

# JTA daily news bulletin

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## Israel In Contact With Governments Whose Planes Were Hijacked; Holds Jordan Responsible

JERUSALEM, Sept. 7 (JTA)--Yesterday's triple hijack by Arab terrorists was the subject of high level discussions here today. A Foreign Ministry spokesman said Israel was in contact with the governments whose planes were involved. Efforts were being made to check out terrorist claims that 50 Israeli nationals were among the 300 passengers aboard a TWA 707 and a Swissair DC-8 forced to land at Zerka, near Mafrag, in northern Jordan yesterday. The terrorists are holding the passengers and crews as hostages for Arab prisoners in Israel and Europe. (Late this afternoon, the terrorists issued a demand that the United States release Sirhan B. Sirhan who is facing execution in California for the assassination in 1968 of Senator Robert F. Kennedy. Reports from Washington said Secretary of State William P. Rogers was conferring with other administration officials on this latest terrorist demand. California's Governor Ronald Reagan assailed the demand for the Jordanian's release.) The Ministry spokesman said the fate of the passengers and the aircraft rests with the Jordanian government. He said he hoped Jordan would abide by international law and release the passengers and planes without delay. (According to reports from London the terrorists issued a 72-hour ultimatum for their demands to be met and hinted that the hostages would be tortured.)

According to one source, there were 12 Israeli passengers aboard the TWA jet hijacked on a flight from Frankfurt to New York. Among them reportedly were a Rabbi Joseph Raful-Harari and his five children, Mrs. Tova Cohen and her two children and a Mrs. Goren with two children. Several Jews of U.S. nationality were said to have been on the plane. They were identified as a Mrs. Friedman and Rabbi Itzhak Hutner of the Haim Berlin Yeshiva in New York, his wife, daughter and son-in-law. Minister of Transport Shimon Peres said last night that Israel was demanding the extradition of Laila Khaled, the survivor of a hijack team that failed in an attempt to seize an El Al airliner yesterday. Her male companion was shot and killed by an El Al security guard and she suffered slight injuries in a scuffle with passengers. Miss Khaled was taken into custody when the plane made an emergency landing at London. Mr. Peres said the crime was committed aboard an Israeli aircraft and therefore technically on Israeli soil. (British authorities reportedly have the Israeli extradition demand under consideration. According to reports from London this morning, there was some inclination to release the girl in order to save the hostages in Jordan from terrorist reprisals. The guerrillas have demanded the return of Miss Khaled to Jordan along with the body of the slain hijacker.)

## El Al Official Attributes Hijackings To Greek Government's Capitulation To Terrorists

Israel was apparently holding the Jordanian government fully responsible for the fate of the hostages and the aircraft. Officials pointed out that the landing strip at Zerka was Jordanian territory, though admittedly under control of terrorists who are backed by Iraqi troops at Mafrag where King Hussein's authority is ignored. One official who asked not to be identified said, "I am pretty sure they would not kill the passengers and crew, and as for the planes, they are of much less importance than human lives." A senior official of El Al said today that the rash of hijackings was a direct result of the Greek government's recent surrender to terrorist demands. He referred to the release in Athens last month of seven Arab terrorists who were serving jail terms for fatal attacks on an El Al airliner and the El Al office there. They were released following the hijacking of an Olympic Airways jet and terrorist threats to kill all of its passengers and crew.

(In Paris last night the vice president of the French Airline Pilots' Association claimed that Israel's seizure last month of two Algerian nationals from a British airliner at Lydda Airport was responsible for yesterday's wave of hijackings. Comdt. Jacques Landragin, an Air France pilot, disclosed that he had cabled Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban urging the release of the Algerians last week and warning him that Arab commandos would retaliate. He said he never received a reply from Mr. Eban. "We have had a period of relative peace up to now, since the Arab governments had pledged not to receive hijackers," the French pilot said. "But with the detention of the two Algerians last month the Arab commandos found a way to put the Arab governments in a very delicate position." Comdt. Landragin implied criticism of the Israeli crew that foiled the hijacking of an El Al airliner yesterday. "The Israeli crews have the same psychology as the Palestinians. For the rest of us, the safety of our passengers is paramount," he said.) In addition to the two Algerians, Israel is holding several dozen Egyptian prisoners of war and some 2000 Palestinian guerrillas are serving time in Israeli jails. Last week Israel rescued the 24 man-crew of a burning Greek freighter, 14 of them Egyptian nationals who have been detained.

