

A Flight From Newark to Cuba Shifted After Threat Is Reported

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NEWARK, Dec. 3 — The first regular charter service between Havana and the New York metropolitan area began today, but only after an apparent terrorist threat had forced Cubana de Aviación to shift the departure of its Russian-built airliner to Kennedy International Airport.

The flight, No. 9073, was the first of 17 scheduled in December expressly for large numbers of Cuban-Americans in this area who want to visit their relatives — in many instances for the first time in two decades — in their native land. Some 25,000 people from the metropolitan area have made the trip so far this year, according to tour operators. Until the start of the new service they had to fly first to Miami.

There were divergent explanations of why the scheduled 10 A.M. departure from Newark had become a 5:30 P.M. departure from Kennedy.

Omega 7 Threats Reported

People involved in organizing the 90-day tours said it was due to the withdrawal of a concern that was to provide ground service for the Cuban airliner. They said the carrier, Butler Aviation, a small concern based in the North Terminal of Newark International Airport, had received threats last week from the anti-Castro organization Omega 7.

Persons saying that they were members of Omega 7 have claimed responsibility on its behalf for 13 bombings in the metropolitan area since 1975, and for the assassination of Eulalio José Negrin, a refugee leader shot to death in Union City Nov. 25.

But a spokesman for Butler said it had not, as the persons involved in organizing the tours said, agreed with American Air-

ways Charter of Miami to provide ground service for the airliner. He said he would not comment about the reports of terrorist threats, adding, "This is an internal matter between us and the customer."

Another Butler executive, reached at the Montvale, N.J., offices of Butler International, the parent concern, said the police had told the concern last week that terrorist threats had been reported. This executive said the shift of airports probably followed a meeting last week of representatives of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and security agents of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.

F.B.I. Says It Got No Threats

A spokesman for the F.B.I. in Newark said no threats had been reported to that agency. A spokesman for the Port Authority, which operates both airports, said he knew of no complaints either. But he said he learned Friday that Butler had rescinded an agreement concerning Cubana, and referred questions about the circumstances to Butler.

Butler's replacement in handling the airline's Ilyushin 62M jetliner was said to be Icelandic Airlines at Kennedy Airport. Passengers who had been asked to go to Newark Airport at 5 A.M. were advised of the change overnight, and they took off from Kennedy more than 12 hours later.

Spokesmen for anti-Castro organizations have declared their opposition to the flights, although they have not publicly threatened them.

The charter flights are administered by American Airways Charter. That concern had a Panama-based partner named Havanatur until last month, when a decision by the Treasury Department disallowed the arrangement.