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WITHDRAWAL SHEET **Ronald Reagan Library**

Archivist: jas Collection: North, Oliver: Files

File Folder: Terrorism: Kuwaiti Hijacking (12/3/84): Situation Reports Date: 6/7/99

DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
1. Memo	to Poindexter (1p) Part. 2/27/01 F97-048 #80	8/9/85	P1 , B3
2. Report	Kuwaiti Hijacking (11p) PCv+ u 4 7	8/7/85	P1 , B3
3. Report	#18 (1p) 1/02/03 - #2	12/12/84	PL 36
4. Report	#17 (1p)	12/12/84	PL BL
5. Report	#16 (1p) - +84	12/11/84	P1
6. Report	#15 (1p) - +85	12/11/84	PI
7. Report	#14 (1p) - #86	12/10/84	P1
8. Report	#13 (1p) 1 AC+ +87	12/10/84	N B
9. Report	#12 (1p)	12/9/84	P1
10. Report	#11 (1p) PART *9	12/9/84	P1
11. Report	#10 (1p) Part #90	12/8/84	P1
12. Cable	061127Z (1p)	12/6/84	P1 →
13. Report	#9 (1p) PART. 1/00/03 P97-CAE #92	12/8/84	P1
14. Report	#8 (1p) A c + - + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + +	12/7/84	P1
15. Report	#7 (1p) - +i94	12/7/84	P1
16. Report	#6 (1p) RESTRICTION CODES	-12/6/84	P1

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)] R
P-1 National security classified information [(a)(1) of the PRA]

P-2 Relating to appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA].
P-3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA].
P-4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA].
Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or

between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA].

Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of

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Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]
F-1 National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA].
F-2 Release could disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA].

Release would violate a Federal statue [(b)(3) of the FOIA].

Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA].

Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA].

would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA].
Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions

^{[(}b)(8) of the FOIA]. F-9 Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of

WITHDRAWAL SHEET **Ronald Reagan Library**

Collection: North, Oliver: Files Archivist: jas

File Folder: Terrorism: Kuwaiti Hijacking (12/3/84): Situation Reports Date: 6/7/99

DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
17. Report	#5 (1p) / c/as F97-048 #97	12/6/84	P1-
18. Report	#4 (1p)	12/5/84	P1
19. Report	# 3 (1p)	12/5/84	P1
20. Report	R 3114/06 F97-048/1 #99 #2(1p) Hod/03 - 7100	12/4/84	P1
21. Report	#1 (1p) - +101	12/4/84	P1 →
22. Summary		12/5/84	P1 , B2, 83
	re: terrorism (14p) PART. 11/04/01 F97-048/1 #102		
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RESTRICTION CODES

- Presidential Records Act [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]
 P-1 National security classified information [(a)(1) of the PRA].
 P-2 Relating to appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA].
 P-3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA].
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- F-6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the
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 Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions
- [(b)(8) of the FOIA].
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1 Admiral Jo		ohn M. Poindexter			
2	2 Deputy Asst. to the President				
3 National Security Affairs					
4	White Hous	se			
	ACTION	DIRECT REPLY	PREPA	RE REPLY	
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JAS, 5/26/99

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FOIA (b)(1)
(b)(3)



Washington, D. C. 20505

DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

NLS 197-048 #60

By AS, NARA, Date 27/0/

9 AUG 1985

MEMORANDUM FOR:

Admiral John M. Poindexter

Deputy Assistant to the President

National Security Affairs

FROM:

SUBJECT:

Kuwaiti Airlines Hijacking: A Retrospective

1. The attached memorandum assesses the evidence concerning responsibility for the planning, execution, and subsequent management of the December 1984 hijacking of the Kuwaiti Airlines flight to Tehran. It is our judgement that while Iran was not involved in planning the actual hijacking, Iranian authorities sought to exploit the incident

3. Your comments and suggestions on this memorandum are welcome and may be addressed to the Chief.

Attachment:

Kuwaiti Airlines Hijacking: A Retrospective GIM 85-10176, SC-02404-85, 7 Aug 85

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DECLASSIFIED IN PARTA NLS F97-048 By C45, NARA, Date 707/0/

DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

7 August 1985

Kuwaiti Airlines Hijacking: A Retrospective

Summary

planning the 4-9 December 1984 Kuwaiti airliner hijacking and did not provide material support to the hijackers while the plane was on the ground in Tehran. Nevertheless, Iran's ambivalent handling of the incident on the ground indicated its sympathy for the hijackers and their goals.

rinally, among Iran's conditions for the return of the aircraft is its demand that Kuwait fulfill the hijackers' principal demand—that is, the release from prison of the Iranian—backed terrorists responsible for the December 1983 bombings of US, French, and Kuwaiti installations in Kuwait. In addition, although Iran claimed at first that it would try the hijackers for murder, perhaps only two of the four hijackers are still in Iranian custody awaiting trial on hijacking charges.

a little—known Iranian law may guarantee amnesty and asylum to the hijackers in Iran.

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The Terrorists and Their Weapons

as Lebanese.

The hijackers were four Arabic-speaking males in their early twenties. the hijackers boarded the aircraft in Dubai after traveling from Beirut, Lebanon. the four were radical Lebanese Shias inspired by Iran's Islamic fundamentalism.

- -- Native Arabic-speakers among the crew and passengers aboard the aircraft identified the terrorists' accents
- -- The hijackers' principal demand was that Kuwait release the prisoners convicted for the December 1983 bombings of the US and French embassies. The prisoners are members of the Iranian-backed Dawa Party, and three of them are from Lebanon.

The hostages said the terrorists had as many as four handguns and one or two fragmentation-type grenades. Two of the handguns were small caliber (.22 or .25) automatic pistols, one was a .38 caliber revolver taken from the aircraft security guard, and the fourth may have been a .45 caliber handgun. Although the terrorists threatened to blow up the aircraft, there is no evidence that they had any explosives other than the grenades. Most of the hostages, including the flight crew, believe that the devices the terrorists claimed were explosives were not genuine.

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The passengers said the hijackers identified themselves only as Abu Hassan (leader), Sameh, Khalid, and Abu Sharkah.

Whether or not the hijackers were assisted by outside accomplices remains unclear. The hostages said the hijackers did not receive additional weapons or other equipment while the plane was on the ground in Tehran. If true, the hijackers' weapons and equipment were either brought on board by them or by accomplices before reaching Tehran or else were acquired from passengers. passengers said security at Dubai and Most of the Kuwait airports was lax, making it easy for determined terrorists to bring weapons onto the aircraft. The security quard on board the aircraft searched the passengers only cursorily before they boarded the aircraft in Dubai. The handcuffs used on one American hostage were taken from the aircraft guard and the rope used to bind the hostages _____came from the baggage of a Pakistani passenger. The pilot said the hand-held radio used by the hijackers was forcibly taken from an Iranian official while he was delivering food to the aircraft.

