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(3 of 14)

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WITHDRAWAL SHEET

Ronald Reagan Library

Collection: PRESIDENT'S SPECIAL REVIEW BOARD
(TOWER BOARD): Records
File Folder: SRB 378 TWA 847 (3) Box 93207

Archivist: mjd
FOIA ID: F97-059/2
Date: 09/21/1999

DOCUMENT NO. & TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
1. memo	Oliver North to Robert McFarlane re: presidential phone call, 2p	6/17/85	P1/F1 P6
2. cable	re: TWA 847 (annotated), 3p	6/17/85	P1/F1
	<i>R 3/15/06 F97-059/2 #48</i>		
3. letter	King Hussein to Reagan, 2p	6/19/85	P1/F1
	<i>R " " #49</i>		
4. letter	copy of item 3, 2p	6/19/85	P1/F1
	<i>R " " #50</i>		
5. memo	North to McFarlane re: talking points, 1p	7/1/85	P1/F1
	<i>R " " #51</i>		
6. PROES note	re: Cabinet Meeting, 1p	6/27/85	P1/F1
	<i>R " " #52</i>		
7. PROES note	re: hostage situation, 1p	6/27/85	P1/F1
	<i>R " " #53</i>		
8. memo	Donald Fortier to Don Gregg re: TWA hostages, 1p	nd	P1/F1
	<i>R " " #54</i>		
9. draft letter	Reagan to President Assad (annotated), 2p	nd	P1/F1
	<i>R " " #55</i>		
10. draft letter	Reagan to Assad, 2p	nd	P1/F1
	<i>R " " #56</i>		
<i>11. paper</i>	<i>Timeline p.1 only</i> <i>D 3/15/06 F97-059/2 #56A</i>	<i>6/24/95</i>	<i>P1/F1</i>

RESTRICTIONS

P-1 National security classified information [(a)(1) of the PRA].
P-2 Relating to appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA].

P-3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA].
P-4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA].
P-5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA].
P-6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA].

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

F-1 National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA].
F-2 Release could disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA].
F-3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA].
F-4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA].
F-6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA].
F-7 Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA].
F-8 Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA].
F-9 Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA].

RONALD W. REAGAN LIBRARY

THIS FORM MARKS THE FILE LOCATION OF ITEM NUMBER 1 LISTED ON THE
WITHDRAWAL SHEET AT THE FRONT OF THIS FOLDER.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON
RECOMMENDED TELEPHONE CALL

TO: Richard (Father), Patricia (Mother),
Sherri (Sister), Kenneth and Patrick
(Brothers) Stethem (301) 843-1265

DATE: Tuesday, June 18, 1985

RECOMMENDED BY: Robert C. McFarlane

PURPOSE: To express condolences to the parents of
SW-2 Robert Stethem, who was murdered by the
terrorists aboard TWA Flight #847 on Friday,
June 14, 1985.

BACKGROUND: SW-2 Stethem was apparently beaten and kicked
to death by the terrorists who hijacked TWA
#847. There is some, as yet unconfirmed
information, that SW-2 Stethem may have
attempted to intervene during the initial
stages of the takeover and was, therefore,
singled out by the hijackers. Stethem's
remains will arrive at Andrews AFB June 18,
at 7:00 p.m. The Vice President has agreed
to head a delegation at Andrews AFB on
arrival. A brief summary of SW-2 Stethem's
military career is attached at Tab A.

TOPICS OF
DISCUSSION:

1. I am calling to express my sincere
condolences at your loss. The tragic death
of your son at the hands of these terrorists
is indeed a loss to our nation.
2. It is young men like Robert who give of
themselves in the service of their country
that have made this nation what it is.
3. I am told that your son was returning
from work on a construction project in
Greece. He well served our country and we
poorer for losing him.
4. Vice President Bush plans to be at
Andrews AFB this evening for your son's
arrival ceremony. I have also ordered that
Robert be officially promoted to the rank of
SW-2.
5. Please know that you and your family are
in our prayers. God bless you.

Date of Submission:

Action

SUMMARY OF SW-2 ROBERT STETHEM'S MILITARY CAREER

Robert D. Stethem (Steel Worker (SW) SW-3, Frocked SW-2)
Age: 24
Birth Date: 17 Nov 61
Race: Caucasian
Marital Status: Single
Awards: Two marksmanship awards for M-16 rifles

10 Sep 84 - 14 June 85	Underwater Construction Team 1 (UCT-1) Naval Amphibious Base Little Creek Norfolk, VA 23521 (There are two Underwater Construction Teams--one on the west coast and one on the east. UCT-1 services the Atlantic, Mediterranean, South Atlantic, and Caribbean. Stethem was part of a detachment detailed to Greece for work on a construction project at our naval communications facility at Nea Makri.
11 May 84 - 06 Jul 84	Naval Construction Training Center Port Hueneme, CA (Basic training for underwater construction technician)
18 Jan 84 - 04 May 84	Naval Amphibious Base Coronado, CA (Basic diver's training. Navy Enlisted Classification NEC-5343 (same as MOS))
29 May 83 - 13 Jan 84	NMBC-62 Detachment Diego Garcia
23 Sep 81 - 28 May 83	Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMBC-62), Gulfport, Mississippi
04 May 81 - 1 Jul 81	Basic Training, Great Lakes, Michigan

~~Secret~~

CLASSIFICATION

Chron File June 1985

27

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
CROSSHATCH ACTION SHEET

MESSAGE # *1219*
DATE TIME: *1520*

IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE COMMENT OFFICER TO CLEAR WITH THE
DEP EXEC SEC PRIOR TO THE ASSIGNED DUE DATE.

