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THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

30 June 1985

PRESS BRIEFING
BY
SECRETARY OF STATE GEORGE P. SHULTZ

The Briefing Room

6:17 P.M. EDT

SECRETARY SHULTZ: Questions?

Q Mr. Secretary, what is our policy toward --

SECRETARY SHULTZ: He started first.

Q Mr. Secretary, can you explain why Syria, a country that the United States has often criticized for supporting terrorism, has been so helpful, and does this indicate a change in our approach to Syria?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: I don't know the reason, although I hope that it shows that Syria, like other states, has concluded that hijacking and terrorism is bad.

Q What about the seven who remain in Lebanon? What hopes do you have that perhaps Syria could be helpful, and what is our policy toward retaliation?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: We discussed this with -- the seven -- with Syria, and it is our impression, I think based on reality, that President Assad is working hard on that problem, and we are glad that he is doing so.

Q Mr. Secretary, what can you tell us about --

Q And the second part of the question, about retaliation?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: No comment on that.

Q Mr. Secretary, what can you tell us about the possibility that now Israel will release, on some schedule, the Lebanese prisoners that it is holding?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: Israel said before any of this happened that it intended to release those prisoners. And I saw the Defense Minister, Mr. Rabin, on American television today saying that those prisoners had been taken temporarily -- I think that was his word -- and they intended to release them. So, I expect that they will.

Q Won't that be seen, sir, as a quid pro quo, even if there was no direct linkage?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: There is no linkage and certainly when Israel intended to do something before this happened, the hostage-taking should not prevent them from doing something that they fully intended to do. So there is no linkage there, and I think it is extremely important for us and for others who are combatting terrorism to see to it that the linkage does not exist.

Q Well, are you saying that you had no talks with Israel, no talks with Syria, that this all came out of the blue, you know, from Heaven?

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SECRETARY SHULTZ: Of course it didn't.

Q Well, how did it come about?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: We had lots of discussion with many governments, including Israel, and of course in recent days especially Syria, and throughout we have made the point that these hostages and the others being held should be freed. And we also made the point that since Israel was in the process of releasing those prisoners before this happened that it was quite clear that if anything the hostage taking was impeding a process that had already been underway.

Q Mr. Secretary, would you explain what the hitch was yesterday, why there was a delay, and what Syria's role was in resolving the problem?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: The problem apparently was that the four held by the Hezbollah were not released to the pool of the rest of the group of the hostages. And so exactly why and what persuaded them, I don't know. I do know that the Syrians came to us last night and they said that they thought it would be helpful if we issued a statement along certain lines and so we worked up a statement that reaffirmed our long-standing policy and put it out.

Q Did they help write the release?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: They suggested what they thought might be helpful in a statement, but we wrote the statement and, as I said, it is a statement of things that we have long held and I think it is an unexceptionable statement.

Q Do you have any evidence of Iranian involvement either in the creation of the delay or the resolution of the delay between yesterday's aborted release and today's release?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: No, we don't.

Q Is the government committed to retaliation, as the President said?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: Let me tell you what our policy is, if I can just take a minute, on combatting terrorism. First, in a democracy there has to be an effort and there has to be a broad understanding in the American people about the nature of this threat, its importance, and an understanding of why certain kinds of positions need to be taken toward it, in particular why it is important that you do not make deals with terrorists.

Second, we are working very hard and with considerable success at developing our intelligence capability, not only so that we are more and more going to be able to find out who has done something after it takes place, but more important, to spot things that might happen. It is important for us to have this capability, it is important for our friends to have it, and then it is important for there to be a linkage in an intelligence net. There have been over sixty instances in the last nine months in which we have managed to find out about something that probably would have happened and expose it or stop it or do something about it. So we are having some impact, and I might say that those who are planning and carrying out terrorist acts perhaps would be a little surprised to know how much we are getting to know about them.

Third, obviously we have to do certain defensive things. Right now people are focused on airplanes and airports. And of course that is something that we have been working on for many years. Again, we have to do more and we have to do better, but the techniques that have been developed have been working.

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To take an example, some 35,000 weapons or explosive charges of one kind or another have been siezed at American airports in the last 20 years. There's also, of course, the question of our embassy buildings and things of that kind, so there's that kind of defense.

