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Notes and correspondence - "Life and Death on a Tarmac: The Hijacking of PK326" by Jeffrey Balkind - 1981-1994



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 **Archives**  
A2016-001 Other #: 3 **397018B**  
Notes and correspondence - Life and Death on a Tarmac - The Hijacking of PK326 by Jeffrey Balkind

30293587





sent to  
cc Saideh

202-667-7947 (H); 458-9116

1829- 19th, Street, N.W.  
Washington D.C. 20009  
June 7, 1994

Jim Theodores  
29 Hunter avenue,  
Newport  
Rhode Island 02840

Dear Jim,

Thanks so much for your letters to me and Marshall. Saideh received hers and Ann Hammond told me you wrote to her. If you do not get your Afghanistan novel published (which I'm sure you will), we can publish the letters of Jim Theodores! You are so prolific and diligent. I am a terrible correspondent. Anyway, many thanks for your wonderful words of support, as always.

I enclose the revised Chs. 4-5, which include your suggestions and input. I hate to put you to work in making inputs to other chapters, so do as much or as little as you see fit. Your rounding out of Chs. 3-4 with the Paijmans conversations and your thought processes was terrifically helpful to me, but see how you go. after all, san Francisco is wonderful to do more than read/revise a hijacking book.

You will be interested in a letter I sent to Mark Tully of the BBC (a well-known and highly respected senior correspondent of the BBC), through a trusted BBC reporter (Richard Downes) that I met here yesterday by chance (they were doing a story on the Bank including an interview with Mr. Preston). So I went over to BBC's office in Washington this morning to meet briefly with Downes and he is sending my package (draft book, letter and press clippings) onto Tully. I am covering all bases as you can see. It turns out that Tully is a critical source because of that radio conversation that he had with Murtaza Bhutto in 1981. By the way, Murtaza Bhutto has been released on bail, but the charges against him have not been dismissed, contrary to what some people told me on Monday morning after hearing the recent BBC report.

Thanks for your comments on my Bank's World article -- watch for the July issue with my photos of the buildings.

Take care and have a lovely time in California.

Warmly and a big hug from me, Tia, and Marshall.

Jeffrey



6/22/94

Dear Jeffrey →

Many thanks for copies of the updated Chapters 4 and 5. You did a great job in maintaining a smooth and very readable flow. I have since made some minor markups on only a few pages for consideration.

I have enclosed some more detailed suggestions for consideration on the balance of the chapters referring to behind the scenes operations in Washington. I have added a couple of things that you would not find mention of in the log book or any other references. I was tempted to make a fleeting and indirect reference to a luncheon get-together that I had with Bill Colby (AKA William, former CIA Director) at the Executive Dining room prior to the hijacking. I thought it would add a bit of spice but after talking to a couple of his ex-aides, I scratched the idea, and put it to rest. (F41 only, pls.) It sure raised eyebrows that day.

I have also enclosed some rough ideas on how your close call has had a major impact on the Banks field security system and all its staff -- now and for years to come. I hope you find it useful.

Most of all, I'm delighted that you are pressing ahead to whip the book into shape to grab the interest of publishers. You have accomplished so much in so short of time. Mack Tully could turn out to be an interesting and useful contact. Regards to Tim, Marshall and Saideh.

Sincerely →

Tim



Jeffrey —

6/22/94

I had prepared most of the attached while still in Newport and finished them up after arriving in S.F.

what I have tried to do was to provide a little more background that you wouldn't find in the log book.

For example, the "Sadie" I refer to (P 163) is not fictional. She is something very special and I barely scratched the surface on how helpful she was. Needless to say, I did not identify the agency she really worked for and used the office for evaluating terrorism with which we regularly liaised as a convenient contact point. She, along with a couple of others who remain totally unidentified, were incredibly helpful when I had to make circuitous contacts with "running dogs" in Kabul.

I thought my reference to Hisako (P 120) might offer a bit of a light point for a moment or two. you may not know this but I got to know Hisako very well in the earlier 70's when she was secretary to Division Chief Jack Stewart and I was his Deputy. She was one of my favorite people.

Tim



6/22/99

Jeffrey →

Chapters 4 & 5 are on the mark. You have done a masterful job of entering the roughed out suggestions in a very smooth flow. The attached reflect some very minor points for you to consider.

Tim

THE THOUGHT CROSSED HIS MIND  
THAT MAYBE THIS TIME, JUST  
MAYBE -- WITH LOTS OF LUCK --  
HE MIGHT BE OF HELP

INSERT ON PAGE 51, LINE 2,  
FOLLOWING "IT FELT EERIE."

Insert for Page 73, line 2 after  
the word "moment."

AS IF THAT WASN'T BAD ENOUGH,  
THEODORES COULD NEVER DISPEL  
FROM HIS MIND THE NOTION THAT THE  
1979 AFGHAN AND SOVIET SWAT OPERATION  
WAS BOTCHED DELIBERATELY TO SUIT  
THEIR OWN POLITICAL AGENDA. ANYTHING  
WAS POSSIBLE IN THAT REMOTE CORNER  
OF THE WORLD. THE THOUGHT SCARED HIM TO  
HELL IN 1979 -- AND NOW AGAIN IN 1981



J B's notes

1. I was ordered into a window seat as were all the other men. This prevented attacks from the men hostages. Women were ordered into aisle seats.[ch.3]
2. Describe what the 3 hijackers were doing before the hijacking.[ch.3]
3. Add a lot more about how Alamgir was a lot nicer than most hijackers, for example he cared about the hostages.[almost all chs.]
4. CHANGE TO REAL NAMES?[all chs.]
5. Add what Jim Theodores was doing during the hijacking.[his conversations with the State Department and Tia] [almost all chs.]
6. Revise the 1st ch.? [if so, Marshall's version]
7. Hijacking political, chance of survival less criminal.[draw link back to Leila Khaled]
8. Put in photo of Dad's telex.[ch.8]
9. No relief plane, no relief arrangements. In Kabul or Damascus. [contrast to JAL hijacking]
10. Add pictures that Marshall drew on a computer.[chs. which need them]
11. Tell what impact this event has had on you, do you look at life differently? How did you overcome the strong memories? [last ch.]
12. Military training helped me survive through this event[familiarity with weapons]
13. Expand on what you felt about Alamgir and the whole event.[almost all chs.]
14. Understanding why the hijackers hijacked the plane can make it less scary or more scary, depending on the circumstances, in this case avenging Ali Bhutto's death.[ch.4 and ch.8?]
15. Throughout ch.2 put a small photo of the person, his or her name, a paragraph about him or her etc. etc.



16. Do you give in to a hijacker's demands?
17. Find pictures that are appropriate for the chs. they will begin.
18. Police/the Army wanted to do a Swat operation but the authorities would not allow it.[this only happened in Damascus] [chs.12 and 13]
19. Retitle ch.14 Release from PK 326?
20. Add more detail to, and update ch.16.
21. Expand on your relationship with Alamgir.
22. Take out the entire of ch. 18
23. Research origin of the word "hijack" and ask Joan more about the origin of the word "tarmac".
24. Check flight time from Karachi to Peshawar.
25. Describe the conversations between the control tower and Alamgir.
26. Discuss writing the book and how it has driven your fears away. Also discuss how you met Professor St. John.[Epilogue]
27. Alamgir asked for 93 prisoners but he was told that 39 could not be found,this was just a excuse for keeping the 39 most important prisoners in jail in Pakistan.
28. Add that it is a sad story for Alamgir because he was reasonably well educated and had a kind heart but he got into the hijacking business and got executed for it. So he never got to live a peaceful and happy life. It just ended all too soon.



Phone: 202-667-7947 (H); 458-0506 (W)

1829- 19th, Street, N.W.  
Washington D.C. 20009  
March 11, 1993

Professor Peter St.John.  
200 Dromore Avenue  
Winnipeg  
Manitoba  
Canada  
R3MOJ3

Dear Peter,

As discussed, I am pleased to be able to come up to Manitoba for your March 22 class discussion. Today I called Professor Mcvicar to thank him for giving me your home phone number two nights ago. Are all Canadians so charming?

Regarding material that I will bring up with me for use in the class presentation, this will include: (i) my 19 slides taken on board during the event (in color); (ii) copies of the March 16, 1981 New York Times (front page) article on our incident, a Time Magazine article, and one from Newsweek (the Time article, in particular, was quite predictive -- "Bound to Encourage Others" -- the heading reads); and (iii) my draft book of 160 plus pages long (for your and Barbara's eyes only, the table of contents and title page enclosed -- please take care with it, as I have not yet copyrighted my book -- I will do so soon). Incidentally, a large picture of me appeared on page six of that same NY Times article that I mentioned (I will bring a copy of that page as well), so the veneer of my pen-name (Alistair Smith) will soon peel off if my manuscript is one day published. All of the materials that I am bringing can be displayed in the classroom in advance (except perhaps "the book").

Regarding my book, each chapter will start with a full-page blow-up photo of the various characters shown in my slides to illustrate "Faces in the Crowd" -- the characters that are described in Ch. 2 of my book (the scene at Karachi terminal Building before boarding the flight of PK326). I introduce the key persons like a Playbill. Overall, there are three themes in my docudrama: (i) it is written as a human interest, survival story of an incident that could happen to anyone, as it did to me in March 1981 aboard Pakistan International Airways (page 36 of your excellent book (1991)); (ii) it contains sufficient historical/political material for the reader to understand the context, which is very important to disentangling the web involved in this 13-day saga; and (iii) it captures the theme that the Subcontinent is a very violent place where religious and ethnic strife can flare up in an instant (see the book on Partition: *Freedom at Midnight* for example). While the specifics of my story are about Pakistan, Afghanistan, Syria, and a little on Libya and India (my Manila dream sequence of the night of Rajiv Gandhi's slaying is my flashback entry point into the story), there is, I believe, a good deal of universality to this story. And that is what I endeavour to bring out. How successful I am depends on the particular perspective of the reader. So far, about ten people have read my book.

In the case of PK326, three aggrieved Karachi university students saw fit to seize over a hundred and fifty hostages, and to murder someone (Ali Bhutto's aide-de-campe, who they alledged turned state evidence in Bhutto's 1979 trial). He was shot right on board ten feet away from me in cold-blood, in a premeditated fashion -- not in a mistaken shootout. In that sense, as distinct from casualties in a SWAT shootout, the story is similar to the better-known TWA 847 one. The duration of these two incidents were similar as well.



There are some similarities to other Middle-East terrorism acts of the 19870-80s, but naturally I am not an expert in this area. In all, I have tried to introduce sufficient material to ground the story, without burdening it with extraneous material. Naturally, I would like to talk to you and Barbara (if I may) regarding aspects of the draft.

I should add that my manuscript is written in the first person, as a suspense story, with each chapter describing the day-to-day survival that took place. I intend to do some restructuring and rewriting of the draft in the coming months. For example, I currently have too many footnotes (for my purposes), I am told. One of the footnotes connects the Hindawi/EL AL/Heathrow story (which you also discuss) to my story, through a central Syrian official (our chief negotiator in Damascus Control Tower).

I wrote most of my book in Manila in May 1991, right after Rajiv Gandhi's death, angered if you will, by some of the same feelings that you had about Rahul Aggarwal's death. You see, the nephew of a colleague of mine was killed on that same Air India flight that went down off the coast of Ireland. Since May-June 1991, in the little spare time that I have had on weekends and weeknights (and I regret not having come across your seminal book earlier, as my search for information would have been made easier), I have revised and re-written parts of my manuscript. I have also inserted suggestions from a writer/editor who lives in Camden, Maine. A friend of mine who works for USA TODAY and who formerly worked for the Book Review Section of the Washington Post has also read the manuscript and calls it "a powerful story", but she said that the reader would want to know more about what has been the impact on me, which at the time was not something that I was willing to write much about. Now that the genie is back in the bottle, I might weave more of that into my story. She also assures me that the manuscript is in much better shape than many of the manuscripts that are sent to literary agents and has advised me to not spend too many possibly wasted hours revising the chapters before I get more feedback. Well, we will see.....I think it needs it.

Soon, we are likely to see a spate of hostage stories from Terry Anderson's, to Terry Waite's, to Tom Sutherland, etc. The Keenan story (Irish hostage in Iran) has already been published. All of those are quite different to a hijacking, although there are similar considerations when it comes to negotiations for release, etc. As you will see from my presentation, I am very troubled by the balance between individual choice (that is which airlines, aircraft, airports to choose) and the corporate responsibility of the managers of airlines/airports to disclose information **in advance** to those who are holding a reservation on a given (and threatened flight). I notice that you take the same stance on this point, as does the Israeli expert that you cite in your book. Surely the passengers on the particular flight in question can, and should be warned in advance, even if in the most confidential manner. The obligation of the airline/airport authorities is a moral one, if not legally so.

You see in our case, it turned out that Karachi airport was on high alert because of a specific threat made in advance (discussed in Chapter 16 of my manuscript) and this was told to me by none other than Pakistan's Secretary of Defense at the time and the concurrent Chairman of PIA, when he interviewed us in the military hospital outside of Damascus, where we were inexplicably (and under false pretenses) kept under guard for two days again, after our release from the plane. The Karachi airport authorities were aware of the warning to hijack a PIA plane (supposedly written by Murtaza six months earlier), but they searched the wrong plane (a London-bound DC-10, and not our Peshawar-bound Boeing 720-B (a first generation 707).

I know that the issue of whether the public should be warned of a specific threat when the threat is made in advance is a vexing question, but I come out on the side of Isaac Yeffet (and I guess



it is your view too) that the passengers who have reservations on that given flight have a right (moral, and maybe legal) to expect to be warned. The airline should have to ask them (in the strictest of confidence if they wish) whether the passengers still wish proceed with the flight. This was behind the first judgement handed down in the Lockerbie cases in the Brooklyn court, besides the issue of PAN AM's failure to match the baggage with the passenger list at Frankfurt airport. To me, there is no reason why the airlines, if such a threat is indeed known to them in advance, cannot apprise the passengers in such confidence, asking them not to "go public with the information" and let them (the passengers) make the decision as to whether to fly or not. Surely, it is the passengers lives that are at stake, not that of the airline/airport operations manager! It is such a basic point that i wonder if I am missing something here. just as the fact that Karachi airport was on high alert when we boarded PK326, except we never knew it.

Incidentally, since I have gone to the trouble of crafting my book using pseudonyms (concern for my own safety because of the Murtaza Bhutto link) and concern that until published, my book-project should be kept reasonably quiet), I trust that any announcement on my upcoming talk will be limited to mentioning that I will be doing a talk (no mention of a book please yet -- I will do that in person). Also, the announcement should be circulated only to the attendants in the class (and whomever else you wish to invite).

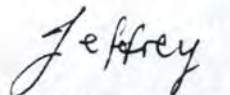
In my talk, I might mention at the outset that I work for the World Bank. Then I will move into a full discussion of my incident, including analytical implications/lessons learned that illustrate some feature or other in your book. When I move into this main segment of the discussion and the question/answer segment, I suggest that you try to arrange for a video tape to be made, as I would like to keep it for posterity, plus it might be useful for our later collaborations. I see a lot of possibilities, assuming that it is of interest to you.

I will lace my presentation with slides (you have a projector, I assume) of the photographs that I took on board. These are rather rare, as you can imagine. I took the pictures during the only hour of respite that we had in the whole thirteen days ordeal. The interlude occurred when the details of the "prisoner-hostage exchange accord" were being worked out, when we were supposed to fly to Libya. Severe tension soon resumed when the accord appeared to be falling apart,

On another quite different topic, enclosed please find an article that I wrote on World Cup soccer and kids' soccer, which you and your wife (given her interest in the Olympics) will enjoy, I think. The discussion about the seven stages of a project can be applied to any situation, including my coming to Manitoba (site selection) for me to do my first "structured talk" of this incident outside of my job setting (in 1981 I did a few internal seminar discussions and then tried to put the incident behind me -- to no avail, as I found out ten years later in Manila). Let's hope that we can jointly get to all of the remaining stages, including post-audit feedback.

Looking forward to seeing you on Saturday, March 20 (Air Canada flight 195 arrives 6:39 p.m. from Toronto) and again many thanks.

Warmly, ..... (rather than "Sincerely yours", as I feel that I know you already, at least through two phone conversations and 220 pages, including your many excellent footnotes and graphs).

  
Jeffrey Balkind



# Amateur Chronicles Crisis

By Frank Van Riper

IT WAS sweltering at noon when Jeffrey Balkind, a Washington-based official of the World Bank, arrived at the domestic departures building in Karachi, Pakistan, for a routine flight to Peshawar, some 800 miles away. On this day in 1981 Balkind was the World Bank's senior industrial officer for projects in Pakistan, and the flight was supposed to be like many he had made before, in a career that had taken him all over the world. He had no inkling that before the flight ended—some 13 days later—he would witness a murder, become a pawn in a

global test of wills, and face death himself at the hands of a hijacker.

Balkind is 47 now, a thin, intense man with dark eyes and an almost compulsive way of talking about the things and people he loves—his work at the bank, his wife Tia, his young son Marshall—as well as his photography. He is an avid amateur whose work regularly wins prizes in the bank's camera club competitions. It was no accident, then, that Balkind had his camera with him when a group of Pakistani nationals, brandishing automatic weapons, hijacked Pakistani International Airlines Flight 326 shortly after takeoff and demanded the release of scores of political prisoners held by the regime of then-President Zia-ul-Haq.

Rarely has a professional photographer, much less an amateur, had the chance to make photographs during a hijacking. But Balkind did, and the experience taught him something about himself as a person and offered insights into how photography not only helps us see the external world, but see inside ourselves as well.

The nearly two-week ordeal of that flight, which ranks among the world's



© JEFFREY BALKIND

The pilot of the hijacked Pakistani plane, center, is comforted by two men.

longest hijackings, reads like a John Grisham novel, and Balkind himself has written a riveting account of the takeover in an as-yet-unpublished book. It took Balkind more than 10 years to produce the manuscript,

which he admits was one of the ways he finally helped put the terrifying experience behind him. But in talking to Balkind, it is apparent that by taking pictures during the hijacking—the only photographs believed ever to be made inside a plane during a hostage takeover—he gained a degree of control over his destiny, even if his actions at the time might have seemed foolhardy in the extreme.

"I don't know what possessed me at the time to take pictures," Balkind admitted. He noted that he only dared use his camera in the final hours of the hijacking, after Zia's government had agreed to a prisoners-for-hostages swap and tensions had eased considerably. "The photos essentially have played the role of hypnosis [and have] allowed extensive memory recall to allow me to relate such detail," Balkind said. Still it is a measure of how the mind can submerge horrible

memories into the subconscious that, for a long time after his return home, Balkind didn't even remember he had photos.

Balkind and the more than 100 passengers on PK 326 were caught up in the bloody struggle between Zia's regime and that of the late president Zulfikar Ali-Bhutto, whom Zia had put to death in 1979. On the fifth day of the hostage drama, as the plane languished sweltering on the tarmac in Kabul, Afghanistan, Balkind watched in horror as one of his fellow passengers, a Pakistani diplomat named Tariq Rahim, was first beaten then murdered just a few seats away.

Balkind's own brush with death came six days later, when he and another hostage were marked for execution if the hijackers' demands were not met that evening. Miraculously, the plane's radio came alive with the news that Zia has capitulated: The prisoners would be released; the hostages freed.

It was in the ensuing half hour—"after the hijackers have been informed that they've pulled off the world's most successful hijacking"—that Balkind grabbed his camera and began making pictures. Of all of the dramatic shots he made—of the exhausted yet happy faces of his fellow prisoners—one stands out. It shows two men comforting a third who sits between them. That man is the captain of the plane, who had suffered an apparent nervous breakdown and who ultimately turned over control of the plane to his co-pilot and flight engineer.

Balkind, who only minutes earlier faced death himself, made this dramatic and poignant image—a remarkable testament to one man's awesome self-possession and talent as a photographer.

*Frank Van Riper is a Washington-based professional photographer and writer.*



THE WORLD BANK  
Washington, D.C. 20433  
U.S.A.

March 17, 1981

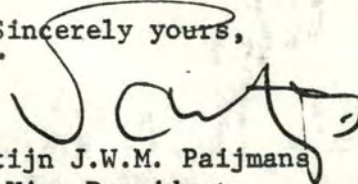
Mr. James L. Theodores  
Acting Field Coordinator, AOPVP  
World Bank, I9-136

Dear Jim,

At the conclusion of the terrible hijacking ordeal, I wish to go on record to compliment you and thank you for your truly tireless efforts during the last two weeks. Your dedication to our institution and its staff have pushed you well beyond what could be expected even from the most loyal supporter of the Bank. You have literally worked day and night, demonstrating your tremendous concern for the human as well as the institutional dimensions of this tense situation; thereby helping the Bank to indeed act fully as the concerned employer it wants to be.

