

Hotfoot Tape #16
Interview With Bill Gayden
November 5, 1981

KF With Bill Gayden, 5th of November. Let me ask you that question again, when did you come out of Iran?

BG Something like the 14th of December, after we had done the evacuation.

KF And why did come out?

BG I live here, I was coming home for Christmas.

KF Had, you just gone over there just for the evacuation?

BG Yes, I, was, I ran EDS World so I was over there working on the contract, so I was over there trying to cancel the contract, plus being there for the evacuation.

KF Okay. You came back on the 14th, and you were obviously involved indeed with all the discussion of cancelling the contract, trying to get the money that you were owed, and so on. Now, when did you hear that Bill and Paul had been detained?

BG Lloyd Briggs called me within a few minutes of after they had not been allowed to come back, which would have been about 4:00 o'clock in the morning Dallas time, of the 28th of December, which would have been late in the afternoon in Tehran time.

KF That would have been at 4 o'clock in the morning of the night of the 27th through 28th.

BG Yea, in the morning of the 28th.

KF Okay, and what did you do then, do you remember what he said?

BG He said, we've got a problem, Bill and Paul have been detained and put in jail. My first reaction, was you know damn it don't kid me. It wasn't happening, things like that don't happen, that was my reaction.

KF Were you the first person in Texas to learn?

BG Yea.

KF Okay.

BG Because Lloyd worked for me, Lloyd was running things over there at the time, I was the obvious person to contact.

KF What did you do?

BG I can't remember exactly, I'm sure I spent the better part of an hour on the phone with Lloyd, trying to understand what had gone on. He had very little facts at the time. And, if I remember right I waited until 6:00 or 6:30 and called Tom Walter, and then about 7:00 or 7:30 I called Ross in Colorado.

KF Okay, so it was you that gave Ross the news. Alright, that's something that I've been trying to get at for a week. Can you remember the details of your conversation with Ross?

BG Ross, was a hell of alot of calmer than I was about it. He asked a bunch of questions, started some things that I can't remember exactly try to talk to some people in the State Department, and try to talk to, get Tom Luce, the lawyers involved, etc. And, either that call or the one immediately after that he started heading back to Dallas. I think he called us from the airport when he got to Denver. He was back in town by like about 2:00 o'clock that the afternoon.

KF But his first instructions, his instructions during that first phone call were, call Tom Luce, get him to work on calling the State Department.

BG We called the State Department too, I called the State Department.

KF Anybody in particular?

BG Yea. Precht.

KF Well you already knew that Henry Precht was head of the Iranians. desk

BG Yea.

KF Well did you the man personally?

BG I never met him but I knew ^{of} a Precht because of the a couple of weeks preceding that the guys passports were picked up and that sort of thing. I knew ^{of} a Precht from over in Tehran, because I had dealt with the Embassy over in Tehran. Who's named was that. Lou Goelz had become a friend of mine, was a friend of mine there in Tehran, the Counsel General.

KF But you didn't try and call Lou at that time?

BG No not at that time, Lloyd had already talked to Lou.

KF Okay. Can you remember your conversation with Precht?

BG Yea. In essence I called Precht, Precht's a prick he really is. He basically took the position that well you guy's are probably guilty of something, there's nothing I can do to help you. And in fact, Precht would not even return my calls when I first called him. I tried to call him three or four times.

KF During the morning of the 28th?

BG Yea, and he wouldn't return my calls. And finally the way I had him, finally I called back and I told his secretary I said you tell him he's got 20 minutes to return my call, or I'm calling CBS, and ABC, and NBC and Perot's having a press conference in an hour. He was on the line in five minutes.

KF Did Ross know you made that threat, or did you just make it up?

BG I just made it up. Ross was in the air I think at the time he wasn't even here. But, we called I think we probably talked to, what's his name, Helms.

KF Yea.

BG And the whole thing was kind of incredible, and that was my, my feelings were I was dealing with something, I didn't know what the hell I was doing and unlike our business, even when you don't know what you're doing, you know some things to do, you know. And, this was this situation, I had no idea what to do. And, we wasted alot of time because of that, you sitting down staring at each other, and none of you know what to do. Well that was the 28th, that occupied a great deal of the 28th. The 29th...

KF Wait a minute, Ross came in at about 2:00 did he have, did he give you any new instructions at that point, or did you have meetings with him to discuss, you must have...

BG Yea we had meetings with him and by that time Ross decided on Simons, before he ever got down here. Because by late that evening Marquez was hunting Simons.

KF Okay.

BG You know there was alot of conversations and, but Ross was also in one of those moods of let's quit talking about it I'm the boss, you do this and you do that thing. Which is what he is very effective at when the chips get down.

KF But try and remember what he told you to do when he said that.

BG I don't remember what he told me to do, I remember what I did the next day.

KF Go on. Okay.

BG I got on the airplane and started heading for Tehran.

KF Okay. Do you remember what time of day you left?

BG I would've left here at noon of the 29th. I'm sure it was the 29th that's just because I had to go to New York to catch the flight to get to Paris.

KF You went New York, to Paris, to Tehran.

BG I never got to Tehran, I got to Paris, called back to Dallas, and this in that phase where everybody thought there was a list at the airport, and they said don't go to Tehran. Stay in Paris. So I stayed in Paris through the 30th I guess, I got there the morning of the 30th, so I stayed through the 30th and it was obvious that I was not going to go to Tehran at that time, and I couldn't do anything in Paris. So I got back on the 31st, I got back on the Concorde and flew back to New York on New Year's Eve, and came on back to Dallas.

KF And there was an ice storm here?

BG Ice storm here, the pipes had bursted, my house, lights were out at my house, my wife and kids were not home when I got there. They'd had to move out into the hotel. And, then we went through this period

BG of oh, trying everything. We heard about a lawyer in Italy that had been successful in getting some Italian people out of problems. We sent Paul Bucha to Rome to talk to him.

KF How do you spell Bucha?

BG B u c h a. We were constantly on the telephone to Tehran, grasping, just grasping at straws during this period of time. Now, by then of course the Colonel was here. I knew the Colonel was here but had never met him, which was intentional, he didn't give anybody much to know, I had seen him once, so I knew what he was like. And, that period took oh, two or three weeks, because I would go to New York to talk to an Iranian lawyer about arranging a lawyer in Tehran, and back and forth. And going to Washington to talk to Admiral ^{Moore} ~~Borge~~ who had been Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and is still very well connected in the administrations and all that.

