

HOTFOOT #57 -- Ron Davis, November 23, 1981

RF: Well now, I want to start with when you joined the team. Now, they were--Paul and Phil were imprisoned on December the 28th . . .

RD: That's correct.

RF: It was January the 2nd when Simons came to Dallas.

RD: That's correct.

RF: Sometime in between those two days, either Coburn or Scully must have called you and asked you to come into the office and not told you what it was all about.

RD: That's correct. It was . . . I forget the exact date, but Pat Scully called me the first part of January, and told me that they wanted me in Dallas as soon as possible; and he could not tell me at that time what it was about.

RF: Where were you?

RD: In Columbus, Ohio. That's my home. And . . .

RF: With your parents?

RD: Yes.

RF: And wife?

RD: And my wife. Correct.

RF: And children?

RD: No children at that time. My wife had conceived. She was two months pregnant. And . . . hell, I thought I was going to get fired. I said, "What would what would Ross Perot want to see me about, I'm just a data center manager, and what have I done, you know?" And Scully said, "I can't see you now, but Ross would like to see you. It's very important. Get on the first plane out." And trying to explain it to my wife was very difficult, because she hadn't seen me in . . . seven weeks. And . . .

RF: Why was that?

RD: Cause she had evacuated early, early on. She had evacuated first of November. Her mother had a heart attack, and we got her out early. And when she wanted to come back, in the latter part of November, the situation was deteriorated to the point where they--we were not allowed anyone back in . . . in the country. And so, I think it was December 22nd when we decided . . . some of the remaining managers decided that we could go home for Christmas to be with our family and loved ones and then come back after Christmas holidays. So I got home Christmas Eve, no one was expecting me, I had never made a telephone call, and they didn't know where I was at and when I would be home. And so I walked into my mother's house and asked her for \$20 to pay for the cab, because all I had was Iranian money. And the guy, just for some reason, he wouldn't take Iranian money.

RD (CONT): So I spent Christmas and the New Year's not knowing where I was going to go, what kind of job I was going to have, and whether or not I was going to go back to Iran. And I got a call . . . well, I called Dallas, saying that King Taylor was still in Iran, and I'm on my way back, and I know some other guys that was going back and I'd like to meet them in New York. They said, "No, Ron. No one is going back to Iran. You guys are staying home." I said, "Bullshit. King Taylor's there expecting me to come back; and he's over there by himself. I know it's a zoo over there, but I told him I would be back so I'm going." So they told me that if you go back to New York, you're terminated. He said, "Furthermore, I got some further instructions that . . . that Pat Scully would like to talk to you, and he's not here right now. Stay around the house and he'll call you." So Pat Scully called, and he was very very suspicious. He said, "I don't know what you guys got going, but I'm interested in seeing because I don't know what's going on right now." So I got on the plane and I went to Dallas, and there was ice on the ground that thick. I always heard about the good weather in Dallas and everything like that. I got there and they had an ice storm. And I told the taxi driver, "I want to go to Dallas--I mean, 7171 Forest Lane." He said, "Okay." And it took us something like an hour forty-five minutes to . . . to get there, because of the weather. So I got there, I said . . . at the gate, because I didn't have corporate identification, I'd been overseas for a couple of years. I said, "I'm supposed to see Ross Perot."

RD (CONT): And I was nervous, I'd never been to Dallas before, and I didn't have any idea what was going on.

RF: You'd never met Ross before?

RD: Never met Ross before in my life. I'd talked to him on the telephone because when we were evacuating I kept in constant communication to Dallas. I kept the phone open for 24 hours; I would sleep, and anytime they wanted to come to the phone and talk, they'd scream in the phone and I would wake up in an hour. And so he said, "Ron, I know it's bad over there, and we appreciate your staying. Is there anything you want me to do?" I said, "Ross, my wife has conceived, and I haven't talked to her or seen her in seven weeks. If you could have someone to call her and tell her that I'm okay and I'll be home as soon as possible, I'd appreciate it. That's all I want." And I thought someone from EDS was going to call. He called her personally and talked to her and guaranteed that I would be okay. So . . . I had only talked to him, I never met him. So I entered into the building, and the security escorted me up to his office. And he called me in the conference room, and . . . he just delightful look me personally, like he knew me all my life. "Hi, Ron, how are you," and a strong handshake. And he took me in the conference room, and he said--closed the door, and he said, "I'm about ready to tell you something that may cost you your life. And you can say no to it or yes to it. But if you say no, please keep it to yourself, in all confidence." I said, "What is it?" He

RD (CONT): said, "You know that Paul and Bill have been taken hostage." And I said, "Mm, I knew that they were after 'em, but when I left they were still out." And he said, "I've tried everything to get 'em out, we tried to negotiate with the banks and everything like that, but it doesn't look like we're going to have a lot of success. And as a back-up plan, we'd like to get a team ready, fully trained, to go in and extract those guys if necessary." And he said, "Would you go with 'em?" I said, "It's according to who you have on the team, and what is it that you want us to do?" And told us about the _____ assignments, and I had heard about him. I knew about Jay Coburn and all the members of the team's backgrounds: Jim Sweibach, those type of people. So I said, "Well, what part would I play?" And he said, "Well, we've checked your background, we've talked to people that have positioned around with you. We understand that you understand the language. And we also understand that you had a karate club over there, and we understand that in Columbus, Ohio you were a blackbelt karate champion. And Col. Simons thinks that your type of expertise would be helpful." So I said, "Okay, fine." So he said, "But I'm not the one to determine that. After the colonel talked to you, he would determine if he wants you or not." "Okay, fine." So I didn't meet the colonel at that point, I did meet the other members of the team, and--

RF: You were on your own with Ross.

RD: That's right. In that sense. Went in a conference with another large boardroom on the seventh floor, and we sat down and talked, conversed, when all of a sudden this guy came in with ^{New} Myrtle Stauffer. He was a older gentleman with white hair, that maybe looked like a building maintenance man or something, you know? And cigar in his mouth, stuffed in his mouth. And he came up to me and he said, "You're Ron Davis." He never did open his mouth, he was just talking, biting down on the tip of that cigar. And he said that he wanted to talk with me personally and took me away from the other guys again. And it was really just like a reunion, I hadn't seen the guys in several weeks and, a week, and in some cases a couple of weeks. And so he took me off to this room, and he started talking to me real hard like I was nothing and I was a chump and karate wasn't anything compared to a pistol, and everything like that. He was just really talking really bad to me. And he said, "What have you got to say?" And I said basically I've never put myself off as a person who always wanted to fight a guy with a gun and things of that nature. I want to be a part of this team as a result of my feeling for the people and knowing their children and things like that. And I gave him some other reasons, and he said, "Well, I'll consider those reasons." And the next day, when we were supposed to--the team--after they selected the team, we were supposed to go to Airport Marina, I didn't know if I was going to be accepted or not because I had no military background. And he was the first one who came over and grabbed

RD (CONT): me and said, "Let's get in the stationwagon right here and let's talk on our way over to the Grapevine." And that's when I knew he had accepted me. We went out to Grapevine, and we sat down in Ross's lakehouse up there, and we discussed the situation: what had happened over there, and exactly where were the people being held. So we felt that they were being held on the east--well, northern side of Teheran in this little small prison that I used to drive past every now and then. And so we drew up the compound and what it looked like and the size of the fence and the area around it, the street and how busy they were, and all about the mentality of the Iranians and what would they go for, what would they not go for, and things of that nature. So it was determined as small as that prison was that we could, with the team that we had, we could probably get over the fence, into the courtyard, and extract the people with little or no problem. In order to do that, we talked about it and we had to work on our plan. So it was going to be Jay and myself, and Ralph Bulwar, that were going to drive up to the fence--all of us were going to be in that van--we were going to drive up to that fence, throw the ladder over the fence, and I was called number one jumper because my jumping ability, leaping ability, Col. Simons wanted me to be the first one over the fence, and he thought that I could be the fastest one to get back over the fence in case something happened. So we worked on that plan for three days, I think, and we practised it, so that meant that I was jumping over a 15-foot . . . we built all this equipment out at

RD (CONT): Grapevine. And mind you now, there was still ice on the ground, and it was still hard. And what they'd do is they'd drive the security van up that we almost demolished, and we had cut the top off the van and everything like that, and extend the ladder, and I'd climb up this thing, 15-foot, and jump off. And we did that--we must have did that 40 times a day. By the end of the day everyone else was okay, but I was dying, cause I was the only one who was jumping off this stupid 15-foot . . . And so, we practised that, and we got it down to the point where the colonel was satisfied with our time; we could pull up to the fence, extend the ladder and I could be up the ladder, over the fence, and certain things I was supposed to do to protect the prisoners, to provide cover for the prisoners as they ran to the ladder. Allow them time to run up the gate--I mean, run up the ladder, and then myself get up, we did it all in about five seconds flat.

RF: Five?

RD: Yeah, about five. He wouldn't be satisfied until it was under seven and down to five.

RF: How much was taken--well, from the moment the van stops . . .

RD: From the moment that . . . from the moment that I jumped over the fence. Okay? And allowed the two hostages to get on the ladder and get up, they counted (snaps fingers) one thousand, two thousand, three thousand. I could up and over the ladder in

RD (CONT): about a second and a half. But I don't think I touched the ladder but about two times, and then I just dived in head first right back into the hole of the van. So that was really hurting me, I was (laughs) . . I was the only with battle scars, everybody else was just doing a lot of thought process, and I was the one going through a lot of . .

RF: Did you actually cut off the top of the van that you used to rehearse in?

RD: Well, we were going to do it, Jim Sweibach and I, we were going to start burning it, and they decided that we'd better not do that because it was EDS corporate property. And so, you know, we didn't, so we just messed it up, it cost about \$600 to get repaired, but we didn't pull the top off of it. So after that, Ross was getting kind of anxious to get the team in place. So the first . . the first thing that we wanted to do is go to Iran, get set up. So there was some discussion as to whether we should go over there armed; there was a discussion as to whether or not we should take radios, 2-way radios, and how would we get them in. Jim Sweibach and I were basically the utility men. Jim Sweibach was a army ranger, and he was in charge of explosives and surveillance and map-reading, and I was his counterpart. And Jim Sweibach and I were responsible for all the radio communications, and everything getting set up. So we were supposed to get all the weapons smuggled into Iran. So we went out to Ross's house.