ACTION OFFICER

COMMENT OFFICER

INFO

PEARSON

OK
OK
See edit

ACTION: CONCUR TO DEP EXEC SEC VIA PHONE AND/OR COMMENT HERE AND HANDCARRY
TO DEP EXEC SEC DUE DATE: *COB 28 SEP*

ACTION OFFICER COMMENTS:

*clears as
edited
6/17/75
1625*

CLEARED BY: _____ DATE: _____ TIME: _____

CLEARED TO: _____ DATE: _____ TIME: _____

~~Secret~~
CLASSIFICATION

UNCLASSIFIED UPON REMOVAL OF
CLASSIFIED ENCLOSURES.
WJH/16/44

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

85 JUL 17 P: 42

VIRKY
URGENT

MT

WASHFAX RECEIPT
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

B

S/S #

UNCLASSIFIED UPON REMOVAL OF
CLASSIFIED ENCLOSURE(S)

RECEIVED

5 JUL 17 P2: 50

URGENT

MESSAGE NO. 001219 CLASSIFICATION SECRET No. Pages 3

FROM: KMQuinn S/S 28448 7224
(Officer name) (Office symbol) (Extension) (Room number)

MESSAGE DESCRIPTION TELEGRAM TO DAMASCUS: Hijacking of TWA 847:
Presidential Message to Asad

<u>TO: (Agency)</u>	<u>DELIVER TO:</u>	<u>Extension</u>	<u>Room No.</u>
<u>NSC</u>	<u>Bob Pearson</u>	<u>395-3044</u>	
<u>NSC</u>	<u>Secretariat</u>		

FOR: CLEARANCE ☒ INFORMATION ☐ PER REQUEST ☐ COMMENT ☐

REMARKS: URGENT CLEARANCE PLEASE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TODAY!

Clearance McFarlane Comment Corey, Treichen, North

WRP 6/17

S/S Officer: KQ 88

CROSSHATCH

RETURN TIME-STAMPED COVERSHEET TO S/S

~~SECRET~~

DECLASSIFIED / RELEASED

NLS E92-057/2 #48

BY sm, NARA, DATE 3/15/06

TF: BEHRNMAN
06/17/85 EXT. 26610
NEA: RUMURPHY

NEA: RHPelletreau
R/CTP: ROAKLEY
NSC:
P: MPENDLETON

NEA/ARN: MACASEY
S/S
S/S-0:

NIACI IMMEDIATE DAMASCUS

IMMEDIATE ALGIERS, BEIRUT IMMEDIATE, KUWAIT IMMEDIATE,
TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
MODIS

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: PTER, LE, SY

SUBJECT: HIJACKING OF TWA 847: PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE TO
PRESIDENT ASAD

1. ~~SECRET~~ - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. WE APPRECIATE THAT ASAD'S INTERVENTION HAS HAD AN
[SIGNIFICANT] IMPACT ON MOVING BARRI TO PLAY THE ROLE HE
HAS NOW TAKEN IN MEDIATING WITH THE HIJACKERS. AT THE
SAME TIME, BARRI IS PLAYING HIS OWN GAME, IS BEING LESS
THAN FRANK WITH US AS TO THE STATE OF PLAY, AND HAS AN
ONGOING INCLINATION TO BACK OUT OF THE RESPONSIBILITIES
HE HAS ONLY RELUCTANTLY ASSUMED..

3. IT IS THUS ESSENTIAL THAT THE SARG ^{INCREASE} [KEEP] THE PRESSURE
ON BARRI TO BE TOUGH WITH THE HIJACKERS AND THEIR
SUPPORTERS, AND THAT THEY USE THEIR OWN CHANNELS WITH
PSP, HIZBALLAH AND THE IRANIANS. APPRECIATING THAT WE
ARE NOW INTO THE EID, YOU SHOULD DELIVER THE FOLLOWING
MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT ASAD FROM PRESIDENT REAGAN:

-- I [SINCERELY] APPRECIATE THE [IMPORTANT] STEPS YOU HAVE
TAKEN [IN] CONVINCING MR. BARRI TO TAKE A PERSONAL ROLE IN
MEDIATING WITH THE HIJACKERS.

SECRET

RUM
BE
RH
TK
RO
S/
NS
S/
M

~~SECRET~~

1/2

BUT

(TOO CHANGING IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES)

-- BARRI IS TREADING CAKEFULLY. HE IS RELUCTANT TO TAKE FORCEFUL STEPS THAT MIGHT ALIENATE THE MORE EXTREME ELEMENTS OF HIS CONSTITUENCY. UNFORTUNATELY, FORCEFUL STEPS ARE NECESSARY TO RESOLVE THE SITUATION. ~~IMMEDIATE~~

-- THE HIJACKING MUST BE RESOLVED NOW. THE PASSENGERS MUST BE RELEASED QUICKLY AND TRANSFERRED TO SAFETY OUTSIDE OF LEBANON.

