

LIBYAN PLANE INTERCEPTED BY ISRAELI JETS AND FORCED TO LAND AT MILITARY AIRFIELD IN ISRAEL; PLANE AND ITS PASSENGERS RELEASED AFTER 4 1/2 HOURS

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Feb. 4 (JTA) -- Israel Air Force jets intercepted a private Libyan plane bound for Damascus today and forced it to land at a military airfield in northern Israel to check out its passengers for possible terrorists. None were found and the aircraft was released at 6:30 p.m. local time, after four and a half hours, and allowed to proceed to its destination, the Israel Defense Force announced.

Syria has demanded an immediate meeting of the United Nations Security Council to take up the incident which it described as piracy, Damascus Radio reported tonight. Tripoli Radio in Libya also branded the incident as an act of piracy and accused the United States of abetting it.

Israeli officials said the aircraft was intercepted because there was reason to believe dangerous terrorists were aboard. They claimed Israel had a legal right to force the plane to land for interrogation as part of the internationally sanctioned campaign to combat terrorism.

A Means To Defend Israel

Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir, addressing delegates to the meeting of the Zionist General Council in Jerusalem today, said the interception was "one of the means we have to resort to in order to defend ourselves."

He said that since Libya is a known "center of international terrorism" and the Libyan government aids terrorists who perpetrate acts of violence against Israelis and Jews, "when reports reach us of such dangers, Israel has the right to take steps to prevent acts of murder and terror."

In the event, only Syrian political figures were aboard. One was identified as Abdallah El-Akher, deputy secretary general of the Syrian Ba'ath party. The passengers and crew were well treated, the IDF said.

The Army Radio said the plane was a twin-engine Gulfstream executive jet carrying nine passengers and a crew of three. It took off from Tripoli at 12:30 p.m. today and was intercepted shortly before 2 p.m. local time.

According to Tripoli Radio, the pilot reported 55 miles east of Cyprus, nearing the Syrian coast, that he was being tailed by unidentified aircraft. A report from an airfield in northern Cyprus said the interceptors were two Israeli jets. Tripoli Radio said contact was lost with the plane after the pilot reported he was being followed.

Libya charged that the U.S. Sixth Fleet, operating off its coast, helped the Israelis identify and pinpoint the plane.

On February 22, 1973, Israel Air Force jets shot down a Libyan commercial airliner enroute from Benghazi to Cairo, which had strayed into Israeli airspace over Sinai. Israel subsequently paid \$300,000 indemnification to the families of the 108 airliner passengers and crew who died.

Israel admitted the error, which, it said, occurred because the Libyan pilot ignored internationally recognized signals to land and appeared to take evasive action, leading Israeli jets to believe the aircraft was in fact military.

In Washington, a State Department spokesman said of today's incident, "There was no U.S. involvement of any kind." A Defense Department spokesman also said there was no basis for a Libyan news agency report that U.S. warships in the Mediterranean used electronic surveillance methods to guide the Israelis to their target.

At the United Nations in New York, members of the Security Council were planning to hold later today informal consultations on the incident. A formal meeting of the Council is usually set after the informal consultations are concluded.

FORMER NAZI ELECTED VICE PRESIDENT OF UNITED-NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS UNIT

By Tamar Levy

GENEVA, Feb. 4 (JTA) -- The election of Herman Klenner, a Nazi party member during World War II, as vice president of the United Nations Human Rights Commission headquartered here, was forcefully denounced by Israel's Ambassador to the UN in Geneva, Efraim Dubek. Klenner heads the East German delegation to the Human Rights Commission annual conference, which opened yesterday.

Dubek called his election by the conference a demonstration of the "political cynicism and moral degradation prevailing in this international body." He added that the elevation of an ex-Nazi to the vice presidency of the Commission "questions the credibility and efficacy of the Commission's work in the field of human rights."

The Israeli envoy noted that Klenner joined the Nazi party on April 20, 1944 and was issued card No. 97-56-141. Dubek found it morally objectionable in 1984 that a card-holding Nazi should head his country's delegation to the Human Rights conference, and spoke out against it at the time. But Klenner again headed the East German delegation to the conference in 1985 and now as well.

