

MON. MARCH 17 , 1969
(Dallas Townsend)

PLANE

A police official in Maracaibo, Venezuela, says there's "real evidence" that sabotage may have caused yesterday's flaming crash of a Venezuelan jetliner which killed at least one-hundred-fifty-five people. The crash - history's worst air disaster - took the lives of all eighty-four persons on board. Another seventy-one died when the plane knifed through a residential suburb shortly after it crashed on taking off from the local airport. The U.S. Embassy in Venezuela says forty-six Americans were among those who died on board the plane.

HIJACK

Five men hijacked a Peruvian Airlines plane to Cuba today - but the passengers were lucky - all of them were allowed to disembark during refueling stop at Guayaquil Ecuador. The eight members of the crew had to fly to Havana. Among the passengers were two officials of the US Embassy in Lima Peru - where the flight originated.

In Jerusalem the Israeli Parliament gave Mrs. Golda Meir - an overwhelming vote of confidence. The new Prime Minister warned the Arab world that Israel will again be victorious if a new war breaks out in the Middle East. And she declared that Israel has no intention of giving up any Arab territory captured in the 1967 war, until peace is achieved.

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MIDEAST

Fighting continued in the Mideast today, with Israeli planes bombing and strafing Jordanian border areas near the Sea of Galilee - scene of last night's forty-minute artillery and mortar battle. In Beirut, diplomatic sources report that Iraqi mig jets have been flown to Syria, possibly for action in the air battles over the Jordanian border.

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known to be one of the main unofficial channels of communications between Washington and Cairo. Egypt severed regular diplomatic relations with Washington during the Israeli war two years ago.

CUES FOR THOMAS TAPE

Lowell Thomas - still up in Northern Norway - has given us a report on another of the earth's remote areas. Lowell...

Thomas tape runs 1.48, ends:

"So long."

In ground fighting today, Communist forces attacked two American outposts on the northern approaches to Saigon. Ten American soldiers were reported killed and fifteen wounded. Enemy losses placed at forty-two killed.

VIETNAM

American sources in Saigon say at least one hundred American planes have been shot down over Laos since the bombing of North Vietnam came to a halt last November. For several months now, hundreds of American planes have been bombing Communist supply routes in Laos almost daily, particularly the Ho Chi Minh Trail which winds through Laos into South Vietnam. The bombing raids have never been formally reported by the U-S Command, but informed sources say they average from three hundred to four hundred strikes each day.

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McGOVERN

Senator George McGovern sharply criticized President Nixon today, charging him with moving much too slowly in getting this country out of the war. But the South Dakota Democrat failed to win support from Senators Edward Kennedy and Mike Mansfield, both of whom said the President should be given more time. McGovern complained that the new administration is pursuing "the same tragic course with the same tragic results" as the Johnson Administration.

NIXON

President Nixon observed St. Patrick's Day by naming a new ambassador to Ireland and playing host to the Irish government's envoy to this country. Wearing a sprig of artificial shamrock on his lapel and boasting of his Irish ancestry, the President announced the nomination of John D. J. Moore as U.S. ambassador to Ireland. Moore is a Vice President of W. R. Grace & Co. The President also presented his wife, Pat, with a diamond bracelet for her fifty-seventh birthday which occurred yesterday but, under family custom is always observed on St. Patrick's Day.

ANGUILLA

British paratroopers - wearing combat gear - joined Scotland Yard agents tonight in preparation for what appears to be an imminent invasion of Anguilla - rebellious island in the Caribbean. Reports from Anguilla indicate that the islanders may resist any effort to invade the island. British Foreign Secretary Michael Stewart refused to reply in the House of Commons today when he was asked what action the government was taking to restore colonial rule to the island. Anguilla cut its ties with Britain last month and declared itself an independent republic.

ABU DABI

Good evening Dallas, Hello everybody.

What would you imagine would be the most exotic, the most picturesque spot on this planet? Well I have one candidate - course it's impossible to answer such a question - and what would you imagine is the richest country in the world, per capita? The U.S.? Ah, no! The name of the country - Abu Dabi - it's one of the independent sheikdoms of the Trucial Coast - that on the Persian Gulf - just across the way is Iran, to the East. The opposite direction - Saudi Arabia next door. Abu Dabi, a land of sand, in many ways unchanged since the days of the Caliphs in Bagdad. In some other ways it's changing fast, right now. They struck oil at Abu Dabi, you heard about that? And soon the barefoot Sheikh had a million bucks a day coming in. Mebbe you read how he didn't trust banks; he hid his money in mattresses, even in the sand. No wonder he was confused. The transition just too much. Finally some of his younger associates put him on a

plane and they sent him north to the Bahrein Archipelago, also in the Persian Gulf. And there he is now, in exile. At least he has no financial worries.

But changes are coming in a hurry at Abu Dabi. High pressure salesmen whave been arriving from far and wide. Explorer, writer Wendell Phillips, adviser to the Sultan of Oman - just next door - tells me most of the salesmen are sent packing by younger Sheikh Zaid, who is now in power, and has his own long range^y plan. It seems that with all the centuries of trading tradition behind him and whatever it is he has inherited from his sea pirate ancestors, Shaikh Zaid isntt exactly gullible.