And fourth, we have to develop our capability to take matters of active defense so that terrorists more and more come to realize that there are costs to them of conducting these terrorist acts and so that we are in a position, if we see something that might happen, to preempt it and interdict it.

So those are the four strands of our policy. And I think we have been making headway. Obviously, it's something that needs to be worked on hard and continuously.

Q The President spoke of holding the hijackers accountable. Is there some realistic hope of doing that, and if so, how?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: We certainly want to find in particular who it is that beat and shot Robert Stethem. I think, in this moment of joy that 39 people have been released, we have to remember not only the seven we still seek, but we have to remember that one was beaten and murdered. And we have to remember six Americans and El Salvadorans shot in El Salvador. We have to remember the people in the Air India plane that went down. We have to remember the baggage handlers in Narita Airport. So there's a lot of culpability out there.

But at any rate, to come back to your question, who shot -- and we want to find out about that and bring that person to justice, along with the people conspiring with him.

Q But exactly what kind of justice can they be brought to?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: If they are identified, presumably there are processes of law and we will do everything we can to see that they're enforced.

Q Mr. Secretary, the President mentioned his gratitude to Syria for assistance in this affair and did not, as far as I can recall, mention Mr. Berri. Would you appraise his role in this affair in terms of the release of the hostages?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: He has portrayed himself in various roles. He's portrayed himself as a mediator; he's portrayed himself as a party and a member of the group. So I think we have to do some sorting out about Mr. Berri.

Q Mr. Secretary, you said that there has to be a cost with the terrorists. Given the worldwide attention to the terrorists' demands, the "understanding" statements by the hostages, and the lack, thus far, of any kind of reprisals, doesn't it look like there was no cost to these terrorists, that they, indeed, won?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: I think that they have paid a price and this, of course, is an ongoing proposition, this fight against terrorism. We're very much in the midst of it.

Somebody asks --

Q But what price --

SECRETARY SHULTZ: Just a minute. Somebody asked a question about the individuals, and we will seek those individuals. I might say also that 15 percent of the hijackings outside the United States over the last 15 years have either originated, ended, or gone through the Beirut Airport. The Beirut Airport has become a kind of

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safe haven for terrorists. And, certainly, it's one of the things that we and other countries must consider that as long as Beirut is a haven for terrorists, it should not be a place frequented by the world community. So that airport, I think, is something that we have to look at very carefully.

Q Mr. Secretary, you said that you expected that Israel would be releasing the Lebanese prisoners. Would you have an estimate on how long it might be before all of them would be released?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: This question is all something for Israel to decide, and my statement is based on things that they have said.

Q MR. Secretary, do you consider the statement released by the State Department last night to limit the U.S. ability to retaliate or take any action in any way?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: The statement was a statement of our views about Lebanon. Similar views have been stated many times in the past and we had no objection to reaffirming those views.

Q Mr. Secretary, other people in this building have said that the jury is still out on Assad and Syria, and while he's been helpful in this case, the real test may be in whether he can produce the other seven. Is that how you see it, that this was a singular incident of cooperation? Or has he really enhanced his position and U.S./Syrian relations?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: President Assad has been helpful on other occasions, you remember. And he certainly was on this one. And we have pretty solid information that he's been working assiduously on the problem of the other hostages. And so we welcome that.

Q Why would it not be a good idea, Mr. Secretary, for us to ask the Israelis not to release the Shiite prisoners until we get our seven kidnapped victims back?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: That would be producing a linkage that we do not want to see. Our hostages in Lebanon should be free, period. It's not linked to anything else. We don't want to link it to anything else.

Q Mr. Secretary, why was there not a military action, an attempt to rescue the hostages on that one opportunity the United States seems to have had in Algeria?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: I'm not going to comment on military possible options.

Q What price -- you mentioned that these terrorists have paid a price. What price have they paid, since it seems as though they have won what they wanted?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: Lebanon and the Beirut Airport has dramatized itself as an outcast by its actions in the world community.

Certainly, Lebanon is a place with a very considerable degree of chaos. And I think that's a heavy price for that community to pay. And they're very much a part of it. And this all is not over yet.

Q Mr. Secretary, are you suggesting --

Q To follow up on that, are you calling for a world boycott of the Beirut Airport? Is the United States going to take any measures to prevent other world carriers or our own carriers from flying in there? Tell us precisely what you intend to do about the airport.