I want to thank you for a great achievement on which you can look back with considerable pride.

Sincerely yours,



Martijn J.W.M. Paijmans  
Vice President

Administration, Organization, Personnel Management

cc: PMD files



## OFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: Mr. Martijn J.W.M. Paijmans  
 FROM: Bruce W. Rohrbacher, Director, OPD *BWR*  
 SUBJECT: Mr. James L. Theodores

DATE: March 12, 1981

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1. I know that you are acquainted with what Jim Theodores has been doing in relation to the PIA plane hijacking. I also know that you are in a far better position than I to judge the quality of his work as the "crisis center director". But I simply want to ask that note be taken, hopefully by Mr. McNamara, of the dedication, hard work, and long, long hours that Jim has put into this emergency.

2. For the first five or six days of the crisis, Jim worked around the clock from early morning till late at night here in the office, and on-call at home during the remainder of each twenty-four hour period, including Saturday and Sunday. It was not until two or three days ago that Jim would even accept some relief. His schedule now is to come into the office about 11 p.m., handle calls, etc., while also trying to "catch a few winks" on a cot in his office, and be at his desk and telephone full-time from about 7 a.m. until 3 p.m. Then he goes home. His secretary covers the office until 6 p.m. and "volunteers" from EMENA, PMD, and elsewhere cover until he gets back again at 11 p.m.

3. From all I can gather, Jim has handled the job sensibly and effectively. He has "taken charge", devised procedures where none existed, prodded UN security coordinators into action, and elicited great assistance from the US State Department. He has done all this calmly and expeditiously and, at the same time, compassionately insofar as Mr. Balkind's wife is concerned.

4. I recognize that the emergency is not yet over, but I hope that promptly after it is Jim will receive the commendation due him. In addition, I intend to send him away for a good rest, without charge to his annual leave account. He badly needs it, and I know he would like very much to be able to join his wife who has been in Canada all during this crisis period. She is taking care of their daughter and new grandchild, and Jim is anxious to see them both.

cc: Mr. James L. Theodores ✓

BWRohrbacher:cfa



::

Friday, March 6, 1981, 10:00 p.m., Washington

Jim Theodores put down his umpteenth cup of coffee and wondered when the next communication would be received from the operations control room in Rawalpindi, or from the Bank's office in Islamabad. He had just finished talking to Gwynn Davies and told her that there was nothing new to report. It had been a quiet day, which was almost as bad as when a lot would happen. The eeriness of the silence was getting him down, and he wished that he was back in Kabul where he could be in closer touch with the situation. Earlier in the day, he had sent a <sup>circutous</sup> message to a close contact in Kabul, hoping that he could obtain some hard information as to what was occurring on board the plane. However, this initiative drew a blank since his contact was unable to get into the Kabul Airport operations room. The Afghan authorities had also turned down all requests for information other than what they were providing to Pravda and Radio Moscow correspondents.

A secretary walked in flashing a long telex that had just come in from New Delhi.

"Mr. Theodores, I've got something for you here, it seems that Jeff Balkind has been talking on the air. This communication is from New Delhi, not Islamabad."

Theodores read the telex message intently. It started: The following message was received by PIA Karachi from Jeffrey Balkind on board PK326. Quote.... "I Jeffrey Balkind on board PK326 ..."

Theodores nearly did a double-take. He realized from the wording that this could not have been Balkind's own words. He would never had referred willingly to "the illegal regime of General Zia." He read the rest of the message and then called Gwynn Davies. He had better put a positive spin on the message as he thought that some people might be concerned by the contents, and the tone.

"Gwynn, I have news from your husband. It looks like he's been writing long messages again but this time they don't appear to be his words."

*All normal channels of communication were compromised. The code of East German and "communications technicians" assigned in advance to the Afghan. Soviet Police had done their job exceptionally well.*

*It now served as the hub of Soviet military aircraft operations. Only high level Soviet military personnel had access. To make matters worse,*



Theodores started to read Gwynn the message. She listened carefully. When Theodores had gotten to the middle, she interrupted: "Jim, what's that stuff in the message about time bombs. I didn't know that there was dynamite on board. You never told me that."

"Gwynn, I don't think it would've been any easier for you to have ~~known~~ known days ago that there was dynamite on board. You have to understand that we ourselves were not informed about it by the Pakistani government until someone in the local press picked up a reference to dynamite in one of the transcripts of the lead hijacker's Urdu messages. Since the international press had ~~not cottoned onto it yet~~ <sup>yet picked it up,</sup> <sup>let it slide,</sup> I decided to ~~not tell you~~. Please trust me -- there are some things which it doesn't help to know as and when they occur, while there are other things that of course you will be told about immediately. Knowing this, wouldn't have helped at all in this case, especially since there is nothing that you or I -- or anyone else for that matter -- can do about explosives."

Gwynn countered: "I know we are all helpless, but I need to be kept informed. Isn't that what Hopper promised me on the first day?"

→ "~~Okay, I'll let you in on more details as they occur.~~ But remember, dynamite is not lethal until it is rigged up, and there's no indication that the leader of the group is contemplating this drastic action. Usually, if such a step is resorted to, it is at the end of an incident when the terrorists leave the plane. That's what happened in Jordan in 1970 -- three empty planes were blown up on an airfield somewhere. Anyway, the Pakistani government is trying to find out through the Red Cross whether their representative who entered the aircraft in the first few days noticed any containers or bags that could've contained such dynamite sticks. For all we know, it is just be a hoax, which Jeffrey was forced to include in the message. Just because he said "which I have seen" doesn't in fact prove that Jeffrey has seen any dynamite or time bombs as he refers to them. That's the trouble with these incidents -- you don't know what to believe. The SWAT guys will have the real information, one hopes."

"Who are the SWAT guys?" Gwynn asked.

*Ok., Gwynn. Hopper promised to keep you informed about developments that could tilt the odds in Jeff's life either way. That I have done and will continue to do.*



make" a message. So don't be alarmed about his role. I wouldn't read much into it one way or the other. What it does do, however, is give us a reading as to where things stand."

"I guess you're right. I'll come to your office tomorrow to get a copy of the message when I can read it more carefully." Gwynn was about to hang up, when she asked Theodores one last question:

"An especially aggressive news reporter called our house this morning asking for confirmation as to whether my husband was on board the PIA plane, and if so, what's his nationality?" Theodores fumed. <sup>INSERT</sup> ~~"These guys are like pesky flies. Just say 'no comment', and hang up the phone if you wish. I did just that with a British reporter yesterday. The Press can be quite harmful in a sensitive situation like this."~~

Theodores turned his attention to his secretary, Hisako, who was lingering in front of his desk, telex in hand.

"Mr. Theodores, another message has come in from Islamabad. It contains the same radio message of Mr. Balkind, but this time Mr. Siebeck has added a comment that the Foreign Secretary of Pakistan is asking the Bank to formally disassociate itself from Mr. Balkind's message."

"What's eating them, Hisako?"

"They apparently are bothered by Mr. Balkind's reference to the illegal regime of General Zia."

Theodores looked incredulous. "For Chrissake", he said, "it's obvious that Balkind is under duress and they should understand that! If we had to issue any statement, it would only fuel the fires. We just won't do it. I need to brief Mr. Paijmans right away." He dialled Paijmans' home number. It was busy.

As Theodores was about to get up from his chair, Hisako just stood there. It was most uncharacteristic for her to linger, a person who kept conversation to a minimum.

"What's up, Hisako?"



INSERT

" Dammit all, I thought we had things buttoned down pretty tight. I'll have it checked out, Gwynn, and if I find a leak from the Bank side someone will be in hot water up to their eyeballs. We just can't afford any slip ups -- none! Meanwhile, keep your answering machine on round-the-clock at home and let your secretary take all calls at the office. If ~~someone~~ <sup>a reporter</sup> does get through to you on a slip-up, play dumb -- you have no idea what they are talking about -- and hang up quickly. The less said the better.



I'll bring you Bunsei Sato's book tomorrow, Mr. Theodores. Look for it on your desk. It's called "*Hijack -- 144 Lives in the Balance.*"

Theodores thanked her: "That's four less hostages than in the case of PK326. Let's see how things turn out. We don't have a Sato-san, remember."

Hisako bowed, but not as low this day, and certainly not as low as when her Embassy officials would enter the room from time to time. She walked out briskly. Perhaps Theodores, a Westerner in outlook, could never understand what she was saying. Some things were different, and they would always remain different. Just because we work in the same international organization, it does not mean that we see the issues the same way. There is no right, no wrong -- just a different approach.

\* Insert new para. ??

::

The next morning, when Gwynn sat down in Theodores' office, he ~~looked~~ pointed to a page <sup>7</sup> form a telex received from the Government of Pakistan.

"The officials were upset by some of the sentences in Jeffrey's message. Not to worry, we told them ~~that~~ it is obvious that he is under duress. Hell, what do they expect, freedom of speech in a situation like this!"

Gwynn read the message. She was relieved to have this confirmation that I had not been harmed.

Theodores then passed her the news message that had just come in from Agence France Press:

AFP EE09  
AHL W  
Hijack - Bank.

United Nations, New York, March 6 (AFP)

A World Bank official trapped in the Pakistan International Airways (PIA) Boeing hijacked to Kabul on Monday has appealed to U.N. Secretary General Kuri Waldheim to intervene in the drama, a U.N. spokesman said here.



\* new para after line 9

Self.

If you need something light for a brief change of pace, you might consider this.

About five minutes later, Theodore put a draft telex on Hisako's desk with a bright red sticker for high priority handling. She glanced at it quickly and said, "Mr. T., this is not what I meant when I told you about Minister Sato. It won't do to offer your wife, Rose, as a substitute for the hostages." Theodore shot back with an exasperated sigh, "What's with you, Hisako? You know we won't find any honcho volunteers. Ditto for politicians. Alamyir would turn me down flat. When I get the brilliant idea of offering the most important person in my life, you tell me that won't do. How about if we add you for good measure since you raised the idea of substitute hostages in the first place? And before you take off for Kabul, Hisako, how about telling me truthfully if your old boss, Balkind, is really worth this kind of mega swap. Her giggle turned to laughter. Theodore had again used his favorite weapon of humor to ease the <sup>mounting</sup> tension from the long hours and intense pressure of the past four days. He placed a cup of coffee on her desk, smiled and said, "Enjoy."



The spokesman said that the official, identified as Jeffrey Balkind, had been allowed to relay his message via the Kabul Airport control tower.

Mr. Waldheim has asked the Pakistani Government to avoid anything that might put further passengers in danger, but the spokesman gave no details of his message.

One passenger, Tariq Rahim, Second Secretary at the Pakistani Embassy in Teheran and son of a retired army general, was shot earlier today.

The U.N. spokesman said that Mr. Waldheim had received a message from Afghan Foreign Minister Mohammed Dost.

LAS/AFP 061912

*IT SEEMS EVERYONE IS GETTING ON THE BANDWAGON ABOUT*

Theodore smiled and said: "A Pakistani newspaper has even gone so far as to claim that Jeffrey's <sup>MESSAGE TO</sup> ~~had a conversation with~~ Kurt Waldheim <sup>VIA</sup> ~~in~~ the Control Tower. He passed her the Pakistan Business Recorder article that he had only moments before received from Siebeck in Islamabad.

#### APPEAL TO WALDHEIM

##### Appeal to Waldheim

United Nations, March 6: A World Bank official trapped in the Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) Boeing hijacked Kabul on Monday has appealed to U.N. Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim to intervene in the drama, a U.N. spokesman said here.

The spokesman said that the official identified as Jeffrey Balkind, had been allowed to relay his message via the Kabul airport control tower.

The U.N. spokesman said that Waldheim had also received a message from Afghan Foreign Minister Mohammed Dost. -

*JEFF!*

*The deleted lines of text did not seem to square with the "Recorder" news release. I have no problem making public that I also spoke directly to Dost, who I knew well, among others.*

As Gwynn finished reading the article, Theodore told her that ~~to the best of his knowledge, I had never left the plane.~~

*HE WOULD TRY TO FIND OUT IF THE MESSAGE FROM FOREIGN MINISTER DOST TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL DIFFERED IN ANY WAY FROM HIS OWN PHONE CONVERSATION WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER LESS THAN 24 HOURS AGO.*



"The reporter is confusing the word 'via' the Kabul Control Tower with a message that gets sent over the wires of that control tower. I ask you, how can Jeffrey have had a conversation with Kurt Waldheim? Absurd! But it makes good reading in Pakistan."

Gwynn did her best to smile. She knew that Theodores was only trying to cheer her up.

Gwynn rose to go to her office, one floor below his. "Perhaps by tomorrow Jeffrey and all of the others on that plane will be released," she said.

"Insh' Allah" Theodores sighed. He gave Gwynn a much-needed hug.

Theodores sat back in his chair. He felt so weary, partly because he had stayed up all night reading about the JAL hijackings. Hisako hadn't told him that one of the interesting aspects in the second JAL hijacking was that the PFLP hijacker spoke better English than the principal government negotiator, Defense Minister of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Sheikh Muhammad ibn Rashid Al-Maktoum. The hijacker had attended the University of Cairo; the Sheikh, son of the UAE Prime Minister, had no college education. So the hijacker was extremely polite in all his radio transmissions to the Minister, in deference to his position. From what Theodores was able to ascertain, the lead hijacker of the PIA plane had also been reasonably polite up to this point. Not that politeness in itself was important, other than to indicate the state of the hijacker's mood -- and his mental balance. But would it stay that way on board PK326?



he knew of the Bhutto family, he realized that they were deeply grieved by what had happened to their father -- anyone would be. But hijacking an aircraft -- that was another matter entirely. He became more worried. This does not look like an amateurish operation, he thought.

The T.V. announcer flipped to a funeral scene in Peshawar -- it was the body of Tariq Rahim being brought back for burial. A special PIA plane had been dispatched to Kabul in the morning to pick up the body and return immediately. The same plane carried the Pakistani negotiating team who had tried to gain access to a direct radio communication with the hijackers but the Afghan authorities had not allowed them to enter the Control Tower. The complicity of the Afghan authorities did not surprise Siebeck at all. Jim Theodores had briefed him plenty about the mystifying things that went on in Kabul. Siebeck was pleased that his duty station was Islamabad -- at least the authorities were level-headed and played fair. They were also frank.

Siebeck called the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and complimented the officials on the tough language used in the official statement that had been released to the media.

::

**Sunday, March 8, 1981, 12:00 p.m., Mclean, Virginia**

Jim Theodores walked across the front hallway of his house to check his phone messages: nothing there. Friday had been a key turning point in the crisis with the killing of Tariq Rahim. It was as though the telex machine was in constant motion; now it was downtime -- the weekend. Washington was quiet and Rawalpindi was even quieter, except for those who were manning the operations control room in the makeshift crisis center. Being nearly noon on Sunday, Jim Theodores had just returned from attending morning services at the nearby Greek Orthodox Church, where he had prayed that the slaying of Tariq Rahim would be the only one to occur on board the PIA plane. But he could not be sure of this and that scared him.



January 5, 1981. He has publicly claimed that Murtaza Bhutto is the Secretary General of his terrorist group. All this has been duly recorded. It has also been confirmed that the leader of the hijackers had a meeting at the Kabul airport immediately after the arrival of the hijacked plane with Murtaza Bhutto.

The Government of Pakistan has made it clear to the Kabul authorities that it holds them responsible for the safety and release of the persons on board the aircraft and for the aircraft itself.

The Kabul authorities have regrettably shown no inclination to discharge this responsibility. Indeed, there is ample evidence that they have colluded with the hijackers. They are pressing the Government of Pakistan constantly to surrender to the black-mail of the hijackers. This open encouragement of an international crime is unprecedented.

Under the circumstances, the Pakistan Government holds the Kabul authorities wholly responsible for the developments so far, including the death of Mr. Tariq Rahim a Pakistan Government official, and demands that they fulfill their elementary international responsibilities for the protection of the persons abroad the aircraft both Pakistanis and nationals of the other countries. It also appeals to all states and organizations which are opposed to terrorism to exert utmost pressure in Kabul to secure the release of the passengers, crew and aircraft.

The Government of Pakistan's offer to send a rescue mission to Kabul was conveyed two days ago to the Kabul authorities. There has been no response from them, nor have they taken any steps themselves, even though they have free access to the aircraft and have been providing full news media facilities for publicity and propaganda to the hijackers.

The Pakistan Government is approaching the UN and the International Red Cross for assistance.

END QUOTE

Wolfgang Siebeck, who had just tuned into the eight o'clock evening news, heard the new allegations. He was shocked. The part about Murtaza Bhutto came as a complete surprise. From what



Theodores had not received any communication from the World Bank office in Islamabad for nearly twenty-four hours <sup>(\* INSERT PAR 12) (WERE)</sup> and he feared that the negotiations between the Pakistan Government and the hijackers were becoming bogged down. <sup>HOPELESSLY</sup> Were the hijackers getting the upper hand, now that they had killed a prominent Pakistani diplomat? Or had the Pakistan Government's resolve become so hardened by this turn of events that what little chance may have previously existed for arriving at a compromise solution had effectively been shattered?

*EE-145-7 suggested in para*

~~Theodores knew little about the origins of the hijackers other than what he had read in the Press reports, as well as in the telexes that had streamed into his office during the second day of the hijacking. He did not know, for example, whether Alamgir (or Sallamullah Khan Tippu as the foreign Press liked to refer to him, or in the New York Times' formal tone: "Mr. Khan Tippu") was operating alone or was he in cahoots with a larger group that was lying in wait in Kabul. If so, did such a group plan to link-up with the three hijackers (as the Ammal Group did with the TWA hijackers in Beirut in June 1985)? When would the hidden card be revealed?~~

*NAHADDIN GUERRILLA OPERATIONS,*

During the last few months of 1980, as Jim Theodores was preparing to close the Bank's office in Afghanistan and vacate his Kabul home, he had been exposed to enough loose talk at dinner parties about suspected spies and alleged drug smugglers to fill the manual of any would-be spook. Stories abounded about particular lucrative routes for the drug trade (through the Khyber Pass, processing in Peshawar and sea shipments from Karachi to Europe) and gun-running (the flow of merchandise would run in the opposite direction from the illicit dealers in the United States and Europe to the gun importers in Pakistan for eventual shipment to the Mujahaddin guerrillas). Theodores would also pick-up comments regarding progress on the Afghanistan warfront. These were the topics that were washed down with the help of whiskey <sup>VODKA</sup> and gin at the Kabul cocktail-dinner circuit in those days. ↗

There was ample evidence that the first year of the Soviet Union's incursion into Afghanistan had not gone well for the Soviet forces. While the futility of the war had not yet become clear, initial signs were

pointing to a long siege by the occupying troops. Jim Theodores was well aware of this in what turned out

*For Theodores, one of the very few non-Eastern bloc foreigners with regular access to high level counterparts in government even during these violent times, diplomatic functions meant long hours of hard work. Everyone seemed to be searching for special pieces of information that fit into a larger puzzle. It also meant lots of plain vodka with a twist because Theodores only went through the motions of drinking when he worked.*



P 145

L 2

\*  
INSERT  
FOR  
LINE 2

----- The curtain of silence extended even to his network of personal contacts. Thoughts of the much-feared and much-hated Murphy's Law flared in Theodore's mind. He muttered to himself, "not now dammit, not now."

P 145

L 7

Insert  
this  
new para.

Theodore's usually calm demeanor was on trigger edge. He desperately needed hard information about the hijackers and was quickly running out of time. His most reliable contacts were coming up dry; their best leads ended up at stone walls and in blind alleys. He needed to know about the origins of the hijackers, their size and patterns of operations. Most of all, Theodore wanted to know whether Alamgir (or Mr. Khan Tippu as the New York Times called him) was a loose cannon with a personal agenda or whether he was leading the hit squad operations of a larger group lying in wait in Kabul. Theodore did not even want to think about the worse case scenario in which Alamgir might be an off-the-wall type from the extreme political fringe who was prepared to die for a cause and take all the hostages with him. It was a blood-chilling thought but Theodore had seen enough violence in that part of the world to know anything was possible.