-- I HOPE YOU WILL REITERATE TO BARRI YOUR FIRM OPPOSITION TO HIJACKING AND [SUCH FORMS OF] TERRORISM, AND URGE HIM VIGOROUSLY TO [DO WHAT IS NECESSARY TO] RESOLVE THE SITUATION AND SECURE THE SAFE RELEASE OF ALL THE HOSTAGES. ~~IMMEDIATELY~~

-- I UNDERSTAND THAT THE HIJACKERS AND THOSE GROUPS ASSISTING THEM AT THE AIRPORT ARE NOT ALL UNDER MR. BARRI'S CONTROL BUT INCLUDE THOSE WITH TIES TO THE MORE EXTREMIST GROUPS IN THE LEBANESE POLITICAL SPECTRUM. I HOPE, THEREFORE, THAT YOU WILL ALSO DO WHAT YOU CAN TO PRESS THE LEADERS OF THESE RADICAL GROUPS TO INTERVENE WITH THE HIJACKERS AND THOSE WHO NOW CONTROL THE PASSENGERS AND CREW OF THE AIRCRAFT TO RELEASE THEM TO RESPONSIBLE LEBANESE OFFICIALS OR THE RED CROSS. THE GOVERNMENT OF IRAN MAY ALSO BE ABLE TO EXERT A HELPFUL INFLUENCE ON SOME OF THESE ELEMENTS.

-- THE USG WILL NOT/NOT ASK ANY GOVERNMENT TO MAKE CONCESSIONS IN RESPONSE TO TERRORIST DEMANDS. IT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN GRADUALLY RELEASING THE LEBANESE PRISONERS IT HOLDS, AND INTENDS TO RELEASE THEM ALL. THIS HIJACKING WILL NOT ACCOMPLISH THIS HOWEVER; INDEED, IT WILL LIKELY CAUSE DELAY AND GIVE CREDIBILITY TO THOSE WHO OPPOSE SUCH ACTS OF RECONCILIATION.

-- THE HIJACKING HAS BROUGHT NEW EMPHASIS TO THE DANGEROUS ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH THE OTHER AMERICAN, BRITISH, AND FRENCH HOSTAGES IN LEBANON CONTINUE TO BE HELD. THIS NEW TENSION CLEARLY INTENSIFIES THE THREAT TO THEIR LIVES. I HOPE YOU WILL CONTINUE TO GIVE YOUR PERSONAL ATTENTION TO RESOLVING THEIR SITUATION AND GAINING THEIR FREEDOM.

-- I APPRECIATE THE EFFORTS YOU HAVE TAKEN REGARDING BOTH THE HIJACKING AND THE HOSTAGES, AND URGE YOU TO CONTINUE ENERGETICALLY CONTACTS WITH BARRI, THE PSP, IRAN, AND

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

| 2

OTHERS WHO MIGHT BE ABLE TO PLAY A POSITIVE ROLE IN
RESOLVING THIS DANGEROUS SITUATION. [IT IS DOUBLY TRAGIC.
THAT THIS INCIDENT IS OCCURING AT THE TIME OF ONE OF YOUR
HOLY HOLIDAYS.]

4. MINIMIZE CONSIDERED. YYY

~~SECRET~~

NSC/S PROFILE

UNCLASSIFIED

ID 8501862

RECEIVED 03 JUL 85 09

TO PRESIDENT

FROM HUSSEIN I

DOC DATE 19 JUN 85

STATE

02 JUL 85

KEYWORDS: JORDAN

HIJACKING

HS

SUBJECT: HUSSEIN LTR RE HIJACKING OF TWA FLIGHT 847

ACTION: PENDING STATE DRAFT / RECOM DUE: 10 JUL 85 STATUS D FILES PA

FOR ACTION

FOR CONCURRENCE

FOR INFO

STATE

COVEY PEARSON

STARK

STEINER

TEICHER

NORTH

COMMENTS

GRIMES

MCDANIEL

REF#

8519524

LOG

NSC IFID

(CM)

ACTION OFFICER (S) ASSIGNED ACTION REQUIRED DUE COPIES TO

- 7/8 Recd state memo

SC, BP

C 7/8 No response necessary
(per state)

DISPATCH

W/ATTCH FILE (C)

(Classification)
UNCLASSIFIED
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT
TRANSMITTAL FORM

1862

S/S 8519524

Date July 5, 1985

For: Mr. Robert C. McFarlane
National Security Council
The White House

Reference:

To: President Reagan From: King Hussein

Date: July 2, 1985 Subject: Alerting NSC on Presidential
Correspondence

WH Referral Dated: July 2, 1985 NSC ID# 8519524
- (if any)

_____ The attached item was sent directly to the
Department of State.

Action Taken:

- _____ A draft reply is attached.
- _____ A draft reply will be forwarded.
- _____ A translation is attached.
- _____ An information copy of a direct reply is attached.
- X _____ We believe no response is necessary for the reason
cited below.
- _____ The Department of State has no objection to the
proposed travel.
- _____ Other.

Remarks:

Correspondence already acknowledged to the Jordanians.