SECRETARY SHULTZ: We are going to be in touch with our friends about the airport and, we hope, develop a concerted pattern of action. At any rate, we have a very clear view about that airport, and I've expressed it here.

Q Mr. Secretary, you've spoken about the people who shot Robert Stethem, the murderers, and that we're going to try to bring them to justice. You've spoken, though, of a juridical setting. Can we take it then that we are not going to attempt to retaliate in the sense of vengeance against a -- just a wider community?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: Vengeance is a kind of a visceral feeling that people get, naturally. We all do. I think from the standpoint of the sort of active defense that I spoke of, that what we really need to think about is imposing costs and looking to the future and preempting.

But, at the same time, people who commit crimes -- and this is certainly a crime in anybody's book -- must be brought to justice. And we will do everything we possibly can to see that that takes place.

Q Mr. Secretary, I wonder if you were at all disappointed when the hostages held their press conference that seemed to have nothing favorable to say about the U.S. government and its efforts, but a lot favorable to say about the Amal?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: They speak for themselves. They're entitled to their opinions. They've been through a trauma. And God bless them. And I'm glad that they're on their way home.

Q Mr. Secretary, one other question about the two -- or about the actual killers of the -- of our man, are you suggesting that you would try to extradite them through the government of Lebanon?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: I'm not setting out any particular judicial path here, but to say, here is a person and -- in conspiracy with others -- who committed murder, cold-blooded murder after having performed a beating. And that kind of activity deserves to be punished.

Q Okay. But the question really is whether you're going to try to do it covertly or whether you're going to try to do it through principles of international law.

SECRETARY SHULTZ: Naturally, we are principled people. But we believe it should be done.

Q Mr. Secretary, could you tell us, in regards to Beirut Airport, as far as I know, there are only four airlines that fly in there and -- besides the Middle East Air, there are only weekly flights. Is that a strong enough action to tell people to cancel -- three airlines to cancel weekly flights from the airport?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: Well, we'll see how that works. And I

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think, however, that closing an airport that has turned out to have such a high participation in hijackings and which has become a place where, in a sense, you can go if you hijack a plane and get reinforcements, is a place that should be on our off-limits list. And that's the point here. It's not a question of sort of economic sanctions or something like that. It's a question of trying to close the usefulness of that airport.

Q Mr. Secretary, the President said that those who helped us would be remembered and those who didn't help us will be remembered. Who were those who didn't help us?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: I'm not going to go into that. But we have some pretty good ideas.

Q Mr. Secretary, the President used some fairly strong language in denouncing the terrorists. What is to impel them to release the remaining seven Americans?

SECRETARY SHULTZ: They, I hope, will respond to the same considerations that must have led to the release of the 39 that were released today. Certainly, if there's any humaneness, that should be done. And it should be done promptly. And at any rate, we will continue to work at it. And, as I said earlier, we have the very distinct impression that President Assad has put a considerable amount of will power into it. And we will be pushing hard.

MR. SIMS: Helen, last question, please.

Q Mr. Secretary, if you're so interested in justice being done and the Lebanese have been in captivity in Israel for two years, some of them, why don't you ride herd on Israel so that they also liberate people who were taken as "potential terrorists," never charged? We vetoed anything that would have helped them in the UN, and so forth.

SECRETARY SHULTZ: The point I want to make in response to your question is that the problems of prisoners in Israel and the problems -- our hostages in Beirut had no connection with each other.

Q Well, why don't you worry about them?

MR. SIMS: Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

SECRETARY SHULTZ: We worry about injustice all over the world. But in the case of handling a terrorist incident, the worst mistake you can make, I think, or one of the bad mistakes, is to allow terrorists to establish a linkage where none exists, simply by asserting it. And if we allow that to happen, then anybody who has a grievance anywhere in the world can grab you and a few other people -- famous people like you --

Q And you.

SECRETARY SHULTZ: -- and say --

Q Thank you.

SECRETARY SHULTZ: -- and say, "The United States should go redress this grievance or we won't let you go." So, we're not going to do that. That's the answer.

Q What the Senior Official who said that we should --

Q You're keeping your dinner guest waiting.

SECRETARY SHULTZ: You better believe it.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

June 30, 1985

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

The Roosevelt Room

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Q Do you believe that they are in Lebanon?