Dubai, one of the terrorists insisted on using one particular restroom, suggesting that the weapons may have been hidden there.

The Case against Iranian Involvement

Iran appears to have been surprised by the incident:

According to the released passengers, the terrorists do not appear to have received any weapons or other equipment after the plane landed in Tehran.

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-- The hostages say there was no indication of a close rapport between the terrorists and Iranian personnel in contact with them. They did not see any messages being passed.

Tehran also apparently followed some standard counterterrorist procedures in handling the crisis

The Possibility of Iranian Complicity

We cannot rule out the possibility that elements of the Iranian Government knew about the hijacking beforehand or were involved with the hijackers during the ordeal. Representatives of several ministries, particularly the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps and the Foreign Ministry, support various terrorist groups and sometimes plan terrorist operations, often without the knowledge of other elements of the Iranian Government.

Iranian officials, particulaly those in Lebanon, could have helped plan the Kuwaiti airliner hijacking

The hostages acknowledge they could not observe all of the hijackers' activities. The hijackers may have received support or encouragement from the radical Iranian officials initially in charge at the airport which the hostages were unable to detect.

Tehran's inconsistent handling of the hijacking may also have been, in part, the result of disagreements among elements or officials within the Iranian Government. Hardliners-particularly from the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, and possibly

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from the Foreign Ministry and Interior Ministry as well--probably supported the hijackers' objectives and argued that Tehran should cooperate with them as much as feasible. As it became apparent that Kuwait would not comply with the hijackers' demands, the more pragmatic elements evidently prevailed, probably because of international pressure.

Iran's Sympathies

Whether or not Tehran actively assisted the hijackers, Iran clearly was sympathetic to them and their goals. This sympathy produced Iranian behavior that complicated a prompt resolution of the incident:



Iran refused to allow Kuwaiti officials to contact the released hostages, thereby denying them the conditions on the plane.

These Iranian actions helped prevent the Kuwaiti negotiators from pursuing a coherent strategy in their talks with the hijackers.

Tehran became seriously interested in ending the incident only after the hijackers killed William Stanford and claimed to have killed two Kuwaiti officials. After receiving pleas from Syria, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and other countries to end the incident, Tehran condemned Charles Hegna's death.

The circumstances surrounding the rescue operation on 9 December, however, are very suspicious, and we do not believe the rescue operation was a genuine assault. We suspect, instead, that Iranian officials made a prior arrangement with the

hijackers to stage the assault.

- -- Iranian security forces were firing their weapons as they stormed the aircraft, but no hostages or hijackers were killed or wounded. The principal objective of counterterrorist forces conducting such operations is to disable the terrorists.
- -- The hostages say the hijackers' conduct and attitude on the last day suggested that they knew some sort of conclusion to the incident was at hand.

The Aftermath

Tehran might try to mitigate the adverse effects the incident had on its image by appearing to deal harshly with hijackers:

- -- Tehran claimed it will try the hijackers for murder--a crime punishable by death in Iran.
- -- Tehran moderated its conditions for extraditing the hijackers. Initially, Iran said it would extradite the four terrorists only in exchange for Iranian opposition leader Rajavi, resident in France. Iran's chief justice later said Tehran is interested in reciprocal extradition agreements and would consider extraditing the four terrorists if other countries extradited the hijackers of Iranian aircraft.



Nevertheless, since December, Iran has obstructed Kuwaiti efforts to retrieve the hijacked aircraft and it appears that Tehran has no intention of releasing the aircraft to Kuwait. For several weeks, Iran would not allow a team of Kuwaiti technicians to come to Mehrabad airport to inspect the aircraft. Then,

Iranian officials told Kuwaiti negotiators that Tehran would not release the aircraft unless Kuwait releases the Dawa prisoners and arranges the return of two Iranian aircraft hijacked to Iraq. The setting of such extraordinary preconditions is further

evidence of Iran's sympathy for the hijackers' goals.

Despite Iran's public statements that it will eventually try
the terrorists,

perhaps
only two of the four hijackers are still in Iranian custody
awaiting trial on hijacking charges.

will be convicted and sentenced to two years of house arrest.

The hijackers almost certainly will not be incarcerated in a criminal prison, nor are they likely to be tried for the murder of the two American diplomats. In fact, there is an obscure Iranian law that automatically provides amnesty and asylum in Iran for any Muslim who kills a non-Muslim.

APPENDIX:

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS DURING KUWAITI AIRCRAFT HIJACKING (Note: All times are approximate Tehran local times)

4 December	
0235	Kuwaiti Airlines flight 221 from Dubai to Karachi hijacked and forced to fly to Mehrabad Airport, Tehran. Total of approximately 166 people aboard: 151 passengers (including three USAID employees and a US businessman), 11 crew, and four hijackers.
	Soon after the plane landed, USAID employee Charles Hegna was shot and killed. Hijackers demanded that the plane be refueled and food be brought on board.
0930	Hijackers announced that their "first and last demand" is for the release of the Dawa prisoners in Kuwait.
1110	
1740	Hijackers released 19 passengers after aircraft is refueled.
5 December	
0630	Injured aircraft guard released.
morning	Two Kuwaiti passengers broadcast appeals over radio; lead hijacker cut one with axe from aircraft. Terrorists then pretended to kill two Kuwaitis.
2030	Doctor allowed on board aircraft to treat Kuwaiti passenger suffering from heart problem. Two other passengers also reportedly suffering heart ailments, and hijackers offered to exchange them for Kuwaiti Charge in Tehran.

6 December

0230

Kuwaiti negotiating team, headed by Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, arrived in Tehran.

