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WITHDRAWAL SHEET

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Collection: PRESIDENT'S SPECIAL REVIEW BOARD
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Archivist: mjd
FOIA ID: F97-059/2
Date: 09/21/1999

DOCUMENT NO. & TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
1. paper	re: Hijacking of TWA 847, 8p <i>P 3/20/06 F97-059/2 # 77</i>	2/2/87	P1/F1
2. paper	re: TWA 847 Chronology, 13p <i>P 3/20/06 F97-059/2 # 78</i>	nd	P1/F1
3. memo	Nicholas Platt to Robert McFarlane re: CPPG meeting, 1p <i>P 2/12/02 NLSF97-059/2 # 79</i>	7/6/85	P1/F1
4. paper	re: hostages, 6p <i>D 2/12/02 NLSF97-059/2 # 80</i>	nd	P1/F1
5. report	re: hostages, 4p <i>D 3/20/06 F97-059/2 # 81</i>	7/3/85	P1/F1
6. paper	3p <i>D 2/12/02 NLSF97-059/2 # 82</i>	nd	P1/F1
7. paper	re: hijacking, 1p <i>R 2/12/02 NLSF97-059/2 # 83</i>	nd	P1/F1
8. memcon	re: NSPG meeting (page 7), 1p <i>R 3/20/06 F97-059/2 # 84</i>	nd	P1/F1
9. memcon	re: NSPB meeting (annotated page 7), 1p <i>R " " " # 85</i>	nd	P1/F1
10. summary of events	re: TWA 847, 5p <i>P 3/20/06 F97-059/2 # 86</i>	6/29/85	P1/F1
11. handwritten notes	1p <i>P 3/20/06 F97-059/2 # 87</i>	nd	P1/F1

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].

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Ronald Reagan Library

Collection Name PRESIDENT'S SPECIAL REVIEW BOARD (TOWER BOARD): RECORDS

Withdrawer

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File Folder SRB 378 TWA 847 (8)

FOIA

F97-059/2

Box Number 93207

ID Doc Type	Document Description	No of Pages	Doc Date
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~~8 MINUTES FOR MEETING, PAGE 7 ONLY~~ ~~MVH 3/6/08~~ ~~1~~ ~~ND~~

~~9 MINUTES DRAFT FOR MEETING, PAGE 7 ONLY~~ ~~MVH 3/6/08~~ ~~1~~ ~~ND~~

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The Hijacking of TWA 847

Background

On June 14, 1985, TWA 847, en route from Athens to Rome with 135 Americans and 16 aliens was hijacked by two Lebanese (later identified as Hizballah), who demand the release of all Lebanese detainees in Israel and Kuwait, and the release of four specific individuals: a third hijacker, who had been arrested in Athens, two Lebanese, allegedly in Israeli prisons, and one Lebanese allegedly held in Cyprus (but who had actually been released into Amal custody on May 30).

Between June 14 and June 16, the aircraft shuttles between Beirut and Algeria as negotiations ensue as to its final destination. Early on the day of June 14, a total of 40 passengers, including women and children are released. However, US Navyman Robert Strettham is killed and his body thrown on the tarmac in Beirut.

Later that day, approximately a dozen armed Hizballah and Amal militia board the plane in Beirut and take control from the original hijackers. American Jews and US military are then singled out and a total of 12 passengers are removed from the plane and taken into custody by what is later learned to be Hizballah. The new hijackers escalate their demands to include the release of all Arab prisoners in Lebanon, complete Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon and withdrawal of Lahad forces from Lebanon.

On June 15, in Algiers, an additional 61 passengers are released. The aircraft arrives at Beirut again on June 16 and remains at Beirut Airport from June 16 until after the conclusion of the incident on June 30. On June 16, the remaining 29 passengers are removed from the plane and taken into custody by the Syrian-controlled Amal, leaving 3 crewmen with an unknown number of hijackers still on the plane.

US Efforts

Overall USG strategy in response to the hijacking of TWA 847 was directed and coordinated by the National Security Advisor and the National Security Council staff, yet tasked for the implementation of its various elements to the Departments of State, Defense and Transportation.

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By smf, NARA, Date 3/20/16

(3) undertake a variety of diplomatic initiatives to assist in the release of the aircraft and its passengers.

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State is designated as the lead agency and organizes a task force which operates throughout the incident. [REDACTED]

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State Department efforts are twofold: US Ambassadors in country are instructed to make high level demarches to Arab leaders to enlist their help in achieving resolution of the crisis, focussing in particular on Assad (Syria) and on Nabih Berri (Head of Amal, Lebanon). Demarches are also made to Algeria, Syria and Cyprus to ensure that they accept the aircraft if it is diverted and not to permit it to leave once it has landed. (Algeria permits the aircraft to land, but is unable to prevent it from leaving, as the hijackers threaten to execute the hostages.)

Reluctance on the part of the Governments of Algeria and Syria to intervene politically are countered by Presidential calls on June 15 to President Bendjedid of Algeria, urging him to keep the plane on the ground when it again lands in Algeria; and to Assad, requesting him to contact Iranian and Shia leaders to influence the hijackers to release the aircraft to Algerian authorities. On June 16, Berri, apparently under pressure from Assad, enters negotiations with the hijackers and succeeds in getting one hostage (Peel) released. Berri pledges to release all the hostages if the US persuades Israel to release the Lebanese prisoners held in Atlit prison.

Policy and operational response options are reviewed on successive occasions during the crisis at the highest levels. On June 16, the first NSPG, of the six which are convened during the two week incident, is held. The full NSC, plus deputies and FAA Administrator Donald Engen, is in attendance. Shultz lays the blame for the incident at the feet of Berri who, probably acting in concert with the Syrians, expected the US to pressure Israel to release the Atlit prisoners. He indicates that the negotiations will require the US deal with the Israeli prisoner problem. In addition, Shultz notes that while the Algerians have been

helpful, [REDACTED] and have now twice refused to keep the aircraft.

