

11-5-1981

HOTFOOT #20-1

TAPE #20--SIDE A

INTERVIEW WITH BILL GAYDEN (Continued from tape #16)

KF What did you tell them?

BG We tell them we didn't make a phone call. So they take us to the phone company to make the phone call, but it's closed and you can't get a call through. And then we are wondering around up in the mountain and come to this compound, and we had trouble getting into, and then after a while we do get into it. We don't know exactly what's going on, but we get taken up to this building. And you've got that story, where it turns out to be The Shah's guest house, up the lake there, a very nice place. The thing that impressed me about that was that that made them so mad, because we walked into it it was colder than hell. When we walked into it the heat was off. And the Shah had not stayed there in three years. And that just drove them up a tree. The thing that impressed me was in...the Shah's suite was here and the guards rooms were like a motel, but just in the same hall, right out in front of his, and we stayed in those. And there were two single beds in each one. And slippers under each of the beds. And this thing hadn't been used in three years. So we had quite a nice night that evening. We we all bone tired, and we wound up going to sleep. Getting up the next morning...The next morning we are trying to get away from them to make our own way to Rezaiyeh. But the night before there had been alot of fighting up toward Rezaiyeh, which we had known about from (? can't understand, sounds like Gloria)...and they decided that they were going to escort us to Rezaiyeh. And they didn't have a vehicle. So we go to the police station, and I don't know, they can't get one there, we go somewhere else, can't get it there. So finally we're back at the police station, and they wind up with this big white ambulance, that they then, with felt markers, write down the side of it, which I believe said, you know, People's Revolutionary Party of Bahavad, or something like that. I don't know exactly what it said, it was something like that. And we set off for Rezaiyeh. This red light

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Belawan

Mahesh

BG twisting as we are going...here we are trying to be inconspicuous, us
cont. in a pair of matched, green Range Rovers with a white ambulance,
with guards with machine guns in the car, and four guys in the
ambulance. And we don't get very far out of town until we pull over
on the side of the road to this little restaurant. I asked the guy, I
said what are we stopping for. He said "don't you all want breakfast?"
We finally convinced them that we didn't, that we were in a hurry. So
we get up to Rezaiyeh, we have to stop for an hour to get the
ambulance fixed, because at a road block the ambulance ran through
the contentino (?) wire and screwed the ambulance up. But then take
us in, finally take us to this...they park us on this main street while
they are looking for a hotel. I think that's what they are going to put
us in. And then comes this, all this cheering and everything else, and
these guys come running back over and said, lock your doors and
turn your heads away from them. These people were very nice to us,
these people from Bahavad....And they stood up and made a wedge
across the front of the bus, and then all of a sudden comes this pour
of people, and what they were doing was, they had just...either that
morning or late the night before had just taken over the Army, and
they were running the Army through the street. Now it wasn't running
them through the street in a beating sort of way. They had disarmed
the Army, and the Army had decided that the better part of valor was
to join to revolution. So all these soldiers were running down saying
the equivalent of leave the Khomeine, you know. That went past in a
while. Then we went to another building and sat for a while, while
they were trying to do something. I guess find the proper
authorities. And then they take us down to this mosque where we go
into this...and that's another place mobbed with people, everybody
just about...Old grizzled men, and the bandoliers with the leather
bandoliers, all the national geographic pictures you see of the...they
are right there. So we go in the mosque, and that's when Reza really
starts to perform. At one point in there they make us move away from
the door, because they are afraid some of the people outside seeing us
were getting upset, and might hurt us. So we sat in the corner. It
turns out that they try to check us out in Tehran. And we've got this
piece of paper from Bahavad. And I guess we're not on anybody's list

CONSPIRACY

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BG in Tehran, that they are talking to, because Bill and Paul's name
cont. weren't on the list now, because we had these other two passports of
the people they became. So after a while we are allowed to leave
there. And on the way out...it was really the only physical exchange
that I saw, was a pretty good sized guy comes in and he's got a pistol
in his hand, and he walks up to Jay and pokes Jay in the chest. For
some reason every one of them thought Jay was a Russian. Everywhere
he went in Tehran they thought he was a Russian. But immediately
when this guy hit Jay, pretty hard, twice..well immediately a couple
of our guards came up and got him away. So then they took us back
to this hotel and stuck us way up in the back end of it. And we got
up there and they served us lunch, nice lunch, kind of a barbecued
chicken and rice, you always have rice. And then we spent the
afternoon up there, and trying to nap, talking, not excited to be in a
place we've never been, you know, with all that was going on, what
the hell we were going to do next.