*Insert P146 L1 attachment*

to be his last year in Kabul. [He was not as interested in news on political developments as he was in economic news. But these days there was not much of the latter news, while there was plenty of the former. War and intrigue dominated the airwaves and Jim had become used to it, as had most of the embassy personnel around town.]

As he stood in the portico of his Virginia home, Jim imagined how the Pakistani airplane standoff was being played out around the Kabul dinner circuit at this very moment -- Sunday night in Kabul. It was not much of a circuit these days, but more like dismal get-togethers that were played out at various diplomatic residences. The Soviet Union had brought with it a heavy atmosphere, made no lighter by the crates of vodka that could be found at the East European embassies. Sunday night was a popular time for arranging such diplomatic get-togethers, and as the World Bank's Resident Representative, Theodores had to attend more than his fair share of such functions.

Yet the Afghanistan war had made Kabul the center of things in some ways -- at least as a source of conflict between the two superpowers. The United States was beginning to funnel support to the Mujahaddin guerrillas, and the first signs that the tide was beginning to turn against the Soviet Union were becoming evident. The diplomatic cocktail-dinner circuit, for purposes of Pakistan-Afghan matters, stretched from Washington, to New York, London, Paris, Geneva, Cairo, Kabul, Islamabad, and New Delhi (where there was always great interest in what may be transpiring across the border). And so the representatives from these cities were the ones most sought out at the various cocktail parties. They were meant to be the knowledgeable persons, the ones who had a secret window to all of the confidential telex traffic.

Jim felt particularly frustrated this Sunday morning. He knew that if he were in Kabul now, he would be on the spot, perhaps not quite inside the Control Tower at Kabul Airport, but close enough to feel that he was doing something useful, something immediate to where the drama was being played out. He didn't like being in Washington, as he felt so inconsequential, some ten thousand miles away.

*and face to face*  
 He always preferred dealing personally with various officials and diplomats, many of whom he knew well -- no misunderstandings, no put-offs. He was confident they would have provided whatever hard information that might be available at that time.



146 --- to be us last year in Kabul. News about economic development was scant and suspect.

increasing numbers of afghans were leaving their homes, fields and work to fight the Soviet backed puppet regime. <sup>Reports of</sup> guerrilla warfare, sabotage, political assassinations and intrigue dominated every day life, especially the airwaves. Jim, along with the rapidly shrinking core of "essential" diplomatic personnel, quickly adjusted lifestyles and schedules to get on with their work as in an environment simmering with violence.

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Through the motions of drinking when he worked



~~His only~~ lifeline was the telex machine; he wanted to hear the clicking of the typewriter's keys, to see the carriage, as it jumped back and forth bringing life to the letters sprayed across the page. So he jumped into his car and drove to the office, just to see if the telex machine would be working, or be silent. X

As Theodores crossed Chain Bridge and cruised down the empty Canal Road, he recalled one of the most infamous of hijackings. It consisted not of one hijacking, or two, but five inter-related ones. First, on Sunday, September 6, 1970 there was a multiple hijacking: on the same day a half-dozen members of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) commandeered four planes: a TWA Boeing 707 while enroute between Frankfurt and New York; an EL AL Boeing 707 hijacked while enroute between New York and Tel Aviv, and which had stopped in Amsterdam; a Swissair DC-8 hijacked while enroute between Zurich and New York; and a PAN AM Boeing 747 hijacked from Amsterdam to Cairo. The last plane, a new jumbo jet, was blown up on the Cairo airfield barely eight minutes after passengers were told to evacuate the aircraft. Then two days later, on September 8, 1970, a BOAC plane enroute between London-Bahrain-Bombay was hijacked as a bargaining tool to secure the release of Leila Khaled, the Palestinian leader of the El Al hijacking two days earlier, who was captured and was being detained at Ealing Police Station outside London (the pilot of the El Al plane had to make an emergency landing at London Heathrow Airport after Khaled's colleague, Patrick Arguello, a Nicaraguan, was shot and killed by the Israeli guards who were travelling 'incognito' aboard the El Al plane). Several days later, the other two planes involved in the multiple hijacking -- the TWA and Swissair one -- were blown up at Dawson's Airfield in Amman, Jordan.

Theodores recalled the stark photographic images of the planes burning on the airfields, juxtaposed side-by-side with photographs of Leila Khaled, the highly attractive and well-educated Palestinian woman (the living version of John Le Carre's *Little Drummer Girl*, crafted some years later). The BOAC hijacking was in direct response to the capture of Leila Khaled and the killing of Patrick Arguello and the lives of the hostages aboard the BOAC plane were exchanged for Britain's release of Khaled, who some twenty-four years later -- in 1994 -- would still be an official working in the Middle East).



-- AND PUZZLING --

Theodores stopped to ask himself what was so interesting about the multiple incident -- and then it all clicked for him. The two Palestinians who had hijacked the PAN AM plane from Amsterdam did so only because they didn't make it onto the El Al plane to join Khaled and Arguello from the outset. The original plan called for four hijackers on the El Al plane, not two, and for no Boeing 747 to be hijacked on that day. The two who missed the El Al flight (the plane was oversold) were not trained on Boeing 747s and that flustered them; yet they made it to Cairo, and flew the PAN AM 747 themselves for part of the way. Arguello was not so lucky on the EL AL 707; he didn't count on air marshals being on board, a practice that is a matter of course for El Al now.

Theodores wondered whether there were any such marshals on board the PIA plane. And if so, why hadn't he been informed about this in all of the cable traffic that had passed between Washington and Islamabad and between Washington and New York? Also, if two hijackers had proven to be too few to take over the EL AL plane, were three sufficient for the PIA plane? Did that give Alamgir and his accomplices enough firepower, especially if there were no armed marshals aboard the PIA plane, as he suspected was the case? Theodores grappled with these questions as he swung his car down Pennsylvania Avenue towards Eighteenth Street.

He was barely concentrating on the road ahead of him, which luckily for him was empty on this Sunday (the cherry blossom parade was still several weeks away). How vivid these images of hijacked planes were for Theodores, after all of these years. Eleven years that had seen the heyday of hijackings, with the Entebbe hijacking of 1976 when the Israelis launched their daring elite commando raid being the incident he remembered best. ~~And all he had done was to read press accounts of incidents like Entebbe, Dawson's Field, Cairo, Amsterdam, Rome, etc.~~ <sup>(directly) the fate of those aboard PK 326,</sup> Now that he was involved in monitoring ~~an actual situation, he realized how~~ <sup>(hijackings were no longer)</sup> ~~chilling the incidents really were.~~ This was not the stuff of abstract names -- people who were strangers, airports that were remote or unvisited, and aircraft with which he was unfamiliar. No, it was Kabul, his temporary home for five years; it was a Boeing 720B, the type of aircraft that he had travelled on many times;

*He never ceased to marvel at the Israelis' daring and split-second precision. During his many visits to Uganda, Theodores always managed to visit Entebbe to honor those who pulled off that incredible rescue operation. But Entebbe, Dawson's Field, Cairo, Amsterdam, Rome and others were now history, each with a legacy of lessons to be learned.*



and it was PIA, an airline that he knew nearly as well as he knew ARIANA for he had passed through Pakistan many times. He almost felt as if he were inside that green and white PIA plane, and he shuddered.

More importantly, the hostage whom Theodores was charged to monitor was no longer a stranger to him. He was a Bank person, a member of his corporate family, and the spouse of someone he had grown to like immensely. Images of Leila Khaled were quickly replaced by images of Gwynn Davies, as he guided his car through the entrance of the Bank garage. It would soon be time to call Gwynn again.

Theodores had long been interested in espionage stories and incidents of terrorism. Yet, he was constantly amazed at how short was the world's memory. Entebbe, Fiumicino Airport in Rome, Athens airport, Lod airport in Tel Aviv -- these were some of the infamous settings for hijackings and airport terminal shootouts that had occurred in the past. But how many people remember those incidents, he wondered? And now Kabul! Romantic-sounding Kabul -- how ironic. Would it take this new incident -- the hijack of PK326 -  
- to bring such incidents back to the world's attention again?

Theodores pulled his car into the empty garage at the World Bank and hurried upstairs. <sup>The duty</sup> [A] ~~officer gave Jim a brief update, signed the log and headed home. Jim was once again of the staff who had helped him during the week were now at home and he was~~ alone in the Bank's crisis center, his make-shift office, Jim stared hard at the silent telex machine as though sheer will alone could make it operate. The machine was quite different from a typewriter. It had an obstinate personality: it would only sputter into action when someone else was transmitting a message. ["Start, my little friend." Then he got angrier: "move you lousy machine." He was frustrated, and kicked the telex stand.] Suddenly, the carriage burst into action. The obstinate machine was becoming the bearer of tidings. Good or bad tidings, he could not yet know. Click, click, click... Jim looked at the top of the page. The words: "Page 1 of 4, Kabul ... Tariq Rahim has been killed ...the Kabul authorities ..." flashed by. But the machine's carriage was moving so fast that he couldn't read the message easily, so he curbed his impatience and waited until the four-page telex was completely received. Meanwhile, he walked to the phone and called Martijn Paijmans.

"Martijn, it looks like something important is coming in from Islamabad. I'll call you in a few minutes once I've read the contents."

"O.K. you have rested long enough. Now start spewing out some good news or I will turn you into a goddamn pile of junk." As it to get his message across, he gave the telex stand a sharp kick.



*Shit! Unbelievable! That's all we needed to screw things up even more -- having Murtaza Bhutto involved -- and fanning the embers of political firestorms. So much for his privileged upbringing and Oxford schooling. What's next? 150*

The telex machine stopped clicking and Theodores pulled out the three-foot long sheet out from the back of the machine, and gave the carriage a little pat. "Thanks, my friend, let's hope that you are my friend today." He sat down and started reading. Halfway through the telex he let out a loud shout to the empty room.

"Good, god, it's Murtaza Bhutto who appears to be the person behind this hijacking. I would never have believed it, not with his upbringing, Oxford University and all that...."

Theodores called Paijmans: "Martijn, the Government is alleging that the person behind the hijacking is Ali Bhutto's son, Murtaza Bhutto. The Government has apparently confirmed that Murtaza Bhutto came to the back of the plane and met with the hijackers. Furthermore, the Government charges that Murtaza Bhutto is Secretary-General of the Al-Zulfikar Organization, which in their view is a terrorist organization. As head of the AZO, Bhutto is being pinned with masterminding or being responsible for several incidents, including the bombing of Karachi stadium in February during a visit by the Pope."

Paijmans agreed with Theodores that the situation had become alarming, especially with this allegation about Murtaza Bhutto and the BBC report that the Pakistan Government had rounded up hundreds of Pakistan Peoples Party supporters, including Begum Nusrat Bhutto and Benazir Bhutto. Paijmans asked where the Bhutto women were being detained.

"In Karachi, I believe, as they were at their house in Clifton at the time," Theodores replied.

Paijmans asked to be kept posted all day if need be and hung up. Theodores became even more downcast. He realized that if Alamgir was listening to these broadcasts on board the aircraft -- as he claimed to be doing -- then nobody could predict how he might react to this new piece of adverse news. The arrest of the Bhutto supporters had to be interpreted as adverse from Alamgir's perspective, or that of the alleged head of his organization -- Murtaza Bhutto.

Jim called Gwynn to check up on how she was faring. He made no mention of the allegation concerning Murtaza Bhutto. There is no need to worry her anymore than is necessary, he thought.

"What's up Gwynn? What are you doing?"



"Not much of anything. I've just returned from attending Quaker Meeting. The Indonesians have left town and I'm finishing up some loose ends. I try not to think about the Rahim killing, but it's hopeless. Even the evening news on National Public Radio carried an item on that slaying. I can't get away from constant reminders. Maybe I should just shut off all contacts except for calls from you Jim."

"Not a bad idea.... try it until at least tomorrow, when a new week starts."

"A new week!" Gwynn exclaimed ... "We are starting to talk in weeks, not days. This whole thing is unbelievable, Jim. It still feels so unreal -- like an enduring, bad nightmare."

Jim Theodores ran his fingers through his shiny, gray hair. He looked in the mirror and was stunned to see how much he had grayed in just the last week. He vowed to bill me for that shock of new gray hair, should he be so lucky as to get a chance to send me a bill. A pinch-full of luck and a dose of good planning - the two ingredients to cook this Afghanistan stew, he mused.

On balance, Jim felt hopeful, and as was his usual demeanor, humorous, though this was not exactly the situation to indulge in light-hearted banter. He would have to engage in that with himself for now and save the humorous telexes, for which he was legend, to sometime later. Insh' Allah, he thought.

*The relief duty officer came in and asked if there were any special instructions, there were none.*  
 Jim put his papers into his briefcase and departed the building. The bicyclists were now clogging the bike path along the canal, adjacent to the Potomac River; casual strollers stepped out of the cyclists' way as they whooshed by. He had been told that I liked to ride my bicycle along the Potomac Canal on Sunday mornings.

*"If we keep our fingers crossed and get a good run of luck, maybe Jeff can get back to the bike path soon," he thought.*

By this time it was night aboard the PIA plane. Jim wondered what it must be like to sit in a dark, cold plane for a week, deprived of one's normal routine. Would it be the claustrophobia that would get to one, finally driving the person crazy, or would it be the tension of the standoff? Jim could only wonder ...



moment, considering what Nadir had said about the possibility of a bomb being placed under the aircraft's wings. I tried to shut out from my mind the frightening images of a plane crashing and concentrate on what might happen next, once we got to wherever we were headed.

The mountains receded in the distance; the aircraft banked to the right. This indicated we were headed over Iran. Moments later, I saw a speck of light flash by on the left. All of a sudden, the lights on our wing flashed on and off twice, and the speck of light went away, I later found out that these were Iranian F-4 Phantom jets that had come to check out who we were. Once the their pilots saw the green and white tail of PIA's logo, they moved off.

We flew for several hours. Nadir had told me that with the extra-full load of fuel that we had taken on board, and with a lighter passenger load than we had when we took off from Karachi, and assuming a speed of the usual 650 miles per hour, we might be able to make it through to Europe. I prayed that our destination be Athens, Rome or Frankfurt, because in any one of these airports, under Western control, our chances of survival would increase. I smiled inside at the prospect (or illusion) of being able to fly to Western soil.

::

Sunday afternoon, March 8, Washington, 2:00 p.m.

Jim Theodores mistakenly thought that he would be able to get a brief rest that afternoon. It was not long since he had returned <sup>(from his office,)</sup> to his home after spending another fruitless morning at the office waiting ~~many implications and complications arising out of Martega Bhutto's alleged~~ for word out of Kabul. The telex machine had been quiet, and the phone even quieter. ~~tie-in to the hijacking.~~

It had been only three minutes earlier that Theodores had sunk into his lounge sofa and drifted off to sleep when his phone rang. It was the <sup>relief duty officer</sup> supervisor at the Bank's cable office on the line. *Jim, sorry to bother you so soon but this one can't wait. It's a hot*  
 "Come quick, Mr. Theodores. We've received a telex from U.N. New York. The PIA plane has wire from UN headquarters that has triggered all our top-priority indicators. The PIA plane has left Kabul. They have also tagged on a telex from UNDP Kabul. Neither mentions the planes destination. "Hang tight. I'll be there in a few minutes. Don't pass this on to anyone until I get there and make a couple of calls."



left Kabul. There is ~~an attached telex from U.N. Kabul. They don't mention the plane's destination.~~"

His head still full with the government's startling allegation that Murtaza Bhutto was the mastermind behind this incident, Theodores rose quickly, slipped on his coat, grabbed his ever-present small note-book and went on his way for his second trip that day into downtown Washington. He felt odd -- PK326 was on the move and he didn't even know where it was headed. His pulse quickened, as he raced his car through Canal Roads' speed zone. As he entered his office, the phone was ringing. It was Sjoed Boorsma, head of the U. N.'s Emergency Coordination Unit on the line (the PIA incident was not the only one of concern that day; some U.N. relief workers had run into some trouble at the refugee camps in the NWFP; local tribes were arguing and the workers were caught in the middle).

Boorsma, in his usual style of carefully measured words said:

"We've just had word that the PIA plane departed Afghanistan at 10:00 p.m. Kabul time."

*"Do you have any feedback at all, Sjoerd, as to where it might be headed?"*  
~~"Where's it going? We've got to know where that plane is going."~~

"We don't know, I'm afraid. Perhaps by the morning we will get more information, possibly

from Bonev. Our people here think that the plane is headed for Beirut or Cairo."

*(He wasn't about to wait some 12 to 18 hours for any)*

*Theodores thanked Boorsma for the information and called his counterpart at the U.S. State Department. The U.S. Government could be relied on to provide more detailed information drawing on time to call some of his heaviest hitters. He glanced at what looked like its sophisticated intelligence system. gibberish in his small notebook and dialled.*

~~"Al, PK326 is on the move. Can you guys lend a hand and track the plane's movements. We don't know where it is headed."~~  
*a familiar voice answered, "O.C.T. Emergency Operations Center." He had reached the U.S. State Department's Office for*

~~"We can do better than that. The guys at the Pentagon have had a satellite reading on the plane for nearly an hour now. Apparently, the aircraft is heading at this moment towards North Africa -- Libya, is the guess. I'll let you know if things change. We have three U. S. citizens still on board."~~  
*Combating Terrorism. INSERT ATTACHMENT.*

Theodores hit a new low. How was he going to tell Gwynn it might be Libya?

He called Gwynn's house; the line was busy. Before he had a chance to dial again, another call



ATTACHMENT FOR INSERT BOTTOM PART P. 163

"Sadie? I can't believe my luck. Salaam, dear heart, Salaam Alikum. I thought it would take hours to find you. Look, I need lots of help fast."

"So what else is new, Jim? Whenever you go native on me with the Salaam Alikum stuff, I know the distress flag is flying. If it makes you feel better, I have been keeping close tabs on the hijacking and was curious as to when you might give a call. In fact, I just tried to reach you at home and was told you were heading for the office. What do you need to know first?"

Jim smiled. He and the soft spoken lady on the line went back a long way. She was one of a kind; a charter member of a small group known as the old Afghan hands.

Beneath her elegant appearance and quiet demeanor were nerves of steel that were honed in countless close calls in all corners of the globe.

"Sadie, PK 326 is on the move. I need to know where it is headed. Can you arrange to track its movements?"

"Jim, for you anything is possible. For today only I'm offering you a 2 for 1 special. We have just finished working out weights, speeds, winds and mileage ranges to determine most likely destinations. Best of all, your old friend from DIA called moments ago to report they have had a satellite reading on the plane for about an hour. In fact, PK 326 might even have visitors at closer range. At this moment, the aircraft is headed towards North Africa -- probably Libya. I'll let you know if things change. We still have three U.S. Citizens on board."



## IT WAS SADIE

came in ~~from the State Department~~ informing Theodores that the plane had changed direction and was now headed north, up the Bahrain Straits. This was better news for him to convey.

"Gwynn, Jeff's plane took off an hour ago from Kabul, that is ten p.m. their time."

"What's the destination?" Gwynn's voice was full of trepidation.

"Damascus, Beirut, or Cairo, is the thinking -- any one of these three. Some said Jeddah or Dubai. I would rule these last two out as they both take a tough line on terrorism. Unless the plane is low on fuel, the hijackers will not want to touch down at those airports. My guess is that it will be Nicosia or Damascus. The plane took on a full load of fuel at Kabul, so it could even get to Athens or Rome, but these are unlikely. You can rule out any Western airports. Teheran is also out as the government refused a request for asylum, which was apparently radioed directly from the plane last night.

Also, Jeddah is unlikely as President Zia-ul-Haq was in Saudi Arabia last week; the collaboration between the Pakistanis and the Saudis has always been close. *Gwynn, stay near the phone, I'll call back in a minute.*"

~~The State Department contact called back. "Our radio monitoring has picked up Alamgir's voice requesting permission to land in Damascus."~~

Theodores was relieved that the plane's destination was not Benghazi after all; dealing with the Libyans would have been a nightmare. Beirut would not have been any better as it lacked a government to speak of. He called Gwynn Davies.

"It's Damascus. The plane is over the Bahrain Straits right now."

Gwynn thanked Theodores and hung up. She felt more hopeful, knowing that the plane had left Kabul. The calmness at Quaker Meeting in the morning had given her a renewed sense of optimism that the crisis would soon come to an end.

