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PP0255-5-2

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

Pres Citron 1/14

OFFICE OR DIVISION PREPARING FORM:

CONTROL NO:

09-1001

C2

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DATE

Sen Muskie

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INTERAGENCY SECURITY CLASSIFICATION APPEALS PANEL,  
E.O. 13526, SECTION 5.3(b)(3)

ISCAP APPEAL NO. 2011-064, document no. 24  
DECLASSIFICATION DATE: December 19, 2013

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ACCESS RECORD AND COVER SHEET

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January 14, 1983

CHRONOLOGY OF PRESIDENTIAL INVOLVEMENT

\* January 18, 1985

NSPG meeting on the Beirut hostages. (DCI Log -- no papers yet)

\* January 19, 1985

Poindexter distributes NSDD-159 on Covert Action procedures signed by the President to the interested Cabinet members. (1/19 transmittal memo and 1/18 NSDD)

\* February 21, 1985

DCI meeting with the President and others on the Beirut hostage situation. (DCI Log -- no papers yet)

\* April, 1985

Reagan sends Peres an "urgent personal request" to help in securing the release of William Buckley -- CIA Chief of Station in Beirut." (From 1/12/87 NPR radio report based upon conversation with unnamed Israeli officials -- no independent confirmation.)

\* May 24, 1985

NSC meeting on Central America policy. (DCI log -- no papers yet)

\* June 11, 1985

DCI briefing with the President on Nicaragua. (DCI log -- no papers yet)

\* June 14, 1985

DCI meeting with the President with Alan Fiers and [ ]  
[ ] in attendance. (DCI log -- no papers yet)

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\* June 14-July 1, 1985

TWA 847 Hijacking; Iranians play role in securing release of a handful of Americans held outside Beirut. President is intimately involved in crisis handling -- 7 NSPGs and 1 Cabinet meeting during this period. (documents from NSC)

July 6, 1985

McFarlane informs the President, with Regan (and maybe Bush) of his discussion with David Kimche on political contacts in Iran. (McFarlane testimony)

July 13-15, 1985

McFarlane meets with the President (and assumed, Regan) in the hospital on at least two occasions (once with at least Secretary Shultz in the room). (McFarlane testimony)

\* At the meeting with just McFarlane and Regan, they have a 25 minute discussion in which the President asked quite a few questions." The President authorized opening a "contact from Iranians whom [McFarlane] had reason to believe had reasonably good connections with Iran." (Regan, 4)

August 4, 1985

McFarlane meets with President again to discuss the Israeli channel into Iran; McFarlane proposes an NSPG meeting on the topic (Reagan agrees). (McFarlane testimony)

August 6, 1985

Informal NSPG in the residence (President still convalescing) with Reagan, Regan, Shultz, Weinberger, Casey, McFarlane, and Poindexter (unclear on Bush) in attendance. McFarlane presents the Israeli proposal of arms to Iran to facilitate a U.S.-Iran political dialogue. (McFarlane testimony)

Attendees disagree on outcome. McFarlane initially testifies that President supports and declares an oral finding (later before the SSCI he appears to soften the line and says that the President reached this decision over a series of meetings that includes this NSPG). Shultz and Weinberger say no decision reached. Regan says the President opposed the idea of Israeli arms transfer at this meeting. (in testimony to board, B. McMahon, and reported testimony to SSCI)

In the April 4, 1986 document that lays out the contra diversion, the writer notes that "the Israeli Government, with the endorsement of the USG, transferred 508 basic TOW missiles to Iran." Another document titled "Background and

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Chronology of Special Project" that has Poindexter's initials back to Ollie North states that "the Israelis, at NSC behest, delivered 508 TOW missiles to Iran."