RD (CONT): And he's got a woodshop, up in this apartment. And we made boxes with false floors--false bottoms, and we painted 'em so that when you looked down, it looked like the box inside was just as deep as it was outside. And we put all of our pistols in the bottom of about four boxes. We put four or five pounds of buckshot in the boxes. And . . . we didn't have the radios at that time. But during the course of a day, we found out that they had moved the prisoners. And it was too late to change at that time our getting over to Iran, so we went to Paris and just stayed over in Paris. And we tried to get tickets into Iran. We got one confirmed and two standby. I think it was the colonel, Jay Coburn, and Joe Puchette--Puchon that went in on those tickets. And after they got there and did some surveillance and reconnaissance, they reported that the hostages had been moved and our plan would not work. And we had to make up another alternative. So we disseminated in different groups, and Glen Jackson went on to Georgia, Pat Scully . . . Pat Scully and Jim Sweibach stayed in Paris, and Ralph Mowere and myself returned to Dallas. I think that was about January the seventh or eighth, right in there. From that point, the only thing I did was radio communication and break codes, like we had set up code systems, and when one of our people was called in, we would use this code; it would take me fifteen, twenty minutes to decipher what it was, and I'd give it back to Merv, and Merv would call him back and give him his reply, things of that nature. So all I was doing was utility man, working with them off and on.

RD (CONT): I would go to my regular job, I'd do half a day, and then when Merv wanted me, I'd come back up. So basically I was getting down, because I thought I was out of the picture altogether. And so I was . . . They told me to bring my wife down to Dallas. I brought my wife to Dallas, she still had no idea what was going on. So we were staying in an apartment that the company had set up a lease in a building with. And so Pat Scully came over early one morning. He said, "Ron, you're in." He said, "We need you." And . . . I'm jumping ahead of myself. I was in the office one Saturday morning, with Tom Walters, Merv Stauffer, and I think it was Pat Scully. And the phone rang. Merv answered the telephone. And everybody started . . . you could hear laughter on the telephone. And Merv said, "Are you shittin' me?" And everybody stood up. He said, "Are you shittin' me? Are you shittin' me?" He said it about three times. He said, "The guys are out, they done it, they actually pulled it off." And Tom Walter said, "We got to move heaven and earth . . . heaven and earth to get those guys out of there now." He said, "Let's execute plan B." And I had no idea what plan B was. Cause these guys were working in the office, and I knew all the plans that the colonel had set up because every individual had to know everybody's duties and functions. And so I didn't have any idea what plan B was, but I was rejoicing anyway that at least they're out. And so we rejoiced for a while, and the big guys went off to another room to sit down and determine what strategy they were going to execute. And so Pat Scully and I, we went

RD (CONT): back to our apartments and everything like that. The next morning I'm laying in this little bed in this apartment; it's just a regular bed, and my wife is about three months pregnant, now she's getting a little bigger, and she's sleeping wide, her arms wide open like this, and I'm laying on the corner of the bed, and the doorbell rings. Well, knocking at the apartment door. I look at my wife, you know, it's quarter to six. "What the hell?" I didn't know nobody in Dallas, now why in the hell is somebody knocking at my door? I went to the door, it was Pat Scully, and his eyes were this big. He said, "Ron, we got to go. Ross wants to see you right away. And we got to go." "What the hell am I going to tell my wife?" "I don't know, but I'm telling her--" What are we going to do? So I went in, I told my wife. I said, "Honey, I have to go. I'll be gone for a couple, three days or so, and if you need anything, get in touch with Merv Stauffer or Tom Walters or someone like that, like you did before." She said, "Ron, what are you up to out there?" "Oh, nothing, honey." You know. She said, "Well, I don't have all your suits clean." I said, "That's okay, I'll pick up a couple, you know, on the way out," or something like that. So she kind of smelled a rat, but she had no idea what the hell we were doing. So, anyway, we got back down to the office. By that time, they had a whole day to plan out what they wanted to do, it was all the heads of EDS and Ross Perot himself, Merv Stauffer, myself and Pat Scully, and . . . and Pat Scully. Ross was going to Washington at that point. In fact,

RD (CONT): he was probably already in Washington. He wanted to try one more time that the State Department, the CIA, to say, "Look, this is what we're going to do and we need someone to help us. _____." They couldn't give us any help. So we had to charter a 707, Boeing 707, to fly where we wanted. We also had to get a pilot. We had to get three pilots, as a matter of fact. We had to get a pilot, a co-pilot, a helicopter pilot, and a fixed-wing pilot. So they were taking care of all that, and they wanted us to locate an airport. So here I am calling this airlines, and we have a plane to let. And you'd say, "Yeah." And they'd give us these prices and everything like that. And I'd never dealt with \$350,000 just to use an airplane or \$500,000, like that. So anyway, I let somebody else handle that, because they were talking too big numbers, and I didn't really know what we wanted. So anyway, Tom Marcus found a Boeing 707 that was made for a prince of Saudia Arabia or somebody like that. It was a luxury liner. And so we worked out the details about how we were going to get the plane. So we had to go over to Dulles--no, not Dulles, Muhl Field or something like that, to pick up the airplane.

RF: This . . . The day that the news came that they were out was the same day Ross went to Washington. Now I can't figure out how you could have been--you could have heard the call when Merv said, "You're shittin' me," and then gone to bed and been woken up the next day by Pat Scully, cause I think

RF (CONT): all this happened on the same day.

RD: It may have. It's been two and a half years, so I mean . . . I know I was in the office when the call came through. Okay? Ross may have already been in Washington at that time, I didn't really . . . I don't really know where his whereabouts were at that time. But I'd seen him that week in the office. It would only take a minute to get to Washington. So . . .

RF: Probably . . . probably you were--It was a Sunday when they got out. You were probably in the office when Merv got the phonecall, and probably . . . you may have been woken up early the next morning.

RD: That's probably--I knew it was a weekend I was in the office for some reason, and the day I woke . . . Yeah . . . I got awakened the next morning. It was probably Monday morning.

RF: So then during the day, after Merv got the call, during that day you had been working on chartering the plane.

RD: That's right.

RF: And probably you would have gone home to bed, and the next morning, the Monday morning, Scully would have woken you up and said, "We've got to go because--" By that time, you would have had to--The plan would have been that you were all meeting in Washington.

RD: That's correct. That's correct. So you know all

RD (CONT): the . . all the other stories about it. So you can keep me straight a little bit. It's been a while. We went out to pick up the 707. It was Pat Scully and I, and we had hired a captain and a co-captain. So we had to pick them up at the airport, and go to pick up our aircraft. We got there, and some of the employees showed us the aircraft. We got on it and inspected it. The thing had everything on it that you really wanted, you know, you could have a disco there. To make a long story short, it was a very well put together aircraft. So the captain and co-captain sit down and commence to check out the various instruments and go through their pre-flight test and everything like that. And the plane was having its . . experiencing a lot of problems at that point. They couldn't get the damn thing started at first, and then finally they got a automatic power unit started, and got the plane started. Some instruments were not working properly. It was a manual that was supposed to be with the plane that the people out at Love Field did not have. There was a captain's report . . A captain fills out a report every time that he lands, so that if there's difficulty with the plane landing, how did the aircraft take off? You know, everything about the aircraft, but none of that information was available. So we did pre-flights about an hour, an hour and a half, and the captain was just not satisfied. He kept saying, "We could probably fly to Washington, but once we get to Washington it's going to have be someone there to do some major repair." Stuff like that. So this luxury liner was

RD (CONT): just Pat Scully and myself as the passengers.

(laughter) This plane had a bar in the front, bar in the middle, bar in the back, and a queensize--kingside bed back there with a office and telephone in it. And . . . it was just beautiful. Closed-circuit televisions. So Pat was in one section, watching what he wanted on the television; I was in the other section playing music and everything. Well, we flew to Washington. We got there at least . . . I don't know, it was late. It was late: nine, ten, twelve o'clock, or something like that. It was extremely cold. The airport was . . . There was probably about five people in the airport when we landed. And we got off the plane, went in looking for Mr. Perot and Jim Sweibach. We got there and we didn't see 'em in the beginning, but we saw this little guy with a tweed hat on and tweed coat on, and he was acting like he was just one of the guys, you know? He was standing there talking to some guy that he didn't know, and I didn't know and no one knew. And we went up to him, and we said, "We're here." He said, "Go on, guys, put your bags down. I'm starved. I need some eggs, some bacon," you know? Well, Simey had this taxicab driver just sitting there waiting, you know? So we all piled in the taxi, and we went over to the nearest hotel there, we thought maybe we could get some breakfast, but they didn't serve breakfast, start serving breakfast till six o'clock or something like that. So Ross really wanted some eggs and bacon, sausage, and stuff like that. So we weren't able to get any. So we came back to the airport. And these two beautiful women walked

RD (CONT): out, and they were going to be our stewardesses. Beauty. That guy got class. (laughter) Beautiful plane and these beautiful stewardesses. And they were loading the plane up with food and everything like that, and the stewardesses knew the captain and the co-captain, they'd met in their travels. Very elite people, I mean these were just good people. Very smart people. And so we loaded the plane. Ross, myself, Jim Sweibach, and Pat Scully, and the helicopter driver, and the fixed-wing pilot; we were the only passengers that got on. And we flew to Istanbul. And when we landed, well, we talked about our plan and what we were going to do all the time we were on the plane. I was assigned these tasks initially: to pay all ground fees, landing fees, stay with the captain to make sure that if he needs anything, and since he didn't know what our plan was; all he was doing was flying, to make sure he wasn't harassed or giving up any information that would jeopardize the operation. So when we landed, I had \$45,000 I had to pay: \$7,000 landing fees, \$5,000 to refuel, and miscellaneous little things like that.

RF: This would be in Istanbul?

RD: That's right. Here they were . . . They were looking at me like, this black guy flying this private plane, and he's got a private plane, he's paying all this stuff cash! (laughter) And so, you know, it was getting kind of sticky, they were wondering what the hell this private jet is doing there and everything like that. So we got hotel rooms, we were

RD (CONT): waiting, and I had to make sure I went out to the airport every day to check on the plane, cause they were kind of wondering what it was doing there.

RF: You must have seen Boulva when you landed.

RD: Ralph Boulva was the first person that we saw. When we landed, we sit there for a few minutes on the plane. As the door opened and we went down the ladder, Boulva and the Turkish agent . .

