

SOUTHALL PLANE CRASH.

Kelvin Gardens, Southall - and where No.6 used to be, there is nothing but smoking rubble. For at 7.30 on a September morning, a Viking aircraft crashed into the street, destroying one house, damaging others, killing seven people - including a mother, a baby-in-arms, two children, and the aircraft's crew. It was a godsend that the plane carried no passengers - otherwise the death-roll would have been far higher.

The aircraft - a charter plane outward bound with freight for Israel - had turned back with engine trouble, and was waiting to land at Blackbushe Airport. What further trouble caused the disaster is not yet known; but eyewitnesses say the pilot, in his last moments, leaned out of the plane to wave a frantic warning. Seconds later, he died instantly as the aircraft ploughed into the houses; and it was some time before his body could be brought out of the tangled wreckage.

Neighbours, firemen and police worked for hours - hampered at first by fire from exposed gas mains. Until the wreckage could be cleared, it was feared that many more might have been trapped, dead or injured, in the ruined houses.