Nicholas Platt
Nicholas Platt
Executive Secretary

UNCLASSIFIED

(Classification)



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

'85 JUL -2 P9:51

Copies to:
S/S-S(MM)
Rf
(chs)

July 2, 1985

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Robert M. Kimmitt
National Security Council

SUBJECT: Alerting NSC on Presidential
Correspondence

Enclosed is a copy of a letter to President Reagan
from Jordan King Hussein
which is transmitted for your information.

This document was received in the Executive Secretariat
Information Management Section on 7/2/85.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "G. Stange".

Director, S/S-I
Information Management Section
Executive Secretariat
ext. 23836

8519524



DECLASSIFIED / RELEASED

NLS F97-059/2 #49BY 2m/, NARA, DATE 3/15/06Amman.
19 June, 1985*Dear Mr President,*

When you kindly expressed to me, my Government and people your feelings of strong condemnation, sympathy and support following the destruction in Beirut of our Alia 727 Royal Jordanian Airliner, and the inhuman ordeal which its crew and passengers were subjected to, I did not imagine that within less than twenty four hours from that time, another dastardly crime was to begin to be enacted against so many innocent victims, lawfully travelling aboard a civilian airliner, this time a Boeing 727 of Trans World Airlines.

We are living the ordeal of the passengers and crew of Flight 847 of Trans World Airlines including the cowardly murder of an American citizen who flew it, with the same deep anger and revulsion which we experienced during our own ordeal, and which we have experienced whenever a similar crime was committed against civilization and humanity. In fact, for one whole month we have lived in unbelievable anger and revulsion during the genocide enacted by the same criminals and their cohorts against men, women and children, the Palestinian refugees, who are still bravely warding off constant attacks by those who call themselves Muslims and Arabs, around the Camps of Sabra, Chatila and Burj El Barajna in the area of Beirut. These Palestinians, facing their fate, are all but out of food, water and medical supplies, let alone care, with disease rampant amongst the victims. These crimes are crimes against humanity, Mr. President. They are crimes perpetrated by those who have become the scum of the earth against life and every human decency, values and code of honour. More specifically, they are primarily directed against every valued code, principles and teaching of Islam and Arabism. We condemn them and stand against those who condone such crimes.



-- 2 --

My feelings, I know, reflect the feelings of my countrymen as well as our Palestinian brethren, and their sole legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization, and the overwhelming majority within our Arab and Muslim worlds. I am certain we will eventually succeed, as we must, in cleansing ourselves of all within our world who are bent on the destruction of our beliefs and values we hold dear, and our image within the world at large.

With my highest esteem, I send you my warmest personal good wishes. God bless you my friend.

*I am
Your Sincere friend,
Jimmy Carter*

The Honourable Ronald Reagan
President of the United States of America
The White House
Washington, D.C.
United States of America



S/S 8519524

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

July 2, 1985

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Robert M. Kimmitt
National Security Council

SUBJECT: Alerting NSC on Presidential
Correspondence

Enclosed is a copy of a letter to President Reagan
from Jordan King Hussein
which is transmitted for your information.

This document was received in the Executive Secretariat
Information Management Section on 7/2/85.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "C. H. Stange".

Director, S/S-I
Information Management Section
Executive Secretariat
ext. 23836



8519524

DECLASSIFIED / RELEASED

NLS F97-059/2 #58

BY smf, NARA, DATE 3/15/06

Amman -
19 June, 1985

Dear Mr. President,

When you kindly expressed to me, my Government and people your feelings of strong condemnation, sympathy and support following the destruction in Beirut of our Alia 727 Royal Jordanian Airliner, and the inhuman ordeal which its crew and passengers were subjected to, I did not imagine that within less than twenty four hours from that time, another dastardly crime was to begin to be enacted against so many innocent victims, lawfully travelling aboard a civilian airliner, this time a Boeing 727 of Trans World Airlines.

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-- 2 --

My feelings, I know, reflect the feelings of my countrymen as well as our Palestinian brethren, and their sole legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization, and the overwhelming majority within our Arab and Muslim worlds. I am certain we will eventually succeed, as we must, in cleansing ourselves of all within our world who are bent on the destruction of our beliefs and values we hold dear, and our image within the world at large.

With my highest esteem, I send you my warmest personal good wishes. God bless you my friend.

I am
Your Sincere friend,
Jimmy Carter

The Honourable Ronald Reagan
President of the United States of America
The White House
Washington, D.C.
United States of America

EOB: ROOM 385

~~SECRET~~

PAGE 40

DOCUMENT NUMBER = MAX8505232

DESC	TALKING POINTS FOR MCFARLANE 1 JUL BRIEFING / PRES MTG ON HOSTAGE RELEASE		
KEYWORDS	TERRORISM	<u>HIJACKING</u>	MEDIA
DOCDATE	850701		
RCVDATE	850701		
STATUS	C		
I ACTION	FOR DECISION		
I ACTOFF	MCFARLANE		
UPDATES	850702	OBE PER PEARSON	
SOURCES	NORTH		
FILE/OC	PA		
STAFF/OFF	NORTH		