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	Before 0740	Mr. William Stanford, USAID, killed on the platform of the aircraft after broadcasting appeal on radio and told to give a countdown to his execution. The hijacker calling himself Abu Hassan was invovled in Stanford's killing.
	0740	Hijackers claim to have killed two passengers Stanford and a Kuwaiti. Pakistani passenger escapes from the aircraft.
	0740	Hijackers first contacted Kuwaiti negotiating team. Discussions lasted only 10 minutes. Hijackers threatened to kill the remaining US citizens if the Kuwaiti prisoners are not released.
	0915	Photographer allowed to approach door of aircraft and take pictures of bodies of Kuwaiti passengers allegedly killed earlier in the day.
	Before 1045	Hijackers demanded a new crew be supplied for the aircraft.
	Before 1444	Kuwaiti flight engineer suffering from heart ailment released by hijackers.
	afternoon	First beatings of the two remaining American hostages by the hijacker calling himself Khalid.
٠.	1654	
	1840	Four more passengers released from aircraft.
	Later .	Twenty more passengers, all Pakistanis, released.
	7 December	
	0000	Time set by hijackers for Kuwait to meet demands or plane would be blown up. First actual deadline set by hijackers. Allowed to pass.
	0700	Revised deadline, but this one passed unmarked too.

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1906	Hijackers' first statement broadcast on Iran radio. Statement condemned Kuwait, justified killing of Hegna and Stanford as CIA agents. Claimed killing of two other unspecified persons; said next to be killed would be presumably USAID employee Kapar (although name and title garbled) and three named Kuwaiti diplomats.
2300	Eight more passengers released (6 Pakistanis and 2 Iranians described as students.) Released passengers said only two Americans had been killed.
8 December	
1130	Sixteen more persons released (nationalities not specified).
sometime	Second beatings of the American hostages by Khalid and Abu Hassan.
1407	
1730	
1800	Hijackers' second statement carried by Tehran media. Repeated above release offer and reasserted terrorists' intent toward remaining captives.
2015	23 hostagesall Pakistanisreleased.
2030, (Deadline set by "Islamic Jihad" in earlier anonymous call to Agence France Press in Beirut. Caller said killing of Kuwaiti diplomats would begin if demand not met; reiterated position that hijackers were not members of "Islamic Jihad" but enjoyed "group's" full support.
9 December	*
Morning	Kuwaiti negotiating team left Tehran; said negotiations will be handled by diplomatic personnel on scene.
1140	Hijackers declared they wanted to leave Tehran; demanded new aircraft.
1222	

	All and
1349	
1520	Hijackers broadcast "last will and testament" to control tower, rejected food, and broke communications.
1619	Ambassadors from Saudi Arabia, Syria, Pakistan, Algeria, and Bangladesh summoned to Mehrabad airport, presumably to witness Iranian rescue operation.
1635	
1710	Food delivered to aircraft.
2037	Hijackers said they would "release the innocent and kill the criminals."
2002	
2145	Seven more hostages released: six crew members and a "flight engineer."
2345	IRNA reported that Iranian security forces "stormed" the plane. Hijackers came out with their hands up, and remaining hostages walked out. According to the IRNA report, the troops had hidden close to the plane and entered when the hijackers requested a clean-up crew. Gunfire reported, but no casualties announced. The two Kuwaitis the hijackers claimed to have killed were among the nine hostages "rescued," confirming that Hegna and Stanford were the only passengers killed.

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE OPERATIONS CENTER KUWAIT AIRLINES HIJACKING WORKING GROUP SITUATION REPORT NO. 18 SITUATION AS OF 1200 EST, DECEMBER 12, 1984

The Vice-President, AID Administrator AcPherson, Under Secretary Armacost, Under Secretary Spiers, AID Inspector General Beckington, M/CTP Director Oakley, Acting Assistant Secretary Raphel, and Kuwaiti Ambassador as-Sabah were among those at Andrews AFB to pay their respects as the remains of Messrs. Hegna and Stanford arrived at 0730 EST December 12. Condolence messages | to Mrs. Hegna and Mrs. Stanford may be sent to the following addresses: (a) Hrs. Charles F. Hegna, 10 Crisswell Court, Sterling, Virginia 22170; (b) Mrs. William Stanford, c/o Mr. Lawrence G. Stanford, 6040 Richmond Highway, Apt. 611, Alexandria, Virginia 22203.

On the basis of medical examinations and consultations in Frankfurt, it has been decided to have Mesers. Kapar and Costs return to the U.S. by connercial means on December 13. Costa's destination is New York, Kapar's Washington.

The Working Group is disbanded as of 1200 EST December 12. Any further communications relating to the travel of Hesers. Kaper and Costa should be directed to AID/IG/SEC Walf R. Lindeneu (office tel. 703-235-9727; home tal. other aspects of the hijacking-should be directed to H/CTP or to NEA as appropriate.

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Working Group Director Christopher Ross

Senior Watch Officer

Cassius Johnson

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NARA, Date 1/02/3

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE OPERATIONS CENTER KUWAIT AIRLINES HIJACKING WORKING GROUP SITUATION REPORT NO. 17 SITUATION AS OF 0500 EST, DECEMBER 12, 1984

The special Air Force flight carrying the remains of Charles Hegna and William Stanford is on schedule and is expected to be on the chocks at Andrews AFB between 0730 and 0735 EST 12 December. The Vice President, AID Administrator M. Peter McPherson, Under Secretary Armaçost, Under Secretary Spiers, Acting Assistant Secretary Arnold Raphel and AID Inspector General Herbert L. Beckington will attend the ceremonial reception at 0730.

Charles Kapar and John Costa are being treated at the 97th General Hospital in Frankfurt.

Working Group Director Allen Overmyer

Senior Watch Officer

Sheldon Krebs

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE OPERATIONS CENTER KUWAIT AIRLINES HIJACKING WORKING GROUP SITUATION REPORT NO. 16 SITUATION AS OF 1700 EST, DECEMBER 11, 1984

Charles Kapar and John Costa, the two American hostages, as well as the remaining Kuwaiti hostages, arrived in Kuwait by special Kuwaiti aircraft at 1020 EST and were met by Ambassador Quainton, the Crown Prince of Kuwait, and the Foreign Minister of Kuwait. Kapar and Costa, accompanied by medical personnel, departed Kuwait at 1231 EST for Frankfurt aboard a special Air Force flight and are expected to arrive in Frankfurt about 1930 EST. Their onward itinerary will be determined in the light of their medical needs.

The remains of Charles Hegna and William Stanford arrived in Frankfurt from Tehran aboard a Lufthansa flight this morning. Positive identification has been provided by U.S. military forensic specialists. Plans are being made for a ceremonial reception at Andrews AFB at 0730 EST December 12.

Messages of appreciation have been sent to the leaders of Kuwait and are being prepared for the leaders of Pakistan, Switzerland, and Saudi Arabia. Ambassadors in other countries that provided assistance have been requested to convey USG thanks in the manner they deem appropriate.