RF: ^{Mr. Fish} _____

RD: ^{Mr. Fish} _____, ^{Mr. Fish} _____ came on, and ^{Mr. Fish} _____ was smoking those nasty cigarettes, those Turkish cigarettes? Jeez, they smell like shit. So, they came up and they were talking. And Ralph Boulva and Tuna had already figured out a way that they were going to get to the border. Okay. They wanted to go to the border to check to see if everything was okay, and make sure how difficult it was going to be to get through it. So Ralph said, "Okay, that's ^{Mr. Fish} a good idea." _____ and Boulva immediately left. And the way I understand it, they had a hell of a time with the car. The car they started out using had a problem with a tire, and the next time they got out and they hitchhiked again, and then they got in a guy's car and he had a problem with a tire; and Boulva got out again. And ^{Mr. Fish} _____ was disgusted, said, "Boulva, let's go back. This must be an old one." And Boulva said, "Oh, no, they told me to be there at a certain time. We gotta get there." So he

RD (CONT): stuck his thumb out again and got another ride all the way to the border, and he paid the guy off and everything like that. And we didn't see Boulva again . . . I don't think that he came back, but I'm not sure. Anyway, here was the things that I am sure of: We went to the hotel and got checked in. The stewardesses and the captain and co-captain were getting kind of concerned about what we were doing. We were just playing a waiting game, you know, we would sit there for a day. And guys like myself and Pat Sculley and Jim Sweibach would go off and leave them and they wouldn't see us all day. What I would do is I would go down to the airport and file a flightplan with the captain. We wanted to see if we could enter Vonn; that's the closest airport to the border. And when we asked, we caused a lot of concern. The police came and everything like that. We asked if we could land in Vonn in a 707. They said no way. The Stressbacher, the largest plane that ever went in there, was something like a DC-9 or something like that. And I guess it's the way the mountains surrounding the runway, the landing strip, it would be hard to get a big plane in and get out. And plus they never tested it for a 707. But the guy says, "Why in hell do you want to go to Vonn anyway?" And so they're arguing and everything like that and police came over and wondered why we wanted to go to Vonn. And I made up an excuse. I said, "Hell--you know?--we're just touring and, you know, I wanted to see what it looked like." And they said, "No, you can't go." So. We said, "Well, can we get a charter flight out that would land

RD (CONT): in Vonn?" "You might be able to do that." So . . .

RF: There were no scheduled flights to Vonn.

RD: No scheduled flights. So we had to charter a plane to go to Vonn. It was me, Jim Sweibach, Pat Scully; I forget the two other gentlemen's names, I think it was Dick and . .

RF: Julian.

RD: Julian. They were fixed-wing pilots and helicopter pilots. And by this time we knew everybody very well. And knew what was going on, and we knew it was time to really be precise and careful of what we done. So we took the plane into Vonn . . the charter plane into Vonn.

RF: This would have been the day after . . would this have been the day after . . ?

RD: The day after we arrived.

RF: So it's Thursday now.

RD: Thursday. So we took the plane into Vonn. And it was night again, late at night when we got there. We went to a . .

RF: Why did it take two days? I guess that was arguing with them about how you were going to get there.

RD: That's right. Cause initially Ross wanted to take that plane that we had chartered every place, even into Teheran if possible, to get all of our people out and just fly

RD (CONT): directly back to someplace like Paris or Germany or something like that to get the hell out of the way. But it didn't work like that because it took us a day or so to regroup and find out what would be logical and what would not be logical. So--

RF: Late on Thursday night you went to Vonn on the chartered . . . Was that a jet?

RD: Yeah, it was sort of like a . . . No, it was a prop, the kind that lets you out the back and the front _____ #473-4
_____ I don't know, a DC-6 or DC-9 or something like that, you can let the tail down, but the . . . the back of the plane, you can go out the back of the plane, you can come out the sides.

RF: How did you pay for the charter? With cash? How much--

RD: Everything. Oh, it was something like . . . Well, for all of us, it was only something like \$1,000, I guess. It was five of us and equipment. That's all. About a couple hundred dollars apiece, I think, one way. So I paid \$1100, I think it was, for the plane. So we got there and people were getting very suspicious. Vonn is very small. We got there, the whole police department was waiting for us, all two of them. (laughter) Old shotgun, you know, and they were watching us, and they didn't really know what to do. They probably didn't have the communications or the facilities to find out exactly what we were doing there, and they didn't want to

RD (CONT): detain us if we didn't really cause a problem, plus we had ^{Mr. Fish} [REDACTED] with us and he was our mouthpiece. He was really negotiating with 'em, you know, paying under the table and everything like that. So we got to the . . . We got to Vonn, and it was late, and it was cold as hell. And we went to this dinky apart--hotel. We walked in with our bags on the packs and everything like that, and we had tobaggans and half-bearded and we smelled like holy crap. And the people were looking at us. You know, here are these Americans, and they got packs and all this kind of crap; what the hell are they doing here? And it was a hotel that had wooden floors and all these Turkish guys, 25 or 30 of them, sitting there watching some soccer game on television, drinking beer and cursing and screaming. When we walked in, there was a silence, they started looking at us. They gave us these hotel rooms. We walked up the steps like _____ but on a very older type format; you could see every room ^{#510} that everybody goes in--went into. And the floors . . . You had to walk . . . You were on the third floor, you had to circle until you get to the third floor and walk to your room. And one bathroom on each floor. So all these Iranians are looking at us--I mean, Turkish people are looking at us. Cold looks followed us up the steps and everything like that. So we went two . . . It was two to a room. Those were the grossest rooms I had ever seen in my life. I mean, we walked in the door . . . My door, I had to push at the top, and when you push at the top, the bottom of it comes out and hit me. (laughter) So we finally

RD (CONT): beat on it and got it open, and Dick and I were roommates, and we were sitting in there on these little cots, cold as hell, and had a bathroom in there that was just a hole. You know. It was just a shower curtain, so you had to go in there and use the bathroom. No running water in the room, you had to go down the hallway to get your running water. And you couldn't look out because there was no windows in the damn thing, you know. And so Scully called us all to his room, so we all got over there in his room with ^{Mr. Fish} [REDACTED] And just think you're in a room about the size of your kitchen, with five guys, and ^{Mr. Fish} [REDACTED] smoking those damned cigarettes. So, anyway, Pat Scully said, "It don't look good here." You know? He was really kind of nervous about their reaction. And ^{Mr. Fish} [REDACTED] said, "These are all bandits. This is where they hang out at." He says, "It's not a good idea to go to sleep in here." He said, "Ten to one, they're probably searching your rooms right now. And if we end up going to sleep, there might be some problems here." So Scully said, ^{Mr. Fish} [REDACTED], "can you get us out of here?" He said, "I'll see what I can do." So we all sit in Pat Scully's room and brought our passports and everything with us, so if they did steal anything, all it was was just our knives and stuff like that. Cold weather clothes. So Pat Scully sent ^{Mr. Fish} [REDACTED] out to try and get transportation. Then about two hours--by this time it was four, five o'clock in the morning--^{Mr. Fish} [REDACTED] come back and said, "Let's go. Let's get the hell out of here quick." And we got all our bundles and everything like that and put 'em on our backs and

RD (CONT): was going downstairs, and every man in there was standing there, watching us go out. Watching us go out the door. We got on the bus. They had hired some busdriver or something. I don't know where this guy got all these contacts, but I mean he made things happen, ^{Mr. Fish} made things happen. So we all got on the bus. And ^{Mr. Fish} told the busdriver to take off, and we started driving. And ^{Mr. Fish} said, "Okay, guys, this is where it gets serious." He said, "I'm not worried too much about the police. But the only ones that I'm worried about is the bandits and the soldiers." He said, "Because I don't have any ties with these guys." You know. And so, then we knew it was getting ready to get kind of exciting. So we got--we still had a couple of weapons with us that we got rid of; if they stop us, at least they search us, we can just tell them that, you know, we're going to meet some friends at the border and that's it. So we got rid of the weapons that we had.

RF: What'd you do with them? Throw them out the window?

RD: Mm-hmm. Just threw them right out in the snow.

RF: What kind of weapons did you have?

RD: I had a .38. Okay? And I don't know what Pat had.

These were weapons other than our PTK's, okay. And I think ^{Mr. Fish} had got 'em from somewhere. ^{Mr. Fish} was scared to death, he didn't want any weapons involved at all. He really didn't--he said, "I can talk my way through it, but if they find a weapon,

RD (CONT): (bang) that's it." So we threw them out in the snow. And on our way to the border, it was the most beautiful scenery I had ever seen in my life. I mean, this busdriver, he was just going up and up and up and up. You know, mountains and snow on both sides and looking down on the city and countryside, and we were just going up and up and up and up. It was just like being in an airplane; you can be up close to the clouds and everything like that. It was just really far up, and when the daybreak broke, I could really see how beautiful it was. And it was cold. The bus was cold. Our feet were cold. We were bundled up in our cold weather gear and our covers and everything like that. Ross had taken care of us; he had given us duffelbags and blankets and, you know, just everything you needed to survive. So as soon as we got warm, the bus started warming up a little bit after three hours of driving, we got to a checkpoint where the military point was open. They got on and, out of nowhere, this guy came out--of nowhere, and just stood in front of the bus and made it stop. Tuna didn't know if it was the military or if they were bandits, but we had to let him on; the guy was armed with a machine gun. So the driver was saying, "Oh, he should go, he should go, he should run right over him," or something like that. And ^{Mr. Fish} [REDACTED] said, "No, stop." Good thing he stopped, because after we stopped for him, on the side of the mountain, a damned platoon looked like it came up, at least fifteen, sixteen soldiers with high-powered rifles and things like that. And just a sergeant and one of his lesser officers

RD (CONT): got on and checked our passports and talked to
 Mr. Fish Mr. Fish
 [REDACTED] a little bit. [REDACTED] bullshitted and gave them
 cigarettes, talked stuff with them for about ten minutes.
 Then he let us go. They were very curious, though. And I
 think they radioed ahead, because we went about another
 couple of miles or so, and another group stopped us. And
 did the same routine. And they let us go. And an hour or
 so later, a ruthless bunch of guys stopped us, that was no
 uniforms. And they detained us for the longest period of time.
 I think we were there about forty-five minutes. We thought
 the guys were going to check us and take our money and our
 equipment and stuff like that. They were arguing among them-
 selves about what they should do. And [REDACTED] was uncertain
 because Mr. Fish [REDACTED] said, just stay there, just act like you're
 reading a book or something like that; don't start looking at
 'em. Okay? So we read books, and they finally let us go. So
 we got to the border . . .

