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Israel Warns Arabs, Singling Out Lebanon, On Guerrilla Attack On El Al Plane

JERUSALEM, Feb. 19 (JTA) -- The machine-gun attack by Arab terrorists on an El Al airliner Tuesday in Zurich drew a veiled warning to the Arab states today from Israel Transport Minister Moshe Carmel. His warning was directed apparently at least in part against Lebanon, for he told the Knesset (Parliament) in an hour-long speech that Lebanon must "eradicate" the "nest of terrorists" who three times used her territory as a base of operations against Israel.

He voiced this claim despite the assertion of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, based in Amman, Jordan, that its guerrillas shot up the Boeing 720B airliner at Kloten International Airport. The London Evening Standard quoted official Lebanese sources as saying that none of the guerrillas went to Zurich through Lebanon. Earlier, Transport Minister Carmel asserted that one of them had proceeded to Zurich by way of Damascus. The Damascus airport is less than 40 miles from Israeli positions on the captured Syrian Golan Heights.

"Israel has both the moral strength and the operational ability," he said, "to break the backbone of the attackers' organization. However, it would be better if the Arab states themselves would restrain the terrorist gangs."

The Government meanwhile decided to send a circular letter to all United Nations members via the General Assembly president pointing out that protection of civil aviation is the concern of all. The message will ask that they consider measures to prevent a recurrence of attacks like the one in Zurich and the Dec. 26 terrorist attack on an El Al airliner in Athens airport that resulted in the death of one Israeli. Israel will also approach the International Civil Aviation Organization, a UN agency based in Montreal, and the International Air Transportation Association, a pilots group, with the problem. The case will also be taken up in foreign capitals.

High level consultation in Government continued all day as authorities tried to determine what course of action--political, diplomatic and possibly military--should be taken. Israel reacted to the Athens incident by sending helicopter-borne commandos two days later to destroy 13 commercial aircraft on the ground at Beirut Airport. The terrorists who shot up the aircraft in Athens had come from Beirut. That incident led to a condemnation of Israel in the Security Council and the subsequent embargo by President de Gaulle of France on all arms and military equipment to Israel. The terrorist act was not mentioned in the UN resolution.

The big question confronting the Government was whether or not to order another deterrent reprisal raid. An angry Israeli public was demanding one swiftly, and Israeli papers reflected their mood. The daily Lamerhav said: "The sabotage of airways cannot be one-sided." And Hayom, published by the right-wing Gahal (Herut-Liberal parties alignment), put it this way: Israel "must react because her neighbors understand no other language."

State Department Calls Upon Israel Not To Retaliate

But the Government was apparently not prepared to rush headlong into a military response, possibly taking into account Washington's call for "utmost restraint." Shlomo Argov, a minister temporarily in charge of the Washington Embassy, was called to the State Department by Assistant Secretary of State Joseph J. Sisco to discuss the dangers to Mideast peace posed by the Zurich attack.

It was learned that Mr. Argov, standing in for Ambassador Yitzhak Rabin, was read the same statement that Department spokesman Robert J. McCloskey gave the press. Mr. McCloskey condemned the Zurich attack and other attacks on civil aviation as "deplorable and senseless."

Such provocative attacks," he said, "only add to the tension in the Middle East where the utmost restraint is essential if efforts to achieve peace are to have any prospect of success." Yesterday, the State Department said, "We are concerned by the threat...to the safety and freedom of international civil aviation."

Mr. McCloskey declined to say whether Mr. Sisco had made a direct appeal to Mr. Argov against an Israeli military reply. He said, however, that the Nixon Administration would raise the matter at a meeting beginning Monday in Montreal of the International Civil Aviation Organization council.

Secretary-General U Thant of the United Nations and the British Foreign Office, both of whom condemned the Tuesday attack, strongly urged Israel not to take retaliatory measures lest the delicate Middle East balance be upset and current peace-making efforts negated.

(United States Ambassador to the UN, Charles W. Yost, was quoted yesterday as saying, "The Israeli Government would be advised to keep in mind the reaction of world opinion in light of previous events. Right now the outrage will be focused on those who committed the act, and Israel would be well advised to keep it there. We will do our best to help.")

Mr. Carmel told the Knesset that Israel has information that all three attacks on El Al planes in the past year--including a hi-jacking last summer of an aircraft en route from Rome to Tel Aviv--were plot-

ted in Lebanon. The guerrillas, he said, departed from Beirut.

The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine has an office in Beirut. It has claimed responsibility for the three incidents. The responsibility for the attacks rests, Mr. Carmel said, not only with assailants themselves but also with the states where they organize, train, plan attacks and from which they set off on their "murderous journeys." Recalling the Security Council's failure to cite the reason for the Beirut attack in its Dec. 31 resolution, he said that its "unilateral attitude" undoubtedly encourages hi-jacking, assaults and murder. "The conscience of the Council members and the world cannot remain clear when, in the wake of this resolution, the attacks were renewed," he declared.

