

IN ORDER TO PUT MY COMMENTS TONIGHT INTO PROPER PERSPECTIVE,  
GO BACK TO DECEMBER 31, 1977. THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES IS  
IN TEHRAN AT A STATE DINNER. HE MAKES THE FOLLOWING TOAST TO THE SHAH  
OF IRAN --

"IRAN, UNDER THE GREAT LEADERSHIP OF THE SHAH, IS AN ISLAND OF STABILITY  
IN ONE OF THE MORE TROUBLED AREAS OF THE WORLD. THIS IS A GREAT TRIBUTE TO  
YOU, YOUR MAJESTY, AND THE RESPECT, ADMIRATION AND LOVE WHICH YOUR PEOPLE  
GIVE TO YOU. THE CAUSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS IS SHARED DEEPLY BY OUR PEOPLE AND  
BY THE LEADERS OF OUR TWO NATIONS."

THE SHAH HAD BEEN A LOYAL ALLY TO THE UNITED STATES FOR OVER THIRTY  
YEARS. THE MILITARY CAPABILITY OF HIS ARMED FORCES STABILIZED THE MIDDLE  
EAST -- A FACTOR MORE OBVIOUS TO THE AVERAGE AMERICAN THAN ON DECEMBER 31, 1977  
<sup>NOW</sup>

EDS HAD 140 EMPLOYEES AND AN ADDITIONAL 135 DEPENDENTS IN THE  
COUNTRY -- 325 PEOPLE IN ALL. WE WERE DESIGNING AND INSTALLING A LARGE  
COMPUTER SYSTEM TO ADMINISTER THE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SECURITY PROGRAMS. <sup>Details</sup>  
Details

DURING THIS SAME PERIOD, THE PRESIDENT HAD STOPPED SHIPPING  
MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND APPLIED OTHER PRESSURES TO THE SHAH, BECAUSE OF  
HIS CONCERN OVER THE FACT THAT IRAN WAS NOT RUN IN A DEMOCRATIC MANNER.

DURING THE LATTER MONTHS OF 1977 AND EARLY MONTHS OF 1978, THE  
SHAH STARTED MAKING CHANGES TO ACCOMMODATE THE REQUIREMENTS LAID DOWN  
BY WASHINGTON.

THE PEOPLE OF IRAN INTERPRETED THIS AS A SIGN OF WEAKNESS ON THE  
PART OF THE SHAH. THE MULLAHS, FROM WHOM THE SHAH HAD TAKEN LAND AND  
GIVEN IT TO THE PEOPLE MANY YEARS EARLIER, SAW THIS AS THEIR OPPORTUNITY  
FOR REVENGE.

MOBS STARTED FORMING. UNDER THE NEW RULES FROM WASHINGTON, THE  
MOBS WERE NOT CONTROLLED.

DURING THE SUMMER THERE WERE MANY HIGH LEVEL RESIGNATIONS IN THE IRANIAN GOVERNMENT. HOVEDA, THE LONG TIME PRIME MINISTER, RESIGNED. SOME OF THIS WAS DONE IN AN EFFORT TO SHOW THE PEOPLE THAT CHANGES WERE BEING MADE, IN HOPES THAT THE DEMONSTRATIONS WOULD CEASE.

THESE CHANGES WERE ALSO VIEWED BY THE PEOPLE AS SIGNS OF WEAKNESS.

DURING THE SUMMER AND FALL OF 1978, BUSINESS GROUND TO A HALT. *Did they stop payments?*

THE SITUATION CONTINUED TO DETERIORATE, BUT AS LATE AS OCTOBER THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S OFFICIAL POSITION WAS THAT THERE WAS NO REAL CAUSE FOR ALARM, AND THAT THE WHOLE MATTER WOULD SETTLE DOWN. *Did they stop payments?*

INSTEAD, DURING NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER THE SITUATION DETERIORATED TO THE POINT WHERE IT WAS NECESSARY FOR ALL AMERICANS TO EVACUATE.

EDS WAS INVOLVED IN A NUMBER OF COMPUTER PROJECTS IN THE COUNTRY. IN THE FIRST DAYS OF DECEMBER, EDS INFORMED THE IRANIAN OFFICIALS THAT IT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO TAKE OUR PEOPLE OUT FOR SAFETY REASONS. WITHIN TWELVE HOURS, THE IRANIANS STARTED TRYING TO PICK UP OUR KEY PEOPLE AS HOSTAGES.

WE WORKED WITH THE U. S. EMBASSY ON THIS PROBLEM. THEY ARRANGED A MEETING ON DECEMBER 28, ASSURING US THAT UPON COMPLETION OF THIS MEETING ALL OF OUR PEOPLE COULD LEAVE THE COUNTRY. THEY HAD WORKED THIS OUT WITH THE IRANIANS. PAUL CHIAPPARONE AND BILL GAYLORD ATTENDED THIS MEETING, AS THE TWO SENIOR EDS REPRESENTATIVES. THEY NEVER RETURNED. THEY WERE PUT INTO PRISON. THE STATE DEPARTMENT EXPRESSED SURPRISE, BUT COULD DO NOTHING TO GAIN THEIR RELEASE.

THE OBJECTIVE IN HOLDING THESE MEN AS HOSTAGES WAS TO ASSURE THAT EDS WOULD RETURN TO START UP THE COMPUTER SYSTEMS WHEN THE COUNTY WENT BACK TO WORK. THE ENTIRE NATION WAS ON STRIKE. NO WORK WAS BEING DONE. THE IRANIANS FEARED THAT WHEN THEY WENT BACK TO WORK, EDS WOULD NOT RETURN. AT THE TIME, IT WAS DIFFICULT TO EXPLAIN WHY THE IRANIANS WOULD TAKE HOSTAGES. TODAY THE ENTIRE WORLD UNDERSTANDS.

IRAN FELT THAT ITS BEST ASSURANCE WAS TO HOLD OUR EMPLOYEES AS HOSTAGES. THEY LATER PROPOSED, AS AN ALTERNATIVE, A RANSOM OR BAIL OF \$12,750,000. THE LARGEST PRIOR BAIL ON RECORD IN THE IRANIAN JUSTICE SYSTEM WAS \$200,000.

THE FACT THAT OUR MEN WERE BEING HELD AS HOSTAGES WAS FIRST CONFIRMED BY YOUR CONVERSATIONS WITH IRANIAN OFFICIALS AND LATER CONFIRMED BY CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN OUR STATE DEPARTMENT AND THE IRANIAN GOVERNMENT.

