

A split-second later Paul landed beside him.

They looked at one another.

They were out.

*

That morning John Howell drove to the Ministry of Justice for yet another meeting with Dadgar.

He hardly expected Dadgar to turn up. The city was a battlefield, and an investigation into corruption under the Shah now seemed an academic exercise. But Dadgar was there, waiting for him.

Dadgar had asked Howell about EDS's relationship with one Abolfath Mahvi. Howell knew ^{There had been a lot of rumors about} ~~that getting involved with Mahvi was not the smartest thing EDS had ever done.~~ ^{There had been a lot of rumors about} Mahvi, the brother of a general, had made the business introductions which got EDS its early, small contracts in Iran, and ^{he had earned} ~~for this service he had been paid~~ \$400,000. However, he had demanded a share of all EDS's subsequent profits in the country. ^{Later} ~~EDS had learned that Mahvi was a notorious illegal middleman, nicknamed 'the king of the five percenters', and despite his high-level connections he was eventually put on the Shah's business blacklist, which meant he could not trade in Iran.~~ ^{had been} ~~had been~~

*

Howell now handed Dadgar a twelve-page document, plus a Farsi translation, outlining in detail EDS's dealings with Mahvi.

Dadgar said, and [REDACTED] ^{Abolhasan} translated: 'Your company's helpfulness is laying the ground for a change in my attitude toward Chiapparone and Gaylord.'

'Good,' Howell said.

While Dadgar was reading the document, the phone rang. It was for Howell. He took the receiver. 'Yes?'

'John, this is Keane.'

'Hi, where are you?'

'Still at the Bucharest Street office. I've been up on the roof. John, there are fires down there by the prison. If the mob attacks the prison Paul and Bill could get hurt. Ask Dadgar to turn them over to the American Embassy for their safety until this is over.'

'Okay, Keane.' Howell hung up and repeated the request to Dadgar.

Dadgar said: 'Chiapparone and Gaylord have to be kept in an Iranian prison, according to our laws. I fear we cannot consider the U.S. Embassy to be an Iranian prison.'

This was getting crazy, Howell thought: everything was falling apart and Dadgar was still consulting his book of rules. He said: 'How do you propose to guarantee the safety of two American citizens who have not been charged with any crime?'

'Don't be concerned,' Dadgar replied. 'The worst that could happen is that the prison might be overrun.'

'And what if the mob decides to attack Americans?'

'Chiapparone will probably be safe - he could pass for an Iranian.'

'Terrific,' said Howell. 'And what about Gaylord?'

Dadgar just shrugged.

*

Coburn put down the phone and said: 'The mob has overrun the prison.'

Simons nodded. 'Good.'

'Shouldn't we get down there?'

Simons looked at him. 'If a bunch of Americans went tearing in there in a car what do you think would happen to them?'

Coburn shrugged.

Rashid

'██████████ should be there,' Simons went on. 'But send someone else as well.'

*Howell reviewed in his own mind the Central facts about the EDS-Mahvi relationship. EDS had formed a joint venture with Mahvi, but only for local assistance in hiring Iranian nationals to work on EDS contracts. All Iranian agencies insisted on this. Unlike other American companies, EDS wouldn't pay Mahvi a commission of the total contract for these services. Tom Luce had insisted that 1) Mahvi contribute to the joint venture his proportionate share of capital; 2) Mahvi was to receive money only if the joint venture made a profit and then in the form of dividends. In other words, Mahvi's capital was at risk just like any other investor; and 3) in fact the joint venture had not made a profit and no money was distributed to Mahvi. The icing on the cake was that EDS had even publically disclosed the entire Mahvi relationship in routine SEC filings in March, 1977, it was obvious that EDS had nothing to hide.

morning. Since then almost all telephone lines to Tehran had been disconnected, and the White House was monopolising the few lines left. So Perot did not know whether the Clean Team had been in the Embassy during the takeover, nor did he know what kind of danger they might be in even if they had remained at Lou Goelz's house.