Working Group Director Christopher Ross

Senior Watch Officer Ellen Shippy

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NLS 197-046 # 84

BY GJ NARA, DATE 1/02/03

For Your Information

State Working Group informed the Sitroom at 0720 that Embassy Islamabad has reported that the Americans are <u>not</u> on board the Pakistani aircraft and will not be released until tomorrow due to their medical condition. They will be released to the Pakistanis tomorrow and a determination will be made whether to ask the Swiss to take care of them at that time and arrange their departure.

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE OPERATIONS CENTER KUWAIT AIRLINES HIJACKING WORKING GROUP SITUATION REPORT NO. 15

SITUATION IN TEHRAN AS OF 0500 EST, DECEMBER 11, 1984

The special flight from Kuwait has departed for Tehran to pick up the two Americans, Charles Kapar and John Costa, who have been released from the medical facility in which they were being held and are at the Tehran Hilton. The flight departed Kuwait between 1030 and 1100 local time. The medevac C-141 is enroute from Frankfurt to Kuwait. Psychiatrist Robert Blum will arrive in Kuwait at 1925 local and has asked that the medevac aircraft delay its departure until his arrival.

We have received confirmation that the remains of the two murdered Americans have departed Tehran aboard Lufthansa 601. The aircraft is expected to arrive in Frankfurt at 1455 local, as scheduled.

Working Group Director Allen Overmyer

Senior Watch Officer Robert Ayling

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE OPERATIONS CENTER

KUWAIT AIRLINES HIJACKING WORKING GROUP

SITUATION REPORT NO. 14

SITUATION IN TEHRAN AS OF 1700 EST. DECEMBER 10, 1984

The remains of the two American citizens murdered by the hijackers of KU 221 are tentatively scheduled to leave Tehran aboard Lufthansa 601 on December 11, arriving 1455 (local) in Frankfurt. The remains will be identified there by military forensic specialists. After identification, the bodies are to be transported to Andrews AFB. The exact times of departure from Germany and arrival in the United States are undetermined at this time.

Based on information from the Iranians, Swiss, Pakistani, and Kuwaiti authorities expect that the two surviving American citizens will be released from Iranian medical care on December 11. The Kuwaiti Government is sending an airplane to bring the five Kuwaitis and two Americans to Kuwait. Current plans call for the Americans to be medically evacuated by military aircraft from Kuwait to Frankfurt later that

Morking Group Direc Mark Hambley

Senior Watch Officer Sheldon Krebs

For Your Information

State Department Working Group informed the Sitroom at 0700 that, according to the DCM in Islamabad, both Americans will be on board the Pakistani aircraft — which should depart Tehran within the hour.

There are no further details on the remains of the two slain Americans.

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE OPERATIONS CENTER

KUWAIT AIRLINES HIJACKING WORKING GROUP SITUATION REPORT NO. 13

SITUATION IN TEHRAN AS OF 0500 EST, DECEMBER 10, 1984

Situation in Tehran: Diplomatic sources in Tehran confirm that Iranian authorities have entered the Kuwaiti aircraft, rescued the remaining hostages, and have arrested the hijackers. The Iranians have stated they undertook the rescue effort when it appeared the terrorists were preparing to blow up the aircraft.

Status of the Passengers. The Swiss consul has visited the two Americans at an emergency medical unit set up by 'Iranian authorities at the airport.

Both are being treated by Iranian doctors, and say that their medical care and their treatment in general by Iranian authorities has been good. Indirect reports indicate the Kuwaiti hostages are in worse condition.

Diplomatic Efforts. The Swiss Embassy, on our behalf, is coordinating efforts with the Kuwaiti and Pakistani embassies to facilitate the transportation of the American citizens from Tehran. Kuwait has not yet received permission to send a special flight to pick up the hostages, and doubt that it will be possible before December 11. A special PIA flight is due to arrive in Tehran at 1340 local to pick up the Pakistanis who were released earlier, and the Pakistan government has offered to bring the Americans out at this time. The Swiss have informed us, however, that the Iranian medical team has recommended that all the hostages rescued when the aircraft was seized remain under medical observation for 24 hours, and that they not travel until December 12. We have asked the Swiss to do what they can to get the Americans aboard the PIA flight. An Air Force medevac aircraft remains on stand-by in Germany to meet the Americans once they reach safehaven.

Working Group Director
R. Bruce Ehrnman

Senior Waton Officer Robert Ayling

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE OPERATIONS CENTER KUWAIT AIRLINES HIJACKING WORKING GROUP SITUATION REPORT NO. 12 SITUATION IN TEHRAN AS OF 1700 EST, DECEMBER 9, 1984

Situation in Tehran: According to various wire services, including the Iranian News Agency and the major western services, Iranian security forces disquised as a cleaning crew stormed the Kuwaiti airliner at 2045 GMT (1545 BST). All these sources report that the operation was successful. Iranians are said to have arrested the hijackers and released all the hostages. Some wire services state that the hostages were seen descending the staircase from the aircraft. Efforts to confirm the details of the operation and the identities and condition of the hostages continue through contact with the Swiss, Kuwaiti, British and Pakistani governments.

Status of Passengers: The British Embassy in Tehran reports that the Pakistanis state that the two Americans and the Kuwaitis require medical attention and have been taken to a hospital. The aircraft's British pilot, Captain Clark, is in good condition and has moved to a hotel, according to the Pakistanis. The Kuwaiti Government has offered to fly the Americans to Kuwait along with the Kuwaitis. The offer has been accepted. A U.S. military aircraft is standing by to fly the Americans from Kuwait. The Pakistanis believe that the British and American governments should continue to avoid making statements critical of Iran until their nationals have left Iran.

Working Group Director Christopher Ross

Senior Watch Officer SKrebs

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE OPERATIONS CENTER

KUWAIT AIRLINES HIJACKING WORKING GROUP SITUATION REPORT NO. 11

SITUATION IN TEHRAN AS OF 0500 EST, DECEMBER 9, 1984

Situation in Tehran: Hijackers continue to control the Kuwaiti airliner at Mehrabad Airport. The Iranian press agency reports that they have made a fresh request to take the aircraft away from Tehran, and have not been given a reply by airport officials. The plane's present airworthiness is not clear, and Kuwait has refused a hijacker request for a substitute aircraft. The GOK has told us it has withdrawn its negotiating delegation under Al Ayoub from Tehran

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Although all 127 Pakistani passengers have been released, the Pakistani Ambassador remains active. He sent the USG, through the British, a caution that the day of December 9, in Tehran would be "crucial". He urged that no USG statement be made during this time concerning "complicity" or otherwise critical of Iran.

