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September 6, 2007

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

DATE: July 31, 1972

PARTICIPANTS: David D. Newsom
Assistant Secretary for African Affairs

Bertram W. Rein
Deputy Assistant Secretary for
Transportation and Telecommunications

George M. Lane
Algerian Desk Officer

Alec Toumayan
Interpreting Branch

Abdel Kader Bouselham
Chief, Algerian Interests Section

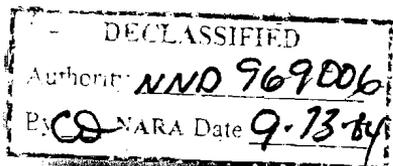
Abdel Kader Mekideche
Third Secretary, Algerian Interests Section

Mr. Newsom thanked Mr. Bouselham for coming in to talk to him about this new and extremely serious incident. He wanted to say- first of all, that USG did not wish to negotiate with Algeria on this subject. It was obvious that we had no control over the aircraft which was presently en route from Miami to Boston; it's ultimate destination presumably being Algiers. The ~~xxxxxxx~~ passengers had been let off, \$1 million ransom collected. There were threemen, two women and three children involved in the ~~xx~~ hijacking group.

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We did not intend to ask Algeria any question on what would be done if the plane landed in Algeria. We felt that if there is any responsibility anywhere it lies in the fact that Algeria did give asylum to the previous hijackers -- a fact which was widely circulated by the press -- and a statement

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was recently issued by the Panthers HQ in Algiers, and picked up by the US press, containing encouragement to carry out similar acts.

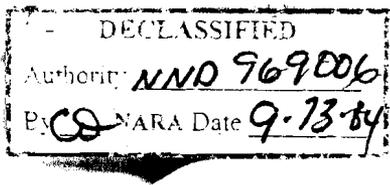
There can be no question about Algerian responsibility concerning the life of the crew and the safety of the aircraft. This is clearly a national responsibility under the terms of the Chicago convention which Algeria has signed.

Speaking now as a friend, continued Mr. Newsom, and one who has served and worked hard and long to improve relations between the US and Algeria, he could not over-emphasize the seriousness with which this second incident is viewed at the highest level of the USG nor the effect that its outcome will have on the progress of our relations.

We have to consider -- many people in this country will indeed feel this way -- that encouragements are being given to commit similar acts and that this constitutes a direct intervention into the domestic affairs of the U.S. No country is more conscious than Algeria of what intervention into one's domestic affairs means.

We were not suggesting any conditions nor directing requests at GOA but the steps that one might normally expect to be taken by any government were clear.

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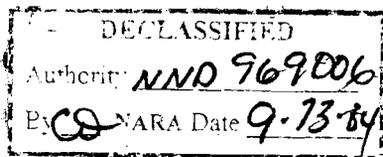
Such steps would be liberation of the plane and its crew, immediate return of the \$1 million, action against the hijackers which unlike the previous case would signify to them that they were not welcome, would not receive asylum and would be dealt with in conformity with the crime they had committed.

Mr. Newsom then repeated that he did not feel useful or proper to engage in a discussion of what steps might be taken, Algeria might be able to handle the situation while still able to meet some of its own problems. It might for instance let the hijackers off, then take them into custody and if it did not want to treat with them directly could send them on to a third country. It might allow the plane to land but only to refuel and proceed.

USG did not intend to embarrass or pressure GOA but Mr. Bousselham ~~was~~ must be aware that Algerians have created a very, very grave situation for us. In the eyes of many US officials the statement issued from Algiers constitutes an encouragement to perpetrate such acts in the future, this endangers civil aviation users and the resulting situation can only be termed intolerable.

Mr. Rein pointed out that the measures Mr. Newsom alluded to were not the result of any bilateral obligation of GOA but rather were the sort of measures that Algeria

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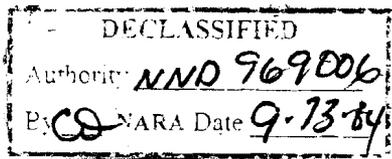


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might want to take under its Chicago convention and ICAO memberships. It was not something that was owed to USG by Algeria.

Mr. Bouselham responded that normally ~~xx~~ he would just express his thanks and hurry back to his office to transmit Mr. Newsom's comments to his government but he felt constrained to remark on some of the points made by Mr. Newsom which had come as a painful surprise to him. Mr. Newsom had said that GOA encourages hijacking. He did not think that his government encouraged these acts in one way or the other. GOA's behavior in previous cases had consistently been to participate in the saving of the lives of the crew and the aircraft involved. GOA does not intend to encourage hijacking throughout the world or interference in US domestic affairs. Mr. Newsom must surely know this being an expert and the officer responsible for relations between the US and Africa. Mr. Newsom had quoted a statement that was unknown to Mr. Bouselham, he was sure GOA was unaware of it also. It was a statement made by a irresponsible person and Algeria could not be made to assume responsibility for it. How could anyone pretend to SPEAK for GOA and pretend to make such appeals in its name. He wished to denounce this statement as a falsehood if it had been ~~xxxxxx~~ made in the name of GOA. ~~xAtx~~ He attached absolutely no value to it and rejected the responsibility of its author.

