

116/12-א

מדינת ישראל

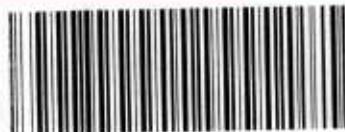
משרד הממשלה

משרד רפ"ח

לשכת ראש-הממשלה - ג.מ.א.
כיום הולד לזכר
24.2.1973

תיק מס' 116/12-א

מדינת ישראל
ארכיון המדינה



שם תיק: לשכת ראש-הממשלה גולדה מאיר - פרשת המטוס
הלובי

מזהה פיוז
116/12-א

מזהה פריט: 000wesf

כתובת 2-111-1-1-10

תאריך הדפסה 21/06/2016

מחלקה רפ"ח

שאלה לרמטכ"ל:

מב אלוף אלתר, אמרת שמסיבות ששקלה הייתה צריך לתת את ההוראה שנתת. האם אתה יכול להסביר האם במצב זה לא הייתה צריך להתייעץ עם הדרג המדיני, הדרג שמעליך? ולך עוד שאלה - האם אתה סבור שלאור המקרה צריך לשנות את הפקודות הקבוע במצבים כאלה?

תשובה הרמטכ"ל:

אני רוצה להסביר שמשך הזמן למבצעים מסוג זה הוא קצר ביותר, כפי שאנחנו רואים מן החומר משך הזמן שהמסוסים שלנו אוססביכ למסוס הלובי שהיו 7 דקות. הידיעה הגיעה אלי לאחר שכבר כמה דקות היה מוע בין המסוסים לבין המסוס הלובי. באותן הדקות שנוהרו צריך לקבל את האינפורמציה ולהחליט, אין זמן להעביר לדרג יותר גבוה ולפי דעתי גם אין צורך להעביר לדרג יותר גבוה, מדובר במצעי הגנה שלתפקידו של צה"ל ובסמכותי להפעיל אותם.

Question to General Hod

שאלה לרמטכ"ל:

Would the general agree that the Vulcan ... cannon has a very high rate of fire that a one-^{single}~~burst~~ burst would put 100 high-explosive shells in the air? And that any firing at the airplane would automatically hitting the wing-route kill anyone on board?

תשובה הרמטכ"ל:

באופן יאורטי כן, אבל אנחנו, יש אפשרות לנסות לפגוע בחלק מהכדורים לא בכל הכדורים באזור שהוא נותן סיכוי למסוס לא להפגע באופן קטלני בכל פעם יורט וזה אני אומר כאשר עושים במשך 7 דקות את כל מה שניתן לעשות לפני שיתחיים באש.

Question to Mr. Dayan

שאלה אמר דיין:

In view of the new evidence would you be ready to change your opinion about the possibility of paying some compensation to the regardless of the question of guilt or nonguilt?

Answer: I have to say clearly that that it is not my authority to talk on the behalf of the government but what I am going to say about is my personal feeling. Now if there is no political or guilty meaning to it whatsoever and my ~~main~~ only consideration ^{whether} ~~whether~~ it would be some poor families should get some help ⁱⁿ order to intain their welfare then I would have advocated this. But you ~~and~~ know and surely know that it can not be represented by that. Compensation in this case means that the

guilty party should compensate. And I do feel that we have an error of interpreting the most unexplainable situation in that time but we didn't do anything which I would say that should put us on the guilty side.

Question

You have explained very clearly why Israel should have been suspicious of this plane flying into this territory. That's easy to understand sir. But why the end of the sequence of identification and attention ^{and attempts to} to bring the plane down when you saw it ^{heading} ~~getting~~ back across the canal indeed very short space before the canal before ~~again~~ crosses to Egypt apparently doing no damage at all the most perhaps some photographs, ~~of~~ why did you then still insist of bringing this plane down by force?

Answer

Mr. Daven

When I spoke there the day ~~beef~~ before yesterday, then I tried and I quoted and I repeated the considerations about it. Nowthe people that took the consideration and the decision are here I don't think it will be fair of me to try to explain why the airforce commander or the chief of staff came to this decision and they are here.

