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~~rights do under terms of our aviation bilateral agreement~~ to equalize situation. Davies told Argov that on personal and official basis he urged that GOI not add to problems of carrier. TWA has done its utmost to obtain release of all passengers and is using its best judgment to accomplish this end. Davies noted to Argov that TWA believes there ~~there~~ organized campaign being organized against Company and harmful effects of any possible boycott should also be apparent. Davies hastened to point out that we not accusing GOI of organizing boycott. We merely asking that GOI refrain from taking any actions that would exacerbate situation.

3. Argov replied that TWA had made very serious mistake in initial public statement when it indicated that captain of hijacked aircraft would remain behind in Damascus to supervise repair aircraft but made no mention that his remaining behind connected in any way with ~~the~~ fate of six ~~passengers~~ Israeli passengers. Argov had contacted TWA President Wiser who recognized importance of oversight and issued corrected

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statement that included reference to Israeli passengers. Argov emphasized that it was the first report that received play in press today and has left the impression of callousness on part of company which will be hard to overcome. People are reacting to what they have heard and read. Mrs. Meir's statement [redacted] in this context should be viewed as a natural reaction to the information she had on hand.

4. Davies replied he wished to be very frank. He not aware TWA statement given to him last night which contained reference to the Israelis was not the original. In any event, the Prime Minister of Israel as well as other officials should rely not on press reports but on official information communicated by company. Point is USG and Company have serious problem and Davies would ask on both personal and official basis that GOI and its representatives do nothing to complicate further the Company's problems. He asked specifically that GOI do what it can to moderate reactions. Davies also pointed out that TWA could suffer major damage and

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~~xxx~~clearly/~~xxxxx~~ neither of us wants this.

5. Upon digesting foregoing Argov's reaction was explosive. He asked Davies if he were suggesting that the USG were preparing to retaliate against El Al for any damage that might be suffered by TWA. Davies replied that our actions would be of course guided by the provisions of our bilateral air agreement. Davies, speaking slowly in order permit Argov take notes, then said the following: "we are seriously concerned by the potential damage to our carrier which, through series of events including the Israeli Prime Minister's reaction to press statements, now looms before us. We would appreciate all actions by the government of Israel and its representatives both here and in Israel to moderate the situation. We have a mutuality of interests in protecting the commercial rights of both carriers."

6. Davies told Argov that we cannot inform him of all that is being done on the part of the Company at this time to free the Israelis but reiterated his appeal ~~on personal and official basis~~ that Israelis not rock the boat. Argov said this real problem because of initial impression ~~that~~ TWA had abandoned passengers. Davies replied that we can

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understand there have been misunderstandings but in any event the Prime Minister's statement was not helpful and we hope corrective measures can be taken. Davies emphasized that what he had said was not in spirit of recrimination but was appeal for cooperation.

7. Argov said that to extent possible he would share with our friends information on TWA's commendable ~~effor~~ efforts to help detained passengers. He noted, however, that there had been lapses (i.e. initial press reports on TWA position) ~~[illegible]~~ but he noted that TWA President Wiser had been very helpful, particularly in issuing ~~QTE~~ correction ~~[illegible]~~ QTE

8. Davies ended conversation with personal observation that Syrians may be looking for way out of this situation. We prepared a tough public statement yesterday but we tried to leave a door open to SARG and we think there [redacted] chance they will walk through it. Argov's closing remark was that he hoped Davies ~~[illegible]~~ would cool reactions within USG and said he would try do ~~[illegible]~~ same in Jerusalem.

GP-3. END

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