DECLASSIFIED
White House Guidelines, August 28, 1997
By MSH NAPA, Date 9/16/99

RECEIVED 01 JUL 85 15

TO MCFARLANE FROM NORTH

DOCDATE 01 JUL 85

UNCLASSIFIED UPON REMOVAL OF
CLASSIFIED ENCLOSURE(S)
MJA/16/ak

KEYWORDS: TERRORISM

HIJACKING

MEDIA

SUBJECT: MCFARLANE TALKERS FOR PRES MTG 1 JUL

ACTION: FOR DECISION

DUE: 01 JUL 85 STATUS X FILES PA

FOR ACTION

FOR CONCURRENCE

FOR INFO

MCFARLANE

COMMENTS

REF#

LOG

NSCIFID

(CT)

ACTION OFFICER (S) ASSIGNED ACTION REQUIRED DUE COPIES TO

C 7/1 ~~THE~~ OBE per Pearson

ONE

DISPATCH

W/ATTCH FILE

(4)
(C)

National Security Council
The White House

RECEIVED

System #

I

Package #

5232

1858

85 JUN 31 P 1: 33

	SEQUENCE TO	HAS SEEN	DISPOSITION
Bob Pearson	<i>1</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>A</i>
William Martin	<i>2</i>		
John Poindexter			
Paul Thompson			
Wilma Hall			
Bud McFarlane			
William Martin			
NSC Secretariat	<i>2</i>		<i>N</i>
Situation Room			

I = Information

A = Action

R = Retain

D = Dispatch

N = No further Action

cc: VP Regan Buchanan Other

COMMENTS

Should be seen by:

(Date/Time)

** Advance provided*

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

5232

MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

July 1, 1985

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

ACTION

MEMORANDUM FOR ROBERT C. MCFARLANE

FROM: OLIVER L. NORTH

SUBJECT: Talking Points for Presidential Meeting in Cabinet Room on Hostage Release

You are scheduled to attend a meeting in the Cabinet Room this afternoon at 2:00 p.m. on the current situation regarding the release of our American citizens. All of the relevant background information is contained in the chronology at Tab A and your press backgrounder at Tab B. There are, however, two additional points which should be made before the entire Cabinet:

- The work of the Department of Transportation and, particularly, ADM Don Engen and Billie Vincent of FAA is to be highly commended. Their efforts and those of the FAA task force were exceptional throughout this event.
- The State Department's lead agency task force should also be recognized for their exceptional work in coordinating interagency activity and in providing recommendations and carrying out decisions.

RECOMMENDATION

That you use the points above and the attachments during your briefing for the Cabinet.

Approve _____

Disapprove _____

cc: Don Fortier
Rod McDaniel
Howard Teicher
Jock Covey
Bob Sims

DECLASSIFIED / RELEASED

NLS F97-059/2 #51

BY Sm/, NARA DATE 3/15/06

Attachments

Tab A - Chronology
Tab B - Press Backgrounder

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Declassify: OADR

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

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 our limits -- and our limits have been reached. We cannot allow our 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."

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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."

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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

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? Nabin 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 other 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 now 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 Naph 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, 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

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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 -- Rick Bartolomew, 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 -- great 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

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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.

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.

MORE

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

MORE

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

URGENT

From: NSWRP --CPUA
To: NSGVE --CPUA

Date and time 06/27/85 16:45:10

SYSTEM II
90724

NOTE FROM: BOB PEARSON

Subject: Monday's Cabinet Meeting

Please task Sys II, action Fortier, comment North, Sable, Covey, Teicher, info McDaniel. Due COB 6/29.

*** Forwarding note from NSWGH --CPUA 06/27/85 15:06 ***

To: NSWFM --CPUA

NSWRP --CPUA

~~-- SECRET~~

NOTE FROM: WILMA HALL

SUBJECT: Monday's Cabinet Meeting

RCM has a "speaking part" in Monday's 2:00 pm Cabinet Mtg. Agenda provided to me by Cabinet Affairs Ofc (and modified by RCM) is:

- RCM will given "an overview of the hostage and terrorist situation"
- Shultz will discuss "diplomatic efforts"
- Secy Dole will talk about "airport safety"

There had been some consideration by Kingon's ofc for Weinberger to discuss "military efforts"; that has been reconsidered and has been deleted from agenda.

Please task up-to-date TPs for RCM to use at mtg. Many thanks.

cc: NSCEC --CPUA

NSJMP --CPUA

cc: NSWFM --CPUA

NSCEC --CPUA

DECLASSIFIED / RELEASED

NLS F97-059/2 #52

BY am, NARA, DATE 3/15/86

From: NSWRP --CPUA
To: NSGVE --CPUA

Date and time 06/27/85 17:01:40

NOTE FROM: BOB PEARSON

Subject: Hostage Situation

Please print and provide to Fortier as action officer on the event Monday for the Cabinet Mtg.

