

TAPE #4
INTERVIEW WITH BILL GAYLORD
NOVEMBER 2, 1981

KF EDS negotiations with the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare are getting nowhere. Who are you talking to there?

BG We're talking to a Deputy Minister of Social Security, with an acting director of the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare. And indirectly they were involving the Social Security Board of Directors, and there were other lesser officials that we were dealing with.

KF You say anti-American incidents begin to occur at the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, and you say XXXXX and in Tehran, xxxx by the signs on the walls. Were there any specific events that you saw, or that you felt were directed at you, rather than just generally?

BG You mean personally, or EDS people?

KF Well, thrust at you personally.

BG No, I had no personal incidents, other than seeing the armed soldiers in the streets, Iranians or other people being hassled by the soldiers. But there were friends of mine that had specific instances. One of them was a girl that I'd gone to highschool with, was married to an American that was in the American Embassy. Their home was one of the homes that was fire bombed. So I had a first-hand conversation with them about what had occurred on that, and that that wasn't just a rumor type story.

KF There was a meeting held in the beginning of December attended by Gayden, XXXXXXXXXX ^{Abolhasan} and several other people. Do you remember the date?--Doesn't matter.

BG No I don't remember it specifically.

Abolhasan

KF Tell me who [redacted] was, and what his position at EDS was?

BG Ahmad was an Iranian who worked in our office there in Tehran. He was from a high middle class family, his father, I believe, was an Iranian Jurist. ^{Abolhasan} [redacted] spoke good English, and was very proficient at translation of Farsic English, which was a very key skill for us in contracts...

KF He was a lawyer then?

Abolhasan

BG No, I'm not sure that [redacted] was a lawyer, his father was a Jurist.

Abolhasan's

KF What was [redacted] actual job at EDS?

BG I don't recall his exact title. He worked for Paul Chiapparone, and I would say, more or less as an Iranian Administrative Assistant, or an Iranian Advisor on how to properly do business there in Iran. He was really someone there to council all of us as to how to best go about doing things.

KF I understand. Okay--On December 5th you learned that the Ministry of Justice wanted to seize your passport and Paul's. How did you learn that?

BG One of our Iranian employees transacting some routine business with the immigration office was told "Do you have the papers for Bill and Paul", and she said no, she would have to--you know, they were elsewhere, they were at the office someplace in the files. She was told, well, "get those papers, and don't raise a big stink about it at the office, don't tell Paul and Bill, but bring the papers back to me directly." And I believe the young lady told this fellow at the Ministry, well, "I can't do that because of the time, it will be tomorrow before I can bring them back." On returning to our office we were immediately advised that they had requested it.

BG That's true. We were having daily meetings with their security people, along with many other companies there in Iran, specifically to get instructions on the safety of our people, what to do, what not to do. So there was an active program underway, which was more than just hoping that they would tell us they were actively doing that on a daily basis. We may have been a bit naive at assuming that they knew what was going on, but yes, I think we believed that they were giving us good council.

KF So, now we've got to the meeting on the 28th of December. Paul is interrogated first. You go upstairs, now obviously, EDS works in the Ministry building. You have what, a floor, two floors?

BG We had several offices in that building..Well we had several offices on the floor that I went up to, we had other office, maybe five or six others throughout the building, and then we were located in other facilities, other buildings that the Ministry had throughout the city.

KF Who did you call? You called an EDS Manager, do you remember who it is?

BG Well, it was

KF The EDS Manager called back. It was he and your lawyer thought had no problem. Who was that lawyer?

BG I tried to remember that, it was a law firm there. And Paul and I had been to the law firm before, maybe one of the other people involved, like Paul, can resurrect the name of that lawyer, perhaps, John Howell, our lawyer, who I think you'll talk to later may have that in his records. It was a law firm in Tehran that supposedly was a student dealing with the the government and dealing with Americans.

astute at

KF Okay, it was a law firm in Tehran retained by EDS?

BG Yes.

KF Have you any idea how much money EDS had in the safe at the Bucharest office?

BG No, I don't have to speculate that it was--how much we had. I think Paul might be a good source for that.

KF Paul indicated that it had been warm in his chair, now this is now after you go back in answering some hot questions. How did you get that message?