The loss of phone connections also meant that Merv Stauffer was unable to call ^{Rashid} [REDACTED]. By now the Dirty Team should have called Riaz with a 'message for Jim Nyfeler' - either saying they were okay or they were in trouble. The whole Dallas team was pulling every possible string to get one of the few remaining lines so they could call ^{Rashid} [REDACTED]. Tom Walter had called A.T. & T. and spoken to Ray Johnson, who handled EDS's account. It was a big account - EDS used phone lines to transfer data from one computer to another across the country - and Johnson had been keen to help. He had asked whether EDS's call to Tehran was a matter of life and death. You bet it is, Walter had said. Johnson was trying to get them a line. At the same time T.J. Marquez was sweet-talking an international operator, trying to persuade her to break the rules and give him a line.

There was more bad news from Dallas. A press officer in the State Department's Iran Task Force had told Robert Dudley, Washington Correspondent of the Dallas Times Herald, that Paul and Bill were coming out of Iran overland, ^{and had even disclosed the Turkish route.} Dudley had called EDS and tried to confirm ^{and had even disclosed the Turkish route.} the story.) The seventh floor at EDS was pulling every string they could to get the story killed, but the newspaper was making no promises.

Perot had also lost Ralph Boulware. He had last been heard from in Adana, five hundred miles from the Iran-Turkey border. Perot presumed Boulware was somewhere between Adana and the border but he had no idea where.

Perot had spent most of the day trying to buy a light plane or ^{To do so he violated criminal statutes because he impersonated a} White House official.

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^{claiming as their} ONLY reason they were afraid ABC was going to break the story first - they would lose an exclusive!

Claiming as their only reason they were afraid ABC was going to break the story first - they would lose an exclusive!

a helicopter in which to fly into Iran. The Boeing 707 was no use for that purpose, for they would have to fly low and search for the Range Rovers with 'X' or 'A' marked on their roofs, and they might want to land on little disused airfields, or even on a road or in a meadow. But so far the attempt had only confirmed Boulware's pessimism. Late in the afternoon Perot had said to Pat Sculley: 'I want to talk to the highest-ranking American in Istanbul.'

Sculley had gone off and raised a little hell at the American Consulate, and now, at ten-thirty p.m., a consul and a CIA man were sitting in Perot's suite at the Sheraton.

Perot was levelling with them. 'My men aren't criminals of any kind,' he said. 'They're ordinary businessmen with wives and children at home worrying themselves to death. The Iranians had them in jail for six weeks without bringing any charges or finding any evidence against them. Now they're out of jail and they're trying to get out of the country. If they're caught, you can imagine how much chance they'd have of getting justice: none at all. With things the way they are in Iran they may not be able to reach the border. I want to go in and get them, and that's where I need your help. I have to borrow, rent or buy a small aircraft. Now can you help me?'

'No,' said the consul. 'In this country it's against the law for private individuals to have aircraft. Because it's against the law, the aircraft aren't around even for someone who's prepared to break the law.'

'But you must have aircraft.'

'The State Department has no aircraft.'

'What about the military?'

'I don't think we can send the U.S. Air Force into Iran at this moment in time.'

CHAPTER ONE

It all started on 5 December 1978.*

Jay Coburn, Director of Personnel, sat in his office in uptown Tehran with a lot on his mind. He was personally responsible for the safety of 131 non-Iranian employees and their 352 dependents in a country which seemed to be sliding rapidly downhill into chaos. Among the 352 dependents were five about whom he cared particularly: his wife Liz and his children Kimberly, Kristy, Scott and Kelly.

Today and every day he made phone calls around the city, trying to find out what was happening and where. His official source of information was the U.S. Embassy. The Embassy's weekly security briefings, which Coburn attended faithfully, were more or less useless: the Embassy always said that Americans should stay indoors as much as possible and keep away from crowds at all costs, but that the Shah was in charge and evacuation was not recommended at this time. More helpful was the information room which the Embassy manned twenty-four hours a day: Americans all over the city would call in with reports of demonstrations and riots, and the Embassy would spread the news that this area or that was to be avoided. Coburn also called heads of security in other American companies in Tehran, plus his contacts in the military.