Mr. Carmel warned the Arab states Tuesday that the Zurich attack could have consequences for Arab civil aviation as grave as those inflicted on Israeli aviation. He emphasized, "We shall not tolerate a situation where Israeli civilian planes are attacked with impunity while civilian Arab planes continue to fly without disturbance."

(In Chicago, Israel's Ambassador Rabin said he would not be surprised if Israel ordered a reprisal action. He told newsmen, "Israel cannot let her airline and her civilian population be hurt and do nothing." He said that the full public support he has promised Arab commandos made President Nasser of Egypt at least partially to blame for the incident. Gen. Rabin was in Chicago for speeches.)

Mr. Carmel's warning that "Israel reserves its right to protect its planes and citizens wherever they are," was given Knesset endorsement. Israel attaches major importance to El Al as its lifeline to the world. Surrounded on all sides by enemies except on its Mediterranean shore, Israel has developed the airling to play a prime role in the State's growth and development.

Arab Rejoicing Tempered By Concern Over Diplomatic Consequences

LONDON, Feb. 19 (JTA) -- Arab rejoicing over the terrorist attack on an Israeli airliner in Switzerland Tuesday was tempered today by concern in political circles over the long-range diplomatic consequences of the action and fear in Beirut that the Israelis would once again hold Lebanon responsible for the terrorist actions and take action against that country.

The London Evening Standard said that reports from Cairo revealed concern over the possible effect of the attack on the worldwide campaign the Arab governments have mounted to try to compel the British Government to embargo the sale of arms to Israel. The campaign was to have reached a new stage in the next 48 hours, the Evening Standard said, with an official warning from the Egyptian Government to Britain. But the Zurich affair, the paper said, has undermined this move. An immediate Arab objective is to make Britain halt the sale of Centurion tanks to Israel. Britain has been supplying Centurions to Israel for more than 10 years.

In Cairo, official Egyptian Government spokesman Mohammed Hassan el-Zayyat said an Israeli reprisal attack was expected since "Israel's policy is government by terror."

Swiss Cabinet Hits Attack; Authorities Study Security Weaknesses At Airport

GENEVA, Feb. 19 (JTA) -- The Swiss Cabinet went into session at Berne today to consider the situation created by the Arab terrorist attack on a civilian Israeli airliner. In a statement issued following the meeting, the Cabinet expressed "deep regret" over the act which "made our neutral soil the arena of warlike conflict" and condemned the action "in all severity." It called for international action to halt "aerial-piracy and other attacks against air travel."

The Cabinet acted after receiving detailed preliminary reports on the incident, as Federal and cantonal authorities pressed investigations seeking to find holes in the security arrangements at Kloten Airport set up after the attack on an El Al airliner in Athens last December. One question to which they sought the answer was how the four Arab terrorists, heavily armed, had managed to drive a hired Volkswagen so near the runway as to be able to open fire on the El Al Boeing 720B without being detected.

The three surviving terrorists--the fourth was shot and killed by an Israeli security guard identified as Rachamin Mordechai, 21--may be charged with attempted murder, which can carry a sentence of life imprisonment. District Attorney Joerg Renberg said they might also be charged with endangering air traffic and with intent to use explosives to harm or kill.

The Israeli security officer, who leaped off the plane to attack the Arab assailants, killing one, was also held by the Swiss police. Swiss police said he could be released on the grounds that he had fired in self-defense, or accused of manslaughter or even of murder if it were established that the Arabs had stopped firing before the Israeli rushed them.

On this crucial point, a number of witnesses said that the Arabs had continued to fire on the plane after the Israeli guard began to return their fire, but Mr. Renberg said one witness has asserted the Arabs had ceased firing before the Israeli shot at them. According to the Zurich police, the Israeli maintained silence and refused to answer questions.

(In Jerusalem, authorities said they were doing everything in their power to provide legal protection to the Israeli, whom they described as a "passenger". It was decided that no extradition request would be filed on the terrorists since their offense is not listed in the treaty between the two countries.)

The Arab prisoner talked through an interpreter. A police spokesman said one of the prisoners had said the four Arabs had "undergone training for this action" but did not disclose where the training had

taken place. All four were said to have been identified as natives of Israel or Israel-occupied territories and, as such, would not have required Swiss visas. Police said the three surviving Arabs had quietly surrendered but the Israeli had had to be forcibly disarmed or he would have killed all of the terrorists.

