



January 7, 2003, and the facts found therefrom as set forth below pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 52(a), for the reasons hereinafter set forth the Court concludes that judgment will be given for the plaintiffs.<sup>1</sup>

## I.

Reverend Benjamin Weir was born on December 20, 1923, in Salt Lake City, Utah, and received his bachelor's degree from the University of California at Berkeley in 1947. He met his wife, Carol, at a church youth group in Berkeley, and they were married in 1949. Thereafter Weir attended the Princeton Theological Seminary where he received his master's in divinity in 1950.

Ordained a Presbyterian minister, Weir became pastor of a Presbyterian Church in Oakland, California. In 1953, he volunteered for missionary work in Lebanon for the Presbyterian Church, and he and Carol moved to Nabatiyeh, a Shiite Muslim town in southern Lebanon, to begin 31 years of missionary service in that country. The Weirs were briefly posted in Tripoli, in northern Lebanon, before settling permanently in Beirut in 1961. At the time of his abduction, Weir was the leader of the Church's missionary work in both Lebanon and Syria.

When he accepted the assignment, the Weirs understood they were committing to a life-long mission to the work of the Church in Lebanon. Weir immersed himself and his family in Lebanese culture, becoming fluent in the Arabic language, and deeply involved himself in a

---

<sup>1</sup> The Court also takes judicial notice of the evidentiary record in the companion cases of Sutherland v. Islamic Republic of Iran, 151 F. Supp. 2d 27 (D.D.C. 2001); Jenco v. Islamic Republic of Iran, 154 F. Supp. 2d 27, 30 (D.D.C. 2001); Anderson v. Islamic Republic of Iran, 90 F. Supp. 2d 107 (D.D.C. 2000), and Cicippio v. Islamic Republic of Iran, 18 F. Supp. 2d 62 (D.D.C. 1998).

number of projects aimed at improving the lives of the needy, in particular, the impoverished Shiite Muslim community. Among other activities, Reverend Weir interceded for them in disputes between the warring factions in Lebanon's civil war, provided food and clothing to the victims of the internecine fighting, and helped to restore war-ravaged homes. All four of the Weirs' children were raised and educated in Lebanon.<sup>2</sup>

The Weirs remained in Beirut even as conditions grew increasingly perilous for Americans. In 1975, a civil war that was to last 15 years broke out among the many tribal and religious groups, and the turmoil was further exacerbated in 1982 when Israel invaded Lebanon. Hostility towards the Western presence in Lebanon—particularly American—increased, as the influence of radical Islamic fundamentalism spread. In 1983, suicide bombers successfully destroyed both the United States Embassy and the United States Marine barracks in Beirut, killing many Americans. Malcolm Kerr, the President of the American University of Beirut, was assassinated in January of 1984. Prior to Reverend Weir's abduction in May of that year, three other Americans had been kidnapped and held hostage in Lebanon.

On the morning of May 8, 1984, Benjamin and Carol Weir left their apartment to attend a meeting. As they were walking, a car pulled up behind the Weirs and two men got out. Weir asked "What do you want?" One man replied, "I want you," and then both seized him. Although Weir struggled and cried for help, his assailants ultimately overpowered him, forced him into their car, and sped off, leaving Carol screaming for help.

---

<sup>2</sup> The three Weir children who are parties to this lawsuit were all born in Lebanon. Susan Weir was born in Tripoli, Lebanon in 1954; John Weir was born in Beirut in 1957; and Ann Weir was also born in Beirut in 1961. The Weirs' oldest daughter, Christine, who is not a plaintiff, was born in Oakland, California in 1951.