The city was relatively quiet today: there were no major demonstrations. The last outbreak of serious trouble had been three days earlier, on 2 December, the first day of the general strike, when something like seven hundred people had been killed. The lull could be expected to continue until 10 December, the Moslem holy day of Ashura, when there would be big demonstrations. Meanwhile hundreds of thousands of Iranians were on strike, oil production had been

PART ONE: IN

*It all started on December 4, 1978. Paul Chiapparone finally bit the bullet and officially notified the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare that EDS was terminating its data processing contract and leaving Iran. Paul had tried everything else to get EDS' bill paid. He had met with everyone he could find in the Ministry, but it was clear that in the existing chaotic political condition no Iranian would take responsibility for approving a payment to an American company. Lately he had begun to feel the pressure from higher up to get the bill paid; the past due amounts already totaled more than \$8 million (check the amount). Earlier in December Paul had asked John Howell to come back to Iran to see what he could do. John was EDS' principal international lawyer and Paul's kind of lawyer. Howell was thorough and persistent, yet he never offended a customer. Mostly Howell just outworked the other side. When Howell arrived, he began to see what he could do. Howell attended the meetings and helped Paul and Paul's boss, Bill Gayden, put on the pressure, but they just weren't getting anywhere. Howell had finally said we had better put in writing Iran's failure to pay and document all the ways in which the Ministry was failing to perform its end of the contract. Howell had drafted the letter (check this) and it had now been delivered - let's hope that gets the ball rolling.

chartered buses to take people to the airport, and photocopied leaflets to hand out. In the afternoon they notified the team leaders that the evacuation was on. The team leaders began contacting the people in their sectors.

* Two people decided not to go. Rich Gallagher had been recruited in Tehran, unlike the others who had been sent there from the States by EDS. His wife, Kathy, worked for the American military there. Iran was their home, and they were not ready to leave it.

Nine more EDS men agreed to stay behind, to maintain a presence and keep the office ticking over: they still hoped very strongly that the trouble would pass and they would eventually be able to work normally.

About half of the other 472 people arrived at Mahabad Airport on schedule the following morning. An advance party was already there, buying tickets and handing out hundred-dollar bribes to smooth the way. The tickets were to Istanbul, Turkey, where the evacuees were to stop over before continuing to the States; and already two top EDS executives, Merv Stauffer and T.J. Marquez, were on a plane from Dallas to Istanbul to meet them.

There was only one hitch that Coburn had not provided for: flights were delayed and there was nothing to eat at the airport. Coburn sent an American colleague, Keane Taylor, and an Iranian, Rashid, to get food. In Tehran there were little street stalls selling candy, fruit and cigarettes: Taylor and Rashid bought the entire stocks of twenty or thirty stalls and brought it all back to the airport.

Eventually the flight took off. The next day, Friday 8 December, the second half of the party left for Istanbul.

** ~~Then Coburn turned his attention to the mystery of his boss's passport.~~

Who wanted to keep Paul and Bill in Iran? And why?

'Thankyou, Nabi,' said Coburn. 'I'll talk to Paul.'

*

*

That night Coburn was awakened at two a.m. by a phone call from Paul Chiapparone. Paul had been talking to Bill Gayden, president of EDS World, and H. Ross Perot, the founder and owner of EDS. They had reached a decision.

'We're going to evacuate,' Paul said.

'You got it,' Coburn replied.

After hanging up he ran over the arrangements in his mind. Some weeks ago Paul had asked him to make contingency plans for an emergency evacuation of all EDS's non-Iranian employees and their dependents - 483 people altogether. Coburn had divided the city into sectors and appointed a team leader for each sector. Once Paul had made the decision to go, the team leaders would be told, and they in turn would notify everyone in their sector.