2-HOUR GENERAL STRIKE SHUTS DOWN GOVERNMENT OFFICES, PUBLIC SERVICES

By Hugh Orgel

JERUSALEM, Feb. 4 (JTA) -- A two-hour general strike called by Histadrut today shut down all government offices and most public services in a protest against what the trade union federation called the deteriorating economic situation. The private sector was not affected, however. A labor court ruled yesterday that private employees could "assemble for protest meetings" during work hours but could not strike.

Nevertheless, airports were closed, docks were idle, and there was no train or bus service for the duration of the strike. Kupat Holim, the Histadrut sick-fund, shut its doors, as did chain food and department stores affiliated with Histadrut. Classes were suspended in schools for two hours, and radio and tele-

vision broadcasting was blacked out except for hourly news bulletins. Histadrut Secretary General Yisrael Kessar said the strike was intended "to awaken the government to worsening unemployment. But Finance Minister Yitzhak Modai said the strike was a Histadrut tactic to pressure the government on the eve of new wage hikes that would undermine economic stability."

REAGAN ADMINISTRATION NOTIFIES CONGRESS THAT IT WON'T SELL PROPOSED ARMS PACKAGE TO JORDAN

By Judith Kohn

WASHINGTON, Feb. 4 (JTA) -- The Reagan Administration formally notified Congress yesterday that it was suspending its efforts to sell a proposed arms package to Jordan and promised that no Jordan arms deal would be made before Congress has had "adequate time to further review and debate fully the issues involved."

Notification of the decision reached the House just in time to avert a vote by the Foreign Affairs Committee today on a resolution disapproving the proposed package. In a letter from Secretary of State George Shultz, the Administration said it would not conclude the proposed deal with Jordan without giving Congress written notification 30 days in advance.

Shultz said the decision was based on his belief "that further Congressional action on a resolution of disapproval at this time would severely damage the ongoing (peace) process."

A Graceful Retreat

The decision, which was reached in principle last week, is being viewed as a graceful retreat from an effort that was widely regarded as futile almost since Congress was informed of the Administration's plans last fall.

In a last-minute compromise meant to avoid an embarrassing defeat of the proposed arms package in October, Congress passed a resolution barring the President from providing Jordan with arms sales until March 1, "unless direct and meaningful peace negotiations between Israel and Jordan are under way."

With increasing indications that recent meetings held by Assistant Secretary of State Richard Murphy with Israeli Premier Shimon Peres and King Hussein of Jordan had achieved no real progress in efforts to find a formula for peace negotiations, Sen. Richard Lugar (R. Ind.), chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, informed the White House last week that more than 80 Senators could be expected to vote to block the sale and that a Presidential veto would be easily overridden.

After apparently failing to win support for an extension of the March 1 deadline, the Administration moved to save what face it could by suspending its pursuit of the sale at this time rather than pronouncing the issue entirely dead.

Members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, which had scheduled today's hearing to consider the disapproval resolution before the letter from Shultz arrived, welcomed the Administration's decision but indicated that only tangible signs of progress toward peace in the Middle East would break the continued resistance in Congress to a new arms deal with Jordan.

Calling the Administration's move "an appropriate decision," Rep. Lawrence Smith (D. Fla.), who had vigorously opposed the sale, observed nevertheless that the language of Shultz's letter "is not fully clear" and expressed hope that in any case, no further

attempts would be made to provide Jordan with the arms until direct peace talks with Israel are actually under way.

The Administration had been under no legal obligation to give Congress advance notice of its arms sales plans since the Supreme Court ruled the legislative veto unconstitutional in 1983. The decision swept away the procedure that the Administration had been required to follow with regard to Congress in order to conclude an arms deal.

But the White House has assured Congress that it would continue to abide by the old procedures of giving Congress formal notification of plans to sell arms 30 days in advance of the proposed sale.

Although the 30-day notification period will have long passed by the March 1 deadline, Shultz's letter pledges to provide another month's debating time before reviving the deal.

The bill that was to have been considered by the Foreign Affairs Committee today would have barred delivery of the proposed weapons to Jordan even if an arms deal had already been concluded.

