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Jim -

Any ~~fur~~ther action required
on this?

Trudy

No but keep
report here.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

January 5, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR:

JIM CONNOR

FROM:

STEVE McCONAHEY *SEM*

SUBJECT:

President's Meeting on
La Guardia Bombing Incident

Attached is a summary memorandum of the discussion that took place on December 30th pursuant to the President's interest in an up date on the New York La Guardia bombing incident.

Attachment

SUMMARY OF MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT
TO DISCUSS LA GUARDIA BOMBING INCIDENT
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 30, 1975

I. Attendance

The President met with the following key people to discuss the New York bombing incident:

Secretary Coleman
Federal Aviation Administrator John McLucas
Deputy Attorney General Judge Harold Tyler
Federal Bureau of Investigation Assistant
Associate Director Jim Adams
John Marsh
Philip Buchen
Richard Cheney
James Connor
Ron Nessen
Mike Duval
Steve McConahey

II. Summary of Discussion

A. The President initiated the discussion by expressing his concern over the death of innocent victims and the security of transportation and other facilities. Secretary Coleman provided a brief summary of the incident and subsequent actions by the Department of Transportation.

1. Key Facts:

- a. Incident occurred at approximately 6:00 p.m. on Monday, December 29, 1975 in the joint TWA/Delta baggage claim area at La Guardia airport.
- b. Initial estimates were 11 dead and 74 injured.
- c. No warning was given and there was no clear indication of whether the act involved an individual or an organized terrorist group.
- d. FBI and New York City police were cooperatively investigating the incident.

- e. Initial investigations indicate a plastic type device was placed in the coin operated public locker adjacent to the baggage claim area.
 - f. Subsequent to the bombing, nearly 50 other bomb threats occurred at airports and other transportation facilities.
 - g. Air Transport Association had offered \$50,000 reward for information pertaining to the identification of participants.
- B. An industry/government advisory group was established under Secretary Coleman to assess the incident and the implications for airport security. The advisory group is comprised of representatives of DOT and FAA, the FBI, and the Customs Service, as well as representatives of the Air Transport Association, Airline Pilots' Association and the Airport Operators' Council International and the American Association of Airport Executives. This advisory group will be meeting regularly to develop a set of recommendations in a report due to Secretary Coleman by January 9th.
- C. Subsequent discussion of the incident focused on several key points:
- 1. Future actions may well be determined by whether evidence indicates that the bombing represents a move from individual incidents to a broader attack on airports and other transportation facilities. Current system of security focuses on the prevention of hijacking. Additional security to cover all baggage would double the checking work load and present some problems due to technological limitations of scanning equipment.
 - 2. Secretary Coleman indicated that several changes in security procedures were being considered, e.g. relocation of locker and security devices, tighter control of locker access and new detection devices for the identification of explosives.

3. Several comments reflected the need to assess the problem of over-all transportation security. If such a bombing indicates a broader attack by organized groups, improved security at airports may focus their attention to other facilities.
4. Concern was expressed over the possible impact of excessive press coverage. Caution was urged to avoid providing incentives for other groups or individuals. Hope was expressed that this incident, along with others on the international front, will raise public and governmental sentiment toward positive action against such bombing and terrorist activity.
5. It was decided that the investigation should proceed under the assumption of it being an airport security problem and not prejudging the involvement of formal terrorist groups. Should such information clarify formal terrorist action, it would require a broader investigation.

III. Closing

The President closed the meeting by expressing his desire to be briefed on a daily basis. He also requested that Secretary Coleman report to him no later than Friday, January 2, 1976, on the progress of the task force and the investigation. It was agreed that by January 9th the advisory task force would submit its formal report to Secretary Coleman for his evaluation and subsequent recommendations to the President.

BB

EXECUTIVE

(15)

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN...

JL3
CA2
PR 9-1
FB 25
FB 25-5
FB 17

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

December 30, 1975

MEETING ON LAGUARDIA AIRPORT EXPLOSION *FB 17-5*

Tuesday, December 30, 1975
6:30 p.m. (30 minutes)
Cabinet Room

FB 6-15
FB 6-11-1/Buchen
FB 6-11-1/Cheney
FB 6-11-1/Marsh
FB 6-11-1/Duval

From: Mike Duval *Mike*

I. PURPOSE

You asked for this meeting to be briefed by Secretary Coleman, Deputy Attorney General *Harold* Tyler, and other Transportation and Justice Department officials on the LaGuardia Airport explosion.

II. BACKGROUND, PARTICIPANTS AND PRESS PLAN

A. Background

Adams, James B.

At about 6:33 p.m. last night, a bomb exploded at New York's LaGuardia Airport killing at least 11 and injuring 74.

The bomb had an estimated force of 20 to 25 sticks of dynamite and appears to have been placed in a locker in a baggage claim area used by TWA and Delta.

Mc Conahey, Steve

The FAA and FBI are assisting local officials. LaGuardia has been closed to all traffic for 24 hours but is expected to reopen at 10 p.m. tonight. In addition there have been numerous bomb threats throughout the country.

Reportedly UPI received a call from a man claiming responsibility for the Palestinian Liberation Organization. However, PLO spokesmen here and abroad have disclaimed any responsibility.

So far there are no indications of "terrorist" type activity thus FBI involvement is "informal".

JAN 1 1976
CENTRAL

B. Participants

Secretary William T. Coleman
 Administrator John L. McLucas, FAA

Deputy Attorney General Harold R. Tyler, Jr.
 (Ed Levi is out of the country)

Asst to the Director James B. Adams, FBI

Phil Buchen
 Dick Cheney
 Jack Marsh
 Mike Duval
 Steve McConahey (Domestic Council)

C. Press Plan

Meeting has been announced. Press photo after greetings are concluded and the serious meeting has begun.