## INSERT ATTACHMENT

~~Theodores lay down on the couch in his office and shut out the scenes around him. He desperately needed the sleep because he knew that once the plane landed in Damascus, a whole new chapter in the ordeal would unfold.~~

*Sadie was on the line again. "Jim, this is your lucky day. Our monitors have picked up Alamgir's voice requesting permission to land in Damascus. If nothing else, we should be able to get a better fix on what is going on. I'll keep in close touch."*



ATTACHMENT FOR INSERT BOTTOM P. 164

As soon as Theodore put down the phone, he went out to speak with Hisako who had arrived only moments earlier and was busy updating the logbook. "Hisako, I'll probably be busy for awhile with some follow-up work, especially briefing and conferring with Pajmans. Meanwhile, get me a list of the two or three most senior level staff who are in Damascus, Beirut, Cairo, Nicosia and Tripoli. . . If the destination of PK 326 is switched unexpectedly, I want to be sure we have someone on the spot to meet Jeff on release or to intercede at high levels of government if need be. Theodore was covering all bases and leaving nothing to chance. He desperately wanted to sleep for an hour because once the plane landed, in Damascus or elsewhere, he knew a whole new chapter in the ordeal would unfold. But first things first -- he picked up the phone and pressed the button for Pajmans home number.



::

In Islamabad, Wolfgang Siebeck was greatly relieved that the PIA plane had departed South Asia. At last he had an opportunity to sort the backlog of mail that cluttered his desk. He came to a scruffy envelope on which his name was scribbled. He ripped open the envelope and pulled out what appeared to be a paper napkin from inside it. He recognized my handwriting which ran across the white flimsy page. My script was quite discernible, which he read quickly. He felt a strange quiver; what if something similar happened to him one day? Would he also have to write his final instructions in this way? Not likely, as his Teutonic upbringing had resulted in a methodical approach to matters, including the question of one's last will.

Siebeck rose from his chair and walked to his safe. He put the napkin-will on the top shelf and locked the door. My secret was secure with him for now. He swore that until I had later proven to him that I had drafted a proper will, he would keep that napkin in his safe.

Siebeck was perplexed as to how the envelope had come to his house, since it contained no postmark. He asked the driver if anyone had come to the front gate recently. Yes, there had been a man at the gate, accompanied by a woman. The guard had not asked who they were, but had accepted the envelope from them, which he held to the light to see that there was nothing in it other than paper. Mail bombs were known to exist in Pakistan at the time. After finding the envelope to be clean, the guard passed it onto his employer, Siebeck.



In Washington, Theodore calls Martijn Pajmans on the phone.

"I think we need to set in motion Plan B. We have waited long enough. Can you get Mr. McNamara to call President Zia-ul-Haq?"

Pajmans tells Theodore that although McNamara knew President Zia-ul-Haq well enough to call him, he thought that it would be better if McNamara called Waldheim and asked him to call Zia. As the president of the World Bank, it was appropriate for McNamara to call Zia, but it was equally appropriate to have Kurt Waldheim, in his capacity as Secretary-General of the U.N., do it instead.

After all, it was Waldheim who had already made several appeals regarding this crisis and therefore a *Theodore readily agreed. In a worse case scenario, they could still call on McNamara. Meanwhile* call from him would not seem out of place. The Bank's approach was not to intervene in a crisis like

this; it was for the governments to handle it directly. All the Bank could do was what it already was doing -- monitoring the situation in the closest way possible and keeping an institutional clear head.

Jim Theodore, amongst others, was providing that head and there was no need to change course at this time.

At 8:00 a.m. (New York time) on this morning, May 12 (4:00 p.m. Damascus time or in the *Plan B was activated. It was down to the wire--showdown time. Tension escalating sharply* midst of the final five hour countdown), Kurt Waldheim cables General Zia-ul-Haq, urging restraint

and the fullest possible effort to resolve the impasse. Waldheim offers to take any steps that Zia might think would help. Zia listens and says he will revert back to Waldheim, but first he needs to call President Hafez Assad in Damsacus. The two leaders agree on a common strategy, which cannot be divulged at this point, they say. Later that morning, Zia calls Waldheim back and assures him that everything possible is being done to protect the hostages. Towards the end of the morning Assad calls Waldheim and expresses the hope that positive steps will emerge during the course of the day. The loop is complete.



extra adrenalin, which kept me going. But there were limits, and my mind and body had just about reached them. So the brief rest was a welcome respite from the living nightmare, which as it turned out was far from over.

::

In Washington, Gwynn was busy packing her clothes -- and some of mine -- for a flight to London. In addition to the regular clothes, she packed for for me a new toothbrush, two razors (a scalpel kind, suitable for long bearded growth, and one for a regular shave) and, most importantly, two light-hearted books. I did not know at the time that Martijn Paijmans and Jim Theodores had decided that Gwynn should be at the airport, wherever it may be, since the details of where we were to be released had not yet been worked out. Gwynn had been told that she could take me on a few weeks holiday anywhere, within reason. Never had institutional red tape been cut so fast. yet The only snag was that Paijmans and Jim Theodores did not know to where Gwynn should fly --Damascus, Tripoli, Beirut, or (more hopefully) Rome, Athens or Nicosia, as some people had speculated might be the final destination of our plane. The Mediterranean airports were long shots, Theodores pointed out, as the exchange would likely take place at an airport in the Middle East,

where the hijackers could hope to gain political asylum. But exactly where? *In any event, a senior level staff member was on standby at each possible destination waiting for final instructions from Theodores of PK 3216 put down at their location.*

Gwynn had been informed that President Zia-ul-Haq had yielded at the last moment -- a scant twenty minutes before the final deadline. Those last hours were the worst she had ever spent in her life; yes, she had experienced death in her family before. But in each case, she had been able to prepare herself for it, not that she ever could fully accept such bereavements. Peaceful death had an abstract quality to it; violent death came unexpectedly and it had no abstract feeling to it. Gwynn shuddered to think that her husband had come within twenty minutes of that horror. She felt as if she had aged by a year or two at least -- all in the space of a few hours -- hours whose passage of time she was unable to



Gwynn supported the view that if one gives in to terrorism once, it could encourage similar acts. However, this was all fine in the world of the abstract, but when the life of one's family member was at stake, these high-minded propositions tended to crumble.

Gwynn wondered what had caused Zia to finally yield to the hijackers conditions in the end. From what she was able to piece together, based on Theodores' information and press accounts, it could have been any one of a combination of factors: the ordeal had already lasted eleven days, far longer than any other hijacking at that point; Zia was losing face the longer it lasted and would lose more support if additional deaths were to occur. The fallout from Tariq Rahim's death had been enormous in Pakistani public opinion. There was widespread clamoring for Zia to do something.

Yet, Zia was in a tight spot. The leaders of both Syria and Libya (Hafez al-Assad and Muhammad al-Khaddhafi) had been closely aligned with Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and were outraged when Zia went ahead with the hanging. Khaddhafi and Ali Bhutto shared the dream of a Pan-Islamic movement to unite Muslim countries. Zia, on the other hand, talked about a Pan-Islamic movement, but so courted the West for arms and ammunition to help arm the Mujahaddin guerillas in Afghanistan and restock his army divisions that were stationed along the border with India's Jammu and Kashmir state, that the chance of forging a Pan-Islamic alliance with Pakistan at the epicenter was in effect lost.

Gwynn had a nagging worry that something unexpected, such as a botched SWAT operation with possible loss of life, could still occur aboard the PIA plane. Theodores had informed her that the Syrians had refused the Government of Pakistan's request to allow a Pakistani tactical unit into the country to carry out an operation to storm the plane by surprise. [The Syrians had refused a request from the Government of Pakistan to mount a SWAT operation.] Yet even at this late stage, the Pakistani government was considering how it might wrest control of the PIA plane away from the hijackers. This would require collaboration and logistical support from the Syrians. To date, there had been no evidence to indicate that the Syrians were willing to consider any such venture. In fact, the Syrian negotiators had

X  
P



vent to her deepest emotions, but she knew that these things could never be fully predicted.

At first, the British Airways woman looked shocked, then turned around and threw her arms around Gwynn. Gwynn did the same, and two strangers hugged each other in comfort. Two strangers who shared a secret; and until a moment ago, two strangers to each other, who now embraced like best friends, coming to grips with what it meant to be trapped inside a plane for twelve days.

Gwynn went straight to her hotel in Knightsbridge; she was desperate for an update of developments aboard PK326, but she also dreaded the prospect of hearing them. She knew that at this critical stage, anything was still possible. She called the World Bank's London office -- no new telexes or messages had arrived. Next, she called Washington -- no word there either. She turned on the T.V. for the late afternoon ITV news. The broadcast mentioned that a second PIA plane thought to be carrying 54 persons who were to be swapped for the PK326 hostages, was on its way to Libya. Libya! Disturbed at this news, she called Theodores, who confirmed that the prisoner plane was indeed on its way to Tripoli. Would PK326 follow suit? The prospect alarmed both of them. They agreed to stay in close contact by telephone.

INSERT ATTACHMENT.: HERE

On board we could only sit and wait ... and wait! A few hours went by. At noon, the Nigerian mullah conducted Friday's prayer session. He looked more at ease this time compared to the previous day's last prayers. I could now listen to his chanting with some pleasure. He laid out the same rug at his feet, a Bokhara design with the geometrically arrayed camel's foot. On this day, the rug symbolized life for me yesterday it was a red and black shadow of death.

Engineer Nadir was sitting on my right in the front row next to Captain Saeed Khan. Khan was sobbing. He told Nadir that Copilot Jounus should fly the plane if we were going to be on the move gain -



ATTACHMENT FOR INSERT LOWER SECTION P197

When Theodore put down the phone, two names flashed in his mind. One was Yogi Berra as in "it aint over till its' over". The other name was Murphy, as in Murphy's law. An odd couple befitting the moment. This was the Middle East. Things could turn on a dime and often did. Theodore had reason to keep worrying. He glanced at the wall where he had posted his collection of humorous expressions in Latin to fit all occasions. As his gaze fixed he muttered "Obesane cantabit? obesane cantabit? Will the fat lady sing?" That broke the ice. If anyone had an informed guess as to the likely answer, it would be his friend Sadie. He picked up the phone, it was time to get back to work.



At home, Gwynn and I saw a picture on T.V. of the PK326 hostages coming down the staircase in front of the plane. I saw myself coming down the staircase in a "Live shot". The rest of the details -- yellow balloons and my welcome home party -- was to become a regular feature of hostage-return scenes that were played out in America and the United Kingdom throughout the nineteen-eighties and early nineteen-nineties, with the saga of the Beirut hostages.

One of the best aspects of my homecoming was for me to meet and then get to know Jim Theodores, the wonderfully warm and humorous man who had steered the Bank through the hijacking crisis. It was clear to me that because of his beyond-the-call-of-duty efforts -- and those of Martijn Paijmans, Ernie Stern, David Hopper, Malcolm Rowat and a host of other Bank officials too numerous to mention -- I had been able to emerge from the crisis unscathed. These officials had kept clear minds and a sound determination to oversee this crisis through its every detail, twist and turn. Gwynn shared my views entirely in this regard, which is no small aspect, given the different sense of crisis a spouse feels than any other person connected to a hostage.

Gwynn and I took a short holiday, which lost its appeal when we read about a Garuda Indonesian Airways hijacking (an airline on which Gwynn had flown a great amount) and the shooting of Ronald Reagan by James Hinckley, Jr., all in the same week. Reagan was shot only blocks from our house, which made the world of terrorists and psychotics all the more terrifying. It was both real and surreal - in one strange package.



6/22/97

Jeffrey →

If you need some extra filler, this might give you some ideas on how your ordeal was in fact the key leading to the development of the field security program.

Although the writing is in rough form, it does describe quite accurately how our field security program was born and developed.

The reference to what I had forgotten about security some 20 years earlier is about a family owned consultancy business that specialized in several areas including industrial espionage wherein we helped companies protect product research and development. We also did work for the Pentagon in the 60's which marked the start of my personal network from way back then.

Jim



Washington, D.C. Monday, March 16, 1981

Jeff Balkin's harrowing countdown against the clock of death was finally over; it was time for Jim Theodore and his hastily assembled crisis team to rest, unwind and celebrate. But Theodore had not rested much or well in the past 24 hours. His adrenalin level was still high. The full reality of Jeff's safe release had not yet sunk in. His mind was filled with a growing check-list of loose ends to tie-up. Would he be able to convince management that existing mechanisms for dealing with life-threatening crisis, especially terrorism, were amateurish and woefully inadequate at best? Most of all, he fretted about how the down-to-the-wire reprieve from death would impact on Jeff and his family in the days and years ahead. Stepping safely back from the precipice of death is one thing; learning to live on borrowed time is something different. Theodore looked at the time; it was about 4:30 AM. Time to go. <sup>Later,</sup> as he opened the door to the crisis center, all the lights were on, he smelled brewed coffee and heard the fast-paced clicking of the computer keyboard. It was 6:00 AM. Hisako was truly one in a million. She was so overjoyed with Jeff's release she too couldn't sleep.



as predicted, moments after Martijn Paijmans entered his office at 7:00 AM, the phone rang. "Hisako picked up," The boss wants to see you at 7:15 for an update and an overview of where we go from here. He wants to brief senior management at their usual 8:00 AM meeting. You already have an Executive Summary and a full report and here are the two extra sets for Mr. Paijmans."

When he entered the Vice-Presidents' office, Paijmans gave Jim an abrazo and said with a grin, "fantastic, fantastic." They went back a long way together and no other words or gestures were needed between them. The congratulatory speech was over. It was time to get on with business.

Paijmans spoke first, and sparingly as usual "What's next? Where do we go from here?" Theodore was equally direct. "For the next 24 hours, lots of thank you letters have to be drafted for signing by Mc Namara, Stern and you. I'll do another bunch at operational levels. The rest are special 100's that I will handle on a personal basis. I'll need to go to Toronto on Wednesday for a couple of days to meet my newest Grandson, Toby, and will be back here well before Jeff and Gwynne return from their mini-vacation."



Theodore took a sip of coffee and put in front of Pajmans two sets of red covered reports marked CONFIDENTIAL: SECURITY AND SAFETY OF STAFF IN FIELD. "Read the Executive Summary. It gives you a quick road map of where we go from here."

"Jim, this is a top-to-bottom analysis of what is wrong with our field security system, as well as those of other international agencies. You not only spell out what is wrong but also what we need to do to fix it. When did you do all of this?"

"Martijn, we have had lots of long nights in the past two weeks. It didn't take long to find out we had nothing in place to deal with real emergencies except what I call the three B's-- Bullshit bureaucratic babble. zilch. Nada. We had to improvise from scratch every goddamn step of the way. The existing operation is a joke and waste of money. By the time we got to the third night I was really pissed off. That's when I decided to put this package together. Management has been danced around the Maypole enough. I may not be the best expert in international security but the existing program doesn't even reflect what I forgot 20 years ago. As you will see in the report, if management is really serious about its' commitment to



the safety and security of staff in the field, it must adopt clear policies and procedures and rebuild the whole operation from scratch. If we do anything less, it means we haven't learned one goddam thing from Balkind's close call." Pajmans put the reports in his priority box. "Jim, we are on the same wavelength on this. I want to read the main report and we will talk on your return from Toronto."

Though he didn't know it at the time, Jeff Balkind's close call with death had a direct and major impact on the safety and security of the large number of Bank staff and dependents living or traveling abroad. To its credit, the World Bank's management bought off on the whole field security package and more. Their international security and counter-terrorism program served as a model among international agencies and the private sector. Pajmans had one condition for signing off on the total package; Theodore had to be in charge of developing the program and running the operation. Theodore had a counter-condition; he would report only and directly to Vice-President Pajmans. Since the day of his return to work in 1981, Jeff Balkind continues to serve as an advisor on field security and shares for the benefit of all the many valuable lessons learned from his incredible near-death with death.



# CHALLENGES TO THE REBUILDING OF AFGHANISTAN

1. AFGHANS ARE THEIR OWN WORST ENEMIES

2. AFGHANISTAN SUFFERS FROM BRAIN DRAIN  
85-90% ILLITERACY 2

3. NATIONAL TREASURY HAS BEEN LOOTED

4. EVERYTHING... BUT EVERYTHING MUST BE REBUILT

5. ETHNIC SUICIDE - AFGHANISTAN HYPHENATED

6. TRIBAL WAR-LORDS - 15 POWER-FREAK THUGS  
WHO GIVE THE MAFIA A GOOD NAME

7. MINES/MINES/MINES & GUNS/GUNS/GUNS  
N.W. PROVINCE, DARRA, PAKISTAN  
AK-47 @ \$1200.

8. THE UNDERGROUND ECONOMY - SMUGGLING & DRUGS  
AND THE HOLY MEN OF AL-QUIDA & TALIBAN COLLECTED THEIR TRANSIT FEES

9. THE IMMENSE COSTS  
\$10 BILLION TO ?

After the Soviets withdrew from Afghanistan "under duress" the attached is an actual copy of my note to my Regional VP asking for informal inputs on the rebuilding challenges ahead.



Ethernet 802.11b/g

Network Card

Status:	Connected
Bitrate:	54 Mbps
Current Date and Time:	2006-04-03 22:24
End-of-Job Timeout:	90
UAA(MAC):	002000556289
LAA:	000000000000
Part Number:	40X4817
MFG FW:	SD0036C
Firmware Version:	NET.AR.N204
Compi:	27-May-08 16:25, mls-bld
Password:	Not Set

Integrated Network Option Settings

Printer Type:	5600-6600 Series
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TCP/IP

Active:	On
Enable DHCP:	On
Address Source:	DHCP
Address:	192.168.1.101
Netmask:	255.255.255.0
Gateway:	192.168.1.1
Fully Qualified Domain Name:	ET002000556289.myhome.westell.com
DHCP Server:	192.168.1.1
Zero Configuration Name:	5600-6600 Series

Wireless

BSS Type:	Infrastructure
SSID:	linksys
Wireless Security Mode:	WPA2-PSK Only
Signal Strength:	-36 dBm
Current Access Point:	002369C8DECF
Current Channel:	6
Quality:	Excellent
Pairwise Cipher:	aes-ccmp
Groupwise Cipher:	tkip
Trouble Code:	None



## MEMBER NEWS

**Jeffrey Balkind** was featured in Frank Van Riper's Photography column in the *Washington Post's* Weekend section of September 23. The article describes Balkind's nearly two-week ordeal as a hostage in the hijacking of Pakistani International Airlines flight 326 in 1981, and includes one of the poignant photos taken by him in the final hours of the hijacking. Camera club members and others in the Bank may recognize the photo as a winner in both ICC and GWCCC competitions, as well as from the previous D-E Walkway Exhibit. Van Riper notes that this, along with Balkind's other photos, are believed to be the only ones ever taken inside a plane during a hostage takeover.

For those who are unfamiliar with Balkind's story (or even those who are) Van Riper's article provides a brief preview of what to expect from Jeffrey's as-yet-unpublished book of dramatic nonfiction detailing the hijacking.



J Balkind, EC402  
Rm H2-090

The World Bank  
International Finance Corporation  
Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency  
Washington, D.C. 20433 U.S.A.

*Forwarding and address correction requested*

FIRST  
CLASS



FIRST CLASS

JIM THEODORES  
29 HUNTER AVENUE  
NEWPORT, RI 02840

AIR MAIL  
PAR AVION  
CORREO AEREO





# Pakistani leader assailed by her jailed brother

By ZAHID HUSSAIN  
Associated Press

KARACHI, Pakistan — Suspected airplane hijacker Murtaza Bhutto appeared in court Saturday and lashed out at his sister, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, in the latest round of an escalating family feud.

Murtaza Bhutto returned to Pakistan on Thursday after 16 years in exile and was arrested at the Karachi airport in connection with a 1981 airline hijacking.

At his first court appearance Saturday, he said he had been detained unlawfully and attacked Benazir Bhutto without citing her by name.

"There seems to be no law in the country despite the claims of a democratic government at the helm," said Murtaza Bhutto, who was not asked how he would plead. He was returned to Karachi's Landhi jail afterward and is to appear in court Saturday.

He faces numerous charges, including terrorism and political murder, which can carry the death penalty. However, Murtaza Bhutto is not expected to receive a harsh sentence even if he is convicted on the most serious counts.

Murtaza Bhutto won a seat to the Sindh provincial assembly in last month's elections despite campaigning from exile.

He said he would try to get sworn in to office Monday despite his legal problems. It was not clear



**Murtaza  
Bhutto**

Accused of plotting the 1981 hijacking of a Pakistani airliner

whether he would be allowed to leave jail for the ceremony.