BG Well, he said that directly, and yet, there was a bit of humor in what he was saying, because it was very cold in the building, and there was no heat in the building, we had on our overcoats. I think he was making a little bit of levity that although it was very cold, that it had been warm in his chair.

KF I see. So what he said--do you remember exactly what he said? He said it's hot in here, or it's hot in this chair?

BG I asked him how its gone, and he said, more or less "it's been a very interesting session, its gone longer than we thought" and I may have said something about it being cold, and he said, "the chair has been a little warm."

KF That guy asked you about a conflict of interest situation regarding Doctor Kularti. Who's he?

BG He was a Persian that was someone with a data processing background, obviously knowing Iranian business methods and customs, a fellow who had gone to school, or had taught school in the United States, someone, it was a Ministry official that had the Persian/American business background, that we had hired to help us on the contract, and that had provided him under contract to the Ministry that's heard as an official consultant and manager for that.

6

KF Was the suggested conflict of interest?

BG I think that because Dr. Toluti was involved in the administration of the contract, more was being made of his role, more authority was being attached to his position than he really had. I think they were looking for people, who do we have that's in a bad position, and he was one that appeared, at least to Dadgahr, to be in a position of importance and have some involvement with both sides. But that relationship was clearly out of the open, was a matter of record, a matter of discussions in front of a number of people, both American and Persian.

KF But I can't--I don't understand at the moment what they were alleging about him, or what they were--I don't see where there was a suggested conflict of interest. He worked for EDS, he represented EDS.

BG He worked for us, but he was in effect--we signed him over lock stock and barrel to the Ministry to be their--to help them, since they didn't have people with data processing background that he had. He had a great deal of expertise and experience that just didn't exist in the country. He was a very valuable resource, and in effect made him available to the Ministry to act as their representative.

KF Okay. And what they didn't like was an EDS employee effectively working for the Ministry, is that it? That doesn't sound very grave to me, maybe it sounded--was that your impression, you thought it was a bit silly, or am I just not getting the picture very clear?

BG I don't think its a matter of gravity, I thought it was such a matter of open public record, but it was, it was the subject matter of what they were--the questions they were asking me and the way they were being asked, accusatory tone coming back from the interpreter. It was obvious that they were making a great deal of it.

3

KF Tell me exactly where at in Tehran the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare office is?

BG The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare office was on Eisenhower Avenue. It was, I believe we have some maps.

KF Yes.

BG To help show you. That would be the center of the city to the west.

KF There was an EDS decision to evacuate all dependent and non-essential U.S. personnel on December 8th and 9th. 8th and 9th is the date of the evacuation, I presume. Do you remember the date of the decision?

BG The decision would have been of an imminent time frame, that morning, the day before.

KF I see.

BG But we had prepared as a contingency, a very elaborate evacuation plan, if it proved to be necessary. So we were able to put into execution very shortly, the actual evacuation once the decision had been made to do it.

KF So it would have been about the 7th?

BG Yes.

KF Now, at this point you were all--I have the impression so far that you were all fairly confident in the Embassy, in the State Department, that if they told you something you pretty much thought that they were probably right.

KF Okay. Oh, later now....Later you get into this policeman's car, why is it called a Jane?

BG That's the only name that I can remember that they were called as far as a brand name. It's a small French car.

KF I see.

BG Dyane.

KF Oh, Dyane, D-Y-A-N-E.

BG I've never seen it spelled out or written.

KF Is it one of those little citrons that looks very old fashioned?

BG Looks like a box with a little slipping back....Looks like a box. It's like, you know, square size, sloping top, very small car, no springs, you know, no frills.

KF I think it must be a Citron Dyane. Okay, I just wondered. Now, exactly where is the jail at Cocke?

BG The jail at Cocke is in the southern part of the city, almost in the central part of the southern section of the city. It is...

KF It is a street name?

BG Well, I can show it to you on the map, exactly where it's located.

KF We'll do that.

BG It is in effect, part of the building that is the Ministry of Justice. The Ministry of Justice is a huge building that maybe takes an equivalent of a block square, several wings of the building, and in the ground floor, and in the basement, on one side of the building is where this Jail at Cocke is. It's like a holding jail for people that are going to, say appear at the Ministry of Justice. It's not a....