הרמטכ"ל

אני סבור שהאבחנה איננה בכיוון נכונות של המטוס. אם מניחים שהוא מטוס המוביל נוסעים אין הצדקה להשתמש באש להכריח אותו לנחות. לא בדרך הכניסה ולא בדרך היציאה. אם מניחים כפי שאנחנו הנחנו שזה איננו מטוס שמוביל נוסעים, אלא מטוס הנמצא במשימה עוינה ומסרב בעקשנות לנחות סודק היה לחשוב באותם ההנאים שצריך להכריח אותו לנחות גם באמצעות אש.

שאלה:

שר הבטחון מנה שלושה גורמים שכתוצאה מאי הבנוה שלהם קרה האסון. האם אין עת ישראל לדרוש שגם תהיה חקירה בצד השני בקהיר מדוע ענו לקברניט בצורה שענו ומדוע גרמו לדבר הזה. והם דורשים ועדה חקירה אצלנו ?

Mr. Daven

I suppose our government will do our..... here I can talk only about what we are going to say ^{to do} and the way that we I think that what happened here happened because of the error of three parties I ~~feel~~ can tell that the way that I feel about it the main one is the Libyan airway the way that they behaved. The Cairo tower control should have behaved better and something that we couldn't anticipate at the time but now we have to realize that even such unacceptable happening might happen and did happen.

Question

Wasn't it possible to give the benefit of the doubt that the possibility that it might have had passengers on board?

Mr. Dayan

Gentlemen, today ~~it is not possible~~ even if I feel like answering ^{the} ~~that~~ question I must refer such questions to people who took the decision at that time.

Question: General Dayan assuming that Egypt turns down the idea this idea of the red line in Sinai and s.....knowing what you know now if the same thing is happening again now would you do anything different?

Mr. Dayan

I do hope that nothing like this will happen again not only because I didn't want it to happen again but usually such incidents are not happening twice the sameI said before and I want to repeat : we are going to study the case and to learn the lesson and draw the conclusions. So if you allow me to put it in a more respectful way the question is not whether we would do exactly the same incident will occur. This is not the question. The question is general approach to such possibilities if I can refer to myself I wouldn't in the past about anything like that. A Libyan aircraft going from Benghazi to Cairo ~~was signalled and warned for seven minutes and rejecting all the orders that it would be a civilian innocent passenger carrier~~ would go there after being signalled and warned for seven minutes and rejecting all the orders that it would be a civilian innocent passenger carrier I wouldn't have imagined that before. I do realize now that something like that might happened and we have to take it into consideration.

Question

General Dayan could you not have used the United Nations existing communications systems which hooks up with the ceasefire observers and both sides of the lines and even you could not use that system why couldn't use that system?

Mr. Dayan

We can use them probably for something like a camel that would about six months before we get an answer.

Question

I am happy that the contents of the black boxes/~~have~~^{have} been found, since this enables us to verify the movements and suspicious behaviour which were apparent to us on that day.

The airliner, due to a series of errors clarified here, was identified by the control center of our air defence system as a hostile aircraft on a hostile mission, despite its being a passenger plane. However, as a result of its behaviour, we could not assume that the airliner had in fact been carrying passengers.

The plane had managed to come through Egyptian air defences without being hit or even warned, thus giving the impression that the plane was crossing in co-ordination with these systems.

The plane penetrated closed Israeli airspace housing some of the country's most sensitive systems, reaching a point 180 kilometres from the nearest civilian navigation beacon - a point which no civilian aircraft had reached since 1967.

The airliner's strange behaviour - in total disregard of the fighter planes - did not befit that of an airliner carrying passengers.

From the material at our disposal we now know that the pilot was aware of the fact that he was surrounded by fighter planes for seven minutes. In addition, sounds from the cockpit indicate the warning shots which were fired. And during those moments - the risk and total disregard...

The above facts led our air defence system in all its branches, to the conclusion that in spite of its being a passenger craft... we cannot rule out the possibility of a civilian aircraft coming our way with the intent of carrying out a hostile mission.