Benazir Bhutto, 40, has not commented on her 39-year-old brother in recent days, but during the election campaign she called Murtaza Bhutto and his followers "terrorists."

Benazir Bhutto and her brother both see themselves as the political successor to their father, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, a former prime minister who was overthrown in 1977 and hanged two years later on orders from military dictator Gen. Mohammed Zia ul-Haq.

Benazir Bhutto and her brother both opposed Zia's regime. She was repeatedly imprisoned in Pakistan while Murtaza Bhutto fled to exile.

He is accused of plotting the 1981 hijacking of a Pakistan airliner in a bid to undermine Zia's rule.

Despite Zia's death in a 1988 plane crash and Benazir Bhutto's rise to power, the charges against her brother remain.

JEFFREY BALKIND  
HIJACKING



# Amateur Chronicles Crisis

By Frank Van Riper

**I**T WAS sweltering at noon when Jeffrey Balkind, a Washington-based official of the World Bank, arrived at the domestic departures building in Karachi, Pakistan, for a routine flight to Peshawar, some 800 miles away. On this day in 1981 Balkind was the World Bank's senior industrial officer for projects in Pakistan, and the flight was supposed to be like many he had made before, in a career that had taken him all over the world. He had no inkling that before the flight ended—some 13 days later—he would witness a murder, become a pawn in a

global test of wills, and face death himself at the hands of a hijacker.

Balkind is 47 now, a thin, intense man with dark eyes and an almost compulsive way of talking about the things and people he loves—his work at the bank, his wife Tia, his young son Marshall—as well as his photography. He is an avid amateur whose work regularly wins prizes in the bank's camera club competitions. It was no accident, then, that Balkind had his camera with him when a group of Pakistani nationals, brandishing automatic weapons, hijacked Pakistani International Airlines Flight 326 shortly after takeoff and demanded the release of scores of political prisoners held by the regime of then-President Zia-ul-Haq.

Rarely has a professional photographer, much less an amateur, had the chance to make photographs during a hijacking. But Balkind did, and the experience taught him something about himself as a person and offered insights into how photography not only helps us see the external world, but see inside ourselves as well.

The nearly two-week ordeal of that flight, which ranks among the world's



© JEFFREY BALKIND

The pilot of the hijacked Pakistani plane, center, is comforted by two men.

longest hijackings, reads like a John Grisham novel, and Balkind himself has written a riveting account of the takeover in an as-yet-unpublished book. It took Balkind more than 10 years to produce the manuscript,

which he admits was one of the ways he finally helped put the terrifying experience behind him. But in talking to Balkind, it is apparent that by taking pictures during the hijacking—the only photographs believed ever to be made inside a plane during a hostage takeover—he gained a degree of control over his destiny, even if his actions at the time might have seemed foolhardy in the extreme.

"I don't know what possessed me at the time to take pictures," Balkind admitted. He noted that he only dared use his camera in the final hours of the hijacking, after Zia's government had agreed to a prisoners-for-hostages swap and tensions had eased considerably. "The photos essentially have played the role of hypnosis [and have] allowed extensive memory recall to allow me to relate such detail," Balkind said. Still it is a measure of how the mind can submerge horrible

memories into the subconscious that, for a long time after his return home, Balkind didn't even remember he had photos.

Balkind and the more than 100 passengers on PK 326 were caught up in the bloody struggle between Zia's regime and that of the late president Zulfikar Ali-Bhutto, whom Zia had put to death in 1979. On the fifth day of the hostage drama, as the plane languished sweltering on the tarmac in Kabul, Afghanistan, Balkind watched in horror as one of his fellow passengers, a Pakistani diplomat named Tariq Rahim, was first beaten then murdered just a few seats away.

Balkind's own brush with death came six days later, when he and another hostage were marked for execution if the hijackers' demands were not met that evening. Miraculously, the plane's radio came alive with the news that Zia has capitulated: The prisoners would be released; the hostages freed.

It was in the ensuing half hour—"after the hijackers have been informed that they've pulled off the world's most successful hijacking"—that Balkind grabbed his camera and began making pictures. Of all of the dramatic shots he made—of the exhausted yet happy faces of his fellow prisoners—one stands out. It shows two men comforting a third who sits between them. That man is the captain of the plane, who had suffered an apparent nervous breakdown and who ultimately turned over control of the plane to his co-pilot and flight engineer.

Balkind, who only minutes earlier faced death himself, made this dramatic and poignant image—a remarkable testament to one man's awesome self-possession and talent as a photographer.

*Frank Van Riper is a Washington-based professional photographer and writer.*



**The World Bank**

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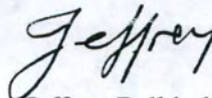
Dear Jim,

Enclosed is the article which recently appeared in The Washington Post. It's nice to have such pre-publicity. Partly because of this article, I attracted the interest of one of the well-known agencies in Washington, Literary and Creative Artists Agency, Inc., who will try to sell the rights for a made-for-television movie of the book, based on the story as I've written it up. The agency will try to sell the book as well, but they, like myself, think it needs some work and some expansion. My next step is to write the proposal for the television version, and we will go after the major networks and HBO.

Again, many thanks for your support and encouragement.

Best regards to Rose.

Warmly,

  
Jeffrey Balkind



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*LIFE AND DEATH ON A TARMAC:*

*THE HIJACKING OF PK326*

by Jeffrey Balkind

April 1994



**LIFE AND DEATH ON A TARMAC: THE HIJACKING OF PK326**

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## PROLOGUE

What the hostages of Flight PK326 endured thirteen years ago in one of the longest hijackings on record was a small fraction of what Terry Waite and Terry Anderson later endured. Their land-based ordeal was entirely different from our air incident. The length of time and brutal conditions of their imprisonment makes comparison difficult. Nevertheless, surviving hostages share one trait: they have regained their freedom and are at liberty to recount the tale so that others might draw some lessons from it.

Life can be ephemeral -- grab it and it can elude you. Consider that one moment you are walking down a path. It may be a country lane, a city sidewalk, or an airplane aisle. You are minding your own business and wham -- the next moment you find yourself trapped in a life-threatening situation, in this case a hijacking. It is a surrealistic, dangerous incident, and one for which you are totally unprepared. The incident lasts for almost half a month -- a long, long time to have to spend in an airplane, or in any confined space. You try to gather your inner resources as you struggle to get through the days cooped up inside the plane. You have no alternative for you have to survive, if not for yourself then for your next of kin. Fortunately, you find out that the limits of your endurance are far greater than you ever imagined, having had it put to the test.

Imagine that a decade later you are again going about your business and quite unexpectedly you are thrown back into re-living the original incident, the one that you thought you had effectively put behind you. Your memory is stirred and your emotions churned, again and again ...

That was the situation in which I found myself, first in 1981 and then in 1991. In retrospect, ever since my hijacking occurred in 1981, I have been fascinated with it because of its historical significance -- some of the key figures important in Pakistan's past and present history are part of the story itself. In this regard, I have long been aware of the broader significance of this hijacking, but chose not to air it



which he is buffeted, and any changes in his deeply-held beliefs as a result of the incident. If I am able to provide a glimpse of these things, then my purpose in putting pen to paper will have been served. And if through the process of disseminating this information I am able, indirectly, to save the life of someone who happens to get trapped in a similar situation as I was, my task will have been doubly served.

My gratitude is owed to Peter St. John, Director of the Center for Counter-Terrorism in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, who invited me to spend several days with him and his associates to exchange views on aspects pertinent to this story and to the broader topic of air piracy and airport security. May the excellent work of this center and the few others like it in the United States, the United Kingdom and Western Europe continue to make the world of air travel safer in the years to come.

Washington, D.C.

April 1994



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book is dedicated to my wife and son who gave me the encouragement that I needed. Their advice was always invaluable, as was that of my dear friend Saideh Pakravan, daughter of the late General Hassan Pakravan. General Pakravan was Iran's first military attache to Pakistan after the partition from India, and later returned to Islamabad as Iran's Ambassador to Pakistan when Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was Foreign Minister. As a result, Saideh grew up in a setting in which I only set foot a half-dozen times. Nevertheless, any errors of fact or interpretation rest entirely with me.

I also wish to acknowledge the invaluable role of Peter St. John, Director of the Center for Counter-Terrorism in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, who shared his deep knowledge and insights with me.

But without the cool head of Jim Theodores and many others, I might not be here to express these thanks, so no words can capture the gratitude owed to them.



16 MAY 94

## STUDY: RUSSIA AND FORMER SOVIET UNION - AVIATION SAFETY

### GENERAL

The enormous changes in the social and financial structures of the former Soviet Union have affected aviation as deeply as any element of the country's infrastructure. Two crashes since January - one in March of an Airbus operated by the successor to Aeroflot of the Soviet times and another in January of an aircraft run by a tiny offshoot of Aeroflot - have severely damaged the Russian airline industry's image. Safety and security issues come after profitability, with maintenance and safety regulations severely lagging.

### AEROFLOT BREAKUP

Since the split of the Soviet Union in 1991, Aeroflot has splintered into not just 15 airlines, one in each newly independent republic, but also about 160 "amalgamated air companies" covering all of Russia's regions and using the Aeroflot insignia on their planes. The deregulation of the airlines, which proceeded without any rules, has led to unmanageable spinoff companies which are too small to adequately maintain their fleets. Additionally, the government regulatory mechanism, the ministry of civil aviation has been ineffective in ensuring proper maintenance and supervision of the airline industry due to a lack of staff and financial resources.

#### International flights:

Following the split up, Aeroflot had only 120 jets left and it became Aeroflot-Russian International Airlines, with no domestic routes. Based at Russia's Sheremetyevo-2 international airport, the airline had leased five Airbuses. Russian International Airlines, is one of four companies within Aeroflot, which handles international flights. Boeings are also used on many international routes.



### Domestic flights:

After the breakup of Aeroflot, the 15 former republics and some regions inside Russia claimed the Aeroflot planes based in their territory. Aeroflot's domestic routes have been taken over by Volga-Dnepr Airlines, Baikal Air, Tatar Airlines and other new ventures. Unlike Western airlines, each new regional airline not only flies planes, but also takes care of air-traffic control and runs the local airports. Most new lines still fly under the Aeroflot banner and have Aeroflot crews. The break-up exacerbated the problems of the old Aeroflot, aging aircrafts, dilapidated airports and poor service. Industry officials estimate that breakdowns have now idled up to half of the old fleet. Most of the new companies are state-owned, small and inefficient. Further compounding the problem, is the lack of profit that the airlines make as none of the splinter Aeroflots make enough money to pay for upgrading aircraft or proper maintenance.

### Government regulation over aviation:

The new government regulatory mechanism is also proving particularly ineffective to ensure airline safety. The old Soviet civil aviation ministry was replaced by a Russian air transport department to supervise airlines within Russia, and an inter-state aviation committee to agree common standards on issues such as safety among the independent republics. Both organizations lack political strength, staff and money. In April following pressure due to the poor safety record, Russia's air transport minister announced plans for a 2% levy on airline revenues to fund tighter supervision of the airline industry. The controls would included the issue of regular proficiency certificates to airline staff.

### SAFETY ISSUES

Russia's civil aviation system has had to cope with dwindling supplies of spare parts, soaring costs and shortages of skilled workers in air transport maintenance. In 1991, there were a record 36 crashes and 252 people killed. Although Aeroflot is eager to point out that the number of fatal crashes dropped from a total of 123 (24 fatal) in 1992 to a total of 87 (11 fatal) in 1993, the number of fatalities remains high - 209 in 1992 and 221 deaths in 1993. Within its massive domestic network, Aeroflot's fleet of Russian built aircraft have a horrific safety record. But until, the March crash, there had not been a crash among its small fleet of new Airbus jets that were



acquired by the airline to operate key international routes. While Russian Transport Ministry officials quickly reject charges that air carriers have been cutting corners, Reuters reported that a senior official in charge of air crash information, Alexander Neradko, admitted that air safety is "beset with a whole range of technical and organizational problems."

**International Airline Passenger Association issues warning:**

In April, the International Airline Passenger Association (IAPA) warned that flights to republics of the former Soviet Union or even overflights of their territories are extremely dangerous and should be avoided. This was the first such warning the IAPA has ever issued and it was in response to the number of crashes in the territories of CIS countries and particularly in connection with the crash of an A-310 airbus in Siberia on March 22. According to the IAPA, conditions such as regular checks on reliability of equipment, assessment of pilot training, thorough checks during the loading of luggage and rigid rules for technical checks on aircraft equipment are not being observed. "Overloaded planes, lack of cockpit discipline, pilot error, aging aircraft" are all common, the agency said. The IAPA claims that of about 110,000 procedures taken for granted in the U.S., like safety inspections and regular maintenance and renewal of pilot licenses, are completely absent in the Soviet Union.

**Pilots threaten strikes due to safety issues:**

In April, Russian pilots told the International Federation of Airline Pilots Association that they could no longer guarantee passenger safety on Aeroflot flights in the former Soviet Union. The pilots said the breakup of the giant Aeroflot monopoly into many companies had caused a breakdown of services, coordination and proper control of flights. In May, Russian airline pilots threatened to strike because of the growing number of crashes. The pilots demanded that the government take measures to enforce air safety in the country's chaotic skies.

**Air traffic controllers threaten to strike over safety:**

Air traffic controllers threatened to strike in January due to poor working conditions and safety issues. Controllers have threatened several strikes in the past year, but called them off on each occasion after last-minute talks with the government. Controllers complain they have to work with outdated and unreliable radar and communications equipment. An official Russian investigation commission had just



reported the "an extremely serious error" by an air traffic controller nearly caused a mid-air collision between two Western jumbo jets over Russia's far east in late November 1993.

### SAFETY BREACHES

Russian pilots are usually former fighter pilots, who are regarded as very highly skilled. However, crash investigations have repeatedly showed that the pilots violated safety rules and regulations. Russian pilots claim they earn \$20 per month, making them targets for bribes to take on more passengers, more freight and less fuel. In particular, breaches of safety rules are highly visible on flights within the former Soviet Union. The primary safety rules that are ignored are overloading the aircraft, letting other people fly the aircraft, inadequate aircraft maintenance, flying in severe weather conditions and not having adequate safety features and procedures in place during flights.

#### Overloading the aircraft:

One of the main threats to safety comes from overloading of aircraft. Investigators probing the January crash of a Baikal Airlines plane in Siberia that killed all 120 people on board, cited overloading and an inadequately repaired engine as possible cause of the crash. The engine had recently been remounted after being inadequately repaired. The plane, a Tupolev 154, reportedly was also carrying 20 tons of excessive weight. Russian authorities also admit that the engine burst into flames after the pilot ignored a warning light which came on when he originally switched on the engines. Also, on August 26, an L-410 crashed in southern Yakutia with 22 passengers, five of them unregistered, and 677 kilograms of luggage instead of the 219 kilograms allowed. Two days later, a Yakovlev-42 airliner crashed just after take-off in southern Tajikistan, killing all 82 people aboard. The plane was three tons over capacity.

#### Other people flying the plane and in the cockpit:

In the latest crash, the transportation ministry said the cockpit recordings indicated that the Russian pilot of the European made Airbus A-310 was giving flying lessons to his two teenage children when the airliner crashed March 22 in Siberia, killing everyone aboard. The child reportedly accidentally switched off the autopilot causing the plane to nosedive. The co-pilot, who could have spotted the problem, was not in the cockpit. In April, a similar incident occurred



on a battered TU-134 charter flight. Two hours into the flight the plane lurched to one side, bounced back and then did a terrifying approximation of a nosedive. Passengers reported that the pilot was letting a Mexican soap opera queen fly the plane. There have also been hundreds of reports of pilots letting passengers ride in the cockpit to make extra money.

#### Lack of safety features and procedures:

Aeroflot and the new splinter companies do not have a crash posture, nor do they show safety demonstrations. And fastening seat belts is not a priority. Passengers have long told tales of luggage piled up against safety exits and people standing in the aisles for take-off. Also, most Russian airliners on domestic routes are not equipped with anticollision devices due to the high cost of equipment. In February, London authorities threatened to ban Aeroflot flights flying from Britain unless the Russians responded to allegations that international safety rules were ignored on a Heathrow to Moscow flight. The incident occurred on flight SU-242, an Ilyushin IL86, on January 14. Passengers claimed the cabin seats were broken and moved on takeoff. The "fasten seat belts" and "no smoking" signs were not switched on and there was no pre-flight safety briefing, no seat-belt check, and no safety cards in the seat back. Overhead lockers were not properly secured and locked and items fell out as the plane climbed. Soon after the aircraft reached cruising altitude, there was a loud explosion from the cockpit and the aircraft sharply dropped. Passengers claimed the crew was visibly frightened and panicking after a cockpit window blew out. Despite British pressure, Aeroflot has still not responded to the case.

#### Inadequate maintenance:

The lack of maintenance standards has been the cause of several crashes. Furthermore, there appears to be no enforcement of maintenance standards across Russia. Most recently, on May 7, an Aeroflot jet carrying 62 people made an emergency landing in the Far North city of Arkhangelsk after the crew managed to unstuck the faulty landing gear by substituting lemonade for hydraulic fluid. As stated, the January Siberian airplane crash that led to the death of all 120 people aboard was caused by an inadequately repaired engine.

#### Airport safety:



The dilapidated airports throughout the Soviet Union have problems which include inadequate crater filled runways, poor equipment and poor lighting. In February, an incident occurred which highlights the impact of economic disarray on air transport safety in Russia. Angry over unpaid bills, a state-owned electric company suddenly cut off power to an aviation control center while dozens of planes were in the air, including President Yeltsin's. Yeltsin was unaware of the danger when the Strela Control Center, one of the country's main civil aviation tracking facilities, was forced to shut down December 7.

#### AIRPORT SECURITY

Additionally, security standards at former Soviet airports are grossly inadequate. Theft is rampant as terminals are dimly lit, security measures are disorganized and personnel are subject to corruption. The prevailing crime situation at Moscow airports has caused a serious financial problem to Aeroflot. In the last year, the Russian airline had to pay more than 250 million roubles in compensation to its passengers and customers for lost baggage and cargo. In Moscow, police claim they are not responsible for general airport security and Aeroflot, which operates the airport, claims it is not their job either. Asked why baggage handlers are not arrested for theft, an Aeroflot official explained that they were independent, as if the tarmac was a country with its own rules. A new security guard under his command had refused a bribe from a baggage handler. A few nights later a bomb exploded at the front door of the guard's apartment, blowing out the windows of the entire building.

Customs agents at Moscow's airport have allowed luggage to leave unexamined for bribes of \$150 and \$250. The extent of baggage theft in these airports has reached such proportions that foreign consignors have already begun to avoid air routes involving these airports. Scandinavian Airline officials say thievery is 80 times worse than the theft the carrier experiences at any other airport used in the world. One employee from a Western carrier complained to superiors about theft from baggage handlers. Police say the baggage handlers rammed the man's car with their own vehicles. Swissair Station Manager, Gisele Roos got so fed up with the pilfering that she told Aeroflot she would no longer use - much less pay for Aeroflot Security. The Russian government told the airline to pay or forget about landing in Moscow.

Recently, it was reported that the Russian mafia had succeeded in taking full control over criminal activity at Moscow's primary airports.



Major criminal gangs have been operating at the Moscow airports of Sheremetyevo, Vnukovo and Domodedovo. The gangs are now under mafia control. One airport official claims that you cannot even obtain permission to charter an aircraft without paying the mafia.

#### GROUND TRANSPORTATION

In general, there have been security problems using official taxis for transportation. However, a common method of robbery is the cooperation between robbers and taxi drivers. A foreigner is targeted and a co-passenger or driver usually carries out the robbery. Another method employed is a second car will sometimes block the taxi so the passenger may be robbed. Other incidents include cab bandits who wait outside places visited by foreigners, picking up their victims and driving them off to an ambush. These attacks have occurred even when travelers are in groups. Hotel taxi drivers claim they are beaten or their cars are destroyed if they do not pay a mafia tax. Tourists taking a non-mafia taxi have also been beaten.



Friday, May 20, 1994

**UNITED STATES**

• *Bomb sent to ABC executive*

New York City police confirmed Thursday that a suspicious package delivered Wednesday to the Manhattan office of Robert Iger, president of the ABC television network, was a bomb designed to detonate upon opening. A mechanical switching device apparently malfunctioned, preventing two cylinders of gunpowder from igniting. Police noted that office workers should not have opened the package, which had an excessive amount of tape, exposed wires and was not properly addressed — all clues of a potential package-bomb.