MR. MCFARLANE: Yes.

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

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MR. MCFARLANE: Not to our knowledge.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

MR. MCFARLANE: Sure.

END

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

June 30, 1985

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AFTER RELEASE OF TWA HOSTAGES

The Oval Office

6:01 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Good afternoon. The 39 Americans held hostage for 17 days by terrorists in Lebanon are free, safe, and at this moment, on their way to Frankfurt, Germany. They'll 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 and civilians in El Salvador must be held accountable; that those responsible for 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 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 lie quietly, indeed, 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. Nations that harbor terrorists undermine their own stability and endanger their own people.

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 lawless terrorists. King Hussein spoke out early and forcefully in condemning the hijacking. Saudi Arabia also made an effective contribution. Throughout the past 17 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 which displayed great concern for the safety and release of the hostages.

We will remember, and offer out thanks to all who helped us and who stood with us. And, yes, we'll remember those who did not.

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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.

I just want to inject a personal note here that, like all of you, Nancy and I have been living with these -- all these 17 days, and like you, we have both been praying for what has now taken place. And like you, we thank God and wait with baited breath their final arrival here on our shores.

Thank you.

END

6:05 P.M. EDT

Draft

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

PRESS BRIEFING
BY
LARRY SPEAKES

June 30, 1985

The Briefing Room

2:05 P.M. EDT

MR. SPEAKES: We are pleased to announce that the President has received confirmation that the American citizens who have been held in Beirut since June 14th have now left Lebanon. They crossed the border into Syria shortly before 1:30 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time today. This has been confirmed by the United States Embassy in Damascus in a message to the White House and the State Department.

The President was informed by Foreign Policy Advisor McFarlane shortly afterward. The President said, "That's very welcome news. Let me know when their wheel's up." The U.S. Embassy has been in touch with Syria -- the Syrian government to effect a speedy departure. A U.S. military aircraft is in Damascus to take them to the Rhein-Main Military Airfield near Frankfurt, Germany.

At that time, the President will have a statement to the nation from the Oval Office. Flying time to Rhein-Main is expected to take five and a half to six hours. The Vice President will be on hand there to greet the American citizens when they arrive.

Q Now you're saying the President's statement is --

Q When's the statement from the Oval Office?

Q Just a second --

MR. SPEAKES: That's the --

Q Now you're saying the President's statement isn't until after the hostages arrive at Rhine Mein?

Q -- question --

MR. SPEAKES: That's correct. No. I'm sorry.

Q That was my question.

Q -- is that correct, this is important, Larry.

Q Well, I'd started it first, Bill.

MR. SPEAKES: The President will have a statement from the Oval Office when the aircraft leaves -- shortly after the aircraft leaves Syria.

Q What's your best guess, Larry?

Q That's what I thought you'd said.

Q Larry, what's your best guess as to when that's going to be?

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MR. SPEAKES: Take your time. I would -- my estimate would -- depending on how long they stay in Syria, five -- six o'clock p.m. -- in that area.

Q Would he take questions from a pool of reporters?

MR. SPEAKES: Let's continue -- discontinue our live coverage now and I'll answer some specific questions on what the remainder of the day's briefings are.

Q Is the President --

Q Can you tell us --

Q Is this -- TV coverage is finished now?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

Q Would you consider having the President respond to questions from a pool of reporters in the Oval Office?

MR. SPEAKES: I'm waiting until we discontinue our television coverage.

Q What do you want? The lights out?

MR. SPEAKES: Sure we can. Yes.

Q Then say the lights should go out.

MR. SPEAKES: If you'll cut your lights out, then we'll continue.

Q This statement, Larry --

MR. SPEAKES: Let me finish the remainder of the schedule. What we see when we get to -- when we -- for the afternoon, here, I'll go to that.

The President will be in the Oval Office once they're clear of Middle East air space. It will be a pool and now -- a opool, remarks from the Oval Office.

After 15 minutes for filing time, Secretary Shultz will be in this briefing room for camera to answer questions. At that time, we will have a fact sheet that will be a chronology of events from June 14th until the present hour -- literally -- that gives a great deal of detailed information about when meetings were held and how they corollate with statements made in the White House and events in the Middle East.

We also, for those who are on our photo distribution list, will receive a packet of photos that show the activities of the past week.