Rashid

KF [REDACTED] was off negotiating.

Rashid

BG And [REDACTED] was off doing something, whatever it was, I don't know, he
was off trying to figure out...Later, [REDACTED] told me later that he had
driven up to the border. So he comes back...Oh, we're downstairs
eating dinner about 8, 8:30. [REDACTED] comes back in...but now we're
worrying about him, because he's been gone so long. And we're really
getting worried, because without [REDACTED] we've got no way to communicate
or anything else. Not a problem in Tehran, because so many people
spoke English, but you get up in the mountains and it's pretty
tough. And you do stick out. So [REDACTED] came up to the table as we were
sitting there eating, and he said, enjoy it, it may be your last meal,
which jerked all of our head toward him. He said, oh, no, I mean in
Iran. So then we get packed up, he's got a bunch of Khomeine
posters, by the way, I've still got one of the ones we had on the
truck, that I stuck in my brief case when we got into Turkey. And we
take off. Well, we made like two blocks until there was a road
block...now road blocks, there are different road blocks in different
parts of the country, and Rezaiyeh made of fires in the roads,
burning anything, cars..and all that.

- KF When ^{Rashid} [REDACTED] came back from having visited the border, that was the point at which you, or at any rate the Colonel decided to abandon the horseback plan. Was it?
- BG I don't know. I expect that he had abandoned that before, because of our inability to make contact with one of the guys we were supposed to go contact in Rezaiyeh, we couldn't find this friend, okay.
- KF Oh, this was the professor.
- BG The professor, the cousin. And I think he was fairly critical, but I don't know who all they met up in the northern part up there, but I was always under the impression that he was kind of critical.
- KF But who had looked for him?
- BG All of us had, we had his phone number, we called his house. ^{Rashid} [REDACTED] had gone to his house.
- KF I see.
- BG He was, you know, I guess if there is any hole in the plan is that if there is really a revolution everybody is going to be doing something except what you expect them to be doing.
- KF Plus, of course, it didn't seem....
- BG Well, plus by this time we had made 500 miles, or however far it is by car, very successfully.
- KF Yes. The horseback plan was because you anticipated the greatest problems on the border. But in fact, you had had border type problems all the way. However, none of those people had had a stop list with Paul and Bill on.

BG None of them had authority either.

KF Yes. So it's clear by now that Dadgar's authority, whatever it is, does not appear to extend out this far.

BG Yes, it didn't. Dadgar's authority brings him to the States and brings him to Vienna.

KF But it doesn't take him to the...

BG I sat at end of this classroom two weeks ago, September, or the first of October sitting at a table with him sitting where you are and me here.

KF I'm surprised you didn't punch him in the mouth.

BG Oh, well. You know, I'd never met him before, so I didn't, you know, the world goes around. He has a very nice personality.

Anyway, so we take off, there is kind of a fire, so we can't go the route we wanted. And once again, all of a sudden, [REDACTED] is in the car in front of us, and he's slowing down and waving. We're on this deserted street and he waves this taxi down. Goes out and talks to the driver and he tells us to pull over and turn off the lights. So it's maybe ten minutes later before we realize what he's done. The taxi..he said, can you lead us out of town. And the taxi driver said let me go take my fare home, and come back. And the guy did. So we go to...we hit one little road block where they hardly stop us..they didn't stop us or anything else. The only scary thing about it was, 13, 14 year old kids or 17, with automatic weapons. And a few hundred yards beyond them, we stopped and gassed up again. And of course, we are gassing up everytime we get a chance, because we don't know where we are going and what not. And we payoff the cab driver there. We gave him 300 Riyals I think, which was about five dollars (sounds like he's saying five dollars, but not sure)...And then