At this NSPG, the President asks about the prospect of an exchange of the Israeli-held prisoners for the TWA hostages. Shultz indicates that Rabin has invited the US to formally call for it. The President expresses his interest in gaining release of the US hostages followed later by release of the Israeli prisoners. Shultz argues against what he feels would mean essentially a deal with the hijackers. McFarlane urges a variation, in which the US would state that the Israeli prisoners, scheduled to be released anyway, would be held until the US captives were released. [REDACTED]

FOIA(b) (1)

[REDACTED] In conclusion, the President directs that, although the Israeli position should be sounded out, basic policy (not to negotiate with terrorists) would remain unchanged; [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] the Amal should be held responsible politically and diplomatic pressures be intensified in that direction.

FOIA(b) (1)

Diplomatic initiatives during the remainder of the incident are continued on two levels: Direct demarches by the President to Assad and by McFarlane to Berri, and an expanded set of in country demarches by US Ambassadors at Shultz' direction throughout the Arab world and Europe. The talking points used by McFarlane in his call to Berri on June 17 were prepared by State and reflect Shultz' position that there can be no quid pro quo on the US hostage release in terms of a release of Israeli-held prisoners: "The US will not make concessions or ask anyone else to do so...will hold the Shia community responsible if passengers are harmed...future of Shia will be determined by responsible behavior...Al Dawa prisoner release [demand] creates a contest of wills which the US/Israel will not concede." The President's message to Assad on June 18 is to increase pressure on Berri to be tough with the hijackers, and to use Assad's own channels with the Hizballah and Iranians to effect the quick release of the hostages and their transfer out of Lebanon. (On June 18, Berri releases 3 more hostages, leaving 40 still in custody.)

The Terrorist Incidents Working Group continues to meet during this time to consider both near-term options to effect the release of the hostages and longer-term options to reduce the incidence of hijacking and terrorism in general. [REDACTED]

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Phase II

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On June 26, the NSPG meets again in the morning. The outcome of the meeting is to defer execution of the initial steps of the plan "pending diplomatic developments." [Note: There is no evidence to indicate what exchange causes the breakthrough in negotiations. Israel had already released 31 detainees on June 24 and indicated that another 31 could be released during the week. However, there are no communications to indicate that the US directly influenced the release. The GOI position had been that the detainees were to be used as bargaining chips to obtain the release of

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captive IDF soldiers. However, the Israelis had indicated that they were under pressure to release them quickly in any event as there was no legal basis under Israeli law to detain them.]

A Crisis Pre-Planning Group is chaired by Poindexter directly following the NSPG. Another CPPG is held that afternoon, chaired by Fortier. There is no information on the agendas or outcomes of those meetings, with the exception that a news blackout is declared. Later that day, Berri announces a plan to transfer all the hostages to a Western Embassy either in Beirut or Damascus, where they would remain until all the Lebanese detainees are freed from Atlit prison. Berri also reiterates a demand that that US warships leave Lebanese waters and adds the demand that he receive assurances that neither the US nor Israel would retaliate once the incident is resolved. A State status report to the President that day notes further evidence of Israeli preparations to release additional prisoners and undercores Syrian concern that the US would retaliate against all Arab states thought to be implicated in the hijacking.

On June 27, the CPPG meets again. The agenda item is the consideration of a contingency plan in the event of only a partial release of the hostages. The CPPG meets again the morning of June 28 and recommends the implementation of Phase I of the "Plan of Action" if the hostages are not released by the afternoon. Late that afternoon, an NSPG is held to review the diplomatic situation and to consider next steps to take given the apparent lack of progress in getting the hostages released. A briefing memo to McFarlane from North, Teicher, et.al., notes that the CPPG recommends returning to the original "Plan of Action." However, the NSPG directs that the plan for extracting the hostages once they are moved to Syria be implemented. [Note: There are no details on this plan, except to note that US pressure had focused on getting the hostages into Assad's custody.] The NSPG also directs that the longer-term plan for combatting terrorism be developed. Detailed reports by Shultz and Dole at this point are submitted to the President recommending plans for enhancing aviation security and combatting terrorism aimed at US civil aviation.

A June 29 North, Teicher, Fortier memo to McFarlane on "Next Steps for Obtaining Release of AMCIIT Hostages" concludes that the passengers and crew may not be released through Damascus "as expected"; in any event, there may be only a partial release -- it seems that only the Iranians and Assad have leverage over the Hizballah elements. They then recommend Phase I comprising [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] In the event, Phase I is not fruitful, they recommend going to Phase II.

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There is no evidence that this plan of action was approved since announcement of the hostage release is made the next day.

The afternoon of June 29, State issues the following statement: "The US 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." If asked, the spokesman was authorized to say only that "we are making this statement in order to make our position clear."

In a memo to McFarlane, State presents its analysis of the role played by Assad. "Part of Assad's motivation in solving the hijacking was undoubtedly to limit the role of Iranian-backed radical elements in Lebanon...He also wishes to demonstrate to the American Government that Syria is a major power in the region, responsible for security is Lebanon." As part of the supporting documentation for the assessment, [REDACTED]

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On July 1, a full Cabinet meeting is held. A decision is taken to impose sanctions against Lebanese air carriers, terminating service. Later that day, it is reported that David Kimche confirmed to the USG that the Israeli inner Cabinet has decided to release 300 of the 735 Atlit detainees within 48 hours. PM Peres, on Jerusalem radio, declares the freeing of the hostages "removes a major obstacle to freeing Lebanese Shiite prisoners. He denies Israel took any part in a deal."

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Characterization of Process of USG Response to Hijacking

A characterization of the process of developing and implementing a USG response to the hijacking offers the following elements:

- The response to the hijacking was directed and coordinated by the National Security Advisor and National Security Council staff.
- Policy and operational response options were tasked to and developed by the appropriate departments and agencies, and vetted through those interagency groups constituted for the review and implementation of counter-terrorism responses.
- Policy and operational response options were reviewed on successive occasions during the crisis at the highest levels through conference calls and during NSPGs by the full National Security Council.
- There was frequent Congressional consultation and update.
- All relevant diplomatic channels were employed in the effort to seek the release of the hostages, including consultation with Allies.
- A set of coordinated, timed diplomatic initiatives and operational military rescue response options were developed.
- There was concomitant development, consideration and decision to implement a range of longer-term counter-terrorism strategies, designed to safeguard against future hijacking incidents.
- There was ex post facto review of USG handling of the incident and the initiation of a long-term planning strategy both improve counter-terrorism operations and eventually to reduce the occurrence of terrorist incidents.
- Actions and options considered apparently were consistent with stated US policy. There is no direct evidence to indicate that the White House concluded an arrangement with the Israelis.