RF: Didn't any of these people get on the . . . stay on
 the bus with you?

RD: Oh, yeah. The . . . I think the last time we got
 stopped was plainclothes guy got on the bus, two of them, sit
 on the back of the bus with us. And I know they were armed.
 And they sit on the back of the bus with us till we got to
 the border. We got to the border, that's where we met . . .
 first person I was off was King Taylor. King Taylor. And we
 all grabbed each other and hugged each other. And Bill Gaylord

RD (CONT): had a moustache and I didn't even know him, I thought he was an Iranian guy. Paul Chapperone, you know he's a small guy, but he's reddish like the Iranians anyway, and he had a tobaggan pulled down over his head and a cold weather jacket, you know, and everything like that, and I didn't know who in hell he was. And so when I finally found out, we all started hugging and rejoicing and everything like that, and Ross said there would definitely be no drinking during this mission, and the colonel said there would be no drinking during this mission; but I had brought a bottle of 20-year old Chivas Regal, 2-year old Chivas Regal, or something, I don't know with us. And I asked the colonel, I said, "Would this be the right time to open up this bottle?" He said, "Go ahead." So I opened up this bottle and we all-- we knocked this bottle out in about two minutes or so. (laughter) But there was so many of us that there wasn't enough to get intoxicating or anything like that, we just having a big time. So Pat Scully and the colonel had to negotiate getting us from that point. Especially Paul and Bill, that didn't have . .

RF: Didn't have passports.

RD: Passports. And so, since I could speak Pharsee, as--well, we had ^{Rashid} [REDACTED] there, but I guess ^{Rashid} [REDACTED] had . . did all the parleying and all the . . negotiating all the time, and he ended up at the endpoint losing two vehicles behind it, because he couldn't negotiate getting them across. And they wanted to know if I could give them one more chance. And I

RD (CONT): guess the border was only probably about a hundred yards, a hundred fifty, two hundred yards at the most. So I jogged down there and started talking to them. Iranians kind of were easy to deal with if you were talking about something that they liked to hear. You know, if you talk about Moslems, Muhammed Ali, and all that stuff, they love Muhammed Ali, they love--

SIDE #2

RD (CONT): So anyway, I went down to try to negotiate getting those Land Rovers across, Range Rovers or whatever they were called. And I could have, the guy had agreed to do it, but there was a chain across the border that no one had the key to. And it was only about this high off the ground, and, you know, you couldn't just roll over it because it would get caught up in the axle of the jeeps. So we had no way of getting it across, so I just gave up and told the colonel that we can't get across. Pero wanted to cut it with his hacksaw, and they wouldn't let him. So the colonel started cursing and everything like that, and he'd get upset, you know, and I'd get out of his way. And so we sit down during the negotiations, and commenced to play just poker, you know, to pass the time away. And nothing was happening. You know, the Turkish people were kind of concerned because they didn't know what was going on. And they didn't know what was going on on the Iranian side, who we were or anything like that. So they sit around watching us play poker and saw the money we were betting and couldn't

RD (CONT): understand why we were betting so much money, and when we'd win they'd cheer and everything. And so the colonel called me over to the side, cause he had overheard a telephone call, and he could understand Turkish. Okay, but he didn't want anyone to know. Especially the Turks. And he told me to tell Pat Scully . . . no, to tell Paul Chapperone that Scully and them should be back within the hour, cause he had overheard a telephone call or something like that. So Scully came, but he came back with people that I had never seen, that . . .

Mr. Fish

RF: Scully had gone up with [REDACTED]?

Mr. Fish

RD: Yeah, Scully and [REDACTED] had gone and they came back, they said, "Let's go." So, when we were getting ready to go, we'd gotten authorization to go, we were all packing up and ready to go, and the guy that was in charge, the Turkish guy that was in charge, he pulled his coat back and he had a pistol right here. He said, "No." He told us all to sit down, and those two guys did not have passports, and they were not going to leave. And then all of the guys, the guys that were laughing and watching us and playing with us and everything, pulled their coats back and they had pistols. And so, what's going to

Mr. Fish

happen now? So the guy-- [REDACTED] tried to explain to the guy that he had talked to somebody or somebody had called and talked to the guard on the telephone, and they had agreed to let him go.

Mr. Fish

But when [REDACTED] and them got back, he said no. So they ended up calling somebody on the telephone again, talking, talked for an

RD (CONT): hour, hour and a half, and the guy called him back again, _____^{#033}. Then he let us go after a couple of hours. Okay? But again somebody got on the bus with us. We got to the first checkpoint, it was a military checkpoint, and they stopped us and they checked us. And when they found Paul and Bill didn't have identification--passports, proper passports? That's when the two guys in the back of the bus came up and talked to 'em and everything like that, and they allowed us to go.

RF: They must have been going from the border, border guards.

RD: That's right. And so we went down probably 40 miles, and another group of military people stopped us. By this time the driver was getting irritable. He was always getting stopped and the same thing would happen and they'd let us go, and he was just getting really pissed. So instead of him stopping, he jammed the accelerator, you know, and they aimed the guns at us and ordered us to stop again. And finally the driver slammed on the brake and he decided to stop. I think ^{Mr. Fish} [REDACTED] was saying, "Stop, you son-of-a-bitch, you'll get us all killed," or something. And so the sergeant got on the bus and pulled his pistol out and put it at the driver's head, like that, and a lot of soldiers ran on the bus and started ^{Mr. Fish} talking to him, and [REDACTED] was hollering and the guys at the back of the bus ran to the front and they started talking to him. And I guess the cooler heads prevailed, you know, but he

RD (CONT): was pissed that the guy was trying to run over him and went through a roadblock. And that made it a little tougher because we probably had to sit there about an hour and a half, two hours, while they took Bill and Paul off the bus. Took them over to some area where they had the interrogator and all this crap. And they came back with tea, bread, and enough meat to just kill the taste of the bread or something like that, maybe just a couple pieces of meat. And so we ate the bread, drank the tea. Then they let us go. There's still people on the bus. And we got stopped a couple more times. And finally we got back to Vonn. And when we got there, it was certain situations that didn't look good: The fact that there was now twice as many of us. Okay? And they were suspicious when there was only five of us, now it was eleven of us. And plus the guard that rode on the back of the bus was talking to the other people in the airport and got them alarmed. So (clears throat) excuse me.

(They move away from the recorder: #065-074)

[Van, Turkey]

RD: So, we're in Vonn now. Talking about coming back from the border. And we had gotten stopped several times, and reiterated other times that we'd gotten stopped . .

RF: Yeah. You were saying that when you got back to the airport, they were even . . the airport at Vonn, they were even more suspicious because now there were twice as many of you.

RD: That's correct. Initially it was just Jim, Pat,

Mr. Fish

RD (CONT): the two aircraft pilots, [REDACTED]; now it's twice as many people, and the suspicion is grown twice as much. I think the only reason that they didn't hold us there is because the police force was too small, they didn't know enough about us, they didn't know how big this thing was. All they did was just look, you know. I don't think they really stopped us or anything. They just let us do our thing, and we got a flight out. We had a lot of baggage. I think on the overland trip, King Taylor and ^{Rashid} [REDACTED], he had put a large sum of money into a Jeep gastank, I think it was, and it was . . . They had put oil and gas over the top of the money, and so in case anyone inspected it, they could see the large sum of money. So I think the biggest problem was then, was getting the money out of the gascan because there was no way that they were going to allow us to put a can full of gas on an aircraft. Did he not at that point take the money out in the bathroom?

Third voice: (unintelligible)

RF: He told the Iranians that it contained the oil that the Americans put on themselves, that's what makes them smell so bad.

3rd: I only told the _____.

RF: Told the _____^{#97}. You said . the oil the Americans use, Americans put on their bodies, that's why they smell so bad.

RD: And they laughed about it and let us go and put it on. _____
#100-101

3rd:(unintelligible)

RD: So at that point, we all got aboard the plane. And I don't think Istanbul was our next stop, I think we had a stop before that.

3rd: Opra. *Al. 100*

RD: We went to Opra. We stopped in Opra. We got off to get a connecting flight, as I recall it. And at that point in Opra, they stopped the colonel and checked his briefcase.

3rd: (unintelligible)

RF: Okay. And then when you got back on the plane, when you got on the scheduled flight back here, the colonel had the money in a paper envelope, I think, under his arm

#118

3rd: He had the money with him.

RD: He had the money with him and he had decided to tell them where the money was, as I recall. He said, "They find the money, and we try to hide the money and they find it, they're going to confiscate it. If I tell them I've got this money, tell them what I'm doing, " he said, "that this money belongs to a wealthy American businessman, I am working for him, and this is how much money I have." And so the people in Opra

RD (CONT): really didn't want to bother, because the people having that large a sum of money, and there was fifteen of us at that time, and they really didn't want to bother us. But they were kind of very curious at that point. What they did, we thought we'd gotten away; we thought they'd checked the money and let us all on the plane. And what they--what apparently had happened, they had called ahead to Istanbul, and said there's a lot of Americans on this flight, one, and possibly, obviously described the colonel has a large sum of money. And so, we all got off our plane in Istanbul, and they let all of us and pulled the colonel out, no problem out, just like someone said, "It's the gray-haired man with the blue jacket on, carrying a bag." They pulled him over to the side, and all the Turkish people in the airport, as I recall, were heavily armed with machine guns, and they pushed the colonel up against the wall, and searched him. At that point, we had come to really respect the colonel, and we were getting kind of edgy because they were pushing him around, they were giving him a little rougher treatment than we thought he deserved. And so the military at that point, turned around and saw how many it was, and they kept their eye on me and Jim, and held their guns low, they didn't hold them directly at us, but we know that they knew that we were all together. And they frisked the colonel, took the money, and told him that they were going to arrest us. And so at that point, Pat Scully and . . . decided that we should all just find out where the colonel was going and go back to the hotel and let Mr. Pero handle it from Perot

RD (CONT): this point. So we went back to the hotel with Paul and Bill and got everyone settled in and started talking about what had happened. We told the colonel the only problem was--we told Mr. Pero that the only problem was that we lost the colonel in the airport, got arrested. And he located him and found where he was at, and at that point Mr. Pero made some calls and successfully got the colonel released. And they went in, as I recall it, they went in to tell the colonel he could come home, I mean, he could, you know, go back to the hotel with all of us, he said, "Hell, I'm comfortable now." He's laying on the cot. He said, "I'm not going anywhere. I'll see them in the morning." So he kept the money and he stayed overnight at the police station because he didn't feel like coming back to the hotel. So we rejoiced a little bit and talked about what had happened. And we hadn't had a good meal in a while, so Mr. Pero ordered a lot of food for all of us in his suite. And we ate breakfast and determined when we were going to leave, and talked about how we were going to leave. And things of that nature. So that night, it was determined that I would get up early and take a taxi to the airport to do several things: take the captain, make sure there were no fees that were owed, pay whatever fees that were owed, and make sure that we had no problem getting through customs or getting on the plane. Okay.