Police in Zurich displayed some of the weapons carried by the quartet, including a Russian-made Kalachnikov sub-machinegun with which they sprayed the aircraft with 60 bullets in three bursts. Police said that if any of the thermite incendiary bombs the Arabs threw at the plane had detonated near its wings, the plane's fuel supply would have exploded. Shells found on the runway at the Zurich airport were of Russian make.

Confidence in Swiss action was expressed by Gideon Rafael, director-general of the Israeli Foreign Ministry, who had been a passenger on the attacked airliner. He said he had talked with the Swiss authorities before his departure from Zurich and commented that Switzerland, "as a State of law and justice" would know how to deal with the case.

The Swiss Cabinet's statement today expressed particular outrage over the fact that the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine had claimed credit for the attack and the violation of Swiss neutrality. The statement noted that the Swiss reaction was marked "with all the greater indignation" in view of the substantial past Swiss aid for Palestine Arab refugees.

Anticipating this reaction, the Arab organization issued an "apology" Tuesday night to the Swiss people. It claimed credit for the attack and said El Al pilots would not be endangered if they persuaded the Israel Government to "stop using El Al planes for military purposes." The statement was carried on the Swiss television network Tuesday night.

Swiss press reports described the Swiss people as shocked and angered over the attack on the airliner and the violation of Swiss neutrality. Offers of blood donations for the wounded El Al trainee-pilot, Yoram Peress, were telephoned to the Zurich hospital where he remained in critical condition today after major surgery.

The International Air Transport Association, from its Geneva headquarters, issued a statement denouncing the attack in the strongest terms. The International Federation of Airline Pilots Associations, based in London, said the selection of civilian aircraft for criminal attacks threatened international aviation.

The Histadrut, the Israel Federation of Labor, cabled appeals today to the International Transport Union in London and the International Congress of Free Trade Unions in Brussels asking that every measure be taken to ensure freedom of transport and safety of passengers and crew members of civil aircraft. The Israeli Association of Travel and Tourist Agents called on the Universal Federation of Tourist Agents for action to prevent recurrence of attacks on airliners.

The terrorists, as identified by the Popular Front, in Amman, were Amina Dahbour, a 25-year-old schoolteacher from Gaza; Ibrahim Tewfik, a laborer from Haifa; Hohamed Abu el Haza, a Nazareth laborer; and Abdel Mohsen Hassan, a driver from Lydda, who was killed.

(The Popular Front called the attack a reprisal for brutality and torture allegedly committed by Israeli authorities against "unarmed and innocent civilians in occupied Arab territory.")

El Al Continues Services As Scheduled; Kol Urges More American Travel To Israel

TEL AVIV, Feb. 19 (JTA) -- El Al Israel National Airlines declared today that despite the attack on one of its planes at Zurich Tuesday, the line will maintain all regular services as scheduled. Mordechai Ben-Ari, the El Al director-general, expressed gratification that all the passengers on the attacked plane had decided to continue their journey to Israel by El Al and not to transfer to another line. A direct New York-Lydda flight was diverted to Zurich this morning to pick up the passengers and crew of the disabled airliner. It brought them into Lydda today. A 12-man El Al technical crew left for Zurich today to examine the damaged airliner and to make the necessary repairs.

In an interview here today with the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Moshe Kol, Israeli Minister of Tourism and Development, said that one of the motives of the attack on the El Al airliner was to kill Israeli tourism and create an atmosphere of tension and hysteria, bolstering Russian and French attempts to establish a crisis atmosphere on the eve of possible Four Power talks on a Middle East settlement.

The Israeli official said American Jews had to answer these attacks by increasing travel to Israel this year, thereby proving that intimidation would not work. American Jewish organizations, he said, should not reply to the attacks with indignant statements but by organizing new group flights to Israel, thus showing real solidarity with Israel. The heads of the Christian churches in Jerusalem, Mr. Kol said, had told him they had decided to show their support of Israel by increasing the number of Biblical tours and Christian pilgrimages. American Jews should do no less, he said, and should show an example of Jewish stubbornness to convince the Arabs of the futility of further attacks. He asserted that he expected a 15 percent increase in tourism this year, with more than 500,000 tourists visiting the country and tourism netting for Israel more than a record \$100 million.

Vatican Newspaper L'Osservatore Romano Condemns Zurich Raid

ROME, Feb. 19 (JTA) -- Vatican newspaper L'Osservatore Romano today condemned the Zurich attack. Pope Paul had criticized the Israeli Dec. 28 Beirut raid.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Warns Britain On Sale Of Arms To Jewish State

LONDON, Feb. 19 (JTA) -- The London Daily Telegraph reported today from Beirut a warning from Egyptian Foreign Minister Mahmoud Riad that if Britain sold arms to Israel, the act would make the United Nations Security Council resolution dealing with a Middle East settlement a "mere scrap of paper." The diplomat, speaking in Baghdad, also was reported as saying that British insistence on providing arms to Israel was "incompatible" with the Security Council Nov. 22, 1967 resolution.

