

Basic Detail Report

Captain Giorgio Pizzo, Alitalia's chief pilot

on a flight that was struck by Syrian missiles

Date

1970-1970

Medium

gelatin silver print

Description

Captain Giorgio Pizzo, Alitalia's chief pilot on a flight that was struck by Syrian missiles. Pizzo guided the plane and all its passengers to safety. An extract from the Chicago Tribune on June 27th 1970: ROME, June 26-A group of Europeans landing in Rome told of tense moments of terror they experienced in an Alitalia-Airlines DC-8 struck by a missile this morning near Damascus, Syria, Passengers said only a miracle brought the aircraft to a safe landing in Beirut, Lebanon. "Many passengers kissed the ground when they got out," Camisasca said. The plane spilled fuel after it was struck in its left wing about 40 miles from Damascus as Israeli and Syrian warplanes battled. The missile smashed a large hole between the two jet engines on the left wing. In Beirut, Capt. Giorgio Pizzo, the air liner's commanding pilot, said he thought at first the plane had collided with another until he saw the hole in the wing with fuel gushing out of it. Passengers applauded him as the plane rolled to a smooth stop on the runway. Pizzo said that when he examined the gaping hole in the wing, he revised his first impression that there had been no danger of the fuel tanks exploding. "I feel I've been very lucky," he said.

Dimensions

Overall: 24.2 x 18.4 cm (9 4/8 x 7 2/8 in.)