Mr. Fish

RF: You did that with [REDACTED]?

RD: No. You see I had made contact with Hamir at the

RD (CONT): airport, that was personally taking--looking over our plane. Okay? Hamir had a American wife who could speak fluent English _____^{#170}. So I went out to talk to Hamir, and I called back to the hotel to find out the status on the colonel, and it was told to me at that point to stay out there with the airport--at the airport with the plane. The colonel would meet me out there and the police was going to drive 'em to the airport. So . . . Were you with us?

3rd: No, (unintelligible)

RD: He was at the hotel. So during that time, I contacted Hamir at home, because he wasn't there. He wasn't at work, he had overslept. Told him to come up there, I needed him immediately.

RF: Now this is . . . Who's Hamir? Is it just a Turk?

RD: Hamir is a Turk that was responsible for commercial flights and private flights and flight preparations for . .

RF: I see. So it was Hamir who was the EDS employee in Iran.

RD: Right. This guy was _____^{#182}. This guy's a Turk. And he got there probably about 20 minutes later, and the colonel was on the plane. I had put the colonel on the plane, the captain and the co-captain was doing their pre-flight work and everything like that. And I told Hamir that

RD (CONT): I had fifteen to seventeen people that I needed to get through customs without any problem. I said, "Could you help me?" He said, "That's pretty hard to do cause you guys have raised a lot of commotion about this plane." There was something about the tail that they . . . that they--

RF: Caman Island's tail--had a Caman Island's tail, maybe, I think that you--the usual thing . . .

RD: Yeah. Okay. Well, they kept questioning and complaining, and I didn't know what the hell they were talking about, so Hamir was the guy that told 'em. So he said, "The police have been out asking about it, that you guys have left it here for a couple of days, and I haven't seen 'em, but anyway, you have to be very careful, Ron, and I don't want to get in trouble because they're going to stop you as soon as you get on the plane." I said, "Hamir, I don't want that to happen. My main duty is to make sure that there's no problems out here. Now who do I need to see to do that?" He said--"Do I need to see someone other than you or pay someone other than you?" He said, "You can pay me." I said, "Well, you know I'll pay you. But just get everyone through customs with no problem." So, "what time are they coming?" So, I said, "I don't know." I talked to the hotel, I said, "Mr. Pero, what time are you coming?" He said, "We'll be there about 11 o'clock." By this time it was 10:15. The police came, start . . . We were loading the plane with food and stuff like that; the police wanted to know who we were and what we were doing. So

RD (CONT): Hamir went up and talked to 'em and convinced them that it was just a lot of Americans on a tour, and he had them already under surveillance and control. So he came back to me, he said--it was two minutes to eleven--he said, "Where are these people at?" He was getting nervous, and we were standing there at the passport line in customs line. They were checking people's baggage and things like that. And comes in the whole team! I mean, it was a slew of us with double bags, pouches and Ross Perot had \$250,000 cash in his briefcase. The colonel had at least \$200,000 on him. And I had about \$45,000 in my pocket. And these guys just didn't look like American businessmen. And I tell ya, when all of 'em are in line, with all this baggage, right? So Hamir and myself walked up to the line with all these people in line to get out. And Hamir said, "Where are your people?"

_____ #217
 _____. So he walked up and he told all of 'em to come through. So everybody picked up their baggage and everything like that and went through customs without being checked. So we walked out to the plane, we got on the plane. And we got okay to take off and everything like that. I paid the landing fee, I think it was something like \$7000 or something like that. And it was so cold we had to get our wings de-iced. And the captain said, "Ron, is it okay to get the wings de-iced?" I said, "How much is it going to cost?" He said, "\$15, 1800," something like that. I said, "Hell, no, you don't need 'em de-iced, do you?" He said, "Are you crazy?" (laughter) So I said, "How long is it going to take?" I wanted to really get

RD (CONT): off the ground. I was getting really scared, you know. He said, "Oh, about fifteen, twenty minutes." They called this truck, this guy called this truck up. They de-iced the wings and everything like that. So we finally got the doors closed and got all the Turkish people off the plane and everything like that. They were coming back asking us for jobs, and they knew that we had done something wrong, but here's my name and gave me resumes and stuff like that. "When you get to the States call me. And I'll come and work for your company," and all this kind of crap. And, "Yeah, yeah, fine. I'm going to call you Thursday when I get back to the States." So, anyway, we finally got rid of all the Turks and closed the door to the plane. We started rejoicing and said, "All right! Let's get out of here. Let's get the hell out of here," and start saying, singing and everything, rejoicing. And I went back and told Mr. Perot. I said, "We got permission to take off." He said, "Ron, tell the captain, I'll lay a hammer on this son-of-a-gun when we take off." So I went up and I asked the captain. I says, "Mr. Perot wants you to make a beautiful take-off out of this place." He said, "You got it!" So he let me and Bill Chapperone sit in the cabin while he took off. And he got permission to take off, he went down that runway. He had the full--he held the plane back all the way. And he took off, whooooosssshhhh, straight up in the air. He said, "How was that? Ask Mr. Perot how he liked that." (laughter) So I went back, and . . . and, you know, everybody liked the take-off, and we started partying and thinking every-

RD C(ONT): thing was okay, rejoicing and really having a good time. Then the plane started getting hot, and the windows started icing up, or steaming up. Cab started getting really . . . really hot. And I was checking with the pilot, and he said, "We're experiencing a lot of problems. Got some temperature problems. We have some directional problems." I think his landing gear or something was screwed up. And he said, "I just filled up, and I'm going to have to dump this damned gas."

RF: Now. Are you sure this didn't happen after Frankfurt?

RD: Ah! No.

3rd: (unintelligible)

RD: Oh! It was a good flight from . . .

3rd: After you left .
#258

RD: Oh, that's right. I'm jumping ahead here. We got to Frankfurt. We were landing there at Frankfurt, where we were supposed to meet our other people who were coming out of Teheran. And during the mean--in the meantime, I was coordinating radio contact with the pilots in Teheran, to see if our plane had left yet. And it was detained, detained, detained. And I kept having the pilots--

RF: Could your pilot talk to the pilot on the Pan Am flight--Pan Am plane on the ground in Teheran?

RD: No, what he would do is call . . . put out a signal for anyone in that vicinity. And they would contact the pilot on the ground. Or the control tower. Or Teheran. And they relayed a message back. So we were getting all the great scoop about it, and they--the captain was telling us that the plane had not arrived, as they had not taken off yet. And when it finally took off, he let us know when it took off so we had a couple of hours there that we had to kill. So we landed in Frankfurt, and we found that Frankfurt is a free port. That if the police would have found Paul and Bill there, they would have had to return them to Iran. So, we'd hide 'em in Frankfurt airport there. It was a huge airport, and we were all in the hotel room, in Ross's hotel room, trying to decide what we should do at this point. Cause we didn't know the . . . they had those extradition rights. So Jim and I, you and I were doing something, we were checking surveillance or seeing who was looking for us or something at that point.

Jim (3rd): Yes, _____ #282
 _____ #283 we had discovered that there was
 a possibility of extradition. And there was some concern that the German police would pick up on Bill and kick him off. And there was also some concern that they knew they were there. So, _____ #288-290
 the lower part of the airport. _____ #291-292
 _____. In the meantime, Ron and I made contact with some of the airport personnel that controlled gate

Jim (CONT): assignments and worked out arrangements so that we could have the gate opened _____ as soon as Pan Am flight came in from Teheran. And then we worked out arrangements whereby Ron and I could get into the reception area, the army barrier set up _____, so that when the people came in on the flight, we could _____ and try and get through to Ron to pick up the people coming off the airplane. Ron was the most recognizable of the group. And I was _____. And as Ron put the people down the gate, my assignment was to ride back fifteen, twenty-five meters or so, and make sure they were not getting involved with _____ or get in their way or whatever. _____ But me and Ron, we just tried to set up the . . . set up the gates--

RD: That's right.

Jim: And set up the messengers who would recognize the people coming in from Teheran and get them onto the other aircraft, onto our aircraft.

RF: So as the people came off that Pan Am flight, you were there to pick EDS people out of the crowd and take them to the gate where your own plane was, mainly.

RD: That's correct.

RF: Okay, now--

RD: We made it very clear.

RF: ^{Rick & Kathy} Mister . . Mister--Capt. Galahad didn't want to go on your plane.

RD: Yeah, that's where the problem came in. Generally, really refreshing my mind. Initially, we found in a free port when the captain went down I paid the landing fees. Okay? They started questioning us about who we were and what we were doing. So I translated that information back to Mr. Pero and told them everything that was happening. They then said since--

RF: _____ is empty. You want to make some more?
#124
It's all--everything is there.

Jim: (unintelligible)

RD: They sent Jim and I down to do things that Jim just told me, just make sure that those guys can get out in time, and everything like that. Now, when I went . . I was standing in front of the gate so they could . . our people could immediately see me and we could go off to our aircraft. Now when I first saw . . the first person I saw was Joe Couchet-- Couchon.

RF: Couchet. ^{Peché}

RD: Couchet. Joe saw me and immediately started walking toward me. He . . knew what was going on, and he was in charge of that group. And I waited to . . Jim, to let him know

RD (CONT): that our people was coming off, and Jim immediately moved in behind us, you know, and started looking around to see who was . . . who was watching and everything like that. And at that point in time, we waved to, I think it was Boulva, to tell the colonel and Mr. Perot and all of them to come down to the gate to board our plane. Cause we didn't want them down ahead of time. And so all of our people came directly toward me. Mr. Gallagher came off and said, "Rich, everything was okay. Mr. Perot is here . We got a charter flight. We're going to take you guys home." He said, "Don't give me that goddamned shit. Get outta my way!" I said, "You bring your ass on with me right now." You know? And his wife came up to me and said, "Ron, is everything going to be okay?" I said, "Just fine. We got a plane here." And they started arguing between themselves about who's going to go where. Rich wanted to go onto Paris, and his wife wanted to go home. And so I said, "I'm not going to stay here and screw around with you, Rich. If your wife is going to get on the plane. And you can come or you can get the hell out of here, you're about ready to blow something that's just going to cost us a lot of problems." I said, "Now, you got your damn choice." And so I went back and told Mr. Perot and Col. Simons. And Col. Simons' first reaction was, "Kick his ass and put him on the plane." So I was going to do that, I really wanted to do that anyway because he was making such a commotion. And Ross says, "Maybe we better go over and talk to him." I think either Jim or the colonel or someone, because I wouldn't

RD (CONT): then we took off. And on our way to . . . on our way home, that's when we experienced a problem with the plane. Is that correct?