KF And you would have gone, and on each of these occasions you would have probably gone with Tom Luce or John Howell?

BG A couple of them I went with Tom Walter, I think he and I went to see ^{Moore} ~~Borge~~ more than once, Luce was with us probably. Luce and Howell were all, were that involved in Iran. Was not that much direct involvement at the State Department at that time, that all came a few weeks later. That goes on two and half weeks maybe maybe up till the 15 or 16th or something like that in January. Prior to that four or five days Ross had gone to Tehran.

KF He went on the 13th I believe. Keep talking I'll just check it. Yea, Ross arrived on the morning of the 13th.

BG And then he stayed, we had argued about him not going over there, obviously. And...

KF What was your feeling about that?

BG I thought it was a great mistake for him to go, I thought we might be gambling a 100 million in revenue, but it was his deal. And at the time I said, well I'm the one that ought to go, but he was dead set to go and in retrospect it worked that he was right to go. A couple of days were taken up just getting him there, trying to find, we had to hustle around and find Arab wings and all these things, getting him transportation in. He kind of left here not knowing exactly how he was going to get to Tehran. You know kind of thinking that it was ~~like~~ ^{like} from here to New York or something. And, I forget exactly when I left, he was over there, in Tehran four or five days. And, he called me and said "okay, I need to come back will you come on over", I said yea, I'll get the plane tomorrow. I got in without a hitch, I had been there two times before and I knew who would be flying in, who didn't cancel flights.

KF You don't remember the exact date that you flew in?

BG No I don't right now. I want to say it was the 18th again.

KF It was the day Ross came out.

BG Yea, it was the day he came out, because I flew to Geneva and caught a flight out of Geneva into Tehran, and met him at the airport, I got in...

KF At which airport?

BG ^{Mirabad} Mirabad in Tehran. Met him at the airport and talked to him for about 30 minutes and then he went on his plane, and Keane Taylor and I went on in to town.

KF Okay. And presumably Keane brought you up to date on the situation there.

BG Yea. Most of it being, bringing up to date was what had gone on while Ross in detail. We had been talking on the phone pretty much everyday. Although there was about by that time about a two day lag since I had left Dallas to get into Tehran, I really didn't know what was going on, what I did was call him back the next day. And, John Howell was there and they had had some meetings...

KF Did you know that at this point that Ross had pretty much given up on the possibility of paying the bail and getting them out that way, did he tell that?

BG No he hadn't. He wouldn't have told me that what the rest of us were doing would've been useless if he had told us that.

KF Yea.

BG But, you know as time went on I was only optimistic that we were going to get the bail together. And I don't think anybody could predict the set of circumstances where every jail in the country is open in a 24 hour period of time, you never saw that happen. And, I certainly...

KF The Colonel did by the way, the Colonel predicted that.

BG Yea, but you can't sit at a distance, he predicted that, and I guess that some of the experiences in the Far East and 'Nam and seeing the complete destruction of any sense of order makes that a fairly. But there was a part of Tehran that Ross didn't understand, that's the part of Tehran when you're there and a block away you hear very heavy gunfire and nobody even turns their head anymore, it's been going on so long. It's you know, Beruit was like that for years, if you were two blocks away from the fighting in Beruit, you'd cuss the waiter out for not bringing your drink on time. And literally, you'd hear heavy firing, and there would be a kid on the corner selling newspapers, it was that kind of environment. I had been in Beruit once near, back in '75 or '76 when they had gotten the Strait, and it

BG was just weird, to see Beirut, to see that that sort of thing happen in Tehran, in Tehran it was accepted it wasn't, it was never in those local areas like Beirut where whole sectors of towns that there'd just fighting. Tehran is scattered out a bit and all of them mostly focused. So I couldn't see...

KF Well you did a pretty normal thing, you moved into Ross' suite and filled it up with booze.

BG That's right, I had the best bar in Tehran. We did a hell of alot of sitting around because cancelled meetings, we're meeting today, then we'll meet tomorrow, then we'll meet the next day. Alot of frustrating things we finally had the letter of credit, we finally had Dadgar's approval on the letter of credit, all of the communications fell apart in the country. And this letter of credit is like 50 pages long, legal size pages long, and we're having to read the letter of credit over the phone, well we had to transmit the letter of credit by telex to the Bank Ohmran Branch in Abadabi 25 minutes of it. And, then we're having to get a telephone call through to do by it this way and get this 50 page document read over the phone and it has to be exact, it would be like you're trying to give you transcript before your manuscript is done over the phone. That is physically, I found out that cannot be done, it is impossible to get a document, especially when you've got two people on both ends trying to do it in English, when English is their second language. That was just a period of intense frustration, and a period when you knew something had to happen, because this wasn't. Of course the thing that we were working on was one of you know hoping that Dadgar would see the impossibility of that, I mean we could come up with some other way to accomplish the thing. Because the airports were closed you couldn't get the document flow in. We were just working away.

KF You and John Howell would have gone to meetings with Dadgar?

BG No, I didn't meet with Dadgar.

KF You never met him.

BG No see we were afraid to meet with Dadgar because I'm the guy, if he was after those two guys, I was the President of the company, you know...

KF You were the President of EDS World?

BG Yea, I was the guy that had negotiated with Sheik and talked to Sheik Omslam xxxxx, and Reza Negobot, the ones they had pitched in jail before. I kept, I never ceased to wonder why it wasn't me they wanted, other than my name really didn't appear on too many documents at the Ministry because, never having to work there day to day it really never appeared on anything that much. And course, I've told Bill since then, they thought they had me, because William Gayden and William Gaylord is not that terribly different to them.

KF What was Bill's job?

BG Bill was the Manager of the Ministry contract, and Chiapparone was our Country Manager in Iran.

KF Well it made sense for them to have Bill Gaylord.

BG Yea, well it made sense for them to have both of them.

KF But it would have made more sense for them to have Paul and you?

BG That's right.

KF Yea.

BG And they'd tried to allege that there were some irregularities at the time the contract was signed, and neither Paul and Bill lived in the country or been to the country when the contract was signed. So you know, I was the obvious guy for that. And they had wanted Bucha. See his name...

KF What was his job?

