# August 16, 1985

#### Cable No. 6170, Ambassador Matsunaga to the Foreign Minister, 'Problem of the Release of the American Hostages'

### **Citation:**

"Cable No. 6170, Ambassador Matsunaga to the Foreign Minister, 'Problem of the Release of the American Hostages'", August 16, 1985, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, File No. 2017-0631. Translated by Stephen Mercado.

https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/270613

## Summary:

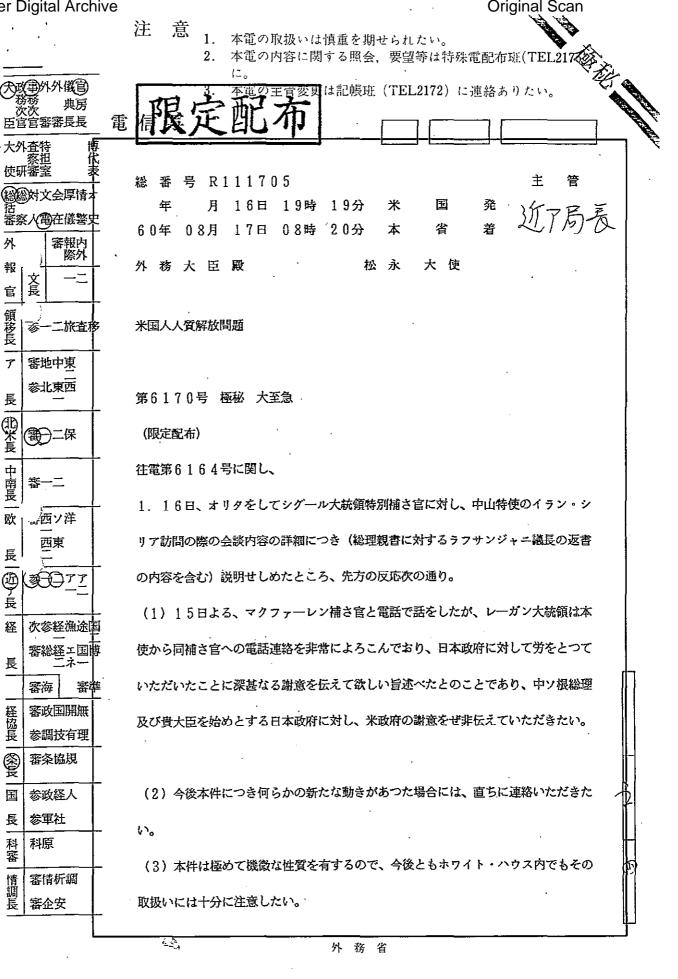
A telegram from Ambassador Matsunaga to the Foreign Minister describing President Reagan and Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs Raphel's response to briefings about Special Envoy Nakayama's visit to Iran and Syria to discuss the American hostages held in Lebanon.

# **Original Language:**

Japanese

## **Contents:**

Original Scan Translation - English Wilson Center Digital Archive



#### Wilson Center Digital Archive

1

意 1. 本電の取扱いは慎重を期せられたい。

2. 本電の内容に関する照会,要望等は特殊電配布班(TEL2175、 に。

Original Scan

3. 本電の主管変更は記帳班(TEL2172)に連絡ありたい。

電信写

ſ

注

	•
•	2.16日、オリタをして国務省レイフイエル中近東担当次官補代行(シュルツ長官
	、アマコスト次官不在、マーフイー次官補は中東出張中)に対して、同様の説明を行
	つた上、シュルツ長官への伝達方依頼したところ、先方の反応次の通り。
	(1)米政府は、7名の米国人及びその他の外国人の人質問題に強い関心を有してい
	ることは御承知の通りであるが、日本政府が労をおしまず、極めてじん速な措置をと
	られたこと、及び機微な会談内容をお知らせいただいたことに感謝する。お話の内容
	については直ちにシュルツ長官に連絡する。
	(2)ラフサンジャニ議長が中山特使に述べたことのうち、「イスラエルのレバノン
	人が解放されれば、その時はじめてシリアと共同して人質解放のための何らかの行動
	をとり得るし、影響力を行使し得るであろう。」の部分はイランが条件付きとはいえ
	自から行動をとることも示さしているように思える点できよう味深いが、他方、「ラ
	」議長の総理親書ではイランによる行動の可能性はあいまいであり、イランの真意に
	ははかりがたいところがある様に思う。
	(3)今後新たな動きがあれば直ちにお知らせいただきたい。
	(4)シュルツ長官自身、当初より本件は極めて機敵であり、取扱いにはじゆう分注
	意するよう述べているところであり、米側としても本件の取扱いには万全を期する積
	りである。
	(5)なお、イスラエルにおけるレバノン人のほりよの釈放については、これを全て
	釈放するとのイスラエルの政策には変りがないと承知する。最近 <b>100名釈放された</b>
	たため残りは250名となつている。釈放がいつ完了するのかは現段階では予測困難
	であるが、南レバノンの治安状態が改善されているため、これまでよりは若干らつ観
	,

