in a trial yesterday on charges of air piracy, Robert M. Helmey was told by his wife that part of his rehabilitation program would be "staying away from airplanes."

The jury foreman, Herb Schafer, said that deliberations lasted "25 to 30 minutes at the most. It didn't take us long to make up our minds," he added.

The jury acquitted the former Green Beret on grounds that he was temporarily insane when he hijacked a United Air Lines Boeing 707 to Cuba last Jan. 11.

In the trial, Government lawyers charged that Mr. Helmey had forced his way into the cockpit of the giant jet shortly after it left Jacksonville, Fla.

Mr. Helmey, 36 years old, contended, however, that he saw the cockpit door open and merely walked in.

Two Government doctors testified that, in their opinion, Mr. Helmey was not mentally competent at the time.

"He wanted to do something

Former Green Beret Freed of Air Piracy on Plea of Temporary Insanity

to alleviate what he felt was an immediate danger to his country," Dr. Harold Fain, assistant chief of psychiatry at the United States Mental Center for Federal Prisoners at Springfield, Mo., said.

Mr. Helmey's wife testified earlier that her husband had told her he was in a plot to overthrow the Castro regime in Cuba.

In emotional testimony, Mr. Helmey on Wednesday described 103 days he spent in virtual solitary confinement in Cuba. While there, he said, he was accused by the Cubans of being both an agent of the Central Intelligence Agency and a counter-revolutionary.

Eritrean Youths Sent

Special to The New

KARACHI

Three

sentenced today by a court here to one-year imprisonment each on charges of attempting to blow up an Ethiopian airliner at Karachi Airfield on June 18.

The youths, members of the Eritrean Front, fired at an airplane parked. There was fire, but the plane was not damaged.