KF So really, its just, so its the Ministry of Justice building and it just happens to be that part of it is a jail?

BG I heard it referred to by some of the Iranians there as the Jail at Cocke.

KF Can you describe that building? What did you see when you pulled up outside?

BG We pulled up in a circular courtyard in the front of the Ministry of Justice, the large, the big burley plain clothesman got out, went inside for maybe ten or fifteen minutes, came out with a slip of paper, evidently he had registered us at the front desk. He got in the car and drove around the block to what I'll now call the back of the building, and on the right hand side there is a park, it's dark, but you can tell from the grass and the trees that there's a park over there. We pull up in front of two steel doors, two metal, steel doors, and there is the rest of, the rest of what's on that side is a brick wall. So you got a big, long brick wall with two big steel doors. We're pulled up on the curb, they get out, a little metal peep hole is opened in the door, they talk, and then the doors are opened and we walk through the metal gates, not drive through, we walk through, and we come into an open courtyard. There's a small one story building off to the left, there's a circular driveway in front of us, there are cars and trucks parked in the courtyard. And then off to the right there is a metal door, and we're taken up to the metal door, and we're taken up to the metal door, they knock on the door, another little peep hole is opened, and the guards inside the jail open the doors, and we're taken inside to a small reception area. There are guards out in that courtyard, armed guards, with it looked like automatic weapons of some type, maybe ten or fifteen on duty, scattered around the courtyard.

KF Okay. So this is the point at which they start to fill out the paper work.

BG Yes.

KF Could you draw me a little plan of the layout of the jail?

BG The upstairs portion where we spent most of our time?

KF Yes, please. This is actually the ground floor.

(Drawing plan)

BG I can do this because I did it in jail.

KF You did it for Simons?

BG No, I kept a daily diary to have something to do during the day, what had occurred that day, and I drew a floor plan, and I think I've got some fairly accurate dimensions in there.

I'll draw you a Persian toilet, there were about four or five of them in the toilet here. They had no European or American toilets, just Persian, three Persian commodes.

KF What are they, holes in the ground?

BG Yes, just a hole in the ground.

KF Like a shower tray, a thing like a shower tray?

(Still drawing plan)

10

BG If this can be drawn, let's say the reception area where we were brought into, come down the hallway, there was an office here where there was a dentist, and perhaps a doctor that were on duty from time to time, and some other administrative offices. Then you came to an interior steel door that was opened by a guard on this side. You come into...this is a hallway, had a little water fountain here, the bathrooms that served this entire floor. This is like a washroom, this is where you go to wash your dishes, or shave in the morning, or may brush your teeth. There are some showers back here, and in the time we were there we were allowed, I think it was one shower in this jail, where everybody in our cell room was brought as a group and we had five minutes, and then the next room had five minutes.

There's a TV set here on this wall. These were two cells that had anywhere from, say five to eight prisoners in each of these. And there are some fairly high ranking ministers of other ministries that we didn't do business with located....several of the people that spoke English that we had been interrogated by the night before had turned...they came out of these cells. There is an office here where the guards, they've got a library, there are some books in there, both American and in ^{Farsi} parson. And then down this hallway there are three more cells, roughly the same size as these, and we're in the third. Cells three, four and five are back here, and then at the very end of the hall there's this little tea room that they built, the Chattanooga Room. It's a little small room, but it's a place to have some social contact, have tea.

The very end of the hall, kind of built into the wall there's a little man that comes once a day and sells things like soap and towels, things like that, so it was like a little mini commissary at the end of the hallway. And then this hallway, there are some racks that have been built into the wall with just some curtains hanging over them, where they keep the linoleum that they eat off of, and some pots and pans and things. These hallways are at the end. Two areas where people just walk back and forth, walk back and forth, or maybe

BG would jump up and down and try to get some exercise. Because at cont. this jail we were only able to go...our room looked out into this courtyard where they had this circular driveway, maybe the front gates and the wall here...going out onto the street...like once a week on Thursday we were able to come out in this courtyard for about a half hour and most of the prisoners would just walk around in a circle to get some exercise, or maybe stand over here and get some sunlight.

KF Okay. Just one more detail on that. How high was the wall outside? You said there was a black wall with steel doors in it?

