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**Folder Title:** Hijacking Crisis, June 1985-July 1985,  
TWA 847 (06/27/1985-07/05/1985)  
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# WITHDRAWAL SHEET

## Ronald Reagan Library

**Collection Name** Fortier, Donald: Files

**Withdrawer**

RBW 2/25/2011

**File Folder** JIJACKING CRISIS, JUNE-JULY 1985 (4) TWA 847  
(06/27/1985-07/05/1985]

**FOIA**

F97-046/4

**Box Number** 5

WILLS

29

ID	Doc Type	Document Description	No of Pages	Doc Date	Restrictions
105748	PROFS	ROBERT MCFARLANE TO JOHN POINDEXTER RE. PRESS GUIDANCE	2	6/27/1985	B1
105749	MEMO	OLIVER NORTH, HOWARD TEICHER, FORTIER, ET AL TO MCFARLANE RE. NSPG MTG.	1	6/28/1985	B1 B3
105750	CHART	RE. HOSTAGES [ATTACHED TO DOC. 105749]	2	6/28/1985	B1 B3
105751	PAPER	RE. NSPG DISCUSSION PAPER ON BEIRUT AIRPORT	3	ND	B1
105752	PAPER	RE. RECOMMENDED PHONE CALL TO PRESIDENT ASSAD [COPY OF DOC. 105711]	2	6/24/1985	B1
105753	CABLE	DAMASCUS 04083	4	6/30/1985	B1
105754	REPORT	RE. ARAB AND ISRAELI HIGHLIGHTS [W/NOTATIONS]	3	7/2/1985	B1

The above documents were not referred for declassification review at time of processing

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

B-1 National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]

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Fortier 10

File  
Wagner

THE WHITE HOUSE  
Office of the Press Secretary

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For Immediate Release

June 30, 1985

SUMMARY OF EVENTS

The Hijacking of TWA Flight 847

All times EDT: Beirut and Damascus and Athens are plus 7 hours;  
Algiers plus 5 hours:

Friday, June 14

- Boeing 727 jet departs Athens en route to Rome with 153 people on board, including 129 American passengers, 14 foreign passengers, six American crew members, two foreign crew members and two Lebanese hijackers.
- At about 3:10 a.m., flight is diverted to Beirut, where it lands just before 5:00 a.m. over the protests of Lebanese controllers. Nineteen passengers, 17 women and two children, are released and the aircraft is refueled.
- The President's national security advisers begin a series of secure telephone conference calls which will continue throughout the hijacking situation. Initial interagency meeting scheduled. Task Force organized at State Department.
- Shortly before leaving Beirut for Algiers, 1,800 miles away, at 6:30 a.m., the hijackers list their initial demands, which include release of Lebanese held in Israeli prisons.
- At 10:00 a.m., initial interagency meeting held at White House.
- U.S. requests Algeria to allow plane to land and not depart.
- Plane arrives at 10:30 a.m. and spends several hours in Algiers, where 21 additional passengers are released. The plane is again refueled. Hijackers threaten to execute hostages if aircraft is not permitted to depart.
- U.S. urges government of Lebanon not to allow aircraft to return to Beirut and urges governments of Syria and Cyprus to accept the aircraft if diverted from Beirut.
- At 3:25 p.m., aircraft departs again for Beirut, landing at 7:20 p.m. over Lebanese objections. When requested Amal intermediary does not arrive, Navy Petty Officer Second Class Robert Stethem is shot in the head and murdered. His body is thrown onto tarmac.
- About a dozen heavily armed men, apparently Hizballah and Amal militia, board the plane and take control from the original hijackers.
- Certain passengers are then singled out, and 13 are taken off the plane.

-more-



Friday, June 14 (continued)

- Plane departs Beirut at 10:40 p.m. U.S. requests Algiers to allow aircraft to land and not take off again.
- In high level diplomatic communication, U.S. urges Syria to contact Iranian/Shia leaders to influence hijackers to release prisoners to Algerian authorities.

Saturday, June 15

- TWA plane arrives in Algiers at 2:50 a.m.
- In Algiers, 61 passengers and all five flight attendants are released in stages. International Committee of the Red Cross and Algerian officials are permitted to board the aircraft to check the health of the hostages and hear the demands of the hijackers.
- U.S. requests Algeria to keep aircraft in Algiers.

Sunday, June 16

- After 25 hours, the plane leaves Algiers for Beirut, landing for third time at about 7:45 a.m.
- Secure telephone consultations among the President's national security advisers are followed by the President's early return to White House from Camp David. His scheduled afternoon events are cancelled.
- Upon arrival at the White House from Camp David, President takes questions from the press and says "... we're doing everything we can do, but I'm not going to talk about details, I don't think that would be proper." Asked if he is ruling out military response, he replies: "I'm not going to comment on anything of that kind." Is he still opposed to negotiating with terrorists? "This has always been a position of ours, yes." Asked if he has talked to any government that morning, the President replies: "We've been in contact with the governments of Lebanon and Syria and Israel, but again, I can't go any further in any details."
- At 1:02 p.m., the President enters White House Situation Room to begin a meeting with his national security advisors. In the the meeting the President reaffirms basic policy not to negotiate; focuses attention on Amal, which now has claimed responsibility for the safety of the hostages. Meeting ends at 2:15 p.m.
- Remaining 29 passengers removed from plane. Three flight crewmen remain onboard with unknown number of hijackers.
- Amal leader Berri enters discussions for first time. Berri frees hostage Robert Peel, Sr.

Monday, June 17

- In early morning hours, National Security Advisor Robert McFarlane makes 30-minute phone call to Amal leader Berri; tells him U.S. will not make concessions or ask anyone else to do so.
- Secretary Shultz makes statement at noon briefing: "We call upon those holding the hostages to treat them properly and to release them immediately ... we will not make deals with terrorists and will not encourage others to do so."

Monday, June 17 (continued)

- At 1:00 p.m. press briefing, Principal Deputy Press Secretary Larry Speakes confirms McFarlane/Berri phone call. Says "we have made it plain what we want Berri to do, and that is to use his influence to resolve this situation. We believe he's capable of doing that. We believe he is the key to the solution there and if he wishes to step forward and take that leadership role and use his influence, then we think it could go a long way toward resolving the problems involved -- the complex problems involved in this situation, perhaps including the releases of the Israeli detainees."

Tuesday, June 18

- Berri frees three more hostages, including Greek singer, leaving 40 hostages, all believed to be Americans.
- U.S. sends demarches to various countries and international organizations, requesting they use their good auspices to influence the situation.
- U.S. decides to issue travel advisory warning to U.S. citizens about travel through Athens Airport.
- U.S. contacts with government of Syria and others focus on the need to release hostages quickly and transfer them out of Lebanon.
- The President, in the opening statement of a regularly scheduled nationally-televised press conference, announces measures to deal with airport security and terrorism. He calls for the immediate safe release of our citizens. Hijacking issue dominates news conference questions.

Wednesday, June 19

- U.S. requests International Committee of the Red Cross to see the hostages and check their welfare.
- ABC News correspondents allowed to approach airliner to interview pilot John Testrake and crew, the first of many media interviews with the hostages arranged by their captors.
- President offers thoughts at a question-and-answer session with members of the Mooresville Chamber of Commerce in Indiana: "To the families of those here from your own state, I think we all are praying -- that's all -- I've been praying ceaselessly for them and for their safety."
- President meets with hostage families in Indianapolis.
- At the Annual Convention of the U.S. Jaycees in Indianapolis, the President says: "We're continuing to do everything that we can to bring all credible influence to bear, to get our people freed and returned home safe and sound ... but let me say, we must not yield to the terrorist demands that invite more terrorism. We cannot reward their grisly deeds. We will not cave in."
- Terrorists in San Salvador kill 15, including four unarmed off-duty U.S. Marines not in uniform and two U.S. businessmen.

Thursday, June 20

- The President meets with his national security advisers in the White House Situation Room, 10:06 a.m. until 11:15 a.m.

Thursday, June 20 (continued)

- The President issues a statement on the killing of Americans in El Salvador, saying he has appointed the Vice President to take the lead within the U.S. government and with our allies "to determine what actions, military and otherwise, we and our similarly threatened friends can take to end this increasingly violent and indiscriminate but purposeful affront to humanity. ... No nation on earth has been more generous to others in need. But we also have out limits -- and our limits have been reached. We cannot allow out people to be placed at risk simply because they are blessed in being citizens of this great Republic."

