

More Bodies from Shannon Crash

## **SABOTAGE RULED OUT**

Toss of a Coin – And Girl Dies

Irish Independent Reporters  
Shannon Airport, Monday.

Sabotage was to-night ruled out as a possible cause of Sunday's crash at Shannon in which 83 people died. The international Sales director of President Airlines, owners of the chartered DC-6 airliner, told a Press conference that the inquiry so far had not disclosed anything abnormal.

A full-scale investigation into the crash was opened here today after officials of President Airlines, The US Federal Aviation Agency and the Civil Aeronautics Board arrived from New York.

The inquiry was opened at a conference between them and the Department of Transport and Power experts. The Agency experts were Mr. J. Cyrocki and Mr. R. Beckley, and the Aeronautics Board officials were Mr. G. Haldeman and Mr. M. Clarke.

The investigators heard a sound reconstruction of the last seconds of the flight when airport officials played over a tape recording of the radio-telephone conversation between control tower officers and the captain.

Meanwhile, it was revealed that the toss of a coin brought a tragic end to the bright dreams of Austrian-born Erika Urban (22), a stewardess aboard the ill-fated plane.

The toss took place last week between Erika and her sister Edith (30) both stewardesses with President Airlines, in their Long Island (New York) home, where they lived between flights.

At stake was who would fly a round-trip flight to Dusseldorf. Erika called heads. She won – and paid with her life. It was to be her last trip before she went to study Hotel Management.

Erika was joined at Shannon by her uncle, Herr Joseph Bachbauer, who was going to Canada on a hunting trip. He missed three flights in order to be with his niece. He was the mystery extra passenger who at first could not be accounted for.

## **LEAVING JOB**

In the airport's lounge, Erika's sister, who is married to an American, Mr. Martin Train, said she is giving up her job. The two sisters had hoped to be together soon for a holiday on the little farm in Austria, where they used to play as children.

Mrs. Train, sobbing and being comforted by friends, said she was going to the farm "to get away from it all".

She said that her dead sister loved Ireland. "She was always glad to get to Shannon. She used to go water skiing at Killaloe, and had a boy friend here".

The co-pilot of the plane Bud Budnich of New Jersey was to be married soon. His flight log book was found today by Sergeant William Nagle at Kildysart, more than six miles away. Another body was also washed up at this spot. The last entry in the log book was for September 4th.

## **TAIL LIFTED**

The harrowing scenes which had cast a shadow over Shannon Airport since the crash drew to a close tonight when all but seven of the bodies were recovered from the wreckage buried in the

mud flats. The Limerick dredger was used to lift the tail section of the shattered plane so that bodies pinned underneath might be released.

The last of the bodies recovered today were entombed in the deeply-embedded cockpit section. Efforts to uncover them went on for hours as a team of 40 workers again had a grim race with the incoming tide which finally forced the temporary suspension of operations.

The recovery operations will be resumed tomorrow as soon as the tide has receded to uncover the wreckage.

A band of 45 workers today began building a temporary railway over the grey wasteland of mud separating the plane from the shore. Tracks were made over a two foot deep bed of hay to prevent them sinking into the slime.

## **KEY TO MYSTERY**

Manually operated bogeys will roll over the two-foot wide track to carry instruments and other parts of the wreckage ashore for expert examination. It is hoped that in them may lie the key to the mystery surrounding the plane's last seconds between its take-off from the airport and its death dive into the estuary two miles away. The work of building the railway is expected to take two days.

There was a rescue during the recovery operations today when one of the workers, Mr. E. Mulqueen, sank up to his waist in the mud, exhausted. He was hauled out and then pulled to shore over the mud on an improvised site.

An inquest is expected to be held on Wednesday morning at the airport by Dr. T.E. O'Connor, Coroner for East Clare.

The State pathologist Dr. Maurice Hickey, arrived here tonight to carry out a post-mortem on the bodies of the crew.

The first relative of the victims to arrive at Shannon was Mr. H. Peill, who flew in from Toronto today. He said that his brother Peter was on the ill-fated flight. An extensive farmer in Austria, he was to visit Canada after his trip to Chicago.

## **STATEMENT**

Nothing has been so far found in the course of the investigations to indicate sabotage as a possible cause of the crash, said Mr. Duncan Tolmie, International Sales Director of President Airlines, at a Press conference.

Any findings of that nature, however, he added, would have to be made by competent authorities but because of certain statements in some newspapers, he wanted to make it clear that there was nothing to point to sabotage. The inquiry so far has not disclosed anything abnormal.

The seven-year-old aircraft was completely air worthy and was not due for its next major overhaul until it had completed another 3,000 hours flying. Conditions at take-off were normal, he said.

Its six hour stop at Shannon was due to refuelling and to allow for the completion of the normal 12-hour rest period for the crew, which had flown in from New York 15 hours earlier. They had left it to be flown on to Dusseldorf by another crew while they took their rest period at Shannon before again manning it for its return journey. The aircraft was not in any way over-taxed said Mr. Tolmie. All the space was being fully utilised but no more.

The Company deeply regretted the great loss of life. It had made arrangements for the transfer home of the remains of the passengers and crew and had arranged for transportation of the victims relatives who wished to travel to Shannon.

## **Messages of Sympathy**

The Minister for External Affairs, Mr. F. Aiken, has sent messages of sympathy to the Ambassadors of the United States and Federal Republic of Germany.

The Minister for Transport and Power, Mr. Childers, has sent messages of sympathy on the disaster to the Federal German Minister of Transport, Bonn, and Dr. Ing – H.C. Seebohm and to the President of President Airlines.

The Mayor of Limerick, Ald. D. O'Malley, T.D. sent telegrams of sympathy to the Netherlands Embassy, The German, Swiss and Austrian legations in Dublin and to the President of President Airlines.

The Chairman of the Ennis U.D.C Mr. Dermot Honan, also sent telegrams of sympathy.