

MATS Stewardesses Provide Touch of Christmas for Hungarian Refugees En Route To U.S.

Munich, Germany — Christmas touched the refugee airlift to America today. Stewardesses of a plane carrying 74 Hungarians to the United States set up a Christmas tree in the aircraft cabin, complete with decorations and gifts of apples, oranges, chewing gum and candy

for all the passengers. The plane, a commercial DC4 under charter to the Military Air Transport Service took off in the first of 10 scheduled flights during the day. Today's airlift was expected to raise the total of Hungarians flown to new homes in the

United States to more than 3,400. The Santa Claus stewardesses who decided to brighten the trip with the spirit of Christmas were Darlena De Long, North Hollywood, and Pat Benko, Encino, Calif. Meanwhile, another plane piloted by Air Force Capt. Charles

A. Lamanna, Little Falls, N.Y., who set an unofficial MATS record for the 3,700-mile flight from McGuire AFB, N.J., to Munich-Reim airport Monday, was nearing the United States. Lamanna made the trip in a C121 Constellation in 10 hours and 59 minutes. He was the first

MATS aircraft commander to complete the Munich-McGuire-Munich round trip since the start of "Operation Safe Haven" to airlift an estimated 9,800 Hungarian refugees to America before the New Year. Lamanna took off again late Monday with 68 passengers.

As fast as the airlift could fly them from Munich, more refugees were pouring in. The U.S. Army reported Monday night 3,489 Hungarians had stayed overnight in two barracks "hotels" and filled up on generous GI dinners and breakfasts, since

the operation started one week ago. Every meal served the refugees included fresh oranges, on the personal order of Maj. Gen. Gordon B. Rogers, commanding officer of the Army's Southern Area Command in Germany. Rogers put oranges on the

menu when he discovered a few of the Hungarians had seen an orange since the start of World War II. The diameter of the moon is over one-fourth that of the earth. 2,160 miles compared with a little under 8,000.



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