



# daily news bulletin

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## ISRAEL DOWNS LIBYAN PASSENGER PLANE; 70 KILLED, 13 SURVIVE; BAD WEATHER MAY HAVE CAUSED PLANE TO STRAY OVER ISRAELI AIR SPACE; PROBE LAUNCHED

### Plane Shot At After Pilot Ignored Signals From Interceptors To Land

TEL AVIV, Feb. 21 (JTA)--Israel Air Force jets downed a Libyan commercial airliner over the Sinai peninsula today. Seventy persons aboard the plane were killed and 13 survived the crash and were treated for injuries at an Israeli Army hospital in Sinai. The airliner, a Boeing 727 of the Libyan Arab Airlines, apparently strayed into Israeli airspace during bad weather. Israel claimed that the plane was shot at only after the pilot repeatedly ignored standard international signals from Israeli interceptors to land.

The Cabinet may be called into special session tonight to discuss the incident. An official statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem today expressed "deepest regret for the incident which caused the loss of human life." The statement said "it was heartbreaking that the pilot of this aircraft did not respond to warnings which were given to him."

An investigation was launched today to determine whether the Libyan airliner was actually shot down by the Israeli jets or whether it was damaged by gunfire and crash landed. Israeli technical crews were reportedly combing the wreckage for the "Black Box" which contains the flight recorder and other instruments that can provide clues to the plane's fate.

### Plane Penetrated 80 Kilometers Over Sinai

An Army spokesman said that at 1:55 p.m. local time today, the plane penetrated Israeli airspace, overflew Israeli Army deployments along the Suez Canal and flew over an Army airfield. He said the plane penetrated some 80 kilometers over the Sinai peninsula but attempts to contact it over international radio channels brought no response. The spokesman said Israeli Air Force jets were then sent up to intercept the plane. He said they signaled the airliner to land, using internationally accepted signals but the pilot disregarded them and disregarded warning shots fired by the Israeli fighters.

At that point, the spokesman said, the Israeli pilots fired at the airliner and it crash landed some 20 kilometers east of the Suez Canal. Israeli Air Force helicopters with medical crews were rushed to the scene and started rescue operations. Thirteen of the passengers were brought to a nearby military hospital. The death toll was 70, the spokesman reported.

The spokesman stressed that Israel acted in accordance with accepted international procedures in attempting to contact the plane and in its warnings. He said attempts to contact the aircraft from the ground continued for 15 minutes before jets were ordered up to intercept it. (According to immediate but incomplete information the plane was en route from Tripoli, Libya, to Cairo.)

### Absence Of Response Caused Tragedy

Minister Without Portfolio Israel Galili termed the incident a "tragedy" and said that Israel "had no interest in downing a civilian air-

liner." Galili, who frequently acts as a government spokesman, told a meeting of the Labor Party Kibbutz Forum here tonight that the Israeli pilots acted in accordance with international regulations and procedures. "It is difficult to understand why the Libyan pilot or the man responsible on the plane did not obey the recognized signals and thus caused the regretful tragedy," he said.

Transport Minister Shimon Peres said on a radio broadcast tonight that Israel respected all international regulations governing civil aviation. "I do not understand why the pilot of the Libyan aircraft took upon himself erroneous decisions, which were dangerous for his passengers," Peres said.

An unidentified Israeli military source said tonight, "There is something fishy about all this. No one knows why the plane was there or what he was doing over our canal positions and an air base. Our pilots radioed him for 15 minutes to come down and make a safe landing."

### Wary About Terrorist Threats

Observers here noted that there has been a wariness in Israel since the recent surfacing of reports that Arab terrorists were planning to load an airliner with explosives and crash it on a suicide mission over a densely populated area of Israel. They said these reports may have caused "nervousness" in the Israeli reaction to the intrusion by the Libyan aircraft.

Israelis have bitter memories of a similar incident 18 years ago when they were victims. On July 27, 1955, an El Al Constellation that strayed into Bulgarian airspace was shot down by Bulgarian MIGs killing all 51 passengers and seven crew members. (See late news bulletin P. 3.)