THE DAY THESE MEN WERE ARRESTED IN TEHRAN, THE SENIOR EDS OFFICERS MOVED INTO EDS HEADQUARTERS IN DALLAS AND LIVED THERE FOR SEVERAL DAYS. WE COMMENCED PURSUING NUMEROUS ALTERNATIVES.

-- WE REPEATEDLY SOUGHT HELP FROM THE STATE DEPARTMENT, CIA, CONGRESS, THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT, THE WHITE HOUSE, FORMER GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WITH CLOSE TIES TO IRAN AND EVERY LEVEL OF OUR GOVERNMENT.

-- AN EDS NEGOTIATING TEAM WENT TO IRAN TO NEGOTIATE THE RELEASE OF THE MEN THROUGH THE IRANIAN LEGAL SYSTEM.

-- WE ALSO ORGANIZED A TEAM OF VOLUNTEERS TO GO INTO TRAINING TO EXTRACT THESE MEN BY FORCE IF ALL OTHER CONTINGENCIES FAILED, AND IF THE SITUATION IN IRAN CONTINUED TO DETERIORATE.

I CALLED AN OLD FRIEND, COL. ARTHUR "BULL" SIMONS, ONE OF THE LEGENDARY FIGURES IN THE U.S. ARMY, WHO WAS CONSIDERED DURING HIS MILITARY CAREER TO BE THE FINEST LEADER OF RAIDS OF THIS TYPE. HE WAS NOW IN RETIREMENT. I ASKED HIM IF HE WOULD CONSIDER TRAINING AND LEADING AN EXTRACTION TEAM, IF ALL OTHER EFFORTS FAILED. HE AGREED.

WHILE HE WAS FLYING TO DALLAS, WE IDENTIFIED ALL EDS PERSONNEL WHO HAD LIVED IN TEHRAN AND WHO HAD PRIOR RECORDS AS MARINE OFFICERS, RANGERS, SPECIAL FORCES OFFICERS, ARMY OFFICERS AND OTHERS WITH SPECIALIZED TRAINING THAT WOULD BE NECESSARY FOR SUCH AN EXTRACTION.

I MET PRIVATELY WITH EACH INDIVIDUAL ON JANUARY 1. I TOLD EACH MAN THAT I WAS ABOUT TO DISCUSS A MATTER WITH HIM THAT COULD COST HIM HIS LIFE, AND IF, FOR ANY REASON HE SHOULD NOT BE INVOLVED, OUR DISCUSSION SHOULD GO NO FURTHER. EVERY MAN I TALKED WITH VOLUNTEERED. THESE WERE YOUNG ENGINEERS WITH EDS, WITH WIVES, YOUNG CHILDREN, MORTGAGES AND ALL THE OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES YOU WOULD EXPECT YOUNG PEOPLE IN THIS AGE GROUP TO HAVE.

COL. SIMONS CAME TO DALLAS -

- SELECTED THE TEAM
- PUT THE TEAM INTO TRAINING
- PURCHASED THE NECESSARY EQUIPMENT.

BY THE MIDDLE OF JANUARY, TWELVE DAYS LATER, THE ENTIRE TEAM AND THE NECESSARY EQUIPMENT WAS IN IRAN. WHEN YOU CONSIDER WHAT THE NECESSARY EQUIPMENT MIGHT INCLUDE, YOU WILL REALIZE THE RISKS IN SUCH AN UNDERTAKING.

THE TEAM MEMBERS NAMED THE ENTIRE OPERATION OPERATION HOTFOOT (HELP OUR TWO FRIENDS OUT OF TEHRAN). THEY REFERRED TO THEMSELVES AS THE SUNSHINE BOYS (TO BRING PAUL AND BILL OUT OF PRISON AND BACK INTO THE SUNSHINE.)

DURING THIS WHOLE PROCESS, EXTENSIVE NEGOTIATIONS WERE UNDERWAY ON A DAILY BASIS TO GAIN THE RELEASE OF THE MEN THROUGH THE LEGAL PROCESS. OUR FIRST PREFERENCE WAS TO PAY THE \$12,750,000 BECAUSE THIS ELIMINATED ANY RISK OF PHYSICAL HARM TO THE TWO MEN BEING DETAINED, OR COL. SIMONS' TEAM, NOW IN PLACE IN TEHRAN.

EXTENSIVE EFFORTS WERE MADE BY OUR NEGOTIATING TEAM TO PAY THE RANSOM THROUGH THE BANKING SYSTEM. THE BANKS WERE CLOSED. ALL THE NEGOTIATIONS HAD TO BE CONDUCTED WITH BANKING OFFICIALS IN THEIR HOMES.

CONSIDER FOR A MINUTE -

- FIRST, THE TEAM HAD TO IDENTIFY THE OFFICIAL.
- SECOND, THE TEAM HAD TO FIND HIS HOME IN A CITY IN CHAOS.
- THIRD, THE TEAM HAD TO PASS THROUGH THE MOBS TO GET THERE, AND
- FINALLY, THE TEAM COULD EXPECT A LESS THAN SUCCESSFUL MEETING.

THE EFFORT TO PAY THE RANSOM SIMPLY COULD NOT BE TRANSACTED THROUGH THE BANKING SYSTEM - AND THIS WAS A REQUIREMENT - THAT THE BANKING SYSTEM BE A PART OF THE PROCESS. Why? Why?

DURING THIS PERIOD, THE SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY DETERIORATED DRAMATICALLY.

- THE CIVILIAN POPULATION WAS GETTING ARMS.
- THE MOBS WERE NO LONGER SHOUTING, THEY WERE SHOOTING.
- PUBLIC EXECUTIONS WERE BEING HELD.
- THE NEW GOVERNMENT LEADERS WERE MAKING PUBLIC STATEMENTS ABOUT CUTTING OFF THE HANDS OF AMERICANS.
- EDS HAD TWO HELPLESS MEN IN AN IRANIAN PRISON.

EACH TIME OUR NEGOTIATING TEAM ATTENDED MEETINGS THEY WERE THREATENED WITH ARREST. THE NEGOTIATING TEAM DISPLAYED A GREAT DEAL OF PERSONAL BRAVERY BY CONTINUING TO MEET DAY AFTER DAY, TRYING TO NEGOTIATE THE RELEASE OF THE MEN.

BILL GAYDEN, BOB YOUNG AND KEANE TAYLOR WERE EXPOSED DAILY IN THE NEGOTIATING EFFORTS.

OUR ATTORNEY, JOHN HOWELL, WITH THE DALLAS FIRM OF HUGHES & HILL, DISPLAYED AN UNUSUAL DEGREE OF PERSONAL COURAGE OVER A PERIOD OF SEVERAL WEEKS IN A COUNTRY WHERE IT IS CUSTOMARY TO ARREST THE LAWYER AS WELL AS THE CLIENT.

IF THE BANKING SYSTEM HAD BEEN FUNCTIONING, WE WOULD HAVE BEEN ABLE TO PAY THE RANSOM, GAIN THE RELEASE OF THE MEN, AND AVOID ANY RISK OF PHYSICAL HARM TO THE MEN.

FINALLY, WE CONCLUDED THAT THE EFFORTS TO PAY THE RANSOM HAD FAILED AND THAT WE HAD TO EXTRACT THE MEN.

ALL OF THE PLANS AND TRAINING HAD BEEN DIRECTED TOWARD RESCUING THE MEN FROM KAKH PRISON. THIS PRISON HAD RELATIVELY LIGHT SECURITY. THE PRISON ITSELF WAS SURROUNDED BY A COURTYARD AND A HIGH WALL. THE WALL RAN ALONG A STREET AND WAS SEPARATED FROM THE STREET ONLY BY A SIDEWALK.

COL. SIMONS' PLAN WAS TO HAVE THE RESCUE TEAM DRIVE A VOLKSWAGEN VAN ONTO THE SIDEWALK UP AGAINST THE WALL. THE TOP WAS TO HAVE BEEN CUT OUT OF THE VAN AND CANVAS STRETCHED OVER THE TOP. THE VAN WOULD ARRIVE AT A PRECISE SPOT AT A PRECISE TIME WHEN BILL AND PAUL WOULD BE IN THE COURTYARD. A LADDER WOULD BE DROPPED OVER THE WALL. TWO OR MORE MEN WITH WEAPONS WOULD TAKE UP POSITIONS ON THE WALL. PAUL AND BILL WOULD SCRAMBLE UP THE LADDER AND DROP DOWN INTO THE VAN. THE TWO MEN WITH WEAPONS WOULD ALSO DROP INTO THE VAN.

THE VAN WOULD DRIVE AWAY. SEVERAL CARS WITH DRIVERS WOULD BE IN THE VICINITY. THE OCCUPANTS OF THE VAN WOULD JUMP INTO THE CARS AND THE CARS WOULD LEAVE THE AREA, GOING IN DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS. IF EVERYTHING WENT AS PLANNED, BUT THE POLICE FOUND THE VAN, IT WOULD BE ABANDONED WITHOUT A TRACE OF WHAT HAD HAPPENED TO ITS OCCUPANTS.

UNFORTUNATELY, THE MEN WERE MOVED TO GASRE PRISON, A HIGH SECURITY PRISON WITH 11,000 - 12,000 INMATES. COL. SIMONS HAD TO COMPLETELY REWORK THE RESCUE PLAN.

I WENT TO IRAN TO PERSONALLY INSPECT THE NEW PRISON WHERE OUR MEN WERE BEING DETAINED.

MY PRESENCE IN IRAN AT THAT POINT INVOLVED SOME RISK. I ENTERED THE COUNTRY ABOARD A LEAR JET FROM AMMAN, JORDAN, THAT WAS NORMALLY USED TO FLY TV TAPES AND CAMERAMEN BACK AND FORTH FOR NBC. BOB YOUNG AND I WAITED UNTIL THERE WAS A FLIGHT CARRYING TAPES, BUT NO CAMERAMEN. THE LEAR JET FLEW FOR ABOUT AN HOUR TOWARD TEHRAN AND THEN STARTED HAVING MECHANICAL PROBLEMS, ABOUT THE TIME THAT WE PASSED THE JUNCTION OF THE TYGRESS AND EUPHRATES RIVER. WE RETURNED TO AMMAN AND BOARDED A SECOND LEAR JET. THE SECOND TRIP WAS UNEVENTFUL. *D.H.*

I WAS THE ONLY PERSON ABOARD. UPON ARRIVAL IN IRAN, I WALKED THROUGH CUSTOMS CARRYING THE NBC TAPES, HAD MY PASSPORT STAMPED, DELIVERED THE TAPES AND DISAPPEARED INTO A CITY OF 4.5 MILLION PEOPLE.

SHORTLY AFTER A MEETING AT THE U.S. EMBASSY, THE IRANIAN OFFICIALS LEARNED THAT I WAS IN TEHRAN AND COMMENCED A FAIRLY ACTIVE SEARCH. IT WAS NOT DIFFICULT TO AVOID THEM IN A LARGE CITY IN CHAOS. THE CRITICAL DAY CAME WHEN I WAS TO GO TO THE PRISON WHERE PAUL AND BILL WERE BEING HELD. COL. SIMONS AND I CONCLUDED THAT SINCE ONE BRANCH OF THE GOVERNMENT WAS LOOKING FOR ME, AND ANOTHER BRANCH OF THE GOVERNMENT RAN THE PRISON, THE NORMAL CREAKINGS OF BUREAUCRACY WOULD PROBABLY ENSURE MY SAFETY. *D.H.*

FOR SEVERAL WEEKS, AN EDS EMPLOYEE HAD ARRIVED AT THE JAIL EACH MORNING, CARRYING GROCERIES FOR PAUL AND BILL. ONE DAY, I ARRIVED, DRESSED CASUALLY, CARRYING THE GROCERIES AND WAS ADMITTED ROUTINELY. I HAD TO SHOW MY PASSPORT AND SIGN IN.

I WAS THEN DIRECTED TO A RECEPTION ROOM WHERE I WAS SURPRISED TO SEE RAMSEY CLARK TALKING WITH THE GENERAL WHO RAN THE PRISON. DECIDING THAT THE BEST DEFENSE IS A GOOD OFFENSE, I WALKED OVER TO RAMSEY AND

ASKED HIM WHAT HE WAS DOING IN AN IRANIAN JAIL. BOTH THE GENERAL AND RAMSEY LAUGHED. THE GENERAL ASSUMED I KNEW RAMSEY, AND EXTENDED ME THE FULL RANGE OF COURTESIES.

THE JAIL WAS A HIGH SECURITY PRISON WITH APPROXIMATELY TWELVE FOOT WALLS AND TWO SETS OF SOLID STEEL ENTRANCE DOORS. GUARDS WERE STATIONED AROUND THE WALLS AND IN TOWERS WITH AUTOMATIC WEAPONS. AFTER ENTERING THE PRISON, I HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO TOUR THE GROUNDS AS I WENT TO VISIT PAUL AND BILL.

I VISITED WITH PAUL AND BILL FOR ABOUT AN HOUR AND PERSONALLY ASSURED THEM THAT WE WOULD GET THEM OUT. MY VISIT TO THE PRISON CONFIRMED WHAT COL. SIMONS ALREADY KNEW -- THAT OUR TEAM WAS TOO SMALL TO EXTRACT THESE MEN FROM PRISON BY FORCE. SOME OTHER METHOD HAD TO BE DEVELOPED.

DURING THIS PERIOD THE MOBS WERE EVERYWHERE. THE MOBS WERE ARMED. OUR STRATEGY BECAME OBVIOUS -- ARRANGE FOR AN IRANIAN MOB TO STORM THE PRISON. THIS STRATEGY INVOLVED CONSIDERABLE RISK TO PAUL AND BILL BECAUSE THEY WERE AMERICANS, BUT IT INVOLVED LESS RISK THAN LEAVING THEM IN PRISON AT THIS POINT.

IN THE MIDST OF ALL THIS ACTIVITY, WE WERE SUDDENLY CONTACTED BY A PERSON WHO CLAIMED TO REPRESENT THE PROSECUTOR, DADGAR. HE ASKED THAT ONE OF OUR PEOPLE MEET HIM IN THE LOBBY OF THE SHERATON HOTEL. HE FURTHER STATED THAT THIS PERSON SHOULD BE READING TIME MAGAZINE. HE WOULD APPROACH THIS PERSON AND MAKE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT AS THE KEY TO HIS IDENTITY: "DO YOU KNOW WHERE PAHLAVI AVENUE IS?" OUR REPRESENTATIVE WAS TO REPLY, "NO I'M NEW IN TOWN."

JAY COBURN AGREED TO MEET THE MAN. AFTER EXCHANGING PASSWORDS, HE ASKED JAY TO GO INTO THE MEN'S ROOM, WHERE HE THOROUGHLY SEARCHED JAY FOR WEAPONS AND TAPE RECORDING DEVICES.

H INFORMED JAY THAT IF WE WOULD PUT \$5 MILLION IN A SWISS BANK ACCOUNT FOR DADGAR, THE MEN WOULD BE RELEASED. HE PRESENTED THIS AS A BARGAIN IN THAT WE WOULD GAIN THE RELEASE OF THE MEN AT HALF PRICE.

JAY QUESTIONED HIM ABOUT HOW WE COULD KNOW IF HE WAS REALLY REPRESENTING DADGAR. HE SAID THAT UNLESS WE AGREED TO THIS BRIBE, WE WOULD HAVE THE WORST MEETING WITH DADGAR WE HAD EVER HAD THE FOLLOWING DAY.

WE DID NOT AGREE TO THE BRIBE. THE NEXT DAY'S MEETING WITH DADGAR WAS THE WORST WE EVER HAD.

I TALKED WITH THE RESCUE TEAM ABOUT PAYING THE BRIBE. IT WOULD NOT BE ILLEGAL UNDER U.S. LAW TO PAY SUCH A RANSOM TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF THE TWO MEN. INTERESTINGLY ENOUGH, THE RESCUE TEAM REACTED VERY NEGATIVELY TO PAYING A BRIBE. COL. SIMONS DID NOT EVEN WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT. THE MEN WHO WERE GOING TO RISK THEIR LIVES HAD ABSOLUTELY NO INTEREST IN ACCEPTING A SHORTCUT THAT WAS PERSONALLY REPUGNANT TO THEM. *Why?*

AFTER VISITING THE JAIL, I NEEDED TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY TO RETURN TO THE U.S. TO CONFIRM THAT ONCE THE MEN WERE OUT OF JAIL OUR GOVERNMENT WOULD HELP US GET THEM OUT OF THE COUNTRY. IN ADDITION, WE NEEDED TO COMPLETE THE FINAL ORGANIZATION OF THE TURKISH RESCUE TEAM, CHARTERED AIRCRAFT, ETC., JUST IN CASE IT MIGHT BE NEEDED.

WE HAD RECEIVED WORD THAT MY NAME WAS ON THE LIST OF PERSONS TO BE ARRESTED AT THE AIRPORT. I WAITED UNTIL TEN MINUTES BEFORE THE FLIGHT WAS TO LEAVE AND STARTED GOING THROUGH THE CHECKPOINTS. THE LAST CHECKPOINT WAS A BOOTH CONTAINING THE LIST. THE YOUNG LADY IN THAT BOOTH WAS READING A PAPERBACK NOVEL AS I APPROACHED THE BOOTH. I HANDED HER MY PASSPORT AND A YELLOW FORM THAT HAD MY NAME ON IT. INSIDE MY PASSPORT WAS A \$5 BILL. SHE DID NOT LOOK UP. SHE NEVER STOPPED READING. SHE DID NOT CHECK THE LIST. SHE TOOK THE YELLOW SHEET OF PAPER, THE \$5 BILL AND SENT ME THROUGH. AT THAT POINT, I THOUGHT I HAD CLEARED TEHRAN AND WOULD BE AIRBORNE IN A FEW MINUTES.

*Did she see the bill?*  
Did she see the bill?

UNFORTUNATELY, THE FLIGHT WAS DELAYED. I SAT IN THE WAITING AREA FOR NINE HOURS, WONDERING IF SHE WOULD EVER CHECK MY NAME AGAINST THE LIST. APPARENTLY, SHE DID NOT. *you stop worrying after a while*

I FLEW FROM TEHRAN TO KUWAIT TO LONDON ON BOAC. IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO DESCRIBE THE FEELING OF RELIEF I HAD ONCE WE HAD CLEARED IRANIAN AIR SPACE. *the way you stop worrying after a while*

MARGOT MET ME IN LONDON. WE SPENT 2-3 DAYS IN LONDON AND THEN CAME HOME TO COMPLETE THE DETAILS OF THE RESCUE. *What did you do* *What did you do?*

AGAIN, WE CHECKED TO SEE IF OUR GOVERNMENT COULD DO ANYTHING TO HELP SECURE THEIR RELEASE. I CONFIRMED THAT WE SIMPLY COULD NOT EXPECT ANY HELP AT ALL. *Who did you speak to?* *Who did you speak to?*

COL. SIMONS ARRANGED WITH REVOLUTIONARY LEADERS IN THE AREA TO HAVE THE PRISON STORMED BY AN IRANIAN MOB. FORTUNATELY, WHEN THE MOB STORMED THE PRISON, THE GUARDS PUT UP MINIMAL RESISTANCE. APPROXIMATELY 11,000 PRISONERS WERE RELEASED. COL. SIMONS HAD ENGINEERED THE LARGEST JAIL BREAK IN HISTORY.