RF: And were you up in the cockpit at this point?

RD: Paul Chapperone was. He wanted to see what a takeoff looked like. And he was really into the plane, you know? And I was communicating with him, I was the only one. I was really in charge of communicating with the captain and the co-captain to see what was going on with the plane and making contact with Dallas via radio. Jim and I both did that a couple of times. Our radio--our side van radio had gone out and we made telephone communications via the pilot's microphone. But we finally got Merv Stauffer, but it was a bad connection, and we had to say . . . say what you want and say, "Over," and wait till they say what they want and say over. And we just washed that out. Then we started experiencing problems with the aircraft that time. An hour into the flight or so, we started experiencing problems. It started getting hot, and we started noticing that the windows were steamed up, then all of a sudden the cab got cold, started really feeling cold. So I talked to the captain. The captain said, "There's not severe problems, but there's bad problems." He said, "We have to land." And so I was thinking, in the back of my mind, I said, "Hell! I thought the rough part was going to be getting those people out of Iran." You know, "and now we got over that hump, I got to go back and tell Mr. Perot we

RD (CONT): got to make a emergency landing." And so before I go back there and tell him--he really liked a lot of details--"I need to ask you some questions." The captain was getting kind of upset because he was busy, you know, he was busy working the instrument panel, finding out where he was at. I said, "Captain, I'm going to ask you one more question. Do we have to land?" He says, "Yes! Now leave me alone." He was really busy, he and this co-captain were really busy. And he had made Paul Chapperone come out of the cabin and everything like that. So they went to work, and I told Mr. Pero that there were problems, I told him the magnitude of the problems and that we had to land. And he said, "Well, where are we going to land at?" I said, "I forgot to ask him." I went back and he said Heathrow was . . . Was it Heathrow that we landed . . . ? He said Heathrow was the closest and probably give us permission to land. So he contacted Heathrow, and they really gave him a bunch of crap about making a landing there, and it was a private jet, and everything like that. And he said, "It's an emergency." So they gave him authorization to land. And so, at that time he had to dump all the gasoline that he had; he was carrying too much weight. And he opened the tanks, and it started dumping gasoline. He didn't think that he could get the gates closed. He said, "If these gates don't close, we're in deep trouble." He said, "I been dumping it all across the ocean," and everything like that. So we started making our descent, and just to look at those guys, I was paying

RD (CONT): attention to what they were doing, they were doing it all on just pure knowledge. They had no instruments that were working hardly at all. And it had really raised a lot of stink at Heathrow, because they had the customs people there, they had the police, and when we finally landed, there was more people getting on the plane than was already on the plane. You know? The customs and the police, it was the mayor, I don't know who-all was with them. They wouldn't-- the first thing they said was, "You can't get off the plane." It was cold, we were hungry, we were scared. And they looked at us and determined, basically, that we couldn't get off the plane. So we, you know, we looked like shit, really. And so . . . and Ross Perot, Ralph Boulva, and Pat Scully talked to some people, and they went back and they came back and they said, "Okay. They'll let you off the plane." So we got off the plane, we got a hotel room, got several hotel rooms, and Ross called to Dallas to . . . to arrange to have us go out on the first Braniff flight. And the next morning we . . . we made it to the airport and they put us on the flight and sent us home. But it was a little scary there when we were making the landing, and he said he didn't know if it was going to come okay or not. Only thing that was going through my mind was that all this time we'd been practising, we thought the most dangerous part of it would be the extraction. Here it is, everything is over, we've pulled this off now--I had a hard time believing that we'd pulled this off--and to find out that we were experiencing severe mechanical problems with the aircraft. And that really

RD (CONT): kind of wiped me out. And on the plane, we had first-class seats. They reserved the whole first-class area for us. Well, the number of seats we had, you could put other people up there with us to complete the first-class area. But when they saw us, they didn't want to give us first-class. They said, "You're not getting those people on first-class, are you shitting me?" And Ralph said, "I don't want 'em to be bothered," and he said, "I don't think you have to worry about anyone bothering 'em in the first place. Where in the hell did you pick 'em up at? Where are they--who are they?" Ross said, "Well, I don't want to go into that, but I'd like to get them on the plane." And we all got on the plane and everything. I know I hadn't had a bath in several days. What about you, Jim?

Jim: I got . . . I got cleaned up . . .

RD: In the hotel that morning.

Jim: Somewhere along the line, because I was in Frankfurt, dressed in a business suit, cause I was with the press.

RD: That's right.

Jim: I put on a suit. So I must have cleaned up somewhere along the line.

RD: You were about the only one. Cause I know that I had . . . I think the first couple of days, I smelled a distinct odor, and then didn't smell it anymore. (laughter) So it went

RD (CONT): away and I know I didn't change anything! And everybody else smelled just like me. Nobody was complaining anyway. So, anyway, the stewardesses were on the plane and I think the captain of the plane, of the charter aircraft, stayed behind with the aircraft. And the stewardesses and all the rescue team and all the people that were over in Iran, hostages and all, we were on the plane. And we were jubilant. At that point we really felt safe. We were on a real good aircraft and very comfortable, they fed us good. Ross had took the restrictions off on drinking and everything like that, just said, "Relax and do whatever you want to do." And so we went up to the top, and you can drink as much as you want to. And the captain was even nice to us, he came up and talked to us. At one point the stewardess . . she was really tired, she was laying down on one of the cots that was . . that was up in the lounge area. And one of the businessmen that did opted to take that seat anyway in the first-class area, came up and he was having a drink and everything like that. And it was me and Bill Gatton and someone else standing there at the bar. And this guy runs his hand up the stewardess's dress. You know? And she turned around and so I happened to see it. And I was a little pissed there, I had gotten a little beside myself and they hurried him downstairs and threw him out in the coach part. But the captain was up there too, he saw what was happening. But then we landed in . . in PFW. And I had no idea what the hell was going on. Cause they kept saying Ross Pero's people get off first. And at this point we were

RD (CONT): always leary of everything at that point. We got off and I saw all of EDS's security and police and things like that around, and I didn't know if they were going to arrest us for what we'd done or . . . or have a motorcade for us or what, you know? Everybody's telling me, "Go this way, go this way," and I knew the faces, they were EDS security. And we all went out front, and seen Paul and Bill's wife, and all these big Mercedes-Benz buses, and stuff like that. And they were scurrying me away and saying, "Ron, you get on this bus." And I got on the bus, and I walked up there and I saw my wife. And by this time she was . . . got a little hump in her stomach and she's got on maternity clothes and everything like that. And everybody was crying and screaming. And that's when . . . It really hadn't struck me at what had happened, but I was so confused I got back off the bus and went down there with the colonel. He was standing there. And Paul and Bill came in last. And their little boy--this little girl comes running up, saying, "Daddy! Daddy, Daddy!" And that's when it really hit me. You know, and that's when I went back to my wife and hugged her. And I really got choked up at that point. And the colonel and Ross were standing there. I saw Colonel Sand talking to Mr. Pero, pointing to Bill and Paul. And that's when I really got choked up. Nothing had bothered me all that time until I saw Bill and Paul get back with their families. And that was a good feeling. Then we went in and Ross had a press conference. I guess he had promised the press if they kept

RD (CONT): this story in until he got back he'd have a press conference for them. And it was so many EDS employees and people being nice to us out there and stuff like that. But it still didn't . . . it still didn't dawn on me what we had done. And we were all sitting around talking, I guess. When the plane landed, King Taylor come and asked me. He says, "Davis, what do you think you're going to do when you get back out there?" "Hell, I don't know. I can't visualize sitting behind a desk anymore." (laughter) But we were all concerned about what the next move would be. It was kind of hard, because we went through a lot of intensive training and we had gotten close to each other, and I knew Jim was going to go back to Green Bay or someplace, or Pat was going to go back to EDS world, and Jay Coburn was going to stay in Dallas, and I was going to go back to--go to Philadelphia, and Ralph Boulva was going to stay in Dallas. We were a unit, we were a team, and we had ate and slept together, and knew a lot about each other. And it was kind of hard getting used to it, being in the States and not being able to carry a pistol or anything like that. And it was really a strange situation. I don't know, it was kind of hard to adjust. When I came into Philadelphia and had to really work and stuff like that. It was just really hard for me. It's really difficult. And I really--it still didn't dawn on me what we had done. And I know that I was satisfied with what we had done, but to us it didn't seem like a real big deal, it seemed like something that needed to be done, something that was organized real well, something that we had

RD (CONT): put a lot of thought into, and something that we had put a lot of money into, and we pulled it off and nobody got hurt. And we really pulled it off. And it wasn't bullshit. It was actual things that we done. I used to hear the colonel say, "You guys don't work like a bunch of white-collar guys anymore." And that's when I knew that we were working as a unit, because he used to have some concern about whether or not we were still businessmen or were we commandos. And he started seeing the way we were shooting those targets and the way we were doing it, and the reasons we were doing it, and he really thought that he had a group there that he could depend on, and he depended on us. He'd tell us to do something and we'd do it. And--

RF: What did you think of him?