### U.S. EXPRESSES SYMPATHY TO FAMILIES; NIXON SENDS MESSAGES TO QADDAFI, SADAT

WASHINGTON, Feb. 21 (JTA)--The U.S. government extended its sympathy today to the families of those killed in the downed Libyan commercial airliner. The State Department issued a statement in the name of Secretary of State William P. Rogers which said: "We were saddened today to learn of the shooting down of a Libyan airliner over Sinai, resulting in the loss of some 70 lives. We extend the sympathies of the United States Government to the families of those who lost their lives in this tragedy. President Nixon has sent messages of condolence to Chairman Qaddafi (Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi, Prime Minister of Libya) and (Egyptian) President (Anwar) Sadat."

Observers here suggested that Nixon may have sent his condolences to the Egyptian as well as the Libyan leader in recognition of the federation relationship between those countries and because the downed airliner was bound for Cairo when it apparently strayed over Israeli airspace in bad weather.

Sen. Jacob K. Javits (R.N.Y.), a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said in a statement: "Everyone's heart must go out in sympathy to the victims and their families even pending clarification of what actually occurred in this most regrettable incident. The tragedies of this war in the Middle East are never ending and it is obviously war that continues. The world's duty simply must be to bring about a just peace and to get the parties to negotiate it. It is truly

top priority."

#### Pilot Reported Interception

(A spokesman for the Cairo office of the Libyan Arab Airlines said the pilot of the downed plane was Capt. Bolleret, a Frenchman and that its crew of eight or nine were French. Flight crews and maintenance teams of the Libyan airline are seconded from Air France. The spokesman said the plane was en route from Tripoli, Libya, to Cairo. He said it took off from Tripoli with 37 passengers aboard, mostly Arabs and more embarked at Benghazi.)

The spokesman said the aircraft was over Lake Bardayf (on the north Sinai coast) when it contacted the Cairo control tower. Contact was then lost. Other reports from Cairo said that before loss of contact, the pilot reported that he had been intercepted by Israeli planes that ordered him to land. The sources said that the Boeing 727 was off course due to bad weather.)

(A British Foreign Office spokesman said in London today, "We deplore in the strongest possible terms the loss of innocent civilian life." He added that "We deplore violence from wherever it comes...All this emphasizes the need for an early settlement of the Mideast crisis." The latter part of the British statement was seen as a disapproving reference to last night's Israeli commando raids on terrorist bases in northern Lebanon.)

(Hafez Ismail, President Sadat's security advisor who is due in the U.S. tomorrow and meets with President Nixon in Washington Friday, said in London today that he was "horrified" by the downing of the Libyan plane. His was the first Egyptian reaction to the incident. He was quoted as saying that "The Israelis are getting very nervous and are committing serious provocative acts.")

(At the United Nations today, Secretary General Kurt Waldheim expressed shock and concern over the incident and conveyed condolences to the Libyan UN Mission.)

#### SAPIR, SCHULTZ, DISCUSS ISRAEL'S PROBLEMS FOLLOWING DEVALUATION

WASHINGTON, Feb. 21 (JTA)--Israeli Finance Minister Pinhas Sapir, in his second meeting with high level American officials within a week here, discussed yesterday with Treasury Secretary George Schultz the problems arising from the United States devaluation of the dollar. Sapir said afterwards that he and Schultz discussed Israel's general problems stemming from the devaluation and whether "something can be done with the help of the United States government." In this connection Sapir said that financial specialists from the Israeli Embassy here and the U.S. Treasury will continue explorations of requests for economic assistance. Sapir said he submitted these requests to U.S. Ambassador Walworth Barbour the day before the envoy left Israel last month to retire in the United States.

Discussing the effects of the devaluation of the dollar, Sapir said it resulted in an increase in prices of some European goods. He said he expected no change in Israeli trade with the United States, but he noted a possibility that Israel will seek to transfer some purchases it now makes in Europe to the U.S. Israel imports television sets and other electrical appliances from West Germany and other European countries.

When asked whether he was leaving Washington in an optimistic frame of mind, Sapir said "I always go with a feeling of realism. I know what is done and what has to be done." During

the U.S. fiscal year 1973 which ends June 30, \$515 million was earmarked for Israel. Of this credits were extended totalling \$300 million in military aid, \$100 million in housing loans, \$65 million in credits for the purchase of commodities under Public Law 480, and a grant of \$50 million in supporting economic assistance. Sapir would not, however, discuss the specific elements of Israel's requests for the new U.S. fiscal year beginning July 1.