PAUL AND BILL COULD RECEIVE NO HELP FROM US IN THEIR ESCAPE FROM PRISON. WE COULD NOT BE IN THE MOB. THERE WAS A DISTINCT CHANCE THAT THE MOB MIGHT HARM PAUL AND BILL IN THE CONFUSION. THEY CLIMBED THE WALLS AND FLED THROUGH INTENSE GUN FIRE FOR ABOUT TWO MILES ON FOOT. THEY WALKED AND HITCHHIKED TO A DESIGNATED RENDEZVOUS.

ON FEBRUARY 11, WE RECEIVED A PHONE CALL IN DALLAS THAT THIS PART OF THE OPERATION HAD BEEN SUCCESSFUL AND THAT THE MEN HAD ARRIVED SAFELY, BUT EXHAUSTED. THEY HAD WALKED AND HITCHHIKED SOME TEN MILES FROM THE PRISON TO THE RENDEZVOUS POINT.

COL. SIMONS ORDERED OUR PEOPLE TO EVACUATE IMMEDIATELY. WITHIN TWO HOURS, THE REVOLUTIONARIES ENTERED THE HOTEL WHERE THEY HAD BEEN STAYING, DETERMINED THE LOCATION OF OUR HOTEL ROOMS AND DIRECTED SUB-MACHINE GUN FIRE INTO EACH ROOM PRIOR TO OPENING THE DOORS. LATER IN

THE WEEK, BEFORE OUR DEPARTURE, ONE OF OUR IRANIAN EMPLOYEES WENT TO THE HOTEL TO PICK UP WHATEVER PERSONAL BELONGINGS MIGHT BE LEFT. HE VISUALLY CONFIRMED THAT EXTENSIVE DAMAGE HAD BEEN DONE TO THE ROOMS, AND THAT HAD COL. SIMONS NOT ORDERED THE EVACUATION WHEN HE DID, ALL OF OUR PEOPLE WOULD HAVE BEEN KILLED.

FOR THE NEXT FEW DAYS OUR TEAM REMAINED IN TEHRAN IN HIDING. I WAS IN WASHINGTON AT THIS POINT, MAKING A FINAL EFFORT TO GET HELP FROM OUR GOVERNMENT IN GETTING THE MEN OUT OF THE COUNTRY. OUR GOVERNMENT COULD NOT HELP. I LEFT WASHINGTON FOR TURKEY ON A CHARTERED 707 WITH THE TURKISH RESCUE UNIT.

IT WAS TIME TO EXECUTE OUR ESCAPE PLAN. THE DISTANCE FROM TEHRAN TO THE TURKISH BORDER IS 540 MILES. COL. SIMONS WAS IN COMPLETE CHARGE. OUR TEAM WAS READY WITH ALL THE NECESSARY EQUIPMENT IN PLACE. COL. SIMONS DETERMINED WHO WOULD GO OVERLAND WITH HIM, AND WHO WOULD STAY IN TEHRAN TO GO OUT ON THE FIRST COMMERCIALY AVAILABLE AIR TRANSPORTATION.

COL. SIMONS, JAY COBURN, KEANE TAYLOR, BILL GAYDEN, PAUL CHIAPPARONE AND BILL GAYLORD WENT OVERLAND. NEITHER CHIAPPARONE NOR GAYLORD HAD PASSPORTS, FURTHER COMPLICATING COL. SIMONS' PROBLEMS. THE OVERLAND ESCAPE INVOLVED A STANDARD PROCEDURE AT EACH VILLAGE, CONSISTING OF ARREST AND INTERROGATIONS.

THE FIRST STEP AT EACH TOWN WAS TO ESTABLISH CREDIBILITY WITH THE LOCAL OFFICIALS. THE FIRST 10-15 MINUTES WAS THE MOST DANGEROUS PERIOD. THE REVOLUTIONARIES MANNING THE ROADBLOCKS WERE HOSTILE, UNDISCIPLINED, NERVOUS, FIRED THEIR WEAPONS FREQUENTLY AS SYMBOLS OF AUTHORITY, AND EASILY COULD HAVE SHOT COL. SIMONS AND HIS TEAM ON THE SPOT.

COL. SIMONS TOLD THE SAME BASIC STORY AT EACH ROADBLOCK. THEY WERE SIMPLY AMERICAN WORKERS WHO HAD CONCLUDED THAT IT WAS DANGEROUS TO REMAIN IN TEHRAN. THEY MISSED THEIR FAMILIES. THEY WANTED TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY. THE AIRPORT WAS CLOSED. THEY HAD DECIDED TO DRIVE TO THE BORDER.

HE SOON LEARNED THAT EACH VILLAGE ONLY HAD AUTHORITY OVER A SMALL AREA. NO ONE COULD GIVE CLEARANCE ALL THE WAY TO THE BORDER. AT EACH VILLAGE HE TRIED TO OBTAIN A PASS FROM THE LOCAL REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEE THAT WOULD ALLOW THE GROUP TO PASS THROUGH THE ROADBLOCKS IN THE AREA UNDER THAT COMMITTEE'S CONTROL. THIS WOULD LESSEN THE CHANCES OF BEING SHOT BEFORE THE TEAM HAD A CHANCE TO TELL ITS STORY AND ELIMINATE THE NEED FOR CALLING BACK TO TOWNS THEY HAD ALREADY PASSED THROUGH, SINCE THERE WAS ALWAYS THE CHANCE THE IRANIAN'S MIGHT HAVE FIGURED OUT THE TRUE IDENTITY OF OUR GROUP. *What language did S use?* What language did S use?

THE MOST DANGEROUS PART OF THE TRIP WAS MAHABAD TO THE TURKISH BORDER. OUR GROUP WAS IN SERIOUS JEOPARDY FOUR TIMES IN THIS SMALL AREA.