Friday, June 21

- Diplomatic efforts continue.
- President meets with hostage families in Dallas.
- In the President's address to the Lions Club International Convention in Dallas, he talks about terrorism:  
"In the last few days, it has become even more clear that the criminal threat to civilization is no mere domestic problem. Wednesday night in El Salvador, four young Marines in civilian clothes, along with civilians from America and several other countries were gunned down in a sidewalk cafe. This event was preceded by the wanton bombing of an air terminal in Frankfurt, Germany; the hijacking of one of our airlines; and the seizure of a Jordanian aircraft. The killers in El Salvador are no different than those other perpetrators of inhumane acts."

Saturday, June 22

- Diplomatic efforts continue.
- The President says in his weekly radio address to the Nation: "We will carry with us all of the grief and sorrow and rising anger of a nation whose patience has been stretched to its limit."

Sunday, June 23

- Diplomatic efforts continue. By now, numerous countries, including many in the Middle East, have condemned the hijacking.

Monday, June 24

- Israel releases 31 Lebanese detainees from Atlit prison, but says their release resulted from judicial processes and is not linked to hijackers' demands.
- In Beirut, Nabih Berri announces a new demand: that U.S. Navy ships in the area leave before the hostages can be released.
- Meeting with his national security advisors in the White House Situation Room, the President decides to let diplomatic action play out; Syria the focus of diplomatic efforts. Meeting, which began at 2:07 p.m., ends at 3:38 p.m.

Tuesday, June 25

- At 9:15 a.m. press briefing, Larry Speakes discusses options the President may consider, including limiting goods and services to Beirut and limiting use of Beirut International Airport.

Tuesday, June 25 (continued)

- At 1:47 p.m., the President chairs a meeting of national security advisors in the White House Situation Room; reviews plans to extricate the hostages and to press forward with a campaign against terrorism. Meeting ends at 3:00 p.m.
- Interagency meeting refines planning directed by the President.
- In a 4:00 p.m. press briefing, Larry Speakes reports that the President met with national security advisors, receiving a top-to-bottom review of current diplomatic efforts and the full range of future options for bringing full pressure to bear on those holding U.S. citizens. Speakes says that the review covered ongoing efforts and the assessment as to whether they will bear fruit. According to Speakes, the President also reviewed a wide-ranging series of options that could be applied to the situation should the hostages be held for a longer period. Speakes closes the briefing by saying: "The President will let diplomacy run its full course before taking further steps, but he is prepared to take whatever actions are necessary."

Wednesday, June 26

- From 10:03 a.m. until 11:00 a.m., the President chairs another meeting of his national security advisors in the White House Situation Room. Defers other steps pending diplomatic developments.
- News blackout begins.
- Another hostage, Jimmy Palmer, is released because of a worsening heart condition.
- Berri reiterates his demand that U.S. warships pull away from the Lebanese coast. He adds a new demand: that neither the U.S. nor Israel retaliate once the situation is resolved. Berri announces proposal to transfer all hostages to a Western embassy in Beirut or to Damascus, where they would remain until Atlit detainees are released.

Thursday, June 27

- Interagency group develops contingency plans.
- Wide speculation in media about whether hostages will be transferred to the French or another Western embassy. Europeans won't accept conditions.
- Secretary of State Shultz's call for release of 46 U.S. hostages (including seven who were missing in Lebanon prior to the TWA hijacking) is widely reported in media as a "new U.S. demand."

Friday, June 28

- Interagency group meets again, prepares agenda for consideration by the President and his advisors.
- More hostage interviews by television networks.
- President meets with hostage families in Chicago.
- At a luncheon with community leaders of Chicago Heights, Illinois, the President says, in response to a question about one of the hostages' critical comments on the linkage of the seven kidnapped hostages to the 39 hijacking hostages: "I don't think anything that attempts to get people back who have been kidnapped by thugs and murderers and barbarians is wrong to do. And we are going to do everything that we can to get all of the Americans back that are held in that way."

-more-

Friday, June 28 (continued)

- In his remarks to the citizens of Chicago Heights, the President says: "When terrorism strikes, civilization itself is under attack. No nation is immune. There's no safety in silence or neutrality. If we permit terrorism to succeed anywhere, it will spread like a cancer, eating away at civilized societies and sowing fear and chaos everywhere. This barbarism is abhorrent. And all of those who support it, encourage it and profit from it are abhorrent. They are barbarians... We cannot accept these repeated and vicious attacks against our nation and its citizens. Terrorists, and those who support them, must, and will, be held to account."
- After returning from Chicago trip, the President chairs another meeting in White House Situation Room, from 5:11 p.m. until 6:10 p.m. -- reviews developments and determines courses of action to be taken in various contingencies.
- More television interviews with hostages.
- At about 7:00 p.m., press reports from the Middle East say hostages will be released. White House, in change from complete news blackout, says: "We have heard the reports. We are in touch with appropriate authorities in both countries (Lebanon and Syria). We have no further comment."

Saturday, June 29

- U.S. C-141 military transport aircraft with reception team departs Washington for Frankfurt. Another C-141 goes to Damascus.
- At about 4:00 a.m., hostages are reported released, en route to Syria. There are conflicting reports on their exact status and location. Syria announces "the hostages were freed today and will be transferred to Damascus where they are expected later today."
- Later reporting, confirmed around 7:00 a.m., indicates hostages still in Beirut, with Berri apparently seeking guarantees concerning U.S. non-retaliation.
- More television interviews with hostages.
- President mentions hostage situation briefly at beginning of his weekly radio address; confers with national security advisors in Oval Office; consults with other advisors by telephone.
- At about 10:00 p.m., the following statement, approved by the President as a restatement of longstanding policy regarding Lebanon, is issued by the Department of State: "The United States reaffirms its longstanding support for the preservation of Lebanon, its government, its stability and security, and for the mitigation of the suffering of its people."

Sunday, June 30

- At 3:30 a.m., Syrian officials in Damascus tell the U.S. Embassy "Syria has solved" the problem that delayed release of 39 TWA hijacking hostages.
- Press reports from Beirut and Damascus indicate preparations are being made for hostage release.
- At 6:00 a.m., arriving at the White House, National Security Advisor McFarlane tells reporters he talked to the President several times the previous evening and says "we just hope for the best."

Sunday, June 30 (continued)

- Hostages are reported by media to be en route Damascus. Other reports conflict with this.
- U.S. officials in Syria advise Washington that shortly before 1:30 p.m., hostages crossed the border into Syria from Lebanon. The exact number of hostages released, believed to be all 39, is not yet confirmed.
- Advised of the hostage release by McFarlane, the President says, "That's very welcome news. Let me know when they are wheels up."
- President addresses the Nation by television from the Oval Office: "The 39 Americans held hostage ...are free, safe, and at this moment, on their way to Frankfurt, Germany. They will be home again soon... We will not rest until justice is done. We will not rest until the world community meets its responsibility: We call upon those who helped secure the release of these TWA passengers to show even greater energy and commitment to secure the release of all others held captive in Lebanon. And, we call upon the world community to strengthen its cooperation to stamp out this ugly, vicious evil of terrorism."

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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

July 1, 1985



NOTE TO DON

FROM: KARNA

*filed  
Hijala*

Here it is -- as you can see,  
she wove in parts of the  
interview Bud did last night  
with Chris Wallace -- and  
interjected other observations  
to make it sound like he was  
pointing to Libya.

Please do what you can on this.

Many thanks.



**HOSTAGES RELEASED** - All thirty nine hostages are safe in West Germany.

Andrea Mitchell reports from the White House: National Security Advisor Robert McFarlane told NBC news that they are considering military action against terrorist training camps. Secretary of State Shultz is talking about closing the Beirut airport. "As long as Beirut is a haven for terrorists, it should not be a place frequented by the world community. It's a question of trying to close the usefulness of that airport." (Shultz) Shultz said terrorists have to play a price.

And the administration is considering preemptive strikes against training camps such as in Libya. "If you look at where it is, home grown, there really are places where you can deal with it strategically." (McFarlane) The President said we will fight back. And moments before that speech, he joked about a popular movie in which prisoners are freed by a one man strike force. "After seeing 'Rambo' last night, I know what to do the next time this happens." (Reagan) On a serious note, there is more and more talk here about military action.

Rick Davis reports from Damascus: Now the United States is in debt to a man who is an enemy of Israel. But the United States had little choice. Assad was the only man in the Middle East with enough connections, enough muscle to deal with the Amal and the more radical Hezbollah. Syria is the major backer of the Amal in Lebanon, so Assad moved in and in doing so, he made the United States a debtor nation.

**SIMCHA DINITZ** (Knesset member) interviewed by Bryant Gumbel

With regard to the prisoners in Atlit, they had announced three or four weeks ago that they would be released. The hijacking was a stumbling block in this process. Now that the hijacking is over, the release of the prisoners will be expedited.

