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^AM-Original Hijackers,0365<

^Hijackers Warn United States Against Military Intervention<

^With AM-Beirut Hostages<

BEIRUT, Lebanon (AP) — Two Moslem gunmen who claimed responsibility for the TWA hijacking said Sunday they had sought the "the glory of martyrdom" and threatened to strike again if America retaliated for the hostage-taking.

The two hooded men, apparently young, were whisked into Beirut airport's transit lounge almost exactly as an International Red Cross convoy left the Lebanese capital, carrying 39 hostages to Syria and freedom.

"America's war machine is nothing but children's toys as far as we are concerned," one of the hijackers, wearing a beige hood, told reporters. "We also warn the United States anew against playing with fire, because we are determined to burn it with this fire."

The men were identified as the hijackers by officials of Hezbollah, or Party of God, the radical Shiite Moslem group believed to have planned the seizure of the plane on June 14. The pair would not give their names.

The two hijackers, described as brutal by passengers, turned over the hostages to the more moderate Amal Moslem militia after the TWA jet came to rest in Beirut on June 16.

"We staged this hijack to show the world the ability of the oppressed to confront America and chase its interests everywhere. .. we were hoping that God almighty would bestow upon us the glory of martyrdom in the defense of our nation and dignity," the hooded man said.

He said that if the United States did not honor two demands made by their captors — freedom for Lebanese prisoners in Israeli jails and no reprisals against Lebanon — the hijackers would strike again.

"We emphasize that in the event of any violation of commitments that had been agreed upon with a Syrian guarantee for the release of the prisoners in occupied Palestine (Israel), we address a strong warning to America who knows that we are capable of accomplishing it," he said.

The two men refused to answer reporters' questions and left after reading their 10-minute statement.

It ended with the sentence "America is the great Satan," and it was signed by: "The Oppressed On Earth." Both are phrases used by pro-Iranian revolutionaries.

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^AM-HIJACK-DEPART< In Beirut, Hooded Men Tell of Hostages' Release< By JOHN KIFNER= c.1985 N.Y. Times News Service= @

BEIRUT, Lebanon — Hoods over their heads and automatic pistols jammed in their pants, two men who said they were the original hijackers of the Trans World Airlines jet held a bizarre news conference Sunday at the moment that the 39 American hostages began their journey to Syria and freedom after 17 days in captivity.

"America is the great Satan," declared one of the men, reading an angry statement, his head covered by what appeared to be a pillowcase with eyeholes cut into it.

They said they had hoped to die as martyrs in the operation.

As the two men were appearing before the foreign television cameras and journalists, their hostages were piling into a caravan of Red Cross cars a few miles away in the Shiite settlements of Bourj el Brajneh just off the airport runways.

It was a strange moment, even by the standards that prevail in this shattered, anarchic city, where violence is so routine that residents do not flinch at the frequent bursts of automatic weapons fire throughout the day and the night.

The two young-looking men strode from the red and white TWA jet at a corner of the runway into the passenger lounge of the airport, once the center of travel for the Middle East, now dirty and seedy, a proven haven for hijackers.

One wore a baby-blue hood, the other a beige one.

The lounge had been taken over by heavily armed, bearded young Shiite militiamen, who were apparently from both the Amal movement and the Party of God. The airport is in a part of Beirut controlled by Shiite militiamen.

"We staged this hijack that showed the world the ability of the oppressed to confront America and chase its interests everywhere," said one of the men, reading a statement in Arabic in a loud, harsh voice.

"We never thought we will return to our people and brethren, but we were hoping that God Almighty would bestow upon us the glory of martyrdom in defense of our nation and dignity," he went on.

When they had finished reading their statement, they got up and walked out the door.

The jetliner remained on the edge of the runway. A fresh crew from the airline is reportedly supposed to come to Beirut to fly the plane out of the airport.

The two men credited Syria with providing a solution to the impasse that had kept the hostages captive for 17 days and a last-minute snag that had delayed their departure from Beirut Saturday. The hostages' principal demand had been the freedom of more than 700 Lebanese and Palestinian prisoners held by the Israelis in Atlit prison.

This was how the men described the negotiation:

"After a direct contact the Syrian brothers made with us, we assigned comrades to go to Damascus to reach an understanding over the the hijack case, and after the Syrian brothers informed us of the commitments they have received for the release of our imprisoned brothers in Al Atlit, we reciprocated with willingness to end the hijack in the manner that

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22:26 the realization of our demand on a basis that the American hostages and the Lebanese prisoners be freed in batches.

That was because we do not trust America's word and commitment. But after pledges and guarantees sponsored by President Hafez Assad that the Atlit prisoners will be freed, especially the one made by the American president to President Assad, and after Syria has formally announced this commitment, and of respect for Syria's credibility and the word of its president, Hafez Assad, we decided to free the hostages.

But the violent threats that Reagan unleashed in Chicago made us decide to delay the release operation until the United States backs out of its rashness and takes up a reconciliatory tone. This was what happened. Bowing to our demand that was communicated to the Syrian government, the U.S. State Department has issued a statement that was published through the international media. Therefore we announce the release of the American hostages upon the completion of this news conference. Should any part of the guarantees fail," the statement went on to say, "we address a strong warning to America, who knows that we are capable of accomplishing it."

The statement was signed by "The Oppressed of the Earth."

According to officials here, Assad played a key behind-the-scenes role in hammering out the deal to free the 39 Americans. .

They said Assad had a considerable investment in prestige riding on freeing the hostages, after he had become a party to the arrangements to release them through Damascus.

One clear sign Sunday of his role was the presence of three gray cars filled with tough-looking plainclothesmen of the Syrian intelligence parked among the motley militiamen in the shantytown where the hostages were gathered.

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