Status of Passengers: The Swiss Embassy in Tehran reports that an Iranian doctor visited the aircraft. He reported that the Kuwaiti hostages were in bad condition, but that the two Amcits (Kapar mentioned by name) were in better shape. Biographic data on Kapar and U.S. businessman Costa, making the point of their innocent backgrounds, have been forwarded to the Swiss for transmission to the Iranian government and possible relay to the hijackers.

Diplomatic Efforts: Kuwait has instructed its Permrep in New York to rebut a reported Iranian statement to the UNSYG that the situation is progressing satisfactorily since passengers are being released. Kuwait believes that pressure on the remaining "real" hostages (Kuwaitis, Americans and crew) is only increasing with the release of others. Iranian Foreign Minister Velayati has returned to Tehran.

Working Group Director

Senior Watch Officer Bruce Strathearn

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
OPERATIONS CENTER
KUWAIT AIRLINES HIJACKING WORKING GROUP
SITUATION REPORT NO. 10

SITUATION IN TEHRAN AS OF 1700 EST, DECEMBER 8, 1984

Situation in Tehran: The hijacked Kuwaiti airliner remains on the ground at Meherabad Airport. The Kuwait MFA understands that the aircraft is unable to fly, possibly due to smashed windows. The Swiss have delivered a note formally requesting the Iranian Government to release the bodies of the two American cititzens killed. Once released, the bodies will be flown to Frankfurt for positive identification. Their families have been notified of our tentative identification of the remains.

Status of Passengers: Based on Iranian news accounts and reports reaching our Embassy in Kuwait there appears to be only thirteen or fourteen hostages remaining on board the airplane. The Kuwaitis believe that besides the two US citizens, one of whom is a US AID employee; and the four Kuwaiti diplomats there are six cabin and two British flight crew still aboard. The Kuwaitis now believe that two Kuwaiti hostages previously thought executed may still be alive. There are also unconfirmed reports that the Kuwaiti co-pilot may have been released. According to Iranian news agencies, the hijackers have said they will hold trials of the remaining hostages and execute them before destroying themselves and the airplane.

Diplomatic Efforts: Embassies Damascus, Riyadh and Muscat, Manama and Islamabad report results of our demarches, all condemning the hijacking. The Iranian Government has reportedly told Kuwait that it has done all it could to release the hostages. The Kuwaitis

have told the

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chosen by Iran in pursuing its absolute responsibility to find resolution to the hijacking, but that they still seek a peaceful release of the hostages.

Working Group Director
Gordon Brown

Senior March Officer Robert Ayling Sitroom note: State just informed us that, according to Kuwaiti officials, there are only 6 passengers left on board the aircraft -- 2 Americans and 4 Kuwaitis -- plus the 2 crew members. State expects this may mean the beginning of the kangaroo court.

1330 EST

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SITUATION ROOM LOG FOR DECEMBER 05/06, 1984

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DAY: 05 TIME: 1330 GORDON BROWN. STATE HIJACKING WORKING GROUP, ADVISED IS MOUNTING THAT INDIVIDUAL KILLED AND THROWN FROM PLANE IN WAS AN AMERICAN CITIZEN. BASED ON EYE WITNESS ACCOUNTS, AMERICANS WERE APPARENTLY GATHERED IN FRONT OF THE PLANE AND ONE HOWEVER, THE PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE BODY (WHICH WAS DISFIGURED AND SHOT IN HEAD) AND CLOTHING DOES NOT MATCH THE DESCRIPTION OF THE THREE USAID OFFICIALS. STATE DEPT IS AT THIS TIME UNABLE TO GIVE AN ACCURATE ACCOUNT OF THE NUMBER OF U.S. ABOARD THE PLANE AT THE TIME OF HIJACKING. NORTH ADVISED.

DAY: Ø5 TIME: 1435 STATE DEPARTMENT HAS INFORMED THE SITRM THAT A BRITISH STEWARDESS WHO WAS ABOARD THE HIJACKED AIRCRAFT DESCRIBED TO BRITISH OFFICIALS AN EXECUTION STYLE KILLING. ALTHOUGH SHE DID NOT WITNESS THE MURDER. THE DESCRIPTION OF THE PERSON KILLED FITS THAT OF USAID OFFICIAL HEGNA. THE STEWARDESS ALSO SAID A KUWAITI SECURITY GUARD WAS SHOT AND EVACUATED FROM THE PLANE THIS MORNING. HE IS STILL ALIVE, ALTHOUGH SERIOUSLY WOUNDED. STATE HAS REQUESTED DEMARCHES IN KARACHI AND KUWAIT TO OBTAIN FURTHER INFORMATION FROM ANY PASSENGERS WHO WERE INVOLVED BUT RELEASED FROM THE AIRCRAFT.

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OPERATIONS CENTER
KUWAIT AIRLINES HIJACKING WORKING GROUP SITUATION REPORT NO. 9

SITUATION IN TEHRAN AS OF DSOD EST, DECEMBER 8, 1984

<u>Situation in Tehran:</u> The hijacked Kuwaiti airliner remains on the ground at Meherabad Airport for the fifth day. Agence France Presse (AFP) claims that the hijackers opened fire inside the aircraft in the early hours of December &, smashing windows in the flight deck and portholes in the fuselage. Diplomatic sources in Tehran have not been able to confirm this report.

Status of Passengers: : AFP reports that 49 people are being held hostage on the aircraft. We estimate that the number may range from 55 to LS. We do not know how many of these may have been injured in the shooting incident reported above. The Kuwaitis told our Embassy that they believe five Kuwaiti nationals remain on board the aircraft -- three diplomats, the co-pilot, and a businessman. The co-pilot is, reported to have suffered a nervous breakdown of some sort, while the businessman may have suffered a heart attack. There is no word about the status of the two Americans still on board.

Diplomatic Efforts: After a breakdown in contacts on December 7. the Kuwaiti delegation in Tehran is once again in communication with Iranian Government officials. However, the Kuwaiti MFA reports that there have been no significant developments thus far.

Working Group Director Mark G. Hambley

Senier Watch Officer Griffith

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

OPERATIONS CENTER KUWAIT AIRLINES HIJACKING WORKING GROUP

SITUATION REPORT NO. 8

SITUATION IN TEHRAN AS OF 1700 EST DECEMBER 7, 1984

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Situation in Tehran: The hijacked Kuwaiti aircraft remains on the ground at Meherabad airport for the fourth day. Eight additional passengers (six Pakistani and two Iranian) were released at approximately 1300 EST following an Iranian broadcast of a statement prepared by the One Iranian press report claimed that shots hijackers. were heard coming from the aircraft after the eight passengers were released. We have had no further confirmation of this. In their statement, the hijackers referred to U.S. and Kuwaiti "criminals" and stated that no citizen of those two countries would leave the aircraft alive. They reiterated their demand that the GOK release the prisoners from Kuwaiti jails. Kuwait informed our Embassy that the hijackers (or the GOI) had broken off communications for at least four hours during the day. The Kuwaiti MFA has informed our Embassy that the Iranians have not yet informed them of the whereabouts of any injured or dead Kuwaitis removed from the aircraft.

