



Department of State

TELEGRAM

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ACTION SS 70

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FM USMISSION USUN NY
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8703
INFO AMEMBASSY TELAVIV
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY ROME

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~~INFO~~

TWA HIJACKING

I BROACHED TWA HIJACKING BRIEFLY WITH SYRIAN PERM
REP TOMEH IN GA CORRIDORS AND URGED SARG TAKE EARLIEST
ACTION TO RELEASE TWO ISRAELIS.

TOMEH SAID HIS GOVT IS TAKING "POSITIVE ATTITUDE"
AND URGED THAT WE CONTINUE "QUIET DIPLOMACY". HE
ARGUED THAT PUBLIC REFERENCES TO THIS AFFAIR, AS WELL
AS PLACING HIJACKING PROBLEM ON SC OR GA AGENDA WHILE
THIS AFFAIR UNRESOLVED, WOULD MAKE ITS SOLUTION MUCH
MORE DIFFICULT.

WHILE EMPHASIZING THAT HE WAS PLACING NO LINK
BETWEEN TWO CASES AND SPEAKING ONLY PERSONALLY, HE SAID
IT OBVIOUS THAT RELEASE TWO SYRIAN PILOTS, WHO HAD
STRAYED OVER ISRAEL AND BEEN HELD SO LONG, WOULD BE
HELPFUL. HE COMPARED SARG CONCERN RE PILOTS WITH US
CONCERN FOR RELEASE HELICOPTER CREW IN KOREA.

WHEN I POINTED OUT LEGITIMATE ISRAELI ANXIETY THAT
RELEASE PILOTS UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD MERELY
ENCOURAGE FURTHER HIJACKINGS, TOMEH SAID HE UNDERSTOOD
BUT THAT PILOTS MIGHT PERHAPS BE RELEASED TWO WEEKS OR
SO AFTER RELEASE OF THE ISRAELIS. HE WAS UNWILLING AND
PRESUMABLY UNAUTHORIZED TO PURSUE MATTER FURTHER.

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