外務省

R111705-02

Wilson Center Digital Archive

- 1. 本電の取扱いは慎重を期せられたい。 2. 本電の内容に関する照会,要望等は特殊電配布班(TEL217です) に。 - 答変更は記帳班(TEL2172)に連絡ありたい。 注 意 .

	· · ·						
	的な見方が出来るかも	知れない。	(了)				
				•			
					,		
	v						
						,	
		-					
		٠				(	
			• .	,			
. \							
			外務省		R 1	11705-	

Number: R111705 Primary: Middle Eastern and African Affairs Bureau Director-General

Sent: United States, August 16, 1985, 19:19 Received: MOFA, August 17, 1985, 08:20

To: The Foreign Minister From: Ambassador Matsunaga

Problem of the Release of the American Hostages

No. 6170 Secret Top Urgent

(Limited Distribution)

Re: Outgoing Telegram No. 6164

1. On the 16th, I had Orita brief Presidential Special Assistant Sigur regarding the details (including the substance of Majlis Speaker Rafsanjani's response to the Prime Minister's letter) of the talks of Special Envoy Nakayama on his visits to Iran and Syria. The other side's response was as follows below.

(1) I talked to Presidential Assistant McFarlane on the evening of the 15th. He asked me to tell you that President Reagan was very pleased with Ambassador Matsunaga's telephone call to Presidential Assistant McFarlane and to convey to you his profound gratitude for the efforts of the Government of Japan on our behalf. Please let me convey to you the gratitude of the United States Government to Prime Minister Nakasone, the Foreign Minister, and others in the Government of Japan.

(2) Please contact us immediately from this point onward in the event of any new developments concerning this matter.

(3) This matter is one of an extremely sensitive character, so we ask that treat it henceforth with great care, even in the White House.

2. On the 16th, I had Orita deliver a similar briefing to Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs Raphel (Secretary Shultz and Under Secretary Armacost were absent, and Assistant Secretary of State Murphy was on a trip to the Middle East) and asked that he convey it to Secretary Shultz. The other side's response was as follows below.

(1) The US Government has a strong interest in the problem of the seven Americans and the other foreign hostages, as you know. We appreciate the Government of Japan for sparing no effort, taking prompt action, and informing us of the content of sensitive talks. We will immediately inform Secretary Shultz of what you have said.

(2) Among the things that Majlis Speaker Rafsanjani told Special Envoy Nakayama, of great interest is the part where he said, "If the Lebanese in Israel are released, I believe that we would then be able for the first time to take some sort of action with Syria for the release of the hostages and exercise our influence." It seems to suggest that Iran, although with conditions attached, itself would take action. On the other hand, in Majlis Speaker Rafsanjani's letter to the Prime Minister, the possibility of action by Iran is ambiguous and Iran's real intention is hard to fathom.

(3) Please let us know immediately from this point onward of any new developments.

(4) Secretary Shultz has said from the beginning that this matter is an extremely sensitive one and asked that you treat it with great care. The United States, too, intends to handle this matter with the greatest care.

(5) In addition, concerning the release of the Lebanese prisoners in Israel, we have been informed that there is no change in Israel's policy of freeing all of them. As 100 prisoners have been freed recently, that leaves 250 of them. It is difficult at this stage to predict when their release will be completed but, as the security situation in Southern Lebanon has improved, a somewhat optimistic outlook may be possible. (End)