Diplomatic Efforts: "Kuwait expressed appreciation for the President's statement at his noon press briefing and for the statement made by Ambassador Oakley. Based on an assessment of the situation at mid-day, the White House and the Department decided not to release any further statement. Our requests to EC capitals to make demarches in Tehran have elicited expressions of strong concern for the deteriorating situation there. With the exception of FOIA(b)(i)

all indicated that they would give serious consideration to our request. It appears that the GCC countries are coordinating a demarche, and we have reports that Syria and Algeria have already urged Iran to do all it can to end the hijacking without further loss of life. Both the Swiss and the British (together with the FRG) made demarches to the GOI today, including a request by the Swiss that the bodies of the two slain passengers believed to be USAID officials be turned over to the GOS for return to the U.S. The Iranian MFA agreed verbally to make arrangements for the bodies. In addition, the MFA official stated that Iran condemns all hijackings, regretted the loss of lives, and urged the governments to

pressure the GOK to resolve the incident.

Working Group Girector

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OPERATIONS CENTER

KUWAIT AIRLINES HIJACKING WORKING GROUP SITUATION REPORT NO. 7

SITUATION AS OF 0500 EST DECEMBER 7, 1984

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Situation in Tehran: The situation on the ground in Tehran remains confused and the Department is still unable to confirm the identity of the two dead passengers presumed to be USAID employees. We have asked the Swiss embassy to claim the bodies, but it has been unable to make its demarche to Iranian officials due to the Islamic sabbath. Press reports indicate that the hijackers are offering to release some of the remaining hostages if they can make a public statement. There is no indication that they are preparing the plane for takeoff, although it remains fueled. The Kuwait MPA team remains in Teheran, but is not in direct communication with the hijackers.

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Diplomatic Efforts: The President has sent a message to the Amir of Kuwait, praising his country's steadfastness during the crisis and informing him that the Department will be making a statement today, saying that the Government of Iran is not doing all it can to resolve the crisis. We have asked Algeria, the Gulf Cooperation Council members, Pakistan and key members of the EC to make approaches to the Iranian government, urging it to redouble its efforts to end the standoff. A similiar demarche will be made at the UN.

Status of Released Passengers: Three groups of passengers have now been released. Fifty of the passengers arrived in Karachi yesterday morning and Congen Karachi interviewed 12 of them. The released passengers confirmed that the Kuwaiti and American citizens had been segregated from the rest of the passengers and that the hijackers had stressed that their quarrel was with the GOK.

Working Group Director Janet A. Sanderson Seni Watch Officer Wayne Griffith

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE OPERATIONS CENTER

AIRLINES HIJACKING WORKING GROUP SITUATION REPORT NO. 6

SITUATION IN TEHRAN AS OF 1700 EST DECEMBER 6, 1984

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The situation in Tehran is not good. Published press accounts indicate that the hijackers have now killed at least four and possibly five of the hostages and tied the remaining passengers to their seats. There are strong indications that two of the deceased are U.S. diplomats. From a variety of reports, we believe that two others may have been Kuwaiti diplomats also aboard the aircraft. identification process has been hampered by Iranian unwillingness to permit Swiss and other diplomats access to the airport. The Department has instructed Embassy Bern to ask Swiss representatives in Tehran to claim the bodies of the two persons presumed to be U.S. citizens. We are asking that the remains be flown to Frankfurt for positive identification.

We now believe that as many as 96 passengers, mostly women and children, have been released. Earlier today, one flight of the released passengers landed in Karachi. Congen Karachi personnel have debriefed a number of them, including two American citizens. A second flight containing about eight other passengers has departed Tehran for Kuwait. Embassy Kuwait has been instructed to seek interviews with them even though none is an American A third group of thirty has reportedly left the airport and should depart Iran later.

The Kuwaiti MPA hijacking task force has informed our embassy that no negotiations are underway with the hijackers at this time despite the presence of Kuwaiti negotiators in Tehran. The Kuwaiti Government has thus far refused to negotiate until all the remaining hostages have been released. .

The U.S. Government is considering other public and diplomatic measures to put pressure on the Iranian Government to take the steps needed to ensure the safe release of all the hostages aboard the aircraft.

Working Group Director mark Hambley

Cassius Johnson

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
OPERATIONS CENTER

KUWAIT AIRLINES HIJACKING WORKING GROUP SITUATION REPORT NO. 6

SITUATION IN TEHRAN AS OF 1700 EST DECEMBER 6, 1984

The situation in Tehran is not good. Published press accounts indicate that the hijackers have now killed at least four and possibly five of the hostages and tied the remaining passengers to their seats. There are strong indications that two of the deceased are U.S. diplomats. From a variety of reports, we believe that two others may have been Kuwaiti diplomats also aboard the aircraft. The identification process has been hampered by Iranian unwillingness to permit Swiss and other diplomats access to the airport. The Department has instructed Embassy Bern to ask Swiss representatives in Tehran to claim the bodies of the two persons presumed to be U.S. citizens. We are asking that the remains be flown to Frankfurt for positive identification.

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Working Group Director

Senior Watch Officer Cassius Johnson

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE OPERATIONS CENTER

KUWAIT AIRLINES EIJACKING WORKING GROUP SITUATION REPORT NO. 5 DECEMBER 6, 1984 0500 EST

The situation in Tehran has deteriorated. A new outbreak of shooting occurred shortly after midnight EST (approximately 10:30 Tehran time). Two more passengers have been killed, apparently executed. One is reported by several sources to be Kuwaiti, the second is variously reported to be a Kuwaiti or an American. The bodies were photographed by the press corps. A third passenger, a Pakistani, was reported to have been wounded during a successful escape attempt.

We have no information as to the status of negotiations between the hijackers, Iranian authorities, or the Kuwaiti negotiating team which is on the scene. The hijackers are once again indicating that they want to leave Tehran on the plane, and press releases indicate the barriers previously placed on . the runway have been removed. The Kuwaitis, however, are insisting to the Iranians that the situation be concluded in Tehran. The Kuwaiti plane, which is in Tehran to carry out the released passengers, has not been cleared to leave and to the best of our knowledge the released passengers are still at the hotel.

