

MEMORANDUM

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Ed
HK File

~~TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE~~

September 8, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger *HK*
SUBJECT: Your 4:30 Meeting on the Hijackings

At your call, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Director of Central Intelligence, the Attorney General, the Director of the FBI, and I will meet in your office at 4:30 p.m. to discuss the hijacking situation. Secretary Rogers will bring Assistant Secretary Joe Sisco to the meeting.

The latest report on the hijacking situation is as follows:

-- Embassy Amman now accounts for 137 persons from the TWA plane; of these, 37 have been released and 100 are presumably on the plane. The Embassy accounts for 136 persons on SwissAir, of which 86 have been released and 50 are presumably on the plane. These figures are not firm.

-- According to Embassy Berne, the British Government is prepared to coordinate in Berne to work through the International Red Cross (ICRC) and to release the female hijacker and the body of her companion hijacker.

-- Embassy Amman reports that the TWA plane is capable of take-off with the possible exception of the need for a battery change.

-- The deadline for expiration of the 72-hour limit set by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) for meeting its demands for release of the hijacked planes and passengers is 10:00 p.m. EDT, September 9.

-- The International Red Cross envoy who worked effectively during the Jordanian crisis last spring arrived in Amman today to contact the PFLP and the Jordanian authorities in an effort to arrange for a departure of the two planes and the passengers.

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-- Damascus Radio announced at 3:45 that the PFLP stated in Amman today that the Front has accepted the Swiss Government's decision to release the Front's three Fedayeen now in Swiss prisons. It added that the Swiss plane and its passengers will be released as soon as the three Fedayeen arrive at a place to be determined by the Front under guarantees to be agreed on with the International Red Cross. All women, children and men, other than Israeli, American, British, Swiss and West German Nations have already been released according to the spokesman. The Front will continue to detain the other passengers and provide them with all care until the governments concerned respond to the Front's ultimatum. The spokesman also said that the German passengers will continue to be detained until the West German Government reports officially through the Red Cross that it has released the Fedayeen detained in German prisons. He added that investigations of the U.S. Nationals are being conducted to determine who among them holds dual citizenship.

At a meeting held in the Secretary of State's office today at 11:00 a.m. possible actions related to the hijacking situation were held. In attendance were Secretary Rogers, Under Secretary Johnson, Assistant Secretary Sisco, Secretary Laird, Director Helms and myself. You may wish to call on Secretary Rogers at today's meeting to summarize the results of this discussion.

In addition to the specific situation surrounding the Middle East Fedayeen hijackings, an effort under the aegis of the Secretary of Transportation has been under way since February 27 to investigate sophisticated surveillance equipment which might be used to detect explosives and other materials which could be used by airplane saboteurs. The Secretary's most recent report dated July 21 suggested that it would probably be impossible to develop any system that would give 100% certainty against conceivable sabotage.