TWA 847 Chronology

June 14 - June 30, 1985

June 14

TWA Flight 847 departs Athens en route to Rome with 153 people on board, including 129 American passengers, 14 alien passengers, six American crewmembers, two alien crewmembers, and two Lebanese hijackers.

Circa 0310, TWA 847 is diverted to Beirut, where it lands at 0453 over the protests of Lebanese air controllers. Nineteen passengers, 17 women and two children are released, and the aircraft was refueled.

President's national security staff begin a series of secure conference calls which continue throughout crisis. (WHCMC chron.)

Terrorist Incidents Working Group (TIWG) is scheduled for 1000.

At 0630, TWA 847 leaves for Algiers. Prior to taking off, the hijackers list initial demands: release of all Lebanese detainees in Israel and Kuwait, and release of four specific individuals. In addition, the hijackers condemn the bombings at Bir al Abd and Riyadh, attack the Arab League and the Palestinians, condemn American practices in the Arab world, as well as US financial support to Israel.

State Department forms Task Force at 0700.

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TIWG meets at 1000. Recommends:

[REDACTED] diplomatic initiatives to Syria and Berri. (WHCMC Chron)

At TIWG meeting, State is designated as lead agency and organizes a task force. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] (North Action Memo to Poindexter)

North Action Memo to McFarlane indicates President approved [REDACTED] and notes that State has [REDACTED]

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instructed USAMBs to approach Assad and other Arab leaders to assist in release. North indicates that TIWG principals agreed not to give Congressional briefings [REDACTED] (North Memo to McFarlane, "Hijacking of TWA 847, June 14, 1985")

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US requests Algiers to allow plane to land on humanitarian grounds and not to depart.

Plane arrives in Algiers at 1030 and spends several hours there, during which 21 additional passengers are released and the plane is again refueled although Algerians initially refuse. Hijackers threaten to execute hostages if aircraft not permitted to depart.

Hijackers add demand for US \$15 million and ask to talk to US Ambassador.

US urges GOL not to allow aircraft to return to Beirut, and urges governments of Syria and Cyprus to accept the aircraft if diverted from Beirut. Amal contact promises AMEMB Beirut heavy presence at Beirut airport and continued close contact on incident.

[REDACTED]
FOIA(b) (1)

AMEMB Beirut speaks to Gemayel about potential for plane returning to Beirut. Gemayel says little he can do to secure release of hostages. BIA manager says his orders are to prevent plane from landing.

USS SAIPAN and NIMITZ diverted to support contingency ops.

Hijackers reportedly plant explosives on aircraft.

SECDEF authorizes [REDACTED] FOIA(b) (1)

USAMB Beirut tells GOL to refuse landing rights.

At 1525, aircraft leaves again for Beirut, landing at 1920 although runways blocked by trucks. Pilot says situation desperate, requests permission to land. Robert Stretchen is killed and his body thrown onto the tarmac.

Hijackers demand that the ranking Amal official come to the airport. The request is eventually granted.

About a dozen heavily armed men, probably Hizballah and Amal militia, board the plane and take control from the original hijackers.

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Hijackers demand release of all Arab prisoners in Lebanon, complete withdrawal of Israel from Lebanon, withdrawal of Lahad's forces from Lebanon. They reiterate demand for release of Ali Atwah (third hijacker, in Greek custody) and threaten to kill eight Greek passengers, if he is not released.

American Jews and US military are singled out, and 12 passengers are taken off the plane, including all six US military.

President asks Algiers to allow aircraft to land but not to take off again.

President urges Assad to contact Iranian/Shia leaders to influence hijackers to release hostages to Algerian authorities.

June 15

Plane arrives in Algiers at 0250. International Red Cross (ICRC) sends team to Algiers at request of US and Algerian governments.

ICRC and Algerian officials are permitted to board plane to check health of hostages and hear the demands of the hijackers.

Hijackers reiterate previous demands and threaten to kill all passengers if Ali Atwah not released.

Sixty-one passengers and all five flight attendants are released.

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Israelis announce intention to gradually release prisoners -- depending on security situation. Sooner or later, all are to be released.

President requests Algerian President Bendjedid to keep aircraft in Algiers.

Greek government considers release of third hijacker.

Shultz sends President detailed status report of current situation diplomatically, and with respect

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McFarlane writes in the margins to the President that "Mr. President, Our specific goals are: Keep them talking, keep the plane on the ground,

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(Shultz Memo to Pres.
"Status Report on the TWA Hijacking.")

June 16

After 25 hours in Algiers, aircraft departs again for Beirut, landing at 0745. [REDACTED] pilot or hijacker to Beirut Tower stated "We want aircraft demobilized in Beirut so it cannot be flown anymore."

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Pilot radios that hijackers ultimately want to go to Teheran, where they will release passengers and crew. If request denied, plane will be disabled in Beirut.

USEMB Damascus informed that Assad told of US request to put heavy pressure on Berri to assist US.

Hijackers state they will negotiate with Red Cross. Secure telephone consultations held among McFarlane, Shultz, Weinberger.

Remaining 29 passengers are removed from plane; three flight crewmen remain on board with unknown number of hijackers.

Amal leader Nabih Berri enters negotiations. He says he is assured by hijackers that no harm will come to hostages if things are proceeding. He releases one hostage (Peel).

Bartholomew tells Algerian charge (Washington) to contact Shiite leader Fadlallah to try to end hijacking. Charge uninformed/not useful.

Berri pledges to release hostages if US persuades Israel to release Atlit prisoners. (FBIS)

SECSTATE status report to the President on the hijacking notes that "Israel has told us that it would be responsive to an American request to exchange certain prisoners for release of the American hostages. It has also agreed to talk to ICRC representatives, but is not willing to engage in a substantive discussion until the US makes clear its position on a prisoner exchange. Our position is unchanged: we do not make deals of this kind with hijackers.