## Relatives, Friends Cheer As El Al Plane With 148 Passengers Lands At Kennedy Airport

NEW YORK, Sept. 7 (JTA)--An El Al Boeing 707 jet with 148 passengers aboard landed at Kennedy Airport early this morning 12 hours late after its security guards foiled a mid-air hijack attempt by two Arab terrorists, killing one and wounding the other. The attempt was made after the plane took off from Schiphol Airport at Amsterdam. Two passengers and a 39-year-old steward, Shlomo Vidor, were wounded in the gun battle. The airliner made an emergency landing at London where the wounded were hospitalized and the surviving hijacker taken into custody. A crowd of about 500 relatives and friends of the passengers gathered at Kennedy Airport before dawn. They screamed and cheered as the jet landed and pushed into the international arrivals building for emotional reunions with their kin. The El Al plane

was one of four international airliners carrying 600 passengers that were the targets of a coordinated hijack plan by Arab terrorists yesterday for which the extremist Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine has claimed credit.

The El Al plane was the only one in which the hijackers were resisted. Two of the others, a TWA 707 and a Swissair DC-8, were forced to fly to a guerrilla controlled airstrip at Mafrag, in Jordan where their passengers and crew are reportedly being held as hostages for Arab terrorists jailed in Israel and Europe. The third plane, a Pan American Boeing 747 jumbo jet was forced to land at Cairo where the terrorists blew it up moments after its passengers and crew were evacuated. A Pan American spokesman in New York said the passengers were safe and would be flown to the U.S. by the airline. He added that the \$23 million jet was fully insured. Capt. Uri Barlev, who was piloting the El Al jet when the hijackers attempted to seize it, flew home from London last night after reporting briefly to Premier Golda Meir and Defense Minister Moshe Dayan by telephone. The two security guards also returned to Israel after being interrogated by Scotland Yard. The surviving terrorist was identified as Miss Laila Khaled, 24, who was born in Haifa. She and her male companion boarded the El Al flight at Schipol using Honduran passports. Security checks at the Dutch airport failed to detect the arms they carried.

According to eye-witness accounts from passengers who landed at Kennedy today and reports from London, the El Al plane had just set course for New York when a young man pulled out a gun and rushed for the pilots' compartment. The girl threatened passengers and crew with a hand grenade. A moment later, shots were heard from the pilots' compartment. Several male passengers overpowered the girl and disarmed the grenade. The incident was over in several minutes. Some passengers in the rear of the plane said they were unaware that anything was wrong until they heard the gunshots and saw the struggle in the aisle. El Al has taken unspecified security measures since one of its planes was hijacked to Algeria two years ago. But it was an open secret that security guards "ride shotgun" on every flight and as evidenced by yesterday's incident they are trained to respond quickly and accurately.

### Nixon 'Deeply Concerned' Over Hijackings; British APA Calls For Severe Penalties

WASHINGTON, Sept. 7 (JTA)--President Nixon was described as "deeply concerned" today over the hijacking of two American and one Swiss airliner by Arab commandos yesterday and the attempted hijacking of an Israeli airliner. Press secretary Ronald Ziegler told newsmen that the White House was "working" with the "nations involved." It was not clear whether he meant the nations where the flights originated or Egypt and Jordan where the hijacked planes were taken. Although aerial hijackings have become almost commonplace occurrences, aviation and security experts appear to be at a loss on how to prevent them. Yesterday's hijackings and attempted hijack are regarded as more political in character than most previous incidents of air piracy. There was no official word here on how many of the 600 passengers and crew members involved are American nationals or what measures were being taken to secure their immediate release and return home. Most experts feel that the only deterrent measure is prompt extradition and punishment for hijackers. (In London today, Capt. Laurie Taylor, chairman of the British Airline Pilots' Association recalled that his organization has been urging a sterner attitude toward air piracy. It has called on all nations participating in international aviation to make hijacking a major crime punishable by the most severe penalties. It has also called for swift extradition of hijackers without formal procedures.)