Martin Fletcher reports from Israel: "...needless to say, Israel stands on the side of the United States and we admire the way that America that American administration and the American president handled this very, very complicated matter." (Shimon Peres) The Cabinet will meet again this afternoon to decide when to release the Lebanese prisoners. But Israel insists there has been no deal, no compromise with the terrorists. Israel will now call for a coordinated international fight against terrorism. But it expects to come under new pressure too, pressure to talk peace to the Palestinians and to withdraw completely from South Lebanon in order to remove the causes of terrorism against Israel and to relieve hostility towards the United States.

**GOFFREY KEMP** (CSIS) and **DANIEL PIPES** (War College) interviewed by Bryant Gumbel: Subject: Retaliation -

Pipes: We do know where the Shias are in the eastern part of Lebanon. We know where their camps are. There is every reason now for us to take steps to protect Americans in the future.

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

July 1, 1985

FOR: BUD McFARLANE  
JOHN POINDEXTER  
DON FORTIER  
JOCK COVEY  
HOWARD TEICHER  
JIM STARK

FROM: KARNA SMALL

For your files.

THE WHITE HOUSE  
Office of the Press Secretary

INTERVIEW OF  
SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL  
BY THE BALTIMORE SUN, THE NEW YORK TIMES AND  
THE WASHINGTON POST  
ON THE RELEASE OF THE AMERICAN HOSTAGES

June 30, 1985

Q Could you start by telling us what undid the glitch at the end, and what was the glitch as you see it and what unscrewed it?

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: Yes, if I could impose on your good will, I'd like to give you, I hope, a short Senior Administration Official Crisis Resolution 101 to start with. (Laughter.)

Q -- 03?

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: Right. (Laughter.)

The President has expressed in the past two weeks, I think, the elements of a framework for -- or his framework of crisis resolution that, as I thought back over it this morning, seemed to have several fairly clearly articulated parts to it.

First of all, going back to the first days, when I talked to him and advised him of what had happened in Athens and his talk with me and then with George and others around the community, was to define what is it that the parties to this hijacking are after, what is their goal. Immediately, and more broader, what are the interests of the people involved? Nabih Berri? Hezbollah?

Secondly, he asked me in that first conversation pointedly, "What is it -- how do you think the Soviets will react?" But it expressed the point, the interests of third parties who may have some influence in bringing it to a close -- and I would put in that category right now the Syrians, Algerians, Russians, Iranians.

And a third element is obviously to identify what are U.S. interests in this problem? And I would say again, goals and interests, immediate goals and broader interest to be served as you work your way through this.

Fourthly, too, establish in the minds of the policy officials his sense of foundation principles that ought to be expressed however you behave.

Fifthly to identify what are your resources? What can you draw upon? What are the elements of U.S. political leverage? Economic leverage, if any? Military? Intelligence? And then, beyond the United States, what leverage can we invoke involving third countries that might be helpful, supportive, complimentary? International organizations, if any. That kind of thing.

Well, looking through those rather abstract principles and concepts -- the interests of the people involved, the other side, of us, of third parties, resources and all of that -- then you've got to get down to the nitty gritty and define your strategy for bringing, or assessing what the risks are in terms of the other side, what they can bring to bear from their side and how you can integrate the considerable resources on our side, over time, to bring a resolution of the crisis which is compatible with American values, as

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a rhetorical way of saying that you can sustain publicly with the Congress and with the American people.

Well, to apply that six-point framework to the instant case, and the President got the word two weeks ago, it seemed to him that the other side was comprised of the Shiite community in Lebanon led by Nabih Berri and, within it, the element, the Hezbollah element, that have different goals and interests.

Looking back, it seems to us that Nabih Berri's interests were political, that he saw an opportunity here to elevate his own standing within the Shiite community, if he were able to make a gain appreciable within the Shiite community, that is, the release of the prisoners in Israel. And that was his purpose, that there was a different value set within the Hezbollah. That community is broadly devoted to riding Lebanon of Western influence generally, and the United States in particular. And then, as a second but related interest, they did, too, want to get back other Shiite, which included in the prisons in Israel some extremist elements, Hezbollah. But you have to look at these as discreet players within the mix here and recognize that they're not after the same thing precisely.

And the second family of considerations was the third parties that might have some influence in bringing it to a close -- and the President recalled Syria and the Soviet Union. It seemed to us that Syria might well have an interest in influencing the Lebanese players to bring it to an end because Syria has an interest in calm stability within Lebanon, so that it can more easily assert its prevailing influence in that country.

With regard to the Soviet Union, it was not clear at the outset what might be their purposes. Their public statements are -- it's not contradictory, not entirely helpful -- they have said that they opposed the hijacking and yet they portray us as having laid the climate that invited it.

With regard to Israel, the President, in his second meeting, I think, said that, in his judgment, that Israel's purposes were to come away from this with a good solid relationship with us intact, a counter-terrorist strategy intact and, too, the release of the hostages, the humanitarian concern.

In the way of our interest and our principles, obviously, we wanted to get the Americans back, but to do it in a way that sustained a viable counter-terrorist strategy, both long-term deterrent, as well as immediate success.

In the way of foundation principles to govern as we worked our way through it, the President, on the phone call, and then emphatically at the first meeting, said that --

Q What phone call?

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: When I told him about the hijacking.

Q You called him?

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: Correct. That, while we'll have to see how it develops, it's essential that we not make concessions to terrorists -- and expanded in the meeting to say, nor should we urge anybody else to do so.

As a related point that derives from looking back over this experience, a principle that he espouses, I believe, is that you've got to expect that it takes patience to resolve one of these things and you can't be spooked into changing your position by extreme rhetoric from the other side or from your own country, for that matter. And the natural emotional reactions can't goad you into imprudent actions. You've got to take a longer view and have a

considerable amount of patience.

The resources --

Q Clarify one thing real quickly?

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: Yes.

Q You said in the first phone call the President said we should not react -- you can't make concessions to terrorists. Then did you say at that meeting he later then said, "Nor can we encourage others to do it"? Or was that in the same phone call?

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: At the first meeting, he expanded it to --

Q To not encouraging others?

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: Right.

Q On the phone call, he just said, "We can't give any -- make concessions to terrorists".

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: That's right.

In the way of resources that we might be able to bring to bear, we have, of course, just our own political suasion, the diplomacy at hand through embassies in the Middle East and Europe, elsewhere, among great powers.

The President believed that when you'd applied all these things to the instant case that the first requirement was to apply the principle of no concessions to induce Berri to a different strategy. Berri's strategy fundamentally was use the Americans to leverage Israel. So you had to disavow -- or disabuse him of that belief that his strategy could work here. And to do that you had to start by making it very clear that there would not be any concessions from us, nor would we urge Israel to make concessions.

Now, I think, to be candid, that in the first three days -- it took about three or four days to do that -- because, as much as he said it and repeated it, speculation from within this country and the Congress and understandable speculation from the other side -- third countries about, well, couldn't you use this or that fig leaf to make it work and go behind the scenes and all of that kind of rhetoric left open, in Berri's mind, I think, as well as thoughtful people here, that maybe there was some wink in the approach that you could take to -- to have the reality of a trade, but not the perception. The President never believed that. And it took, however, about three or four days before, we think, Berri finally got the message. But the President articulated that through our -- Rich Bartholomew, his own public statements, the press conference, my call to Berri. And I think by about the middle of last week -- I say last week, the first week -- that Berri had begun to understand that. And began then to say how could he, Berri, achieve what he wanted to in some other path.

And that's when you began to hear Berri's approaches to other governments, European ones, to see if it might not be possible for him to lay off on them responsibility for holding onto these people to get out of the -- from under the -- by this time -- growing international criticism of him personally and the induced effect of internal criticism, because he simply wasn't getting results, of his own people. And he began to look to third countries. And that played out over last weekend. And -- all of you are familiar, the French, Austrian, Italian, Swiss efforts on his part, imposing pre-conditions. And ultimately, two nights ago, the last gasp of that expired, when the French wouldn't accept pre-conditions. Nor would anybody else.

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By early this week, really, while he continued to pursue that, he began to get the impression that it wasn't really working very well. And he looked to yet a third possibility, and that was that he could possibly exercise the Syrian option of turning the Americans over to the Syrians, at least getting out from under it himself and perhaps getting something in return. And yet it was not an entirely attractive option, because were he to do so, they would have been the ones who, having gotten him off the hook, he would be beholden to, and that is not entirely appealing to him in the long term.

So, from the President's point of view, going in, he said, "Let's set down the fundamental principle, which is designed to alter Berri's strategy."