BG Well Paul had been with Zimnland in Paris, but previous to that he had been the head of our business in Tehran, and had been the man that had sold the Ministry contract. They're all kinds of things that went on that you didn't understand, they were after a Colonel with a Greek name that worked for us. And I spent hours trying to figure out who it was only to find out in the trial later that it was Bucha. You know Bucha's Russian it isn't Greek. He was never a Colonel, he was a Captain. But again, you're dealing in a second language a second society.

KF So, you were keeping your head down, but you were involved...

BG I would go to the office everyday, I would ...

KF But, you wouldn't see Dadgar?

BG I wouldn't see, he came to the office one day, and I just calmly walked upstairs to another set of offices and sat there and xxxxxx. I didn't meet Dadgar until a month ago over in Vienna.

KF You lived at the Crown Hyatt, you're working anyway with John Howell on trying to negotiate your way out of this, and you...

BG I'm working with the bank directly trying to negotiate the letter of credit with the bank.

KF Yea, you didn't know what Simons was doing?

BG Not all of it, knew part of it because we were getting him gas from the Army and we were bitching because, the son of a bitch would use a 100 gallons of gas every weekend. How the hell do you use a 100 gallons, he's got to be going all over the country. They would ask us, we need a 55 gallon drum of gas, well we had the gas but getting it to him would be a problem, we had, we actually had plenty of gas, of course we had these 75 or 80 of our employees cars that we had filled them up and hidden them around town and we just used them as gas tanks. So I knew they had gone to Turkey, I saw Jay very frequently, Jay would come into the office or would call us, but we didn't know in detail what they were doing with all of it, we knew they were in Turkey, we knew they had bought the two vehicles, because we had actually bought the vehicles for them, and paid for them and all that.

KF So you knew something shady was going on over there?

BG I knew that before I left, I knew what Simons was there to do before I ever left. I knew that all along. But I also was not supposed to see Simons, we were to be totally independent. Simons was never to be revealed or discussed. And there was no, there was nothing, I couldn't contribute anything to what he was doing by seeing him.

KF I would presume of course see Jay coming in to the Hyatt with his stocking cap and his big overcoat and with his beard.

BG He used to come up every night and have a drink with me, 'cause Simons wouldn't let them drink so he'd come over to my place and have a drink.

KF Oh he didn't, Coburn didn't tell me that.

BG So he'd come over to my place and have a drink.

KF I wonder if the Colonel ever learned that? Okay. But really...

BG I knew where they were staying.

KF I see.

BG I knew how if anything happened and I was, Keane and I both knew how to get a hold of them at all times.

KF John didn't know it.

BG No he didn't.

KF Did Rich Gallagher know?

BG No Rich didn't know.

KF Have I got the ^{full team} 14 there, Tehran negotiating team?

BG Yea.

KF That's the whole list.

BG That's that whole, yea, that's that list of people that were exposed that were in the country.

KF Yea. Okay. Well now the next significant thing that happened, that you were involved in must have been when you learned that the jail had been overrun?

BG We were, that Sunday, the Saturday before in the afternoon things had kind of, started getting pretty hectic, there started to be fighting further downtown. Down further downtown being like here to that water tower that's sitting out there, on the right of the, you know you see horizon there Ken.

KF Oh yea.

BG Or say the radio tower. And, we spent some time up on the roof of the office building watching the shooting and the smoke and all downtown, and then we went on. Then they called a curfew about 2:30 in the afternoon, or some time, this town just turns hectic and everybody's running like hell to get in before curfew 'cause Saturday's a workday in Tehran, that's their Monday. So you have all these people, four million people, trying to get where there supposed to be after curfew, which is going to be at about 2:30 or 3:00, so we go back up to the hotel. Really very little happens at that point in time. That's the first, you could really tell because there's alot of fires in the streets. Except for far downtown, not alot of weapons yet, lot of fires in the streets and all that stuff. Not very much military anymore. Lots of trucks with, I'll say trucks, not military trucks, just civilian trucks loaded with sheets and bandages heading downtown, people hanging on the sides and hollering and all. But, we get back up to the hotel and not very much going on, but nobody gets a whole lot of sleep that night because you don't know what's going on. You're telling wild stories and speculating about what's happening. So the next morning we get up and go to work again on Sunday. We get down at about 9:00 o'clock and it's starting pretty heavy by nine in the morning.

KF The shooting?

BG Yea. And it's moving up some. And, you know if this was south the prison was off here to our left, which we couldn't really see it, say that building, if you knew where it was you could see some of the towers sticking up. There were some kind of main roads in the city that led up in that direction, and the fighting was beginning to move up in that direction. John Howell and Ahmad Sahd, I guess Bob had gone to a meeting with Dadgar that morning and so as all the shooting was moving up towards us, we were getting worried about whether they could get back from where they were. Because, it wasn't as much as physical danger as just that you know, there would be alot of

BG fighting down this main street you couldn't get across, you had to either drive up or long great distances to move around, you could get yourself trapped into a particular part of town that you couldn't get out of. So I guess we stayed up there 'til I don't know like 2:00 o'clock or something like that. And, they did show up and Keane and I told them to go on to the hotel and I can't really remember exactly why we stayed at the office because we had a couple of days before had gotten all the money out of the office and things like that. Which is an interesting story, Keane had a half of million dollars in cash not all in dollars, but about half of it was in rials. You've got a half million dollars in rials we had three or four boxes like this stuffed full of rials. Because it had everything from ten rial notes to ten thousand rial notes, you know.

KF How many rials were there to the dollar at that time?

BG Was about 70. Just alot of paper. And, you know we had about \$5,000 in ^{Deutchmarks} bushmarks, \$1,000 in sterling, \$200,000 in dollars, handful of gold pallamese, we looked like a bunch of ^{on ZUR f} bizarre traders. Then at some point, we were kind of hanging around just trying to find out what was going on, there was another armory that was about two blocks away from us. I guess they broke into that armory and of course then, all hell broke loose, they were right down the streets below us. An awful lot of shooting were these kids that never had a gun in their hands, trying to learn how to use the damn thing. They just let off full clips in the air, which is pretty scary if they're right outside their office window doing that, and the way they're learning how to use or really use it. So finally, so we said okay, this is it. And, a couple of drivers had stayed with us through this whole thing, and they were dead intent on getting us out of there. Well, we didn't want them to come with us, because there had been some instances a few days before where the revolution had first started, this current party this Razdayh whoever it is, this leftist Marxist, semi-Marxist, our chief accountant turned out to be a member of that party. You know we have a 140 young Iranians that average age is 30 years old, you've got every political belief in the world. So a combination of not really

BG wanting our drivers to know where we were staying and not wanting them to get stuck up on an end of town where they might have trouble getting back, we threw a couple of sets of car keys to the drivers and said, there's your car get back in a few days. And then Keane and I hauled it up to the hotel, which was not a very big problem. Once we got a block or two we got above where they had moved their guns by then, and was alot of people in the streets cheering and jumping in their cars to go join the revolution and all this sort of thing. But, we had quit wearing suits a couple of weeks earlier, while we didn't look Iranian riding in an automobile, but we didn't look not Iranian either, because we honked our horns along with the rest of them, and got on up their pretty easy.

KF Did you grow a moustache?

BG No I didn't. This is the way I was then. You know I'd have on a pair of jeans and a sweater and a sport jacket, and didn't look like the American businessman.

KF Didn't look like an American computer person?

BG I'm not sure that was our intent as much as the fact that things had changed to the point where why be uncomfortable at work. Then we went to the hotel everybody was kind of gathering there.

KF Tell me what made you take that money out of the office.

BG First, I was afraid Dadgar would come into the office and make us open the safe and see that much cash. Where the cash had come from was that I learned, we learned that a couple of months before that in any of these evacuations, you better just have alot of money. A whole bunch of plans can go wrong but a whole lot of hundred dollar bills talks your way out of that. And it will.

KF Were there specific instances of that in the evacuation?

BG Small instances, yea.

KF Would you give me an example or two?

BG Hire the buses that we used to take the people. Who the hell wants to drive a bunch of Americans to the airport, but you know \$100 bill's alot of money for those bus drivers, a \$100 dollars apiece to bus drive. Buy plane tickets, your short two plane tickets in a crowded airport on a full plane, well the price of the ticket a couple of \$100 somebody else doesn't fly today. We had one or two of those. We didn't have that many, you don't have to have but one Ken to know that money talks. And, so as a result of that I had kind of gone into a mode where I told the rest of the officers in the Middle East too, you'll get \$50,000 or \$100,000 and the other things were that the banks would close and you couldn't get money. We knew the banks were closing so we had drawn down all of our cash. We had been selling a bunch of our employees cars because they weren't coming back so we had all of that money. And, you know a car we'd get, a car that's worth \$4,000 maybe we'd get \$2,500 for it. We were doing a brisk business though. I think we still will though, we never gave anybody any papers on the cars, so told them all to come back in two weeks by then we were gone. But, I'm not sure that matters in Iran. So for that reason we had the cash and we took it out.

KF Where did you keep it then, in the hotel?

BG We kept it in the, that was a funny story, we went to the manager of the hotel and said we needed a safety deposit box, and said fine you can have one, I'll show you the safety deposit box, a standard little hotel safe. No we need a bigger one, so he showed us one that was about the size of one of those top drawers, and we said no we need a bigger one. Well we haven't got it. We need to see the bigger ones, he showed us one about the size of those file drawers, I said can we have two of those. So he gave us two of those, he finally knew what we

BG were doing, he knew because he came back and bought some dollars from us. He had some, the hotel was new and they had what they called their training crew in there from all the Hyatt's around the world, even waiters from the Phillipines and places like that. And they had all their contracts in dollars so he had to meet their payroll in dollars. Then we sold him some dollars at a 140 to one, which was kind of silly, because when we got back, I guess we made more money on that. So we had the money there at the hotel the whole time.

KF And in the end Joe Poche took it home in his shoes.

BG No Joe didn't take very much of it. After we got over to the apartment as we started to split up the Colonel said okay, you know, I want that money parceled out, because I want everybody if they get separated to have some way to get back. So we gave \$5,000 a piece to everybody. And, you know alot of us had it in our shoes, alot of us. But still after we gave everybody \$5,000 is only a \$60,000 or \$70,000 there's still a couple of \$100,000 there.

KF And, then it went in the oil can. Okay I got that. Let's go back to February 11th, your at the hotel, John Howell goes to a meeting with Dadgar, and you can see, from the hotel you can see alot of action.

BG At the office, not the hotel, we're at the office.

KF Oh, you're at the office.

BG We've all gone to office together, he's gone off to this meeting.

KF I see, from the office, I thought it was Saturday when you talked about...

BG Both days.

KF I see.

BG We went back to work the next day too.

KF Still try keep some of those computers running?

BG No, we're going to the office, we weren't going to work,

KF Alright. You go the office on Sunday, Howell goes off to a meeting with Dadgar, and you can see from the office that's there's alot of action in the direction of the prison, okay. Pick it up from there.

BG Well, 30 minutes before we leave the office. Howell's finally come back from this meeting, it's getting later and we're already very worried about can we wait him out? Fighting's really rough now. And they've taken on the Army...

Interruption

BG It looks to Keane and I like the fires have gotten up to the prison, and there's not a damn thing we can do about it because by this time they've taken that armory that's between us, all kind of us between us and the prison.

Rashid

KF Would that have the armory that [REDACTED] took?

BG No, no.

KF No, it's a different one.

BG The, so then I was up on the roof and Keane was down in the office and he came up on the roof and says, very quietly says, "come here, come here," and I go down and he's standing with his back to the window and says "look down there". So I looked down and there were a bunch of guys on the street, ones that were loaded up, that was a result of them having got into this armory. Then we went back up on the roof and looked back over the armory, and you could see it, I saw it again the next morning, there was another one. They break into

BG these things and people start charging toward the armory to get a gun. And then ten minutes later would start coming back out. So anyway at that point, we decided to leave. We got the drivers to take off, Keane and I drove up to the hotel when we got to the hotel, by that time everybody was congregated at the hotel and was in our room. And there was just alot of talk about what happens now type thing, not terribly productive. And, ^{Rashid} walks into my room, all hot and out of breath, had a dirty fatigue type jacket on and I don't think you've met ^{Rashid} yet, when he gets excited he justs talks a mile a minute and...

SIDE B

Rashid

KF [REDACTED] telling you a story.

BG About he was at the jail, and Bill and Paul were out of jail. When he came running in the room he said "are Bill and Paul here, are Bill and Paul here? "I've been to the jail, they're not in the jail." How did you get here? Well I ran, I hitchhicked, etc. He had several clips in his pocket, he didn't have a gun, he had clips. Where's your gun? "I gave it away before I came into the hotel." And after a little discussion he said "I'm going to go back to the jail and see if I can find them." Now the jail is maybe ten miles away from where we are. So, this all takes maybe 15, 20 minutes.

KF And what time of day would this have been?

BG Very close to 5:00 o'clock Tehran time in the afternoon. We've gotten a call through to the states so I go to talk to Tom Walter who's at home very early in the morning. And, while I'm on the phone, there's a tape of this somewhere, several of us have a copy of it, that Tom made back here, while I'm on the phone, I said, I had gotten just started telling Tom what had happened with [REDACTED] and then I said wait a minute. And I got off the phone and went to the door, and what had happened was [REDACTED] had gone down and pushed the elevator button and when the elevator opened there was Bill and Paul in the elevator, so he's back in my room within five minutes with Bill and Paul, if you want to hear some excitement you ought to hear that tape. There's the dog yapping in the background, and people hollering and screaming and all that. I come back on the phone, and said we've got the guys, we've got the guns, and then I get back off the phone and go talk to them and Tom, you can hear Tom "Bill, Bill", I just left the phone. So, we had the guys, it was a teary eyed reception and they were excited, the first thing Chiapparone wanted was a drink, so I fixed him a stiff scotch, whiskey to you. He, we sat around and immediately I had Keane go call Jay and the Colonel. We had talked to them once before, we said the guys, we talked to them a few minutes before, I

BG think we talked, no maybe we talked to Coburn, we were back at the hotel, somehow or another had happened in an earlier conversation and they just said sit tight, don't budge. But, then we called them and they came over to the hotel, and while they were on their way over to the hotel I had Bob Young go get some more rooms on a different floor, and, which wasn't hard to do, when a 500 room hotel had 40 guests in it, 50 guests by this time.

KF Now those rooms weren't reserved in advance before?

BG No, no they weren't.

KF Did the Colonel know that, that you had gotten extra rooms?

BG No.

KF You didn't tell him.

BG Well, he knew it by the time he got over there. But I had already gotten them by that time.

KF And you registered them in different names?

BG Your name, whatever came up. Which wasn't a problem because we were paying cash, having lived in a hotel, the old well give me the passport number all that was way passed by then, in a country like that. So the Colonel got there and one of our Iranian employees walks in, the one that has been negotiating with Dadgar, he's very, he's come over because he's concerned about us. So, not very long another Iranian employee shows up.

KF Tell me their names.

Abolhasan A-b-o-l-h-a-s-a-n

BG [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] I think, he was in alot of the meetings with John Howell.

KF He was the first one, didn't he come with his wife?

BG Yea, he came with his wife.

KF And daughter?

BG Yea, his American wife and daughter. Okay. And then...

KF Howell says he came because he had been offered the facility of maybe connecting through the EDS switchboard with his wife's parents in Arizona.

BG Yea, that's right. He was checking on us, and also trying to get a call through to the states. And ^{Majid} [REDACTED] who was the administrative guy in Iran. So obviously, the Colonel is getting worried about all these people and everything, I want to get these guys away from here well I've got these rooms on another floor, fine we'll move them over there. They move them up there, we get big steaks brought to them, they're taking showers and all, and there's just getting to be alot of activity around, and the Colonel says I'm getting them out of here. And, so very fast fashion. I don't know if anything keyed him or what. No, I know what it was. Somehow either ^{Abolhasan} [REDACTED] came back or something, but Dadgar had talked to him that night and said, where the guys? Tell them they ought to give themselves up, and with that the Colonel just said, I mean it was not, by the time he made the decision, by the time they were driving away wasn't four minutes.

KF Oh really?

BG Oh yea, they left literally everything they had brought them, they had brought their bags over that had some, I don't know what all was in the bags. Never looked at them. Kinda suspicious that's why they shot up so many rooms after they moved...

KF You mean those were the bags that the Colonel, Jay and Joe had?

BG They left them. There were a knife or two in them, I'm not sure there might have been a radio or something like that. Plus, I had a couple of these, that I had rigged up where I could not only tape all phone calls, but I could compact my tapes, because I was running out of tapes, and I had it rigged up where I could use it as an extra telephone extension, so that I could get another person on the line with it, by using the little ear plug. So that was wired up in the rooms too, plus, I had two short wave radios I had taken out of people's...

KF So it could look to a suspicious mind like a command post.

BG Yea, it wasn't but I mean it could. Plus fifty bottles of booze in a Moslem country is a meal by itself.

Abolhasan Abolhasan Abolhasan
KF [REDACTED], as I understand it at the moment, [REDACTED] called, [REDACTED] came then went away again and called and said Dadgar...

BG I think that's true.

KF At that point Howell's said there's a discussion...

BG Ken there's an account that was written by Keane and me that was done within a week after we got back into the states that's laying around here somewhere. Which would be much more accurate in terms of time and sequence of events.

KF Let me turn that on. Nevermind.

BG I don't remember that precise conversation, but, I do remember that we wanted to give Dadgar the impression that we didn't have the guys and we were very worried about the guys. And that could easily have been where it came out.

KF But, Bill that doesn't really...

BG But, we did that a couple of times, you see I did that later at the Embassy. The whole thing that we were trying to do was, we didn't know what we were going to do yet. Or at least most of us didn't, I'm sure that the Colonel didn't know what he was going to do, now that he had 12 or 14 people, rather than the two he thought he had.

KF And the dog.

BG And the dog. So, the last thing we wanted Dadgar to think was that we had the people.

KF Okay. But what I'm trying to get at now is the sequence of events because you said a few minutes ago, that the Colonel made a fast decision to get them out...

BG I think it was right after this.

KF And you think it was right after ^{Abolhasan} [REDACTED] called.

BG Yea. And maybe right after we called ^{Abolhasan} [REDACTED] back.

KF Now the other possibility is while the Colonel was with Paul and Bill in that room, the room that you had gotten, Bob Young rather had gotten for them. The phone rang and I think it may have been Jay who told me that when that phone rang, no it was Bill Gaylord, when that phone rang, because nobody was supposed to know they were there. Who would have called, why would anybody have called that room.

BG It could have been one of us, even. But, you're right, the Colonel, the other thing was there was alot of traffic, even though there weren't very many people in the hotel, there was alot of traffic in and out of the halls. And, this was really beginning to worry the Colonel, and you know he was kind of guy that was scared of being on the 11th, 12th, 13th, floor of a hotel, where we are. To my knowledge a

hotel he had not spent alot of time in, Jay had, he maybe had probably never been there, it wasn't that high ground.

KF Anyway, at some point he made that decision and it isn't, well all I've got are conflicting accounts of what sparked that decision, at some point he made that decision, then he moved very fast.

BG Ken, I'm not real sure any of us absolutely know what sparked that decision. He was not a man to tell you why he was doing something.

KF Who was the second Iranian employee who came in?

Gholam

BG [REDACTED].

KF What did he come for?

BG Concern, pure concern. He's the one that helped us later on, the one not going with us, but the one he called back in Tehran gave the message to, and he was the one that found that they had shot up our rooms, and he was the one that went back to try to pay our bill later and all that.

KF That was nice of you to go back and pay the bill at the hotel.

BG I don't know why we did that. Some of the dumb things you do in. I think we were trying to keep the scent off of us is what we were mostly doing, is not leave any loose ends that would get any more people upset at us than we knew we already had.

KF Okay. You paid the bill before you left Iran. Okay. The Colonel, Jay, Joe, Bill and Paul leave they go to the Dvoranchik's apartment. You guys stay overnight at the hotel.

BG Yea.

KF Anything happen during that night?

BG It did. Number one, we know we're going to the Dvoranchik's the next morning.

KF When was that decision made?

BG I can't remember if whether it was before they left or whether they called during the night and said you'll get out first thing in the morning.

KF I've got a feeling that Simons decided that after he got to the Dvoranchik's.

BG Yea. There was discussion as to how we were going to do it. Poche was to be there at an appointed time, early 6:15, 6:30 in the morning. The reason even though we knew where Dvoranchik's apartment was, Poche was to be there to lead us over there and to, and on his way over in the morning, discover a clean way to get there. Make sure there weren't road blocks, etc. So we spent a fair amount of time that night trying to get some news of what was happening in the country on the radio, trying to, doing all the little things you do when you know you're going to leave the next day and you can't take your bags with you. I spent an immense amount of time seeing how much I could get in my briefcase. Making sure you have all the things you consider valuable. I would always take my papers and a change of clothes everywhere I went. Then maybe about 10:30 or something like that we get a call from the Colonel, I don't remember his name, Kathy Gallagher's boss, of the U.S. Army, and it's during the meantime the Gallagher's have decided that they are safer over in the Avene Hotel because it's a U.S. Military Hotel, so they moved over there, they're directly across the parking lot. Well, then they start evacuating the Avene Hotel because they threatened to burn it down, they haven't been over there an hour and I'm overlooking the Avene and I see them wandering around with their bags trying to slip back into our hotel, so they get up there. The Colonel his name's right on

BG the tip of my tongue, and it's in some these paper's somewhere, calls my room and says. You know, we've had to evacuate the hotel, my people are out in a bus I can't get in touch with them, I don't know whether they're there, taken, can you'll do anything to help? So dumb asses that we are, Keane and I trot down go out in the parking lot looking for this bus.

KF The Colonel was somewhere else in the city?

BG Yea. And he, oh God I can't think of his name. We get out to this bus, and what this hotel had in it was, about 25 or 30 transient U.S. Military. Guys that were flying from Thailand to the states that got trapped in Tehran, from Bangkok and the Phillipines and places. They had one Lt. Colonel who's back in the brush with a pistol like this when we came out there. Which was the dumbest thing in the world, here he is with this small pistol, and every Iranian in the country has got an automatic weapon. So, we go out there and say, hey, can we help you? They say, "yea, they won't let us in your hotel," because they threatned to burn down your hotel the U.S. Military Hotel. Okay, that's a problem. Well but, we've got some that aren't military here. So they had some Sirilancan U.S. Government employees from Sirilanca who had their wives with them. So Keane and I trot back across the parking lot, and of course by now, all these guys have got an arm band of some kind or another, and their machine guns. There are all these guys out there but they're not paying too much attention to us they'll stop you every once and awhile, and we stay in the hotel and we had to show them a key or something. So by this time, I've lived there a month, I know the manager. We talk to the manager. He says hell no, he says, I'm trying to protect you'll, I don't want my \$50 million dollar burned down, and let them shoot you. I'm not going to admit them. Well there are some civilians out there. Will you let the civilians? "Who's going to pay their bill?" Why I'll pay their bill. Will you let them in? "Yea, but don't let any military in." So it's pretty easy to tell who the Sirilancans are so we go out and gather up all the Sirilancans and start in, and just as they get to the door. I look up and here are two Americans walking in the building. It made me so

damn mad, I ran out there, 'cause I really had to plead with this guy. Well, it fortunately, it turned out they were defense department employees and were not military. So the guy let them in. So Keane and I go back out there again, and the rest of them, maybe a dozen, military left out there. Where are you going to stay tonight? "We don't know is there any place we can go?" Yea, we've got some places for you to go. Keane go get your keys. Keane goes and comes up and comes back down, and we're laid out, we scared them off at this point in time. Keane says well, he lays out the keys to about 100 apartments on the top what do you call it, hood of the bus. Well let's see, this one's about a mile away, let me see if I can tell you how you get there. Well, hell I can't tell you. This one's easier to get to. I think these guys finally thought that we were CIA or something at that time. Because you know, who the hell's got keys to a hundred apartments, and all of this jazz. And we had a couple of extra cars we were going to give, because we had been stuffing cars into the hotel parking lot just to have a place to store them, okay. And, so finally they decided they weren't going to do that. We spent an hour or so arguing with them and this that and the other. Finally, we said guys if we can't help you, there isn't any reason for us staying out here with you'll and all these kooks out here. So we went back in the hotel and they were gone the next day, where they went I still don't know. The next morning we got up and went to the apartment. We spent an uneventful ride over to the apartment.

KF You then spent...

BG That would have been Monday.

KF This is Monday. You spent the next 36 hours most of you spent the next 36 hours in that apartment. You I think went out at some stage.

BG Everybody stayed in that apartment, except on occasion, Poche and Joe would go make a run somewhere. And, then, that was all day Monday we did that.

KF What did you do?

BG Well we made Chiapparone cook us spaghetti. And, we read a little bit, we talked, what are we going to do? The Colonel would be meeting with his people, he was a bit worried about how many people he had there. None of us had a hell of alot of sleep. So we slept alot during the day. We really were bored stiff. Not really knowing what you're going to do. I guess it was Tuesday, we decided Monday night, or sometime, or Tuesday morning, I believe the Colonel decided we need to figure out a way to not have as many people. So I called Lou, Lou Goelz, and went to see him at his home, which was three blocks away. We, so Poche and I went down and spent a couple of hours with Lou I was asking Lou whether we could put some of our people in the the Embasssy, well no you can't because the Embassy's full but Bill I'll be glad to take you in my home if you want me to. How many is there? I said that it was Poche, and those other people.

KF The clean team?

BG The clean team. But, so let's say, I don't know, how ever many was in that group.

KF Five, I think.

BG So Lou said, that's seven of you. I said no, because I, I didn't tell him about the dog. No I said because Keane Taylor and I are going to stay here to find Bill and Paul. Because Goelz by this time knew they were out of jail. Because he already had the American woman that had been in jail with Bill and Paul, he already had the Mexican-American with them. And, when we first came in he said, you'll have got Bill and Paul. No we don't know where they are, but we're going to stay here to try and find them, etc. but, I sure would like to get these guys down here. So I'll call you back if I need that. So anyway, I go back to report to the Colonel and he decides that that's what we're going to do, call Goelz back and tell him that we need that. I can't

BG through to Goelz, I can't get through to Goelz, I can't get through to Goelz, so finally, we just send them, and it's maybe 45 minutes after they're gone by the time I get through to Goelz, and I guess you know why I've been trying to call you, and he says, "yea, they're here," and he says "that's fine." He said good luck and keep in touch with me, call me every 24 hours, and I said well I think it might be a day and half or two before I can call you, we're really going to take a hard look for the guys. Trying to buy myself some time you know to keep him xxxxx. And, that's how the guys got down there, from that point on, we never saw or heard of them.

KF That was late Tuesday, late afternoon?

BG About four thirty-ish Tuesday.

KF So now you're on the dirty team.

BG Yea.

KF How did you spend that evening and that night?

BG Well we spent a good part of that evening packing up the money, getting rid of what we weren't going to take.

KF Had you given some of the money to Joe Poche?

BG Yea. Poche already had his share of the money. Packing up what we hadn't given now was the problem, you know we had given out a bunch but it was this much money. A lot of time went into finding warm clothes that fit. Then later on in the evening when we started having the problems with Bakhtiar not being able to show. A lot of time went into the conversation who would go, ██████████ ^{Sayed} couldn't get to us, and ^{Rashid} finally about 11:30 we settled on calling ██████████. Which was almost a desperation call because we were to leave at 6:30 the next morning. And he comes in there. ██████████ was the one that finally figured where we
Rashid

BG ought to hide the money, wherever we had it hid at the time wasn't suitable, we had it the bottom of flashlights and things like that you know. We did have \$10,000 in the bottom of a kleenex box sitting up on the dash of the car. \$10,000 in \$100 bills is not that much, I guess about 1:00 we all went to sleep for a few hours. And we were going to try to leave there at 6:30 I think so we were all up by 4:00 rustling around trying not to wake the lady above up and her daughter. Getting out and trying to gas up the trucks, they were down hill, and these 55 gallon drums, we just left tons of fuel, we had originally planned to carry the fuel with us, ^{Rashid} said no, we'll buy it on the way. Don't just want to look like a bunch of scared of guys, alright. He was right about that. Strange thing, here's a country that fell the day before, and you go by these military bases they're deserted, driving out by the airport, burned out cars, huge roadblocks built out of timber and everything. And, just hundreds of people at these some of these control points. We did not pass a closed gas station the whole trip. Those are things that I remember about the inconsistencies of the trip, opposed to the things that you would expect. Like the night they had us at Mahabad, they took us, after all the talking and everything else, they took us, which wasn't very good, but they took us to the best restaurant in town and fed us. So anyway, that's what used up Tuesday night, and everybody had a little something that they had to worry about getting rid of. I had about a half a dozens passports. And, we did have passports for Bill and Paul. They were not their passports, what happened was before I had gone back over there, after evacuating all people, I had sent out word that I had to have everybody's passports to be able to get their goods out of the country for them. So I get these hundred some odd American passports and we'd gone through this end we had gone through who could fake a passport how do you get one. By the way I think I know how you can get one, it's not that difficult there is a way.

KF But, you didn't know then?

BG I knew then, but we weren't in a big law breaking mood in a sense of doing that, but we went through all the motions of getting a guy who had never got one to get one the way we thought we could get one, which involved, there's an expedited method where you go down to the courthouse here and they take all the documentation and they put it in an envelope and wrap it with scotch tape and then someone can carry it to New Orleans with a passport, see. So it's nothing but a plain government envelope and open it, this one, and substitute a picture in there then you have a passport for the other person, okay. And I happen to have some of Bill and Paul's passport picture, so I do really believe you can get one through that way, I don't think there's really a safeguard in stopping it.

KF You investigated the method?

BG Yea. But we never did it. So what happened was we did wind up with these hundred some odd passports, so I went through and picked out the top seven or eight and would look the closest like Bill and Paul and I took those back to Iran and with me and had bogused up a letter to someone in Iran from someone here in the states that said here are the six passports you asked for us to return so you could deal with the immigration authorities. Just so if someone asked me why have I got all these passports I had something in my briefcase that. And those countries love a piece of paper, you know if you have a piece of paper you can usually talk your way through it. So anyway, we picked out these two best ones and here I'm holding these half a dozen American passports that are worthless, so I had to get rid of those and ...

KF How did you get rid of them?

BG I just hid them, there's a bookcase in Dvoranchik's apartment that if you pull hard enough on the bookcase it came out from the wall, it never really stayed out from the wall, you'd really have to pull on it hard. And I pulled it out and I'd sling them back in there as far as I could. 'Cause we really didn't want to burn anything and create the smoke and the smell and all that.

KF Those passports are probably still there?

BG Yea. If that building's still there, they're probably still sitting back there. Twenty years from now, I wonder how these got here. That took up the night, the next morning we gassed up and took off. Made wonderful time until we got to the town up the road up a bit, Gazben, I think it was.

KF Everything went well until you got to I think Mahabad.

BG Yea.