We have, for some time, had reports of plans to carry out hostile acts through the use of civilian aircraft, and, in addition to such acts, are aware of the fact that a series of hostile missions may also be carried out by civilian airliners. (Over)

I emphasize these points since they created the impression that this was a hostile plane and since we know it was a passenger plane, there is now no doubt in any of our minds that it should not have been hit, however, under the circumstances it was thought to be a hostile plane - and during the few moments in which a decision had to be taken, in view of the fact that it was considered a hostile plane by the air force, I believe the decision to force it to land was a correct one. I considered this decision correct and I now consider it correct, and I approved it.

Though we did not intend this most regrettable outcome, we could not prevent it in view of the airliner's behaviour.

דברי הרמטכ"ל במסיבת עיתונאים ב- 24.2.1973

אני שמח שהחומר בקופסתאות השחורות נמצא, וחוא מאפשר לנו לאמת את התובנות וההתנהגות החשודים כפי שנראו בעינינו באותו יום.

המטוס הזה ע"י שורה של טעויות כפי שהוסברו כאן הוגדר ע"י מערכת ההגנה האוירית שלנו ע"י הבקרה והשליטה כמטוס עויין הנמצא במשימה עוינת,

וזאת למרות העובדה שזה היה מטוס נוסעים, אבל כתוצאה מהתנהגותו לא עלה על הדעת שזה מטוס חמוכיל באמת נוסעים.

המטוס הזה בא ממזרים דרך מערכת ההגנה האוירית של מצרים, מבלי איגנע על ידה מבלי שיוזהר על ידה והותר היה להניח שהוא מחואס עם מערכת ההגנה הזאת.

המטוס הזה חדר למרחב האוירי הסגור בו נמצאות מטרות צבאיות הרגישות ביותר שיש לנו במרחב הזה. הוא הגיע למקום שהוא מרוחק 180 ק"מ מאיזשהוא קו העומס אזרחי, ומאז 1967 שום מטוס אזרחי לא הגיע למרחב הזה.

ההתנהגות שלא היתה התנהגות מתעלמת ממסוסי קרב בצורה הסוזה ביותר בצורה שאיננה הולמת בשום אופן כמטוס שמוביל נוסעים.

מתוך החומר שאכשו בידנו אנחנו יודעים שהוא היה ער לקיומם של מטוס קרב מסביבו במשך 7 דקות, אנחנו שומעים גם מתוך הנעשה ב"קוקפיט" שהושמעו בתוכו גם יריות האזהרה. ובאותם הרגעים הסיכון וההתעלמות...

כל הסיבות האלה הביאו את מערכת ההגנה האוירית על כל חלקיה לידי מסקנה שלמרות היותו מטוס נוסעים... ואנחנו איננו יכולים להוציא מכלל אפשרות שמטוס נוסעים עויין יבוא לבצע אצלנו משימה עוינת.

כבר זמן רב יש לנו ידיעות שקימות תוכניות פיגוע באמצעות מטוסים אזרחיים ואבל לא רק אפשרויות פיגוע קימות במטוסים אזרחיים ישנה כוונה של משימות עוינות שניתן לבצע אותם במטוסים אזרחיים.

אני מדגיש את הנקודות האלו אשר יצרו את הרושם שזהו מטוס עויין כי בדיעבדנו
שזהו מטוס נוסעים אין לאף אחד מאיתנו שום דילמה שלא צריך למנוע בו, אבל
בנסיבות שהצתירו הוא נחשב למטוס עויין, ובאותם הרגעים הספורים בהם היה צריך
לקבל את החלטה, אני סבור שהגדרתו כמטוס עויין ע"י חיל-האוויר והשיקול שצריך
להכריח אותו לנחות אצלנו היה שיקול נכון, אני חשבתי את השיקול הזה כנכון
אני חושב אותו היום כשיקול נכון ואני אישרתי אותו לחיל-האוויר.

החוצאה היתה מצערת, לא התכוונו אליה אבל היא היתה בלתי נמנעת בהתנהגותו של
המטוס.

