

Hijackers angered by police presence

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) — Three angry, armed young men, one of whom didn't look old enough to grow a beard, hijacked a Trans World Airlines 727 passenger jet this morning from Albuquerque airport.

The trio used a stuck car ruse to get an auto wrecker tow truck, and then forced the driver to take them to the airport where they drove over some concrete blocks, onto the airport ramp and within 20 feet of the aircraft, Flight 196, carrying 43 passengers and six crew members.

They bounded up a stairway into the aircraft and held a TWA fuel handler hostage until he told them the plane couldn't leave until his fuel truck was moved.

The three hijackers later were identified by the FBI as Michael Finney, 20, Ralph Goodwin, 24, and Charlie Hill, 21. All were wanted in connection with the Nov. 8 slaying of state policeman Robert Rosenbloom west of Albuquerque.

The TWA fuel handler, Ron Simpson, 30, said he was leaving the aircraft cockpit "and was just going out the front door when they came running up the steps."

He said two of the men had guns and the third a "little steak knife like is used at the supper table."

Simpson said the three were black.

The tow truck driver, Victor J. Dugger, said he was called about 1 a.m. by persons who said their car was stuck in the sand in southeast Albuquerque.

Dugger said that when he got out of the truck one of the men, "stuck a gun in my face. They told me to do what they said and I wouldn't get hurt."

He said they told him, "You know who we are." Dugger said he replied, "Yes, I know, who you are."

Dugger said they rode around in his truck for several minutes and then went to the Post Office Annex at the airport. They sat there for a few minutes and watched the plane load its 12 Albuquerque boarding passengers, including two children.

Then, Dugger said, the trio

told him to drive over concrete blocks erected as a barrier to keep people from airport ramps, and take them to the aircraft some 750 feet away.

Dugger's truck stopped about 20 feet from the loading stairway.

The men got out and ran up the steps and into the aircraft.

Dugger later told newsmen the three men apparently knew what time the aircraft would be boarded and what time it would take off.

The aircraft was scheduled to depart at 1:55 a.m. It left at 2:07 a.m. said Tom Blain, TWA control agent in the terminal building. The flight had originated in Phoenix, Ariz.

Simpson said the three men told him to get back on the aircraft. Two of them pointed guns at him, Simpson said.

"The guy who seemed to be in charge sent another guy to the rear with a hostess. He had the youngest guy stay with me and another hostess in the front.

"The guy who looked the oldest was giving orders to everybody and was running back and fourth.

"About that time I saw police cars, about two or three, pull up, and then they (the three men) started getting shook up."

"The guy in charge gave the younger guy a gun and took the knife from him.

"They told the pilot (Capt. Jim McGhee) to get 'the pigs out of here, and get the engineer up here right now,'" Simpson said.

"I told the youngest guy you can't take off until I unhook the fuel truck," Simpson said. "I was the only guy on the shift that knows how."

"We waited and waited," Simpson said. "Finally the engineer came up and they let me off."

He said the engineer, J.B. McFarland, "was outside. The door was closed. They opened the door a crack to let him in."

Simpson said he told the city policemen in the patrol cars "they better move their cars. These guys are getting mad and more scared all the time."

Simpson said the three were wearing pants, shirts and jackets but not suits.



IDENTIFIED AS HIJACKERS — These three men were identified by the FBI as the hijackers of a Trans World Airlines jet Saturday in Albuquerque. They are also named in state warrants charging them with murder in the Nov. 8 slaying of a New Mexico state police officer. They are from left: Charlie Hill, 21; Ralph Goodwin, 24; and Michael Finney, 20. (AP)

Wife: 'I felt so helpless'

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) — Mrs. Dean E. Helgason, 27, had gone to the Albuquerque Airport early Saturday with her 21-month-old daughter to see her husband depart for Chicago.

He was going to the funeral of his father, who had died Thanksgiving Day.

"The police were there and there was nothing they could do," she later told newsmen.

"My husband was the last person to get on the plane," Mrs. Helgason said.

"He had just stepped inside the plane when the three men drove up in a wrecker and ran up the boarding stairs," she

said. "One of the airline men on the ramp came running back to the terminal shouting. 'He has a gun.'" she said.

"I felt so helpless when the plane started its engines and started to take off," Mrs. Helgason said.

Her husband, 31, is a junior physics student at the University of New Mexico.

Vigil: 'Shrewd'

New Mexico State Police Chief Martin Vigil said Saturday, three young black airline hijackers were shrewd in their escape ruse from Albuquerque.

"I never would have anticipated they would try with a wrecker driver," Vigil said. "They were pretty shrewd." The three men called an Al-

buquerque tow truck service early Saturday and said they needed help because their car was stuck in the sand.

The tow truck driver, Victor Dugger, was abducted by the three men. They forced him to eventually drive the truck to within about 20 feet of a TWA 727 passenger jetliner at the Albuquerque airport.

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