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BG we take off and we make excellent time going up this dirt road to the
cont. border. It was really quick and long. This is from Rezaiyeh up to
Sahro. I guess we...I never really figured it, but I doubt if we were
more than five miles from the border when we come to this bridge.
And they stop us. And they were laying and waiting for us, they
could see us coming up those mountains for 30 minutes. They had the
ambush set there. They had two guys out, with weapons, and a chain
across the bridge, and they stop us. And as soon as they have us
stopped then about 50 of them surround us. Plus, they told us later
that they had seen...part of our trouble was, they had seen Reza's
car go up earlier in the day, and come back, and now it was coming
up again late at night. So they, after alot of clabber, take us out of
the vehicles, put us in theirs, take ours and theirs, and take us up,
oh, two or three miles from this bridge, up in the mountains to this
little village. Pile us into this room, and of course, here's the chief,
and you've got an assortment of everything up there. All of these
guys with guns. And we're in this big room and it's a house, really an
old Persian house and there is no furniture, and this carpet is on the
floor and rolled up bedding pushed to the side. So we're ringed
around on the floor there, and they either send somebody to tele-
phone, or something, but they...we're sitting there waiting for them
to check out our stuff. And the guy's got our passports in front of
him, and he's looking through them. And we're sitting there, all
sitting on the floor. So finally that comes back and we're okay. So
then we have to have tea with them. In the middle of tea they want us
to take their picture. And I said, Keane, go get your camera. Keane
whispers to me, there's no film in it. Go get your fuckin camera. So
we took away. I wish there had been film. We would have had some
beautiful pictures. And...so then there is this guy that's been dressed
in black, and kind of a real Kurdish type outfit, which was baggy
pants and semi-turbins. And we said, well now we get to go. So we
are getting ready, and he said, no. Just scares the heck out of all of
us. Then this little thin smile, he speaks just a little English, he said
village rule, two teas. So we have to have another tea. And then they
escort us away and take us up, just out of the middle of nowhere they
stop, and they say, this is as far as we can go, that's another tribe.
So we're...

KF But you're back on the road to the border.

BG Yes, but we're out...we're on a little dirt road in deserty high mountains, with snow up above us, and nothing out there. No houses, no lights, no nothing. We're going along about 40 miles an hour, and all of a sudden there are these bright lights. And guess what it is, in the middle of nowhere, another filling station. So we go sailing past the filling station, not realizing that there are guys in there. And guys come sailing out of the filling station with guns, so we, you know, rather than having them start to shoot at us we pull up to a sharp halt. So I'm talking with them...put is in, they get in our vehicles and they take us into another little village. Well we didn't know it, but this turned out to be the village that ^{Rashid} had been to. And these guys were really, they were shouting and screaming at each other and getting into big arguments, and all, over us, etc., only for a very few minutes though. And then the chief walks out and sees Reza, and comes over and shakes his hand and all of this, and we're gone in 30 seconds after that. And then we hit the border. And there's no one at the border. I mean, these four men with guns, not part of the border patrol, could care less whether we went to Turkey or not...they're not going to let us cut the chain to cross the border though. So we had to leave the vehicles. And we forgot the money the first time we went over. ^{Rashid} came back and got it. It got cold in the middle of the night and ^{Rashid} came back and got sleeping bags.

KF He did.

BG (say's something while laughing, and I can't understand)...and that was it. Then we stuck around there. I really, you know, I think alot of us got mad at the border in Turkey, I don't know why...well, we reached the border within 30 minutes of the that that we had said that we would be there.

KF Oh really. What time had you said you'd be there?

BG We would be there at midnight. Days before the Colonel said we'll be there at midnight. We were there at 12:30 and there was nobody there. Number one, that ticked us off. And number two, it took 13 hours to get us a way from the border. We stayed at the border almost as long as we were travelling, you know. So that was...and you're out, and now you want to get moving, and hell, I'm no longer in Iran, I'm supposed to be somewhere where I can do whatever I want to do. Why the hell can't we get this show on the road, and all this jazz. But then finally we drove to Van.

KF But there was nobody there to get mad at.

BG No, a couple of Turkish guards. And you know, the rest of it is just...

KF And the bus came.

BG The bus came, we got in the bus and went with Ralph, and Scully showed up there.

KF Schwebach.

BG I can't remember whether Schwebach was at the bus or not. Scully showed at the bus.

KF Davis.

BG And Davis showed at the bus, and Ralph showed at the bus.

KF And the other two are pilots.

BG Yes. Who I never...see, I never even knew anything about any of that. These were just...I never could, during that period of time we're coming out, until we're half way back across to the States on Braniff, I never could figure out, you know, who in the hell are these two guys.

BG There's an interesting story in Van. Did anybody tell you the story about how [REDACTED] got the gas can on the plane?

Rashid

KF No.

BG Number one, the gas can is filled with oil. And so here's this petro can that he's trying to check on the airplane. Of course, there' no airline in the world that's going to let you check a petro can. He finally explains to them...they let him do it. We asked him, [REDACTED] how did you get that can on here? He says, well, he wouldn't tell us at first. Finally he said, well, I told them it was oil American rubble and it wouldn't make them smell so bad. (I really couldn't understand the last sentence, but that's what I got out of it). I mean, this is a very street smart little kid. He is the real street smart one of the whole crowd.

*the oil American ruble
m that makes them
smell so bad*

KF When did the money come out of the can?

BG Ankara. At the motor pool at the Embassy in Ankara. See, we got past

KF Who did that, who took the money out of the can?