### Peres Says Israel Will Never Negotiate With Terrorists On Hijackings

PARIS, Sept. 7 (JTA)--An Israeli Cabinet Minister said here today that his government would never negotiate with the Palestinian terrorists who hijacked three airliners yesterday. Minister of Transport Shimon Peres said, however, that Israel might negotiate for the release of Israeli hostages with "involved Arab governments." Mr. Peres arrived here today to attend the funeral tomorrow of the late Gen. Pierre Koenig who headed the France-Israel Friendship Alliance. He told newsmen, "The Israeli government considers that the governments of the countries on whose territories the planes have landed and the passengers are held are responsible for actions of the terrorists who carried out the hijackings." He said Israel rejected any contact with the terrorists "just as the United States government could not consider negotiating with an armed group such as the Mafia within the U.S.A." Questioned about Israel's withdrawal from the Jarring peace talks, Mr. Peres said his government was prepared to return to the negotiations "on condition that the cease-fire situation in the Suez Canal zone is reverted to the status quo ante." He said, "This is our only condition but we demand that it be respected. We cannot accept a situation different from what it was on the day the cease-fire went into effect." Also here for the Koenig funeral is former Minister Menachem Begin, leader of the Gahal faction which quit the government coalition in July in protest against Israel's acceptance of the cease-fire.

### Israel's Withdrawal From Talks Seen As Shift In Priorities; Will Adhere To Truce

JERUSALEM, Sept. 7 (JTA)--Israel's withdrawal from the Jarring peace talks yesterday represented an important shift in priorities from negotiations to rectification of Egyptian cease-fire violations, the Jewish Telegraphic Agency learned today. According to a highly knowledgeable source the government not only has no intention of resuming talks at the United Nations in New York under present conditions but will insist on the removal of all Egyptian missiles from the standstill cease-fire zone even if the talks are called off entirely. If the United States government fails to induce the Egyptians and Russians to pull back the missiles, Israel is prepared to act by other means, the source said. The JTA learned today that the government was considering a major military action to destroy Egyptian advance missile bases in the Suez Canal zone shortly before the cease-fire went into effect. But the U.S. learned of the plan and brought strong pressure to bear on Israel to abandon it, an informed source said. Israel then accepted the cease-fire on specific assurances from President Nixon that he would not tolerate any change in the military status quo in the area. Mr. Nixon was also reported to have advised Israel that the U.S. would allow it to take action if the military freeze was violated.

Withdrawal from the truce talks does not mean that Israel has abrogated the 90-day cease-fire that went into effect Aug. 7 or that it has rescinded its acceptance of the American peace initiative. This was made clear in yesterday's announcement of the Cabinet's decision. But government spokesman Michael Arnon said "As long as the standstill cease-fire is not restored, Israel cannot participate in the talks." He added that Israel's acceptance of the American peace initiative and the appointment of a representative to the Jarring talks continue to be valid." Premier Golda Meir said much the same thing in a television interview last night. She said her government's initial endorsement of the peace moves remains unchanged but Israel is not ready to continue the Jarring talks as long as the other side persists in violating the cease-fire. Asked what Israel expected the United States to do, Mrs. Meir replied, "The U.S. says they have been in touch with the Russians and Egyptians to rectify the situation. We want them to continue to apply pressure because we cannot be asked to carry on while the other side acts so that if the shooting starts again we will be in a much worse situation than before the cease-fire." Asked about possible American pressure on Israel, Mrs. Meir said, "There's been pressure on Israel since the State was established. That is how policy is made. One side exerts pressure while the other side must have the strength to stand up against such pressure."

Mr. Arnon said in reply to a question yesterday that the government has not changed the appointment of its UN Ambassador, Yosef Tekoah, as Foreign Minister Eban's alternate in the Jarring talks. Mr. Tekoah, so far, had only one meeting with Ambassador Jarring. He has been in Israel for the past ten days but was flying back to New York today to report his government's action officially to Dr. Jarring. The latter has met several times with Arab representatives. Prior to his departure from Lydda Airport this morning, Ambassador Tekoah said the Egyptians could pull their missiles out of the cease-fire zone as quickly as they installed them there. He said he was returning to New York to attend the UN General Assembly sessions which begin next week. The JTA learned today that despite current differences between Israel and Washington, there has been no slow-down in American arms deliveries. According to a reliable source, press reports to that effect are "completely wrong." The source added that while Israel has no complaint, that does not mean it is getting all the weapons it wants. Former Minister Menachem Beigun told a mass meeting in Haifa last night that the government was right to discontinue the Jarring talks and not to resume them until the Egyptians pull their missiles out of the cease-fire zone.