One other item, the President will be attending a private dinner tonight that has been scheduled for a couple of weeks at Secretary Shultz's house. He's scheduled to leave at 6:15 p.m. and return at 9:50 p.m. There's a travel pool that will accompany him.

When the group arrives at Rhein-Main, there, of course, are press facilities there arranged by the Defense Department. TWA is flying some family members from the United States to Frankfurt. The numbers the Defense Department now has is 24 from New York and 12 from Chicago. There may be others.

Once they arrive at Rhein-Main, they will be given an opportunity for a medical checkup at Wiesbaden Air Force Hospital, which is in the same area. And at the hospital, the United States European command will have a press facility there. They do plan a technical briefing shortly after the President's statements in Wiesbaden that will outline the procedures there. After the medical checkup there is a possibility that the medical people will have a briefing on the condition of those American citizens.

That pretty well gives you the schedule.

Q How about when they come back to the U.S.?

Q What about coming back?

MR. SPEAKES: We do not have a time frame when they come back to the U.S., depending on how long that -- how many avail themselves to the facilities there at Wiesbaden and how many -- how long that takes, and then how many do wish to return to the United States immediately or whether they take time with their families somewhere else.

Q All right. They --

Q Are you suggesting they may not come as a group. In other words, once they're at Frankfurt and go through this procedure, they then may go their separate ways?

MR. SPEAKES: Of course, because different from previous situations, these people are not government employees or military except for a very few. And they will be free to do what they want to do.

Q Larry, will you --

MR. SPEAKES: In fact, if -- I believe I'm correct that those who are -- they will have a choice whether to avail themselves

to whatever debriefings and other medical treatment there or medical examination there.

Q Will you please clear up, did you answer Andrea's question about a pool in the Oval Office?

MR. SPEAKES: I did not answer it, but, no, we plan to do the regular customary Oval Office statement.

Q And --

MR. SPEAKES: As we do on the nighttime speeches.

Q All right. And you're saying that Shultz will begin 15 minutes after the President concludes?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

Q You expect the President about -- somewhere around 5:00 p.m. or 6:00 p.m.?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes. We don't have the specifics about how long they will remain in Damascus. But if you're plotting it out, sometime in the 5:00 p.m. area is our judgment. And then 30 minutes or so after they leave there, then the President will come into the Oval Office and make his speech.

Q How long -- two questions. First of all, how long is the President's speech going to be?

MR. SPEAKES: I would say seven or eight minutes, I would guess. Bob, it's about five pages now, I believe. And I don't know how that translates --

Q Seven or eight minutes?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes -- five to seven minutes.

Q And the second question is, when would you -- would you guess that there will be some kind of welcoming ceremony here at the White House at some point, and what day would you predict?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't look for it at the White House. It depends on how long they stay there, whether they would be back here Tuesday or Wednesday. The President would look for the opportunity to personally welcome them back to the United States, but when and where that takes place just has not been determined.

Q Well, why do you say not at the White House?

MR. SPEAKES: We don't plan a White House ceremony. He will go to wherever they come in.

Q Well, say they --

Q -- they'll come as a group, though?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

Q I don't understand how that will work.

MR. SPEAKES: If they don't come as a group, then there won't be an opportunity for him to greet them unless he --

Q Well, Larry, when the Granada --

MR. SPEAKES: -- wants to run all over the country.

Q Well, he won't do that, will he?

Q Well, Larry, after the Granada students came back, you may recall, that although they were private citizens from all over the country, they scattered, went home, and then reconvened in the White House ceremony on the South Lawn. Would the President desire something like that?

MR. SPEAKES: David, we really haven't done much thinking about what happens because we've been concentrating on the current situation. So right now, our tentative thinking is if they came back in -- a large number of them came back in some group, the President would greet them at whatever airport they came back to. If that doesn't happen, then we'd have to cross that bridge --

Q Larry, you all are sending a --

Q This includes -- this is the 39, is it? Are there any of the other seven there?

MR. SPEAKES: I do not have numbers, Herb, and we won't until we get into Damascus where we can be accurate on it. I won't make a statement.

Q Do you know whether any of the other seven --

MR. SPEAKES: I just would rather not make a statement on it now. Let's -- we've got plenty of time.

Helen.