BG I think Jay and the Colonel.

KF I must ask Jay about it. I may have it on the tape with Jay. Any more indicents on this trip back?

BG None that...you know, we got to Istanbul and picked up the Colonel and that's about all. It was pretty uneventful up to Frankfurt.. We checked into the Sheraton in Frankfurt. You know, the guys come in on the other plane, and we were worried...we were worrying about that because it was pretty general knowledge that they had to clear Iranian air space before dark. We were getting that back from the States. And then the fear that maybe they'd get picked up in Germany, and so, we

BG stuck them in those sex movies at the Frankfurt airport there, which I cont. thought was a cruelty joke, to take two guys that had been in jail for two after being in jail for two months and stick them in these.

KF I never thought of that.

BG And then we came back and had the problem with the airplane. And you know, of course, the British immigration service thought we were..I don't know what they thought. It was one o'clock in the morning, these scraggly looking guys...

KF Kimini...

BG Kimini...that's right. But way, they pushed us way over to a wing far over, way over on the far side, a part I'd never been into. Then finally we got through and I don't where we stayed, in the host house, or one of those out there that Heath. The next morning was fairly uneventful at the airport. Other than, you know, nobody liked us because, here we were, 15 scruffy guys, with first class plane tickets.

KF Were you all wearing black?

BG No. I had on a pair of jeans, green sweater, you know, some kind of coat, I don't know what kind of coat I had.

KF Ross has got the idea from somebody that you were all wearing black. I thought was a bit unlikely. It would be too conspicuous for Colonel Simons taste. What do you remember about the flight from Gatlich to Dallas? That must have been...

BG Oh, alot of drinking, alot of hell raising. I had Keane trying to count his money, and get it balanced, because I had made Keane responsible for the money back in Iran. So after we got out he started trying to gather up all these five thousand dollars from everybody. So of a

BG month there, where we dealt with cash, in big numbers, buying cars
cont. and all that...once, of course, Gaylord swiped 15 thousand of it on
the plane, and kept it, and finally after we gave him that back, we
were within a thousand dollars of balancing a month's of work, which I
thought was amazing. You know, the way we were throwing money
around, a thousand dollars could have just fell out of the back end of
the truck.

KF What I find amazing is that any of those guys agreed to do it. I would
have told you not to worry about the money in no uncertain terms.

BG So anyway, we were back...I had left with 2 or 3 thousand dollars of
personal money, and stayed over there a month, and had about 4
thousand dollars of personal money in my pocket. We played cards
some, and there had been a huge poker game at the border in Turkey
when we got over there. A big game, you know 2 thousand dollar pots
and things like that. And I'd won some money there from some of the
guys. And so I gave Keane a thousand dollars so that the company
books would balance. I didn't give a damn, I still had a couple of
thousand more that I'd left the country with. And that was kind of the
end of it.

KF Who was waiting to meet you, you personally, at Dallas?

BG My wife and two kids. My wife had kind of knew what was going on,
because, see I talked to her every other day when I was in Iran,
because I was the one having control of the telephone, and I could talk
to her.

KF Okay, lets go over and see if we can pick up a couple of highlights.
When were you most frightened?

BG I guess when those guys stopped us in the mountains. That time and
the day of.....the plane scared the hell out of us.

KF The 707 that Ross had brought.

BG Yes, it really scared me.

KF Tell me why? You must have known what was going on. Some of the people didn't even know...

BG Well, I was asleep in the back. And this gal, one of the girls, the two girls on the plane came and woke me up, and said come help me. So came, and said what do you want me to do? She said I want you to put everything into the heads, I want all the doors cleared. And I said what the hell is happening. And, we're loosing pressure, we're loosing fuel, you know, the damn thing is falling apart. And that scared me, that really scared me. You can't do anything about that. You know, everything else we had done was keep talking, and I can't talk to an airplane. But I guess the guys in the mountains, because I kind of had it...

KF The Kurds?

BG The Kurds. Not the Mahavad Kurds, the Kurds up out of Rezaiyeh close to Turkey. Because I kind of had, you know, I had them figured as being out there in the mountains by themselves, something could happen to us, and no one would ever know it, and they would be two vehicles richer. Alot of the other things either happened to suddenly, or too slowly to be scared about.

KF When did you get happiest?

BG Oh, I guess when we hit Turkey.

KF And you won a thousand dollars. Did you ever screw up very badly at any point?

BG Yes, I screwed up when I heard they wanted their passports, and not getting those two guys out of the country. That was a terrible judgement call call right there. In retrospect I really believed, had I told them, let's go get on Pan Am tonight that we would have never had the problem.