RD: I'd learned to look for him every morning, you know? First when I met him, we all were managers in some area or other, all the team were managers and used to doing things basically their own way. And making their own decisions or when a decision was made that you didn't like, you were openly verbal about it and things of that nature. We started off doing it . . . doing that, you know? We all had our own opinions about what should be done and what locations certain things were, and we didn't agree on anything, didn't agree on our approach and everything like that. And the colonel just sit there and gnawed on his cigars and waited till there was a moment of silence. And then that's when he would say something. He would never

RD (CONT): say that Jim had a bad idea or I had a excellent idea, my idea was better than his or anything like that. He would say, "Now wait a minute. Maybe he's got something here." You know? And he would sum it up, whatever we had came up with, you know? "Okay, this is the way I see it." Then he would tell us back what we had said and talked about and things like that. And he'd say, "That sounds good. Maybe we should work on that." And so after working with him for a couple of days, we started talking to him and saying, "Colonel, you know I was thinking last night. This is what I came up with." He said, "Let's talk about that when we get down to this point." We'd started learning a sense of respect for him. And you know it was just like everybody called him the colonel? And that's what he meant to us. He had actually come in and within a day or two days, taken charge. We had started looking at him like . . he was our colonel. You know, he wasn't brutal, you know, to us. But you could see a cold side to him, you know, like it would probably be a bad idea to . . to do something that he didn't like. And we all understood that. He could talk bad, and everything was "Goddamn". He would bite you, he would cut you, he would do anything to you and it probably wouldn't make a hill of beans to him, you know? He was cold, but he gave me a sense of security. I felt that I was absolutely safe in what we were doing, because he was there. I got to that point that, I had built up my confidence in him so much, that I felt that if Russia was next, and the colonel's in

RD (CONT): charge, I think we can handle it. (laughter)
But I had not, at no point, Ken, did I ever feel that we were going to fail. Because the colonel would not allow us to get down to that point. He always kept the morale up by either complaining about the food that we are eating, or telling us some experiences of his, or he worked right along with us when it was cold outside and we were practising and shooting. I would go back. Jim was our leader in this shooting area, we'd shoot . . . Oh, it was so cold out there, we had on cold weather equipment gloves, and we would shoot, and when it was somebody else's turn we would go back into the shed and shiver and everything like that. The colonel was out there all the time. And we'd be out on the pistol range sometimes two or three hours. And he would stand right out there--

HOTFOOT #58 -- Ron Davis, November 23, 1981

RD: But Jim would tell me; I would say, "Jim, I got a problem." You know, I wanted to get right in there, in the bullseyes. I was hitting vital areas, but I was trying to hit all bullseyes, and I wasn't doing good. But the colonel saw some improvement but it wasn't enough for him to say, "Well, Ron doesn't need this extra training." So Jim just took me over, basically, to myself and gave me six or seven clips and put me on the ground to shoot. It was cold too. And my shooting ability came up something like 35%, I was more

RD (CONT): accurate laying down firing at the target than I was standing up, much more. So . .

RF: Still using the Wolk? *Wolk*

RD: Yes. So as a result of me being the number one jumper, the person that was going to jump over the fence, and lay down and provide cover for the hostages, it was the best position for me, I was much more accurate that way. So the colonel and Jim decided that if that's what I was going to have to do I'd better practise that way. And then I became very, very good at that point. So the colonel said, "Okay, fine," because he was kind of questioning my ability to handle that weapon. So after Jim had told him I was doing better at shooting laying down, he was kind of satisfied with that. But he would stand out there the whole time, wait till the last minute shoot, then he would come in. And he never showed signs of being fatigued, tired, weary, cold. I don't know what was in his blood. You know? He didn't even seem like he was cold. He would come in and say, "Okay, you guys ready? Ready to go home?" Fine, we were standing there shivering like that. "Well, Goddammit, let's go." We'd get in the car and we'd go. And at one time he really showed us out. He was teaching us how to fire, and we were shooting Ranger Staffs, they were long as a tube. And, hell, guys were wide to the right, high, low, to the bottom, sometime it didn't hit the damn target. The colonel said, "Shit. Give me that." He'd take one hand: pow-pow-pow-pow-pow-pow-pow-pow!

RD (CONT): All right in the damned center of the target. And he was just extraordinary. The things that he would say would paint a picture for you when he was talking. "Okay. Let's look at it this way. Say for instance that we went into Teheran and this happened." You know, he had painted a whole picture for you. "We need to set up our . . . some type of explosion to have them to look in another area while we do something else." And he'd paint a whole picture of what was supposed to happen. So when he finished, you automatically knew what you were supposed to do; I knew what Jim was supposed to do, what Jay was supposed to do. And I felt really comfortable about what we were doing. He never even gave us half the opinion, you know, he never gave us the idea that something would go wrong. You know, he just made us feel real comfortable. We always knew that the risks were there, that something could happen, they always can. But . . . he always gave us a chance to talk about it. He told me, he said, "You're going to be the first one over that fence. Don't you have some reservations about that?" I said, "Yeah." He said, "Good thing you do, or I wouldn't take you with us. And you're going to be the first one over that fence." He said, "Paul and Bill, if they don't come right away, or wonder if they panic and say, 'Well, if I go to that gate I'm going to get shot' or 'If I go to that gate I'm going to get shot,' and you're stuck over there and now the guards have seen you." He'd say, "You're going to be in bad trouble, aren't you?" I'd say, "Yeah. I'll just have to do what I have to do." He said, "Well, that's what you

RD (CONT): have to think about." And he told me, he said . . . I was talking to him, man--one-on-one, and he said, "Your wife's two months pregnant, Ron." He said, "You're going to be the first one over the fence." He said, "Hell, I'm sixty, sixty years old." He said, "I've lived my life." He said, "I don't have anything. An old man like me, I probably don't have but a year, two years anyway. You're a young man. You sure you want to do this?" So I convinced him that I did. But he often talked to all of us and let us know that it was always a way that we could get out of it. Now that it's over, you think back on the type of man that he was, and we had a chance to work with him, and to really see what an American military leader was like, was really the most impressive part . . . one of the most impressive parts of being a member of the team. But we really worked with smart people. Jim, Pat Scully, Jay Coburn, and King Taylor; all of those people I have a lot of respect for. And Ralph Boulva. Because there was never a time where anyone really got off the track. I think I was probably about the youngest and most inexperienced in . . . _____ like hiding his cigar and stuff like that, but I found out that's a bad idea. We were--We were in the boathouse, the Grapevine. I kept telling the colonel, I was really starting to like the colonel, I told the colonel, I said, "Well, look. You know, you smoke too many cigars, it's bad for your health." And he'd never say anything but looked at me real wierd and kept puffing like "if you take my cigars I'll kill you". So he

RD (CONT): had one pack there, but he had probably about five packs in the kitchen. So I took them and I hid them in the washing machine--dish washer. And so the colonel was smoking, and he smoked five of them in twenty minutes, I guess. He'd take a draw off his cigar and he'd pull ashes that long. He would draw on it, man, and you could just see that cigar melting away, you know? And he'd smoke it all the way down to the damned tip. Sometimes the tip'd melt on the end because of the fire he started, you know, before he put it out. Well, he wouldn't put it out, either. He'd take it and light another one, and then put it out. But he went through that pack so damn fast that he said, "Where's my cigars, Jay?" Jay said, "Well, I just had 'em. Some on the table." You know? So he couldn't find 'em. So I thought I was doing something smart. But I didn't really know how into those cigars he was. He said, "Well, Goddammit, everything has to cease." You know. "I have to go get me some cigars." So he was smoking people's cigarettes, right? He'd take two puffs off the son-of-a-bitch, and it'd be down to the damn filter. He smoked a pack of Winstons in something like an hour. See, you couldn't smoke cigars on the plane, so he had to buy three packs of Winstons for a two hour flight, and he went through a pack and a half, two packs, or something like that, before he got to where he was going. But anyway, he told Jay, he said, "Come on, let's go down to the market, I gotta get me some cigars." So I said, "Colonel, I didn't want you to smoke, but I have your cigars here in the dish washer." And

RD (CONT): I opened it up like that. He said, "You keep those, Goddammit, I'm going to get me some." And he went down and got him two more boxes, and he said, "Don't you mess with these." That isn't what he said, but he said, "These are mine. You can have those right there. Those are yours. These are mine. Keep your hands off them." And I knew he meant it, and I didn't bother his cigars after that. And that's . . . that's about it. My involvement in it and as much as Jim's was basically to coordinate the safe . . . the safety of the passengers that we were going to meet in Frankfurt, and coordinate all the escape routes, and making sure that we never got stopped in customs. We never got stopped by the police. And Gemini also, once we met our people in Frankfurt, if we were going to be followed or tailed or stopped by the police at any point, Jim, basically, number one, would probably have been detained in some way, depending on what he does, he would probably put the onus on himself to get captured and let us go. That was the whole plan. Number one, if police intervened, Jim was supposed to start some kind of disturbance, or either intervene with the police and whoever you had captive, and if push comes to shove, I was supposed to assist him with whatever he was doing.

RF: Basically, I suppose, if you two had committed a crime in Germany, you would have been in trouble but you wouldn't have been sent to Iran. So the main thing was that Paul and Bill should not be arrested.

RD: That's right.

RF: All right, now. Just tell me a bit about your
like
#112 story. When and where were you born exactly?

RD: Columbus, Ohio. 1948. June 23rd. Went all
through school there, graduated from Ohio State University.

RF: What did your father do for a living?

RD: He was an insurance salesman.

RF: Successful?

RD: No. Not successful at--well, we weren't hungry.
He had ten children, he fed us all and educated us all.
Wasn't extremely poor. I would say we were average. I
would say that my childhood life, going to schools, was
probably about on a scale of one to ten, about a seven,
eight. Cause we did live in a nicer neighborhood. I think
there was a little bit more lucky than it was successful,
because my father had an average job, but we had older brothers
that were single, that were military . . . career military men,
and they were sending allotments and stuff like that to help
us. We come from a large family and was--it was always into
us that the older . . . the older guys would help out, especially
the ones that were not married. So . . .

RF: There were ten children and you were . . . what number?

RD: Ten.

RF: You were the last of ten children.

RD: That's right.

RF: Okay. And what was your father's name?

RD: Leslie Davis. And it was a lot better for me because I was the youngest child, so when I was in high school, things were a lot better. My own bedroom, car, sports, movies, and dates and stuff like that where my brothers can remember when there wasn't a lot of food on the table, and they had to work every evening after school to make sure that the lights were still on and everything like that. So . . . my childhood was good. My father's child was average but with a little help and all the kids out of the way at that time, you know, it was a lot better for me.

RF: Were you smart in school?

RD: No. About average student. In high school I was smart, in college.

RF: Where did you go to college?

RD: Ohio State University.

RF: What did you major in?

RD: Computer science and my major was education.

RF: What was your first job? When you graduated?

RD: When I graduated from college? Computer operator.

RF: Who for?

RD: ~~Con~~Federated Department Stores. In Columbus, Ohio.