MINISTER MOSHE DAYAN
PRESS CONFERENCE

24th February, 1973

Minister Dayan: The Israelis will excuse me for talking English, and the foreigners will excuse me for my English.

I want to add two remarks to what I had a chance to say before. Now that we know more now and we agree that we have more or less a clear picture of what happened, I feel that I can say that what happened is a disaster, was the outcome of three, three elements of error.

The first one, the Libyan airplane; the second, the Cairo tower control; the third, the interpretation of our people of the events, the happening of that time.

About the Libyan, we have an attitude - I'm not an expert and I would not pass judgement where one can have such a state and get that far out of the truth, but I feel right to say that to mistake Phantoms for Migs and the Egyptian crescent with the green background for the Israeli Shield of David on blue; the warnings signal for friendly exercise - this is a little bit too much for an ordinary human, just mistake. I would call it irresponsibility. That much is expected of a Captain, to take more notice when he is on duty.

About the Egyptian tower control, I am sure that their motives were innocent, and they lost contact, well, that happens. But in a way they confirmed to him that he was on Egyptian ground when they told him they would give an order for the Egyptian Mig to stop firing. The least that I would have expected of them would have been: "Wait a minute. Something might be wrong", and not to assure him: "All right, you can go on, we shall take care of it."

Without trying to underestimate the error of judgement of our people at the time, I want to say that to expect an airplane going from Benghazi to Cairo to get to the distant eastern side of the Suez Canal and to expect him to take our Phantoms for Migs, and our signals for friendly warnings - one should have more imagination, much more imagination than I think that one can rightly ask or expect not only

any pilot, but just ordinary, intelligent human beings.

Now all this very, very regretful incident is a fact, and I feel that all of us have to learn our lesson and draw conclusions. I say "all of us" and I mean the Libyan airline, the Egyptian tower control and ourselves. We should go into it, and should draw our lessons about it. I know that frankly, there is interest all around the world about it; any qualified international body will get all the information at our disposal, and will answer all the questions and give them everything we have, whether it is instruments, the tape-recording, information - and they will be free to go around, to talk, to see, to find out for themselves everything.

Whether it is Air France or the Libyan airways, their representative, the Pilots' Association, the Red Cross - every international or qualified party involved in this incident, who would feel like going into it, will be welcome and get our co-operation, in order to get to the bottom of the incident and to find out all the facts about it.

Moreover, I am quite sure that if any agreement, rules, regulations, procedures will be agreed upon internationally about the attitude in such cases, that is to say, on the battlefield, at a time of war - whatever rules and regulations will be accepted internationally, we shall accept them, implement them and carry them out. I wouldn't welcome advice just how we should behave and the others not, but anything accepted by everybody on similar circumstances will be accepted, honoured and implemented by us.

Moreover, I think that practically what could have saved and prevented such an incident - and we have to think about it for the future - if some kind of a red line for emergency cases between us and our neighbours, and if they are ready for that, I am sure that we will accept it willingly. Supposing we have some kind of emergency communication between us and our neighbours and they would have reported to us that an unreported airplane is missing in this area, we would have saved this airplane. As a matter of fact, some more than 20 years ago when I was the Commander of Jerusalem, at that time the Arab Legion Commander of Arab Jerusalem, General Abdullah

e-Tel, did agree to our proposal and we did have such a line between his headquarters and ours, and it did help at the time. I would be very glad if our neighbours will agree to some kind of quick communication, not for any political purpose - just for emergency cases so that we can be notified in such cases.

Had we had such a way of communication now, between us and Egypt, let us say between the control tower, they would have told us they've got an army-reported aircraft going around somewhere in this area, and there would be no problems.

This is just an idea and I want to conclude by saying that whatever agreement will be accepted internationally, we will welcome, accept it, and carry it out by ourselves.