President meets in SitRoom at 1300 with full NSC plus deputies for NSPG (includes participation of FAA administrator Donald Engen): [REDACTED]

FOIA(b) (1)

[REDACTED] Shultz notes that Berri probably acted in concert with the Syrians; expectation that US will pressure Israelis to release Lebanese prisoners. Notes Algerians helpful but [REDACTED] and twice refused to keep aircraft; indicates that negotiations will require that the US deal with the Israeli prisoner problem. President asks

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about prospect of an exchange. Shultz indicates that Rabin has invited the US to call for it. President indicates his interest in bringing about the release of all US hostages followed by the release of the Israeli-held prisoners. Shultz argues that this would essentially mean making a deal with the hijackers. McFarlane urges a variation, where we not that the Israeli prisoners will not be released until hijacking ends. Weinberger agrees extremely dangerous to act with force; notes that if US gives in there will be new demands tomorrow. President suggests talking to Israelis since they appear to be prepared to let their prisoners go anyway. He directs that the discussion of the Israeli offer on the prisoners not be mentioned to anyone. Shultz says US policy should continue unchanged. Reaffirms basic policy not to negotiate. [REDACTED] Hold Amal responsible. [REDACTED]

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FOIA(b) (1)

June 17

McFarlane calls Berri (30 minute conversation): US will not make concessions or ask anyone else to do so...will hold Shia community responsible if passengers harmed...future of Shia will be determined by responsible behavior...Al Dawa prisoner release creates contest of wills which US/Israel will not concede.

The points made by McFarlane to Berri above are prepared by State and reflect SECSTATE's position that there can be no quid on the US hostage release in terms of release of Israeli prisoners. (Platt Memo to McFarlane)

ICRC meets with Israeli officials...ready to facilitate release of ex-Ansar prisoners...will not be party to negotiations.

Shultz makes statement "we call upon those holding the hostages to treat them properly and release them immediately. We will not make deals with terrorists and will not encourage others to do so."

Bartholomew in contact with Berri. Barth. reports Berri "very tough"..."it is now up to US."

[REDACTED] FOIA(b) (1)

AMEMBDamascus reports that Syria is publically neutral but privately trying to get Berri involved.

USEMBDamascus instructed to make another demarche to Asad, to put additional pressure on Barri, Iran and others.

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June 18

Berri releases three more hostages, leaving 40 still in custody, all believed to be Americans.

Bartholomew talks to Berri. Very useful. Berri says he has all hostages, except five; but has connections with those holding the five, seeking consolidation of control.

TIWG scheduled for 1400, but postponed. Briefing memo for Poindexter (North drafter) indicates agenda to cover: State travel advisory; sky marshall program; denial of BIA; Congressional call for hearings; an NSDD on next steps on airport/aircraft security.

US demarche to Algiers, Jordan, France, UK, Spain, Saudi Arabia, FRG, Austria, UN: US holds Berri responsible...will not negotiate...request they use good offices to influence Berri and other political and religious leaders to effect release.

US demarche to Greece: improve airport security...travel advisory to be issued.

US demarche to Berri: the US understands aircraft is refueled and loaded with explosives, and expects Berri to control the aircraft.

Presidential message to Assad: increase pressure on Berri to be tough with hijackers...use own channels with PSP, Hizballah, Iranians...release prisoners quickly and transfer out of Lebanon.

Speakes publically says that Israelis should release the Lebanese prisoners since they are illegally detained.

UAE paper reports Algerian plan that hostages be released if US promises that Israel will release Shia prisoners at a later date.

Teicher produces a memo on GOIsrael statements with respect to the Lebanese prisoners. A Minister of Defesne spokesman tells the US that the intent of retaining the detainees is as bargaining chip for release of captive IDF soldiers. It was indicated that there was, however, no legal basis for the detention of the Lebanese, since they could not be tried under Israeli law, and therefore, they would have to be released. (Teicher to McFarlane Memo)

President holds a press conference on the situation in Beirut.

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June 19

SECSTATE message to Gemayel looking to him for help.

US requests ICRC to see hostages.

McFarlane provides Senate update on hijacking. North/Teicher prepare detailed talking points which reflect internal White House discussions and planning. (North/Teicher Memo to McFarlane)

Shultz, Weinberger, McFarlane breakfast. Talking points prepared by North provide same update as provided to Senate leaders. (North Memo to McFarlane)

Teicher memo to McFarlane about Japanese debrief of Tokyo meeting between FOMIN Miyake and Iran FOMIN Ardabili, in which Japan indicates grave concern about hostage situation and Ardabili denies Iranian involvement and pins it on Syria. Handwritten note by Poindexter states that the US has evidence Ardabili is lying.

June 20

McFarlane briefs President at daily NSB on alternative solutions to the Beirut hostage problem. He reviews 3 possibilities: UN undertaking to find a protective power to take custody of hostages; Algeria being approached to intervene and ask that hostages be released to them; get Syria to take control, since Assad seems to have asserted his influence already with Berri.

NSPG meeting at 1000.

Austria offers to assist.

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Memo to McFarlane from Fortier, Covey, North entitled "TWA Hijacking: [REDACTED]"

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Teicher Memo to McFarlane outlines a Counter-Terrorism strategy for the aftermath of the hijacking. Involves three elements: identify participants, sponsors, infrastructure;

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[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Fortier/North concurred with memo; no indication of approval.

SECTRANS Dole begins demarches to counterparts in high terrorist risk areas for improving airport security.

June 21

A State status memo to McFarlane is verbally briefed to the President. It indicates: Berri not in full control of hostages; Swiss made a demarche to Berri, but that Lebanese prisoners have to be released; strong message to Iran through Swiss indicating our knowledge that some hostages are in Iran-controlled Hizballah custody; Israel will not release prisoners unless asked to do so in a formal and explicit manner; new civil aviation measures being introduced; modalities for hostage release.

US proposes release scenarios to Berri: release to Syria, Algiers, UN, ICRC...avoid release in Beirut.

Japan approaches Iran and Syria...Iran denies responsibility, blames Syria.

US message to world requesting improvements in airport security.

President meets with hostage families in Dallas.

June 22

US message to Iran via USEMB Bern: Iran cannot escape responsibility for failure to act urgently to help resolve crisis situation.

US message to Syria: keep pressure on Berri...urge Iranians to use their influence.

In contact with Algerians.

President sends letters to all NATO heads of state on further practical activities to be undertaken to prevent terrorism.

June 23

In contact with Algerians.

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

-9-

Rabin announces that 31 of the Shia prisoners will be released the next morning a result of prior legal appeals, not in response to hijacking.

June 24

CPPG meets: reviews [REDACTED] and to consider other methods of increasing pressure.

FOIA(b) (1)

Israel releases 31 detainees from Atlit prison and, in Beirut, Nabih Berri announces a new demand: US Navy ships in area must leave before hostages can be released.

NSPG meets at 1400 to review [REDACTED]

FOIA(b) (1)

[REDACTED] Briefing memo from North/Teicher to McFarlane for NSPG indicates that CPPG consensus was that [REDACTED] ineffective and that Assad should be confronted directly and called by the President. N/T recommend taking the actions proposed in another non-paper they prepared, a two-phased approach; the first, while hostages are still captive; the second, once released. Phase 1 [REDACTED]

FOIA(b) (1)

Phase 2 [REDACTED]

FOIA(b) (1)

[REDACTED] McFarlane approves the memo for consideration at NSPG. (North Memo to McFarlane) NSPG results: President decides to let diplomatic action play out for next several days. Recognizes that real player is Assad and that plan has to be developed accordingly. (WHCMC Chron.)

In contact with Algerians.

State makes demarche to Soviets to use its influence with Syria. (approved by McFarlane)

State memo for McFarlane gives status update: Swiss approached GOI on Berri's requests; GOI indicates 31 prisoners may be released as early as the next week.

President calls Assad to bring his influence to bear on release.

June 25

Gemayel message to Shultz: doing what I can; area not under GOL control.

~~TOP SECRET~~

Larry Speakes discusses with the Press options the President might consider, including limiting goods and services to Beirut and limiting use of Beirut International Airport (BIA).

NSPG meets at 1330: reviews the Plan of Action to place increasing pressure on Syria to extricate the hostages and to press forward with a campaign against terrorism. (WHCMC Chron.)

NSPG briefing memo drafted by North, Fortier, Teicher, Covey, McDaniel and approved by McFarlane included three elements for consideration: Framework for Decision -- a description of the stakes, objectives, strategy for achieving release of hostages; Graphic Timeline -- visual layout of dip, pressure, consultation activities for the next few days; Day-by-Day description of initiatives. This provides a detailed plan of the Phase 1/Phase 2 approach described earlier.

CPPG meets at 1600: refines details of Plan. Tasks a series of papers: T.P.s for the VP; SECSTATE letter to NEA FOMINS; SECSTATE letter EUR FOMINS requesting support of action to close BIA; SECSTATE instructions for demarche to East EUR FOMINS for support in closing BIA.

In contact with Syrians.

June 26

NSPG meets at 1000: defers initial steps of plan pending diplomatic developments.

CPPG meets at 1050, chaired by Poindexter.

CPPG follow-on meeting at 1340, chaired by Fortier.

News blackout is declared.

Hostage Palmer is released because of heart condition.

Berri reiterates demand that US warships leave Lebanese coasts and adds demand that neither the US nor Israel retaliate once crisis is resolved.

Berri announces proposal to transfer all hostages to a Western Embassy in Beirut or Damascus, where they would remain until the release of the Atlit prisoners.

State status report indicates: further evidence of Israeli preparations to release more Lebanese prisoners; Syrian concern that US would retaliate against all Arab states thought to be implicated in highjacking.

~~TOP SECRET~~

-11-

In contact with Syrians, Paris.

Office of Attorney General prepares legal opinion on options to prosecute hijacker addressed to McFarlane.

June 27

Israeli Amb. to Armacost: there is debate as to status of prisoners under Geneva convention...asks US not to bring up issue again.

CPPG meets at 1000: develops a contingency plan in the event of only partial release of the prisoners.

Europeans will not accept conditions of Berri's release scenario.

In contact with Syrians, Algerians, Tel Aviv.

McFarlane provides Senate update.

Shultz and Dole submit to the President State and Transportation Dept. reports on plans for enhancing aviation security and combatting terrorism aimed at US civil aviation.

June 28

CPPG meets at 1030: recommends implementation of Phase 1 actions to pressure Assad, if no release by the afternoon.

NSPG meets at 1700: reviews diplomatic situation, next steps in face of apparent lack of progress at getting hostages released. Briefing memo from North, Teicher, et.al., notes that CPPG recommends returning to original Plan of Action. NSPG Confirms plans for extraction of hostages once they are in Syria. Campaign against terrorism to continue.

In contact with Syrians, Algerians, Geneva, Paris, Tel Aviv.

June 29

North, Fortier, Teicher Memo to McFarlane on Next Steps for Obtaining Release of AMCIT Hostages gives the view that the passengers and crew may not be released through Damascus (as expected) and that, in any event, it is possible that there will only be a partial release; it seems that only the Iranians and Assad have leverage over the Hizballah elements (not Berri). As a result, they propose (Phase 1) [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] If this doesn't work, they propose (Phase 2)

FOIA(b) (/)

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

-12-

dispatching high-level US emissaries to: Israelis, to defer further releases of prisoners; to Tokyo, to tell Rafsanjani that there will be signif. bloodshed; to Assad, to threaten serious reprisals; [REDACTED]

FOIA(b) (1)

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

US C-141 with reception team departs Washington for Frankfurt. Another C-141 goes to Damascus.

Hostages released, according to Press, and en route to Syria, although there are conflicting reports as to their status and location.

PM Peres, on Jerusalem radio, declares the freeing of the hostages "removes a major obstacle to freeing Lebanese Shiite prisoners"...denies Israel took any part in deal.

Later reporting, confirmed about 0700, shows hostages still in Beirut and in custody of Amal/Hizballah... Berri apparently seeking more definite guarantee re Atlit detainees and assurance that US will not retaliate.

State issues the following statement at 2230: "The US 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." If asked, the spokesman was authorized to say that we are making this statement in order to make our position clear.

In a memo to McFarlane, State presents its analysis of the role played by Asad. "Part of Asad's motivation on solving the hijacking was undoubtedly to limit the role of Iranian-backed radical elements in Lebanon." He also wishes to demonstrate to the American Govt. that Syria is a major power in the region, responsible for security in Lebanon.

FOIA(b) (1)

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

June 30

At 0330, Syrian officials in Damascus tell the US Embassy "Syria has solved" the problem that delayed the release of the 39 TWA hijacking hostages.

~~TOP SECRET~~

At 1405, Speakes announces release of the hostages and crossing of the Syria-Lebanon border at 1330.

At 1805 President announces departure from Syria.

July 1

Full Cabinet Meeting held. US imposes sanctions against Lebanese air carriers, terminating service.

David Kimche confirms to USG that the Israeli inner cabinet has decided to release 300 of the 735 Atlit detainees within 48 hours.

President calls Assad to thank him for his intercession in the release of the TWA hostages and to encourage timely action on the remaining hostages being held.

HLTF meets to review the TWA incident from the standpoint of what was learned that might be applicable to gaining the release of the remaining US hostages in Lebanon. [REDACTED]

FOIA(b) (1)

[REDACTED]

July 2

President greets hostages at Andrews AFB.

July 3

NSPG held to review counter-terrorism planning situation, including, as one option, a decision in principle to consider [REDACTED]

FOIA(b) (1)

[REDACTED]

~~TOP SECRET~~ SPECIAL HANDLING

(CLASSIFICATION)

UNCLASSIFIED UPON REMOVAL OF
CLASSIFIED ENCLOSURE(S)

mg 9/17/64

SPECIAL INTELLIGENCE MATERIAL

DOCUMENT # OD-1031

COPY # 2

RESTRICTED TO FOLLOWING AUTHORIZED PERSONS:

SENATOR MUSKIE

THE HIJACKING OF TWA 847

RETURN BY HAND TO OMB/NSD/Intel. Br., Rm. 8215 NEOB

~~TOP SECRET~~ SPECIAL HANDLING

~~TOP SECRET~~ SPECIAL HANDLING

(CLASSIFICATION)

UNCLASSIFIED UPON REMOVAL OF
CLASSIFIED ENCLOSURE(S)

*msP
a117/69*

SPECIAL INTELLIGENCE MATERIAL

DOCUMENT # OD-1031
COPY #3

LT GEN SCOWCROFT

RESTRICTED TO FOLLOWING AUTHORIZED PERSONS:

THE HIJACKING OF TWA 847

RETURN BY HAND TO OMB/NSD/Intel. Br., Rm. 8215 NEOB

~~TOP SECRET~~ SPECIAL HANDLING

~~TOP SECRET~~ SPECIAL HANDLING

(CLASSIFICATION)

UNCLASSIFIED UPON REMOVAL OF
CLASSIFIED ENCLOSURE(S) *WMA/17/96*

SPECIAL INTELLIGENCE MATERIAL

DOCUMENT # OD-1031
COPY # 4

RESTRICTED TO FOLLOWING AUTHORIZED PERSONS: RHETT DAWSON

THE HIJACKING OF TWA 847

RETURN BY HAND TO OMB/NSD/Intel. Br., Rm. 8215 NEOB

~~TOP SECRET~~ SPECIAL HANDLING

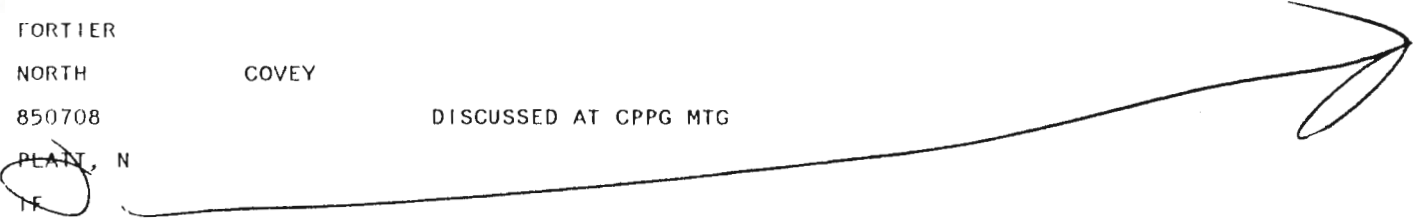
EOB: ROOM 385

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PAGE 36

DOCUMENT NUMBER = SY18590753

DESC	STATE OPTIONS PAPER FOR 8 JUL CPPG MTG		
KEYWORDS	CPPG	<u>TERRORISM</u>	SYRIA
DOCDATE	850706		
RCVDATE	850708		
STATUS	C		
I ACTION	PREPARE MEMO FOR MCFARLANE		
I ACTOFF	FORTIER		
COMMENT	NORTH	COVEY	
UPDATES	850708	DISCUSSED AT CPPG MTG	
SOURCES	PLANT, N		
FILE/OC	IF		
STAFF/OFF	FORTIER		





July 6, 1985

~~SECRET/SENSITIVE~~

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. ROBERT C. MCFARLANE
THE WHITE HOUSE

Subject: CPPG Meeting, Monday, July 8

The Department of State has prepared a paper offering various options aimed at inducing Asad to take a more active role in gaining the release of the seven remaining hostages.

for Mr. Nicholas Platt
for Nicholas Platt
Executive Secretary

Attachments:

- Tab A: Report Concerning Intensified Syrian Efforts to Locate Hostages
- Tab B: Discussion of [REDACTED]
- Tab C: Syrian Efforts in the Hijacking

DECLASSIFIED IN PART
NLS F97-059/2 #79
By *sml*, NARA, Date *2/12/02*

~~SECRET/SENSITIVE~~
DECL: OADR

RONALD W. REAGAN LIBRARY

4

THIS FORM MARKS THE FILE LOCATION OF ITEM NUMBER 309 LISTED ON THE
WITHDRAWAL SHEET AT THE FRONT OF THIS FOLDER.

TAB A

RONALD W. REAGAN LIBRARY

THIS FORM MARKS THE FILE LOCATION OF ITEM NUMBER 5 LISTED ON THE
WITHDRAWAL SHEET AT THE FRONT OF THIS FOLDER.

TAB B

RONALD W. REAGAN LIBRARY

THIS FORM MARKS THE FILE LOCATION OF ITEM NUMBER 6 LISTED ON THE
WITHDRAWAL SHEET AT THE FRONT OF THIS FOLDER.



~~SECRET/SENSITIVE~~

SYRIAN EFFORTS IN THE HIJACKING

6/14 First Presidential message to Asad (get Barri involved at BIA)

6/15 Khaddam called Barri; Barri intervenes with kidnappers, took control of majority of passengers

6/16 Asad responds to President Reagan: we're working on it

6/18 Second Presidential message

6/18 Response, queries regarding what Syria can say about US position on Atlit prisoners

6/19 Third Presidential message

6/19 Asad to Moscow; unlikely he saw third message prior to departure

6/21 Khaddam returned to Damascus

6/22 Asad returned to Damascus

6/23 Arrival of Iranian delegation

6/23 Asad raised hijack situation with Rafsanjani

6/24 Rafsanjani condemns hijacking, disassociates Iran and says Iran would have taken steps to prevent hijacking if had had prior knowledge

6/24 Intensive communications between Barri and Syrians

6/25 SARG asks if Syria can guarantee release of Atlit prisoners

6/26 Barri collocates passengers; inspection by ICRC; publicly offers new "plan" for placing passengers in safe haven at western embassy or brotherly capital like Damascus

~~SECRET/SENSITIVE~~
DECL: OADR

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NLS F97-059/2 #83

BY smf, NARA, DATE 2/12/02

~~TOP SECRET~~

SYSTEM 11 *CMOK*
90674 Re-do

28

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

Chon File June 1985

June 17, 1985

~~TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE~~

ACTION

MEMORANDUM FOR JOHN POINDEXTER

FROM: OLIVER NORTH
HOWARD TEICHER

SUBJ: Minutes of NSPG Meeting
on Hijacking of
TWA Flight #847

DECLASSIFIED

White House Guidelines, August 23, 1997

By *W37* NARA, Date *9/17/99*

Changes have been made as indicated.

RECOMMENDATION

That you approve the minutes
attached.

Approve ____ Disapprove ____

Attachment

Original Package #90674
dtd June 16, 1985

~~TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE~~

Declassify: OADR

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

7

SENSITIVE

The President: Asked whether we were sure which group the terrorists actually belonged to.

Secretary Weinberger: Responded that while we were not sure about the original two, the additional 12 who got on the plane are Amal and Hizballah trained in Baalbek.

The President: Then Baalbek it is.

Robert McFarlane: On leaving this meeting, we should say only that the President has met with his advisors and reviewed the situation that there is no change in U.S. policy on concessions to terrorists and that we are doing everything we can with those who have influence over the situation. We should try to keep as low a profile as possible for the next 24-48 hours so that we do not provide any encouragement to the hijackers while the other negotiations continue.

DECLASSIFIED / RELEASED

NLS F97-059/2484

BY AW, NARA, DATE 3/20/04

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

SENSITIVE

~~TOP SECRET~~

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

SYSTEM II
90674

June 16, 1985

~~TOP SECRET~~SENSITIVEACTION

MEMORANDUM FOR ROBERT C. MCFARLANE

FROM: OLIVER L. NORTH
HOWARD R. TEICHER *HRT*SUBJECT: National Security Planning Group (NSPG) Meeting:
Hijacking of TWA Flight #847

Attached at Tab I are the minutes of the NSPG meeting held in the White House Situation Room this afternoon at 1:00 p.m.

RECOMMENDATION

That you review and approve the minutes attached at Tab I.

Approve *[Signature]*

Disapprove _____

*Needs additional work
on last page.*

Attachment

Tab I - Minutes of NSPG Meeting

DECLASSIFIED
White House Guidelines, August 28, 1997
By *msk* NARA, Date *9/17/99*~~TOP SECRET~~

Declassify: OADR

~~TOP SECRET~~SENSITIVE

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

7

SENSITIVE

The President: Then Baalbek it is.

Robert McFarlane: On leaving this meeting, we should say only that the President has met with his advisors and reviewed the situation that there is no change in U.S. policy on concessions to terrorists and that we are doing everything we can with those who have influence over the situation. We should try to keep as low a profile as possible for the next 24-48 hours so that we do not provide any encouragement to the hijackers while the other negotiations continue.

The President asked whether we were sure ~~whether~~ which group the terrorists actually belonged to. Secretary Weinberger responded that while we were not sure about the original two, the additional 12 ^{are} ~~were~~ Amal and Hizbollah trained in Baalbek who got on the plane

DECLASSIFIED / RELEASED

NLS F97-057/2 # 85

BY 201, NARA, DATE 3/20/06

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

SENSITIVE

~~TOP SECRET~~

29 June 1985
1300 EDT

White House Crisis Management Center

TWA Flight 847 Hijacking: Summary of Events (all times EDT)
(Athens and Beirut = EDT + 7. Algiers = EDT + 5)

Friday, 14 June; Day 1

- Departed Athens en route to Rome with 153 people onboard, including 129 American passengers, 14 alien passengers, six American crewmembers, two alien crewmembers, and two Lebanese hijackers.
- Flight was diverted to Beirut, where it landed at 0453 over the protests of Lebanese controllers. Nineteen passengers, 17 women and two children, were released, and the aircraft was refueled.
- Shortly before leaving Beirut for Algiers at 0630, the hijackers listed their initial demands, which included release of all prisoners held in Israeli prisons.
- TIWG at 1000. [REDACTED]

FOIA(b) ()

[REDACTED] Diplomatic initiatives to Syria, Barri.

- The plane spent several hours in Algiers, where 21 additional passengers were released and the plane was again refueled.
- U.S. urges GOL not to allow aircraft to return to Beirut.
- U.S. demarche to Syria: Do not allow Lebanese to return aircraft to Beirut -- allow landing in Syria if asked.
- Departed again for Beirut, arriving at 1920. At that time, Robert Stethem was killed and about a dozen heavily armed men, probably Hizballah and Amal militia, boarded the plane and took control from the original hijackers. American jews and U.S. military were then singled out, and 13 passengers were taken off the plane, including all six (seven) U.S. military. The plane departed Beirut Friday night and arrived again in Algiers early on Saturday morning.

~~TOP SECRET~~

Declassify on: OADR

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NLS F97-05912 #86
By 0111, NARA, Date 3/20/06

- Presidential message to Algiers requesting they allow aircraft to land and not take off.
- Presidential message to Assad urging he contact Iranian/Shia leaders to influence hijackers to release prisoners to Algerian authorities.

