

# PLEA ON HOSTAGES IS MADE BY ROGERS

## He Urges 10 Arab Countries to Give Humanitarian Help to Bring Their Release

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WASHINGTON, Sept. 8—The United States appealed today to 10 Arab countries including the United Arab Republic and Jordan, to assist on humanitarian grounds in obtaining the release of the hostages held by Palestinian guerrillas in Jordan.

The appeal was made by Secretary of State William P. Rogers as he met with Arab diplomats at the State Department before joining President Nixon at the White House for a review of the hijacking problem.

After the 25-minute session with Mr. Rogers, Ambassador Talat al-Ghoussein of Kuwait, acting as spokesman for the Arab group, said the hijackings of foreign airliners "do not serve the cause of the Palestinian people."

"We will try to contact the guerrillas and convince them of this," he added.

It could not be ascertained whether Mr. al-Ghoussein's

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statement meant that the Governments of the United Arab Republic and Jordan were prepared to intervene with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, which carried out the hijackings Sunday, on behalf of the hostages.

Diplomats here noted the Front's declarations that the hijackings were aimed at dramatizing their opposition to peace talks between the Egyptians, Jordanians and Israelis that were set in motion at the United Nations last month after a cease-fire went into effect. The talks are in a abeyance.

The appeal to the Arab countries was made as a series of Administration meetings was held to develop United States and international policies to deal with the guerrillas' demands. The State Department spokesman, Robert J. McCloskey, said that "there is an air of urgency and concern within the United States Government."

At the end of the day, nonetheless, no clear decisions appeared to have been made either by the United States or by the Western Governments concerned, acting jointly.

### Role for the Red Cross

The other countries concerned, Switzerland, West Germany and Britain — all of which hold Arab guerrillas whose release has been demanded by the Popular Front — called on the International Committee of the Red Cross to negotiate with the front on their behalf.

Israel is not being officially represented by the red cross and, in discussions with American officials, insisted again today that the responsibility for

the lives of the passengers, including Israeli citizens, fell on the United States, Switzerland and Jordan.

The Israeli contention is that the United States and Switzerland are responsible for the passengers' aboard carriers from their jurisdictions and that Jordan's responsibility stems from the fact that two of the hijacked airliners — a Trans World Airlines Boeing 707 and a Swissair DC-8 — were taken to Jordanian territory.

Israeli officials here also stressed that while they had evident interest in efforts by the Red Cross, Israel would not be bound by any agreement reached in negotiations with the guerrillas.

Demanding that all passengers be treated equally, they urged that no deals be made that excluded Israeli citizens.

### A Demand Is Rejected

At the same time the Israeli diplomats made it clear that their Government rejected the guerrillas' reported demands that an unspecified number of Arab prisoners held in Israel be freed as a condition for the release of the hostages. The guerrillas estimate the number of prisoners at 3,000.

The position, American officials said, may result in a deadlock in the dealings with the guerrillas. Their ultimatum on a threat to blow up the two airliners and their passengers expires at 10 P.M. tomorrow, eNw York time.

Israel, already angry with the United States over what she considers its failure to act effectively to keep Egyptian missiles out of the Suez Canal truce area, showed new bitterness toward the Nixon Administration over the handling of the hijacking crisis.