### U.S., UN Officials Express Cautious Optimism Peace Talks Will Continue

WASHINGTON, Sept. 7 (JTA)--Despite Israel's decision yesterday to withdraw from the peace talks under the auspices of Ambassador Gunnar V. Jarring, U.S. officials here have taken the view that the peace talks are far from hopeless and that Israel's withdrawal meant only delay rather than a termination. Officials here and at United Nations headquarters in New York were of the opinion that the talks would be resumed at the ministerial level when the Foreign Ministers of Israel and the Arab states arrive in New York beginning Sept. 15 for the opening of the 25th session of the General Assembly. Spokesmen for the administration and the UN based their cautious optimism that the talks would resume on the fact that Israel also declared it would continue to honor the cease-fire truce. At the Western White House in San Clemente, Calif., White House press secretary Ronald Ziegler expressed hope the talks would start soon. "We will continue to make every effort to work out these problems," he said. Referring to the two elements to the U.S.-sponsored truce agreement--the military standstill and the cease-fire in the Suez Canal area--Mr. Ziegler stated, "We believe both sides should abide by both of them." According to sources here, the U.S. would undertake a diplomatic effort to ensure that the peace talks do not break down entirely. There are tentative plans for Secretary of State William P. Rogers to confer with Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban, Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko, Egyptian Foreign Minister Mahmoud Riad, and Jordanian Foreign Minister Anton Atalla when they arrive for the opening of the General Assembly. (During a meeting on Friday in Cairo with the senior American diplomat, Donald C. Bergus, Mr. Riad categorically denied Israeli charges of standstill violations.)

Diplomatic sources noted too that consultations may also take place between the U.S. and Israel later this month when Israeli Premier Golda Meir visits the United States where she is to address the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations in New York on Sept. 20. It is considered likely that Mrs. Meir will confer with President Nixon when she returns to the U.S. again some time in October. Informed sources said that the administration was unable to get assurances during discussions last week with Egyptian and Soviet officials in Cairo and Moscow that truce violations would halt. Israel lodged today her eleventh complaint with the UN Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO). State Department spokesman Robert McCloskey said on Friday that U.S. diplomats were "seeking rectification" in Cairo and Moscow but refused to explain what he meant by "rectification." Other U.S. officials stated their efforts at "rectification" of the standstill violations was a "continuing matter." UN Secretary General U Thant said on Saturday that the Egyptian violations of the cease-fire and standstill charged by Israel and confirmed by the United States were not a "valid reason" to delay the Mideast peace talks. He said there were two aspects of the problem, "the alleged violation" and "the talks with Dr. Jarring." Mr. Thant had been asked for comment on Israel's reported insistence that Egypt draw back the missiles installed since the start of the cease-fire on Aug. 7 before the Jarring talks were resumed.

### Israeli Soldier Killed, One Injured When Army Vehicle Hits Mine

TEL AVIV, Sept. 7 (JTA)--An Israeli soldier was killed and another was injured this morning when an Army vehicle hit a mine near Kisuifim settlement in the Western Negev close to the Gaza Strip. Two Arab saboteurs were killed in a clash with Israeli forces near Kibbutz Nir Itzhak north of the Gaza Strip. Misgav Am settlement was shelled from Lebanese territory last night. No casualties were reported. An explosive charge went off in the labor exchange office at Khan Yunis in the Gaza Strip last night. There were no casualties and only slight damage. Two Israeli soldiers, one of them a girl, were slightly injured yesterday when a grenade was thrown at them from the walls of the Old City of Jerusalem. Twenty suspects have been arrested for questioning.

## Rabin At ZOA Conclave Condemns Hijacking, Assails Egyptian-Soviet Duplicity

NEW YORK, Sept. 7 (JTA)--The 73rd annual national convention of the Zionist Organization of America will remain imbedded in the minds of the 1,500 delegates who attended the four-day conclave. The final sessions yesterday took place against the backdrop of Israel's announcement that it would withdraw from the peace talks at the United Nations and the terrorist hijackings of four airliners, including an El Al airliner, over various parts of Europe with more than 600 passengers and crewmen on the four airliners. Israel's ambassador to the United States Yitzhak Rabin, condemned the hijackings and told the ZOA dinner last night honoring outgoing president Jacques Torczyner: "I feel duty bound to say that what has happened today is the result of the past tolerance and outright refusal of certain governments and international agencies to treat these people as the criminals they are. It is the result of surrender to their blackmail when murderers are allowed to go free to be received as heroes in Arab capitals." It was only last month that the Greek government released seven Arab terrorists who had been convicted for terrorist activities in Greece against Israeli citizens and property after six other Arab terrorists seized an Olympic Boeing 727 and held its 53 passengers and crew as hostages. Gen. Rabin told the delegates that "the time has come for drastic action to be taken against the terrorists and against the Arab governments which arm them and which hold innocent travellers as hostages." He declared that Israel will not stand idly by but would safeguard its air routes "on the basis of reciprocity."