#### 400 EL AL EMPLOYEES FURLOUGHED

TEL AVIV, Feb. 21 (JTA)--Four hundred El Al employees were furloughed today as the airline attempted to cut its losses resulting from a strike of 120 technical supervisors which has grounded the company's fleet of 12 Boeing jets. El Al claimed that it has lost IL 3.5 million since the strike began Sunday. It has managed, however, to place all of its passengers on chartered or foreign-flag flights.

A proposal was made last night that El Al, Israel's national airline, dissolve itself. Its 5000 employees would be dismissed and a new company would be organized under a different name which would re-hire only selected employees. The proposal was flatly rejected by Yitzhak Ben Aharon, secretary general of Histadrut, at a meeting of the Histadrut Central Committee. But Histadrut issued a call to the strikers to return to their jobs.

Transport Minister Shimon Peres was authorized last night to decide what steps to take to restore El Al to normal operations. Under consideration are the recruitment of supervisors from Israel Aircraft Industries Ltd. or the employment of foreign technical supervisors.

#### ALLON: NO ISRAEL MINISTER WOULD ALLOW JORDANIAN SOVEREIGNTY IN JERUSALEM

JERUSALEM, Feb. 21 (JTA)--Deputy Premier Yigal Allon again firmly denied yesterday that he had advocated granting Jordan any sovereignty over any part of Jerusalem. Answering a motion for the agenda proposed by Herut leader Menahem Beigin, Allon said no minister in the Cabinet would countenance giving Jordan political rights in the capital. There was "not a shadow of doubt on this," he said. Allon said, however, that in the context of a peace settlement it might be possible to grant Jordan religious rights over the Moslem holy places. This, he said, would in no way impinge on Israel's sovereignty.

Allon had been reported by Israeli newsmen as advocating granting Jordan sovereignty over the Moslem quarter of the Old City, or, according to another report, over the Temple Mount. He has denied both versions. Beigin, who based himself on the newspaper reports, called on Allon to resign as Deputy Premier if he felt this way.

#### TIEMKIN ARRESTED, DAUGHTER PLACED IN A CHILDREN'S INSTITUTION

NEW YORK, Feb. 21 (JTA)--Aleksandr Tiemkin was arrested yesterday and his daughter, Marina, 13, was placed in a children's institution, the National Conference for Soviet Jewry reported today. The NCSJ said Tiemkin was subsequently released but will be put on trial shortly on charges of insulting the militia by calling it "Fascist." According to the NCSJ, Tiemkin was granted a visa to go to Israel but would have to leave his daughter behind.

The NCSJ also reported that a trial is imminent for Isaac Shkolnik, who was arrested last July on charges of industrial espionage and has been confined to a Vinnitza prison since then. The NCSJ said Shkolnik's wife was told to get a lawyer.

SPECIAL LATE NEWS BULLETIN4 OF THE 13 SURVIVORS DIE

TEL AVIV, Feb. 21 (JTA)--Four of the 13 survivors of the downed Libyan airliner died tonight, three in a field hospital in Sinai and one at Beersheba Hospital. Nine injured passengers were brought to Beersheba by an Israeli Army plane which was delayed two hours because of bad weather in Sinai. The whole medical staff of Beersheba Hospital was recruited within minutes and efforts were made to save the lives of the injured, most of whom were in critical condition. Among the injured are two women. Arab radio stations started this evening a strong attack on Israel over the plane incident.

ATTACK ON TERRORIST CAMPS DESCRIBED AS OPERATION TO FOIL NEW OUTRAGES

TEL AVIV, Feb. 21 (JTA)--A combined sea and air-borne attack by Israeli forces on two terrorist camps in northern Lebanon last night was described today as an operation designed to foil new terrorist outrages planned against Israel or Israelis overseas. The commandos struck at terrorist bases within the perimeters of refugee camps at Nahar el Bard and El Badawi, 112-125 miles north of the Lebanon-Israel border.

An Israeli military spokesman said scores of terrorists were killed or wounded in the surprise assault. Eight Israeli soldiers were reported wounded, six of them only slightly.

The attack was the deepest penetration of Lebanese territory by Israeli forces to date. According to Israeli military sources, the targets were the camps where Arab terrorists and foreign volunteers who carried out the May 30 Lod Airport massacre and the Sept. 5 slaying of 11 Israeli Olympic athletes at Munich trained for their missions. The explanation for last night's raids came from military, not governmental sources. The spokesmen were identified as a Maj. Isaac of the paratroopers and Brig. Gen. Emmanuel Shaked, commander of a paratroop and infantry brigade.