**ALGERIA**

• *3 Russians killed in ambush*

Three Russian engineers and 11 Algerian soldiers guarding them were killed Wednesday when their bus was ambushed by suspected Muslim militants. Five of 25 other Russians aboard were injured in the attack. The bus was en route from the coastal town of Jijel to the Algiers airport when it came under attack. The Jijel region, about 235 miles east of Algiers, is reportedly under the control of Muslim extremists. The attack brings to 37 the number of foreigners killed since Islamic militants began targeting expatriates in September 1993.

**FRANCE**

• *Aid group pays Serbs bounty for workers' release*

*Premiere Urgence*, an aid group, said Thursday it had paid \$4,000 "bail" for each of 11 workers held hostage by Bosnian Serbs for 40 days in a prison near Sarajevo. The Serbs accused the aid workers of trying to smuggle weapons to Bosnian Muslims; the workers charged the Serbs planted the arms to stop the distribution of aid. The hostages were freed Wednesday "without any help from French diplomats" and flew home to a hero's welcome. Serbs say charges against the 11 have not been dropped.

**SOUTH AFRICA**

• *Ramaphosa security guard fires at 4 hooded men*

A security guard assigned to the home of the ruling African National Congress (ANC) Secretary-General

Cyril Ramaphosa opened fire today at four hooded white men who scaled a wall and jumped into the garden of the home. The intruders fled in a car without license plates. Ramaphosa is the chief executive of the ANC but is not a member of the new government headed by President Nelson Mandela.

*COMMENT*

Although there is no chance they will reverse the democratic transition that has taken place, white militants will continue to pose a serious threat to the new South African government because of their willingness to assassinate senior black officials.

**DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**

• *Vote count halted amid political tension*

With less than 3 percent of precincts left to report and tensions running high over allegations of vote fraud in Monday's presidential election, the Central Election Board today said it will not release more figures until the official final count is ready. At the last presidential election in 1990, the final certification was not released until two months after the balloting. Until now, President Joaquin Balaguer has been reported slightly ahead of his main rival, social democrat Jose Francisco Pena Gomez, whose supporters have been threatening to take their protests into the streets. Armored personnel carriers have been patrolling Santo Domingo and other cities for the past two days, and there have been no reports of significant unrest so far.

*COMMENT*

The slowing of the vote count is clearly a tactic by the Election Board to allow time for tensions to ease prior to announcing Balaguer's fraud-tainted re-election. Pena Gomez now faces a difficult choice: If he waits until the final vote count, he risks his supporters returning to their normal lives and losing enthusiasm for resistance to a stolen election; but if he tries to lead massive protests against Balaguer before the final vote count, many nonpartisan Dominicans will consider his actions premature and will blame him for any deaths caused by security forces. Most likely, he will seek a middle ground, asking his supporters to await word and prepare to participate in nationwide strikes if credible results are not released by a set date. Travel to the country may be feasible next week in case of pressing business, but nonessential



trips should be postponed and personnel in-country should keep close track of developments.

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**BRAZIL**

- *Japanese consul killed in Belem*

Machiko Fukuzawa, Japan's consul in Belem, was stabbed to death in her apartment Wednesday night. The apartment showed signs of forced entry and, because of missing jewelry and electronic items, police believe the murder began as a home invasion. The career diplomat had been stationed in Belem, the capital of Para state at the mouth of the Amazon River, for three years.

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**PHILIPPINES**

- *Bomb at Miss Universe Pageant Center*

A pipe-bomb exploded Thursday in front of the headquarters of the Miss Universe Pageant in Manila, but caused no injuries and very little damage. Initial investigations suggest a group of men placed the bomb in a concrete pot some 200 yards from the main building of the center before escaping in a car. No one claimed the attack, which police say may have been the work of pranksters. The incident occurred on the eve of the contest.

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**CAMBODIA**

- *Grenade thrown at Malaysian Embassy*

A grenade was thrown in front of the Malaysian Embassy in Phnom Penh on Wednesday night. No one was injured, but windows were shattered by the blast. No motive has been established for the attack, the first violent incident directed at an embassy in the capital since the holding of United Nations-sponsored elections nearly a year ago.

---

**UNITED KINGDOM**

- *IRA questions get reply*

The government Thursday night issued a cautious reply to 20 questions about the Anglo-Irish peace accord posed by *Sinn Fein*, the political arm of the Irish Republican Army (IRA). For the first time, the government explicitly said it would hold a referendum to determine the wishes of Northern Ireland residents, 60 percent of whom are Protestants. In response to most questions, the government referred *Sinn Fein* to language in the original Downing Street Declaration. However, in reply to a question on what comes next, the statement said: "Certainly no further playing for time."

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**LITHUANIA**

- *Thousands rally for social pact*

Lithuanians across the country staged rallies Thursday to press for an accord among unions, employers and the government on a better social service net for hard-pressed workers. It was the first post-Communist protest that united leftist and rightist unions. Unions said new demonstrations will be mounted unless the social pact is signed. Included in their demands is a rise in the minimum monthly wage from \$12.50 to \$37.50.

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**MEXICO**

- *Cardenas meeting with EZLN flops*

A much-ballyhooped meeting last weekend between leftist presidential candidate Cuauhtemoc Cardenas and leaders of the Indian guerrilla Zapatista National Liberation Army (Spanish initials: EZLN) resulted in no agreements on how to end the EZLN's uprising in Chiapas state. As reporters filmed one meeting, EZLN spokesman "Subcomandante Marcos" dismissed Cardenas' Democratic Revolutionary Party as "repeating the same poison" of "neglecting the masses" as the long-ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (Spanish acronym: PRI). Upon his return to Mexico City, Cardenas was denounced as a "traitor" by PRI leaders and the solidly pro-PRI media.

**COMMENT**

The failed meetings with the EZLN leadership, following Cardenas' third-place showing in last week's presidential debate, probably sound the death knell for a candidacy that was not doing well to begin with. PRI nominee Ernesto Zedillo now must turn his sights on the third candidate, conservative Diego Fernandez de Cevallos, whom most Mexicans feel won the debate. As to the EZLN, it is increasingly clear the guerrillas have little interest in serious peace talks until they know who will be the next president. The fact they did nothing to help Cardenas' race indicates the guerrillas are not eager to lay down arms but want to become the chief representatives of the Mexican left, and advance their political-military strategy from that position.



# Wife Keeps Hope Alive in Andean Search

**BOLIVIA, From D1**

somewhere in the densely forested Andean foothills. "As long as they were able to land [the plane], they'll be fine," she said.

Her main concern, she said, is that the search may soon be called off. To prevent that from happening, she has prompted dozens of U.S. senators and representatives to write letters urging the embassy and the Bolivian government not to give up. At her urging, members of Congress also have asked the U.S. Defense Department to use satellite imaging technology to search for the missing plane.

Olem also has enlisted the help of neighbors, friends and her husband's co-workers in her letter-writing campaign.

Last week, she arranged for students at her 10-year-old son's elementary school to write letters to Vice President Gore, hoping that his concerns for the environment might lead to more U.S. government help in the search.

"Mike needs his dad," wrote Jay, 10, a classmate of Michael Olem at Hutchison Elementary School in Herndon. Jay drew a picture of Harvey Olem standing in a tree and shouting for help.

The Olems' other child, 2-year-old Matthew, also has been a vehicle for help. Sheila Olem posted notices at Matthew's day-care center, prompting other parents to write letters to their representatives.

Since the disappearance, four planes and two helicopters, along with dozens of search teams on foot, have been combing the area. The search planes also have been dropping leaflets in nearby villages, promising a \$10,000 reward for information leading to discovery of the plane.

Harvey Olem, who has a doctorate in civil and environmental engineering, has written or co-written five books and 90 technical articles on environmental issues.

One of his proudest moments came as an amateur photographer, when he took a picture of then-Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev getting out of a limousine to shake hands on a Washington sidewalk. The picture, which hangs in Olem's den amid piles of environmental books, was published in newspapers around the world.

Sheila Olem exudes calm and self-control as she goes through the file of letters written in the last few days on her husband's behalf. Only momentarily does her mood darken.

She recalls at one point that there have been other trips during which she worried about her husband's safety.

"He was gone once for two weeks, and I didn't hear a word from him," she says, referring to a project in the Smoky Mountains several years ago that entailed hiking in an isolated forested area.

"But this is a little too much," she adds. "I wonder if he knows how much this is killing me."



**PETER SEIDLE**

... also on missing aircraft



BY JAMES A. PARCELL—THE WASHINGTON POST

Sheila Olem waits each day for a call from the U.S. Embassy in La Paz.



TO

Washington Post 5-20-94

# From Herndon, Wife Presses Search for Husband in Rugged Andes



**HARVEY OLEM**

... on mission for World Bank

By Peter Pae  
Washington Post Staff Writer

It's 5:45 p.m. and Sheila Olem's strain finally begins to show.

Every day since May 7, when her husband, Harvey, was first reported missing in the rugged Andes Mountains of Bolivia, the U.S. Embassy in Bolivia has called her at 5:30 sharp to update her on its efforts to find him. She wonders why no one has called in the last 15 minutes.

"Maybe something is happening," says Olem, 38, emotion creeping into her voice for the first time in an hour's interview with a reporter at her Herndon home. Even as she waits impatiently, she considers only the possibility that a late call could bring good news. "If I can get the call by 6 p.m., I can rush to the airport and be down there by morning and give him a big hug."

An hour later, the call finally comes. The only news is that the

embassy has added a third helicopter in the search for the small plane in which her husband and four others were flying.

Harvey Olem, 42, an environmental engineer who has traveled frequently in the last decade to remote areas of Latin America, Africa and the former Soviet Union on water quality projects, went to Bolivia this month on a mission for the World Bank.

He was last seen boarding a Cessna single-engine plane that also carried a Bolivian air force pilot, two Bolivian government officials and Peter Seidle, 40, an associate of Olem's and a native of Canada. The plane was flying from the village of Teoponte to the capital city of La Paz, 85 miles away, when it disappeared.

Sheila Olem believes very strongly that her husband, who has had extensive survival training, is still alive

See BOLIVIA, D6, Col. 1



BY JAMES A. PARCELL—THE WASHINGTON POST

Each day, Sheila Olem, shown with her sons, Michael, 10, and Matthew, 2, awaits a call from the U.S. Embassy in Bolivia.



**LIFE AND DEATH ON A TARMAC:**

**THE HIJACKING OF PK326**

by ALISTAIR SMITH



**SYNOPSIS (blurb for Book Jacket back page)**

**LIFE AND DEATH ON A TARMAC: THE HIJACKING OF PK326**

**by Alistair Smith \*\***

In this third ever full account\* of an actual hijacking seen through the eyes of a hostage, the author takes us through the chilling suspense as it unfolds. From beginning to end, through the numerous twists and turns, we see the vicissitudes of fate and fortune working their strange ways. Through this gripping, real-life drama, we are able to see the inner workings of the minds of both terrorists and hostages.

Not since the hijacking of an AIR France plane to Entebbe, Uganda in 1976 and that of TWA 847 to Beirut in June 1985, has there been such a complex web of intrigue told in all of its political dimensions and unsolved puzzles. The saga of PK326 in March 1981 was the world's longest hijacking at the time, only to be surpassed by that of TWA 847. As in those incidents, the tragedy that accompanied PK326 only serves to remind us how vulnerable we all are to such acts of terrorism.

As we move from Pakistan to Afghanistan and Syria, and back to the United States, the relevance to today's turbulent world becomes clear. Many of the same features persist and the characters are no different to those that any of us might encounter one day. The story thus essentially becomes a primer in survival techniques regarding risks that we all face. While the story is embedded in a particular type of risk -- terrorism -- the more general issues of air safety are also discussed, to the extent that obtaining adequate information is seen as the key ingredient to avoiding potential tragedy.

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\* There were two other books written by hostages, *Hostage in a Hostage World*, by Christian Zimmerman, the flight engineer on TWA 847 in 1985 and *Hijack -- 144 Lives in the Balance* by Bunsei Sato on a 1973 JAL hijacking; *Namesake* by Micel Goldberg had two chapters on his experience on the Air France hijacking in 1976 to Entebbe, Uganda.

\*\* The author has travelled extensively in Asia, Latin America, and Europe.



LIFE AND DEATH ON A TARMAC: THE HIJACKING OF PK 326

A PERSONAL ACCOUNT OF A TWO-WEEK ORDEAL

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The story takes place in eight locales

I .....	The Manila Hotel
II .....	Karachi Airport
III .....	Kabul Runway
IV .....	Damascus Runway
V .....	Damascus Hospital
VI .....	Damascus Meridien Hotel
VII .....	The United States
VIII .....	The Manila Hotel

List of Characters

Person

Alistair Smith<sup>\*</sup>  
Mrs. Smith  
Lead Hijacker<sup>\*</sup>  
Hijacker Number Two<sup>\*</sup>  
Hijacker Number Three<sup>\*</sup>  
PIA Engineer<sup>\*</sup>  
The Californian<sup>\*</sup>  
Another American<sup>\*</sup>  
The Swede<sup>\*</sup>  
A Mid-Westerner \*  
Mid-Westerner's Wife  
Pilot<sup>\*</sup>  
Co-Pilot<sup>\*</sup>  
Purser \*  
Stewardess\*  
Stewardess\*  
Syrian Colonel  
BBC Speaker  
New Delhi Airport Controller  
Deputy Res. Rep. UNDP-Kabul  
Syrian Negotiator  
Pakistan's Ambassador to Syria  
Premchand

Character

Self  
Gwynn  
Alamgir  
Burly man, six ft.  
Dark-eyed, thin man  
Bashir  
Peter William  
James Clark  
A nervous youth  
Frank  
Lillian  
Capt. Saeed Khan  
First Officer Younus  
Javed  
Naila Nazeer  
Farzana Sharif  
Hospital Commander  
Mr. Oxbridge  
Indian Controller  
Roger Davis  
Military Officer  
The Ambassador  
A Friend

\*These persons are shown in the color photographs included herein and were taken by the author surreptitiously while on board on the Damascus airport runway.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

On February 11, 1993 a LUFTHANSA AIRLINES flight from Frankfurt to New York (original destination was East Africa) was hijacked by a single Ethiopian passenger "armed" with a starter's pistol used in athletic track events. The motive and message of the hijacker was confused and rambling -- apparently, it had something to do with protesting the ethnic cleansing that has been going on in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Yet this hijacking only serves to remind us that this type of threat and personal risk remains of great concern to would-be air travellers. As this book tries to show, there is a direct link between the narrower topic of hijackings/terrorism and the broader topic of air safety. In 1991 there were nearly 450 million air passenger trips in the United States alone, not counting the more than a billion passenger trips that occurred world-wide in the year. Each flight is an independent statistical event and some trips that a person takes, as I typically do, involve a half dozen or more flights on each trip. This book is therefore dedicated to the millions of air passengers who fly each year.

We, the airline passengers -- and our families back home -- depend upon only one aspect of airline travel as our overriding concern -- **and that is safety**. It is not the comfort of the plane's seats or the quality of the cuisine that matters, or whether we can watch a movie on large screens or little video screens in front of our seats. All of this is trivial in my view. For myself, I only want to know from whatever advertising flashes across my eyes, what is the reliability and safety record of the airline in question, and what is the safety record of the airport of my destination (or take-off). Lastly, I want to know what is the model type and age of the aircraft that I am supposed to be flying. That is all that concerns me, besides of course punctuality records (if only because there is a correlation between tardy airlines and their preponderance of mechanical breakdowns, .... and hence safety. The rest of the usual advertising and magazine literature that is thrust in front of one's face is totally off the mark, it seems. Yet, why do most airlines stress all of the trivial items that I have mentioned? Is it to lull the public into believing that flying is a joyride?

To illustrate the argument, contrast the advertising that is characteristic of Volvo, Mercedes Benz, and BMW cars. There is little mentioned about comfortable seats and other paraphernalia. All that is stressed, over and over again, is the quality of the automotive engineering and the safe handling that those cars are expected to deliver and most of the images show treacherous roads, not smooth, straight highways. So then why do airlines differ in their approach? It is presumably because they do not unduly want to alarm the public. However, we are not children. The "safe automotive advertisements" have not discouraged people from driving cars, even the less reliable cars. The whole thrust is for people to make rational choices, after considering all of the issues involved. After all, it is our lives that are at stake, no one else's.

Now, when it comes to the many alternative airline flights that are available to a passenger on most trips, I would like to feel that I am making rational choices. However, I, like most other passengers lack, indeed are deprived of, the basic facts **in advance** from which rational choice can be made, as you will see. Thus, in a sense, this book is dedicated to the numerous airline crews that silently go about their business all around the world in what is at times an unappreciated setting, and who carry out their difficult jobs with great courage and a lack of concern for their own well-being. It is the tireless efforts of these crews that represents the only advertising that sinks home to me.



I owe my deepest gratitude to my family and friends -- new friends and old ones, some who knew about this story, others who did not. Through their encouragement they have given me the energy to persist with a project that at times had to substitute for riding my bike on weekends, or playing squash, or going to the theater. Those activities would no doubt have been more pleasurable for me than re-examining this troubling topic but, in my view, it is vitally important that the issues raised in this book find a broad audience. Perhaps, I have waited too long already, some twelve years now, and the crash of a Thai Airways plane nearby Kathmandu, Nepal in July 1992 touched off inside of me a torrent of feelings that brought this topic right back to the surface again, despite my having tried to have repressed these thoughts and memories. You see a colleague of mine was killed aboard that Thai Airways flight from Bangkok to Kathmandu, Nepal, and another colleague was on board the recent LUFTHANSA plane that was hijacked to New York.

This book is also dedicated to my fellow ex-hostages, strangers who became my friends while trapped on board a Boeing aircraft in an extremely dangerous, indeed terrifying situation in a part of the world that is quite remote to the average Western person.

I believe that there is much to be learned from the recounting of this drama. My hostage ordeal was quite different to that of Terry Anderson or of Terry Waite, two very brave men who reside on opposite sides of the Atlantic Ocean. Their ordeal was of a totally different dimension to mine. Yet all hostages share one vital piece of common ground: they have survived a life-threatening situation and they have their regained their cherished freedom. Unfortunately, that is not the fate for all hostages and it is a strange randomness that sometimes determines the result in each case.

My thanks go out first and foremost to Jim, who helped to resolve this crisis by being a pillar of strength and of clear mind in relaying the delicate communications and in liaising with my wife, Gwynn, throughout the ordeal. My thanks also go to Daud and Salem, two Pakistani friends of mine who have provided me with invaluable advice and encouragement throughout the reconstruction and writing stages of this extraordinary tale.

Lastly, to those fellow ex-hostages who may have been able to shut out the ordeal from their memories, I apologize for what may stir up their feelings and emotions. However, the world might be able to benefit from a full account of what actually happened on board PK326, if as a result of this information, it would make things safer for the millions of other travellers around the globe today. The recent LUFTHANSA hijacking was a brief incident and for the majority of the 105 passengers on board, they did not experience the sheer terror of having to get through a situation that lasts for weeks, and to deal with three heavily armed and resolute hijackers, as we had to.

New York, March 1993



Extract (from Chapter 11)

Alamgir spun around on his heels, flashed a menacing glare at me, cocked his semi-automatic machine gun, and sneered, this time in a loud voice.

"In less than an hour, you Americans will be the first to die. Zia's time to agree to our demands has run out."

My mind raced back to the images of last week, of Tariq Rahim slumped on the seat immediately to the right of me, blood gushing out from the deep bullet wounds to his head and neck. The sight had almost thrown me into nauseous convulsions at the time. Now, in this second week of the ordeal, I felt a strange sense of terror on the one hand, and a resigned acceptance of the inevitability of fate, on the other hand. The panic of terror, calmed only by the feeling that one was soon to die prematurely, surrounded by a bunch of strangers in a cold and filthy plane seemed to me to constitute a most ignominious end. How unjust it all seemed. I had so many unfulfilled hopes that were almost certain to be condemned to nought in this living morgue, just as my physical life would soon expire in a matter of minutes.

How precious the last few moments had seemed. The clicking of my watch had sounded like a time bomb going off in my head. Yet, there was sheer silence all around. I looked into Alamgir's dark, cold, eyes for any clues as to whether he was at last going to proceed with his threats to kill the Westerners (the CIA agents as he called us). Was he at last going to escalate the carnage from the vendetta that he had pursued against Tariq Rahim last week, now to the mass slaying of us innocent victims? The stakes had changed, and the central characters had taken on a different composition.