But most observers appeared confident today that the effort to provide the arms to Jordan would not be revived any time soon. A State Department official said the President still regards the sale as important to Jordan's security and would continue to consult with Congress on the issue, but declined to gauge its chances of re-emerging in the near future.

"One thing that we have learned not to do is speculate. We'll just take it as it comes," the official said.

OPPOSITION TO ABANDONING THE LAVIE

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Feb. 4 (JTA) -- The head of Israel's largest defense contractor argued forcefully against proposals to abandon the Lavie, Israel's second generation jet fighter, on economic grounds. David Ivri, chairman of Israel Aircraft Industries (IAI), told reporters that a decision to terminate the project would cost more than \$200 million in cancelled contracts.

This sum, he stressed yesterday, would not come from U.S. military aid funds but from the Defense Ministry's already shrunken budget. Replying to suggestions that it would be cheaper for Israel to buy its new jet fighters abroad than build them at home, Ivri said the estimated cost of the Lavie and of the U.S. F-16 is about the same -- between \$13.5 and \$15.5 million per plane. But over a period of time, the economic advantage would go to the Lavie, he said.

Ivri, a former commander of the Israel Air Force, conducted a group of military correspondents on a tour of the IAI plant. He said a prototype of the Lavie will be ready for test flights next September. The prototype will be a fully equipped model, except for the ground support systems, which will be built once the plane goes into production.

Opponents of the Lavie say IAI would have to sell at least 300 planes to the Air Force in order to break even. Orders of that magnitude are unlikely, given the present budgetary constraints.

In another defense-related development, Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin disclosed that the Soviet Union has supplied Syria with additional submarines. He said in a radio interview that those recent acquisitions added a new dimension to Syria's naval strength and represented a considerable increase in the quality and quantity of the Arab armed forces.

FOCUS ON ISSUES THE PATHOLOGY OF HATRED

By Arnold Ages

TORONTO, Feb. 4 (JTA) -- It's been more than five months now since a jury of his peers found Eckville high school teacher James Keegstra guilty of violating Canada's anti-hate statute. Despite the conviction and the fine imposed upon Keegstra, there is little evidence that he is in any way contrite or repentant.

According to two journalist-researchers, David Bercuson and Douglas Wertheimer, in their new book, "A Trust Betrayed: The Keegstra Affair" (Doubleday Canada, Toronto, and Doubleday & Co., New York), this is not an unexpected development because the pathology of hatred which actuates Keegstra is deep-rooted.

In their account of the affair, Bercuson, a professor at the University of Calgary, and Wertheimer, editor of the Jewish Star of the same city, display a dispassionate and highly commendable objective attitude. There is a minimum of editorializing in their treatment of what was undoubtedly one of the most squalid interludes in recent Alberta history.

Although the authors were unable to secure an interview with Keegstra himself, they were able, through an unremitting diligence, to track down and speak to almost everyone else who was involved in the incident.

Their treatise encompasses far more than the pedagogy of Keegstra; it is an inquiry into the nature of high school education in Alberta, the canons of modern journalism, the politics of the Alberta Teachers Association (ATA), the response of political personalities in the province, and the reaction of Alberta's Jewish communities to the threat of Keegstra.

The Malignant Source of Anti-Semitism

The latter, of course, is the central focus. Bercuson and Wertheimer display magisterial control of the literature of Judaism and of its antagonist -- anti-Semitism. They show in their book that which newspapers were unable to delve into -- the malignant sources of so much of Keegstra's virulent anti-Jewish sentiments.

Tracing the history of anti-Semitism to a radical fringe of Christianity, they show how in the medieval period a whole corpus of literature developed depicting the Jew in demonic terms. By the eighteenth century, there was a full-blown library of books denigrating not only Judaism and the Talmud, but depicting Jews (along with Masons and the Illuminati) as conspiratorial agents out to undermine Christendom and supplant it with a Judeo-Masonic confederation.

The Bercuson-Wertheimer volume is the first serious attempt to explore the lunatic fantasies which flowed from these theories and which were adopted uncritically and malevolently by an Eckville high school teacher who, for more than a decade, taught as unimpeachable fact what was hysterical rubbish.