The second general guidance he gave was, he said, "Assuming we can do that, then we ought to apply, over time, the resources that we have in a deliberate fashion to



place greater pressure on Berri, but do it in a way that's compatible with what we can sustain here at home and that led him to believe first, we got to try diplomacy and we got to make it try out, it's got to be credible and not flaccid and just superficial, and so let's get every avenue we can leveraging Berri diplomatically." And he did that, and there was a long discourse between us and the Algerians -- a flurry of circular cables that went throughout the world to get this outpouring of international criticism -- dialogue back and forth with the United Nations Secretary General. And, this did induce statements and a growing climate of isolation for Berri because everybody was sniping at him -- internationally criticizing him.

As that happened, and then as public perceptions in this country are expressed in editorial opinion and you gain, as I think the President did, greater support in terms of his having tried in deliberate fashion peaceful, firm, yet unprovocative steps and Berri's growing pressure as affective, then to nudge the pace of things, add to that any nonviolent measures you might take which would alter the climate in which Berri makes decisions. Now what do I mean by that rhetoric?

Well, he lives -- he swims in a sea that is created by a community of Druze, Sunni, Christians and Shiite and Hezbollah, but how can you alter that climate to maybe add to the international criticism internal frictions? Well, the President conceived -- he said, "Well, if you could do two things, you might create some internal problems and one of them would be stop traffic in and out of BIA." Why, because the Shiite get revenues from that and so it's a short term financial effect, but more significantly, that affects the perceptions of Druze, Sunnis, Shiite. And in the latter context, if you could cut off goods and services into the -- into Beirut, that really does have an effect.

You might say, why? Well, we don't pretend to siege Beirut. The purpose was not to make people hungry; it would never work. Lebanon's a very rich country in terms of just self-sustaining food and so forth. But the opinion makers, the leaders, the people that make money, do so through that port in a very major way. And both the illegal port and the normal commerce through there are very central to the day-to-day well being and -- of the heavies in Beirut. But, the President didn't do it. He said, "Let's make clear that we're considering it so that it gets the attention of those people and Nabih Berri." And he did so.

So, by Wednesday of this week, you had Berri in a position where he knew he wasn't going to get it from the United States in terms of leverage on Israel, he had a community of criticism coming from all over the world and sniping beginning from within, plus a Syrian intervention after Assad's return from Moscow this past Monday. So everybody -- there wasn't anybody standing up and saying, "Right on, Nabih Berri," but a lot of people criticizing.

It came down by the middle of this week to Berri looking at an accelerated pace for someone else to pass the ball to and, when on Thursday the French firmly said no, the Syrian dialogue began -- not didn't begin -- it picked up in earnest -- it had been going on. And the other element at play all along which was attenuated Thursday, too, was his dialogue with Hezbollah. Hezbollah's purposes, as I said, were different -- that they went into this with a kind of a general animus against the West, but a short term interest in these prisoners. And they weren't seeing anything encouraging coming out of this, and the idea of getting them to the Syrians really didn't answer that felt need. They wanted something personally. ✓

Well, they argued at some length with Berri and the Syrians and both of them were saying in so many words, we don't think we're going to get anything except if you let loose of the Americans, there may be some change in the future in the situation in Israel. But, that wasn't enough for them and they wanted something for their own, I think, internal purposes to point to. They focused upon the fact that there might be reprisals. I honestly do not believe that that was a central demand because they really are not very vulnerable and they know darn well they are not vulnerable to reprisals.

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Hezbollah lives in urban areas. It is manifestly infeasible, and they know it, to conduct violent raids against them. But it was more in the context of Berri having gotten all the news, Berri having been portrayed as the moderate, Berri being the emergent leader in the Shiite community and them not having gotten anything out of this. That, for sustaining internal cohesion, not for deterring future reprisals as -- they picked that out and they said, "Well, let's see if there can be some kind of apparent change."

But I think really what was telling was that by this time the combination of Syrian pressure, Berri's pressure and no gain had persuaded the Hezbollah that they couldn't emerge from this with any, I mean, just holding on as they were and improving their position.

The report of their criticism of that two days ago -- it was yesterday actually, was met with a firm no. Because that had come from Berri earlier through the French and others -- his commitment to no retaliation. And the Syrians last night about 8:00 p.m. came up with a formula that clearly was almost verbatim of what we had said six times in the last two months. And they said they would portray that as sufficient reassurance. And we said, "Well, do not mistake this. This is not an expression of intent to alter our policy." And they said, "Roger that. Let us handle what we think are the mindset of the Hezbollah."

But the President had discussed it with the Secretary of State. I talked to him about it last night at about 9:15 p.m. and he said, "Well, let there be no question. Either with us and the Syrians or more broadly, that this is simply the same thing the State Department said in April twice, May twice -- that it is simply a restatement of U.S. policy. And with that, the Syrians were able to bring this to a close and that's where we are."

Why don't you go ahead with your questions.

Q Well, what caused the -- presumably the Hezbollah had this -- separate agenda all along. What caused their -- the last minute glitch and did they -- even if that wasn't their real concern, did they seize upon Reagan's speech Friday as an excuse for not doing what they didn't want to do?

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: Good points, Lou. I believe that what caused them to come around was, in fact, a combination of Syrian pressure and pressure from within their movement, anxiety about Berri and the future of conflict in West Beirut. So, they came to that conclusion based on those factors and nothing else.

The gasp for some element of emergent credibility in the wake of this thing led them to cast about for what might we seize on that has been said in the last few days. They happen to have picked this. I honestly don't think that that was a -- expressive of an important Hezbollah goal because it is simply not something to which they are vulnerable.

Q So what do they get out of it? They get nothing.

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: They get what I assume they will portray as having protected their people. But their people are protected inherently by where they live.

Q Why was there this last, what would seem to be a problem with four of the hostages yesterday -- where four were not in the original roster. What -- who were the four? I mean, why were they --

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: We haven't seen the roster of yesterday. We assume they were the four held by Hezbollah.

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Q Oh, I see.

Q Could we just back up a bit. Are you fairly certain at this point that the Hezbollah people did the hijacking --

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: Yes.

Q And what then prompted them to turn over the hostages to Berri? What is your reading of that? Why did they give them up?

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: Jerry, I am speculating. I think that those who did it were not directed to by the senior echelons of Hezbollah. I think Hezbollah, you have to recognize, has elements within it, and people are fairly autonomous, and individuals will go out and do something like this -- as not terribly sophisticated hijackers. The two guys that brought it to Beirut were overcome, really, by force measure. I mean, Berri had twelve guys that were -- that outnumbered them and were more, probably, skilled in terrorist tactics and took it over.

Q What is your sense of why they singled out that one Navy man, subsequently beat him, and then killed him, and why that one person?

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: It is -- I couldn't say with any precision, Bernie. I would guess that they checked the ID cards of everybody and the taking of a military person, given the history of the U.S. military in Lebanon, and so forth, is a publicly natural thing for them to express their animus against Americans, especially against American military people.

Q When you were considering this range of options that the President -- these discussions the first few days -- was there at some point a viable military option, such as rushing the plane, seizing it, when it was in Algiers, or at any point was that an option that was available to the United States?

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: Well, generically -- and this was the motive for putting -- for assuring the capability of doing it. In a crisis like this, you want to have at hand all the resources you can have, and so having them in theatre was a sensible thing to do. You are making sure there was in the theatre the elements you would need. We did not do it, point one, with the intent that we ought to try it. We did it to be ready. Was there in fact the option? Theoretically, yes. Politically, no. And by the time that they got off the airplane, a forceful rescue was virtually out of the question.

Q Do you think -- two questions. Do you think that the airport and port threats were successful? How much success do you think you got out of that in terms of Berri's behavior in changing his strategy? And secondly, from your account it strikes me that Assad and Syria have changed a great deal since Lebanon of a year ago. And I just wondered -- your assessment as to what his motives are, and if I accurately described that, has Assad turned over some kind of new leaf from the Assad that we knew in our last Lebanon experience?

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: Good questions, David. On the first point, I am guessing -- and this probably is self-serving, but I did sense a change in the pace of Berri's negotiation after Tuesday, and that was after we made these references -- and that is a post hoc ergo propter hoc -- but I believe that -- that it may also have involved word coming in from places as distant as Moscow, and surely Damascus, that the Americans are serious about this. And the second part of your question, I think Syria acted throughout out of self-interest. I mean, I don't think that it represented some new value set on the part of Syria or latent altruism, which has been -- escaped us all these years. I

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think, really, that Syria has a very high interest in stability in Lebanon.

Secondly, I think they do have an interest in elevating Berri to have a reliable surrogate whose standing is improved by an outcome here. But foremostly their interest was calm in Beirut. ✓

Q And calm was threatened as long as these hostages were held?

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: That is right.