*** Forwarding note from NSWFM --CPUA 06/27/85 12:58 ***

To: NSWRP --CPUA

~~SECRET~~ --

NOTE FROM: WILLIAM F. MARTIN

Subject: Hostage Situation

fyi

*** Forwarding note from NSRCM --CPUA 06/27/85 12:26 ***

To: NSWFM --CPUA

~~SECRET~~ --

NOTE FROM: ROBERT MCFARLANE

Subject: Hostage Situation

*** Forwarding note from NSRCM --CPUA 06/27/85 12:23 ***

To: NSWGH --CPUA

*** Reply to note of 06/27/85 10:04

~~SECRET~~ --

NOTE FROM: ROBERT MCFARLANE

Subject: Hostage Situation

It's OK. I expect that I will open with a summary and then call on SecState for an update on the status of diplomatic efforts (recognizing that there will not be much he can say). I think Al Kingon asked me to do this yesterday. I'm sorry I didn't pass it along to you.

cc: NSJMP --CPUA
NSFEG --CPUA

NSKWZ --CPUA

cc: NSWFM --CPUA

NSDRF --CPUA

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NLS F97-059/2-53

BY Smf, NARA, DATE 3/15/06

DECLASSIFIED
White House Guidelines, August 28, 1997
By MSH NARA, Date 7/16/99

EOB: ROOM 385

~~SECRET~~

PAGE 41

DOCUMENT NUMBER = MAX8505237

DESC	MEDIA PACKAGE RE RELEASE OF TWA HOSTAGES		
KEYWORDS	TERRORISM MEDIA	<u>HIJACKING</u>	MIDDLE EAST
DOCDATE	850701		
RCVDATE	850701		
STATUS	C		
I ACTION	NOTED BY PRES		
INFO	MARTIN COVEY	NORTH SMALL	TEICHER
SOURCES	POINDEXTER	FORTIER	
DISPATCH	GREGG, D		
FILE/OC	PA		
STAFF/OFF	FORTIER		

NSC/S PROFILE

~~SECRET~~

ID 8505237

UNCLASSIFIED UPON REMOVAL OF
CLASSIFIED ENCLOSURE(S)

RECEIVED 01 JUL 85 13

TO BUSH, G

FROM POINDEXTER

DOC DATE 01 JUL 85

FORTIER

28 JUN 85

KEYWORDS: TERRORISM

HIJACKING

MIDDLE EAST

MEDIA

SUBJECT: MEDIA PACKAGE RE RELEASE OF TWA HOSTAGES

ACTION: NOTED BY PRES

DUE:

STATUS C

FILES PA

FOR ACTION

FOR CONCURRENCE

FOR INFO

MARTIN

NORTH

TEICHER

COVEY

SMALL

COMMENTS HANDLED PER INSTRUCTIONS

REF# 2902462

LOG

NSCIFID

(CT CT)

ACTION OFFICER (S)

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ACTION REQUIRED

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COPIES TO

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UNCLASSIFIED UPON REMOVAL OF
CLASSIFIED ENCLOSURE(S)

UNCLASSIFIED UPON REMOVAL OF
CLASSIFIED ENCLOSURE(S)

mm 11/6/85

5237

~~SECRET~~

CLASSIFICATION

CIRCLE ONE BELOW

FLASH
IMMEDIATE

85 JUN 28 P11:34

MODE

SECURE FAX # 10

PAGES 20

DTG 290246Z JUN 85

PRIORITY

ADMIN FAX # _____

RELEASER DFI

ROUTINE

WHITE HOUSE
SITUATION ROOM

RECORD # _____

FROM/LOCATION

1. THE WHITE HOUSE / DONALD R. FORTIER

TO/LOCATION/TIME OF RECEIPT

1. DON GREGG FOR THE VICE PRESIDENT

TOVP #19

TOR: 290325Z JUN 85

INFORMATION ADDRESSEES/LOCATION/TIME OF RECEIPT

1. _____
2. _____

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS/REMARKS:

NIAC: PLEASE DELIVER TO DON GREGG EYES ONLY TONIGHT REPEAT TONIGHT
IN A SEALED ENVELOPE...

SECRET

CLASSIFICATION

~~SECRET~~

5237

~~SECRET~~

EYES ONLY

To: Don Gregg for the Vice President

From: Donald R. Fortier

FOR IMMEDIATE DELIVERY

Subject: TWA Hostages

The 39 TWA hostages may soon depart Damascus. Bud is sending cable to the Vice President. Following for your information are five items that would come into play thereafter:

- (A) Interim Statement by the White House (for use once the hostages are in Damascus).
- (B) Draft Presidential Statement (to be released only when hostages have departed Damascus).
- (C) Draft questions and answers (also for use after hostages have departed Damascus).
- (D) Draft letter from the President to Assad (also to be delivered after hostages have departed Damascus).
- (E) Congressional Notification.

Released:
John M. Poindexter

DECLASSIFIED / RELEASED

NLS F97-059/2#54

BY 4114, NARA, DATE 3/15/06

~~SECRET~~

Declassify on: OADR

~~SECRET~~

INTERIM STATEMENT UPON ARRIVAL IN DAMASCUS

We have been in contact with the Government of Syria regarding the movement of the ____ Americans from Beirut to Damascus. The Syrian government confirms that our people are now in Damascus. We expect the Government of Syria to facilitate their onward travel as rapidly as possible.

RECEIVED

JUN 26 PM 10:47

WASHFAX RECEIPT

THE WHITE HOUSE

C

NY

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

35 JUN 28 PM 10:47

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UNCLASSIFIED UPON REMOVAL OF
CLASSIFIED ENCLOSURE(S)

MESSAGE NO.

412

CLASSIFICATION

Secret

PAGE 1

FROM

COVEY
(NAME)

(EXTENSION)

(ROOM NUMBER)

MESSAGE DESCRIPTION

~~SECRET~~
FINAL PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENT

TO (AGENCY)

DELIVER TO:

DEPT/ROOM NO.

EXTENSION

STATE

ARMACOST

PLATT

FYI ONLY

Handwritten signature

REMARKS

RECEIVED

5 JUN 28 P10:47

WHITE HOUSE
SITUATION ROOM

WASHFAX RECEIPT

THE WHITE HOUSE

C

UNCLASSIFIED UPON REMOVAL OF
CLASSIFIED ENCLOSURE(S)

WJN 4/6/44

MESSAGE NO. 412 CLASSIFICATION Secret PAGES 3
FROM COVEY _____
(NAME) (EXTENSION) (ROOM NUMBER)

MESSAGE DESCRIPTION

~~SECRET~~

FINAL PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENT

TO (AGENCY)	DELIVER TO:	DEPT/ROOM NO.	EXTENSION
<u>STATE</u>	<u>ARMACOST</u>		
	<u>PLATT</u>		

FYI ONLY

[Signature]

REMARKS _____

~~SECRET~~

The President has seen _____

SECRET

PROPOSED PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENT

Good morning. The 39 Americans held hostage for 14 days by terrorists in Lebanon are free, safe, and at this moment, on their way to Frankfurt, Germany. They will be home again soon.

This is a moment of joy for them, for their loved ones, and for our nation--and America opens its heart in a prayer of thanks to Almighty God. We can be thankful that our faith, courage and firmness have paid off. But this is no moment for celebration. Let it be clearly understood:

that the seven Americans still held captive in Lebanon must be released, along with other innocent hostages from other countries;

that the murderers of Robert Stethem--and of our Marines in El Salvador--must be held accountable;

that those responsible for the barbaric terrorist acts throughout the world must be taken on by civilized nations;

that the international community must ensure that all our airports are safe and that civil air travel is safeguarded; and

SECRET

Declassify on: OADR

DECLASSIFIED
White House Guidelines, August 28, 1997
By MSJ NARA, Date 9/21/99

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2

that the world must unite in taking decisive action against terrorists, against nations that sponsor terrorists, and against nations that give terrorists safe haven.

This drama has reminded us how precious and fragile are the freedoms and standards of decency of civilized societies, how greatly civilized life depends on trust in other human beings, but how those values we hold most dear must also be defended with bravery--a bravery that may lay quiet and deep, but that will rise to answer our call in every time of peril.

Freedom, democracy and peace have enemies; they must also have steadfast friends.

The United States gives terrorists no rewards and no guarantees. We make no concessions; we make no deals. Terrorists be on notice: we will fight back against you, in Lebanon and elsewhere; we will fight back against your cowardly attacks on American citizens and property.

Several countries have been actively involved in efforts to free our fellow citizens. Syria has had a central responsibility. The efforts of the Algerian Government were likewise an example of constructive cooperation against the direct challenge of

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3

lawless terrorists. Throughout the past 14 days, we have also been in close touch with Israel and a number of governments in Europe and the Middle East, as well as with international organizations, all of whom displayed great concern for the safety and release of the hostages. We will remember all who helped us and who stood with us; and, yes, we will remember those who did not.

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.

We call upon the world community to put Beirut International Airport off limits until that airport demonstrates to the world that it has put terrorists off limits.

And, we call upon the world community to strengthen its cooperation to stamp out this ugly, vicious evil.

Thank you.

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~~SECRET~~

5/5A 8519235

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WASHFAX RECEIPT

THE WHITE HOUSE

C

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

35 JUN 28 1955

479 M

RECEIVED

MESSAGE NO. 411

CLASSIFICATION

PAGE 7

FROM COVEY
(NAME)

(EXTENSION)

(ROOM NUMBER)

MESSAGE DESCRIPTION

Q + A for use
after departure from DAMASCUS

TO (AGENCY)

DELIVER TO:

DEPT/ROOM NO.

EXTENSION:

STATE

ARMACOST
PLATT

✓

REMARKS

RECEIVED

5 JUN 28 P10:42

WHITE HOUSE
SITUATION ROOM

WASHFAX RECEIPT

THE WHITE HOUSE

C

urgent

MESSAGE NO. 411 CLASSIFICATION _____ PAGES 7
FROM COVEY _____
(NAME) (EXTENSION) (ROOM NUMBER)

MESSAGE DESCRIPTION Q+A for use
after departure from DAMASCUS

TO (AGENCY)	DELIVER TO:	DEPT/ROOM NO.	EXTENSION
<u>STATE</u>	<u>ARMACOST</u>		
	<u>PLATT</u>		

REMARKS _____

~~SECRET~~

HOLD FOR RELEASE

CONTINGENCY PRESS GUIDANCE: UPON RELEASE OF HOSTAGES

Q. Was the release of the hostages part of a deal? Did we give guarantees that the prisoners held by Israel would be released?

A: --We gave no guarantees and made no concessions, nor did we urge others to do so. This is a firm policy which we shall continue to respect.

DECLASSIFIED
White House Guidelines, August 28, 1997
By 1437 NARA, Date 7/21/99

Q. What do we expect Israel will do now with the prisoners it is holding?

A: --Israel's policy on returning its prisoners to Lebanon is a matter of record. Israel has stated that its policy is to release the prisoners as the security situation permits in South Lebanon.