The Kuwaitis have asked us, through Ambassador Quainton, to obtain helpful intercessions from other interested governments. We have contacted Embassies Bonn and London to see if the host governments would intercede with the Iranians: both are considering doing so. (The Germans had also been contacted directly by the Kuwaitis.)

Working Group Director

GORDON BROWN

ELLEN SHIPPY

DECL: OADR DEPARTMENT OF STATE OPERATIONS CENTER

KUWAIT AIRLINES HIJACKING WORKING GROUP SITUATION REPORT NO. SITUATION IN TEHRAN AS OF 1700 EST

DECEMBER 5, 1984

Negotiating Situation: The Kuwaiti negotiating team has departed Kuwait a**nd should arrive in Tehran within the**

next few hours.

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The hijackers in the meantime have reportedly insisted that they meet with the Kuwaiti Prime Hinister (the team is composed of lower-ranking officials), and have threatened to blow up the plane. There have also been unconfirmed reports during the day that the hijackers wished to take off for an undisclosed destination, but the Kuwaitis have insisted to the Iranians that the situation be concluded in Tehran.

The Situation in Tehran: The 66 passengers who have been released (apparently including two American citizens and a US permanent resident alien) remain in the Hilton and may be taken out by the Airbus on which the Kuwaiti negotiating team will arrive. The Kuwaitis have not committed, themselves yet, however, to taking the released passengers on to Karachi; saying, that would be "one option". We have alerted Karachi, Kuwait, and other posts to debrigs the passengers if possible. The released passengers have told the press in Tehran that the American and British passengers were singled out for particular abuse by the hijackers, and that the fatality came about through an apparently deliberate execution, possibly designed to terrorise and cow the passengers. (The wounded passenger -- a Kuwaiti security guard -- was also conspicuously brutalized. He has since been released and is in the hospital.) We continue to receive conflicting evidence, but it increasingly points to the possibility that the executed passenger may have been one of the AID officials. Senior AID officials have spoken personally to the family to inform them of events. To the best of our knowledge, the AID officials and one other US citizen (a businessman) remain on board. CA remains in frequent contact with the family of the one private American citizen identified aboard.

Working Group Director

Senior Watch Officer Cassius Johnson

Gordon Brown

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Kuwait Atilines Working Group Mark G. Hambley

SITREP NUMBER 3: Situation as of 0500 EST,

KUWAIT AIRLINES HIJACKING WORKING GROUP:

December 5, 1984

Situation at Mehrabad Airport: Reuters reported at 0450 that the hijacked aircraft had departed Tehran airport for an unknown destination. This has not been confirmed, and other reports suggest that the aircraft remains on the ground in Tehran.

Status of Passengers: Forty-one women and children were released inharmed in Tehran. All are being held at the former Tehran Hitton. The Iranian MFA has arranged access to the released passengers by foreign missions, including the Swiss. The latter confirm that two Pakistani-Americans are among those released. Next-of-kin were notified. It is not yet known if WORKING GROUP other Amchts were released. Some released passengers report that the gemaining Americans on board (number still unknown) were isolated and subjected to verbal and -- in some cases, physical w- abuse. This has not been confirmed.

> Injuries: The one fatality reported earkier is apparently a Western European or North American. There continue to be persistent reports that he was "an American diplomat". From ---- his description, he does not appear to be one of the three AID officials on the plane, although his identity has not been established. There are still no additional details about a second pagsenger/security guard who was apparently shot by the hijackers,

Diplomatic Moves: Kuwait told our Embassy it is sending a three-man team to Iran which is expected to arrive around 0730 EST today, The GOK had asked the USG not to speculate on the proposals this team may be carrying. The GOK purportedly told the Iranians they want this espisode to end in Iran, and Kuwaiti officials said the Iranians agreed to this request.

Ellen Shippy

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BY ______ NARA, DATE 3/4/06

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OPERATIONS CENTER

HOL & KUWAIT AIRLINES HIJACKING WORKING GROUP

SITUATION REPORT NO. 2

DECEMBER 4, 1984

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Negotiations are reportedly underway between Iranian authorities and the hijackers of Kuwait Airways Flight 221. Our information concerning the situation on the ground however remains thin, as we are relying on partial information from the Kuwaitis, Swiss, and the The hijackers are reportedly asking for release of the seventeen prisoners held in Kuwait on charges stemming from the bombing of the US embassy in Kywait last December. They have threatened to kill three Kuwaiti diplomats on board the plane if their demands The Kuwait government, which has been are not met. meeting in Council of Ministers sessions continuously during the day, has taken the position that it is the responsibility of the Iranian government to obtain the safe release of the plane and passengers; the Kuwaiti Prime Minister has sent a cable to his opposite number in Tehran appealing for a prompt release of the plane. Meanwhile, released passengers have identified the hijackers as Palestinians and credit for the hijacking has been taken publicly by the ::17::September Organization (which we find implausible), and (privately to the Kuwaitis) by the Musawi Group.

We have no reason to believe that the three USAID employees on the hijacked plane are not still alive. The one fatality so far appears not to have been one of the known US citizens, although the Iran News Agency has identified him as such. A second casualty reportedly remains on the plane in seriously wounded condition and may already be dead. We are checking into the possibility that other US citizens or nationals may be among the approximately 110 passengers still on board or among the 46 women and children passengers released and housed at the Tehran Hilton. The Kuwaitis plan to send a second plane to Tehran tomorrow to fly out the released passengers.

In order to facilitate secure communications with our embassy in Kuwait during a more active negotiating stage which may begin soon, we are airlifting one of the Department's few remaining tacsats to Kuwait immediately.

Working Group Director

Gordon Brown

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Wayne Griffith

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE OPERATIONS CENTER

KUWAIT AIRLINES HIJACKING WORKING GROUP SITUATION REPORT NO. 1

SITUATION IN TEHRAN AS OF 0500 EST DECEMBER 4, 1984

Kuwait Airlines flight 221 carrying three U.S. diplomats was hijacked to Tehran at 0300 local time (1900 EST December 3, 1984). It is believed that four hijackers, possibly of Lebanese nationality, boarded the aircraft in Dubai. Kuwait government officials have informed our embassy in Kuwait that they are in contact with the aircraft crew and hijackers, but have reported no demands by the hijackers except for refueling. Our Embassy in Bern has contacted the Swiss MPA to ask their urgent assistance as protecting power in Tehran. The Kuwaiti Prime Minister has sent an urgent message to the Prime Minister of Iran requesting his immediate intervention to secure the release of the aircraft and the safety of the passengers and crew.