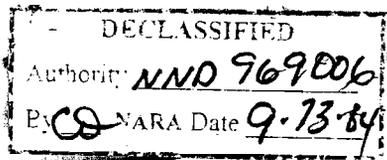


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Mr. Newsom pointed out that ~~when~~ he had suggested that GOA bore a measure of responsibility because at the time of the first incident we had stated that unless GOA took legal measures against the hijackers this would only serve to encourage future incidents. Instead ~~of~~ the Panthers had public~~ly~~ly announced two weeks ago the granting of asylum and the international Panthers HQ located in Alg~~ers~~ers in facilities supplied to them by the Algerian Party Organization had thanked GOA for the considerate and comrad~~ly~~ly attitude shown in this case and had stated that it would seek to carry out other acts of expropriation against the US.

Mr. Newsom recalled that we had raised the question of asylum granted to the Panthers HQ only once when they had an article in NYT advocating the assassination of the President. Following our dem~~ar~~ar~~ch~~ch~~e~~e GOA had then placed some restrictions upon them. Obviously the Panthers HQ is in a country which has control over what goes on on its territory. The two hijackers had been turned over to the Panthers organization and that organization's statement must obviously have had the encouragement or even clearance of GOA. It is very hard indeed to think the GOA does not bear some responsibility. Mr. Newsom invited Mr. Bousselham to consider that if a New York-based group advocating the overthrow of the GOA ~~x~~ was receiving exiles from Algeria, who at gunpoint had



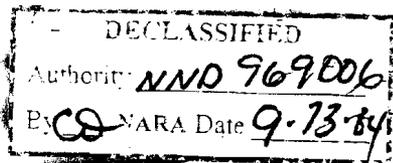
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extorted \$1 million and then proceeded from Algeria to New York then he, Mr. Bouselham, would be sitting where Mr. Newsom was sitting now making very sharp representations.

Mr. Bouselham responded that the relation between our two countries go back many years, have gone through difficult times but the difficulties have always been overcome by calm and equanimity. The recent hijacking case had been solved in this ~~period~~^{spirit} in spite of the complications brought by the world wide campaign of threats of boycott against Algeria, going as far as the Security Council. In this case again, Algeria had not asked for this airplane to be diverted towards its territory; he would check very closely into the situation and hope that it would have a normal outcome. GOA would do everything to insure the safety of the crew and aircraft. He wished to assure Mr. Newsom on this point without even awaiting instructions from his government. As for the rest, he urged Mr. Newsom to trust in the good relations and the climate existing with his country, he was sure that the same procedure based upon good will would obtain in this present case. He stressed the need to allow GOA to act in a calm atmosphere, not in a climate of artificial tempest, under pressure and threat. He expressed his thanks to Mr. Newsom and reiterated the esteem of his leaders for Mr. Newsom and all the efforts he has made which are highly appreciated. He urged Mr. Newsom not to allow his work to be placed in jeopardy

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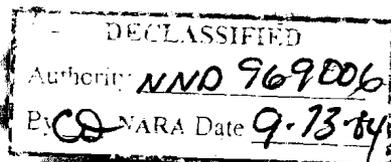
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by a situation which Algeria had not sought and which the US had not wished but of which both were the victims. He stressed that at times it is more difficult to guide one's friends than one's foes.

Mr. Newsom stressed that he understood fully Mr. Bouselham's position but we in the Department do not determine what the public reaction will be or how airline pilots will react. We did not try to stimulate such a reaction last time; we will not* this time. The problem remains with us, it grows more serious each time.

Speaking as a friend and not as a part of his official *démarche* he wanted to stress the importance of mutual confidence in the fabric of the relationship we are trying to build between our two countries. If he were to repeat to Mr. Bouselham some of the language used at the time of the previous hijacking and some of the views held now at the highest level of USG, Mr. Bouselham would be shocked.

Mr. Newsom continued that however hard we may strive to detach events for which neither of us bear any responsibility from the general state of our relations we will not succeed because in the view of many USG officials there is only one country which so far/as not fully cooperated in hijacking problems, at the time when such problems aroused world-wide concern and that country is Algeria and this per force puts Algeria in a very



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special category. It also complicates our task of maintaining confidence in Algeria and in her respects of international commitments. Mr. Newsom concluded that he would do the ~~utmost~~ utmost so that all concerned would give GOA some more time to work things out if the plane did indeed land in Algeria. It was his personal view that at some point Algeria must make a choicex between the responsible image that it wants to have, that we want Algeria to have also and the benefits it derives from sheltering exiles and permitting such exiles to encourage the perpetration of criminal acts seemingly with Algeria's support or ~~acquiescence~~ acquiescence.