Despite assertions to the contrary, Keegstra used the trust placed in him by an Alberta school board to transform a social studies classroom into a laboratory with some very combustible experiments in the inculcation of hate. The documentation which surfaced during the hearings on Keegstra's dismissal and during the subsequent trial showed that any student who failed to regurgitate Keegstra's party line on Jewish iniquity was penalized with low marks.

Failure to reproduce Keegstra's delusional theories meant that students had used materials found in libraries rather than the anti-Semitic pap which he made available to his charges from the library of anti-Semites which he possessed.

A Peculiar Circular Logic

The various confrontations which Keegstra had with students, principals, school supervisors, the media and the court show quite clearly the way in which the classical anti-Semitic mind works -- and it does, with a peculiar circular logic of its own.

Starting from the "revealed truth" that Jews are part of a demonic conspiracy to rule the world, Keegstra reasoned that the absence of this truth in conventional history books was ipso facto proof that the conspiracy had succeeded in capturing the book publishing industry. Any pressure brought to bear against him by the school board, by the province or by the courts was interpreted by Keegstra as additional evidence of the diabolism of the agents of conspiracy.

One of the merits of the Bercuson-Wertheimer volume is the patient reconstruction which they effect of the complaints which were first lodged against Keegstra, the warnings which were issued to him and the hearings which finally revoked his permission to teach.

It seems astonishing that Keegstra was able to use his classroom for the inculcation of hatred for Jews for more than a decade before his performance came under critical scrutiny. This occurred because of a number of contributory factors: the inertia of the educational establishment, the real affection which many Eckville residents had for the teacher (he was a sincere, honest Christian, the refrain went) and the reluctance of the ATA to sanction a dismissal of any teacher, under any circumstances.

This latter somewhat delicate issue is brought to the surface in the Bercuson-Wertheimer volume. The authors do not find much integrity or moral stamina in the ATA. They flatly reject the organization's defense that it was interested only in the question of preemptory dismissal and that it represented Keegstra as it would any teacher in such circumstances.

The authors cite chapter and verse to show that the ATA has more discretionary power than it let on, and that intervention is not automatic on behalf of a teacher. They conclude that the ATA is more akin to an industrial union out to protect job security than a professional organization.

A Case Of Professional Journalism

With regard to media professionalism, the Edmonton Journal scores high in the inventory by the two authors, of the Alberta press during the incubation, development and bursting forth of the Keegstra affair. While the authors have some critical comments to make about the reluctance of the press in the province to play up the affair as nothing more than a local happening, they are complimentary towards Steve Hume, editor of the Edmonton Journal.

Hume's background in British Columbia and his humanist concern for the native peoples in that province prompted him to see the Keegstra affair in its true light, as an incitement to bigotry and hate. He was led to this realization in part by some of the phone calls he received implying not so subtly that Keegstra was correct.

Thanks to Hume's sense of integrity, the Edmonton Journal more than any other Alberta newspaper began to utilize its editorial page and op-ed sections in order to sensitize readers to the horrors of the Holocaust and

its breeding ground, anti-Semitism. For this mature coverage, the Journal won a prestigious journalism award.

Difficulty Faced By The Jewish Community

One of the great quandaries explored in the Bercuson-Wertheimer chronicle was the difficulty faced by Alberta's Jewish community. When rumors of the Keegstra affair began to drift into the Calgary and Edmonton communities, there was a tendency on the part of the communal leaders to ignore the whole thing for fear of aggravating a potentially harmful public ventilating of the controversy. In the final analysis those anxieties proved to be predictive of what actually occurred.

The Jewish communities in Alberta were slowly but ineluctably drawn into the conflict by the rush of events and by the leadership of two main individuals in Calgary and Edmonton who resolved to fight Keegstra out of a sense of injury and the belief that resistance to outrage was better than silent acquiescence.

One of the things which emerges from this book, however, is that the Jewish communities in Calgary and Edmonton were very poorly organized to deal with an event of the Keegstra magnitude and had, moreover very little liaison between them. It took the pressure of Keegstra to develop an intercommunity sense of camaraderie and a healthy relationship at the same time with the Canadian Jewish Congress of Toronto -- which helped the Alberta communities with legal opinions and other documentation.