BG I'm referring to this wall out here, and I'm going to say it was 10 to 12 feet high.

KF The first morning you were visited by Buck Sorenson and Al Jordan, do you remember their positions or titles at the end of the scene?

[Goelz]

BG Al Jordan was an Iranian who worked with Lou Gelts. Lou Gelts was the Council General, and I got a heavy impression that Al Jordan was one of the Iranian's on the staff there at the Embassy. What's the other name?

KF Buck Sorenson.

BG That was the first...we had heard Al Jordan's name before. He was one of the people that had been involved in trying to set up the meeting with Dadghar and had been at the original meeting that we went to at the Embassy where they gave us the advice of let us hold your passports, get your families out of town. So he had kind of been involved from the beginning. Sorenson, that was the first time I had met him, or had heard his name, and as far as I knew he was just another person on the Embassy staff. He was an American who was still in the country, and was willing to come down to the jail to pay us the visit.

12

KF Did you ever find out the name of the Colonel who was in charge of the jail?

BG No, not that it's a secret. We may have heard that it was Colonel XYZ, but it's a name lost in time. He was fairly friendly towards us.

KF And then two members of the law firm that we had been dealing with in Tehran, that was the same law firm we talked about before?

BG At first it was the same law firm that we'd dealt with before, and then Dr. Kuhman was retained, and from then on....

KF Is he a doctor?

BG Yes, he's a doctor.

KF Do you remember the names of the first two lawyers?

BG No I don't. They were members of the law firm we had talked about previously. John Howell may have those in his legal file.

[Gallagher]

KF Tell me who Rich Gallahad is?

BG Rich was an American working for us there in Tehran, had been in the country several years. Worked for Paul Chiapparone as, like and American Administrative Assistant, kind of an American version of ^{Abolhasan} type. He had done some work in...oh, I guess sales calls, helping us establish relationships with government ministries, things like that.

KF Later on, we are visited by Bob Young and John Powell and Jay Coburn. Any dates for those visits?

BG Their first visit would have been several days later following the Sorenson and Al Jordan visit. Somewhere toward the end of the first week we were in jail.

KF Now tell me who Bob Young is.

BG Bob Young at that point in time was our country manager in Kuwait. He was in charge of all of our operations in that country. But prior to that he had spent two, maybe two and a half years in Iran working on our business there. So he was someone who had come back into the country to help get our problem resolved, because of his knowledge of Iran, and also because of his knowledge of the Ministry Contract, what it was all about and who those people were.

KF John Howell.

BG John was legal council from the United States who worked with EDS..worked on EDS business for a number of years, including, I guess some of the...well, he's probably the best source of whether he was involved with our...

KF So he had flown in from Dallas?

BG Yes.

KF And Jay Coburn, Jay must have come from...was Jay still in Iran, or had he come back from Dallas at that point?

BG He had come back from Dallas. He had left the country and come back into the country.

KF I was going to ask you what the food was, but I think you told me later on, didn't you? I've got the clothes description and the food. Oh, there is something here I don't understand. Dr. Siassi was in charge of the rehabilitation area at the Ministry. What's that rehabilitation?

BG Well, if someone has been operated on, or has been injured, rehabilitation is physical therapy, mental therapy.

KF What time did you get lunch in this jail?

BG At about noon. We were on a fairly strict schedule at this jail, as far as time up in the morning, breakfast, you had to be ready for these things at a specific time.

KF And dinner?

BG Maybe 5:30, 6:00 in the evening, which was unusual, because in the Iranian society, if you were going to go out to dinner with somebody, it more typically might be 10:00, 10:30 or 11:00, they were usually late to dine.

KF Now then, obviously Dadghar at this point is trying to make a case that EDS' monthly report is fraudulent somehow. He's trying to make out that you are exaggerating the work that has been done. Tell me about that.

BG Well, when I'd been interrogated the first time, after we had gone through the who are you, what schools did you go to, the preliminaries, there were really only two or three areas of any significance that he asked any questions about it. If you can picture, he would ask a question in farsic, it would be interpreted for me by Mrs. Nourbash. I would talk for five minutes, she would talk for a minute, and he would write for 30 seconds. You know, it obvious that it either wasn't getting through, or...