Q Could you give us a feeling of the chronology of the President's day up until now? What -- I mean, has he been in the Residence all the time?

MR. SPEAKES: Bud's talked to him three times today. He has been in the Residence all of the time.

Bud has kept him abreast as -- each time he's had something new to report.

Q Talk to him in person, Larry?

MR. SPEAKES: By telephone.

Q Larry, is the --

Q And he's been in the House --

Q Will the air force send a plane for them to Frankfurt? Has anything of that sort been laid on?

MR. SPEAKES: It has not. There's a possibility they may come back by TWA and I think that's probably a likely -- the strongest likelihood that TWA will fly them back.

Q Frequent flyers that they are --

Q Two questions; one, what happens to the TWA plane out of Beirut and, two, much more importantly, what does the President do now? Is he going to resume his vacation schedule if all this works itself out?

MR. SPEAKES: The President has not developed any planning other than the fact that he did cancel his trip to the West Coast and he's -- there are no plans at the moment to go to the West Coast. As far as TWA plane in Lebanon, I don't know.

Sarah?

Q What's your understanding of what they will do in Damascus. What is the routine for the --

MR. SPEAKES: What they will do? It's up to the Syrian government. We've heard various reports and you've heard the same. I don't know whether they'll go to the hotel or whether they'll go directly to the airport or whether they'll do press, or what. We've heard all of those.

Andrea?

Q Well, they're -- we've also heard reports from over there that there had been an elaborate dinner and other kinds of receptions went on.

MR. SPEAKES: We've heard those reports too.

Q But your indications, when you referred in your initial statement to the speediness of their departure, your indications from the Syrian government, I assume, are that it will be fairly abbreviated so that the President will be able to speak at this hour?

MR. SPEAKES: We're -- no. The President will speak when they leave and they'll leave when they leave and the Syrian government is handling the arrangements and we're working with them. Other than that, I can't be specific.

Q Does the President intend to -- after the Americans have left Syria, does he intend to call any leader in the Middle East and express some sentiment?

MR. SPEAKES: Sam, I don't know of any plans to do so, but if he does, we'll let you know.

David?

Q You said in the 4:00 a.m. news conference, categorically we have made no concessions. In light of the statement that the State Department issued last night, is that still your position -- is no concessions were made for this release?

MR. SPEAKES: No concessions -- we made no deals.

Barry?

Q Was the President in touch with the Israelis today or last night at all?

MR. SPEAKES: Not to my knowledge, no.

Q What about McFarlane and Shultz?

MR. SPEAKES: Not to my knowledge in either case. Secretary Shultz will be here and you can ask him, but I'm not aware of any. We've had ongoing contacts with them, but -- and I guess I really shouldn't rule out as to whether there were perhaps the Ambassador there talking and so forth, but I'm not aware of any specific contacts.

Q You say, "No concessions, no deals." What about guarantees?

MR. SPEAKES: No guarantees. No concessions, no deals, no guarantees.

Q Understandings?

Q Larry?

Q No understandings?

Q Take the oath Bush took.

MR. SPEAKES: Candy?

Q I just wanted to check on something you said yesterday. Do you still consider the freedom line for these people to be beyond Syrian air space?

MR. SPEAKES: Well, they have been under Syrian control and Red Cross since they left Beirut.

Q I understand, but I -- because yesterday you were asked when will they be free -- and you said, "Once they're on that plane and out of Syria."

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

Q I wonder if that's still the case.

MR. SPEAKES: Yes.

Nelson?

Q Larry -- did you give a hard estimate as to when they will get to Damascus? I assume what you said is they're past the border --

MR. SPEAKES: Past the border nearly an hour ago now, so it could be very shortly.

Q They're there.

MR. SPEAKES: There now.

Q Larry --

Q They're in my ear. They're there.

MR. SPEAKES: Okay.

Q Given past statements --

MR. SPEAKES: I'm going to the back.

Q -- we've made about Syria, has this episode changed our view of Assad and his behavior in the region?

MR. SPEAKES: I think I'll reserve those kind of questions to Shultz, if you don't mind, because you're going to have him and it will be -- it'll be very authoritative.

Q Larry, is there any -- do you have status of the seven kidnapped Americans --

MR. SPEAKES: Pardon?

Q The status of the seven kidnapped Americans that they have?

MR. SPEAKES: Once again, I'm not dealing in numbers.