Gen. Rabin warned that the alternative to halting "this lawlessness and air piracy" is the continuing "murder of innocent people and literal chaos in the skies." He urged all governments and international agencies and bodies concerned with freedom of the skies to "act for the immediate release of all the passengers, the aircraft and the crews. They are called upon to take forceful and effective measures to guarantee an end to this criminal piracy whenever it occurs, and to ensure that those responsible be brought to justice." Focusing on the cease-fire violations by the Egyptians and Soviets, Gen. Rabin told the dinner guests that "by duplicity, by double talk and by sheer conspiracy, the Egyptians and the Soviets have tried to hoodwink the authors of the peace initiative and place Israel in a position of political and military retreat." He said that it reminded one of the "Russian duplicity and outright lies at the time of the Cuban missile crisis." Gen. Rabin declared: "All along, the Egyptian-Soviet strategy has been to build up their military strength in the hope of intimidating Israel and the West. They have sought now to exploit the cease-fire agreement for this very goal in an effort to confront Israel with an ultimatum: either we surrender to their terms and allow ourselves to be dismembered and truncated, or face the prospect of a military avalanche backed and abetted by the Soviet Union." Gen. Rabin declared that the peace talks were conceived by the U.S. government "as a corridor to peace, not as an instrument for intimidation and blackmail. The cease-fire standstill agreement was designed to nourish mutual confidence as a background to the talks, not as a cover for military conspiracy."

## Rockefeller, Goldberg Urge Immediate Aid To Israel; Weisman Elected New ZOA Head

At the banquet, Congressman Ogden R. Reid, Republican of Westchester, N.Y. and former ambassador to Israel, called on President Nixon to initiate direct personal communication with Soviet Communist Party leader Alexsei Kosygin and Premier Leonid Brezhnev over the Middle East situation. Earlier in the convention, New York's Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller called upon the U.S. to see to it that the Egyptian government "immediately withdraws" the missiles and other military equipment moved into the 32-mile cease-fire zone. He also called on the U.S. to supply Israel immediately with planes and other essential military equipment Israel needs to defend herself against the threat posed by the missiles' deployment. The governor, who was interrupted numerous times by thunderous applause, said: "Israel has observed the cease-fire terms, she has negotiated in good faith. We cannot allow Israel to become a victim of superior military might. We must make it clear beyond any doubt that our commitment to Israel will endure." Governor Rockefeller declared that "Only because she had faith in America did Israel agree to the terms under which negotiations would be conducted. Now it is for us, the American people, to prove that faith was justified." The governor noted that despite the Soviet Union's objectives of domination and expansion in the Mideast there is still a possibility that the two major powers could work together to resolve the crisis in that area. "The United States and the Soviet Union must work now for peace in the Middle East and throughout the world," he declared.

Arthur J. Goldberg, Democratic-Liberal candidate for New York governor, told the delegates that the survival of Israel is vital to the best interests of the U.S. Declaring that all Americans fervently hope for a negotiated agreement between Israel and the Arab states that will bring a just and lasting peace, Mr. Goldberg added: "A prerequisite to such a peace is for the United States to make it explicitly clear to the Soviet Union that in our own national interest we will not permit another Czechoslovakian tragedy to engulf Israel." He urged that the U.S. give Israel arms and planes it needs to preserve the military balance and demand the cease-fire be scrupulously observed "by the Soviets and their Arab clients." Mr. Goldberg declared: "We ought to stop vacillating." Herman L. Weisman, a New York attorney, was unanimously elected ZOA president to succeed Mr. Torczyner. Mr. Weisman, presently the president of the Jewish National Fund and who was national chairman of the United Jewish Appeal in 1948-49, called upon the Nixon administration to exercise its influence to gain the removal of Soviet missile sites from the Suez Canal zone. He told the delegates that "only the strong influence of President Nixon can effect the removal of roadblocks to peace negotiations which have been paralyzed by the pernicious and flagrant scrapping of the basic terms of the cease-fire." In a telegram to Mr. Torczyner, Pres. Nixon stated: "We must recognize that a step away from war toward the threshold of peace is one step closer to the kind of world we want. No one has ever said that the task of achieving a durable peace is simple or that one simple solution could end a history of hostility in a moment." In other action, the delegates denounced what was termed as "the thinly masked Soviet anti-Semitism which, under the guise of anti-Israel and anti-Zionist propaganda, engages in and encourages overt acts of discrimination." The delegates called upon the free world, including the U.S., to ask the Soviet Union to allow Jews the "right of free emigration."