KF Or he didn't care.

BG Or he really didn't care. So the other area was the Ministry, he asked about the monthly status reports, which was simply that, a monthly status report that we submit to the Ministry, outlining where we stood in each of the projects, percentage of completion, significant events.

KF Explain that in a bit more detail for somebody who is not familiar with what EDS does.

BG One of the projects might have been to...for the Social Security Administration where we were...one of the things we had to do was issue social security cards. Get people registered at their area social security offices, and then issue them social security cards. So, in the social security section of the status report there would be a project such as register people in this particular area office, area office 1, 2 and 3, issue social security cards to people in areas 1, 2 and 3. And there would be like a chart indicating what percentage of that specific project task had been completed, and what its time frame was, when was it supposed to be completed, what have you. And this was for hundreds of tasks.

KF I see. So then EDS would get paid, if it was getting paid, which at this point it wasn't, but when it was getting paid it would get paid according to how many people had been registered?

BG No. The contract simply called for payment upon a time frame, so many dollars a month. The contract obviously had been executed in relation to all of these projects. But this report was really a vehicle, it was more of a monthly reporting vehicle back to the various ministers, one in social security, one in health, one in banking, one in administration, of where their projects stood. You know, the Iranian way is, before signing or approving, whether it's required or not, it's, you give me all the details, that if anybody ever asked me why did I do that, I would be able to show them, here's what it is. So, although it wasn't required by the contract, they wanted, and we had been producing monthly status reports anyway. But this was a status report that reflected our status on the project.

KF Okay. And Dadghar was trying to make a case that these, you had exaggerated the work you had done. Said that you were further ahead than you really were?

BG Perhaps, he didn't say that.

KF I see. Okay. Give me just one more example, that was a good example of issuing social security cards. Give me another example of the project.

BG At the bank there are a number of applications, one that we call demand deposit accounting, which is you checking account. This bank was not automated previously, so one of the projects was to write computer programs and get them operating so that checks could be utilized by the bank's customers. The second application might be a simple savings account, where you deposit money and can make withdrawals. Payrolls, each of these ministry entities had a payroll system running to pay their employees. And so we were automating those kind of functions.

KF I see. Previously it would have been done by bookkeeping ledgers?

BG Just by manual bookkeeping.

KF On January 18th, one morning, Paul and I were told that we were going to be transferred to another jail. Cast your mind back to that morning, and tell me what time it was, and who came and told you?

BG It was, I would say, between 9 and 10 o'clock in the morning, and the guard, who was a fairly low key individual that sat in this office here, came back to our cell, and simply....

KF He spoke English?

BG Well, no I think, I think he had spoke to the Iranians that were in the cell there, and said tell the Americans to get their belongings together, they are going to be transferred. We are going to transfer them, they are going somewhere. And he seemed kind of sympathetic about it, you know, like, tell them not to be concerned, this is for their good.

KF He made it clear you weren't getting out.

BG Well he certainly didn't indicate that we were.

KF You didn't think you were getting out.

BG Well, at that time you can always hope. And, one of the things we had hoped, what that somehow our people had succeeded in convincing Dadghar to release us, or the Foreign Ministry had intervened, or somebody had commanded to let the Americans go free, and we didn't know whether we might be freed directly, or whether we might be freed indirectly, where we would get on this bus, supposedly to be transferred to another jail, but the bus would, you know, divert to the airport, we'd get on a plane and fly out of the country. That's what we hoped was going to happen. But as we pulled up in front of the Gasre prison it was obvious that that wasn't the case.

KF How many other prisoners got on the bus with you?

BG There was Paul and I, there was a French fellow who spoke English, who was being transferred, and he said he was also being released that day. And it seemed like the, it was just the last administrative details were going to be handled at the larger jail rather than at the small one. There were several, two to five, Iranian prisoners that were also loaded on the bus, one of whom we knew. He was the chiefton that had been in that jail downstairs the first night. The big, burly guy, that was a chauffer, would make a tremendous actor in a movie, had a lot of character, and took command without being a bully. He just was a natural leader. He was transferred, and he wound up....

18

KF Do you remember his name?

BG No, I'm not sure we ever heard it, in English anyway. We saw him a time or two in the new prison, walking somewhere.

KF Okay, how far was it between jails?

BG I looked on the map, and I'm going to say several miles. Two to five miles, but we were going down streets that were in the middle of chaos, and revolution, and there were mobs on the streets, and barricades, so heavy traffic as usual. So it took us maybe forty-five minutes to an hour to actually get there.

KF As you pulled up outside this jail in the bus you saw stone walls 25 to 30 feet high. And there were metal gates in the front, these would be solid metal gates?

BG Yes.

KF When you got inside, what would you estimate the acreage of this facility?

BG I would think in terms of city blocks, it's like maybe four to six city blocks wide, and maybe six to eight city blocks long. But it's hard for us to tell, because we never really see the full parameter of the prison, and you can only judge that from what you can see from side to side, and what we later learned by being in the prison. We know that in the prison there are 20 or 30 buildings, there is a mausp with a huge ornate dome, there is a bakery, a new building built right next to where we are held, it's a bakery. There a....

KF Sounds like about 50 acres.

BG It was an enormous complex. There was, you know, even helicopter landing pads in it. And we're not sure how far back it goes, but we do know that just north of us, and that's what I'll call back, there's a military complex of some kind, because the military helicopters are taking off and landing there every day.

KF I was going to ask you to draw another plan, but I wonder what you should draw a plan of. You are not going to be able to draw a plan of this whole complex.

BG I have drawn before, when I was in prison, a plan of the compound, the building and its courtyard.

KF Okay, let's do that. Put it in my notebook.

(Drawing?)

KF Do you remember the name of the Iranian lawyer who was your roommate?

BG I don't remember it.

KF Okay, that's not important.

BG I do remember that he spoke French, English and Farsic. And he had a villa in Paris. He showed us pictures of that and showed us on a map of Paris where it was located. He said as soon as he got out of there that's where he was going to go.

KF I wonder if he ever got out.

BG We saw him running out of the courtyard the day we escaped. I assumed he did.

KF Later on five other foreign prisoners were brought in, do you remember how much later, how many days?

BG We had been there for a while, I would say they were there, perhaps the last ten days that we were in that prison.

KF Okay, were all four of them in jail for dope, or just the Yugoslavian?

BG All of them except for the Mexican-American were there for a dope related charge. Smuggling or sale.

KF Some of the foreigners were in the other building, such as the American woman which you met in January. I don't remember reading about her previously in this.

BG You'll come to a section here where Ross paid the visit to the prison. He has several Embassy personnel with him who were coming to see an American woman, and that's the first day that we've ever seen her.

KF I see. Oh, I see. So really, you meet her actually later in narrative?

BG Yes.

KF What's Chella Kubob?

BG Chella Kubob is strips of lamb served like, oh, cut in long thin strips and served on top of the rice. It's cooked over a fire like barbecue. If they had a good piece of meat and cooked it, it was very good. And typically they would serve it with rice and yogurt. Break some eggs over it, whatever you liked, paprika.

KF Sounds good, it's making my mouth water. Okay, now we move to the day when Ross comes. That must have given you quite a buzz.

BG Yes, that was quite an event, one of those things you don't ever forget.

KF We also had some very candid discussions in brief, general terms that led us to believe that something specific was being planned to get us out of jail, by force if necessary. Now, I understand from Paul, I haven't interviewed him, but I talked with him briefly, that he was told specifically, but you weren't. Is that right?

BG Well, we were sitting there in this room, and the guards are present, and were more or less sitting on these booths, rather than in the circle. So where he started off by talking to Ross, and I'm talking to Jay Coburn, or Rich Gallagher, then we kind of swapped places and talked, so it wasn't possible there, for us to fully tell each other, what did they tell you, what did they tell me. We talked in general terms after we got back to our cell.

KF Do you remember what was said that gave you the impression that something was being planned?

BG Well, as Ross went through this litany of here's who we've contacted, here's what they are trying. We've been over, we've talked to the Iranian Military, we've talked to the American Military. And it could have been as casual as, and we have some other things underway, which we shouldn't get into in a whole lot more detail. There was one thing that I'd forgotten until Paul mentioned the other day, they all stood.....

END OF SIDE A, TAPE #4