

news from



Israeli attacks kill 18 civilians

BEIRUT — Israel said its warplanes attacked Arab guerrilla bases in Lebanon Thursday in their biggest air strikes in more than a month. Lebanese reports said the targets included Palestinian refugee camps and "dozens" of civilians were killed.

The Palestinian Red Crescent Society — the Arab equivalent of the Red Cross — said the victims included old people, women and children as well as rescue workers. It appealed for help.

Palestinian guerrilla sources said at least 18 persons were killed and 45 wounded. There was not immediate report from Lebanese authorities.

The Israeli military command said the air strikes were ordered because of increased guerrilla activity in the region. It was the third consecutive day of raids in retaliation for last Thursday's guerrilla attack on the border village of Shamir in which three women were killed.

The four guerrillas, who also died in the attack, were identified as members of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command which said the attack was "our reaction to President Nixon's visit to the Arab world."

A guerrilla spokesman said the Israeli warplane raiders hit and destroyed the

Front's offices in Rashidiyah during Thursday's raids. He said they also hit a guerrilla police post at Ain al Helweh.

Both were among four targets listed by the Israeli military command which said only military objectives were attacked. The airstrikes extended over a period of 75 minutes, the command said, and were directed at guerrilla bases near the Mediterranean coastal towns of Sidon and Tyre. It said all Israeli planes returned safely to base.

The Lebanese Defense Ministry said Lebanese anti-aircraft gunners opened fire on the raiders but made no immediate claims of hits. The Palestinian guerrilla news agency Wafa said two Israeli planes were shot down by the guerrilla air defense systems.

Israeli military sources said the Israeli planes struck in waves and encountered several Soviet-made SAM7 shoulder-fired missiles but none of them hit. Guerrilla sources said the Palestinians had equipped camps in the south with the heat-seeking missiles during recent weeks. The missiles are particularly effective against low flying aircraft.

Several problems still remain

Nixon holds Mideast briefings

WASHINGTON—President Nixon told congressional leaders Thursday that no agreements have been negotiated in advance of his summit meeting next week with Soviet Party Leader Leonid I. Brezhnev.

Nixon, who briefed congressional leaders, the Cabinet and the National Security Council in a day-long series of meetings following his return from the Middle East, also repeated what the Arab leaders told him—that a lasting peace in that area of the world still depends on solving the problems of the West Bank, the Palestinian refugees and the Holy City.

Abandoning plans to spend a long weekend in Key Biscayne, Fla., the President announced he would stay at the White House or possibly go to his retreat in Camp David, Md., prior to his departure Tuesday

for another round of summitry in Europe and the Soviet Union.

He will begin two days of talks Tuesday with NATO heads of state in Brussels and then go to Moscow Thursday.

Senate Democratic Leader Mike Mansfield said Nixon assured the congressional leaders that "no agreements have been entered into" prior to the Moscow summit. He added that the President "hopes to make progress toward agreements later" and will "discuss these matters at the summit."

These assurances apparently were designed to allay fears raised Wednesday by Sen. Henry M. Jackson, D-Wash., who accused Nixon of arranging agreements in advance of the trip without telling Congress. Jackson and other congressmen also have

criticized Nixon for plunging into foreign diplomacy at a time when his leadership at home has been threatened by the possibility of impeachment.

But Rep. Les Arends, R-Ill., told reporters after the briefing that the results of the Middle East tour "should put to rest once and for all the question of whether the President is leading the nation or not."

Arends said the mood of the briefing was "very good" and Nixon "was very convincing."

Assistant Senate Democratic Leader Robert Byrd said Nixon indicated he hoped to make some progress in Moscow toward an eventual agreement limiting strategic arms, but did not expect a full pact to emerge from the summit. Brezhnev has said however that he would be willing to negotiate a ban

on underground nuclear testing.

Both Mansfield and Senate Republican leader Hugh Scott said the President continued to warn that it will not be easy to achieve a lasting peace in the Middle East.

Mansfield said "he emphasized that while great progress has been made in the first two steps, the more difficult lie ahead—the West Bank, the Palestinian refugees and the Holy City."

Repeating what Nixon was told in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Jordan, Scott said the question of Palestinian refugees is "one of the greatest problems."

But he added that what Nixon's Middle East trip "was all about" was that "both sides concluded they could not reach their objectives through war."

Scott and Mansfield both said that Nixon assured them there were ample safeguards written into the agreements providing Egypt and Israel with nuclear power plants safeguards limiting the use of nuclear power for peaceful purposes.

But Byrd added: "I sometimes wonder why we provide these nuclear reactors which are for the purpose of developing peaceful uses of atomic when we ourselves have not been very successful in this area."

Grand jury: evidence 'vast'

WASHINGTON — The grand jury considered a "vast amount" of evidence — including White House tapes and testimony from witnesses — when it named President Nixon as an unindicted co-conspirator in the Watergate cover-up case, Special Prosecutor Leon Jaworski said Thursday.

Jaworski, in papers filed in the Supreme Court, countered arguments by White House lawyer James D. St. Clair that the grand jury named Nixon only on the basis of one taped conversation on March 21, 1972. Nixon was named an unindicted co-conspirator in March by a grand jury that indicted seven of his former aides in the Watergate cover-up.

Jaworski made the comments in a brief opposing St. Clair's attempt to obtain all grand jury material relating to Nixon's role in the cover-up. St. Clair's motion is part of the forthcoming Supreme Court battle over whether Jaworski's subpoenas of further White House tapes can be enforced.

"The President's present contention seems based on an attack upon the significance of one tape-recorded conversation he was ordered to produce," Jaworski said. "Of course, the grand jury's decision was not based on any particular item, and . . . the grand jury transmitted to the House Judiciary Committee a vast amount of evidence it considered 'material' to the

President's role in Watergate.

"That decision to name Nixon as an unindicted co-conspirator was reached by a randomly selected panel of citizens."

Rabin's peace hopes ebbing

JERUSALEM — Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said Thursday Israel cannot enter peace negotiations with the Arab states now. He spoke as Israeli warplanes struck at Palestinian guerrilla bases in southern Lebanon for the third straight day.

"The concept of the Arab leaders of what constitutes a political settlement falls very far from what we mean by peace and

security," Rabin told 500 Jewish leaders at a Jewish Agency gathering here. He said the responsibility for peace rests with the Arabs.

"Israel endeavors to continue this gradual progress towards peace which started with the separation of forces between Israel, Egypt and Syria. Even as her fight against the murderers continues, Israel will continue its wholehearted efforts for speeding the peace-making process in our region," Rabin said.

But he said the time had not yet come for peace talks.

"Obviously, we can wish for nothing better than to move forward to negotiations that will lead to peace and security. But, regrettably, there are signs that this is not possible at the present time.

"If Egypt and Syria will concentrate their efforts on reconstruction and peaceful development, the message will not be lost on us. The onus is on them."

Rabin said the Arabs had told Israel through declarations that they are intent on mobilizing all resources to impose their will on Israel. "We have got the message," he said.

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Offices are at the Student Union building, Univ. of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, N.C. 27514. Telephone numbers: News, Sports—933-1011, 933-1012; Business, Circulation, Advertising—933-1163.

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