KF Out of that bunch of people who did you get along with best?

BG Keane, Keane and I are very close personally.

KF Anybody you didn't get along with?

BG No, not really. All of the, see, well, not...Davis had worked in Iran, Scully had worked there, all these guys had worked in Iran, all these were people that I'd known, that I'd worked with for years, some of the for...Poche and Schwebach I had known just simply because...I hadn't worked that close...I knew them but I didn't know that that well, because I worked with them personally, but I wasn't around then that much. There wasn't a question whether you...I never knew them well enough. Didn't like the damn dog.

KF I got off Poche, what happened to that dog in the end?

BG He came all the way out, that's why...

KF He came on the evacuation flight?

BG No, yes, he came on the evacuation flight. And that was a big part of the reason that Rich and Kathy wouldn't go on to the States with us, because they were afraid of quarantines and that sort of thing. And they knew they could get the dog into France. In France it's nothing to take a pet...because of people's attitude about them over there. And in retrospect they were really right, because what happened was we went down and England, and then bingo, six months.

KF While all this was happening, was there anything going on at home that you were worried about? Anybody in the family sick...you had no particular worries about what was happening at home?

BG No.

KF Were you ever sick during this period of time?

BG No. We really lived pretty good. We were living at that Hyatt Hotel, eating at the best restaurant in Tehran every night, we were trying to drink their wine cellar dry. You know, they had a nice one, a good wine list. Of course, nobody was going to be able to use it in a few months. You know we really didn't live a very bad life.

KF What was the funniest thing that happened?

BG Oh, I don't know, there were alot of comical, I thought alot of people were comical. The idea of one of your guards being all dressed up in his baggy Kurdish pants and all, being on his way to Stockholm to do his PHD in archeology, and just didn't conquer it, it just is not the thing that's going to happen. One of the guards, that same night, a great big guy, went in...they took over the Shah's suite with us in the guards suite. He came out in a great big robe that had the royal crest on it, and all of that, and his hair was sticking up like this, and then all five of them came out...he did speak English and he came up and said, "complete gentleman." And that just cracked me up. Another thing that really cracked me up, is on the way of to Mahavad, from Mahavad to Rezaiyeh we stopped for one thing or another, and one of the guards tried to get out...well, one of the guards...I was driving and one of the guards, the agriculture guy was sitting by me. And we stopped for breakfast, he went in to check on that place, and when we stopped I stayed in the car and he handed me his gun while he went in to check. Which isn't very important when you've got one and there are six others standing around the car looking at you. My memory of Chiapparone's first comments to me.

KF In the hotel after he escaped?

BG Yes. What was it..."I saved you twelve and a half million dollars, give me break dang it." You had a bunch of people that just have a natural good sense of humor about nearly ending the business, and all of that. Keane Taylor's got a great sense of humor, Jay's got a good sense of humor. And you know, they had the ability to laugh at most anything that happens after its happened. Now my mental image of what we must have looked like driving out of Mahavad with the big white ambulance with the red light and all of that, it just was putting me up a tree.

KF Just to finish. Tell me a little bit about yourself. Tell me when and where you were born?

BG Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1941.

KF Your birth date?

BG May 1st.

KF Who are your parents?

BG What are they?

KF Their names, and what your father did?

BG Gary Gayden. My father was in the cattle business. My mother and father divorced and my mother remarried in the cattlice business. So I had a step father who was in the cattle business.

KF How old were you when that happened?

BG Twelve. And it was twice as many Christmas presents, and they both remarried and that was and affect to me, was that they both remarried people I knew. And went to the University of Texas, went to work for IBM.

KF What did you major in?

BG Business. Went to work for IBM. Stayed at IBM three years and came to work at EDS in 1967.

KF What time did you get married, what stage of this did you get married?

BG About a year after I was out of college.

KF Now what was your first job in IBM?

BG Salesman.

KF First job at EDS?

BG Salesman.

KF How did that happen, did they come after you?

BG Yes. I'd had a couple of pretty good years here in Dallas. I spent my first year with IBM in Shreveport, Louisiana. A couple of pretty good years here, and one of EDS' recruiters came and found me.

KF Okay. What's your wife's name?

BG Cynthia.

KF And children.

BG Two girls. Beth and Catherine.

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KF And when were they born.

BG Beth was born in December of 1968, and Catherine was born in December of 1971.

KF And how do they feel about all of this now. How did the family feel?

BG Oh, you soon forget about it. Was not as big an event in my life as it was with some other people.

KF Okay, I think that's it.

END OF TAPE #20