AT ONE POINT OUR GROUP WAS STOPPED AND TAKEN INTO A MOSQUE. THERE WERE SEVERAL HUNDRED PEOPLE IN THE MOSQUE. THE REVOLUTIONARIES PROCEEDED TO SHOVE COL. SIMONS WITH THE BUTT OF A RIFLE. WITHOUT COMMENT HE REACHED INTO HIS SKI JACKET POCKET AND PULLED OUT A CRUMPLED UP PIECE OF PAPER. THE GUARDS STOPPED SHOVING HIM, TOOK THE PIECE OF PAPER AND READ IT. THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION IS:

THE PERSON WHO CARRIES THIS LETTER CAN TAKE SIX AMERICANS THROUGH BARZAGAN OR SEROW. IT IS EXPECTED THAT ALL GUARDS WILL GIVE THEIR BEST COOPERATION AND ASSISTANCE. THEY ARE FULLY INSPECTED AND IDENTIFIED, AND, IF NECESSARY, ESCORT THEM. SIGNED: ISLAMIC REVOLUTION COMMANDANT COMMITTEE SEAL: LIBRARY OF REZAIYEH RELIGION SCHOOL, FOUNDED 1344.

AFTER READING IT, THE GUARDS PUT OUR MEN BACK IN THE VEHICLES AND TOOK THEM TO THE SHAH'S ABANDONED GUEST HOUSE IN THAT TOWN. THEY WERE PUT UP FOR THE NIGHT HERE. THE LOCAL PEOPLE HAD A DINNER FOR THEM, THE KURDS CAME OUT AND DANCED. THE NEXT DAY, THEY WERE ESCORTED SAFELY TO THE BORDER.

THE DOCUMENT WAS A FORGERY.

THE PRINCIPAL VALUE OF THE LETTER WAS THAT THE GUARDS WOULD CONCENTRATE ON ITS CONTENTS INSTEAD OF OUR PEOPLE AS INDIVIDUALS. THE INTERROGATION STILL TOOK PLACE, BUT THE LETTER HAD ENOUGH CREDIBILITY TO GIVE THEM SOME REASON TO BELIEVE OUR PEOPLE.

ON THREE OCCASIONS, OUR GROUP WAS ASSEMBLED IN VILLAGE SQUARES, A SUBMACHINE GUN WAS PLACED TO COL. SIMONS' TEMPLE, AND THE INTERROGATION COMMENCED. IN EVERY CASE HE WAS ABLE TO CONVINCED THE LOCAL OFFICIALS THAT THEY WERE SIMPLY AMERICANS TRYING TO GO HOME. IN THIS ENVIRONMENT, YOU CAN UNDERSTAND MY DISAPPOINTMENT THAT OUR STATE DEPARTMENT IN WASHINGTON WAS LEAKING INFORMATION TO THE PRESS, WHEN THE LIVES OF ALL OF OUR MEN WERE AT STAKE, AND THE TIME TO MAKE A DIRECT DIAL TELEPHONE CALL FROM THE U.S. TO TEHRAN WAS APPROXIMATELY TEN MINUTES.

UNFORTUNATELY, EVERY PIECE OF INFORMATION OUR STATE DEPARTMENT WAS ABLE TO OBTAIN ABOUT THE ESCAPE WAS LEAKED TO THE U.S. PRESS WHILE COL. SIMONS AND HIS TEAM WERE MOVING OVERLAND ACROSS IRAN. A SECRET

CABLE FROM THE U.S. EMBASSY IN TURKEY, REVEALING MY PRESENCE IN TURKEY, WAS LEAKED MINUTES AFTER RECEIPT BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT IN WASHINGTON. THE PRESS WAS MOVING FORWARD TO PRINT THE STORY. UPON BEING INFORMED OF THIS IN TURKEY, I AUTHORIZED MY ASSOCIATES IN DALLAS TO TRY TO REACH AN AGREEMENT WITH THE PRESS TO HOLD THE STORY UNTIL OUR PEOPLE WERE SAFE. THE PRESS AGREED, PROVIDED THAT I WOULD HOLD A NEWS CONFERENCE AND TELL THE ENTIRE STORY IMMEDIATELY AFTER I RETURNED.

THE NEWS CONFERENCE SEEMED A REASONABLE PRICE TO PAY TO PROTECT OUR PEOPLES' LIVES AND WE AGREED TO IT. WE HAD HOPED TO EXECUTE OUR PLAN WITHOUT ANY PUBLICITY, BECAUSE OF LEGAL PROBLEMS AND THE PERSONAL SECURITY PROBLEMS THAT PUBLICITY WOULD CREATE FOR EVERYONE INVOLVED IN THE RESCUE. CONSIDER FOR A MOMENT, THE SIZE AND NATURE OF THE IRANIAN STUDENT POPULATION IN THE U.S. AND YOU WILL UNDERSTAND OUR SECURITY CONCERNS.

WE HAD FLOWN A 707 AIRCRAFT WITH SPECIALIZED COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS INTO TURKEY FROM THE U.S. WE HAD PUT OUR TURKISH RESCUE TEAM INTO PLACE IN EASTERN TURKEY. THE PURPOSE OF THE TURKISH RESCUE TEAM WAS TO GO INTO IRAN, IF COL. SIMONS' TEAM DID NOT APPEAR AT THE BORDER ON SCHEDULE, FIND OUT WHERE THEY WERE AND GET THEM OUT. DICK DOUGLAS, AN EXPERIENCED, LIGHT AIRCRAFT PILOT, WAS PREPARED TO FLY ANYWHERE IN IRAN, INCLUDING TEHRAN, TO PICK THESE MEN UP. BACKING UP DICK WAS JULIAN KANACH. JULIAN IS DICK'S COUNTERPART WITH HELICOPTERS. I WON'T GO TOO MUCH INTO THEIR BACKGROUNDS, BUT IF YOU KNEW THEIR BACKGROUNDS, YOU WOULD UNDERSTAND WHY THEY ARE CONSIDERED THE BEST. THEY WERE ON THE BORDER IN EASTERN TURKEY, READY TO GET INVOLVED IN A VERY HIGH RISK OPERATION -- FLY INTO IRAN AND BRING OUR MEN OUT IN THE EVENT THEY HAD BEEN DETAINED.

THE CHARTERED 707'S FUNCTION WAS TO ACT AS AN AIRBORNE COMMUNICATIONS CENTER, IF IT HAD BECOME NECESSARY TO GO INTO IRAN TO EXTRACT COL. SIMONS' GROUP. THIS COULD ALLOW US TO HAVE COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE LIGHT AIRCRAFT, HELICOPTER AND COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE MEN ON THE GROUND.

FORTUNATELY, NONE OF THIS WAS NEEDED.

THE MEN WERE NOW SAFELY ACROSS THE BORDER. IT WAS ALMOST SUNSET. A TURKISH NEWSPAPER WAS DELIVERED TO OUR HOTEL ROOM. THE HEADLINES STATED THAT THE IRANIANS HAD OVERRUN THE U.S. EMBASSY FOR THE FIRST TIME. A MARINE SERGEANT, KRAUSSE, HAD BEEN SERIOUSLY WOUNDED AND, ACCORDING TO THE TURKISH NEWSPAPERS, WAS DYING.

THE CAPTAIN OF THE CHARTERED 707, JOHN CARLEN, WAS IN THE ROOM. AFTER READING THE ARTICLE, I HANDED IT TO JOHN AND ASKED HIM, "JOHN, HOW WOULD YOU FEEL ABOUT FLYING INTO TEHRAN TO PICK UP THE MARINE SERGEANT, IF HE IS DYING?" JOHN READ THE ARTICLE AND THEN REPLIED, "YES, I CAN DO THAT".

KEEP IN MIND, THE TEHRAN AIRPORT IS SURROUNDED BY MOUNTAINS. WE WOULD BE GOING IN AT NIGHT. THE AIRPORT WAS CLOSED. THERE WOULD BE NO LIGHTS ON THE RUNWAY. THE IRANIANS HAD A PRACTICE OF PUTTING HEAVY EQUIPMENT ON THE RUNWAY TO PREVENT TAKE-OFFS AND LANDINGS. WE WOULD BE INSIDE IRANIAN AIR SPACE OVER 500 MILES BEFORE WE REACHED TEHRAN.

I CALLED GEN. WILSON, THE COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS, IN WASHINGTON. HE AND I ARE FRIENDS.

I EXPLAINED TO HIM THAT I WAS IN TURKEY ON BUSINESS AND HAD A CHARTERED 707 AIRCRAFT COMPLETE WITH MEDICAL SUPPLIES AND A BED.

I EXPLAINED THAT IN THE EVENT SGT. KRAUSSE WAS DYING, WE WOULD GO IN AND PICK HIM UP, IF GEN. WILSON WANTED US TO. I POINTED OUT TO HIM THAT THIS WOULD BE A PRIVATE OPERATION AND WOULD NOT IMPLICATE THE U.S. GOVERNMENT IN ANYWAY, THUS AVOIDING AN INTERNATIONAL INCIDENT.

HE CRISPLY REPLIED, "ROSS, IF, IN FACT, HE IS DYING, I WANT YOU TO PICK HIM UP. I WILL CHECK AND CALL YOU BACK".

HE CALLED BACK IN ABOUT A HALF AN HOUR TO SAY THAT THE MARINE WAS NOT SERIOUSLY WOUNDED. IT WAS NOT NECESSARY TO GO, BUT I WILL NEVER FORGET JOHN CARLEN'S WILLINGNESS TO RISK HIS LIFE FOR A MAN HE DID NOT KNOW.

UPON ARRIVAL IN ISTANBUL, WE TRANSFERRED OUR ENTIRE TEAM THAT CAME OUT OVERLAND TO THE 707 AND FLEW APPROXIMATELY 1100 MILES TO FRANKFURT, GERMANY, TO PICK UP THE FIVE WHO CAME OUT ON COMMERCIAL TRANSPORTATION FROM TEHRAN.

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IN ADDITION TO THE GROUP WITH COL. SIMONS, FIVE TEAM MEMBERS FROM THE NEGOTIATING TEAM CAME OUT FROM TEHRAN BY COMMERCIAL FLIGHTS.

GLENN JACKSON WAS IN JORDAN WITH TWO LEAR JETS, READY TO FLY INTO IRAN IF COMMERCIAL FLIGHTS HAD NOT RESUMED.

JOE POCHE WAS IN CHARGE OF THE TEAM REMAINING IN TEHRAN TO GO OUT ON COMMERCIAL AIR.

THE GROUP REMAINING IN TEHRAN WAS ACTIVELY, BUT UNSUCCESSFULLY, PURSUED BY THE REVOLUTIONARIES. THE GROUP WAS ABLE TO GET ON A PAN AM FLIGHT. THE PLANE WAS HELD ON THE GROUND FOR SIX HOURS WHILE AN INTENSE SEARCH WAS CONDUCTED FOR OUR PEOPLE. <sup>Details</sup>

FORTUNATELY, THE PEOPLE CONDUCTING THE SEARCH COULD NOT READ ENGLISH, DID NOT IDENTIFY OUR PEOPLE ON THE AIRPLANE, AND THEY WERE ABLE TO DEPART FOR FRANKFURT.

BY THIS TIME, THE IRANIAN AUTHORITIES HAD LEARNED THROUGH LEAKS IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT, THAT PAUL AND BILL HAD ESCAPED FROM IRAN. THE EXTRADITION TREATY BETWEEN GERMANY AND IRAN WOULD HAVE REQUIRED GERMAN AUTHORITIES TO RETURN PAUL AND BILL TO IRAN. WE FIRST LEARNED OF THIS AFTER LANDING IN FRANKFURT.

WE HAD TO WAIT FOUR HOURS IN FRANKFURT. COL. SIMONS CAREFULLY HID PAUL AND BILL DURING THIS PERIOD. WE WAITED TO PICK UP OUR MEN COMING FROM IRAN ON A PAN AM FLIGHT. IT ARRIVED SEVERAL HOURS LATE.

THE ENTIRE TEAM WAS TOGETHER AGAIN, BUT DEAD TIRED, AS WE TAXIED OUT TO TAKE OFF FROM FRANKFURT. COL. SIMONS AND HIS TEAM HAD BEEN WEARING THE SAME CLOTHES FOR OVER A WEEK. THEY HAD NO BAGGAGE. THEY HAD NOT HAD A REGULAR MEAL IN NEARLY A WEEK. IT HAD BEEN NEARLY 48 HOURS SINCE THEY HAD EATEN, WHILE IN FRANKFURT, WE ORDERED OVER \$2,000 WORTH OF FOOD AND PLANNED TO HAVE A REAL BANQUET GOING ACROSS THE ATLANTIC. OUR NEXT STOP WAS WASHINGTON, D. C.

SHORTLY AFTER WE CLEARED THE RUNWAY, THE CHARTERED 707 STARTED TO MALFUNCTION. THE FIRST INDICATION WAS A DRAMATIC OVERHEATING INSIDE THE AIRPLANE, FOLLOWED BY A DETERIORATION OF THE ELECTRICAL AND HYDRAULIC SYSTEMS. WE HAD A FULL LOAD OF FUEL AND HAD TO DUMP MOST OF IT BEFORE WE COULD LAND. THE PILOT, JOHN CARLEN, DECIDED TO FLY TO LONDON, DUMPING FUEL IN ROUTE AND TO LAND AT HEATHROW AIRPORT. WITHIN 30 MINUTES WE WERE TOLD BY THE PILOT THAT THERE WAS A DISTINCT POSSIBILITY THAT THE PLANE WOULD NOT MAKE IT. THE FINAL STRAW WAS THE VALVE THAT HAD BEEN OPENED TO DUMP THE FUEL WOULD NOT CLOSE. IN ADDITION TO THE OTHER PROBLEMS, THERE WAS THE POSSIBILITY THAT WE WOULD LOSE ALL POWER.