The three American diplomats on board the flight are all assigned to USAID's regional inspector's office and were returning to Karachi from Sanaa. They are William L. Sanford, Charles F. Hegna, and Charles Kapar. Kuwaiti officials have indicated that one American diplomat may have been killed or injured. (The families of the American diplomats have not yet been notified.) According to a Kuwait radio broadcast a total of 150 passengers and 11 crew are on board.

NLS 797-048 4101
NARA, DATE 1/6

Working Group Director

Gordon Brown

Senior Watch Officer

Sheldon Krebs

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DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

Terrorism Summary

5 DEC 1984

DECLASSIFIED IN PART

NLS F97-648/1 # (02)

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DIA TERRORISM SUMMARY

publication product Counterterrorism is a of the Counterintelligence Division (OS-1), and has been developed to provide recipients with a limited view of significant terrorist, civil disturbances, and unconventional warfare activities which have occurred during the past several days. The information contained, for the most part, is raw reporting with only limited analysis.

DISSEMINATION CONTROL ABBREVIATIONS

NOFORN (NF) Not releasable to foreign nationals

NOCONTRACT (NC) Not releasable to contractors or

contractor/consultants

WNINTEL (WN) Warning notice - intelligence sources

and methods involved

ORCON (OC) Dissemination and extraction of

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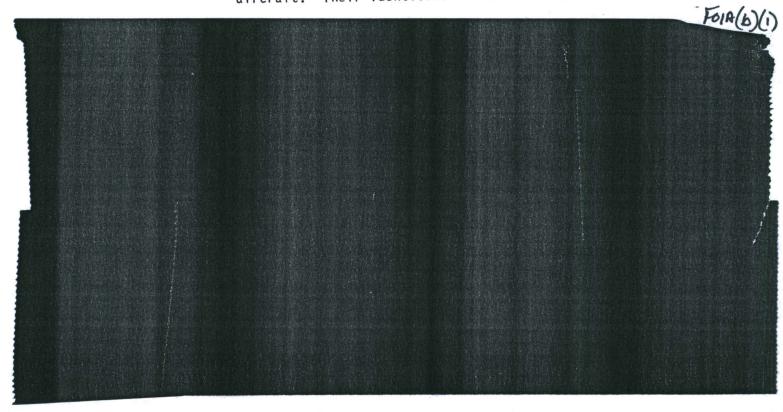
DIATS 235-84

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DIA TERRORISM SUMMARY 5 December 1984

KUWAIT/IRAN/ UNITED STATES:

(S/NE) Update on hijacked Kuwaiti airliner. One passenger was killed and another was wounded in the takeover of the aircraft. Their identities remain unconfirmed.



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DIA TERRORISM SUMMARY 5 December 1984

KUWAIT/IRAN/UNITED STATES: UPDATE ON KUWAIT AIRLINER HIJACKING (U)

(STNF) Kuwait Airlines Flight 221, hijacked on 4 December and forced to fly to Tehran, Iran, remains on the ground at Tehran's Mehrabad Airport. According to various reports, it appears that one passenger was killed and another injured in the takeover. There is still no firm confirmation as to the identity of either the victim or the person wounded. Media reports indicate the hijackers have identified the passenger killed as an American diplomat. who reportedly viewed the body of the victim after it was taken off the plane, indicated the victim appeared to be 20-25 years old and was North American or European in appearance. The hijackers, believed to number between four to six, have demanded the release of prisoners being held in Kuwait on charges stemming from the December 1983 bombing of the Embassy in Kuwait. The hijackers have threatened to kill Kuwaiti diplomats on the plane if their demands are not met. Reportedly, thus far. approximately 67 persons, 66 passengers and 1 crew member, have been released since the plane landed in Tehran, apparently in exchange for fuel and food. If accurate, there are approximately 85 persons still on board. According to unconfirmed press reports, the hijackers have asked for "flight facilities" to leave Tehran for an unknown destination.

In another development in the hijacking situation, the following claim of responsibility has been made. On 4 December, an anonymous caller to a press agency office in Beirut claimed responsibility for the hijacking on behalf of "the 17 September Organization." The caller also stated that they would "strike again" and that "the next blows will be struck inside Kuwaiti territory." The 17 September Organization (the date probably commemorates the Sabra and Shatilla massacres of Palestinians in Lebanon in 1982) was first heard from on 16 November when it claimed responsibility for an explosion at the Kuwaiti Embassy in Beirut (see DIATS 224-84). Another press report asserts that the hijackers have been indentified as Lebanese Hizballah members by the Lebanese security services.

(S/NF) Comment: Due to the conflicting reports, much uncertainty still surrounds this incident, particularly with respect to three major concerns: the identity/nationality of the persons reportedly killed and wounded; a positive confirmation of the hijackers identity and whom they represent; and, the specifics of their demands and whether they will enforce their ultimatum regarding either the release of the Kuwaiti bombers or death for the Kuwaiti diplomats on board the plane. With respect to the first point, if the reporting regarding the British observation of the victim is true and his observations are correct, it would appear that the victim is not one of the

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U.S. diplomats on board since they have all been described as being over 50 years of age. The identity of the person wounded remains unclear, but it has been reported that the wounded individual is being treated by a doctor who was apparently on the plane at the time of the hijacking. Regarding the second point, no positive identification (names, nationality) has yet been given for the hijackers. Finally, regarding the groups' identity, although the 17 September Organization claim implies possible Palestinian involvement in this event, such action by mainline Palestinian groups is unlikely, especially given the extensive support historically provided to the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) by the government of Kuwait. A more likely candidate would be one of the Iranian-supported radical Shiite groups. Iran has been at odds with Kuwait over numerous political issues, not the least of which is Kuwait's pro-Iraqi stance in relation to the Iran-Iraq war and the continued detention in Kuwait of Iranian-supported Iraqi Da'Wa Party members who participated in last December's bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Kuwait. As noted above, the resolution of the latter issue constitutes the hijackers' primary demand. It is worth noting that the last two hijackings which terminated in Iran were resolved in relatively short order, albeit without bloodshed (see DIATS - 149-84, 150-84, 151-84, 152-84, 216-84, and 217-84). The quick resolution of this incident without further bloodshed, would also appear to be in the best

Fo(A(b)(1), b) interest of Iran.

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WARNING NOTICE - INTELLIGENCE SOURCES AND METHODS INVOLVED

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