

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: President Gerald R. Ford
Barbara Hutchinson
Eugene Kopp
Lt. General Brent Scowcroft, Deputy Assistant to
the President for National Security Affairs

DATE & TIME: Wednesday - October 30, 1974

PLACE: The Oval Office

[Press in]

President: Have you gotten a rest?

Hutchinson: Better as hostages!

President: How long had you been there?

Hutchinson: Since December 1972.

President: How did you happen to get caught?

[Press out]

Hutchinson: They wanted an American diplomat.

President: How did it happen?

Hutchinson: They had planned for a long while and had apparently fingered me. They wanted prisoners released. There was some confusion about where to go because the police had barred the place they first wanted to go.

President: How many were there?

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~~TOP SECRET~~ - XGDS (3)
CLASSIFIED BY: HENRY A. KISSINGER

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E.O. 12958, SEC. 3.5
NSC MEMO, 11/24/98, STATE DEPT. GUIDELINES
BY: [initials], NARA, DATE 5/1/04
State Dept. 2/10/04

Hutchinson: Seven.

President: Were they all terrorists?

Hutchinson: Yes, they all had records.

President: Was there any competition for leadership?

Hutchinson: There were three principals, but one was the charismatic leader, the second the theoretician, and the third got discouraged right away. Just a matter for us of sitting it out.

President: What happened to them?

Hutchinson: The last I heard they were in Panama in hospital gowns, well surrounded.

Kopp: Mexico, the Peruvians and Cuba had refused. We had to put pressure on Panama to take them.

President: Your actions were in the highest tradition of the Foreign Service. It took courage and also a sense of humor.

Hutchinson: It couldn't have happened under a better Ambassador. I had worked for him twice.

President: You should write a book.

Hutchinson: I have already written an article for USIA news.

Kopp: We had one kidnapped and shot in Argentina -- by coincidence I met him just before Barbara was kidnapped.

Hutchinson: I was so chagrined at all the trouble and publicity.

President: We were very proud of you. It was in the best and highest tradition of the Foreign Service.

Kopp: We have good machinery for these matters. The family all know that way.



P/Barbara Hutchinson / Eugene Kepp

30 Oct 74

Pass

P Have you gotten a vet

H Better as hostage

P How long been there

H Since Dec 72

P How did you happen to get caught
Pass out

H They wanted a US ship.

P How did it happen.

H They had planned for long while & had apparently
figured out ^{they wanted passage through} that was confusion about where
to go because a police had barred the place
they ^{it} wanted to go.

P How many were there

H 7.

P Were they all terrorists?

H Yes they all had records.

P Was there any competition for leadership?

H There were 3 principals, but one was a charismatic
leader, a 2nd a theoretician, & the 2nd got discouraged
right away. Just a matter for us of setting it
out.

P What happened to them?

H Last I heard they were in Panama in hospital
camps, well guarded.

Kepp The Cubans ^{Wang, Korman, etc} had refused - we
had to put pressure on Panama to take them

P Your actions in light traditions of F.S. It
took courage & also a sense of humor

H Couldn't have happened unless better luck
I had worked for him time.

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NSC MEMO, 11/24/98, STATE DEPT. GUIDELINES, State Dept. 2/10/04

BY 14 NARA, DATE 5/1/04



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✓ We very proud of you. It is best a typical
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