Coburn had drafted leaflets to be handed out to the evacuees telling them where to go and what to do, and he had appointed a small logistics group to organise transport. He had also picked a lively and imaginative young Iranian systems engineer, Rashid, and given him the job of taking care of the apartments, cars and pets which would be left behind by the fleeing Americans and - eventually - shipping their possessions to the United States.

Finally, Coburn had conducted a small-scale rehearsal of the evacuation with a few people. It had worked.

Coburn called each member of the logistics group and told them to meet him at the EDS office on Bucharest Street that morning immediately after curfew.

During the morning, Coburn and his group made plane reservations,

*When Jay talked to Paul, Paul was understandably perplexed and a little shaken. You couldn't have lived anytime in Iran and not heard stories about the Iran police and the notorious SAVAAK and lately everything seemed screwed up. Ministry officials and employees were going on strike, not appearing for work and some of the top brass had been placed in jail. Nobody seemed in charge.

Paul immediately asked Howell to see if he could find out from EDS' Iranian lawyers what this passport request was all about.

To top it all off, that night Paul received a call from Bill Gayden, the guy in charge of all international business for the company, and Ross Perot, the President, owner and founder of EDS. Bill and Ross insisted that all non-essential EDS employees and dependents be evacuated. Paul resisted; he felt that Ross and Bill were overreacting, but Paul had to admit this passport matter concerned him. When Ross found out, he hit the ceiling. "What's going on?" "What have you done about it?" "Get Howell on it right away!" "Get Luce on it!"

*Two people couldn't go. While John Howell tried to find out what was going on by his contacts with Iranian lawyers, Paul and Bill had gone to the U.S. Embassy to ask what they should do. The Embassy said, "Give us your passports and tell the Iranian police what you've done." That seemed to solve the immediate problem of what to do with the passports, so Paul and Bill turned them over. It's funny the feeling you get when you turn loose of your passport; all of a sudden you feel naked. Within hours they had second thoughts, "Maybe we better go get them back and leave on the evacuation flight with everyone else." "Hell no, I have to come back some day; I can't just flee the country; I haven't done anything wrong."

Shortly Paul and Bill found out the internal debate was fruitless. The Embassy people said "Sure we will give you your passports, but we promised the Iranian Police we would phone them right away if you picked them up." So much for the thought of leaving.

Meanwhile, John Howell reported back and he had gotten nowhere. John had worked with three Iranian lawyers, each of a different political persuasion, in an attempt to find out more about the "hold." None of the lawyers could find out what was going on - just vague illusions to an investigation by the Ministry. "Hell, everything in Iran is vague."

The Embassy wasn't the slightest bit of help. First they effectively prevented Paul and Bill from leaving on the evacuation flight. Then on December 12 the Counsel General of the U.S. Embassy flat said the Embassy wouldn't intervene or pursue the

matter with high-level Iranian authorities. Instead, we were told we would have to work within the Iranian "legal system." That action might have seemed correct in a foreign service manual, but it seemed silly when your lawyers can't even find out what's going on.

Perot was becoming impatient. He had not built EDS into a \$_____ empire with patience and nothing turned him off more than inaction. He had finally told Paul, "You're not getting anywhere; we're going to start working on the problem from this end." Ross had assured Paul that the EDS U.S. team would keep the EDS Iran team fully informed as to who was doing what. "The last thing we need is to not know that Senator so-and-so has called the Ambassador and chewed on him."

Ross didn't spend a lot of time meditating; he was and is a man of action. On December 13 he called Bob Strauss, the highest ranking Texan in Washington. Strauss was Jimmy Carter's trouble shooter. Carter sent him to the Mid-East, gave him responsibility for curbing inflation, and finally gave him responsibility for getting himself re-elected. Strauss had the reputation of being a "doer," a Texas wheeler-dealer, who for years had been after Perot to make contributions to Democratic candidates.

Ross got right through to Strauss, "Bob, I've got a problem." The Ross outlined the problem while Strauss listened patiently. "Listen Ross, things are a mess in Iran right now. I'm not sure what I can do, but I'll get on it. Get me a letter right away outlining the problem. I'll get someone on it right away."