KF Just before you got to Mahabad, about 30 minutes, you were in the second car.

BG We had been stopped a good bit by then. We'd been stopped maybe about a half a dozen times before then, we were getting pretty blase about it. They weren't stopping us, they were stopping every car on the highway.

KF But just before you got to Mahabad you said,

BG If something doesn't happen quick, nobody's going to ever believe this, you know. And, it did. We walked right in it. We were driving 70, at that time I said that, we were on a four lane highway driving 70 miles an hour.

KF The way Jay tells it you said we'd better make up some stories.

BG That's right, he's exactly right, we'd better make up something. I've got one that I'll tell you ^{and} Jay later on.

KF Tell me now ^{while} ~~why~~ you're thinking of it.

BG This is way later, this was when we were up in the mountains, on the worst time we got stopped, it was in the middle of the night, two guys stopped us and then maybe 50 came out after we were stopped. This was a pretty mean crowd, they...

KF These are the Kurds?

BG Yea. And, they made us get out of our vehicles and put us in theirs and took us up to this little bitty damn village, and the thing that impressed me was that in this little bitty damn village there were about 15 brand new land rovers. And what they had in my mind these poor people are collecting land rovers, we're going to be in the ditch somewhere 'cause those cars are worth \$18,000 to \$20,000 a piece in Iran. So anyway, they while they have us surrounded here, Jay's sitting up front and I'm sitting in the back and Jay's got his hand on the door lock. Jay's had his hand up on the door lock as you push down. I said to Jay I said these guys all around us with machine guns, I said Jay lock the door. He said I'm too scared to move. All he has to do is that.

KF The way he tell it he thought it was funny because the guy who was pointing this machine gun.

BG Oh, yea, it wouldn't have done a bit of good, it would have done absolutely no good.

KF Alright, we broke off to tell that, but basically, on your way in Mahabad.

BG Everything has been relatively uneventful up there. I think we'd been searched fairly cursorily once. And we come into Mahabad and another one of these routine roadblocks, except this one didn't turn out to be very routine. And, it took a lot of time. We kept trying to talk our way out of it and one thing or another, and finally couldn't. So finally they put a couple of guys in the vehicles with us, take us right down in the center of town. My count of people is not very accurate, but I can guarantee there was a thousand people, milling around in the streets. All men, all women were unseen. This is the first time, I'm kind of a half way gun buff, this is the first time I've really noticed especially in the Kurdish country, is one of everything you have ever seen in your life. There is just, every weapon known to man up there. The significant change you got over in the Kurdish country and in Tehran you saw S3 or G3 depending on where you are in the world, the European assault rifle, was made in Tehran, at the time in Iran you saw a lot of M16's. When you get up in the Kurdish country you start seeing a lot of AK47's, I guess the Iraqis were supplying them. So all these guys around, they go inside in this big pow-wow in there, you really feel like a monkey, because all these people are coming up to look in the truck to see who you are and we've got the windows rolled up and trying to look straight ahead, and all that. Then they come back out and they take us to another building and we have to go into that building. It's a mosque and we all have to take our boots off, I still had my money in my boots too I'm stuffing my money up in the toe of the boot and I almost broke my toe when I put it back on, when we get out of the mosque. And, we go in there and we sit around in a circle, and a lot of palaver goes on there, and then they want to check papers and so, we had all the papers. And, we get by it pretty well that time, they were having trouble taking the name off of the passports. I think it was the order of the names and then your last name or whatever it is on the passport was causing them a problem. So, I was by the guy that was interpreting for the head guy and was doing the writing so finally I got my hands on the stack of passports and was helping him spell and write these things down, and was able to keep my hand over the picture when we came to Bill and Paul's passports. And, that took a long time, we got through there, there

BG was one incident there, they asked us a lot of detailed questions, that were a little scary, one did we know a company that was called Siran which was a government owned computer company. We knew it was xxxxx and xxxxxx to the revolution. "Have you ever worked for them?" We had done some work for them though. "How do we know you are with what company you are." Well one thing we had done was we had gotten rid of all our identification as to what company we worked with except Keane had kept his health card. And, they asked "do you have anything to prove who you are?" That was, now what do we do? So Keane whips out his health card, and that works.

KF Simons wasn't too pleased I gather about that?

BG You know I don't believe he ever said anything. If he did I didn't hear him, he didn't say it to me. I was damn glad he had it, I mean. But, and Simons was funny in those kind of meetings he never said a word, he let us do all the talking. He just sat there and watched everybody. At one point in there the head guy gets up and leaves the room and he comes back in and he's got an old M1 carbine, a little short World War II weapon and he wham, slams the clip in to it, and that scared me, that did. Well what it turned out was that in Mahabad they were pretty tightly controlling the weapons, and he had gone, which we didn't know for ten minutes later, he had gone back to get this weapon to give it to the man who was the interpreter who was going to be one of our guards that night. And, in fact he wrote out the document that permitted this man to have the weapon and gave it to him, gave him the document as well. And he wrote a document to the people in Rezaiyeh for us, that had our passport numbers on it and all. Which was pretty helpful because for a long time, we never had to show our passports again, that piece of paper kept us going through. Then we went...

KF Is this the time you sat in a circle on the floor on oriental carpets?

BG Yea. By, the way when they started serving tea, we knew we were home free.

KF The man who was writing down the details from the passports, was that ~~Glorian~~, the Communist the village chief?

Byrman

BG No.

KF This was just a functionary who did the writing down.

BG Yea. He spoke some English, the stuff that is not known, it's very important to me, I wrote to him a time or two after we got back. He was a young, agricultural research associate at one of the government farms up in Mahabad and he had joined the revolution because that was the thing to do. He was probably active too. So he and two or three other guys, I don't if anybody has told you of one of the other guys was pretty helpful in the meeting too because we said we couldn't get out because the airport was closed, he said, told Glorian "that's right the same thing happened to me." Well a few hours later that night we got to talking to him and he had his master's in archeology and was supposed to be going to Sweden to start his PhD, and couldn't get out of the country because of the revolution so join the revolution for a month. And, then they took us around town to try and find us something to eat, and this was a wierd set of circumstances when you've got two guys in each car with rifles that were your guards and as we're driving around town, I guess it's Jay or somebody, not Jay because he was with me. Someone in the first car where ever it was, we were running low on gas so they pull into a gas station so we fill our....

END OF TAPE