There were no clues in Alamgir's expression -- only the sneers of a desperate man, his face aglow with the knowledge that it was he who controlled the sequence of events and that he could juggle the situation around like tiny balls in the palm of his hand. This Asian struggle that I was enveloped in was quite different to the criminal injustices that one might see in our more sheltered Western world. It was a struggle that was rooted in a political saga involving a family that had come to appear like a dynasty in a country that had no tradition of democracy, and here I was, caught up in one of the tragic fall-outs of that struggle. It was so strange. All of a sudden I felt as though I was a total stranger. My unfilled hopes would soon come to nought. In a little more than twenty minutes time, I would be gone, never to see the persons I loved again. My body might never find its way back home on a lonely trip in some cold hold of an aircraft, and more importantly my spirit would have expired. Everything around me seemed so futile. As I trembled in my seat, hoping that Alamgir would not notice, for I was not going to give him the pleasure of seeing the effect of the psychological torture that he was rendering on us, my body felt like lead. My trousers and shirt were wet with perspiration again, for the hundredth time.

Then, all of a sudden, the abject loneliness of the fast-approaching end took hold of me. I felt an overwhelming sense of claustrophobia, and I knew that I was no longer in control of my movements. I had to break away out of my seat, and try to slip away to some corner, far from the relentless pointing of Alamgir's lethal weapons. And, if he would see me, so be it -- my life was not going to be snuffed out like some sacrificial lamb. Even a last, desperate struggle on my part, with all its likely dire consequences, had to be better than this!



## PROLOGUE

Many of us are skating close to the edge most of the time. In this complex, modern world, we are rushing at work to meet deadlines, we are rushing to catch numerous planes (or riding in what could be unsafe taxis) to meet hectic trip schedules, or we are rushing in our own cars to pick up children from their schools. Even on holiday, we might be rushing to catch some obscure flight that will take us to some exotic destination on which the research into the safety of the transporting airline, airplane, or airport, etc. has not been adequately done. The given flight (even a helicopter perhaps) may be more hazardous than imagined. Yet, we tend not to think about the consequences of a potentially risky event. We think that a disaster will never strike us -- only the next person -- if only for the sake of our "peace of mind." But there is a vast difference between not considering the risks fully, and between being cognizant that tragic events do occur, and that danger may lurk at anytime behind what appears to be a seemingly innocuous or routine event. Clearly, our minds are trained to set aside the pondering of life's daily risks. There are many things that need to get done and we can't afford to spend time on considering imaginary issues. But is it time or is it something else that makes us put aside considering all of the factors involved in a complex situation, as we will soon see?

While the risks of a certain event/trip may be uncomfortably high, this is not something that we are willing to admit to ourselves and least of all to our families at home, or to our bosses at work, lest we appear to be frail-hearted. But that is not the issue. Why are we so compelled to overlook risks? Is it that the consequences are too difficult to think about, or is it that we just act in an *unthinking* manner? Is it that we are fully aware of the risks, but we always think that dangerous or tragic situations will happen to the next person, and never to oneself? And if we are aware of the danger, we prefer to think that fortune is on our side. That may be so, and for the majority of the world that is the case. But do we give a considered judgement to the many complicated aspects that should go into a particular decision, the analysis of a particular tradeoff?

To be specific, consider two actual events that have occurred: in the first case, we have a person sitting in La Guardia's airport lounge waiting to board his aircraft, and it starts to snow heavily. The plane outside has ice on the wings (even though the de-icing trucks are racing around and are soon to come to de-ice the waiting plane again); second, consider another person sitting in Atlanta airport and suddenly there is a severe thunderstorm, which can cause the phenomenon known as "windshear." Yet the control tower in each of these two situations continues to keep the airport open. After all, the controllers can't afford to shut down airports (even temporarily) over a small thing like a driving snowstorm or a sudden rainstorm. Now that may be fine for them to do and it may be the "correct" course of action from the general public's viewpoint. But does it mean that we -- each of us -- must go



ahead with boarding the potentially risky flight when all of a sudden these risks have climbed substantially (astronomically)? Do we reconsider our decision to board the given flight in such circumstances, or do ask to disembark from the plane as it waits on the tarmac, knowing full well that we are supposed to be at a certain destination at a certain point in time? What do we do?

The answer is clearly subjective and, even for the same individual, the response might differ at various times, depending upon how he feels at a particular moment in time. Mankind is neither consistent, nor always rational. And who I am I to say what rationality is all about -- all I know is that I try (at least these days) to make a considered judgement regarding the risks of a given action/trip that I am supposed to take. I try to decide on the tradeoffs within my limited degrees of freedom (I, like you, have certain schedules to meet) and to proceed in a rational manner. Yet, it doesn't always happen in so neat or logical a fashion and perhaps this story will shed some light on this most troubling of topics that we don't like to think about -- the difference between survival and non-survival of an event that can befall anyone of us. It wasn't always rationality (some of it was plain good fortune) that enabled me (and four other Westerners) to survive PK326, and to recall and recite this strange tale some twelve years later. One only hopes that the lessons learned will live on for many more years than a dozen.

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Much has happened these past twelve years: Ronald Reagan has come and gone, George Bush has come and gone, and Bill Clinton is now President of the United States of America. The Berlin Wall has fallen, Mikhail Gorbachev has been replaced by Boris Yeltsin, and he might be replaced by someone else eventually. The Soviet Union has splintered into more than a dozen countries and different states and new leaders have come on the scene everywhere. Yugoslavia has disintegrated in an especially violent fashion and India has erupted into religious strife again..... And so it goes on and on.....

Yet some topics stay the same and, while the issues surrounding them might flow and ebb in some strange way, the underlying premise does not change. The tensions that cause those events to occur are present and might not be solved for a long time. One of these issues is that of **air safety (airlines and airports)**, which itself is affected by the phenomenon of **terrorism** or more specifically by what the world has come to call as **hijackings**. While this story is about both issues (air safety generally and the narrower topic of sabotage and hijackings), its central focus is on the latter such risk.

The more I read about and experience first hand the issue of airline safety, the more I am convinced that the public comprehends only the slightest dimension of the enormous complexities and



risks involved in air travel. And that's not because of any fault on the part of the public. They are simply not given the requisite information in a digestible form that can be easily separated from the constant bombardment of slick advertising messages that constantly emphasize the trivial aspects of flying, like comfort, food, and service. Safety and survival should be the paramount issue -- safety of the particular type of aircraft being flown, safety of the given airline, and safety of the airports from which takeoffs and landings are being attempted. These issues should be the principal concerns of the public, it seems to me, and not issues of comfort. Not all of the public needs to be concerned about issues of air safety, but certainly those who use air travel as one of their major forms of transport. And the topic should be of concern to all airlines, be it a large international airline like British Airways or Lufthansa, or a relatively small one, like Pakistan International Airways (PIA). Let's hope that those who manage the world's airlines understand fully the many tradeoffs involved in the complex decisions that they have to make regarding the balance between the concerns of the individual passenger and those of the company. Profits of the airline is one thing; the lives of its passengers is another matter, and these two types of considerations should not be traded-off against each other. They are on a different level from each other, and there they should stay.

One presumes that those who specialize in airport safety issues and in the design of aircraft take into account the many factors that have to be balanced when deciding whether a given aircraft or flight should be cleared for takeoff (or landing). These are the sequences during which most airplane accidents happen. However, the repeated occurrences of similar-type crashes makes one wonder how much the decision-makers do take into account regarding past experiences and just how much weight do they put on protecting human life. Take, for example, the crash of US AIR Flight 405 on March 22, 1992, which exploded and broke apart seconds after hitting the ground on a failed takeoff from LA Guardia Airport, New York, during a snowstorm. The crash of the US AIR Fokker F-28 killed 27 of the 51 passengers, most of whom died as a result of drowning in the freezing cold water of Flushing Bay as they lay upside down in their seats in the shattered aircraft cabin. Such an irony: those whose seat belts were still buckled got drowned, while other passengers, whose seat belts had fortunately become unbuckled, were able to float to the surface and were rescued by the emergency crews who had arrived on the scene within moments of the fiery crash.

The 1992 US AIR accident bore eerie similarities to the crash of an Air Florida plane some eight years previously, while it was attempting to take-off from Washington National Airport, again during a severe snowstorm. Surely by now, enough is known about the crash of that Air Florida Flight 76 in January 1984 to make one question why is it so important that planes should continue to fly during foul weather conditions? What can be so important to the passengers' schedules that they feel that they must arrive at their destinations on time, even to the point of risking their lives so patently? Are schedules so important to the airlines that they continue to fly in what was obviously very poor weather

*I haven't sent the rest of the prologue except page XVII which is most important*



fairly rare.<sup>12</sup> Yet, most travel agents gloss over this critical information and seem to care more about satisfying a customer's smoking versus non-smoking and special dietary preferences. Unfortunately, the world of aircraft models is "mumbo-jumbo" language to some, but it can be life-saving to others. Has something gone wrong with our priorities, that we have gone numb to this critical aspect?

In contrast, consider a person who walks up to a car rental booth. He usually asks about car type, whether there are shoulder restraint belts, airbags and liability insurance provisions. If you were taking a car trip, you would want to know was it an old car or a new car that you were going to be driving in. What is so different about a plane? The dichotomy in our behavior is striking, and the only reason that we can attribute to this, is that the world of airlines and airports is so technical that we assume that someone else employed therein knows best. But does he? And even if that is the case, a little double checking is all that one asks. If that is the only benefit to be derived from reading this story, my job will have been done on the general issue of safety and precautions.

On the specific issue of hijackings and terrorism, if by relating this story, I am able to save the life of just one person in the future, as a result of his or her taking close heed of the particular events that occurred **and the sequences in which they happened**, then my purpose will have been doubly served.<sup>13</sup>

New York  
March 1993

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<sup>12</sup> For example, when I fly to East Asia, I prefer to fly on the heavily travelled San Francisco or Los Angeles routes (on which the Boeing 747-400 is now quite common) rather than on the less busy Seattle route, because the airlines tend to put the newer aircraft on the busy routes and the older ones on the less travelled routes.

<sup>13</sup> One such person was a colleague of mine who listened very carefully to my story in Ankara, Turkey one night in 1985 (see the Turkish interlude at the end of Chapter 2) and he later on (in 1987) found himself hijacked on an Air Afrique flight that was bound for Zurich. The colleague fractured his heels by jumping out of the plane in Zurich, but he considered that to be a better fate than waiting for the single hijacker to carry out his death threats.



CHAPTER 1: DOUBLE FLASHBACKS -- TWELVE YEARS AFTER

*There was no particular reason it had to unleash itself in Manila, although the similarities of the region and the incidents that were occurring elsewhere undoubtedly provided the catalyst. Post-traumatic stress syndrome (PTSS) can happen immediately after an incident; or it can happen ten, or even twenty years or more after an event; or it may never happen. Each person is different. Thus, how PTSS strikes one person versus another is not always predictable nor consistent. But what is consistent is that once the genie is out of the bottle, he will walk around until he has satisfied himself that the terrain that he had previously feared to travail is mastered, and that the path forward -- as well as that left behind-- is clear. In this way, hopefully the murky images get swept aside.*

The mind is a wonderful thing. One can have such rapid flashbacks that, with almost the speed of light, one is taken back into a "file" or "compartment" of one's mind in which lingers one's deepest thoughts and inner-most memories. Just last month, fresh with the elation of Bill Clinton's inauguration as the 42nd President of the United States, I was flying to the Philippines on a work trip. After boarding United Airlines flight 807 from San Francisco to Manila, via Seoul, I settled back into my seat and reflected how a young boy from a small town called "Hope" had risen to the highest office in the land, and he had done it through sheer grit and hard work, overcoming in the process, several major setbacks in his campaign that would have sunk most candidacies.

Everything seemed normal and, to all outside appearances, I appeared to be in a relaxed mood. But not really, something was pulling on me, just as it has done on other flights. There was no reason to worry, I told myself -- we were flying in the newest of United's fleet of aircraft -- the Boeing 747-400, and the plane's exterior hull and interior decor sparkled everywhere. After engaging in some idle conversation with the bearded passenger, who was sitting next to me, I began to read a couple of newspapers -- the news was nothing much different than the day before. Bosnia-Herzegovina was in smoke, the people of Somalia were starving, although at a much slower rate than a month ago, and a volcano was about to erupt in the Philippines again. *The Philippines!* Please, just keep that volcanic dust away from our engines, I thought.

After dinner, I let my seat recline and began to watch the movie: *Patriot Games* with Harrison Ford. Since I had seen it before, I put my eyeshades on and tried to fall asleep.....



## CHAPTER TWO: FACES IN THE CROWD

*So many times one sees faces,.... faces in a park, in a crowded airport, in a railway station, or in a jammed football stadium. They are just part of the milieu of faces one sees all of the time. Faces that come and go; one sees them and one soon forgets them. Then, there are other faces that one never forgets, either because the features are so striking, or because they belong to some famous figure or personality, be it in the arts, government, or theater. And then there are faces that might mean nothing to you or to the next person, but they mean something to me and to at least 150 other people. Those images and features are indelibly sketched into our collective psyche for a specific reason germane to the group. So it was, and forever will be, for the passengers and crew of PK326.*

### Day One: Monday, March 2, 1981

It was a day like any other in Karachi, Pakistan -- a mild 90 degrees, with little or no wind in the air. Although it was still early, it already felt like a steam bath outside. I had awakened at 5:30 a.m. to get my things ready and had experienced an uneventful taxi drive to the airport, passing by many run-down buildings interlaced with several modern office buildings and hotels. The glistening office buildings housed mainly banks, while the run-down buildings consisted mainly of shops and food stalls. There were few national government offices, as these were mainly in Islamabad, the federal capital located several hundred miles north of Karachi. The offices of the Sind Provincial Government were mainly spread around the outskirts of Karachi. One of the largest modern buildings that I passed was the building of Bank of Credit & Commerce International (BCCI), the \$20 billion bank that was founded in 1972 by a Pakistani entrepreneur by the name of Agha Hasan Abedi. Although the bank was headquartered in London and was incorporated in Luxembourg, its main operations center was in Karachi.

Over the years I had heard many things about BCCI, some good, some not so good. Some of their dealings were hushed up, people said. I had read an occasional article in the press or in magazines, both in Pakistan and abroad, that purported to link BCCI to underworld financial dealings. I never gave the articles much credence at the time and attributed the investigative journalism to over-zealous reporters schooled in Watergate-style tactics. Was illicit drug trafficking and money laundering involved, I would sometimes ask myself, or was BCCI involved in even darker business, such as international terrorism? I had heard allusions to dealings with some of the better-known underworld figures, such as Carlos and the Colombian Medellin families, as well as allusions to political persons like General Manuel Noriega of Panama and Abu Nidal who was believed to be in the Middle East or Libya.



### CHAPTER THREE: THE TAKEOVER

*People say that one can get killed just as easily in a car crash, as in a plane disaster. That may be so, and the odds point that way, even though I spend more of my time in a plane than the average person. Yet, when one is in a car, one can simply stop the vehicle and get out. You are in control, and certainly this applies to the driver, as well as to passengers in most cases. Not so with an aircraft. The passengers are at the mercy of fate, which in turn is influenced by the vagaries of technological machinery and unpredictable natural elements, such as the weather. If a crisis has to erupt, it might take several hours or days (and hopefully not weeks or months) to resolve it. Even the pilot cannot control a tailspin, and he too cannot simply get out and alight from the aircraft. That is what determines my different moods on a plane versus a car, and it stems from the danger of PK326's first leg of its unexpected odyssey.*

The first hour of the 800 mile flight was uneventful. As the four engines of the Boeing 720B<sup>1</sup> roared into full power and we thundered down the runway, I settled back in my seat and peered out of the dusty window. Karachi receded quickly into the distance, a large, bustling city dotted with countless tan colored buildings and red clay roofs that looked as though they might one day crack apart in the extremely dry heat. By now the sun was beginning to scorch the glistening metal wings of the aircraft, but inside we felt quite cool, refreshed by the rush of air-conditioned air from the overhead vents. My mind turned to the upcoming visit to Peshawar and to the wily Saeed Khan, whom I was supposed to meet there, along with a group of officials from the NWFP Province. Saeed was the principal collaborator on the research project that I was working on, and I was glad that he was on my team and not the competing group of researchers. Saeed was also an excellent squash player with whom I always enjoyed squeezing in a game at the old Peshawar club, though I was never able to give him much of a contest.<sup>2</sup>

My thoughts were soon interrupted by the voice of the man sitting next to me, a uniformed PIA employee, who proceeded to introduce himself.

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<sup>1</sup> The Boeing 720B was a first generation version of the Boeing 707 (the aircraft which pioneered long range jet travel). It had the same design as the 707 with four engines, two on each wing, and a fairly cramped cabin compartment compared to the 747. The cabin of the 720B contained three rows in the first-class section and 30 rows in economy class, with three seats on either side of the aisle in both sections. Therefore, the total capacity was about 200 persons, including a crew of eight. The Boeing 707 was considered among the most reliable of jet aircraft and, until recently, it served as U.S. Air Force 1 (the President's aircraft).

<sup>2</sup> For many years Pakistan has dominated the sport of squash and several of its world champions have the surname, Khan.



#### CHAPTER FOUR: DOUBLE JEOPARDY: THE BHUTTO YEARS

*The "Subcontinent" (the region comprising India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bhutan) is extremely rich in history, culture, and tradition. It is also a region of the world with a long history of violence that is rooted in clashes between people of different ethnic, religious backgrounds. The region is also characterized by the political dominance of certain powerful families for some time (the Gandhis, the Bhuttos, the Bandaranaiques of Sri Lanka), which has been a source of much fascination to most Westerners. It would have continued to be the same for me, had I not been so directly involved in the circumstances surrounding one of those such struggles, and therefore forced to relegate memories into the background.*

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was in many ways the founder of modern Pakistan, at least of the boundaries of the country that exists today. After partition of India in 1947, the real founder of Pakistan, Mohammed Jinnah, who was also its first head of state, presided over a nation that consisted of the four contiguous provinces of Pakistan (Punjab, Sind, NWFP, and Baluchistan), which were called West Pakistan and the Moslem part of the Bengal region, which was more than a thousand miles away, called East Pakistan.<sup>1</sup> The Hindu part of Bengal remained in India after partition in 1947. The Bengalis and another group known as the Biharis who resided in East Pakistan were in many ways quite different to their West Pakistani counterparts and nowhere was this more evident than in Pakistan's military, which was not only dominated by officers from West Pakistan, but with officers drawn mainly from the Punjab province. Even the Sindhis felt left out.

For the next twenty years Pakistan saw relative peace and calm under General Ayub Khan. However, the economic and political situation deteriorated under General Yahya Khan, who succeeded Ayub Khan in 1969. In 1963 President Ayub Khan had appointed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto as Foreign Minister. Schooled at Berkeley and Oxford University, Mr. Bhutto excelled as a scholar and an orator and was able to develop a very successful practice as a lawyer back home. He also took a great interest in political matters and was instrumental in developing the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), which had been founded by his father, Sir Shah Nawaz Bhutto. The Bhutto family was a wealthy, landowning family and therefore rather powerful. In 1969-70 the national elections saw Mr. Bhutto and his PPP win enough seats to have the majority in West Pakistan, but not enough to govern the whole country. In fact the East Pakistan party of the Awami League, headed by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, won a sufficient

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<sup>1</sup> East Pakistan was predominantly Moslem, as distinct from the Bengal province of India, which is predominantly Hindu.



**CHAPTER FIVE: DOUBLE JEOPARDY -- MY PARTICULAR PREDICAMENT**

*In many occasions, one has only a split second to make a decision. In some cases, the decisions could have life-threatening consequences, and in this case I had to make such a decision. Who knows which of the alternatives was best. All I know is that the proof is in the pudding -- I survived, whereas the wrong decision could have had tragic results.*

**Day Two: Tuesday, March 3, 1981**

It was early in the morning. Sleep was short-lived and there was no feeling of rest in the cramped, cold aircraft. We were awakened by Alamgir's voice again on the microphone, this time in English.