Frank.

Q Do you have anything on reports that we saw that the motorcade, the convoy was target of some sniper fire as it left Beirut and was --

MR. SPEAKES: I don't have anything on that.

Q Was the United States involved in any way in discussions regarding the security surrounding the convoy as it traveled?

MR. SPEAKES: I don't know of anything, but let's ask Secretary Shultz that.

Q Larry.

MR. SPEAKES: George.

Q I don't know if this duplicates a question up front that I couldn't hear. What role do you think the statement from the State Department played in today? Would they be free -- would they have left Lebanon had you not issued the statement last night?

MR. SPEAKES: We've got Secretary Shultz. He's been closely involved in this. I would really rather you save those type questions for Secretary Shultz.

Bob.

Q McFarlane going to be available to anybody besides the network?

MR. SPEAKES: Secretary Shultz will be here. And McFarlane does plan to do network interviews by their request. I'm not sure that there'll be time for anything else today.

Q How about a pool of print reporters?

MR. SPEAKES: We can see about that.

Q We'd appreciate that.

MR. SPEAKES: And do a transcript, as we've done before.

Leo.

Q Could you tell us, Larry, if the President approved the issuance of that State Department statement?

MR. SPEAKES: He did approve it. But let's wait and go on those things to Shultz.

Q How soon will you have the chronology?

MR. SPEAKES: Chronology will come about five o'clock, wouldn't you say?

MR. SIMS: Right after the President speaks.

MR. SPEAKES: Right after the President finishes.

Q Right after -- immediately after the President speaks.

MR. SPEAKES: Bob.

Q Do you anticipate an advance text of the President's remarks?

MR. SPEAKES: No.

Q Were you going to make transcripts of the television interviews with Bud? You have any plans to do that?

MR. SPEAKES: I think we would probably run past most deadlines if we did that, and it wouldn't be that much value.

Q The pictures that you were talking about --

Q Wait a minute.

Q -- releasing, are you going to be releasing those pictures before the evening newscasts --

MR. SPEAKES: Yes. We'll get them out here I think in just a little bit.

Q And are they pictures of Presidential activity? Is that what we're going to be seeing?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes, various meetings and so forth. Oval Office briefings, those kind of things.

Q Bathrobe?

MR. SPEAKES: In bathrobes. (Laughter.)

Q Could we get the chronology about five?

MR. SPEAKES: Sweatpants --

Q Will we get the --

MR. SPEAKES: Andrea, sweatpants. (Laughter.)

Q -- we get the chronology around five?

MR. SPEAKES: Yes. Chronology around five, or after the President.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END

2:19 P.M. EDT

#1476-06/30

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

June 30, 1985

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

The Roosevelt Room

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Q Did the terrorists win?

MR. MCFARLANE: No, not at all.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Q Robert McFarlane, thank you and congratulations.

MR. MCFARLANE: Thank you.

END

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

June 30, 1985

INTERVIEW OF
NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR ROBERT C. MCFARLANE
BY CNN

The Roosevelt Room

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

Mr. McFarlane, thank you for being with us.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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help, and has, we welcome that.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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directions.

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

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

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

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

Q But what is effective in Lebanon these days?

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

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

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

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

END

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

June 30, 1985

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

The Roosevelt Room

Q Good evening to you, sir.

MR. MCFARLANE: How are you.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

END

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

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 -- 032

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 the countries that might be helpful, supportive, complimentary? International organizations, if any. That kind of thing.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Q What phone call?

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

Q You called him?

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: Correct. That, while we'll have to see how it develops, it's essential that we not make concessions to terrorists -- and expanded in the meeting to say, we 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 -- Rich 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 -- growing international criticism of him personally and the induced effect of internal criticism, because he simply wasn't getting results, of his own people. And he began to look to third countries. And that played out over last weekend. And -- all of you are familiar, the French, Austrian, Italian, Swiss efforts on his part, imposing pre-conditions. And ultimately, two nights ago, the last gasp of that expired, when the French wouldn't accept pre-conditions. Nor would anybody else.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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.

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,

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

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

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

Q But that was the tone --

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

Q -- the meaning of what you said?

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

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

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

Excuse me -- I will be just ten seconds.

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

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

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

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

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

Q We believe they're controlled by the Hezbollah?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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.

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