Saturday, 15 June; Day 2

- In Algiers, 61 passengers and all five stewardesses were released, and the ICRC and Algerian officials were permitted to board the aircraft to check the health of the hostages and hear the demands of the hijackers.

FOIA(b) (1)

- [REDACTED]
- Israeli's announce intention to gradually release prisoners -- depending on security situation. Sooner or later, all are to be released.
- Presidential message to Algerian President Bendjedid requesting he keep aircraft in Algiers.

Sunday, 16 June; Day 3

- Twenty-five hours later the plane left Algiers, again for Beirut, landing at about 0745.
- The President chaired an NSPG at 1300. Reaffirmed basic policy not to negotiate. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Hold Amal responsible.
- Remaining 28 passengers removed from plane; three flight crewmen remain onboard with unknown number of hijackers.

FOIA(b) (1)

Monday, 17 June; Day 4

- McFarlane to Barri (30 minute conversation): U.S. will not make concessions or ask anyone else to do so... will hold Shia community responsible if passengers harmed... future of Shia will be determined by responsible behavior... Al Dawa prisoner release request creates contest of wills which U.S./Israel will not concede.
- ICRC meets with Israeli officials... ready to facilitate release of ex-Ansar prisoners... will not be party to negotiations.

Tuesday, 18 June; Day 5

- By the 18th four more hostages had been released, leaving 40 still in custody.

- TIWG Meeting.
- U.S. demarche to Algiers, Jordan, France, UK, Spain, Saudi Arabia, FRG, Austria, UN: U.S. holds Barri responsible... will not negotiate... request they use good offices to influence Barri and other political and religious leaders to effect release.
- U.S. demarche to Greece: improve airport security... travel advisory to be issued.
- U.S. demarche to Barri: the U.S. understands aircraft is refueled and loaded with explosives, and expects Barri to control the aircraft.
- Presidential message to Assad: increase pressure on Barri to be tough with hijackers... use own channels with PSP, Hizballah, Iranians... release passengers quickly and transfer out of Lebanon.

Wednesday, 19 June; Day 6

- SECSTATE message to Gemayel looking to him for help.
- U.S. requests ICRC to see the hostages and check their welfare.
- Terrorists in San Salvador kill 15, including four unarmed, off-duty U.S. Marines and two U.S. businessmen.

Thursday, 20 June; Day 7

- NSPG Meeting.
- Austria offers to assist.

Friday, 21 June; Day 8

- U.S. requests ICAO, WTO, UNHR Center to publicly condemn hijacking and urge immediate release of hostages.
- U.S. proposes release scenarios to Barri: release to Syria, Algiers, UN, ICRC... avoid release in Beirut.
- Japan approaches Iran and Syria... Iran denies responsibility, blames Syria.
- U.S. message to world requesting improvements in airport security.

Saturday, 22 June; Day 9

- U.S. message to Iran: Iran cannot escape responsibility for

failure to act urgently to help.

- U.S. message to Syria: keep up pressure on Barri... urge Iranians to use their influence.
- In contact with Algerians.

Sunday, 23 June; Day 10

- In contact with Algerians.

FOIA(b) (1)

Monday, 24 June; Day 11

- CPPG Meeting to review [REDACTED] and to consider ways to increase pressure.
- On June 24, Israel released 31 Lebanese detainees from Atlit prison and, in Beirut, Nabih Barri announced a new demand: that U.S. Navy ships in the area must leave before the hostages could be released.
- NSPG: decided to let diplomatic action play out for next several days. Recognized that real player is Assad and that plan had to be developed accordingly.
- In contact with Algerians.

Tuesday, 25 June; Day 12

- Gemayel message to Shultz: I'm doing what I can... area is not under GOL control.
- The President chaired an NSPG at 1330 on June 25, which reviewed the Plan of Action to place increasing pressure on Syria to extricate the hostages and to press forward with a campaign against terrorism.
- CPPG held to refine details of the Plan.
- In contact with Syrians.

Wednesday, 26 June; Day 13

- NSPG at 1000, which deferred initial steps in the Plan pending diplomatic developments. News blackout is declared.
- Another hostage, Jimmy Palmer, was released because of a worsening heart condition.
- Barri reiterated his demand that U.S. warships pull away from the Lebanese coast, and he added a new demand that neither the U.S. nor Israel retaliate once the crisis is resolved.

- In contact with Syrians, Paris.

Thursday, 27 June; Day 14

- Israeli Ambassador to Armacost: there is debate as to status of prisoners under Geneva Convention... asks U.S. not to bring up issue again.
- CPPG to develop a contingency plan in the event of a partial release of hostages.
- In contact with Syrians, Algerians, Tel Aviv.

Friday, 28 June; Day 15

- CPPG. Recommended implementation of Phase 1 actions to pressure Assad, if no release by this afternoon.
- NSPG. Reviewed diplomatic situation, confirmed plans for extraction of hostages once they are in Syria. Campaign against terrorism to continue at a pace to be determined.
- In contact with Syrians, Algerians, Geneva, Paris, Tel Aviv.

Saturday, 29 June; Day 16

- Hostages released, according to Press, and en route to Syria, although there are conflicting reports on their exact status and location.
- PM Peres, on Jerusalem radio, declares freeing hostages "removes a major obstacle to freeing Lebanese Shiite prisoners"... denies Israel took part in any deal.
- Latest reporting from CNN shows hostages still in Beirut and in custody of Amal/Hizballah... Barri apparently seeking more definite guarantee re Atlit detainees and assurance that U.S. will not retaliate.

DECLASSIFIED IN PART

NLS F97-059/2 N 87

By JW, NARA, Date 3/20/00

• Habdel Auid - Tunis

• A/C refused permission to land
Reporting to Benbarak Aid

• PLO Rep in Tunis
The ~~time~~ PLO will not accept

FOIA(b) (1)

N 2030
12/4/00
✓

The PLO has determined that
it is in the U.S. well interest
to act unilaterally to approach
the ter who seized the It did
A H. ~~There ter are bel to be~~
→ Info avail and that the ter
may be flow from Egypt to Tunis