IT WAS INTERESTING TO ME TO WATCH THIS GROUP OF MEN WHO HAD SUCCESSFULLY GONE THROUGH SO MUCH RISK AND DANGER TOGETHER. NOW, AT A TIME WHEN THEY HAD PLANNED TO RELAX AND CELEBRATE THEIR SUCCESSFUL ESCAPE, THERE WAS THE DISTINCT POSSIBILITY THAT THEY WOULD BE KILLED.

THERE WAS NO DISPLAY OF FEAR. COL. SIMONS TOOK A NAP. THE GENERAL MOOD AMONG THE GROUP WAS ONE OF IRONY -- WHAT A STRANGE TWIST OF FATE TO ESCAPE ALL OF THE ANTICIPATED RISKS AND NOW FACE DEATH BECAUSE

OF A MALFUNCTIONING AIRPLANE. THE GENERAL MOOD WAS THAT WE WERE NOW PART OF AN EVENT OVER WHICH WE HAD NO CONTROL.

FORTUNATELY, WE MADE IT. WE LANDED AT HEATHROW AIRPORT LATE AT NIGHT. THERE WAS LITTLE ACTIVITY. I BELIEVE WE DUMPED FUEL THE LENGTH OF THE RUNWAY.

WE HAD THE FULL ATTENTION OF THE BRITISH CUSTOMS AND AIRPORT OFFICIALS. THEY WERE SUSPICIOUS ABOUT A CHARTERED 707 WITH A GRAND CAYMAN TAIL NUMBER THAT WAS TRANSPORTING A FILTHY GROUP OF PEOPLE PRINCIPALLY DRESSED IN BLACK, WITH SOME OF THE PEOPLE HAVING NO PAPERS AND OVER A HALF MILLION DOLLARS IN CASH.

I HAD CALLED BRANIFF REQUESTING THAT THE UPSTAIRS LOUNGE ON THE 747 BE SET ASIDE FOR OUR GROUP. BRANIFF FIRST AGREED, THEN DECLINED, STATING THAT UNDER INTERNATIONAL RULES THEY COULD NOT LEASE THAT COMPARTMENT.

BRANIFF STATED THAT THEIR LONDON MANAGER, A MAN I KNEW, WOULD MEET US AT THE GATE AND ATTEMPT TO ACCOMMODATE US. KEEP IN MIND THAT AT THIS POINT THERE HAD BEEN NO NEWS ABOUT THE ESCAPE.

THE BRANIFF MANAGER IN LONDON WAS VISIBLY SHOCKED BY THE APPEARANCE OF OUR GROUP. HE PULLED ME ASIDE AND SUGGESTED THAT IF OUR GROUP WOULD JUST GO UPSTAIRS INTO THE LOUNGE, NO ONE ELSE IN THE FIRST CLASS SECTION WOULD COME UP THERE.

IN FACT, HE FELT THAT THE PASSENGERS ON THE AIRCRAFT MIGHT BE DISTURBED BY THE APPEARANCE OF OUR GROUP WHICH HE, IN HIS OWN WORDS, REFERRED TO AS A "PLO TEAM". BEFORE DEPARTURE, HE ASKED ME TO WALK THROUGH THE 747 AND REASSURE THE PASSENGERS.

WE OCCUPIED THE UPSTAIRS LOUNGE. MOST OF THE MEN SLEPT ACROSS THE ATLANTIC. WE ALL HAD OUR FIRST GOOD MEAL ON THE BRANIFF 747. AS WE CROSSED THE ATLANTIC, THE TEAM FELT FOR THE FIRST TIME, THAT THE RISKS

WERE BEHIND THEM AND THAT THE ENTIRE TRIP WOULD BE SUCCESSFUL,

THE TOTAL DISTANCE TRAVELED ROUND TRIP DURING THIS WEEK WAS APPROXIMATELY 16,000 MILES.

AFTER LEAVING LONDON, THE WIVES OF THE RESCUE TEAM MEMBERS WERE BROUGHT TOGETHER AND TOLD FOR THE FIRST TIME WHAT THEIR HUSBANDS HAD BEEN UP TO. AS WE FLEW ACROSS THE ATLANTIC, THE WORD SPREAD THROUGHOUT EDS IN DALLAS THAT PAUL AND BILL AND A NUMBER OF EDS PEOPLE WHO HAD RESCUED THEM WERE IN ROUTE TO DALLAS. OVER 3,000 PEOPLE SHOWED UP AT THE AIRPORT TO WELCOME THE MEN HOME.

THE RESCUE TEAM MEMBERS REFUSED ALL COMPENSATION. I BELIEVE IF YOU COULD GET THEM TO TALK ABOUT IT CANDIDLY, THEY WOULD SAY THAT THE CONCEPT OF BEING PAID TO HELP RESCUE A FRIEND WAS OFFENSIVE TO THEM. I BELIEVE THAT THEY WOULD TELL YOU IN THEIR OWN WAY THAT LIFE IS SWEETER, AND MORE MEANINGFUL AFTER YOU HAVE RISKED IT FOR A WORTHWHILE CAUSE.

WE HAVE A TREMENDOUS SENSE OF RELIEF THAT WE HAVE OUR MEN SAFELY HOME AND THAT NOBODY WAS HURT. COL. SIMONS CONSIDERED A MISSION SUCCESSFUL WHEN HE ACCOMPLISHED HIS OBJECTIVE, AND BROUGHT ALL OF HIS MEN BACK SAFELY. HE MET HIS CRITERIA.

WE ARE GRATEFUL TO COL. SIMONS. GRATEFUL THAT OUR MEN ARE HOME. COL. SIMONS, WHO HAD BEEN RESCUING AMERICANS FOR 35 YEARS, SUMMED UP OUR FEELINGS WHEN WE WATCHED THE WIVES AND CHILDREN OF PAUL AND BILL JOYFULLY AND TEARFULLY GREET THEIR DADS. HE LOOKED STERNLY AT ME AND SAID, "I JUST GOT PAID FOR THE TRIP."