Questions:

Ze'ev Schiff:

שאלה לרמטכ"ל:

בב אלוף אלעזר, אמרת שמסיבות ששקלת היית צריך לתת את ההוראה שנתת. האם אתה יכול להסביר האם במצב זה לא היית צריך להתייעץ עם הדרג המדיני, הדרג שמעליך? ולך עוד שאלה - האם אתה סבור שלאור המקרה צריך לשנות את הפקודות הקבע במצבים כאלה?

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In view of the new evidence would you be ready to change your opinion about the possibility of paying some compensation to the regardless of the question of guilt or nonguilt?

Answer:

I have to say clearly that that it is not my authority to talk on the behalf of the government but what I am going to say about is my personal feelings. Now if there is no political or guilty meaning to it whatsoever and my ~~main~~ only consideration ^{whether} ~~whether~~ it would be/some poor families should get some help ⁱⁿ ~~in~~ order to maintain their welfare then I would have advocated this. But you ~~and~~ know and surely I know that it can not be represented by that. Compensation in this case means that the

guilty party should compensate. And I do feel that we have an error of interpreting the most unexplainable situation in that time but we didn't do anything which I would say that should put us on the guilty side.

Question

You have explained very clearly why Israel should have been suspicious of the plane flying into this territory. That's easy to understand sir. But why the end of the sequence of identification and attention ^{and attempts to} to bring the plane down when you saw it ^{heading} ~~getting~~ back across the canal indeed very short space before the canal before ~~again~~ crosses to Egypt apparently doing no damage at all the most perhaps some photographs, ofxx why did you then still insist of bringing this plane down by force?

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I suppose our government will do our..... here I can talk only about what we are going to say ^{to do} and the way that we I think that what happened here happened because of the error of three parties I ~~feel~~ can tell that the way that I feel about it the main one is the Libyan airway the way that they behaved. The Cairo tower control should have behaved better and something that we couldn't anticipate at the time but now we have to realize that even such unacceptable happening might happen and did happen.

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Question: General Dayan assuming that Egypt turns down the idea this idea of the red line in Sinai and s.....knowing what you know now if the same thing is happening again now would you do anything different?

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I do hope that nothing like this will happen again not only because I ~~don't~~ want it to happen again but usually such incidents are not happening twice the sameI said before and I want to repeat : we are going to study the case and to learn the lesson and draw the conclusions. So if you allow me to put it in a more respectful way the question is not whether we would do exactly the same incident will occur. This is not the question. The question is general approach to such possibilities if I can refer to myself I wouldn't in the past about anything like that. ~~A~~ Libyan aircraft going from Benghazi to Cairo ~~being signalled and warned for~~ would go there after being signalled and warned for seven minutes and rejecting all the orders that it would be a civilian innocent ~~passenger~~ passenger carrier I wouldn't have ~~imagined~~ imagined that before . I do realize now that something like that might happened and we have to take it into consideration.

Question

General Dayan could you not have used the United Nations existing communications ^{if} systems which hooks up with the ceasefire observers and both sides of the lines and even you could not use that system why couldn't use that system.?

Mr. Dayan

We can use them probably for something like a camel that would about six months before we get an answer .

Question

.....

I am happy that the contents of the black boxes/~~have~~^{have} been found, since this enables us to verify the movements and suspicious behaviour which were apparent to us on that day.

The airliner, due to a series of errors clarified here, was identified by the control center of our air defence system as a hostile aircraft on a hostile mission, despite its being a passenger plane. However, as a result of its behaviour, we could not assume that the airliner had in fact been carrying passengers.

The plane had managed to come through Egyptian air defences without being hit or even warned, thus giving the impression that the plane was crossing in co-ordination with these systems.

The plane penetrated closed Israeli airspace housing some of the country's most sensitive systems, reaching a point 180 kilometres from the nearest civilian navigation beacon - a point which no civilian aircraft had reached since 1967.

The airliner's strange behaviour - in total disregard of the fighter planes - did not befit that of an airliner carrying passengers.

From the material at our disposal we now know that the pilot was aware of the fact that he was surrounded by fighter planes for seven minutes. In addition, sounds from the cockpit indicate the warning shots which were fired. And during those moments - the risk and total disregard...