Q: Have we suggested to the Israelis that they release their prisoners?

A: --Our position is clear; there is no linkage between the two matters. We have not made deals nor did we urge other to do so. Israel's policy for the release of the prisoners predates the hijacking. They have said they would do so as a function of the security situation in southern Lebanon.

Q: Can you comment on the Israeli television report that Israel and the U.S. reached an understanding that Israel will release its 737 Lebanese prisoners only after the 39 American hostages are released? Wasn't there a linkage?

A: --The GOI formally denied the report to which you refer.

Q: If there was no deal of linkage, then why do you think the hostages are being released? What were the key elements?

A: --We think there finally was a recognition that U.S. patience was not unlimited and that America will not make deals with terrorists. Also, there was growing outrage of this act of terrorism by nations around the world, including Arab states. We were in touch with a number of parties and countries, including Algeria and Syria, and we think these efforts on a number of fronts all helped.

--The Administration is determined to do everything possible to bring an end to such terrorist acts, which are a threat to the entire international community. The U.S. will continue to work to help eradicate this menace to civilized behavior and we call upon the international community to cooperate fully in this effort.

Q. Now that the prisoners are being released, is the U.S. going to retaliate for the hijacking?

A. -- This is not the time or place to comment on that. There is a general recognition however that steps must be taken to get to the root of terrorism. There is also a growing recognition that Beirut airport should not remain a safe haven for aircraft pirates who prey upon civil aviation in the entire region.

Q. What are we doing about the seven Americans who were kidnapped earlier in Lebanon?

A: --They have not been forgotten. We are continuing to work for the release and again call upon the kidnappers to release them. The kidnappings of these Americans and nationals of other nations are acts of terrorism which not only fail to gain sympathy for the cause of the perpetrators but are criminal acts which deserve the condemnation of the entire international community.

~~SECRET~~

The President has seen _____

~~SECRET~~

Letter to Assad

Dear Mr. President:

The United States welcomes the return of the passengers and crew of TWA flight 847 and we appreciate the central responsibility of your government for the resolution of this barbaric incident.

At the same time, seven Americans, along with nationals of other countries, remain in captivity. Their captivity is intolerable. Efforts to secure their release must be intensified. These criminal acts of terrorism are utterly abhorrent. Those who perpetrate such acts must be punished. The brutal and casual murder of Robert Stethem, a young American Navyman, will not be forgotten. We expect your help to see that those who attack the fabric of civilization do not succeed.

Nor does our moment of satisfaction in any way diminish the fact that parts of Lebanon, and Beirut International Airport in particular, have become operating bases and safehavens for terrorists. Civilized nations must act to deal with this horrible reality and to ensure that the Beirut Airport does not ^{Remain} ~~again become~~ a base for hijacking operations. Here, too, I would expect your support.

DECLASSIFIED / RELEASED

NLS F95-059/2*65

BY Amf, NARA, DATE 3/15/06

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Declassify on: OADR

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2

In conclusion, I have confidence in the determination and capabilities of Syria, and hope to receive positive indications from you in the near future.

Sincerely,

Ronald Reagan

The Honorable Hafiz al-Asad
President of the Syrian Arab Republic
Damascus

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Dear Mr. President:

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DECLASSIFIED / RELEASED

NLS F75-059/2 #56

BY 2nd, NARA, DATE 3/15/06

~~SECRET~~

Declassify on: OADR

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~~SECRET~~

In conclusion, I have confidence in the determination and capabilities of Syria, and hope to receive positive indications from you in the near future.

Sincerely,

The Honorable Hafiz al-Asad
President of the Syrian Arab Republic
Damascus

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~~SECRET~~

Talking Points White House will use to Notify Senators Dole &
Byrd, Congressmen O'Neil & Michel at 0700 EDT, 29 June 1985

At 0300 EDT this morning the 39 TWA hostages left Beirut by truck enroute to Damascus. There was a Syrian military escort. The hostages should be arriving in Damascus right about now. We expect the Syrians to turn them over to us in about two hours after they have rested at the Sheraton Hotel in Damascus. The U.S. will then receive the hostages and fly (not certain whether military A/C or not, check in AM) them to Frankfurt, FRG where a reception team from USG will meet them for onward processing. No definite arrangements have been made for their return to US but will be done as rapidly as possible.

The President will make a statement at 0900 this morning as the hostages leave Damascus. Unfortunately, the other seven American hostages have not been returned yet. The President will address this and the continuing efforts to free them. We need to keep the pressure on to get them back.

We'll have more details for you later.

National Security Council
The White House

System #

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Package #

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	SEQUENCE TO	HAS SEEN	DISPOSITION
Bob Pearson	_____	_____	_____
William Martin	_____	_____	_____
John Poindexter	_____	_____	_____
Paul Thompson	_____	_____	_____
Wilma Hall	_____	_____	_____
Bud McFarlane	_____	_____	_____
William Martin	_____	_____	_____
NSC Secretariat	1	✓	STAFF for Record
Situation Room	_____	_____	_____

I = Information A = Action R = Retain D = Dispatch N = No further Action

cc: VP Regan Buchanan Other _____

COMMENTS

Should be seen by: _____
(Date/Time)

in computer,

Action = NBP

Dispatch Info = ARM
NP

cc = WM, DN, HT, TC, KS