MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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?
Hutchinson: They wanted an American diplomat.

[Press out]
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?
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: Have you gotten a report?
H: No.
P: How long have they been there?
H: Since Dec 77.
P: Have they happened to get caught

H: They wanted a US ship.
P: How did it happen?
H: They had planned for long using 3rd party and somehow got caught.
P: How did you come upon this information about when they were in and how we found the place they last wanted to go.
P: How many were there?
H: 7.
P: Where were they asking?
H: Yes they asked for some.
P: Was there any cooperation for helping them?
H: There were 3 groups, but one was a chemically.
P: and in the beginning, we did get some agent right away from a matter for use of chemically.
P: What happened to them?
H: They were all in hospital P: What happened to them?
H: They were all in hospital in hospital
P: How is a health of E.S. It took some time to be back to normal.
P: How about health of E.S. after some time?
I hope you have a good time in the US this summer. I'll write an article for the USH news. My brother is coming to the US for the first time in 20 years. He spent most of his time here just before he came. I'm sure you'll have a good time. I hear there's a typical tradition of F.S. Keep me informed about your trip. I'm looking forward to hearing about your travels. The family will be there when you return.