Maj. Isaac said that in addition to foiling sabotage acts and smashing the terrorist bases, the raids were intended to persuade the Lebanese authorities to take strong action against terrorists operating within Lebanon's borders. He expressed disappointment at the attitude of some European governments which have released Arab terrorists who were caught red-handed. A Turkish volunteer in the service of El Fatah was captured in the raids, according to a senior Army officer at General Headquarters.

Only Terrorist Strongholds Hit

The Israeli forces consisted of naval commandos and infantry paratroopers who were conveyed to the target areas by Israel's speedy missile boats and by helicopter. According to the military spokesmen, complete surprise was achieved. A spokesman said the commandos were carefully trained to hit only the terrorist strongholds and not the adjacent refugee camps. He said the camps were heavily guarded and patrolled, but because of the element of surprise, resistance was swiftly overcome.

The Israeli combined forces reached their targets at 1 a.m. and proceeded to destroy buildings and blow up arms and ammunition caches. The entire force was back on Israeli territory by 3 a.m. At least 40 terrorists are assumed to have been killed in the action. Israeli wounded were air evacuated directly to the Rambam Hospital in Haifa where they were visited this morn-

ing by Chief of Staff Gen. David Elazar. The raid was the first Israeli incursion into Lebanon since Sept. 16-17 when Israeli troops raided terrorist camps 15 miles inside the Lebanese border.

A brief communique broadcast today by Beirut radio said the exact number of casualties was unknown but acknowledged that there were many killed and wounded. All hospitals in the area of Tripoli, Lebanon's northernmost city, were said to be treating casualties. Some casualties were flown south to Beirut. Arab radio stations reported today that the Palestinians were bitterly accusing the Arabs states of failing them. An El Fatah officer was quoted as saying, "We are all alone. We faced the enemy for three hours and no one came to help."

EBAN RAIDS NOT AIMED AT LEBANON

TEL AVIV, Feb. 21 (JTA)--Foreign Minister Abba Eban said today that the raid last night against terrorist bases in Lebanon has saved the lives of many innocent people as the terrorists in these bases were planning acts of sabotage in the near future. Speaking in Beersheba, Eban stressed that Israeli action was not aimed against Lebanon at all. Its sole aim, he stressed, was against the terrorists.

The Lebanese authorities knew how to take action against the terrorists in the regions close to the Israeli border but failed to take any action against the terrorists who made Lebanon their shelter base, training depot and arms arsenal, Eban stated. He added that it is on Lebanese territory that the terrorists find it easy to operate and to start their deadly murderous activities in the past and to plan future activities. Eban said further that the Turkish Fatah member indicated the existence of "a foreign murderer's legion" under the patronage of the Arab terrorist organization.

HIGH COURT JUSTICE SAYS HALACHA MUST BECOME MORE FLEXIBLE

JERUSALEM, Feb. 21 (JTA)--Justice Shimon Agranat, President of Israel's Supreme Court, told 150 Conservative rabbis meeting here that if Jewish religious law is to play a role in Israel's legal system, "it must be flexible and meet the needs of the time." Agranat spoke at the opening session of a three-day Kallah--learning and studies seminar--devoted to a symposium on Jewish law and the State of Israel.

The gathering, the first of its kind by Conservative rabbis in Israel, is attended by rabbis from the United States and from 10 Conservative congregations in Israel. It is marking the 25th anniversary of Israel's independence. Agranat said that unless halacha became more flexible, it would continue to be "only of antiquarian and comparative interest." He praised the work of teams at the Hebrew University and Tel Aviv University which are indexing and codifying Jewish law from the Torah to the modern responsa. "To the extent that they succeed in revealing Jewish law, it will have more chance of playing a part in the life of the country," he said.

Rabbi Stanley Brannick, of Fair Lawn, N.J., chairman of the Kallah, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that it was being held in Israel to strengthen the Conservative congregations in the country. He said the largest Conservative communities are in Haifa and Ashkelon and the bulk of their members are not American immigrants but Israelis who are "thinking of changes while retaining the traditional framework of halacha." There are about 100 Conservative rabbis in Israel, 40 on sabbatical leave from the U.S., and the rest permanent residents.

