WORLD NEWS

El Al is

saved
TEL AVIV

El Al has been saved from
liquidation just one week after
plans had been announced to
dismantle the airline and set
up a new one in its place.
On Sunday October 31, El
Al management, the Hi-
stradrut, trade union feder-
ation, the Israeli Government,
and representatives of the
eight workers' committees be-
gan negotiations on restruc-
turing the national airline.
This action immediately fol-
lowed an announcement by
the pilots' committee that it
would "abide by any decision
reached between the other
parties." (See Flight, October
30, page 1154).

The negotiations began
with management asking the
workers to accept a 20 per
cent reduction in staff. Man-
agement is also demanding
that productivity be improved
by increasing the number of
hours worked by 20 per cent,
at the same salaries. Manage-
ment hopes that by increasing
flight schedules with a re-
duced work force it will be
possible to earn profits of
about $80 million a year.

El Al workers representa-
tive Gabi Saltzman says that
he is "optimistic that progress
could be made which would
enable El Al's passenger
flights to resume". Transport
Minister Chaim Corfu has set
a deadline of November 17 for
the talks to bear fruit. That is
the day on which El Al share-
holders are scheduled to meet
to discuss the airline's future.
Corfu says "only if nego-
tiations are succeeding will
the decision to dismantle El
Al be deferred".

The opening of the nego-
tiations was preceded by vio-
lent scenes at Ben Gurion In-
ternational Airport. More
than 1,000 El Al workers and
their families demonstrated
on the runways in protest at
the Government's stalling on
negotiations. This followed
the pilots' committee refusal
to negotiate on the six-point
re-organisation plan.

An El Al Boeing 747 and
707 (which have not flown for
seven weeks during the strike)
were taxied from their hangar
to block the runways. Work-

1310

British Airways' first Boeing 757 has flown its first two test sorties. During the 2hr 23min first flight from airfield the aircraft carried out initial flight control and engine testing, and a fully automatic touch-and-go Lake Airport. BA takes delivery of the new 757 on February 3, 1983, and its first commercial flight w London-Belfast on February 9

ers then disabled the two air-
craft by deflating the tyres
and draining the hydraulics.
Riot police were hindered
from restoring order because
of the many women and chil-
dren among the demonstra-
tors.
The violent scenes at the
airport were finally too much
for some cabinet ministers, in
particular Deputy Prime Min-
ister David Levy, who de-
manded that Prime Minister
Begin personally intervene to
get negotiations under way.

Second

F-16XL

flies
FORT WORTH

The second General Dynam-
ics F-16XL made its first
flight late in the afternoon of
October 29, from CD's Fort
Worth plant, attaining Mach
1.4 at 30,000ft, and pulling 4g.
A two-seat variant of the
cranked-arrow-wing F-16 de-
velopment, the second air-
craft is powered by the
29,0001b-thrust General Elec-
tric F101 Derivative Fighter
Engine. The single-seat F-
16XL, powered by a
25,0001b-thrust Pratt &
Whitney F100, first flew on
July 3. Pilots for the F-
16XL/DFE were Alex Wolf in
the front cockpit and Jim
McKinney in the rear seat on

the one-hour maiden flight.
The F-16XL's wing is of
graphite composite construc-
tion and increases the wing
area by 121 per cent over the
standard F-16. Internal fuel is
up by 82 per cent, and
equivalent-load drag is re-
duced by 53 per cent, says
GD. The aircraft is capable of
9g instantaneous with full in-
ternal fuel. With 17 stores
stations available on the 29
hardpoints beneath the wing
and fuselage, the F-16XL will
carry 15,0001b of ordnance.
The aircraft is due to fly-off
against the McDonnell Dou-
glas F-15E.

BAe wants

A320 assembly
LONDON

Unless Britain has final as-
sembly of the Airbus A320,
the country could "give up for
ever the final assembly of
medium civil aircraft in
favour of a French European
Centre". This was one of the
subjects debated at a two-
day London conference
"Aerospace—Britain's Fu-
ture?", organised by the
white-collar TASS section of
the Amalgamated Union of
Engineering Workers.

Most public attention has
centred on an address by BAe
chairman Sir Austin Pearce,
to the effect that the future of
the £360 million BAe 146, in
the market for which the
board has great confidence,

depends on more efficient
work practices, keeping down
costs, and raising prod-
uctivity. Pearce wants staff to
be aware that very high pri-
vately funded development
costs are being capitalised at a
time of slow airline sales,
strong competition from the
Fokker F.28, and surplus
shorthaul aircraft.

All change in
Spain
MADRID

The landslide victory of
Spain's Socialist party in last
week's general election poses
several questions in the mil-
itary world. Prime Minister-
elect Felipe Gonzalez says
that the recovery of Gibraltar
and the postponement of
Spain's entry into Nato are
among his priorities.

Reaffirming his pre-
election promises, Gonzalez
says he will hold a national
referendum on joining Nato
and will also renegotiate the
United States' military basing
treaty with Spain. Another
pre-election promise was to
freeze the contract for 84 Mc-
Donnell Douglas F-18 Hor-
nets, not due to be finalised
until the end of the year.

The Socialist party has said
that it will re-open the com-
petition for Spain's FACA
fighter, as the previous Gov-
ernment did not gain all the
industrial offsets that it could
have done.

FLIGHT International, 6 Novembf