The above facts led our air defence system in all its branches, to the conclusion that in spite of its being a passenger craft... we cannot rule out the possibility of a civilian aircraft coming our way with the intent of carrying out a hostile mission.

We have, for some time, had reports of plans to carry out hostile acts through the use of civilian aircraft, and, in addition to such acts, are aware of the fact that a series of hostile missions may also be carried out by civilian airliners. (over)

I emphasize these points since they created the impression that this was a hostile plane and since we know it was a passenger plane, there is now no doubt in any of our minds that it should not have been hit, however, under the circumstances it was thought to be a hostile plane - and during the few moments in which a decision had to be taken, in view of the fact that it was considered a hostile plane by the air force, I believe the decision to force it to land was a correct one. I considered this decision correct and I now consider it correct, and I approved it.

Though we did not intend this most regrettable outcome, we could not prevent it in view of the airliner's behaviour.

דברי הרמטכ"ל במסיבת עיתונאים ב- 24.2.1973

אני שמח שהחופר בקומסאות השחורות נמצא, והוא מאשר לנו לאמת את התנועות וההתנהגות החשודים כפי שגראו בענינו באותו יום.

המטוס הזה ע"י שורה של טעויות כפי שהוסברו כאן הוגדר ע"י מערכת ההגנה האוירית שלנו ע"י הבקרה והשליטה כמטוס עויין הנמצא במשימה עוינת,

וזאת למרות העובדה שזה היה מטוס נוסעים, אבל כתוצאה מהתנהגותו לא עלה על הדעת שזה מטוס המוביל באמת נוסעים.

המטוס הזה בא ממזרים דרך מערכת ההגנה האוירית של מצרים, מבלי שינגע על ידה מבלי שיוזהר על ידה והותר היה להניח שהוא מתואם עם מערכת ההגנה הזאת.

המטוס הזה חדר למרחב האוירי הסגור בו נמצאות מטרות צבאיות הרגישות ביותר שיש לנו במרחב הזה. הוא הגיע למקום שהוא מרוחק 180 ק"מ מאיזשהו קו העומת אורחי, ומאז 1967 שום מטוס אורחי לא הגיע למרחב הזה.

ההתנהגות שלא חימה התנהגות מתעלמת ממטוסי קרב בצורה המוזרה ביותר בצורה שאיננה הולמת בשום אופן מטוס שמוביל נוסעים.

מתוך החומר שנאספו בידנו אנחנו יודעים שהוא היה ער לקיומם של מטוס קרב מסביבו במשך 7 דקות, אנחנו שומעים גם מתוך הנעשה ב"קוקפיס" שהושמעו בתוכו גם יריות האזהרה. ובאותם הרגעים הסיכון וההתעלמות...

כל הסיבות האלה הביאו את מערכת ההגנה האוירית על כל חלקיה לידי מסקנה שלמרות היותו מטוס נוסעים... ואנחנו איננו יכולים להוציא מכלל אפשרות שמטוס נוסעים עויין יבוא לבצע אצלנו משימה עוינת.

כבר זמן רב יש לנו ידיעות קיימות תוכניות פיגוע באמצעות מטוסים אורחיים ואבל לא רק אפשרויות כיגוע קיימות במטוסים אורחיים ישנה סורה של משימות עוינות שניתן לבצע אותם במטוסים אורחיים.

אני מדגיש את הנקודות האלו אשר יצרו את הרושם שזהו מסוס עוין כי בידיעתנו
שזהו מסוס נוסעים אין לאף אחד מאיתנו שום דילמה שלא צריך לפגוע בו, אבל
בנסיבות שהצחירו הוא נחשב למסוס עוין, ובאותם הרגעים הספורים בהם היה צריך
לקבל את ההחלטה, אני סבור שהגדרתו כמסוס עוין ע"י חיל-האוויר והשיקול עצמם
להכריח אותו לנחות אצלנו היה שיקול נכון, אני חשבת את השיקול הזה כנכון
אני חושב אותו היום כשיקול נכון ואני אישרתי אותו לחיל-האוויר.

