

I. Background -- November/December 1978

First week in November -- Military Government installed in Tehran, Iran air goes on strike. Strikes by Government employees, banks, various businesses continue on and off, along with power cuts and fuel shortages. Government opposition continues to grow, especially outside Tehran.

whom? Whom?

EDS' negotiations with MHSW get nowhere. They have no one at work, no one in charge with authority to pay. Anti-American incidents begin to occur at MHSW - specifically and in Tehran. Fire bombings/signs on walls/verbal threats toward Americans. Computer center closed, customer not working. EDS continues to communicate official notices of intention to terminate contract for MHSW payment default. Final default letter delivered on November 14, -- Effective December 14, 1978.

date date

Majid

Meeting held at MHSW at beginning of December -- attended by Gayden, [redacted], several other EDS'ers and John Howell. Several days later on December

5. We learn that The Ministry of Justice wants to seize the passports and other papers belonging to Gaylord and Chiapparone.

perm at EDS

now? now?

EDS'ers attend meeting held at Embassy with Lou Goelz, Consul General, for advice. Embassy staff recommends:

1. Gaylord/Chiapparone turn passports in to Embassy for safekeeping.
2. Start plan to get families out of Iran ASAP.

where is MHSW office?

Where is MHSW office?

Holy Month In Iran -- Morrahram -- December 2 on -- Curfew violations at night, clashes between army/police and people, rooftop chanting -- mobs yelling at night -- massive buildup of violence by the people against the government. Apparent showdown coming on December 10/11 -- Ashura.

take a decision - date of decision
All of these events lead to EDS decision to evacuate all dependent and non-essential US personnel on December 8/9. -- Concurrent with US military and civilian Government decision to evacuate dependents -- Many other US companies leaving Iran -- at least temporarily.

Period from family evacuation to first meeting with Dadgar on December 28 filled with meetings with US Embassy staff in Tehran and local lawyers to determine the extent of our problem and to find ways to leave the country legally. In US, efforts underway by EDS and private individuals to gain our release through State Department, Congress, White House, Iranian Foreign Ambassador Zahedi etc. Although some appeared to be successful, none worked -- and in fact these efforts appeared to make Dadgar even more determined to detain us for questioning. The gist of these efforts were aimed at:

1. Gaining our release from any restrictions and allowing us to leave Iran with no further involvement. -or-
2. Allowing us to leave Iran and answer Dadgars questions elsewhere (perhaps return later when safe in Iran) -or-
3. Moving up the scheduled date for Dadgar to ask his questions so we could get finished and leave Iran.

It was our understanding that we had been detained as possible material witnesses in the investigations into corruption charges against Dr. Sheik and some of his deputies at MHSW. specifically, the area of inquiry involving us was the Ministry/EDS Computer contract.

Finally, immediately after Christmas, the US Embassy in Iran contacted Dadgar who agreed to question us on Thursday, December 28, 1978. Both Lou Goelz and Al Jordan of the Embassy staff emphasized the point that Dadgar was "favorably disposed" to the session and to us -- as a result of the contact they had arranged where Mr. Zahedi had strongly intervened on our behalf through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Justice Dadgar.

We were told that Mr. Dadgar would want to see documents that established when we had come to Iran and our official positions and scope of responsibility. The meeting was scheduled for 8:30 at the MHSW where Dadgar had an office for his activities.

street?
street?

Embassy staff says neither they nor our legal counsel should attend the session because it was not necessary and would antagonize Dadgar as interference.

II. First Meeting with Dadgar on December 28, 1978

Abolhasan

Meeting starts at 10 A.M. -- Chiapparone, Gaylord and [REDACTED] (to translate) from EDS, Justice Dadgar and Ms. Nourbaksh (MHSW employee assigned to Dadgar for translations) from the Ministry of Justice at the session.

At the beginning, Dadgar gives us an off-the-record opportunity to postpone the session if our lawyers had not prearranged bail -- which might be necessary if the questions/answers given in the session led to his placing charges against us.

After considering his offer, both of us advised him that we had committed no crime, had no knowledge of anyone else committing a crime and that therefore did not expect any charges to be placed against us nor would bail be necessary. We preferred to proceed with the session as scheduled.

Need Paul's account of interrogation. Need Paul's account of interrogation.

At this point, Dadgar said he would talk to Paul first, that [REDACTED] could stay to help translate, and that I should return in one hour sharp for my question period (11:15 A.M.).

whom Ross?
whom Ross?

I went upstairs to the EDS offices on 7th floor and called an EDS manager to advise him what had happened, especially Dadgar's warning regarding possible bail requirements. Because of the potential problem this represented, I asked him to call our attorneys and get some quick advice and call me back.

who?
who?

A little later the EDS manager called back and said both he and our lawyer thought we had no problem. In the unlikely event that Dadgar decided that bail was required, EDS had sufficient money in the safe at the Bucharest Office to post whatever bail would be necessary. The lawyer had given an example of a bail of 1.5M Rials (\$21,246) that had been set for a murderer the previous week as an example of the maximum that he thought we should be prepared to post. EDS had a good deal more than that available, if necessary, so there was no reason to worry or to interrupt the session with Dadgar.

At 11:15 I returned to Dadgar's office as scheduled, but was told they were not yet finished with Paul because they had been interrupted a number of times. I was asked to wait in another office down the hall. When I had gone into Dadgar's office neither Paul nor ████████ had given any indication that anything was wrong other than the questions were taking more time than originally anticipated.

During my wait, I was brought both food and hot tea. It was very cold in the building because the heat was turned off to save fuel that had become scarce in the city. All of us still had on our overcoats to keep warm.

As the hours wore on, I became concerned. Something seemed to be wrong with the session going on with Paul, because of the length of time passing versus the hour originally indicated by Dadgar -- and what should have been necessary if Dadgar was really "favorably disposed" to us in this session. This was only a feeling though, since I had no other evidence that anything was out of the ordinary.

There was one other event of note that took place during my waiting period of 6 to 7 hours. To kill time, I had been looking out the windows facing Eisenhower Avenue and I witnessed a sad series of events involving the Army soldiers on duty at the MHSW building. Apparently, they had gotten an order to patrol the avenue and stop cars that had pro-Khomini/anti-Shah posters on their windshields. Somewhere, further down the avenue, demonstrators were stopping cars and putting these posters under the windshield wipers whether the drivers wanted them or not.

At first, the soldiers were content to stop the cars and make the driver tear up the poster. As time went on, the soldier's attitude became more violent and belligerent towards the drivers. Now they were breaking headlights and car windows to teach the drivers a lesson. In some cases, when the drivers didn't stop quick enough or remove the poster fast enough they were beaten by the soldiers before being allowed to drive on. On one occasion, a blue cab slowed down but did not stop. The driver wasn't sure what the soldiers were doing out in the street. One of the soldiers, an officer, began firing at the cab as it drove down the street. He and several other soldiers ran down the street after the cab firing their guns as they ran. I couldn't see what happened down the street whether anyone was shot or not.

Finally after an hour or so, the soldiers ended their grim game and returned to their posts inside the MHSW compound. This scene had been witnessed by myself and several others including two Iranian men who later turned out to be plainclothes policemen assigned to Dadgar. These people seemed just as appalled as I was at the Army brutality down on the streets.

Finally, at approximately 5 P.M., I was taken to Dadgar's office to answer my questions. Paul was allowed to stay in the room and was given a sandwich to eat along with Dadgar and ^{Abolhasan} [REDACTED]. Things were a little tense.

When the questions began, we followed this format: -- Dadgar asked the question in Farsi, then Ms. Nourbaksh translated both the question and my answer back to Dadgar. ^{Abolhasan} [REDACTED] assisted if necessary for clarification of a technical subject or where he thought obvious miscommunication was occurring. In this environment, the translations were awkward and it appeared a lot of information contained in my answers was not being translated and even less was being written down by Dadgar -- who wrote out in longhand both his question and his understanding of my answer.

At this time, I still had no real indication of the trouble we were in. Both Paul and ^{Abolhasan} [REDACTED] were occasionally smiling and being very polite to Dadgar. Paul indicated that it had been warm in his chair answering some hot questions -- but otherwise, no real sign of danger was present. My session with Dadgar lasted between 30 and 45 minutes at most and covered only a minimal number of subjects at a shallow level of detail.

The opening set of questions concerned my name, home address, family info, educational background, my work experience with EDS and IBM and my title and responsibilities with EDS in Iran on the MHSW project -- including when I had started on the project and whose place I had taken.

Then the questions became more specific and were asked in a more accusatory tone (even by Ms. Nourbaksh) concerning the following topics:

1. My overall project responsibility as EDS' MHSW Project Manager.

Who is he? Who is he?

2. The conflict of interest situation regarding Dr. Towliati -- between EDS and MHSW. As I answered the question regarding Dr. Towliati's employment and responsibility -- as far as I understood the correct answer to be -- it appeared from a sharp responsive counter question from Ms. Nourbaksh (without prompting from Dadgar) that either my answer was wrong, or they thought it was wrong. No big deal was made of my answer at the time, Dadgar seemed confident he knew the real answer regardless of what I said.

3. The accuracy of EDS' monthly Progress Reports to the Ministry. Despite my answer to the contrary, Dadgar contended the reports were false and had been utilized by EDS to cause the MHSW to pay our monthly invoices even though the required work had not been completed. The questions on this subject were asked in a very cold manner as if the answers were already known and Dadgar wanted to make sure we knew he thought we were guilty of some wrong. I told him that the reports were completely accurate and pointed out that he was the first person to contend they were not correct -- that no one from the MHSW had ever taken written exception to our reports as required by the contract, nor had they done so verbally.

4. Several miscellaneous questions regarding my areas of responsibility for financial and administrative matters for EDS at the Ministry. Included was a question about our Greek employees -- did we have any?

Almost all of the questions were asked but once and there was little or no follow-up by Dadgar to clarify any of my answers or to make sure that he understood what I was saying. It appeared as if he were hurrying to get finished and it didn't matter what my answers were. Evidently, Dadgar had all the answers he needed before the session began -- we were going through a drill. The only unknown was why.

Once the questions were finished, Dadgar asked Paul and I to sign our names beside our answers on the transcripts he had written in Farsi. ^{Abolhasan} gave our answers a cursory review before we and he signed our names. It was uncomfortable for Paul and I to sign testimony we couldn't read, but at the time there didn't appear to be much alternative -- and we still believed we were going through a formality that Dadgar had to conduct to justify releasing us to leave Iran.

At this point in time -- now about 6 P.M. -- Dadgar spoke seriously to ^{Abolhasan} for several minutes. Then he got up and left the room leaving ^{Abolhasan} to interpret for us what had been said in Farsi.

^{Abolhasan}
What ^{Abolhasan} then told Paul and I was the worst news that could possibly have come.

^{Abolhasan}

^{Abolhasan} said that Dadgar was going to detain both Paul and I and we would have to go to jail until bail could be posted. Paul's bail was set at 60 million tomans (\$8.5M) and my bail was 30 million tomans (\$4.25M). Dadgar obviously had decided to arrest us and keep us in jail for some time.

We were allowed to call EDS and Lew Goelz at the Embassy to tell them what had happened. We turned over our wallets and briefcases to ^{Abolhasan} [redacted] and asked him to try to get our lawyers and/or the Embassy personnel to meet us at the Ministry of Justice to get the bail reduced and to look after our personal safety.

Paul and I were then turned over to the two plainclothes policemen working for Dadgar who were assigned to transport us to jail. The trip itself was dramatic and terrifying enough to warrant inclusion in this description of the Dadgar meeting.

?

The four of us got in the policeman's Jayne (car) and started off into the chaotic Tehran streets which were jammed full of pro and anti Shah demonstrators.

The first 4 or 5 blocks were unusually dangerous since we were going down a narrow one-lane service road, a one-way street, and we were going the wrong way -- dodging in and out barely missing the cars and buses which were honking their horns in protest of our driver's efforts.

We then proceeded South and a little East through scenes of major turmoil and violence. We passed several buses that had been burned only hours before. They sat in the middle of the street as black smoldering metal hulks. Hundreds of demonstrators were running through the streets, some attacking cars, some setting fire to street barricades set up to impede the police and army who were trying to maintain order and get people off the streets. Traffic was very heavy and cars were going helter-skelter in all directions. Our route took us

back and forth as traffic jams dictated, down main streets where possible -- down back alleys and side streets whenever necessary to dodge the mobs and get to our destination.

Kakh?

Kakh? *Described. Were exactly.*

When we finally arrived at the jail we were turned over to the jail officials who began to fill out paper work on Paul and I. This process was slow and tedious since we didn't speak Farsi and the guards spoke little English. On several occasions during this first night in jail, other prisoners who spoke English were called on to help communicate with us and get the papers filled out.

Once the papers were finished, the guards told Paul and I to take off all our clothes except our shorts. Our clothes were searched and so were we. An inventory was made of our belongings that we could not keep, along with our excess cash. They let us keep 2,000 or so Rials (\$30.00) and they put the rest in a bank account for us. Then they let us put our pants, shirts, and shoes/socks back on.

basement? yes
basement - yes

We were then taken to the jail cells downstairs and assigned to cell #9 which was occupied by about 18 other prisoners. Several times this first night we were called out of the cell -- once to fill out some more paper work, once to hand in our shoes and coats -- and to get rubber slippers, and once we were taken upstairs to talk to two prisoners who spoke English. They explained a little bit of what was going on -- both to us and to the guards who were very curious about their surprise American prisoners.

We spent an hour or two getting used to our cellmates and tried to communicate despite the language barrier. After a while the chief of the cell assigned us our bunks and we went to sleep. The room was very cold and drafty, it smelled of urine, the lights burned all night, and the beds were rock hard -- but still we got some sleep this first night.

Paul and I were put in prison without charges, to assure that EDS would return after the revolution to operate the computer systems.

Later, EDS pressed Iran on the issue of what charges we were being held on. At that point, some charges were manufactured. These same charges were later brought up by the Iranians in the federal court case. When announcing his findings, the federal judge stipulated that Iran had failed to prove a single charge. In fact, Iran did not even attempt to prove the charges during the court proceedings. While we were still in prison, the Iranian government conceded that we were simply "commercial hostages". After several meetings, the State Department also determined this to be case.

III. Jail -- December 28, 1978 to February 11, 1979

The first jail that we occupied was the Ministry of Justice jail, which I believe was referred to as the jail at Kakh. ~~The first~~ morning that we were in jail, we were visited by Bob Sorenson and Al Jordan of the American Embassy.

positions?

Name
Name

The Colonel who was in charge of the jail had an office out in the courtyard, in a separate building that we used for the meeting.

As a result of this meeting, we were moved to the upstairs section of the jail with prisoners that had a professional background. This was a better part of the jail. There were fewer people to each cell, and it was on the ground floor rather than underground, a much better environment as far as the prisoners were concerned. The people from the Embassy had no news regarding what had happened in the meeting with Dadgar on the previous day or why he had arrested us. They also had no news on a possible bail reduction. They did agree to contact the EDS office in Tehran and to follow up on getting us some clothes, some money, shaving equipment, and other items.

Names
Names

Concerning other visits that we received at this jail, we were visited by our lawyers; first, two members of a law firm that we'd been dealing with in Tehran during the recent period. Beside these two lawyers, we were also visited by Mr. Houman, who was an Iranian lawyer in Tehran that had been retained by Abolhasan EDS. He had spoken with [redacted] to get the details of our problem, and at the beginning was optimistic that within a week's period of time, he could get the bail reduced to a reasonable amount of money and secure our release from the jail. This didn't prove to be true, but reflected early optimism among many people. From time to time, we were also visited in the initial period by

Dr.

Majid

Rich Gallagher and [REDACTED], who did a good job of getting the EDS people down to the jail and making the necessary arrangements for the visits. Later on, we were visited by Bob Young and John Howell, and also Jay Coburn on one occasion. During the visit Jay explained to Paul that they were planning a raid on the prison to get us out. He asked Paul to carefully observe the pattern of the guards and we would discuss the details at our next meeting. Since we were moved, that meeting never took place.

Panham
date
date

One interesting note concerning our visitors was an Italian builder who had contracts with the Iranian Government. He had been in our prison cell until New Year's Eve, had been released and had come back on New Year's Day to bring us some chocolate and say hello. He also promised to contact the Italian Ambassador, who he would ask to contact the American Ambassador Mr. Sullivan, in an attempt to help us get our bail reduced or to do whatever was necessary to get us out of jail.

Next, a description of the Kakh jail itself including the ground floor where we were located. The upstairs cellblock area was smaller than the downstairs jail in that it only had five different cells instead of the nine that were downstairs. The cells were approximately the same size, 13' X 21'. On the ground floor, however, these cells normally had somewhere between six to twelve people, as opposed to the 15 to 18 for the cells downstairs. The bunks were roughly the same foam rubber mattresses with grey wool blankets for covers. The prisoners either bought or obtained sheets for the beds along with pillows and various pieces of cloth were used to block the lights that were never turned off. Generally, we would eat sitting on the floor in the room.

They would spread a piece of linoleum, about three feet wide, maybe six or seven feet long, and then put the plates and the food and everything on the linoleum.

Our section of the jail had a combination guard's office and library. There was also a bathroom and a separate combination shower and washroom. There were two hallways. The entrance hall was maybe 12 feet wide and 22 feet long; a separate hallway going to the three back cells was probably 50 feet long, but only about three or four feet wide. Both of these hallways were used by the prisoners for exercising.

In our cell, Cell Number 5, we could see outside into the courtyard where the Colonel's building was located and where the guards parked. There was a traffic circle in this courtyard where twice a week the prisoners were allowed to go outside and walk around or stand in the sunshine for a half hour. In the cell itself, the lights were kept burning 24 hours a day, with the exception of periodic power cuts, when all the lights and everything run by electricity was off. Down the hall there was a room that had been built by some of the former prisoners called the Chattanooga room. It was a place where prisoners could go and have coffee or tea at various times during the day.

In the jail itself, there was no hot water during the period that we were there, with the exception of two five-minute shower periods that we had during the three weeks we were at this jail (the prisoners were taken room by room and allowed to take a shower with hot water for five minutes). During the three week period we were in the jail, the lights and the electricity were frequently out for one to two hours, generally in the evening. The prisoners would just sit on the floor and light candles or some cases turn on battery-powered lamps to light the rooms until the electricity came back on.

After a week, the jail ran out of bottled gas which was used for cooking and heating the food. This was due to a general shortage in Tehran of bottled gas, and with the exception of the central kitchen which was used for the entire jail, none of the other jail facilities had gas during the period of time that we were there.

There was also a T.V. set in the jail which had programs on several hours in the evening when the television stations were working. Generally, most of the programs were in Farsi. They also had radio programs on during the day, mostly in Farsi with a good deal of religious chanting that was not music to our ears. The news programs were of primary interest during the day. The prisoners would listen to those and then translate for us what the news had been. While we were in this jail, generally the news was bad, and nobody looked forward to hearing the day's events. Obviously, there was great interest in the Shah leaving the country, and Bakhtiar's government being formed, Khomeini coming back in; but the news in Tehran at this time was not very optimistic for anyone. Still, everybody listened to it, hoping for some good news.

Our roommates during this first period of time were Reza Neghabat, the Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, Dr. Siassi, who was in charge of the Rehabilitation area at the Ministry, his assistant, a Mr. Mahmudzadeh, who handled the financial area for Rehabilitation, and several other fellows that were general businessmen in Tehran; all of whom were friendly to us. Later on, there were two members of the Queen's Imperial Court who stayed in our cell. In another cell was Dr. Towliati and Mr. Pasha, also

from the Ministry. There were other Ministers of other government Ministries, their deputies, various government contractors, and a number of other businessmen.

A typical day at this jail followed this format. Most of the prisoners got up at 6:00 to 6:30 in the morning. We were generally scheduled to eat breakfast at about 7:00. Breakfast would include bread cooked in a prison bakery, cheese, jelly and tea. Following breakfast, the people would clean the room, shave, wash, and get dressed for the day. During the day, we would read, play chess, or talk in small groups. Prisoners would walk up and down the halls to exercise or do whatever they could to pass time until lunch. Our food at lunch included steamed rice and some meat, either lamb or beef in small quantities, and once in a while vegetables, such as spinach or some type of barley served in a broth. We'd have tea or Pepsi to drink with the meal along with yogurt and bread from the prison bakery.

time?
menu

time?
re -

5:00/6:00

The same activities would go on until dinner, when we'd have roughly the same food that we'd had at lunch. Whatever meat was left over would be pounded into a paste-like substance and perhaps they would make some soup. There was some T.V. in the evening when NIRT, the local station, was working. Then, at 10 o'clock, everyone went to bed. The same routine was repeated day after day. There was little variation, from the pattern described. The high point of the prisoner's day was when they had visitors. This gave them some communication with the outside world (news of what was going on in Tehran), gave them something optimistic to look forward to (maybe some good news such as a break in

the case) and frequently the visitors would bring the prisoners food or new books. Visitors were probably the one thing that the prisoners looked forward to most besides news that their bail had been posted, or that they were being released.

During the time that Paul and I were in the Kakh Jail, we did have one other meeting with Justice Dadgar, on January the 11th. This had been arranged by our lawyer, Mr. Houman, supposedly with the intention of it being a question-and answer period that would result in the bail being reduced significantly. As it turned out, Justice Dadgar had apparently met with people from the Ministry and they'd cooked up a scheme where four of them sent Dadgar a letter requesting that our bail be increased to roughly \$23 million, rather than decreased. It seemed like a set-up job since the letter arrived at his office only two days before our scheduled meeting. He began our meeting by reading it to Paul and then, later in my session, to me, asking for our comments. Obviously it was a ploy, I think orchestrated by him to counter for the record our request to have the bail reduced.

It again became very obvious that Dadgar was intent upon having us remain in jail and, although there was a bail amount, it was so high as to almost preclude its being posted because of the exorbitant amount. In my session with Justice Dadgar, the roles of the various managers on the Ministry project were covered in greater detail, explaining the size, scope and complexity of the project, explaining the procedure that we followed to develop the monthly report, and also my views on the role the monthly report had as far as the Ministry payment approval process. Details.

The session was not really very productive. Again, I don't believe Justice Dadgar was interested in getting at the truth. I think the meeting had been held at the request of Mr. Houman, through people that he knew at the Ministry of Justice, with the intent of reducing the bail. Dadgar had countered that with a put-up job from the people at the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare to establish some justification for not reducing the bail. Paul and I went back to our cell, and I think we were both probably very discouraged at that turn of events. It was obvious that Mr. Houman was not getting very far with Justice Dadgar, and we were likely going to be in jail for a considerably longer period of time, until the bail was posted or some new break-through occurred.

Other significant events occurred during this period of time. On January the 16th, the Shah was forced to leave the country. this caused a period of wild celebration in the streets by pro-Khomeini demonstrators. Obviously they had achieved the victory that they were after. It was a low period for many of the prisoners who had worked in the Ministries and were friends of one sort or another of the Shah or the royal family. And, there didn't appear to be a great deal of enthusiasm on the part of the prisoners that Khomeini was coming to the country, although it was widely recognized that this was the major event that was going to take place in the not-too-distant future. There was also a great deal of interest in the government being formed by Bakhtiar.

time place by whom
time place by whom

Then, on January the 18th, as a surprise one morning, Paul and I were told that we were going to be transferred to another jail. This was supposedly for our own good in that General Mohari, who commanded the various jails there in

Tehran, thought we would be safer at a larger jail where he was located. This was probably true in that the Kakh Jail was a very small jail, not adequately secured by the fence around it, and one that was fairly vulnerable, particularly in the part of town where it was located. After an hour or so of getting ready, we were boarded on the bus with ^{how many? how many?} some other prisoners and were transported to a jail further north in Tehran, the Qasr Jail.

exactly?
exactly?

This jail was a much larger ^{acres} facility in that there were 15 or 20 separate buildings in the jail complex, all inside massive stone walls. The walls that we saw were probably 25 to 30 feet high, surrounding the entire jail complex. There was a smaller, outer wall at the front of the jail that was maybe 12 feet high, but there was another higher wall behind it. There were massive metal gates at the front of the jail.

solid?
solid?

Upon entering, you passed through these first set of metal gates, maybe 20 feet tall, came through about 15-20 feet of inner-courtyard space and then another two metal doors bringing you into the central entrance courtyard of the jail itself. This jail was a major prison compound and complex of buildings. It had a brand new modern bakery, a mosque, helicopter landing pads, and a number of different cell block buildings. Paul and I were located in Building Number 8, which was a small two-story building that housed maybe 30 prisoners. Twenty were patients in the clinic that they had on the first floor. Up on the second floor where we were located were five to ten other prisoners. This building had a small courtyard outside, surrounded by a fence and gate. The courtyard was used for exercise. There was an open space where the guards and the prisoners played volleyball during the day. This was a much

more normal setting, as far as prisoners where concerned in being able to go outdoors during the day, than we had at the former jail, where we were only able to go outside for a half hour twice a week.

name?
name?

Paul and I had a much larger room than in the previous jail. This room was probably 20' X 30'. We had one other roommate, an Iranian lawyer who was about 50 years old. There were several other Iranian prisoners on our floor in this building. One fellow was extremely wealthy, and spending something on the order of \$10,000 a month in payments to the jail officials and guards for privileges. He was apparently allowed to go outside of the jail during the day. He also arranged to have his own meals cooked outside the jail and brought in to feed himself and the guards. He probably had everything that he needed or wanted there in the jail. He had his own private room, as did one or two other prisoners, and it was obvious that his treatment and the privileges that he had were beyond what the other prisoners had; but then he was spending a good deal of money for them.

When?

Later on, during our stay at this jail, five other foreign prisoners were brought to our building from the jail near the Karaj Dam. The jail they had been in had been the scene of an attempted jail break and demonstration by the prisoners which caused the guards to shoot into the cell blocks. Since it was not safe for them any longer, they were transferred to the Qasr jail. One of the fellows was a Mexican-American. There was a Brit, a New Zealander, an Italian fellow and a Yugoslavian who were in jail for smuggling dope. Several other foreigners were in the other buildings, such as the American woman we had met in January.

all?

4. 4.

In this jail, our daily routine was somewhat the same as it had been in the previous jail, with the exception there were no set times that the prisoners had to go to bed or get up. We had a separate room where we could eat our meals sitting at a table. The meals were prepared by several of the prisoners who were paid to take care of this duty by each of the other prisoners. We had a great deal more room and we had the outdoor facilities that we could use everyday. We had a T.V. set in our room, which was good if you spoke Farsi. The prisoners who spoke both English and Farsi were pretty good about telling us what was going on, either on the radio or television. We also read a great deal whenever we could get books brought into us by the EDS visitors who came to see us every four or five days. The people that visited us were able to bring us some American food, canned tuna fish, peanut butter, jelly, juice, fruit, things like that, which we used to supplement the food that we had there in the prison. The prisoners got Iranian honey at this jail and treated it as if it were a delicacy. We were also able to get Chelow Kabob once a week, and that was probably the big meal of the week that everybody looked forward to since the meat was excellent when properly cooked.

As time wore on and we had been in this jail for almost 30 days, two things were occurring for Paul and I. One, judging from what our visitors, Bill Gayden, Keane Taylor, Bob Young, John Howell, so forth were telling us, they seemed to be getting closer and closer to posting some type of a letter of credit (bank guarantee) device that would suffice for our bail. They were encountering a number of difficulties with banks, both in the United States and Iran not wanting to be involved in the deal. Dadgar was being his normal uncooperative self in that he was not being very helpful in working out the language of the agreements or helping our people figure out what had to be

done to get us out of the jail. It was not even clear as to whether or not posting the bond would suffice to get us out of jail, and whether we would be then allowed to leave the country.

At the same time, to counter the good news of the progress being made in getting us out of jail, it was obvious that the political and civil situation in Tehran and all of Iran was going downhill rapidly. There was a great deal of fighting and demonstrations in the streets and a lot of shooting was occurring all over the city. News in the papers radio and T.V. was all bad. It was apparent that a showdown was unavoidable between Bakhtiar, the current Prime Minister, and Khomeini. Khomeini's forces were gaining considerable strength, Bakhtiar's forces were going downhill rapidly. The key unknown ingredient was the army; whether the army would attempt a coup and take over the government itself, whether it would support Bakhtiar and attack the people, or just what it would do. As it turned out, there was some limited fighting between the Imperial Guards, who attacked the air force base at Doushen Toppe. But then, in a surprise move, the army declared itself neutral and withdrew completely from the city. This spelled the downfall of the Bakhtiar government.

One morning in late January, the guards tell Paul and I that we have some visitors. We leave our building and its compound accompanied by a group of guards. However, this visit is unusual. Normally, our visitors come to our building or to a small single story building right outside of our compound. Today, we are accompanied by quite a few more officers than usual, not necessarily to guard us but seemingly they are going along for the ride, and they are taking us down the street towards the front section of the prison. We are taken to what looks like a nicely furnished officers club.

Outside the building, peacocks and ducks are strutting around a small tropical garden. Inside, is a big circular room with banquet tables around the walls. The walls are covered with inlaid cut mirrored glass in small triangular pieces which give the room the appearance of a dance ballroom. Standing outside, we suddenly see our visitors walking towards us across the front courtyard. What a surprise, here comes Ross Perot! Ross has a big smile on his face like he's out on a Sunday stroll, coming to see his friends. Three or four EDS'ers are with him plus some other people that we don't recognize. Turns out, the strangers are from the American Embassy.

One of the people with Ross is Rich Gallagher, who is carrying a large box of groceries, books, and warm clothes for Paul and I. We all go inside the building to sit down and talk. I've already had one disturbing thought regarding Ross' surprise visit. It has to do with the scraggly moustache I've been growing for the last two weeks trying to change my appearance to look more Iranian. I wonder what Ross' reaction will be... since no one in EDS has ever had a moustache. What a thing to think about at a time like this.

All the people in the large room divide up into three separate groups. On the far side, the Iranian guards are gathered, drinking their morning tea. Our guards have been joined by some women officers who have escorted an American woman prisoner into the building. She is at the far end of the room talking excitedly with the folks from the American Embassy.

At our end of the room, our group is sitting together and we are having a very interesting discussion. The question that Paul and I have in mind is obvious. Ross, what in the world are YOU doing here? Has everything been settled and we're finally getting out of here? Well, not quite.

It is clear after talking for a while, that there are several reasons for Ross' visit. The primary purpose appears to center around boosting our morale. He tells us in detail about all their efforts to get us out of the jail. Seems like everyone worth contacting for help has been contacted. The White House, the State Department, the Department of Defense, Kissinger, Admirals, Generals, Senators and Congressmen. The list of contacts went on and on. All the stops had been pulled out, no scheme was too wild to try. Ross had succeeded in several of his efforts. A commitment had been secured from General Heyser... he wouldn't leave Tehran without us. The American Government was even considering putting the Embassy property up as collateral to meet our bail. Dadgar had contacted EDS several times through intermediaries and had indicated that his cooperation could be secured for a price, namely a large amount of cash paid to him directly.

Ross had even contacted the Iranian Army and offered Paul and my programming assistance at their data center in Tehran to try to get us out of that jail. It was a great idea, but the Iranians were reluctant to accept Ross' proposal.

There was other news of interest. Upon entering the jail, Ross had been taken to General Mohari's office to register for his visit. To his surprise, he suddenly realized that the man in the room with him, another American, was

none other than Ramsey Clark. Ross had quickly taken the offense and spoken to Ramsey, asking him what in the world was he doing there. Clark missed his opportunity to ask Ross the same question.

Ross continued with his description of the efforts to get us free. Numerous lawyers and bankers, both in the U.S. and Tehran, were trying to solve our dilemma--mostly to no avail, but they were trying and some progress was being made here and there. And, to help boost our morale, Ross had brought us some comical notes from our friends in Dallas who tried to make light fun of what they probably knew was a dangerous situation. The notes did their job. It helped a lot for Paul and I to receive those contacts from the outside world.

We also had some very candid discussions in brief general terms, that led us to believe that something specific was being planned there in Tehran to get us out of jail, by force if necessary. Paul and I knew that Jay Coburn, Keane Taylor and others were up to something. We weren't quite sure what to expect. Would a helicopter fly over our compound and rescue us? Would the U.S. Army come storming over the walls or what? Without knowing all the details, we knew enough to have hope in the difficult days ahead.

More
More

As our meeting broke up and our visitors got ready to leave, Ross and I had a brief discussion about my moustache. I offered to shave it off once we got out of jail. But Ross suggested I keep it, at least until we got home and my wife and kids could see it. He also told us that a decision had been made, as a result of an EDS employee survey, to make moustaches optional in the future. We also discussed other changes in the wind at EDS that Ross planned to implement.

More More

Finally, our visitors said goodbye and headed out toward the front gate and freedom. Paul and I wanted desperately to go with them, but knew that today was not the day. We gathered up our boxes of food and books and clothing and walked back to our compound with our guards. They were very curious about both us and our visitors--and they couldn't wait to inspect what we had in those boxes. It took Paul a week to finally get most of the cigarettes that we had been given. The guards took their share too. In jail, cigarettes are worth a lot of money and are often very difficult to get.

The meeting had produced one other significant result that would pay big dividends in the days ahead. Keane Taylor had discovered a clever way to smuggle money in to Paul and I. Keane had emptied most of the cigarettes out of a box before coming into the jail. In their place, he had stuffed about 15,000 rials (approximately \$225). Then, when we were all sitting together and talking, he simply opened the box and took out a cigarette for himself. His next move was to offer the rest of the pack to me to keep. I caught on immediately and stuck the box deep into my coat pocket to open later when we returned to our room. We used this technique several more times in subsequent meetings with Keane and our other visitors.

There are a number of miscellaneous thoughts, comments, and observations about the jail that are worth noting. The courtyard that was outside of our building had a volleyball court, a ping pong table, room for the prisoners to walk and get exercise, a fountain in the middle of the courtyard, and walkways around the edge of the courtyard which was circled with rosebushes. There were quite a few trees, maybe 10 or 15 trees within this courtyard, mostly pine trees.

Quite a few birds were seen in the last couple of weeks before we escaped, it was obvious we were on the verge of spring. The weather was starting to warm up. Matter of fact, the weather during the entire winter was very mild with only one significant snowfall in the downtown area in January through the entire winter. One other interesting note, the guards had several parakeets, canaries, and even a green parrot. They used to bring these birds outside in the afternoon when the weather was warm, and they'd really enjoy being outside and just sing up a storm. They seemed to be almost immune to the cool weather, which was unusual since birds of this variety normally are found in a warm weather environment. They were very hardy.

The compound that we were in was encircled by a wire fence and a gate which was kept locked. A guard outside opened the gate to authorized visitors. The ground floor of the building we were in contained a medical clinic with approximately 20 patients, some of which were medical patients, most of which were mental patients. They were kept in a large room which was locked. They were not free to go in and out as we were. The building was staffed during the day by an Iranian doctor who had been coming to the prison for 15 years. He had a son living in the U.S. There were also, beside the 20 prisoners on this floor, maybe four or five officers on duty during the day in an office which we sometimes used as a meeting room when we had visitors from EDS. Upstairs, were another 10 prisoners, including Paul and I and a room where maybe 10 or 15 guards lived. There was a small courtyard in the back.

Until the beginning of February, most of our interests were aimed at talking to our visitors from EDS on their progress toward securing our release from jail. Time passed very slowly and quite a bit was going on in the country,

turmoil was growing. This began to reach a peak toward the beginning of February with the demonstrations becoming more and more frequent outside the jail. Tensions were building. About the 8th or 9th of February, when another massive parade in support of Khomeini took place, some of the army officers and a large group of air force officers joined in that march and openly showed their allegiance to Khomeini. This resulted in a retaliatory raid that night by members of the Imperial Guard on the air force headquarters at Duzentabi Air Force Base. The air force opening their armories thus supplying a considerable amount of guns and other equipment to the Khomeini mobs in the streets. The next day, there was gunfire all during the day as the mobs attacked one police headquarters after another, seeking to get the weapons and kill the policemen.

On Sunday February the 11th, the mobs stormed our prison. The shooting had gone on all night long. It began with intensity early in the morning, and by approximately 12 o'clock noon, it was obvious that in a short period of time the mobs would succeed in assaulting and capturing the prison. At this point, the officers changed into their civilian clothes put the enlisted policemen in charge of the prisoners and fled out the back door of the jail to safety.

About half an hour later, the intensity of the attack by the mobs continued to increase. The enlisted men also changed into civilian clothes and began to flee the jail. At this time, they unlocked most of the cells of the jail and informally told the prisoners that they were free to leave if they desired to do so. By this time, the firing on the jail was intense. The policemen were in

Army or
police

More

?

chaos running through the jail compound, some carrying their guns, some just fleeing the jail altogether. Many of the prisoners did not know what to do, whether to leave the compound and try to get out of the jail or whether to stay there. After a while, some of the prisoners began to run through the jail compound and head for the gates. Unfortunately, none of the policemen had informed the guards in the towers that the prisoners had been told that they could leave. The tower guards began to fire down on the prisoners in the courtyards, which added considerably to the danger and the confusion of the situation.

Finally, one event took place which I think set in motion the release of all the prisoners. The mobs attacking the jail succeeded in getting into the compound and set one of the large buildings at the front of the jail on fire. The smoke could be seen clearly through the jail complex, and it was obvious that some of the buildings were on fire. This event then seemed to make it a matter of time before all of the prisoners would be in trouble if they stayed in that the fire could easily spread and consume all of the buildings. So, despite the amount of firing that was going on, both from the mobs and the prison guards in the towers, Paul and I along with most of the other 11,000 prisoners decided to go out in the courtyard to get out of the jail.

We went to the front part of the jail and there were large numbers of prisoners up on the top of the walls. They were climbing trees to get to the tops of the walls and climbing on roofs of buses and planks of wood leaning up against the wall. Some prisoners were letting down sheets or ropes to other prisoners to climb up. In general, the prisoners were climbing up the walls or milling

around uncertain what direction to go in, or what to do. Many of the prisoners, though, were taking time to pick up rocks or bricks, sticks to smash the windows of the cars that were parked in the prison compound which belonged to the police officers. I think this was general destruction just aimed at the establishment.

Out in the front part of the jail, we joined the other foreigners, a group of maybe six to eight in total, Brits, New Zealanders, and Americans. As a group, we happened to find one building over in the corner that had a metal door that had been opened that offered a quick and a much easier route to the outside than trying to go over the wall. We went through this door into a room of a building that was being constructed. The prisoners had succeeded in smashing a hole through the brick wall which provided access into another room under construction. We had to wait there briefly while the prisoners were smashing a hole in yet another brick wall. Once this was done, we scrambled through that hole into a small open courtyard and came to a wall which was about 12 feet high. Climbing up on this wall with the help of other prisoners on top of the wall, we were up to the top of the wall and over into the streets outside the

jail and free. Free on the street. The scene outside was chaotic. It was like a wild Mardi Gras scene. Thousands of people were on the street, some with guns, doing whatever they could to help the prisoners escape the jail. In the apartment houses across the street, hundreds of people were looking out the windows, watching the scene like it was a big happening or a parade in their street.

How did
you feel?
What was
said?

How did
you feel?
What was
said?

From this point on, Paul and I headed to the east of the jail, then to the north where we ran into a fire-fight going on between the people and the army at one of the military installations. We turned south again and went in an easterly direction to get around the shooting. We finally worked our way to a point in the city south of the Lavazon Campus, which is on the north eastern side of Tehran. There, we were successful in hitchhiking a ride with two Iranian men who took us part of the way to the Hyatt Hotel, which was our ultimate goal. They took us over to Kurosh-E-Kabir several miles south of the Tajrish area. There, we hitchhiked some more and finally caught a second ride with a young Iranian couple. They took us through the Niavran Palace area and ultimately dropped us off at our destination at the hotel. We had offered them some money to take us all the way to the hotel rather than just part of the way. They never asked us how much. I think they'd have been happy with 20 or 30 bucks if we'd given them that. However, Paul and I gave them the equivalent of \$300, which was well worth the money at that point in time. These people had to drive through demonstrations, roadblocks, and a lot of people carrying guns on the street. They were at risk with us in the car and it certainly meant a lot to Paul and I to get a ride all the way to the hotel.

IV. Escape From Iran

After arriving at the hotel, we walked through the lobby and asked the desk clerk for the room numbers of the EDS'ers we hoped would be registered there. We were given the information that John Howell and Bob Young's room was on the sixth floor. We took the elevator up and knocked on the door but got no answer. There were however other Americans in rooms across the hall, so we continued looking. Suddenly, we ran into ^{Rashid} [REDACTED] walking down the hallway. ^{Rashid} [REDACTED] was on his way back to the QASR prison to look for us. He had been to our compound and knew we were out on the streets somewhere. We had a grand celebration in Bill Gayden's room. A telephone call to Dallas was in progress, and we talked to Tom Walter and Mitch Hart and asked them to give messages to our wives that we were safe. We had drinks in the room and recounted all the details of our escape. Then, I went to Keane's room to shower, shave, and change clothes. On the way to his room, we took the stairways down rather than using the elevator. Going down the steps, we passed an older man who looked like an Iranian painter or workman. Keane identified him as the Colonel, a military guy with an unusual background that Ross had recruited to help get us out of Iran.

Later that evening, Paul and I were moved to two connecting rooms that were registered in other EDS names. To maintain our security, Paul and I had a steak dinner, via room service, in one room while Keane accepted the food in the other room. Paul took a bath and got pajamas on to go to sleep. In the meantime, ^{Abolhasan} [REDACTED] arrived at the hotel with his wife to tell us that Dadgar had called his father and told him that the Americans had escaped from

prison and should give themselves up and not try to leave the country. Amhad came to the hotel to pass on the message. Unfortunately, our people may have not hidden the fact we were there.

The Colonel took the news of [redacted] visit as a dangerous turn of events. He already disliked the hotel's location because of its proximity to the Evin Hotel, where all the American military were staying, and because it was close to the Evin Prison and a military armory. All of these were prime targets for the revolutionaries, sooner or later.

All of a sudden, the phone rang in the room. No one answered it because we were all together and no one else should have known we were there. Suddenly, the colonel ordered Paul and I to pack up and get ready to leave the hotel, immediately. No one objected, no one questioned his decision.

As we walked out of the hotel to get in one of the range rovers in the parking lot, we saw a jeep full of revolutionaries, armed with machine guns, drive up to the hotel's front door. Paul and I and Joe Poche and Keane Taylor leaped in the range rover and drove out into the street in a hurry. We headed for a safe house. On the way, we were stopped at a roadblock at the Hilton Hotel. The revolutionary in charge spoke English. Joe told him we were going to visit Joe's Mother-in-law on Abassabad. Other revolutionaries wanted to hassel us, but the leader told us to go on. We heard machine gun fire everywhere on the way to the Dvoranchak's apartment, where the Colonel, Jay Coburn and Joe Poche had been staying.

No
[unclear]

Describe & locate.
Describe and locate.

Who Kathy.

Who Kathy.

The Gallagher's spent the night at the Hyatt hotel and were able to keep us informed with valuable information they had obtained from American military at the Evin Hotel. From them, we knew the revolutionaries had gotten all the people in the hotel down to the lobby to match with pictures of Paul and I. Obviously, they had been sent from Dadgar.

Mon 12 Feb 79

Mon 12 Feb 79

who

That night, some of us slept in the apartment. The next morning, the Colonel gave orders to the other EDS people in the hotel to move out at first light bringing no baggage to the apartment. The hotel wasn't safe. Later the next day one of our Iranians went to get luggage from the hotel and reported gunshots in room, etc. Details.

13 + 14 Feb?

13 and 14 Feb?

details from whom?

details from them?

During the next two days, besides trying to get us out of the country, Bill Gayden, Jay Coburn, Keane Taylor and some of our Iranian employees tried to keep our office in Tehran running to pay our Iranian employees and to interface with the Iranian authorities who came to our office.

Name?
Name?

Other Iranian employees of EDS were also providing assistance. One of them helped get us the two range rovers, buying them on the street market in Tehran. Another one was scheduled to drive out of the country with us as an escort and driver. However, he was arrested and questioned by the revolutionaries on the way over to meet us the night before we left Tehran and didn't get to join us.

How do you know?

How do you know?

Rashid

date 14th?

██████████ was contacted late the night we were planning our escape and came immediately to help us drive out of the country. ██████████ and I distributed some of the money the group had to each member of the escape team (\$10-\$20,000 each in U.S. and Iranian money) and then packed the rest in rolled up baggies weighted with shotgun pellets -- which were hidden in the bottom of a 20 gallon gas can. All in all, maybe \$250,000 was carried or hidden in the belongings of the escape team.

Rashid

The Colonel, Jay Coburn and Joe Poche planned the escape trip via telephone back to the U.S. using a code that had been devised previously. The Gallagher's kept us advised through their friends in the U.S. military in Tehran. Bill Gayden talked to Lou Goelz at the Embassy and pretended to not know where we were. Later on, Bill Gayden arranged with Goelz for the Gallagher's, Joe Poche, John Howell and Bob Young to go to Goelz's house to stay until they could get into the U.S. Embassy and later leave Tehran when the commercial planes began to fly again.

Goelz's house
Goelz's house

These people were split off from the rest of our group for their safety and to help improve our chances for success in an escape trip overland. Up to this time, we had been in a dangerous position with ten people, (one dog) and 1-2 Iranians escaping overland, which would have required 3 cars (we only had two range rovers). The escape plan called for us to meet a cousin of one of our Iranian employee's near the border and then to ride over the mountains in the

who
who?

dark on horseback -- which was not likely to succeed with such a large group, a dog and (a woman) who was having serious medical problems. Thus, we were lucky to have been able to split the group up and have some of them go safely to the Embassy.

details.

We stocked up on food and water and miscellaneous items like can openers, flashlights, blankets for our trip. We had a large amount of money to buy our way out of the country if necessary. We had 2-way radios but they were left behind because the Colonel thought they looked too military. The decision was also made to take no weapons since they would have made us look like spies or American military.

A large amount of money was put in the gas can that we put in the back of one of the range rovers. Later, when we were 50-100 miles outside of Tehran on the trip we stopped at a gas station where ^{Rashid} had the attendants put 6-8 cans of motor oil in the gas can to hide the money in the bottom.

Most of the last night in Tehran was spent planning and preparing for the trip. Everyone got 1-2 hours sleep at the most. In the morning, at about 5:30 A.M. Keane, ^{Rashid} and I gassed up the range rovers from 55 gallon gas drums we had at the apartment. Keane had to siphon the gas using a rubber hose and his mouth for the vacuum. We left the rest of the gasoline behind because the drums would have drawn too much suspicion. *range of the jeep*

Early the next morning, ^{Rashid} took a test drive around the neighborhood to see where the roadblocks were and how many revolutionaries were out on patrol. Everything seemed quiet.

We left the apartment at about 6:30 A.M. and drove out of Tehran in a North-westerly direction. Some of us thought the hardest part of our escape would be in Tehran, and believed our trip would get easier as we got further away from the city and out in the countryside. Jay and the Colonel however, knew from their previous recon trip that the opposite was true.

We hit our first checkpoint outside Tehran near the Karaj Dam. We had gone about 30-40 miles. ^{Rashid} █████ told them we were reporters on the way to Tabriz to cover the fighting going on there. The people at the roadblock bought the story and only made a casual inspection of us and the contents of the cars.

We stopped 100 yards further down the road at a gas station, and had no problems even though we got lots of attention.

On we went speeding down the highway which was located in a valley between snow capped mountains.

We were stopped from time to time at roadblocks where cars were being searched for weapons. Each time ^{Rashid} █████ talked us through the roadblock with one story or another and with various instructions from the Colonel regarding what to do or not do. At one roadblock, the revolutionaries used a magic marker to write a clearance for our cars on each windshield. This served as a pass through subsequent roadblocks for awhile.

On one occasion, as we drove along a good road through the mountains at fairly high speed, we missed a right turn and plowed ahead off the end of the pavement into some mud. Fortunately, the range rover had 4-wheel drive and we were able to back up and get back on the right road. Later, the roads got quite rough as we passed through the mountains and small villages.

We passed a ski lift at one point on top of one of the mountains. Then in one of the valleys we stopped by a stream and had lunch beside the road.

In one town we drove through a group of people that tried to stop our cars. Luckily, we didn't hit anyone and they didn't shoot at us or try to follow us.

As the afternoon wore on, the windshields got dirty and Reza turned on the wipers to wash the windows. Unfortunately this washed off the message of passage that had helped us through some of the recent roadblocks -- and seemed like a bad omen of things to come. *Why not write to the author.*

This turned out to be true. The very next town we came to was Mahabad. The roadblock at the edge of town was bigger and better organized than any of the ones before. The men waved us over to the side of the road and told us to stop and park the cars. When they came over to the car, they seemed very curious about us and a crowd of armed men quickly gathered and began to question Reza.

We talked and talked but didn't seem to be getting anywhere. This roadblock was different from the ones before. Everyone was armed with guns of every description and age -- both American and Russian.

Then they put armed guards in each car with us and told us to drive downtown where we were taken inside of a building to meet with a local village chief who appeared to be in charge, since all the regular authorities had been overthrown. The spokesman informed us that this individual had just escaped from the Shah's prison in Tehran where he had been for 25 years.

describe
describe

distance
distance

describe
describe

Blorian .
Blorian

describe the room
describe the room

We sat in a circle on the floor, on oriental carpets, and were questioned. Armed guards sat around the room. We told them we were businessmen trying to get home by driving to Turkey since Tehran was having a war and there were no flights leaving there. They asked us what kind of business we were in and we responded with information about data processing and some of our Iranian customers -- including Bank Ohram which had a branch in this city. They asked for identification and were given our passports to inspect. Keane Taylor showed them his blue EDS health benefits card which was the only thing any of us had with EDS information on it. This proved a vital link of credibility for us with them. While we talked, they sent word to the local Mullah, who had control of the town, that they were questioning us. Supposedly they called back to Tehran to check on us and got a report we were alright.

They decided we were what we said we were and weren't spies or American military. At this point, they served us tea as a sign of friendship and hospitality. Then, they told us it wasn't safe to travel at night so we would be their guests until the next day when they would escort us safely to the next major town. They also said the local Mullah would give us a note of safe passage for the Mullah in charge of that town.

Then they took us off to a gas station to fill up our cars and subsequently to a local restaurant to eat dinner with our armed guards. The restaurant looked like it was the major attraction in town and featured Chelow Kabab and other good food.

We had been under tremendous pressure that day and for several weeks before and it affected each of us in a different way. Paul and I were past the point of worrying about getting shot and really relaxed and enjoyed the meal. Keane and Jay were very tense and lost most of their appetite for dinner or conversation. ^{Rashid} [redacted] the Colonel and Bill Gayden were in between, but ate well and talked a lot to our guards and local hosts. The guards ate a meal like there was no tomorrow. They must have guessed we were going to pay the bill. ?

where ~ Where?

That night, we stayed at a two story villa that had been built for the Shah and his Imperial guards to stay at only a year before, when the Shah attended the dedication of a new dam on the local river. We slept in the guards rooms, while our local hosts spent the night having a ball in the Shah's suite. Our guards were friendly toward us and only seemed dangerous because they were heavily armed and wanted to have our Range Rovers. At midnight, Jay tried to make a phone call to our contact in Tehran to let Dallas know our status. The call was not successful. ?

Who ?
Who?

The next morning, we had some fresh bread and tea at a local roadhouse, and then drove on toward the next major town, Rezayeh. We were escorted by some of the local soldiers who rode in a big white ambulance they had converted into a

troop carrier. The Colonel tried to convince the guards to release us in Rezayeh to a friend rather than turn us over to the local Mullah. However, they were concerned about our safety and what their chief would do to them if we got hurt, and therefore insisted on turning us over to the proper authorities.

When we got to Rezayeh, we drove into the middle of a large parade of the local army troops who had just surrendered to the town revolutionaries. We were taken off to a religious school where the Mullah in charge had set up his headquarters. Most of the activity at the school was centered around the locals signing up as volunteers to go off to Tabriz to help overthrow the Army and Savak agents.

The second most important event taking place was a series of visits by the military officers who had just surrendered and were coming by the school to pay their respects to the Mullah in charge.

We were shunted off to the side of the courtyard and forced to sit and wait for at least an hour or two. The civilian official who was assigned to question our group had no interest in us and wanted to dispose of us by having us sent back to Tehran to be questioned by the Revolutionary Council Members. Rashid gave them the name of a friend of his on the Revolutionary Council to call to check us out and somehow talked the friend into substantiating that we were OK. This convinced the official to not return us to Tehran and instead arrange for us to be taken back downtown, to stay at a hotel under armed guard, while Rashid would return and arrange for us to proceed to the border.

where?

At the hotel, we registered at the front desk and were taken to four rooms upstairs on the 3rd floor. We were told to keep the curtains drawn and to stay away from the windows since local snipers might think Americans were inviting targets. We were accompanied by several local guards who watched us and guarded us throughout the late morning and afternoon. One of the guards was a nasty fellow who made a number of efforts to antagonize us into an argument. He attacked Carter and all Americans in general. He also said the Shah was a devil who was gone forever from Iran. He told us he had been a great wrestler for Iran and had travelled to Russia for training and contests with their athletes. Seemed like he had received some strong political training while he was there.

He did everything he could to try to cause trouble. He pointed his rifle at us and pretended he didn't know much about how it fired or operated. Later, he took it apart and asked if any of us knew how to help him put it back together. Wisely, everyone ignored him and we all disclaimed any knowledge of his rifle -- an American made M-1, which was probably the one gun in the world we all knew something about. He finally gave up on that trick and went off to the hallway to talk with some of the Iranians staying in the hotel on our floor.

How do you feel
How do you feel

At noon, the hotel sent food up to our room for our lunch. We had chicken, rice, bread and cokes. The meal had been arranged by ██████████ ^{Rashid} who had returned from the religious school with news about his progress there. He told us that he had almost convinced the officials that he was our official escort, assigned to us by the Revolutionary Council in Tehran, and that he was taking us to

the Turkish border. The officials were going to contact Tehran to verify his story and he was supposed to return to the school after lunch to meet with them regarding our disposition. His news sounded less than encouraging, especially when he admitted he wasn't sure they believed him and wasn't sure what would happen when the local officials called back to Tehran. Obviously, the message of safe passage we had received from the Mullah in Mahabad to the Mullah here in Rezayeh was not doing us much good.

The afternoon wore on slowly. We stayed in our rooms in small groups and either talked or tried to take naps. The atmosphere was tense and dangerous. No one in this town was being friendly or hospitable and our guards seemed more disposed to shoot us than protect us.

Finally, it got to be dinner time. It was dark outside. We hadn't heard from Reza who had been gone for five or six hours by now. Things were looking grim without ^{Rashid} because we had lost our Iranian link to communications with the locals. At about 7 or 8 P.M., we were taken downstairs by our guards into the hotel's dining room. They were hungry and thought it was time to eat.

We all sat around a big circular table. Our guards sat at another table across the room from us. We ordered lamb and rice and tea and ate our dinner slowly. There wasn't much conversation among the group. We all wondered where ^{Rashid} was. He had been gone too long.

Rashid

Suddenly, as we were finishing our meal, ██████ walked into the room and sat down at our table. He began talking in a very serious voice. He said we had just eaten our "last meal" in Iran. The way he said it sounded like he meant the condemned men had just eaten their last meal before being taken in front of the firing squad. He let us sit there in silence while his words sunk in. Then, he smiled and explained what he really meant. It had been our last meal in Iran because he had succeeded in gaining permission for us to be allowed to leave Rezayeh and cross into Turkey. He had also driven to the border crossing to scout out the roadblocks and to see how difficult it would be to get across the border. What he had to say was mostly good news.

On his trip, he had only encountered two roadblocks. One was on the outskirts of Rezayeh and was dangerous because it was manned by young kids who might shoot first and ask questions later. ██████^{Rashid} proposed to avoid this roadblock by leaving town via some back streets that would take us around the roadblock rather than through it.

The second roadblock was well up the road near the border itself. This blockade was well organized and posed a serious threat. However, to minimize our potential trouble later that night, ██████^{Rashid} had stopped at the roadblock and talked to the men in charge at length about who he was and his important mission to escort the Americans into Turkey. He told them about the clearances he had from the officials in Tehran, Mahabad and Rezayeh which authorized him to pass safely through all authorities he might encounter.

Rashid

█████ also told the men that he would be returning that night with his group and that he wanted to prearrange their safe passage. His plan was to convince the higher-ups on duty during the day to leave instructions for the night time guards that we were OK and to let us pass without interference. █████ thought everything had been taken care of at this roadblock and it was even possible that no one would be on duty late at night in the cold mountain area.

Rashid

█████ had more good news. He had been able to drive all the way to the Turkish border crossing. No regular guards or government authorities were on duty in Iran. In addition, an EDS team member was there. █████ had met one EDS member of the Turkish team at the border. They shouted to each other from 200 yards apart. █████ was also checking out the border guards on both sides to see what we would encounter when we tried to cross later than night.

Rashid

After telling us what had happened, █████ suggested we check out of the hotel and get the show on the road. Somehow, he convinced our guards that everything had been taken care of with the local authorities and that we were free to leave. This release from our guards may have been accomplished by showing them the official pass he now carried, which was signed by the local ruling Mullah, and which authorized him to escort us out of town and into Turkey.

We left the hotel and prepared to drive to the border. Before leaving, we taped pictures of Khomeini to the front and back windows of both cars. █████ had bought these posters from a street vendor and thought they might buy us some goodwill and safe passage. Jay was also allowed to call Tehran, and using a pre-arranged code he left a message to notify Dallas of our position in Rezayeh.

Rashid

Out in the streets of Rezayeh, [REDACTED] stopped a taxi-cab and arranged for the driver to lead us through the back streets in our detour around the blockade with the armed teenagers. After showing us the way, the cab driver haggled with [REDACTED] over the price of his help. [REDACTED] paid him more than the original amount bargained for (roughly \$2 instead of \$1), but argued hard enough to keep the cabbie from getting suspicious.

distance?

Then, we drove up the side street just past the road block and turned right and drove quickly away from the startled kids. They had been taken by surprise and had been too slow to react. Fortunately, they didn't shoot or try to follow and stop us. One roadblock down, many more to go.

We drove on for several hours through the mountainous countryside. The night was cold and dark. Anyone with any sense was inside their home either in bed asleep or sitting by a warm fireplace. For awhile, it looked like the second and last roadblock might be closed for the night with no one on duty to stop us. Unfortunately, this wasn't the case. The roadblock was manned, but apparently only by one or two farmers who seemed half asleep off the road by a small campfire next to a dimly lit farmhouse.

discussion

Our first impulse, in the lead car, was to floor the gas pedal and race full speed ahead, as we had done at the last roadblock. We could be past them in seconds before they could react one way or another. Our second impulse was to slow down, pull over to the side of the road, and talk our way through the roadblock as we had done over and over before, and as [REDACTED] had hopefully already pre-arranged that afternoon. Deciding on this course of action turned out later to have saved our lives.

Rashid

Here to ...

As we later learned, this innocent looking stopping point was actually a very cleverly disguised ambush of deadly proportions. For example, if we had not stopped, we would have driven only a short distance further before coming to a narrow two lane bridge, with steep drop-offs on either side, that was guarded by a stout steel cable strung across the bridge from one side to another. The cable was hidden in the darkness and would have been seen only at the last moment before the lead car would have crashed into it.

Other traps were hidden on both sides of the bridge in terms of hidden machine guns and numerous armed men waiting in the darkness. The traps had been set with deadly ability to wipe out anyone who tried to run this Iranian gauntlet.

Rashid

As it turned out, we stopped and were questioned extensively. Nothing [REDACTED] said or showed them made any difference. It was only after we were driven to a farmhouse, that was the local headquarters, and were questioned extensively did we begin to convince our captors that we should be released and allowed to drive on to the border. At several points during our questioning, we were thought to be spies, American or perhaps Russian, or military personnel trying to escape Iran. They were ready to shoot us on the spot.

— time? time?
Finally, we convinced the leaders that we were really businessmen trying to get home to our families in the U.S. This was accomplished by a lengthy discussion of who we were, where we were going and why. They reviewed all the passports we had and also called back to Rezayeh to check our story with the authorities there. When they were satisfied we were OK, it was again time for hot tea and Iranian hospitality -- the sign that they weren't going to shoot us after all.

Then several interesting things occurred. Keane Taylor got out his pocket instamatic and began to take pictures. The Iranians loved it and posed over and over for Keane's photographs. The room was dimly lit, with only a single bare lightbulb hanging from the ceiling, to see by. But it didn't matter, Keane had long since used up all his film and was only going through the motions to gain their friendship. Our captors loved it and asked over and over for us to send them copies of the pictures when we got home.

They got so friendly, they offered us a second glass of hot tea and even asked us to spend the night with them as their guests. We thanked them for their generosity, quickly drank the hot tea to show we were good guests, but told them we would have to decline their offer to stay since we had friends waiting for us at the border.

Then, they took us back to where the roadblock was located, said goodbye and goodluck and let us go on our way. Shortly, as we crested one of the hills, we could see the bright searchlights several miles away at the border. It looked like we were home free and we all relaxed, a little.

As it turned out, we were stopped at one last roadblock set up at a gas station just before the border guard outpost. We were taken back off the main road to another farm where we were again questioned and released. This time, the pass that ^{Rashid} [redacted] carried from the Mullah in Rezayeh, did the trick.

From [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] [redacted]

When we got to the actual border crossing, no real guards were on duty on the Iranian side, just local townfolk. They were willing to let us drive into Turkey, but unfortunately they didn't have the key to unlock the big chain that blocked the road. Neither were they willing to let the Colonel use his hacksaw blade to cut through the chain. They didn't want to be responsible for letting us cut the chain, and they probably began to realize what they could do with the Range Rovers if we couldn't get them over into Turkey. The cars would be left behind for someone else to have.

Luckily, they let us walk across into Turkey with some of our belongings such as blankets and clothes and some food we had left in the cars. To reach Turkey, the rescue group climbed over the cable, at the Iranian border, which prevented us from driving to safety. Ahead, lay 200 yards of no-man's land separating the two countries. Somewhere out in the middle was the actual border point we had to cross to physically be in Turkey. As we walked along, the Colonel came up behind us and said "Walk faster, I don't want the two of you getting shot out here in the middle of nowhere". We quickened our pace immediately.

Ahead, lay the Turkish border station. It was lit up by bright high intensity search lights. Standing beside the building waiting for our group's arrival were several Turkish officers and a number of border guards armed with sub-machine guns. The officers had earlier walked down into Iran to talk to us and the Iranian townspeople who were the acting border guards. They had seen us stopped at the cable and had walked across the border to investigate. Hopefully, everything had been arranged on their side of the border and we would be allowed to cross safely into Turkey.

Rashid

At that brief meeting, the Colonel and █████ did most of the talking for our group. The Colonel spoke Turkish fluently as a result of his earlier Army years when he had lived there and helped train the Turkish soldiers. But, he never disclosed that he understood anything being said in Turkish, Instead, he pretended to be dependent upon █████^{Rashid} for translations. This meant that he could understand the Turkish officers later on without their realizing it.

Finally, at exactly 11:45 P.M. on February 15, 1979, we all tramped into the border station and celebrated our escape from Iran. We sat in a small room huddled around a small stove to keep warm, but no one minded the cramped quarters. We all took short cat naps from time to time sitting in a chair or lying on the hard floor. We all wondered when the EDS rescue team in Turkey would arrive to take us to real safety.

As the night wore on, we passed the time talking about various aspects of our trip. █████^{Rashid} and I talked about the gas can, the gas can in the back of the Range Rover sitting 200 yards away in the darkness across the border in Iran. The gas can filled with \$250,000 of our money. It had been left behind in our haste to get all our people out of Iran. It wasn't worth getting killed for, but still it was \$250,000 of EDS' money just sitting there waiting for someone to come get it. █████^{Rashid} talked to the Colonel about going back across the border to get the gas can. Together, they cooked up a great scheme that called for █████^{Rashid} to casually walk back to the cars and simply talk the Iranians into letting him bring the can back. The plan worked perfectly. █████^{Rashid} told the Iranians standing guard at the cars that we needed some of the items we had left behind, including some blankets and the gas can. The gas was needed because we

were going to be picked up the next day by some friends with a bus and the bus would need fuel for the return trip. The Iranians agreed, as long as the cars stayed on their side of the border.

It was too dark to open the can that night, so we waited for daylight. When morning came, nothing had changed. The cars were still in Iran, and we were still sitting at the Turkish border station. Things were moving too slowly. The Colonel was as edgy as a caged tiger. He wanted to get out of there and put lots of miles between us and our friends in Iran.

How did you know
How did you know?

Standing outside in the cold morning dawn, watching the sun rise over the mountains, the Colonel remarked how dangerous the situation was. He said that on one side of the border, there were hundreds of well armed Iranians who might suddenly find out whom they had allowed to escape and come charging over the mountains to recapture us. On our side, there were only a handful of Turkish soldiers and it was doubtful they could offer any resistance to such an effort. It would all be over in five minutes. Where was the rest of our rescue team?

More
More

Who?
Who?

Several hours later, at about 8 A.M., the rescue team arrived. Unfortunately, they had no food for us, but they did have a giant bottle of Chevis Regal scotch which served as an impromptu toast to our escape. At last, it looked like we were going to get out of there and back to safety. This wasn't the case, however. There were still several major problems to resolve. First of all, neither Paul nor I had passports. Secondly, it wasn't safe for our group to simply get on the bus and drive off into Turkey. Things like this had to be

Who?
Who?

arranged properly, in advance. To be more direct, this meant that the local authorities and bandit chieftans, who controlled this area, would need to be paid for our safe passage. Part of the Turkish rescue team, led by Pat Scully, went off to make the necessary arrangements.

Rashid

In the meantime, a small discussion had begun between the Colonel, [REDACTED] and I about what to do with the money in the gas can. The Colonel quickly decided that this was not the time or the place to try to rip open a 20 gallon gas can filled with money. He pointed out that our friends the Turks had been known to kill a man for a pack of cigarettes. They would kill us all in a minute for this much money. We would have to take it with us and hope for a better opportunity.

Finally, at 12 noon, everything had been arranged. Scully was back, and we were ready to roll. We were accompanied by Julian Kanach and Dick Douglas, two pilots who had been brave enough to join the rescue team and who were prepared to fly into Iran to get us out if our trip by car had been unsuccessful. It was very interesting to meet people that were brave enough to risk their lives to save some people they had never met before.

The Turkish bus driver had also returned with some sandwiches and cokes. The food wasn't fancy, but it really tasted good. Everyone was exhausted and hungry.

Our destination was Van. Here, we were to get on a chartered plane and fly to Ankara where Paul and I could get some temporary passports at the American Embassy.

However, our trip to Van is not going to be a snap. Separately, the Colonel and our Turkish escorts tell us that the roads through the mountains will be dangerous. They are both right but for different reasons.

One danger is from rock slides and other traffic hazards. The other danger is from the Turkish authorities and bandit groups--and it's hard to tell one from the other.

Our trip is interrupted at a small town about 15 miles inside Turkey named _____. The local police chief wants to question Paul and I about our missing passports. We have been allowed to enter the country, but now an official report must be made. One of our Turkish friends tells us this is probably the major event in the Captain's life. This is his chance to become a hero. He's been here 25 years and this is the first time he has ever faced such a significant responsibility.

His male secretary comes into the office with an ancient typewriter and the interrogation begins. It takes almost two hours for the official story to be typed. We sign the report, get back on the bus and are allowed to proceed.

language?

There is some snow on the ground in places, and we snake up and down the mountains wondering what will be around the next bend in the road. In some cases, we come to giant boulders lying in the middle of the road that have fallen off the side of the mountain. In other cases, we are stopped at military roadblocks. Once, we were stopped because our driver had failed to stop at a small checkpoint. The soldiers are mad and threaten to shoot the driver right on the spot. Fortunately, cooler heads intervene and we are allowed to continue.

The scenery is fantastic in the mountains. We see sights that are unreal such as towns and villages that are still living in the dark ages. We pass the ruins of a stone fortress that probably dates back to the Crusades. At last, we arrive at Van. After a short registration process at the town hall, our escorts take us to the airport. There, everything is arranged for our flight to Ankara. We have only one problem--what to do with the gas can loaded with money. Airport officials don't let you take gasoline or flammable liquids on airplanes because of the danger of fire, and it looks to them like that's just what we want to do.

█ comes up with a great story. He tells the officials that the can contains a special kind of oil that the crazy Americans use to rub all over their bodies for a massage treatment. They buy the story and the can gets loaded on the plane.

Off we flew toward Ankara.

Upon arrival, we went through customs check points and our passports were checked. Since Paul and I don't have passports, we have a problem. Finally, after much discussion everything is resolved. The Colonel, Paul and I and █ will drive into Ankara to the American Embassy and get new passports. We also take the gas can along for the ride in our taxi, which must have aroused some curiosity.

It's a long drive to the Embassy. We go right through the heart of Ankara, which is a huge industrial city. The air is solid brown and stinks. The Colonel tells us they burn high sulphur coal for their fuel needs and the

Turks have never heard of pollution controls. At last, we arrive at the Embassy, pay for our cab ride, and walk up to the U.S. Marine standing guard at the gate. He looks great. Young and handsome in his uniform, which is immaculate, he is an outstanding example of America in the Middle East.

After some conversation with us, and some telephoning to the staff inside, the guard allows us to enter. Paul and I go inside to get our passports, the Colonel and ^{Rashid} go off in the darkness to find a safe place to open the gas can. Since the four of us looked like a band of pirates, we must of left the Marine guard wondering what was going on and who was that wierd group of guys.

Inside, Paul and I are taken to an Embassy Official who will issue us new passports--after we fill out some forms and answer some questions. They want to know where have we come from, what happened to our original passports, and how did we get here. We tell them just enough to satisfy their requirements and they issue us new documents which are temporary passports.

details details

One of the officials is very interested in our escape story and wants to know more. He takes us back into his private office and tells us why. It turns out that the American Consulate in Tabriz, Iran is under attack and the personnel there are trying to escape from Iran into Turkey. There is a great deal of fighting going on in Tabriz between the Revolutionaries and the Army and Savak agents. The Americans are caught in the middle.

The official shows us some telegrams describing the American's predicament and asks us to tell him how they could escape into Turkey. We told him what we thought they should do and they should not do--such as which routes they could take and what roadblocks they might encounter, and what to say if they did get stopped.

The Embassy Official thanked us and we left his office to rejoin the colonel and ^{Rashid} [REDACTED]. Outside, the four of us left the Embassy and walked down the street to hail a cab for the ride back to the airport. The Colonel now had a large envelope under his arm full of cash.

When we got back to the airport, we rejoined our group, which now numbered about fifteen people. There wasn't much to do while we waited for our flight from Ankara to Istanbul, so we killed some time with some drinks and conversation in the airport restaurant.

At about 11 P.M., it was finally time for our flight to leave. We proceeded to the gate to get on the plane. We had to go through one last security checkpoint before boarding the plane. Keep in mind that Turkey was a country living under martial law. Heavily armed soldiers were all over the city and were also on duty at the airport. These soldiers were looking over the passengers and were occasionally checking someone's baggage or belongings. For some reason, they decided to stop the Colonel and check to see what was in the bag under his arm. They found the money!

All of a sudden, just like that, we were back in deep trouble... or at least the Colonel was. The guards shouted to their officers, who came running to find out what was going on. One of the guards grabbed the Colonel and all of them had their guns out ready to fire. You would have thought they had found a bomb in his bag.

Quickly, our Turkish escorts stepped forward to explain who the Colonel was and to try to get him released to get on the flight. Since the Colonel spoke their language, he knew what was happening and told them what to say. Somehow, the guards were finally convinced to let both the Colonel and the money get on the plane. They probably didn't care what happened to the Colonel, but they sure wanted to get hold of the money.

The Colonel's freedom was brief. As soon as we got off the plane in Istanbul, the authorities were waiting to grab him, and the money. The Colonel and one of our Turkish escorts were rushed off to be questioned. The rest of us boarded a bus and were taken to a hotel in Istanbul. Upon our arrival, which was now about 3 A.M. local time, we all proceeded to the suite where Ross had set up his headquarters in Turkey.

Ross met us at the door and brought us all into the room, shaking each man's hand and personally welcoming us back from our escape. Although the hour was late, Ross wanted an immediate update on the Colonel's predicament and he also wanted to hear all the details of our trip since we had left Tehran. Ross also had one other great idea and got on the phone and ordered breakfast for us from room service.

The Colonel's safety came first. Once he had heard what had happened at the airport with the money, Ross got on the phone and started calling the people that could arrange the Colonel's release. Once those arrangements had been set in motion, he rejoined our group to hear the story of the escape from start to finish. Later, we went off to some other rooms to get clean and to get several hours sleep.

The next day promised to be a continuation of our adventure. We had to get the Colonel back safely; we still had to rejoin the rest of the EDS escape team who were sitting in Tehran waiting to fly out to Greece or Germany; and then, we still had to get back to our families in the U.S.