Otherwise the Iran team was frustrated. They were getting nowhere. Here it was December 27 and they still didn't know much. They knew there was an investigation of the Ministry, but hell, everyone was being investigated in Iran. They had finally found out who the investigator was, a man named Hossain Dadgar, ~~but~~ after they identified Dadgar, they pushed the Iranian lawyers to meet with him; confront him; find out what's going on. But Paul and Bill finally had to admit that was like pushing jello.

None of the lawyers seemed enthusiastic about meeting with Dadgar. No one could get "hard" answers and Ross was calling every day to get "hard" information.

At times Paul and Bill wished the EDS operators weren't so damned efficient. At all times of the day or night someone was calling with information or, more likely, questions - "why haven't you done this," "what did he say," or "Ross said why didn't you do this or that" ... Ross just didn't seem to understand why things didn't happen instantaneously. It was bad enough in the states, but in Iran it was impossible.

Ross Perot would get tired of repeating the story over the next 30 days; he must have repeated the same story 100 times to the "who's Who of Washington."

On December 14 and 15 Ross sent two of his most trusted advisers to Washington, Tom Walter and Tom Luce. He arranged for them to meet Richard Helms, former Ambassador to Iran and ex-head of the CIA, and Admiral Thomas Moorer, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. While Moorer was the nation's number one military officer, he made many friends in Iran. He had met often with the Shah.

If anyone could get the ball moving with these two "heavy hitters," it was the two Tom's (Ross can give you background information on Walter and Luce).

As soon as Walter and Luce finished meeting, they called Ross with a report. There wasn't much to report this trip. Both the Admiral and Helms listened attentively. They both promised to see what they could do. It was obvious they were sincere; they both had known Ross and wanted to help. Everyone reported back to Ross; he was the hub. There were already ^{two} ~~several~~ teams working: The Iran team was made up of Paul, Bill, Bill Gayden, and John Howell; the Washington team was Tom Walter and Tom Luce. Soon there would be more teams.

On December 16 the Iran team delivered the official written notice of termination. Delivery of this notice tightened the screws on the Ministry. They now knew it was a matter of days until EDS would depart Iran - absent payment of the monies owed.

colleagues, including Deputy Minister Reza Neghabat, with whom Paul had worked closely.

Since then it had just got worse. *First had been* ~~On 14 December Paul had given~~ *the passport "hold"* ~~the Ministry one month's notice of termination of the contract unless~~ *Then the evacuation* ~~they paid up. On 7 and 8 December he had evacuated~~ most of his non-Iranian staff and their dependents. Contrary to expectations, the holy day of Ashura had passed relatively peacefully. Paul and his colleagues had spent 10 and 11 December holed up in two houses, playing poker, while millions of Iranians attended non-violent demonstrations all over the country. Paul had been so encouraged that he had twenty evacuated executives flown back in to resume work. But the lull had been temporary. On 15 December renewed rioting broke out. The general strike continued. Petroleum exports ground to a complete halt.

It was just one damn thing after another. And today, Paul thought as he arrived at the Bucharest Street office, he would have to waste all day sorting out the trivial bureaucratic muddle which had grown up over his passport.

He had no idea how much trouble he was in.

*

Bill Gaylord came into Paul's office a little after nine, carrying a cup of coffee, dressed in the EDS uniform: business suit, white shirt, quiet tie, black brogue shoes. Paul and Bill had a lot in common. They were the same age - thirty-nine. They were both Catholic, although Bill was more devout than Paul. Both had trained as systems engineers and joined EDS in the mid-sixties, Bill in 1965 and Paul in 1966.

Both had had splendid careers with EDS, but although Paul had joined a year later he was now senior to Bill. There was not much

sparked a protest sit-in by theology students in the town of Qom the following day - a protest which was bloodily broken up by security forces. The confrontation escalated, and seventy people were killed in two more days of disturbances. The clergy organised a memorial procession for the dead, and it was so successful that they repeated it every forty days for the next six months.