August 22, 1985

CIA chron suggests that McFarlane raises the issue of U.S. support for Israeli shipments to Iran to the President, the Secretaries of State and Defense, and the DCI. (Fact of meeting and/or decision is unclear)

\* "Some time after Labor Day," 1985

Regan told the board that McFarlane tells the President at the 9:30 National Security Brief (NSB) that the Israelis had sold arms to Iran. The President was upset, but not "real angry." He decided to leave it alone and knew that some day the Israelis would want us to replenish. (Regan testimony)

According to the NSC chronology prepared after the story breaks, the President learns of the Israeli shipment in late-September and "it was decided not to expose this Israeli delivery because we wanted to retain the option of exploiting the existing Israeli channel with Tehran..."

\* September 3, 1985

NSPG meeting on the situation in the Middle East (DCI Log -- no papers yet)

\* Pre-Geneva Summit

President "turned completely" toward the Summit. "The President regularly asked in morning briefings [if there was] anything new about hostages." (Regan testimony)

\* Early-November 1985

President is told in "quite some detail" about the shipment [redacted] and Israel and that "all of our hostages would come out." Informed by notes in the margins of his briefing papers for the meeting with Gorbachev. (Regan testimony)

According to Regan, the President was not asked permission for the November mission. (Regan, 14)

December 4, 1985

President announces McFarlane resignation and Poindexter ascension.

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December 7, 1985

President chairs an NSPG meeting attended by Shultz, Weinberger, John McMahon, Regan, Poindexter, Fortier, and McFarlane. Approves instructions for McFarlane that include telling Iranians "no more arms." (Oakley Testimony)

December 11, 1985

President chairs an NSPG with Regan, Bush, Weinberger, McMahon, Poindexter (Shultz is at a NATO ministerial). McFarlane recommends that the program be stopped because Ghorbanifar cannot be trusted. (McFarlane and B. McMahon)

\* According to Regan, the President's reaction was "try something else or abandon it." (Regan testimony)

December 23, 1985

Casey sends President a letter urging extreme caution in dealing with Ghorbanifar.

\* After Christmas, 1985

Poindexter tells President that the Israelis are "urging a new line with Iranians." Poindexter counsels on the need for a finding. (Regan testimony)

January 6, 1986

President signs first finding on Iran with Regan, Poindexter, and Fortier present.

January 7, 1986

President chairs an NSPG with Bush, Regan, Shultz, Weinberger, Meese, Casey and Poindexter to discuss the overall situation in Iran and prospects for strategic dialogue. Shultz and Weinberger object to arms transfers. Meese and Casey support the concept of arms transfers as a means of opening the dialogue. President makes clear that a dialogue with Iran is not possible unless it uses its influences to achieve release of hostages.

\* January 9, 1986

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President signs a new covert action finding on [redacted]  
(non-lethal and propaganda). [redacted]

January 10, 1986

NSC meeting on Central America; included in talking points (possibly for Poindexter) is an issue of the "need to resume a program of covert military assistance to the Nicaraguan resistance forces."

January 17, 1986

President signs a finding on Iran with Bush, Regan, and Fortier in attendance.

February 28, 1986

President receives a letter from Shimon Peres that urges continued efforts to achieve a strategic breakthrough with Iran, but asking consideration for the safety of recently-seized Israeli hostages and the desire to have the issue of their release raised once U.S. hostages are freed. (have letter)

April (4?), 1986

Memo prepared for Presidential approval that lays out the Iranian affair and suggests a diversion of \$12million to the FDN. No author, no recipient, no signature. (B. McMahon offers thesis that it is a North to Poindexter memo that Poindexter uses to brief the President at least on the Iran side of the equation).

May 15, 1986

President authorizes McFarlane's secret mission to Iran and the Terms of Reference for that trip.

May 16, 1986

President chairs an NSPG on aid to the contras with Bush, Shultz, Baker, Regan, Weinberger, Casey, Wickham, Poindexter, Fuller, Habib, Abrams, Ikle, Fiers, Moellering, Ball, Derejian, McDaniel, Burghardt, and North attending. Looking for funding (from other countries and private individuals) to bridge the gap forced by Congress.