Q What about -- how did we do with the Israelis? I mean, there is widespread suspicion that, in fact, we gave signals, we made -- we said, "do it." What did we ever do with the Israelis?

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: At no time, from the first day to the last, did we ever urge, cajole, suggest, directly or indirectly by any U.S. official to my knowledge, absolutely never any hint of it from the President, that they alter their policy about no concessions or, in this case, releases, at any point on the prisoners at Atlit.

Q Well, then, what was the gist of our policy and our communications with Israel? Were we saying, look, we want -- we would like you to stand firm? We would like you not to release these prisoners under pressure? Did we ever say that?

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: I think a kind of a benchmark for that issue was Rabin's appearance on Nightline --

Q When he said, "playing games?"

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: Playing games, and --

Q And "why don't you ask us?"

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: That they would respond to a public request -- and I guess I predated Nightline, but the "playing games" reference there. And you may recall that right after that there was a very pointed reference -- Larry may have made it, or the President, I am not sure -- the United States -- I mean, the very next day -- does not make concessions nor will we urge anybody else to do so. It was public. Now, we repeated it in exchanges diplomatically with Israel.

Q Well, just in the time frame on that -- In fact, Larry's very high visibility enunciation of that came on the first Sunday, I believe, of the crisis. The Nightline that you were referring to was several days later.

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: When that happened, we pointedly said it again, just to make the point, but we said it privately to Israel, too. And we did not, in those private exchanges, ever say that we are going to try to work the hostage issue under the assumption, under the expectation, or urging that, after that you all move out with the prisoners. We did not say that -- ever.

Q But was it your reading of it that the view in Israel was one that -- it was in their interest, or interest in terms of U.S.-Israeli relations, that they in effect free the Lebanese prisoners, or sort of resolve this -- try to resolve this impasse by doing that?

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: Well, I would have to say that it seems to me that in the first few days, there must have been in Israel the tentative judgment on their own that maybe we would feel better if they said that in principle they were prepared to. But that was not induced or the result of any kind of suggestion by us. And when they began those hints -- well, they weren't hints,

MORE

they were statements -- we said no, we are not asking you to -- don't intend to.

Q You said that privately through diplomatic channels? You specifically said, no, we are not asking you to?

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: I don't recall what we said exactly.

Q But that was the tone --

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: We said, we are not asking you to.

Q -- the meaning of what you said?

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: That is right, yes, clearly.

Q Is there, as a result of this, a way in which this crisis seems to have been solved, going to be a new -- kind of following from Dave's question -- a new rapprochement with Syria? I mean, is this going to sort of end with this incident, or is there some way in which the United States government is going to try to actively work with the Syrian government to promote stability in Lebanon, or do anything else in the Middle East?

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: Well, Lou, the thing -- the question, I think, that has emerged as a result of this two weeks is the question really, does Syria have a different attitude about terrorism than it has had? To the extent that this Syrian role has been constructive as a counterterrorist performance by them, we will urge that they continue it and be willing to cooperate on counterterrorist things with us. Our agenda more broadly in the Middle East is one of disagreement on a number of areas in the peace process. We have been, and will continue to promote, the Hussein Initiative. Syria has said that it opposes it. We believe that the disintegration of the PLO -- at least the fostering of --

Excuse me -- I will be just ten seconds.

Q Sir, was there any realistic hope that all the hostages, including the seven who were being -- were kidnapped over the past year, would have been released? I mean, at one point this week, there was all the talk about every hostage.

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: I think that was probably my mistake, to tell you the truth. Mistake in the sense that what had been a part of our diplomacy in the private exchanges from the beginning had always included the seven; but that I had never urged or asked Larry to make it part of the seven. And when George put it in his speech, it was, I think, probably the first time in this two-week window where we had made it public. But you can check with the governments that we dealt with, we wanted all of them back.

The second part of your question, there were efforts made. Syria tried in earnest to get the seven and we think they're still trying.

Q It's our understanding now that you did not get them?

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: The report is simply that there are 39 people there, so that's a --

Q We believe they're controlled by the Hezbollah?

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: Yes. I couldn't tell you that the same elements of Hezbollah that held the four hold the seven. I couldn't -- I don't know that.

Q Well, why isn't Syria, if they are being as cooperative as they seem to be and have the muscle that they appear to have, why couldn't they get some of these people back? I mean, don't they know where they are or do they think they've done enough with this -- getting the 39 out? What's your reading of that?

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: Well, I think that over time, Syria may well be able to succeed in that effort. But, to be fair, it is true that there are Hezbollah elements and Hezbollah elements. And in a place like Burj Al-Burajinah or Hay es-Sallum or those just squalid, very violent neighborhoods -- I couldn't fault somebody for not being able to find somebody in two weeks time, not even the Syrians. It's very hard to do.

Q Do you think this is -- their staying there, remaining there is tied in any way to fears about retribution or something -- their being used to try to guard against that, wanting to discourage that fact, or something?

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: That probably is psychically accurate, that they take some comfort from having a hostage. But that isn't the foremost reason for two reasons -- because I think they look to those hostages as possible leverage to secure a different political end, like getting their own brothers out of prisons here and there around the Middle East; or for -- well, just, I guess, the comfort that we may be deterred while Americans are at risk.

Q So is there any prospect that they're ever going to get out? I mean, do you have any feeling now that they're -- any time in the short term?

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: Well, I don't like to predict about things in the Middle East. We did get four of them by people of the same strain of thinking.

Q There's a lot of people who say the President laid down the marker at the beginning of his term with the swift and

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effective retribution and that, although he has enunciated another parallel thing about not hurting innocent civilians that somehow, to maintain his credibility after this thing is over, he needs to somehow follow through on that and -- may be consistent with the other. Do you agree with that?

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: Well, as tragic as this has been, one -- to the extent that there's an improved awareness in the American people of the nature of terrorism, the complexity of dealing with it, then there are benefits. And it's in the context of an improved understanding of how it works and how complex it is to deal with it, but finally, of the need to deal with it, of the catalyzing effect of this thing in urging Americans to care enough to criticize and urge action that you see a nexus between the President's theoretical assertion and the political practicalities. That is, to take strong, swift retribution, to succeed must be done within a climate that understands it and can distinguish between impulsive violence and purposeful sustained action over time.

I think that we are seeing emerge here the foundation, the base for sustaining firm action in the coming months. And I think perhaps, too, to sustaining proposals for legislation to have more resources and greater legislative -- or legal authority to act and to apprehend and to follow, track, identify and detain people.

Q It seems to me what you're saying is that the effect of this has been to get the American people to support whatever -- many of the measures the President might feel he wants to take to react to this. That being the case, is the President going to retaliate, and what is he going to do?

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: I would put the emphasis less on retaliation and more upon the purposeful use of all U.S. resources, including force, in a consistent way to deal with the global problem. In other words, we want to transcend what has happened in Lebanon to focus upon dealing with the infrastructure of terrorism and not an isolated example of where it lives and exists; but to look at what is it that has created this infrastructure, why is it sustained, and why does it flourish, and what must you do at the roots of that infrastructure to deal with it.

Q You seem like you're talking about a general question right now. But right now, we're dealing in the context of a hijacking crisis in which the President said those responsible will be held to account. How is he going to hold them to account?

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: Well, if, over time, the tentacles of a movement see the body being treated, their survival as the digit on the end of the tentacle, the finger, the knuckle, becomes less secure, and their ability to rely on that infrastructure leads them to change their course, or it can, or at least they are cut off.

So dealing with the foundation, the body, the brains and the inspiration, whether theological or otherwise, is important.

Q Is there a new opportunity here to deal internationally against terrorism? During the same period that our hostages have been held we've had that Air India disaster, we've had the bomb in Frankfurt, we've had other things. Is there anything that the United States can or should do that this administration will do to try to get a kind of international attack on terrorism beyond this thing you were talking about the other day, about Beirut Airport, since you don't have that specific situation?

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: Yes. We have, to be fair -- we've brought it up before -- the London summit, and the purpose of the London summit was to get some specifics put down behind the scenes on what each country would commit to do better in the next year. And it has worked. You have found an incredibly

MORE

higher order of cooperation in the last year than we had before that.

There are about sixty-some odd examples in the past year of preventive terrorism. And it's been prevented on those sixty occasions because we and the British, French, Germans, Japanese, or others in the summit seven have conveyed information to each other better, detained people quicker. But, you know, it's the dog that didn't bark -- there's sixty times that we have rounded up -- 15,000 weapons in this country alone have been apprehended in the last year.

MR. SPEAKES: We'd better stop so we can get the transcript out by --

Q Can I take one last quick question, or is that it?

MR. SPEAKES: No. You can take one last quick question.

Q It seems to me that what you're saying is that the U.S. is going to respond in a broad way to this in trying to deal with the roots, causes, and everything else. But what we appear to have is two Hezbollah who grabbed the world and shook it around for two weeks. Two Hezbollah. Not Syria, not Lebanon, not Nabih Berri. How do we respond and, if you will, avenge that? Or are we not going to?

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: Well, vengeance is not a satisfactory basis for policy. It isn't to say that retaliation doesn't deter; it does. But it will be a combination of attack on fundamental infrastructure and the purposeful use of force where it can be done in an unambiguous, effective way that will follow.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END



THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

June 30, 1985

INTERVIEW OF  
NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR ROBERT C. MCFARLANE  
BY CBS NEWS

The Roosevelt Room

Q Good evening to you, sir.

MR. MCFARLANE: How are you.

Q And let me give you an opportunity to respond to something that one of the hostages said, according to Time Magazine. I know you've been busy and perhaps you haven't seen or heard this quote. Time Magazine tonight quotes one of the hostages as saying, "Reagan was stupid to say these guys were a bunch of thugs when he did. Can you believe an American President would say such a thing when American citizens are being held hostage?"

MR. MCFARLANE: Well, I think, Dan, that the reality of a group of people who seize an aircraft, murder at least one of the people there, and make clear that they're intent upon and willing to perform violence doesn't leave much in the way of doubt that these are very ruthless and brutal people. It isn't surprising that someone who is there may become sympathetic to the persuasion of the moment. And yet, I think we have to deal with realities, and murder is not something that anybody could associate with civilized behavior. Thugs, barbarians is not inappropriate.

Q Well, keeping in mind that this was one hostage, unnamed, and that that person has been under tremendous pressure over the last two weeks and may have second thoughts about it, but the point is, has there been any second thoughts about what the President said last Friday? We all, at times, say things and later say, perhaps I shouldn't have said that or shouldn't have said it at that time.

MR. MCFARLANE: I think really that the President's consistency is one of his strengths. And one of the important principles of countering terrorism is to awaken international understanding of its nature. To label these people for what they are, to try to evoke an understanding of it, and combined action with ourselves and other countries to do something about it is important. And that was the President's purpose.

Q As the President's National Security Council Advisor and right in the White House itself, have you told him that this strengthens the hand of Syria and helps the Syrians establish themselves as they would like to be, the preeminent Arab power in the region?

MR. MCFARLANE: Well, the President has been, throughout, very conscious that Syria, in this crisis and always, acts from a perspective of self-interest, its self-interest. That has been expressed in an essentially constructive fashion in trying to resolve this particular terrorist event. We hope it will lead to other examples of Syrian cooperation.

We don't pretend that we agree with Syria on the entire spectrum of issues, notably, the importance of peace between Israel and neighboring states. However, we don't deny that in this case there has been a useful example of cooperation.

Q Mr. McFarlane, we have only a few seconds left. I

MORE

know that you've made an effort, the government has made an effort to get the seven Americans who remain kidnapped in Lebanon freed. Is there any real prospect of that happening soon?

MR. MCFARLANE: I think one can derive some hope from what has happened here today. And if we can engage with the government of Syria and learn from this experience, surely there's hope. We've got to persist and remain determined to get those people back.

Q Thank you very much, Mr. McFarlane, for taking time on this very busy evening to talk with us.

MR. MCFARLANE: It's a pleasure, Dan.

END



THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

June 30, 1985

INTERVIEW OF  
NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR ROBERT C. MCFARLANE  
BY  
NBC NEWS

The Roosevelt Room

Q Mr. McFarlane, does the statement that the U.S. issued last night about support for the preservation of Lebanon, does that in any way restrict U.S. retaliation?

MR. MCFARLANE: No, it doesn't, Chris. This was a statement of our attitude toward Lebanon and the Lebanese people and had no effect on our policy toward terrorism.

Q Secretary of State Shultz said that you intend to shut down Beirut Airport. How?

MR. MCFARLANE: I think that by calling upon other countries which serve it with commercial service to acknowledge that it is a center of terrorism that has been the site of 15 percent of the international hijackings in the past 15 years and to ask them not only not to go there themselves, but not to service aircraft which do, could have a significant effect.

Q But if the real point is to stop hijacking, don't you have to make it physically impossible for hijackers to land in Beirut?

MR. MCFARLANE: Well, that may be necessary. Over time, I wouldn't rule it out. But as a first measure, perhaps to demonstrate to the people of Lebanon who, after all, will determine whether aircraft land there or not that, this is intolerable behavior could lead them not to become a host for it in the future.

Q The President said that the hijackers who murdered Robert Stethem must be brought to justice. How do you do that?

MR. MCFARLANE: Well, I think by persuading people to not only share intelligence but to identify terrorists, track them, arrest them in advance, can help deter these kinds of things in the future. But on this specific act, authorities in Lebanon have the intelligence means to go out and look for those responsible, and we hope they will.

Q With the chaos in Lebanon, do you really expect them to go track down these people and bring them to justice?

MR. MCFARLANE: It's their responsibility and we'll be glad to assist if they need it. But we can't ignore this. It's an outrage.

Q Are U.S. options in terms of military action very limited? Syria, which the U.S. has said in the past was one of the sponsors of terrorism, helped end this crisis. There's even been talk that Iran may have helped to get those four hostages away from the Hezbollah extremists. Doesn't that limit your options in terms of striking against terrorists?

MR. MCFARLANE: I don't think that really is so, Chris. I say that because if you look at where does terrorism breed, where are they trained, what is the infrastructure that makes possible these several tentacles that were expressed in this particular

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action? So if you look at where it is home-grown, there really are places where you can deal with it strategically.

Q Isn't it going to be hard to retaliate when some of the hostages themselves, in interviews today, said that it was a learning experience and that the Shiites have legitimate grievances?

MR. MCFARLANE: Well, I think that phenomena is not uncommon when people are surrounded with a kind of a psychological brainwashing experience without the ability to accept that they have just also witnessed at the same hands murder -- a 747 has been shot down with over 300 lost -- peoples' loss of life. In short, that these same people, saying such soothing things, are very violent people.

Q So what you're saying is we shouldn't take what those hostages said seriously?

MR. MCFARLANE: Well, I think it is understandable that they would say that since that's the only information they were receiving. But I think you have to put in context, that the same captors were capable and executed very brutal acts.

Q Did the terrorists win?

MR. MCFARLANE: No, not at all.

Q Well, let me ask you about that, because they got tremendous publicity for their cause. They can claim, it seems, that they're going to get their Lebanese brothers out of Israel; they got a statement, whatever it meant, out of the United States; and they hurt Israel's standing in the U.S. Didn't they win?

MR. MCFARLANE: In fact, the hostages were released without concession, but in the process the strategy of the terrorists was defeated -- they gained nothing from it -- and the international attention of criticism that was focused upon them gave them very little basis for comfort and, most importantly perhaps, they have evoked in the United States, I think, an understanding of how important it is to truly deal seriously with this problem.

Q Did the U.S. at least bend, if not break, its policy of no deals with the terrorists? You did issue a statement last night, basically under duress, to try to end the crisis. It was a restatement of U.S. position on Lebanon. And an administration official said that you hoped that Israel would read your mind and free those prisoners. So didn't you bend?

MR. MCFARLANE: The administration, the President never, from the first day, altered the fundamental principle for his dealing with terrorism. We shall not make concessions, nor, as you suggest, in this statement last night in which we express support for Lebanese integrity, did we give anything away at all. In fact, that last gasp, that reaching for a straw, so to speak, was an artificial pretext to pretend that they had gained something, and it was nothing at all.

Q How helpful was Iran in helping to end this crisis?

MR. MCFARLANE: Oh, it's purely a matter of speculation, Chris. I have no hard evidence that Iran intervened in any decisive way.

Q Last question. Can you give us a sense of the mood, both for you personally and for the President, here in the White House over the last seventeen days? How much of a roller coaster was it?

MR. MCFARLANE: I think it has been for me a very impressive example of a man who is very confident in the principles

that he would espouse in pursuing this problem, a steadiness that could evaluate each day the evidence before us, and to lay out a thoughtful, deliberate application of U.S. resources to the resolution of this problem -- successfully, in this case. Very steady, deliberate, thoughtful, calm.

Q But in an emotional sense, were there great ups and great downs?

MR. MCFARLANE: There would occasionally be disappointments, but the effect of them was to evoke a little more creativity and imagination and, ultimately, a successful outcome.

Q And what were your feelings when, after thinking that they were out yesterday, suddenly in late morning you learned that they weren't?