The book which Bercuson and Wertheimer have written is a fine study of the sociology of hatred. Their deliberate effort to avoid hysterics and editorializing in the recounting of the Keegstra affair is both a merit and a failure. A merit because it permits the reader access to facts from which he can draw his own conclusions.

It fails in one way, however, because it does not confront the central issue, namely, how is it possible for a sincere practicing Christian to entertain such perverted ideas about Jews and Judaism, and what is more alarming, to make that perverse preoccupation the central preoccupation of his life? The answer to this question may be impossible to provide, but in raising it the authors would have added an additional dimension to their discourse.

What did the Keegstra affair teach? According to this book, "bigotry will not be eliminated by the Criminal Code of Canada." The importance lies not in Keegstra's conviction but in the fact "that a handful of school officials, outraged parents, the Jewish community and a sensitive media were willing to wage a public battle against the danger."

NAZI-HUNTER URGES ISRAEL TO MAKE SOME GESTURE TO FACILITATE THE RELEASE OF JEWS HELD HOSTAGE IN LEBANON

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Feb. 4 (JTA) -- Paris-based Nazi-hunter Serge Klarsfeld, on a 24-hour visit here, said today that Israel should make some gesture to facilitate the release of Jews held hostage by extremists in Lebanon. But he cautioned against giving in to blackmail demands of the kidnappers.

Klarsfeld's wife, Beate, is now in Beirut engaged in efforts to obtain the release of the Lebanese Jewish hostages. Serge Klarsfeld reported here that Beate had recently informed him that she had made contact with the kidnappers and had offered herself as a substitute for the Jewish hostages.

He did not indicate the type of contact -- direct or indirect -- she had in Beirut, or the type of reply she received for her offer. She went to Moslem west Beirut on January 17 after two of the seven men originally kidnapped were found murdered.

Last month, the body of Isaac Tarrah, a 53-year-old Beirut Jew, was found in the Lebanese capital. A group calling itself "The Organization of the Oppressed of the World" claimed responsibility for Tarrah's murder. In late December, the body of Haim Cohen Halala was found in no-man's-land between east and west Beirut. He was abducted from his west Beirut home on March 29, 1985.

Tarrah and Halala were two of the seven men originally kidnapped from the Lebanese capital. In addition to the five known to be in the hands of the kidnappers, leaders of Lebanon's small Jewish community have said that three other community members are also missing and feared kidnapped. There are but a few hundred Jews living in Lebanon.

Serge Klarsfeld told Israel Radio today, "There are a number of Jews who are being held with a knife to their throats, and they will be killed as Jews. We are now exploring how it is possible to improve the situation of those hostages. So during my 24-hour stay in Israel, I shall be getting in touch with friends of ours in the government. I hope it will be enough to change the situation."

ARAB GROUP CLAIMS TO SET OFF BOMB IN A PARIS SHOPPING ARCADE

PARIS, Feb. 4 (JTA) -- A group calling itself The Solidarity Committee with the Arab Political Prisoners and the Middle East claimed responsibility today for setting off the bomb which exploded in the busy Claridge Hotel shopping arcade off the Champs-Elysees at 9:30 last night, injuring seven people, three seriously.

The Committee's communication to a French news agency here gave no details to substantiate its claim of responsibility for the blast, which caused extensive damage. The communication also called for the release of three terrorists imprisoned in France.

The terrorists are: Georges Ibrahim Abdullah, believed to be the head of the Lebanese Revolutionary Armed Factions; Anis Naccache, who tried to murder former Iranian Premier Shapour Bakhtiar; and Waroujan Garbijian, an Armenian, who set off a bomb at Orly Airport in the summer of 1983, killing seven people and wounding 55.

* * *

TEL AVIV (JTA) -- Three people were slightly injured when an explosive charge went off in the main street in Ramat Gan Tuesday morning. The bomb had been placed in a garbage can near a bus stop in busy Rehov Jabotinsky. Police detained some 30 persons for questioning, but most were released immediately.

* * *

WASHINGTON (JTA) -- Soviet cartographers mapping the surface of Venus will name two craters in honor of Judith Resnick, the Jewish woman astronaut, and Sharon Christa McAuliffe, the New Hampshire schoolteacher, who were among the seven who died in the Challenger explosion last Tuesday, Tass, the official Soviet news agency, reported.

* * *