With hindsight Paul could see that calling these marches "funeral processions" had been a way to circumvent the Shah's ban on political demonstrations. But at the time he had had no idea that a massive political movement was building. Nor had anyone else.

In August Paul had gone home to the States on leave. (So had William Sullivan, the U.S. Ambassador to Iran.) Paul loved all kinds of water sports, and he had gone with his cousin to a sports fishing tournament in Atlantic City. Ruthie had gone to Chicago to see her folks. Paul had been a little anxious because the Ministry still had not paid EDS's bill for the month of June; but he had left the problem in the hands of Bill Gaylord, who managed the Ministry contract, and he was fairly confident that Bill would get the money in.

While he was away the news from Iran was bad. Martial law was declared on 7 September, and the following day more than a hundred people were killed by soldiers during a demonstration in Jaleh Square in the heart of Tehran.

When he returned the very air seemed different. For the first time he and Ruthie heard shooting in the streets at night. They were alarmed; suddenly they realised that trouble in Iran meant trouble for them.

At the office there was more bad news for Paul. The Ministry still had not paid its June bill, nor any since. Worse, the Minister of Health, Dr. Sheikholislamadeh, was in jail, as were some of his

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Lined out portion superseded by earlier inserts.

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*Getting nowhere with the lawyers, Paul and Bill had continued to press the Embassy - after all, wasn't the Embassy supposed to help U.S. citizens?

Finally it looked like they were getting somewhere. The COUNSUL General, Lou Goelz, had called and said he had spoken to the elusive Dadgar. It was all set. Here was the deal:

Dadgar had to interview Paul and Bill; it would be routine. After the interview, Paul and Bill would be free to leave.

difference in their abilities: Paul knew he was just a fraction smarter and a shade more dynamic than Bill. Bill spoke slowly and deliberately, and thought deeply.

They were both medium height and stocky, but there the resemblance ended. Paul, the son of Italian immigrants, had olive skin, thick dark hair, heavy eyebrows, deep-set eyes, and a big nose: in casual clothes he was often taken for an Iranian until he opened his mouth and spoke English with a New York accent. Bill had a flat, round face and very white skin: nobody would take him for anything but an Anglo.

Paul smiled at Bill with easy familiarity: they were friends as well as colleagues. 'Ready to go?'

'Any time. Want to go in my car?'

Abolhasan

'Sure. And we'll take [REDACTED] to translate.'

They left the building and got into Bill's car. Bill told his driver: 'We're going to the Social Security Office on Eisenhower Avenue.'

reviewed

in his own mind.

reviewed

in his own mind

As they headed south, Paul ^{reviewed} recalled the events that had led up to today's meeting. ~~After the immigration office had tried to get~~ hold of his and Bill's passports, they had gone to the U.S. Embassy for advice. There they had met with the Consul General, Lou Goelz, a short, round man in his fifties who would have made a good Santa Claus. Goelz was an experienced consul, and he recommended that the Embassy should hold the passports for the time being, while he tried to find out what was going on.

Goelz had quickly learned that Paul and Bill were wanted for questioning in a corruption investigation. The Iranian legal system was based on the French model, and the man who had asked for their passports was an examining magistrate called Hosain Dadgar. The ~~point of confiscating their passports was to ensure that they did not~~

The interview.

12

the interview

~~leave the country before Dadgar had interviewed them. Goelz also discovered that their names were on the stop list at the airport, so that, with or without their passports, they could not leave.~~

~~Paul was not worried by this.~~ ^{wasn't worried about} He had never done anything corrupt

~~in his life and he was sure Bill had not either. Besides, they were not being accused of anything: they were wanted as material witnesses. However, both of them wanted to go back to the States to see their families, so they asked Goelz if he could arrange for the interview to take place as soon as possible. Goelz had obliged, and today they were to meet Dadgar.~~

They had also discussed whether a lawyer, or at least a member of the Embassy staff, should accompany them to the meeting. Goelz thought it was not necessary, since they were not accused of anything; and that it might even antagonise Dadgar. ^{It sounded reasonable to Paul.} ~~that, as a law-abiding American citizen, he had nothing to fear from the legal system.~~ ^{Paul had agreed, feeling} ^{It sounded reasonable to Paul.}

As they drove along the wide, straight Eisenhower Avenue, Paul ^{Goelz} ~~he~~ ^{Goelz} hoped he had been right.

They pulled up at the Ministry building which housed the Social Security Office. Paul was familiar with the place, for EDS and its computers occupied two floors. Paul, Bill and ^{Abolhasan} ~~██████████~~ showed their passes to the guards and went in.

They met Dadgar at ten a.m. He had commandeered one of the Ministry offices, and he sat behind a desk with a woman translator beside him. In front of him he had a notebook and a pen.

They all sat down, and Dadgar began to speak in Farsi. His voice was soft but rather deep, and his expression was blank. Paul studied him as he waited for ^{Abolhasan} ~~██████████~~ to translate. Dadgar was a short, stocky man in his fifties, and for some reason he made Paul think of Archie

of Hughes and Hill. 'They called Admiral Moorer in Washington. Of course, Moorer remembers you from the days when he was Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and you were doing the prisoner-of-war campaign. He said he would talk to Ardeshir Zahedi. Now, Zahedi is not just the Iranian ambassador in Washington but also the Shah's brother-in-law. Moorer's going to ask Zahedi to vouch for Paul and Bill's honesty, and right now Luce is drafting a cable for Zahedi to send to the Iranian Ministry of Justice.'

'So,' Perot said. 'We've got the Secretary of State, the Head of the Iran Desk, the Embassy and the Iranian Ambassador working on the case. That's good.'

T.J. went on: 'Walter and Luce are planning to go to Washington tomorrow to meet with Admiral Moorer. ~~Moorer also suggested we call Richard Helms, because he was Ambassador to Iran after he quit the CIA.~~ ^{and} and'

Perot stood up. 'I'll call Helms right away.' He left Gayden's office and headed for the elevator.

T.J. followed him. 'Ross, I have your passport, and it already has a visa for Iran, but I still think you shouldn't go. We can all work on the problem here but you're the key man. The last thing we need is for you to be out of contact - in Tehran or just up in a plane somewhere - at a moment when we have to make a crucial decision.'

'I'll hold off for a little while,' Perot said. 'With all that's happening here, it looks as if it might not be necessary for me to go.'

Henry Precht was not a prick, but he was probably the most harassed

man in Washington.

He was a long-serving State Department official with a wacky sense of humour which he kept well concealed during office hours. For much of 1978 the Iran Desk had been something of a backwater as President Carter focussed his foreign policy on the agreement between Israel and Egypt which became known as Camp David. Consequently Precht, as Country Director, had been making day-to-day policy more or less on his own.

Things had really started to warm up early in November. Since then Precht had been working seven days a week from eight in the morning until nine at night. And those damn Texans seemed to think he had nothing else to do but talk to them on the phone.

The trouble was, the crisis in Iran was not the only power struggle Precht had to worry about. There was another fight going on in Washington, between Secretary of State Cyrus Vance - Precht's ultimate boss - and Zbigniew Brzezinski, the President's National Security Advisor.

Vance believed - as did President Carter - that questions of morality had a place in the making of foreign policy. Amnesty International had called Iran's human rights record the worst in the world, and the many reports of the Shah's systematic use of torture had been confirmed by the International Commission of Jurists. Since the CIA had put the Shah in power and the USA had kept him there, a president who talked a lot about human rights had to do something. Carter had hinted, in January 1977, that tyrants might be denied American aid. Carter was indecisive - later that year he visited Iran and lavished praise on the Shah - but Vance believed in the human-rights approach. The Shah was the problem, Vance felt, and the sooner he left the better.