Britain reportedly has been discussing the sale to Israel of some of its outmoded Centurion tanks. The Syrian and Iraqi Governments called for a boycott against British trade if the tanks were sold to Israel.

The Daily Telegraph's military correspondent said yesterday that Jordan was believed to have more tanks now than in 1967, when the Six-Day War broke out. He said Jordan has received Centurion tanks since then from Britain as well as from Iraq and Egypt where they have been replaced by Soviet equipment. The correspondent said Israel's request for Centurions was not likely to be rejected since it was compatible with U.S.-British policy to maintain an arms balance in the Middle East.

Parliament Hears Motion Urging Ban On British Arms Sales To Israelis

LONDON, Feb. 19 (JTA) -- A motion calling for a ban on British arms sales to Israel was introduced in Parliament yesterday by Mrs. Margaret McKay, a Labor MP and anti-Zionist. The motion warned that the sale of British arms or tanks to Israel "would contradict the spirit of Great Britain's sponsorship of the United Nations resolution of Nov. 22, 1967, would be injurious to British initiatives toward a Middle East political settlement and catastrophic to those wider United Kingdom-Arab trade interests so vital to Great Britain's economic health."

Foreign Secretary Michael Stewart refused to say whether such a sale would take place. He had been asked whether it would not prejudice Britain's "position as arbitrators" in the Security Council. Mr. Stewart replied that the Government favored a general restriction on arms shipments to the Middle East.

Christian Democrats Offered 'Compromise' Solution On Statute Of Limitations

BONN, Feb. 19 (JTA) -- The parliamentary bloc of the Christian Democratic Union, senior partner in the West German Government coalition, debating the question of abolition or prolongation of the statute of limitations on war crimes involving murder and crimes against humanity, was offered a "compromise" solution today. It appeared that the bloc might be able to reach agreement on the new proposal within the next two weeks.

Under existing law, investigation and prosecution of Nazi war crimes and crimes against humanity can be initiated only until Dec. 31 after which date no legal action can be taken against persons who had not been previously charged. The government is under pressure to cancel the statute of limitations or at least to defer it once again.

The new proposal being weighed by the Christian Democrats is that the statute should be deferred or cancelled only in cases involving the actual commission of murder. Cases involving "desk Nazis"--those who gave the order to kill Jews and others considered enemies of the Nazi regime but who did not actually participate in the killings--would come under the statute of limitations and would not be subject to prosecution after Dec. 31st.

There were no indications about the possible reaction to this proposal by the Social Democrats whose votes would be necessary for the adoption of new legislation.

National Democrats Fail To Meet Requirements, Party Congress Blocked

BONN, Feb. 19 (JTA) -- The neo-Nazi National Democratic Party will not be able to hold its party congress in the Beyrouth City Hall this weekend despite a court ruling that the city administration was obliged to rent the NPD the hall. A city ordinance requires payment of a deposit for use of the facility at least eight days before it is to be used. The NPD officials failed to meet that requirement and city officials refused to accept their deposit yesterday.

Canadian Cabinet Will Get Question Of Aiding Iraqi Jews Wishing To Immigrate

OTTAWA, Feb. 19 (JTA) -- External Affairs Minister Mitchell Sharp revealed today that he would take to the Cabinet the question of Canadian Government aid to Iraqi Jews wishing to emigrate to this country. The External Affairs Minister previously had received a six-man delegation representing the Canadian Jewish Congress and the Jewish Immigrant Aid Services of Canada (JIAS). The Minister of Immigration, Allan MacEachen, also participated in the meeting.

The delegation, led by Monroe Abbey, president of the CJCongress, asked that the immigration department grant entry permits to Iraqi Jews and that the External Affairs Department assist those Iraqi Jews who wished to leave their country to obtain exit permits. Canada received 5,032 Jews last year as landed immigrants from Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia. In 1967, the total was 3,446.

Bucharest Temple Jammed As 9 Iraqi Jews Are Mourned

BUCHAREST, Feb. 19 (JTA) -- This city's Choral Temple was jammed with 2,000 worshipers who recited kaddish (mourners prayers) for the nine Jews executed in Iraq. Chief Rabbi Moses Rosen said Romanian Jewry protested "the barbaric act of the Baghdad authorities." He recited the 137th Psalm dealing with the Jewish exile in Babylon, ancient site of present-day Iraq. "We hung our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. They hanged our brothers in the same place," Rabbi Rosen said.