

## Problems in Navigation

Shortly before 3 o'clock one afternoon last week Capt. David I. Holland, pilot of an RB-66 reconnaissance plane making a navigational training flight out of Toul-Rosières, France, radioed in his position to the nearest USAF ground station. He was, he said, over Nordholz, West Germany. A few minutes later, rocket fire from a Soviet jet fighter sent Holland's plane cartwheeling down in flames. Hitting their ejection buttons, Holland and his two crewmen parachuted to earth—and landed in a pine

protested the "precipitous" downing of the RB-66, it also apologized for the errant flight and employed former ambassador to Russia Llewellyn E. Thompson Jr., a man whose word is respected in the Kremlin, to deny "categorically" as "contrary to fact" the Soviet charge that the plane had been engaged on a spying mission.

The denial, however, left several questions unanswered. Captain Holland's two crewmen, Capt. Melvin J. Kessler and First Lt. Harold W. Welch, were both navigators, which should have greatly reduced the chance of navigational error. Moreover, the RB-66 is, in fact, often assigned to electronic search



Holland



Kessler



Welch

Associated Press



Associated Press

### Held by Russians: Crew of an RB-66 that strayed off course

wood near the town of Gardelegen, East Germany, some 135 miles from where they had thought they were.

The error was more than a little embarrassing for this was the second time in two months that a U.S. plane had been trapped over East Germany. In January, all three crewmen of a T-39 jet trainer lost their lives when their plane was shot down 125 miles on the wrong side of the border. On that occasion, the Soviets claimed the plane was spying and had been shot down only after it ignored signals to land. The U.S., in turn, angrily accused the Russians of a "shocking and senseless act."

Last week, however, the U.S. talked more softly. Though Washington mildly

missions. And it just so happened that this particular RB-66 crashed in an area seething with Russian troops on maneuver. All of this clearly made the Russians even more skeptical than usual, and at the end of the week Moscow was still ignoring U.S. requests for return of the three captured airmen.

#### FRANCE:

### Carnage à Trois

When jealousy knocks the *toujours* out of *l'amour* in France these days, the result is apt to be not only broken hearts but crushed fenders. It used to be that a jilted French lad might leap