1. We have underway in the next 24-48 hours an operation aimed at the release of the Western hostages seized in Lebanon. The operation involves the movement of aircraft from Israel to Iran and requires an enroute stopover at a military or commercial airfield in order to file a flight plan for Tabriz and to refuel. Such a stopover will ease problems for overflight.

2. A total of five sorties are required for this operation. However, if we could agree to one of these occurring in the next 12 hours or so, it would allow us to show our good faith to the party involved and likely result in the release of the hostages. We could then endeavor to accomplish the other four sorties through other means. If we were unwilling to assist us further...

3. The aircraft involved is a commercial Boeing 707 cargo aircraft registry number _,_ owned by _,_. If you are agreeable, I will provide you with flight times.

4. Will you please go to work on this immediately. You can draw on any of the above in making your presentation to him. I would ask however that you impress upon him that we need absolute discretion in the matter. You can also assure him that this operation is of great interest to the highest levels of the USG and if it will help, I can arrange for Bud Macfarland to call whoever you might suggest. Needless to say, that if we cannot assist us, they can expect to receive mention in dispatches, appropriate letters of appreciation from our President, etc. Again, I must stress that discretion is the key element which you should stress to him presenting this matter. I would also ask that you keep knowledge of this operation limited to yourself within and the Ambassador need not repeat it be informed. However, if you need to bounce this proposal off the Prime Minister or someone similar who might bring it to the Ambassador's attention, I will seek special authorization for you to brief him. Best regards and why do these always happen on the weekend?

5. File: No file. Decl: DADR DRV HUM 4-82. All Secret. Orig: C/EUR (Clarridge); Auth: C/EUR (Clarridge); Rel: C/EUR (Clarridge). CL by _._._._. 

End of Message

Reviewed for Release
Date 20 Apr 1987

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