\* May 21, 1986

McFarlane's upcoming trip discussed at NSB. Recommended that the White House stonewall if it leaks and deny involvement. (McDaniel Chron)



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\* May 28, 1986

At NSB, President briefed on the hostages and planning for possible [ ] rescue. (McDaniel Chron)

Late May--Early June 1986

McFarlane briefs the President, Poindexter, Bush, and Regan on his trip to Tehran at the 9:30 National Security Brief. He tells them that "if they wanted to have political meetings that is a judgment we could make, but that there ought not be any weapons transfers." McFarlane testifies that the President did not comment.

\* June 6, 1986

NSB, President briefed on Hostage Location Task Force efforts. President okays concept of a near real-time rescue plan and phony ransom scheme to cheat hostage holders. (McDaniel Chron)

\* June 9, 1986

NSB, President briefed on the status of contra aid legislation and the possibility of a private aid campaign if the legislative strategy fails. (McDaniel Chron)

\* June 20, 1986

NSB, President is told (or decides, cannot tell) that there will be no meeting with Iranians until they agree to release hostages. President briefed on [ ] hostage rescue capabilities. (McDaniel Chron)

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\* July 18, 1986

NSB, The latest communications with Iranian interlocutors is discussed with the President. (McDaniel Chron)

July 26 (?), 1986

Poindexter briefs the President over secure phone on the contents of a memo from North to Poindexter about the Jenco release (as a result of the McFarlane trip, payments, and next steps. (Have document noted by Poindexter)

\* July 28, 1986

President is briefed on Jenco release and reaffirms that the U.S. will not ask for the release of the Dawa prisoners held by Kuwait. (McDaniel Chron)

\* July 30, 1986

In NSB, President approves the immediate shipment of the remaining HAWK parts (left over from the May McFarlane trip), discusses the next steps on Iran and a plan to meet the interlocutors. (McDaniel Chron)

\* August 14, 1986

NSB, President briefed on contra funding (including private funding), Iranian assets frozen by Carter, and the hostage situation. (McDaniel Chron)

\* September 9, 1986

NSB, President briefed on new Iranian interlocutor, prospects for hostage release, and a potential rescue operation. (McDaniel Chron)

\* September 12, 1986

NSB, President briefed on new kidnappings. (McDaniel Chron)

\* September 23, 1986

NSB, President briefed on recent communications with the new interlocutor. (McDaniel Chron)

\* October 3, 1986

NSB, President reaffirms that U.S. does not want either Iran or Iraq to win and signs the Bible. (McDaniel Chron)

October 3, 1986

White House approves passing intelligence to Iran to terminate the Iran-Iraq war (NSC Chronology -- not clear who approves) U.S. passing intelligence to Iran as early as January or February 1986.

\* October 6, 1986

NSB, discuss hostages with the President. (McDaniel Chron)

\* November 6, 1986

NSB, President briefed on Iran in view of the Jacobsen release and the likelihood that others will be released; USG should be in a no comment posture. (McDaniel Chron)



\* November 7, 1986

NSB, President discusses the Iranian internal situation -- decision not to comment until they have the chance to get the hostages out. (McDaniel Chron)

\* November 12, 1986

NSB, Participants discuss Iran and decide to brief Congressional leadership; Regan urges a public statement soon. (McDaniel Chron)

\* November 14, 1986

NSB, President says that he should have gone public sooner on Iran -- decide to make a speech that night. (McDaniel Chron)

\* November 17, 1986

NSB, discuss Iranian situation. (McDaniel Chron)

\* November 18, 1986

Poindexter tells President that Admiral Crowe was not briefed. (McDaniel Chron)

\* November 21, 1984

NSB, President is told that the Iran channel is still open (McDaniel Chron)

November 24, 1986

President chairs an NSPG with Regan, Weinberger, Shultz, Casey, Poindexter (will have to check attendance) on Iran (lasts at least 2 hours); Cave briefs the group. Talking points include discussion on future steps in Iran.

\* November 26, 1986

At NSB, President states that Iran will have to make the next move. (McDaniel Chron)