התוצאה הייתה מצערת, לא התכוונו אליה אבל היא הייתה בלתי נסמעת בהתנהגותו של
המסוס.

MINISTER MOSHE DAYAN
PRESS CONFERENCE

24th February, 1973

Minister Dayan: The Israelis will excuse me for talking English, and the foreigners will excuse me for my English.

I want to add two remarks to what I had a chance to say before. Now that we know more now and we agree that we have more or less a dear picture of what happened, I feel that I can say that what happened is a disaster, was the outcome of three, three elements of error.

The first one, the Libyan airplane; the second, the Cairo tower control; the third, the interpretation of our people of the events, the happening of that time.

About the Libyan, we have an attitude - I'm not an expert and I would not pass judgement where one can have such a state and get that far out of the truth, but I feel right to say that to mistake Phantoms for Migs and the Egyptian crescent with the green background for the Israeli Shield of David on blue; the warnings signal for friendly exercise - this is a little bit too much for an ordinary human, just mistake. I would call it irresponsibility. That much is expected of a Captain, to take more notice when he is on duty.

About the Egyptian tower control, I am sure that their motives were innocent, and they lost contact, well, that happens. But in a way they confirmed to him that he was on Egyptian ground when they told him they would give an order for the Egyptian Mig to stop firing. The least that I would have expected of them would have been: "Wait a minute. Something might be wrong", and not to assure him: "All right, you can go on, we shall take care of it."

Without trying to underestimate the error of judgement of our people at the time, I want to say that to expect an airplane going from Benghazi to Cairo to get to the distant eastern side of the Suez Canal and to expect him to take our Phantoms for Migs, and our signals for friendly warnings - one should have more imagination, much more imagination than I think that one can rightly ask or expect not only

any pilot, but just ordinary, intelligent human beings.

Now all this very, very regretful incident is a fact, and I feel that all of us have to learn our lesson and draw conclusions. I say "all of us" and I mean the Libyan airline, the Egyptian tower control and ourselves. We should go into it, and should draw our lessons about it. I know that frankly, there is interest all around the world about it; any qualified international body will get all the information at our disposal, and will answer all the questions and give them everything we have, whether it is instruments, the tape-recording, information - and they will be free to go around, to talk, to see, to find out for themselves everything.

Whether it is Air France or the Libyan airways, their representative, the Pilots Association, the Red Cross - every international or qualified party involved in this incident, who would feel like going into it, will be welcome and get our co-operation, in order to get to the bottom of the incident and to find out all the facts about it.

Moreover, I am quite sure that if any agreement, rules, regulations, procedures will be agreed upon internationally about the attitude in such cases, that is to say, on the battlefield, at a time of war - whatever rules and regulations will be accepted internationally, we shall accept them, implement them and carry them out. I wouldn't welcome advice just how we should behave and the others not, but anything accepted by everybody on similar circumstances will be accepted, honoured and implemented by us.

Moreover, I think that practically what could have saved and prevented such an incident - and we have to think about it for the future - if some kind of a red line for emergency cases between us and our neighbours, and if they are ready for that, I am sure that we will accept it willingly. Supposing we have some kind of emergency communication between us and our neighbours and they would have reported to us that an unreported airplane is missing in this area, we would have saved this airplane. As a matter of fact, some more than 20 years ago when I was the Commander of Jerusalem, at that time the Arab Legion Commander of Arab Jerusalem, General Abdullah

e-Tel, did agree to our proposal and we did have such a line between his headquarters and ours, and it did help at the time. I would be very glad if our neighbours will agree to some kind of quick communication, not for any political purpose - just for emergency cases so that we can be notified in such cases.

Had we had such a way of communication now, between us and Egypt, let us say between the control tower, they would have told us they've got an army-reported aircraft going around somewhere in this area, and there would be no problems.

This is just an idea and I want to conclude by saying that whatever agreement will be accepted internationally, we will welcome, accept it, and carry it out by ourselves.

Questions:

Ze'ev Schiff: