STATE

SUBJECT: PM Meir Discussion of Hostages Sept. 18

FOLLOWING EXCERPTED FROM MEMCON SECRETARY-MRS. MEIR

MEETING MORNING SEPT. 18. IT IS UNCLEARED, NOFORN AND
FYI ONLY, SUBJECT TO REVISION ON REVIEW.

1. Turning to hostage problem, Secretary said we were trying to keep our British, Swiss and German colleagues together. We did not know why they were so frenetic at times. Secretary noted that he and other Dept. officers had been recipients of middle-of-night calls from concerned diplomats. Mrs. Meir said US position had been very good,
that we had held out beautifully. Israel asked what its contribution was. She said others seemed ready to contribute people who had tried to kill Israelis. Mrs. Meir described crimes against Israelis committed by fedayeen in British, German and Swiss hands. She said Swiss were good in this affair but Germans and British were awful.

2. Sisco said previous night there had been meeting in Bern and British had put forward draft communique. We have said there would be no partial deals. Our concern is greater that others may eventually want to go own way. British would have five countries including Israel say strongly it was question of total deal and that we as a group would consider what British had put forward provided it was a total deal. Israelis were familiar with fedayeen position two Algerians and that Israelis should hand over mixed bunch including Lebanese and agree in principle to release imprisoned fedayeen/ before fedayeen would give list those they wanted. This was pig in a poke. British communique would lay down position
regarding total exchange. Sisco said he hoped Mrs. Meir would look at this proposal. Our concern was that if we could not proceed on unified basis there would be tendency toward separate deals.

3. Secretary said he wished state our position in detail. First, there would be no deal with fedayeen unless all hostages were given over. Second, we did not like idea of demand on Israel to accept in principle exchange of its passengers and would not accept this. Third, we were urging that Israel do nothing under pressure.

4. Mrs. Meir said British could not send out the girl (Lelia Khaled) without Israeli consent. Israel had treaty of extradition. It was question whether when hijacked, El Al plane was legally in British territory or Israeli territory. Sisco commented British communique would help avoid business of Israel committing itself to principle of exchange.

5. Mrs. Meir said she did not like make promises Israel
did not intend to keep. Israel would not release these people. They are in jail because they are murderers who had blown up cafeteria and done other things. Israel would not be told later by world opinion that it had agreed to free these people. Secretary said he agreed with this. Now we are trying to avoid split in five. Mrs. Meir said she was not sure about the British but she was sure that the Germans would never agree to a separate exchange for their people, which left Jews still as hostages. This would be too much and they would not do it.

6. Secretary asked if Israelis had any information on where hostages were. Rabin said GOI did not.

Mrs. Meir commented that she thought Israel agreed to the release of the ten Lebanese. Political Secretary Dinitz said GOI had announced the two Algerians would not be the stumbling block. There was uncertainty among Israelis in room that GOI actually had said...
it ready to give up ten Lebanese. Secretary suggested that Israel not say anything regarding Lebanese until it was sure of getting something in return. Secretary again emphasized getting together on some language to keep British and Germans calm.

GP-3. XXX

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