MR. MCFARLANE: Surely, there was disappointment, Chris. But I think, for those of us who spent much time in the Middle East, that's -- you learn to expect that. And so, it wasn't despair by any means -- evoked a certain second wind and turned out all right.

Q Robert McFarlane, thank you and congratulations.

MR. MCFARLANE: Thank you.

END

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

June 30, 1985

INTERVIEW OF  
NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR ROBERT C. MCFARLANE  
BY ABC NEWS

The Roosevelt Room

Q Joining us now -- I beg your pardon -- it has been a long day -- for the first live television appearance he has made since this ordeal began is the National Security Advisor, Robert McFarlane, who is with us in Washington. And I apologize for coughing in your ear as well.

Mr. McFarlane, it looks very much as if the United States now has an opportunity to alter its policies in the Middle East. Do you think that will happen?

MR. MCFARLANE: I believe that there is the issue of terrorism, as it is expressed there, and the broader agenda as well -- Arab-Israeli peace, and so forth. The latter policies will not change, and we will pursue those as strongly as we can. I do think, Peter, that this has evoked, in the terrorist context, a better understanding here in the United States of the complexity of it, the urgency of it, and the importance of getting more serious and devoting more resources to dealing with it.

Q What about the political context? Once again the Syrian President, Hafiz Assad, has come to the assistance of the United States, and yet we continue to cut him out of the diplomatic process.

MR. MCFARLANE: Well, I think to the extent that Syria has, as you put it, acted constructively in this terrorist incident, we welcome it and we hope that we can work cooperatively with them on terrorist incidents in the future, and more broadly if possible. Syria has acted here out of self-interest. On other agenda items -- Arab-Israeli peace, for example -- we disagree. On their view of the PLO and their sponsorship of extremist elements of it, here again we have some disagreements. Their attitude toward others, like King Hussein, who are trying to make progress in the peace process, has not been totally supportive. And so it is not a matter of congruence in the way we see things in the Middle East. Where we do, as in the past few days, of course, we would like to promote that kind of cooperation.

Q Could I talk to you about the other seven hostages who still remain perhaps in Lebanon? They have not had much attention until this crisis. Do you know where they are?

MR. MCFARLANE: Well, the short answer is that they move so often and so rapidly that you can never be confident. We are making all the efforts that we can. Lebanon is a very chaotic place. We rely primarily on people there, and neighbors, like Syria, to help identify both where they are, who holds them, and to seek their release.

Q Do you believe that they are in Lebanon?

MR. MCFARLANE: Yes.

Q And have they been in any other country, to the best of your knowledge?

MORE

MR. MCFARLANE: Not to our knowledge.

Q You have called repeatedly in this crisis for the release of those seven. Have you asked President Assad to get them back, and do you think he could get them back?

MR. MCFARLANE: We have asked for his help, and he has stated that he will try to be helpful. And we take that at face value and welcome it.

Q It has not appeared, Mr. McFarlane, this week, as if the Israeli government and the United States government have been as much in step as usual. What do you think the future is of American-Israeli relations now?

MR. MCFARLANE: I think they have been very strong throughout this period, and come away from this crisis even stronger. The fundamental principle, which the President enunciated at the beginning, was that the United States would not make concessions to terrorists nor urge Israel to do so. And that has been very clearly preserved. And as a consequence, the policy of both Israel and the United States is very much intact, as is the relationship.

Q Would you agree that the administration now has a two-track problem, what to do about today's terrorists, i.e. the people who took the passengers on FLIGHT 847, and what to do about tomorrow's terrorism?

MR. MCFARLANE: I think that is a fair description. It is important that all of us recognize that terrorists, as they exist from Indonesia to Ireland and throughout the world are, however, supported, trained, and funded by certain centers. And it is important that we look at that infrastructure -- those strategic sponsors, if you will -- and begin to apply more energy to dealing with those fundamental causes.

Q I am sure that you heard the Secretary of State, asked earlier why the United States took no military action in Algiers -- he would not comment. Will you, please?

MR. MCFARLANE: Well, I don't think that it is healthy, in light of future circumstances that could arise, to portray exactly what our criteria are for using force in a given circumstance, so I wouldn't go beyond that.

Q Forgive me for interrupting, but is it correct, as the Algerian Ambassador told us, that Algeria would not let us use force in their territory?

MR. MCFARLANE: Well, I think in this instance that -- well, it became unnecessary by dint of the aircraft having departed. I wouldn't speak for Algeria. They can speak for themselves.

Q Can you remember a more difficult two weeks in the Reagan administration?

MR. MCFARLANE: I am surprised to hear you say that. The impression that I have had throughout this period was of a President who was calm, thoughtful, deliberate, weighing the changes which occurred each day and making judgments about them, but unflappable and in control.

Q I didn't suggest, as I am sure that you know, sir, to the contrary. I asked, can you remember a more difficult two weeks for you as a group?

MR. MCFARLANE: Well, I don't mean to be disingenuous. I have spent a lot of time in crises like this and this is just one more crisis.

Q Just one more crisis. Thank you , Mr. McFarlane,  
very much, for joining us.

MR. MCFARLANE: Sure.

END

THE WHITE HOUSE  
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

June 30, 1985

INTERVIEW OF  
NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR ROBERT C. MCFARLANE  
BY  
INN

The Roosevelt Room

Q Mr. McFarlane, the President had some very joyful and -- cautious words for us. Personally, as Robert McFarlane, how relieved are you?

MR. MCFARLANE: Well, throughout you're concerned for the welfare of the human beings here and, to the extent they are safe today, it brings on a feeling of relief. There are other elements of satisfaction that are hedged by the anguish of the murder of Robert Stethem.

I do think that there has emerged from this past two weeks a better awareness among the American people of how serious this problem of international terrorism is -- how urgent it is that we apply more in the way of resources and imagination to deal with it, and that's why I think the President's mood was one of sobriety and seriousness.

Q Obviously, nothing's this simple in the Middle East or in any hostage situation either but if you were to name one single event or single statement or cable or phone call that you think could make -- could have made the difference in this, what would it be?

MR. MCFARLANE: Well, I suppose I think that it was the moment last week, really, when we convinced Nabih Berri that his strategy couldn't work; that is, his expectation that the United States would concede or require or request Israel to make a concession. And that occurred about four days into the crisis -- that was at break point, and from then on he began to look for what alternatives he might have. But the ultimate outcome, I think, was in sight.

Q You must have seen some of the television footage -- that convoy to Damascus became almost a victory parade for the Shiites. They certainly got attention to their cause, they will not, of course, due to the release of the hostages, but they will, ultimately, get their comrades in Israel released and they'll -- there will be those who say they won. Did they? They'll certainly say it.

MR. MCFARLANE: No, I think for Lebanese, beyond those on the television cameras today who have experienced two weeks of unrelenting criticism, the outrage of countries from Japan throughout the Middle East, sister Arab countries, the United States, the World Court, the United Nations, and the prospect of this same kind of continued violence in Lebanon for as long as these people are allowed to practice there, is beginning to create a very fundamental change in the body politic of Lebanon which, over time, can restore a measure of stability, perhaps. But, these handful of people who created this are seen by the Lebanese people, I think, as outlaws and they've done themselves some damage in this past two weeks.

Q I want to go back for a moment to those Lebanese prisoners. Accepting even no linkage, and, of course, the U.S. still insisting it made no deal, there will those who say, "Well, if it looks like a duck and walks like a duck -- "

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MR. MCFARLANE: Well, I think that's too simple by half. In point of fact, what was entrain before they seized this aircraft was interrupted and the evidence of Israel's intention to release the prisoners which was already under way was brought to a very prompt halt. It became clear to Nabih Berri and his colleagues that the effect of what they had done had been to stop the flow of prisoners back and that's pretty apparent to those involved.

It was equally clear that President Reagan wasn't about to change his policy and make a concession or urge Israel to. So I think that the strategy of both the United States and Israel is very much intact, if anything, it may have been strengthened a bit.

Q Is it possible now, Mr. McFarlane, to surgically retaliate against whoever was responsible for the hijacking -- Hezbollah, or whatever faction you believe did it? Do you think, beyond that, you must do so in order to maintain credibility?

MR. MCFARLANE: Well, I think that's true. And I think the focus of it -- the purpose of it -- has to be, not to conduct a random act of vengeance, but instead, to focus our power on dealing with the root sources of terrorism -- where people are trained, where they are housed, fed, sustained over time. And there are two or three strategic locations in the Middle East, in particular, where that is the case.

I think, more importantly, what has emerged from this experience in the United States has been a very widespread popular support for more firmness in dealing with terrorism that has been missing, I think. I can also translate to support for additional authority from the Congress -- a new law -- to enable us to better deal with this problem, and that is a benefit of this, as tragic as it has been.