RF: (unintelligible)

RD: No, it wasn't. The first job when I graduated was with Service Bureau Corp., a subsidiary of IBM. I was working there part-time and I got full-time responsibilities after I graduated. And my job there was data timekeeper. All I did was keep the time for the keypunch operators and the computer operators, and I reported directly to the personnel manager. Service Bureau Corp. got hit with a lot of lawsuits because they were a subsidiary of IBM and they were a basic servicer corporation. And they sued IBM because monopolizing the industry. So as a result of that, they closed that off and offered me a job in Cincinnati. At that time I was only 21 years old, and I didn't want to leave home, so one of the customers came in and asked me where was I planning on working. And I told him I didn't know. I was going to go goof off for a while, maybe go someplace and travel for a semi-pro football team. And I was very undecided. And he said, "Well, I have a very good friend that is in charge of the computer center at Federated Department Stores." It was a girlfriend of his. They were older people, in their . . . 50 years old maybe. And so he said, "Why don't you go see her? And she can give you a full-time job. I was talking to her last week and she was

RD (CONT): telling me she had openings." So I went there and I filled out a application, and I really didn't want to work, I wanted to goof off for a while or something like that. School was out, and I wasn't hurting for money. I had about \$800 in the bank, and back then that would make my car payments and my insurance payments for a few months. I didn't have to pay my mother any rent or anything like that. But anyway, I went down and filled out a application, and the lady gave me the job the same day. I told her, I said, "Well, could I wait a week to work?" She said, "There's people here lined up wanting that job, and here you want to wait a week." So anyway I . . . she did give me a week, and I started the job the next week, and as a computer operator trainee. And I worked up from that position to computer operator supervisor, and I went into technical support, to the more technical portion of the computers. And from that job to a management job, but it was in Iran, operations manager for Banco ^{Omeran} in Iran.
83

RF: But who were you working--Were you working for Banco Omeran? No, you must have been working for EDS in Iran.

RD: Well, yes, I was working for EDS in Iran, but the account was the King's Bank in Iran, the Polavee Foundation. He had a bank, and the name of it was Bank Omeran. And he had 232 branches scattered out over Omadan, all over the place. And the basic reason why we won the contract was that, since the Iranians had so much respect for American businessman and and, you know, they just think that you're rich because
#192

RD (CONT): you're not an Iranian. You can go and write a check for \$1000 in one of the branches way out somewhere, and it'd be about two weeks before they got the information in and processed and found out that you had an insufficient fund account or whatever. So it was our duty to install a lowline system that could check your balance from any branch and anything like that. And that's what we were sent over here for. And that was my--

RF: Had you got married young?

RD: Yes. I got married July the 9th, 1977, and I went to Iran July 18th, '77.

RF: What's your wife's name?

RD: Marda. ^{MAHDA}

RF: Marda?

RD: Yeah. M-A-R-D-A.

RF: Do you have any hobbies? What do you do in your spare time?

RD: Racquetball, jogging; martial arts. That's about it.

RF: And you're a blackbelt.

RD: That's correct.

RF: When was the baby born?

RD: He was born July the 18th, 1979. 1980, I'm sorry.

RF: What's his name?

RD: Benjamin. Benjamin Alexander. Fine kid. (laughs)
Matter of fact, my wife is pregnant again. She's due in
January. And she was telling me about all these remarkable
things our son could do and say, and I would come on in the
evening and say, "Ah, I never heard him say those things."
She'd say, "Well, he can . . ." I knew that he was keen, but
my wife experienced some problems last week, and she had
placenta crivia, which is somewhat normal in pregnancy. And
so we took her to the doctor, and the doctor said, "She
needs to stay off her feet, and you need to either call a
maid in or stay home yourself and take care of the little
boy, cause she can't do that, running down the steps, running
back and forth. She's got to really relax." So last week
I spent my first week with Benjamin, taking care of him?
Bathing him in the morning, putting his clothes on, feeding
him breakfast, cooking breakfast and lunch and dinner for
my wife and Benjamin. So my wife was, she stayed upstairs
all the time, with the television on and in bed. And I was
downstairs that morning with Benjamin, fixing breakfast. I
found myself talking to him, keeping a conversation for about
fifteen minutes, till I realized that I'm talking to Benjamin!
(laughter) I mean, it was really strange, cause he was sitting
there on the floor, playing with his ABC's, right in the
kitchen, cause them magnetized stick to the refrigerator. And

RD (CONT): he was asking me questions, and I was answering them but I was busy trying to keep the breakfast going, and cause I'm not a good cook, I'm trying to make sure it's nice for my wife and everything like that. And the kid was talking to me. And he's only two--no, he's not even two and a half yet. And I went down--I went upstairs. I said, "Marda, I understand what you're saying. That kid talks. He's smart. He keeps sentences, and you know what he's talking about." You know? But I really got a kick out of that. I really, you know, I really got close to him, and to see how smart kids are like that, cause I never been around kids that much. And the day we took my wife over to the hospital, that Friday, to get her checked because she was spotting, they decided that they needed to keep her overnight. And Benjamin and I were there. And it was about eight o'clock she got checked into her room. We brought her stuff in, and so we had to leave when visiting hours were over. And Benjamin looked at me. He looked at his mother, and he said, "Come on, Mommy. Let's go home." And she said, "Well, Benjamin, you have to go with Daddy, because I have to stay in the hospital." He says, "No hospital. Let's go to our house." He couldn't understand. He had a problem with that, and he squawked a little bit, but we got outside, and he said, "Mummy's staying in the hospital?" I said, "Yes." And I got home and it seemed like everything was okay. And I fixed him something to eat, and we were preparing to go to bed about 10:30. I put his pajamas on, and he said, "Where's Mommy? Mommy in the hospital?" "Yes." But he had a

RD (CONT): hard time understanding that. Yeah, that was sort of strange. But I'm kind of glad--I'm not glad that my wife is ill, but I got a chance to see what she goes through every day, cleaning the house and washing this and vacuuming that and running errands to the store; Benjamin saying maybe he wants an apple and when you give him an apple he don't want it, and he's squawking, and you're asking him, "What do you want?" And he say, "I want an orange." You give him an orange and he don't want the orange. (laughter) So it did a lot for me because even after we went back and talked to the doctor, the doctor said, "Well, your wife can get up out of the bed, but she's not supposed to do this, this, this, this." All she's supposed be able to do is get up out of the bed. So Saturday, you know, she got up and we were . . she was doing things like getting the newspaper up off of the floor, beds in the family room, you know, I'd lay on the floor and read the paper, she was doing those things, and I found myself going back into the kitchen, cleaning the dishes off, putting them in the dishwasher and cooking breakfast and things like that. And we had the house cleaned up by 10 o'clock. Usually take her till 12, 12:30, or 1:00. But with two people doing it, it's a lot easier, and I still bathe Benjamin, put his night clothes on him and put him to bed, things like . . I think I'm apt to continue to share those responsibilities, because now I see how much work it is, and especially for a pregnant woman, that's a heck of a lot of work. And it also tells me that I need to share in his, you know, getting older and getting to know him, those things. But he was conceived

RD (CONT): in a . . . she, she conceived him alone, but we have the baby in the New Jersey. And I gave--matter of fact, I delivered him.

RF: Oh, really?

RD: Yeah, the hospital in New Jersey is Washington Township Memorial JFK branch. And they're only . . . they're one of the three hospitals in the United States that will allow the husbands to actually deliver the children, their own children. And, but you have to have several meetings with the doctor, and go through the Lamas classes. Lamas classes that his people have. And he brought me in a couple of times and told me what was expected of me. Told me about the vital organs and the placenta and all kinds of medical terms. And actually told me how to deliver a baby. And so when it came down to that, man, I was all . . . man, I was ripped, I was about ready to back out, he came in; he said, "Ron, you're about ready to have a baby." You know, and he said, "Marda's ready, she's in the delivery room, you need to come in with me and scrub up." And my heart immediately started beating, you know. And sometimes when I get excited cold perspiration that run down my arm, you know? And so I went in, and he showed me how to scrub up. And you had this brush to clean your fingernails and wash your hands, hot water and everything like that. And you turn around and the nurse is there to dry your hands off. And put these rubber gloves on, you have to hold your hands up like that and snap these rubber

RD (CONT): gloves on you, right? So I think that everything is going fine now. I got scrubbed up and I feel just like a doctor. I got on my gown and everything like that, and he's walking out like this, and I'm walking out behind him. And I get in the deli--the de--excuse me, the delivery room, and my wife is there, she's up on the table. And I do like this. And I say, "Uh-oh." And I have to go out again and scrub up again and put on more rubber gloves. And they said, "Don't scratch, don't touch anything." Yeah. And I went in and I started taking pictures. And then when it was time to deliver, the nurse asked to hold the camera while I delivered and she'd take the pictures of the delivery. And he said, "You've played football before, you know how a quarterback gets underneath the catcher--the center?" "Yes." He said, "Get down and you do just about like this. Right?" I said, "Yeah." _____ #113-114 _____ . He said, "The head's going to be face down." And he said, "When the head comes out, I want you take the suction cup, open his mouth, or open its mouth, and remove all the mucous and everything like that. And take his head, take his chin, and pop his head and pull him out." And I said, "Oh, no, I can't do that." He said, "It'll be easy. Just like opening a drawer." So I pulled him, and his right shoulder came up. Then he said, "Now you want to take your hand and put it under his shoulder." And I got under his lower head and his shoulder, I pulled him right on out of there, and he came out, steam was coming all over the place, man, and everything like that. And I cut the umbilical cord, and . .

RD (CONT): and tied it down. Put a clamp on the end of it and everything like that. He was instructing me all the way. But . . . then he said, "Just put the baby up on his mama's stomach." And my wife was laying there, I put the baby . . . It's not as bloody as you'd think, and there's almost no blood at all, but he was steaming and, you know, he was just looking at her, sucking his thumb, put his thumb in his mouth and looking around and everything like that. And it was just beautiful. I guess, you know, they say that you get a closer bond when you do that, but I don't think so. Every father loves his child and same with mama probably.

RF: Which was . . . which was more tense: entering Turkey or delivering the baby?

RD: Going into Turkey. (laughs) There was some scary points in that, so I'm glad I'm not there now.

Jim: Babies get born all the time.

RD: That's right. Plus we were concerned over in Turkey whether or not we were going to get back to Vonn. It was kind of scary over there. They knew that we were up to something.

RF: Okay. Listen, I think we've done it!

RD: Okay. I read--