

Air crashes prompt questions on chatter

WASHINGTON (AP) — Two fatal airliner accidents have prompted questions about idle chatter in the cockpit and raised concerns by some safety officials that pilots may not always be focusing on business when they should be.

Nearly 11 minutes of the tape were omitted from the transcript because they were considered irrelevant, including a reference, according to sources, of the disclosure in news reports a few days before the crash of idle chatter aboard a Continental Airlines that crashed in Denver 10 months earlier.

Later, the plane's captain told investigators he did not care for the lengthy presence of the flight attendants in the cockpit, but that it was not his nature to order them from the cockpit during the long takeoff delay.

properly set the jetliner's wing flaps, which help it gain lift, and whether the conversations distracted them from preparing the plane for flight.

conversation and untimely presence in the cockpit of flight attendants. Earlier this year, the NTSB in its final report on the Nov. 15, 1987, crash of the Continental Airlines jetliner in Denver also raised concerns about idle chatter in the cockpit. That crash, which killed 28 people, was attributed to the pilot taking off in snow with ice on the wings.

Bush, Dukakis both claim last-minute race momentum

Associated Press

George Bush and Michael Dukakis both laid claim Sunday to precious, last-minute momentum in their campaign marathon, the vice president declaring the tide was "moving in our direction" and the combative underdog insisting he was "rocking and rolling" to an election upset Tuesday.

sought to raise fears over the possibility that Bush — if elected — might put vice presidential running mate Dan Quayle in charge of the White House crisis management team.

Bush a 17-point lead in Texas, with its 29 electoral votes. But Dukakis was reported gaining on Bush in the latest survey in Colorado, and holding an eight-point lead in Iowa.

It's very difficult to legislate against people interacting in a job situation," says Clay Foushee, an aviation safety researcher at NASA's Ames Research Center in California.

Four minutes before takeoff, the two Continental pilots engaged in almost three minutes of nonpertinent social conversation — reportedly involving a flight attendant — which would suggest inattention to more important details such as the weather and its effects on icing, the safety board said.

Israelis bomb Lebanon business

SIDON, Lebanon (AP) — Israeli helicopter gunships rocketed the shop of a boat dealer suspected of links with PLO guerrillas Sunday, demolishing the business and wounding five people, two of them seriously, police said.

PLO guerrillas and selling the guerrillas spare parts. It was the sixth Israeli air strike against guerrilla targets in south Lebanon in three weeks and the 21st this year.

An Israeli army announcement said the base attacked Sunday was used for launching attacks and ammunition storage. It said all planes that took part in the raid returned safely.

NBC News said Bush led nationally by five percentage points, and that one of every five voters were undecided or might switch allegiance.

Democrats also hoped for modest gains among the 12 statehouse races on the ballot. It was the costliest campaign in American history, and just one piece of it, a series of California ballot initiatives, had a price tag of more than \$100 million.

The Israeli army said its warplanes destroyed a Palestinian guerrilla base in south Lebanon. It did not mention casualties. Lebanese police said four Israeli Cobra helicopter gunships blasted the shop and a nearby citrus grove with eight rockets in two raids.

Earlier police reports said aircraft attacked guerrilla bases in the teeming Ein el-Hilweh refugee camp on Sidon's southern outskirts. Police said the guerrillas in the camp opened up with anti-aircraft fire but were not targeted.

The blitz is in apparent retaliation for a suicide car-bombing that killed eight Israeli soldiers in south Lebanon on Oct. 19 and a firebomb attack that killed an Israeli mother and her three children in the Israeli-occupied West Bank Oct. 30.

Voter turnout major issue for Nov. 8

Associated Press

Democrats and Republicans are both concerned with voter turnout in the Nov. 8 election. Only half of eligible voters are expected to turn out for Tuesday's balloting, when a president, vice president, 33 senators and 435 House members will be chosen.

Republicans and Democrats alike are keenly aware that getting people to vote will be their No. 1 challenge. Political parties, unions and other groups are running phone banks to reach swing voters as well as party faithful.

In Arkansas, where the deer-hunting season opened Saturday, Republicans mounted a direct-mail campaign encouraging hunters to get an absentee ballot if they won't be back from hunting in time for the election.

Coalition '88, a group of homosexuals and others who want two California AIDS initiatives defeated, will have hundreds of volunteers on Election Day erecting "human billboards" at 70 major intersections in Los Angeles urging voters to get out and turn down the two propositions.

Both parties are conducting massive drives for the state's 13.5 million registered voters but worry about the dampening effect of a ballot with nine state initiatives and possibly hundreds of local measures.

State GOP chairman Bob Naylor says: "I'm very concerned that people will be confronted with long lines at the polls, get early results from the East Coast and absentee ballots and say, 'What the heck, I won't vote.'"

Nationwide, public-interest groups predict that only 50 percent or fewer of the eligible voters will turn out, one of the lowest percentages this century and down from the 1984 figure of 53 percent.

The AFL-CIO will have 500,000 volunteers out on Election Day, a majority of them in states with the most union members, which also happen to be states with big electoral votes.

DON'T STOP AT THE TOP

VOTE FOR REPUBLICANS ALL THE WAY DOWN THE BALLOT WOULD YOU RATHER SUPPORT SOMEONE FROM THE PARTY OF:

- Jimmy Carter, Mike Dukakis, Walter Mondale, Teddy Kennedy, Jim Wright

OR WOULD YOU RATHER SUPPORT SOMEONE FROM THE

- PARTY OF: Abraham Lincoln, Ronald Reagan, George Bush

HELP THE AGGIE GOP TONIGHT TO HELP:

- George Bush, Gary Norton, Beau Boulter, Randy Sims, Joe Barton, Hub Kennedy (Write-in), Ed Emmett, Wes Peyton, Kent Hance, Nathan Hecht, Tom Phillips, Paul Murphy

We will meet at 7:00 in 701 Rudder Then get to work for the Ticket of the 90's. Lets Have A Victory As Big As Texas In 1988.