Q From the way in which a senior administration official has outlined the scenario of the past two weeks, one could assume that Syrian involvement made the difference in saving these American lives -- that without Syria's help, these people might not be with us tonight.

MR. MCFARLANE: I think Syria has acted constructively in this crisis and as an example of where that cooperation can prosper -- we welcome it. We don't pretend that we and Syria agree on all issues; it's very apparent that we don't. But, in working together to counter terrorism in the Middle East, this has been a useful experience. We hope we can continue it.

Q Syria will continue to work toward getting the seven Americans still held released, we're told. Do you think they can -- is it within Syria's power to get them out?

MR. MCFARLANE: Well, I think that Syria has resources which are better than virtually anyone else in Lebanon and so if anyone can, Syria can. To be fair, it takes time when you're looking in an urban area for people that are often moved from place to place, but we'll remain determined to find those people and bring them home.

Q What can you say about those seven other Americans -- do you know where they are?

MR. MCFARLANE: As I say, on a given day, no. You can try to find out the people who are responsible and to track them. But even if you do find them, the prospect of being able to react promptly enough before they're moved again is very difficult, and you have to rely on others, such as Syria, that can react in a more timely way to do that.

Q How would you characterize the Amal now -- friend or foe?



MR. MCFARLANE: Well, we --

Q Both?

MR. MCFARLANE: -- have no animus toward Amal, per se. We recognize that the Shiite as with the Sunni, Druze, Christians, must find a way to get along with each other in Lebanon and at times they have. There have been times of stability and prosperity in Lebanon. As an example of misguided policies of the Shiite community, this is an unfortunate experience.

Q Does this affair leave any lasting impact on the administration -- on the President?

MR. MCFARLANE: Well, I believe that the President ought to be able to emerge from this with his confidence in certain fundamental principles very much vindicated. From the beginning he set the course, established basic principles, no concessions, patience and it worked. He also decided and put down certain rules for the rest of us about the application of various elements of U.S. leverage and influence and how they would be applied, and at timely moments he intervened personally to do that. And the result was a very successful outcome that he can take great pride in, I think.

Q Thank you very much, Robert McFarlane, National Security Advisor to the President.

MR. MCFARLANE: Thank you.

END

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

June 30, 1985

INTERVIEW OF  
NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR ROBERT C. MCFARLANE  
BY CNN

The Roosevelt Room

Q I'm in the Roosevelt Room at the White House with National Security Advisor Robert McFarlane, whom we know has been involved in the whole 17 days of this ordeal. We know that in part because every morning very early we would see him come into the White House, and his office is in one of those corner positions where we could watch him at his desk, usually with a telephone to his ear.

Mr. McFarlane, thank you for being with us.

The President today said that this was not a time for celebration. There is, after all -- there are 39 Americans free, but there is one American dead. And there are seven still held hostage in Lebanon. I presume they are in Lebanon. Is that the best of your intelligence, that the seven are still there?

MR. MCFARLANE: That's our understanding, Charles.

Q Were they ever close to being part of the deal that was struck? Excuse the word, "deal," but the arrangement that was made.

MR. MCFARLANE: We believe that President Assad of Syria made a serious effort to identify where they were and to recover them. But it proved unavailing. To be fair, it has to be said that -- they are moved often, we are told. And, thus, it becomes, especially in urban areas, very hard to get them.

Q Have they not at times been in an area where the Syrians are effectively in control?

MR. MCFARLANE: We can't be certain of that. We can expect -- and President Assad has said that he believes he can be helpful and will try.

Q We heard Secretary of State Shultz say so, and others here think that, as you've just indicated, that Assad may be able to deliver the seven, but has not had enough time or -- Do you see this as a genuine effort on his part?

MR. MCFARLANE: We think it is. He has been constructive in the past two weeks. And I believe that he has a self-interest in seeing calm restored to Lebanon, end to violence. And so it's in his interest to have this hostage situation, and all other ones, resolved.

Q Has this done anything in particular for U.S.-Syrian relations and, in the broader scale of dealing with Middle Eastern problems? Or is it more in the very specific sense of getting the Americans free?

MR. MCFARLANE: Well, on the important issue of terrorism, it has had a very useful effect, I think, because Syria's contribution has been very constructive. We don't pretend that we agree with Syria on all issues. Broader issues of the Middle East peace process, we have considerable disagreement. But this issue is terribly important in a global sense. And to the extent Syria can

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help, and has, we welcome that.

Q It was the Syrians, we understand, who called last night after the first hitch occurred and the anticipated freeing Saturday did not take place and the Syrians said, "Can you make some kind of a statement which would prompt the Hezbollah to release the four that they were still holding?" And that produced this middle-of-the-night statement that -- about U.S. concerns, stability, security of Lebanon. What exactly are you promising in that statement?

MR. MCFARLANE: Well, this statement is nothing more than a reaffirmation of our attitude toward Lebanon generally and the Lebanese people in particular. It is a statement we have made many times. Gosh, half a dozen times, I suppose, in the last two or three months. And upon receiving the request, our position was: Number one, our policy has not changed. We will not make concessions. Number two, if it is useful to have a restatement of our policy, so be it. And that's what it was.

Q But it was at the same time a statement which allowed everyone to say, in some way, that they had achieved at least their minimum goals in terms of resolving this?

MR. MCFARLANE: It must have had that effect for the other side. And if it did, that's fine, but English is pretty clear. And it was no more, no less than we've said a half a dozen other times.

Q We've been told here that with regard to the Israelis and the Lebanese prisoners they are holding that there are no concessions, no deals, no guarantees. Would the word "understanding" be a better word, that there's an understanding that the Israelis will release those 735?

MR. MCFARLANE: There is no flat understanding or implication of relationship. These two events are not linked, nor has the United States sought to influence the outcome of Israeli decision-making on it.

Q Linkage aside, do you expect them to be released?

MR. MCFARLANE: We can only expect Israel to take its decisions independently. And I'm sure they will do so. And the basis for those decisions has been pretty well laid out before this crisis ever arose. And that same framework for decision-making, I would assume, might endure. But that isn't for us to say.

Q Secretary Shultz was asked about retaliation. And the question will come up again and again. The President himself has been asked. What is possible in the realm of retaliation in the sense that the Secretary talked about closing down Beirut Airport, about finding the murderers of Robert Stethem. Is anything in this sense a priority now?

MR. MCFARLANE: Well, I think you have to distinguish between the role of force in a purely emotional context as vengeance, which is out of place and is not a substitute for policy, and the role of force properly applied to deal with the infrastructure of terrorism.

Now, one of the useful outcomes of this crisis has been to awaken Americans to the fact that this truly is a serious problem, urgent, complex, but that you have to go to the foundation of it. Where are these people trained, supplied? And what sustains this global movement? And I think to the extent we have a people's attention and can channel it into support for countering these more strategic foundations of terrorism, as well as helping our ability through new law and new legislation to be better able to deal with it, it will have had a useful effect. And we're going to go in both

MORE

directions.

Q Can you translate that into some specifics? How do you go about, as someone here put it, squeezing the body of terrorism?

MR. MCFARLANE: I think a fundamental lesson is you don't telegraph your punch. But you can be confident that the United States will deal firmly with the infrastructure of terrorism in the months ahead.

Q Secretary Shultz also said that the murderers of Robert Stethem must be found and brought to justice. Do we know who specifically killed this American?

MR. MCFARLANE: We don't. But we do look to the government of Lebanon, to intelligence resources of countries who are effective in Lebanon to help identify that person and to make it known to the authorities that can bring him to justice.

Q But what is effective in Lebanon these days?

MR. MCFARLANE: Intelligence on what is going on in Lebanon is available. And it isn't out of the question that we can find, over time, who was responsible for this.

Q Does this lead, though, to the further disruption, tearing apart of Lebanon? Does it lead to further Syrian control of this country?

MR. MCFARLANE: 'Well, I think it's too soon to tell about that. I think it must surely have had a lesson on the Lebanese people, for it has focused the criticism of virtually every country on the planet on Lebanon as a center of violence and brutality. And I think for those in Lebanon today who can recall the times of calm, relative prosperity in Lebanon, they can see the trend is bad, and it ought to motivate them to pull their socks up and try to reach compromises for the sharing of authority and power of the economic pie, and to deal more equitably with each of the confessional factions. That's easy to say. It's hard to do. But today's outcome, and two weeks of anguish for all Lebanese, give them a powerful incentive to try to root out, within their own country, the scourge of terrorism.

Q Mr. McFarlane, thank you very much for being with us.

END

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B-4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]

B-6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]

B-7 Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]

B-8 Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]

B-9 Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.