III. AGENDA AND TALKING POINTS

- 1) Bill Coleman and John McLucas will brief on the situation as it has impacted airport security and interstate air commerce. See Tab A (10 minutes)
- 2) Harold Tyler and Jim Adams will brief on the investigation. (5 minutes)
- 3) Discussion and questions.
- 4) You may wish to make the following points in closing:
 - . We must avoid generating unnecessary publicity concerning this tragedy lest our response triggers additional bombings or threats.
 - . Bill Coleman and John McLucas should continue their efforts to review airport security with focus on whether "checked" baggage should be searched.
 - . Harold Tyler and Jim Adams should ensure that local New York authorities receive appropriate assistance from the FBI.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Note:

Received from Bob Linder 12/31-

however, copies of Coleman material
were attached to President's briefing
paper of 12/30 for 6:30 meeting with
Coleman et al on 12/30 on LaGuardia
bombing. Therefore this letter does
not need to go into President.

E. C.

12/31

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

12.31.75

TO: Jim Connor

For Your Information: _____

For Appropriate Handling: _____

Pres F.I. file

RDL
Robert D. Linder

THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

December 30, 1975

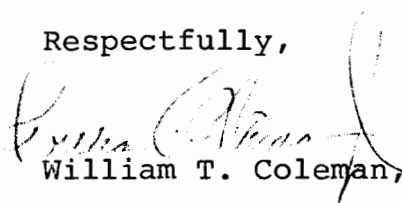
MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

RW
encl

Enclosed is the initial report of Dr. John McLucas, Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, covering the tragic bomb explosion at LaGuardia Airport on the evening of December 29, 1975. As you know, since you got involved last evening soon after the event, the FAA and Department of Transportation have been active in the investigation since 7:00 p.m. last night.

I have appointed Dr. McLucas Chairman of a joint Government-Industry task force to investigate and report to me on courses of action which can be taken immediately to prevent, if at all possible, disasters such as occurred last evening. Additionally, the task force will develop alternatives which, if implemented in the future, will increase passenger safety inside the terminal as well as in the air. This report will be submitted to me by 12:00 noon, Friday, January 9, 1976. In the meantime, the FAA, the airlines and the airports have already started increased security activity.

Respectfully,


William T. Coleman, Jr.

Enclosure

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590



OFFICE OF
THE ADMINISTRATOR

December 30, 1975

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

This report is in response to your concern over the tragic and senseless bomb blast in La Guardia Airport last night. It summarizes the events during and after the incident; reflects the results of preliminary investigations; and reports on immediate actions initiated to deter recurrence; and identifies measures under consideration for future application.

Summary of event: On December 29, 1975, at about 6:30 p.m., with no advance warning, a high intensity explosive device detonated in the baggage claim area of La Guardia Airport, New York City. Contrary to initial reports that the device was in arriving baggage, it is now most probable that it had been deposited in a coin operated public locker adjacent to the airline baggage claim area.

The explosive charge was high intensity indicating the use of plastic or other military type explosives as contrasted with dynamite and black powder. The blast caused major structural damage, and latest reports indicate 12 persons killed and 74 injured. So intense was the blast, it tore a 4x6 foot hole in the reinforced concrete ceiling above the locker area and again damaged the ceiling of the upper level. The La Guardia Airport terminal was evacuated, and airport operations were terminated. Full operations are scheduled to resume tonight.

Follow-on events: Intensive investigation is underway by both local and federal authorities. At this time there are no identified suspects, nor have claims of responsibility for the incident been validated. To aid investigation the Air Transport Association in behalf of the nation's airlines has offered a \$50,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and prosecution of those responsible.

As is usually the case in widely publicized incidents of this type, numerous bomb threats directed at airport and airline operations have been received. Nationwide, almost 50 have been reported since the La Guardia incident. A number of these threats disrupted airline and airport operations causing the evacuation of airport facilities, diversions of flights and extensive airport and aircraft search operations. All searches were conducted with negative results.

Actions taken: To marshal the participation, input and support of the full air transportation community, Secretary Coleman chaired an early morning meeting of government and aviation industry officials. The Secretary called for a full examination of the bombing with a view toward preventing future similar occurrences. He also called for an analysis of baggage and public locker operations from the standpoint of improving safeguards in public terminal areas.

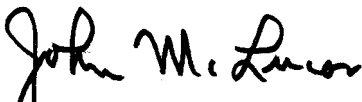
I have been designated by the Secretary to head a special effort which will include participation and consultation with representatives of government, aviation, industry and other affected private organizations.

The first meeting in furtherance of this special effort is being held at 4:00 p.m. this afternoon. Government representation includes the Office of the Secretary of Transportation, the Federal Aviation Administration, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Customs Service.

Representing the air transportation industry are officials of the Air Transport Association, the Airport Operators Council International, the American Association of Airport Executives and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.

The facts available concerning the La Guardia incident do not indicate any weakness in the existing civil aviation security procedures required of airlines and air carrier airports pursuant to current Federal Aviation Regulations. However, the Federal Aviation Administration did, last night, issue a formal alert to all airlines and airport operators. They were advised to make certain that established security requirements and procedures were being followed in all respects, with emphasis on those security measures related to baggage and air cargo operations.

Respectfully,



John L. McLucas
Administrator

THE PRESIDENT HAS BEEN SEEN

MEETING ON LAGUARDIA
AIRPORT EXPLOSION

Tuesday, December 30, 1975

6:30 P. M.

CABINET ROOM

Name	Date
Rudy Fry	1-6-76

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