"I remind you, we have no grudge against you, our brothers and sisters. Our quarrel is with the government people on this aircraft and soon we will find out who they are. The American CIA agents, and others who support Zia ul- Haq, they are like government people. We are against Zionism, racism, and imperialism...." Alamgir's English was much better this time. Perhaps he was reading from a statement that had been written for him prior to the departure of PK326 from Karachi. If so, who was really behind this outrageous deed? Who was Alamgir's boss? These were questions to which I had no answers, nor did I care at that point. I only wanted to be rid of this plane. How many times had I heard that phrase of Zionism, racism and imperialism before, but this time it sent a particular chill down my spine, since I had two strikes against me. I was in essence in double jeopardy. While Alamgir need never know that I was Jewish, he could discover easily enough that I was from South Africa. It was a country that was usually grouped together with Israel in the list of countries that had been defiant of the sentiment of most of the world, especially in disregarding countless U. N. resolutions levied against it for apartheid. And this had been going on ever since the infamy of that system of separating the races become known to the world and so affronted its moral senses. Indeed, the system so affronted my own value system that I had no other option than to migrate overseas in search of a new life. I too was a migrant worker of sorts. The difference to my fellow passengers who filled at least half of the aircraft was that I never returned to reside in my birthplace. Given the notoriety of South Africa, it was likely that Alamgir would find a South African to be repugnant to his sense of equity and values - - to the extent that I conceded at the time that he had any values. I wasn't willing to give concede Alamgir this, considering that I was feeling very angry that morning in addition to feeling rather scared.



## CHAPTER SIX: LAST WISHES

*Afghanistan appeared to be a most foreboding place in those days. At that time in 1981, Kabul was controlled by the former Soviet Union and menacing Soviet soldiers (some Russian and Ukrainian soldiers, but mainly those from the Central Asian republics) were all around. So much has changed in the ten years since then, with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent states (CIS). However, as I look now at photographs of the liberation of Kabul by the Mujahaddin freedom guerrillas and the collapse of Najibullah's government in early 1992, the current images, still filled with soldiers (this time they are bearded and turbanned but still with AK-47s strung around their backs), look no less frightening. Only that the cast of characters in power has changed, but the guns are still everywhere.*

### Day Three: Wednesday, March 4, 1981

Daybreak came. I peered out my window to see Soviet military aircraft taking off with their bombing bays fully loaded. Later in the morning, I observed them return with the bays empty. Some poor Afghan villagers had presumably absorbed the thunderous impact of those bombs and who knows how many persons had been killed. I also saw an Aeroflot jetliner land and Soviet soldiers alight. There were no tourists. After all, who would be taking a holiday in Afghanistan during these times.

I had read a fair amount about the Soviet Union's incursion into Afghanistan in December 1989 and its subsequent futile attempt to subject the population to socialist control. By 1981 the Soviet military, with weak support from the soldiers of Babrak Karmal's government, found itself totally bogged down in Afghanistan. On several occasions in Peshawar and Islamabad I had met Western journalists who liked to compare the situation to the U.S. debacle in Vietnam, and they predicted a similar disastrous result for the Soviet Union if it did not withdraw soon. Thus, my first-hand witnessing of Soviet military aircraft on bombing missions gave me a sense that I was observing history repeat itself with a different set of actors, none of whom had learned anything from nearly fifteen years of misguided American experience in Vietnam. I pulled out my copy of the *Best and the Brightest* from my seat pocket and began to immerse myself in it so as to shut out the awful images that were all around me, both inside and outside of this metal prison in which I was confined.

At that juncture I felt a need to use the toilet and when hijacker No.2 indicated that the first class bathroom one was occupied, he motioned me to go to the back. As I approached the last row, there was Alamgir bending over and shouting at the man who had earlier slipped his gold ring into the



CHAPTER SEVEN: DEATH ON THE RUNWAY

*There is a major difference between the hijacking of a plane, or even risking the eventual killing of hostages in a shootout attempt, be they killed by SWAT team gunfire or that of the hijackers, and the shooting of a hostage person in cold-blood, in a pre-meditated manner. The former constitutes manslaughter (second-degree murder) in legal terms, whereas the latter constitutes first-degree murder, and generally the courts in most countries have followed this distinction. The Hamadi brothers must surely have comprehended this distinction, when the elder brother shot and killed U.S. Navy pilot Robert Stethem on board TWA847 in June 1985 and was later tried in Germany for this murder (see Appendix). Alamgir, too, with his Karachi university training also obviously knew the difference. So did the passengers, who now realized that the stakes had irreversibly escalated to a different level.*

Day Four: Thursday, March 5, 1981

On the fourth day the feeling of claustrophobia started to get the better of me. I yearned for stretching my legs, for running on a road somewhere, for seeing a sports game, and most of all for seeing Gwynn. The days were slowly unfolding in a closed space of about 100 feet in length and 14 feet in width. A confined space, one would say, to have to spend a half a month of your life with one hundred and fifty other sweating, terrified persons.

I began to think about my favorite sports team, the New York Mets. Perhaps they would have a winning season again, while the Yankees would likely get embroiled in strife when the baseball season opened in Spring. Images of the New York Giants flooded my mind. They had just finished another successful football season, certainly as compared to the Jets. I realized that all this yearning was not because I really wanted to play or see football or baseball at that point. My mind was *transferring* the desire to be free of this confined plane to the desire to be running free on a field. I tried to shut out the sports images as they were only making me feel more agitated.

I then started to think about planes, specifically about the Boeing 720B. This might be more productive, I told myself, as at least it might give me some clues regarding how to hatch an escape plan. That soon proved to be a dead end. I then thought about the safety of the 720B, lest we have to take to the air again. Of the parts that count in any plane -- the engines, the wings, the flaps, the hydraulics, and the radar and navigation equipment -- there did not seem to be any problem with our plane. These parts had all functioned properly on the unexpected flight into Kabul, including through



CHAPTER EIGHT: SUMMONED TO DUTY

*The relaying of clear voice instructions in situations of deadlocked negotiations is crucial. I never chose to play this role; rather it was thrust on me, and even the best training might not have sufficed.*

Day Six: Saturday, March 7, 1981

By this time the fatigue was getting to me. I no longer thought about showers, clothes or milk shakes. The desperate need for sleep and survival dominated my mind. I managed to get a bit of breakfast down, and then asked permission from Alamgir to go and use the bathroom at the back. It's not that the front one was occupied -- it was just inoperable from accumulated feces and paper. The resultant stench was neutralizing any benefits that the first class cabin had over economy class. Still, I preferred being near the cockpit -- a valuable vantage point from where one could follow a little more closely the unfolding developments. Another benefit was that Alamgir chose to man the front of the aircraft surveillance, with No.3 in the back, and No.2 on the prowl, roaming between the front and rear most of the time. With Alamgir standing nearby most of the time that he was not in the cockpit working the radio, I was able to signal any requests that I had to someone who understood my mother tongue. Whether this was a benefit is debatable, since Alamgir ignored the few requests that I had, and being in his direct vision most of the time brought on new risks for me, as I became an accessible target.<sup>1</sup>

As I walked to the rear toilet, I was shocked to see that the wife of the Midwestern couple was still on board. I had thought that all the women had been released except for the grandmother, whom I already knew about. I could only surmise that, from the hijackers' perspective, the bargaining value of an American woman was much higher than that of their compatriots. Thus, they had earlier been willing to set free the Pakistani women, but not this American woman.<sup>2</sup> How ruthless was Alamgir behaving. The fact that he would now and again smile at some of the Pakistani hostages did not

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout the entire two weeks, I never once heard the sinister man utter a word of English, while the burly hijacker was able to muster only a few English words.

<sup>2</sup> In the hijacking of an EGYPT AIR plane to Malta in 1986, an American woman, along with the few American men that were on board, was singled out by the hijackers for possible execution. This incident, together with PK326, was one of the few cases when the usually sacrosanct custom that women are not placed in the same threatening or injurious situation as men, was violated by the hijackers.



CHAPTER NINE: A CHANGE IN DIRECTION: THE SYRIAN-LIBYAN LINK

*The respective roles of Libya and Syria were never very clear. At times, they seemed to be in collusion with each other; yet at other times they took different positions with regard to the fate of PK326, just as they seem to have played the same dovetailing roles in the case of the Lockerbie bombing of PAN AM 103. The latter is not my conjecture, but that of some highly placed individuals in the United States, as well as the bereaved PAN AM relatives support group, who cite Israeli intelligence sources for the basis of this allegation. The debate still swirls around, despite even the International Court of Justice in the Hague having gotten involved, as well. The Court confirmed the validity of the extradition order for the two Libyans and the U. N. Security council proceeded with sanctions against Libya in the Spring of 1992, armed with the world court judgement. Meanwhile, the affected persons, namely the bereaved relatives, and the United States State Department remain locked in testy debate, as they believe as that it was Syria that was behind the Lockerbie bombing, or that they at least trained the agents involved. So what was the precise role of Syria, and that of Libya for that matter, in our equally dangerous, if not as tragic situation?*

Given the circumstances, Gwynn was coping very well with the mounting pressure back home. She continued to go to work daily, if only to relieve the constant dread of what might happen next to us. There was no confirmation of my status, although my radio message to Delhi Control Tower was relayed to the United States and on to her. Consequently, she knew that, as of Saturday, the 7th of March, I was alive but under duress. The authorities also relayed the substance of my radio conversation with Roger Davis. At about noon of the seventh day, she received a call from her 'contact persons', that U.S. satellite tracking equipment had picked up our aircraft. According to their calculations, we appeared to be heading towards North Africa, possibly to Egypt, Tunisia, or Libya. *Libya!* That's all her husband needed at that point, she thought. Her mood darkened, but there was nothing to be done. A few hours later, she got another call -- the satellite tracking equipment was now showing that our plane had inexplicably changed direction, turned right and was now moving northwards up the Bahrain straits. U.S. intelligence believed that Damascus, Syria or Beirut, Lebanon might be our eventual destinations. The U. S. was making arrangements to intensify its 'monitoring capacity' over both of those two airports. Gwynn's concern was not lessened at all by these new developments.

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**CHAPTER TEN: DESPERATION**

*The continental divide: the gulf between us across the Mediterranean sea and the Atlantic Ocean gets wider, and the abyss in which we are about to fall comes closer.*

**Day Eleven: Thursday March 12, 1981:**

In the morning the mood of the aircraft started deteriorating rapidly again. No one needed reminding of the extended, and probably the last deadline. Alamgir spent most of the morning talking with Syrian ground control. He was agitated. I heard him say something like: " Why they cannot be found? Zia must find those prisoners. I wait no more. Tonight we start, 7:00 p.m., on the hour and once every hour, I will kill one person. We start with the hated CIA agents we have on board here, ... then the other foreigners, ... then the government officials, ... and then all of the others. I am tired of waiting. I am tired your delay. Zia has had enough time, ... you tell him!"

Not everyone in the aircraft could hear this chilling speech. I did, however, for he spoke in English this time (I guess to make the point inescapably clear) and was still sitting nearby to the front. as usual, he kept the door to the pilot's cabin open, to facilitate his surveillance. Perhaps, he also wanted us to hear so that we all knew where we stood. Alamgir ceased to play the radio and we were shut off from all further broadcasts. The trivialities were over. Alamgir's mood was deadly grim. There was no mistaking it this time. He refused several requests from ground control to speak and he shouted at them:

"No more food, no more medicine, clear the runway around us and send ambulances when I tell you!"

It was two p.m. in the afternoon. Five hours to countdown, ... the worst countdown imaginable. We were ordered not to talk to anyone, anymore. Alamgir and his two cohorts then pulled all of the shades down in the aircraft windows. At least this sheltered us from the relentless sun, and gave some respite from the heat, even though the blasted air conditioning generator outside was not functioning again. No one was allowed to go to the bathroom, and a couple of men were heard to be moaning that they had wet their trousers or their *shalwar kamiz*, as the case may be. It mattered not, no



## CHAPTER ELEVEN: COUNTDOWN TO EXECUTION

*A chilling resignation to the reality of Alamgir's threats and weapons came over me. The feeling was like nothing that I had ever experienced before -- perhaps a prisoner of war facing a firing squad, or a condemned man on death row might have understood the feelings and thoughts that were rushing through my head. But then again, they might not have understood, as in those other cases there are quite different circumstances that lead up to the perilous situation, causing the victim/aggressor to resign himself to the belief that he would not possibly survive a particular incident. Was my life really about to come to an end? And what would come after? The notion of life after death was too difficult a concept for me to embrace there and then.*

Over the past ten years, I have been asked many questions about my experiences on PK326. These questions have ranged (in ascending order of importance) from questions like ... "What did they give you to eat, all that time on board?; What were the toilet conditions like?; Did you get any sleep?; What did you do during those whole two weeks?;" ... to questions like ... "Were you scared?; Was anyone killed on the flight?; and what did you think about, when you realized that the prospect of death was very imminent?" Not many people have asked me the last question, I guess because they are concerned to not take me back through extremely stressful thoughts and walk over uncomfortable terrain. However, I am pleased that people have felt sufficiently at ease to ask me this key question, because any concern for dredging up the memories of the past is both unnecessary and academic. When one has lived through days of contemplating one's impending demise, these thoughts and memories never go away, just as the image of someone being murdered at close range to oneself also never go away. Those are the types of images and memories that are branded into one's brain forever.

Yes, during the previous ten days there were several times when I thought that death was at hand. Two of these came when Alamgir grabbed me out of my seat to do the radio transmissions. Several times during the flight immediately after the hijackers commandeered the aircraft, and again during our flight from Kabul to Damascus, I thought that our Boeing 720-B might crash at any moment. Images of our bodies strewn in hundreds of fragments across the dusty terrain of Beluchistan or Iran or some mountain in Afghanistan had filled my mind. But none of those moments of panic approached the type of thoughts that I had in the period between 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. that Thursday. They were the kind of thoughts and feelings that I had never experienced before and hope I never have to again.



CHAPTER TWELVE: THE REPRIEVE

*No country has a monopoly on violence, but clearly some regions of the world are more violent than others. The United States, and more particularly, parts of New York City may be among the most violent, if one is talking about criminal violence. The Subcontinent ranks high in terms of political violence, but nothing compares with Cambodia in the seventies, except for Nazi Germany. Those were the real killing fields.*

Over the years I had come to form certain impressions about places and their moods and feelings. Certain parts of the world have always seemed to be more violent than others. In local environments I felt this way about Harlem, New York, Soweto in South Africa and Trenchtown in Kingston, Jamaica. All three were tough neighborhoods whose streets I had sometimes walked along, never alone, however. I knew little about Harlem at first hand except that I had often whizzed through its inhospitable streets when my taxi from La Guardia or John F. Kennedy airports tried to avoid the congested East Side Highway enroute to midtown Manhattan. To me, certain cities also felt rather violent. I felt this way about Kingston, Bombay, Manila, and Bogota, to name a few that I had occasion to visit more than a half dozen times each. Certain countries seemed to me to be inherently more violent than others, usually on account of political unrest and violence. While it might not be entirely the fault of the policies of the various governments, their responses in dealing with the outbreaks of violence would more often than not exacerbate the situations. I had lived part of my life in, or visited many times, countries ranging from South Africa, El Salvador, the Philippines, India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka and these were all countries in which I felt there existed a violent undertone to life, requiring one to be careful at all times. Vigilant law and order was not sufficient by itself to deal with the problems and one had to get at the root of the socio-political factors causing the violence. Germany had the world's worst bout of abject violence and senseless killing during the 1930s and mid-1940s, and most of the world either was, or acted oblivious of the goings-on there. So, violence in its worst form is not something confined to the developing country world. Even the so-called "civilized societies" have succumbed to evil at times.

Many writers and historians have observed the very violent undertones that exist in India and Pakistan. The English colonialists in the eighteen hundreds noticed it. Indeed, they may have even caused a good deal of it by their own brutal methods of carrying out the will of the British Empire. The inability to keep on carrying out that dominance and the tremendous costs involved eventually forced the Labor Government of Prime Minister Clement Atlee to grant independence to India in 1947. After



**CHAPTER THIRTEEN: THE WAITING GAME AGAIN**

*To this day, no one knows if there was any one particular straw that broke the camel's back. Was it the particular threat to kill the foreigners that had prodded Zia into action, or was it that he had become so frustrated with the whole situation that he finally gave way to Alamgir's demands? Given that the foreign hostages were the first to come so perilously close to the brink, having been only twenty minutes from execution (aside from the fate of Tariq Rahim), it appeared that it was indeed the threat to kill the foreigners that was the straw that broke Zia's back. That is not an encouraging message for Western travellers and the international press called it that way. But, put the reporters in our shoes; how would they feel, ... which way would they come out?*

It could have been any one of a combination of factors that brought about our reprieve, and that of all the other hostages. To begin with, the ordeal of PK 326 had already reached its tenth day and the apparent stalemate was not bringing any of the parties any political capital at this point. Moreover, there was mounting international sentiment that something needed to be done soon to bring the seizure of the aircraft to an end; yet, a rescue operation was continuing to seem unlikely, given the extent of the weaponry that Alamgir and his two accomplices had at their disposal.

The night that we received the communique of the Government of Pakistan's agreement to meet the essence of Alamgir's demands (there were other conditions relating to the exchange of prisoners with ourselves) was the first time in ten nights that I was able to get some meaningful rest. Upto then, I had been able to snatch no more than a few hours of uninterrupted sleep at a time. In the whole period since we had left Karachi, therefore, this amounted to no more than a total of 10-20 hours of sleep. It is incredible how one's mind and body can summon up the extra reserves needed to get through exacting situations. If someone had to tell me that in the next two hundred and forty hours I was to get only ten hours of sleep, just the thought of that prospect would exhaust me. To be sure, one is functioning on extra adrenalin, and that's what keeps one going. But there are limits, and my mind and body had about reached them. So the brief rest was a very welcome respite from the awful living nightmare, which was far from over as it turned out.

**Day twelve: Friday, March 13, 1981:**

We were awakened by the crackling of the radio, this time over the intercom again, and then the familiar brief music and the crisp English voice began: "Good morning, this is London, and



CHAPTER FOURTEEN: A NEW KIND OF DANGER

*The Syrian connection again; just where will it end? Who was behind all of this?*

When Syrian Air touched down from London, I wasn't able to see it clearly. Nor was Gwynn able to distinguish the hostage plane from the prisoner plane. All she could see was that the two Pakistani planes were on either side of the runway. She was whisked off by her 'contacts' directly to the airport terminal building. Thereafter, she was quickly processed and escorted to the Meridien Hotel in downtown Damascus. She was immensely relieved to be closer to the situation and to see if she could render any assistance in securing our release. The two parts of our story, previously ten thousand miles apart, were beginning to come together. Little did we know at the time that another cruel twist of fate was going to delay the reunion, and present new and ominous risks again. Gwynn in her resourceful way had tried to enquire from various sources when the release of hostages was going to take place. It appeared that the prisoners were first going to be released and checked out before the release of the hostages could take place. But Gwynn could not ascertain from the Syrian contacts or anyone else when this was likely to be.

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On board our plane, Alamgir was getting nervous again. He mumbled something to the effect that this was all taking far too long. Eventually, he got word from the control tower that all prisoners had been released and had been taken to an unknown destination in Damascus. The Syrian negotiator assured Alamgir that this step had occurred and that Alamgir must release all his hostages at once and surrender his arms and ammunition. We were elated! The sky had become dark by now. In one of the strangest twists of irony, it turned out that many of the Pakistani prisoners had not wanted to be flown out of Pakistan and into exile status abroad. They had therefore refused to board the aircraft in Pakistan and the only way that the authorities there could get them aboard, was to force them at gunpoint and to handcuff them to the seats of the plane. Months later I came across a photograph in one of the newspapers showing the release of the prisoners in which the shackles on the arms of some of the prisoners are quite visible. Needless to say, the authorities at Damascus airport were very surprised -- they hadn't seen too many instances of prisoners being flown out to freedom **against their will** to the



**CHAPTER FIFTEEN: ESCAPE FROM A MURKY WORLD**

*Happiness was escape and freedom in this case meant another flight, but one that quite different this time!*

**Day Fourteen: Sunday, March 15, 1981.**

In the middle of the night, which was by now early Sunday morning in Damascus, Gwynn, who was also running short on sleep, was informed that the hostages had been released from the PIA plane. However, she was stunned to be told that there was confusion and uncertainty about where the hostages were at this point. The American Embassy, as well as other interested parties namely, Pakistan, Sweden and Canada, were all trying to find out where the hostages had been taken. How could this have happened, she asked herself. She had been assured that the appropriate officials were going to be on the tarmac to greet the hostages and to bring them to their various destinations, presumably their embassies or in Gwynn's case the Meridian Hotel. She was asked to stay put in her hotel room until the location of the hostages was determined.

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In the hospital, we were herded into large wards and told to sit down on the beds, which were reasonably clean. Some Syrian soldiers, accompanied by nurses in white uniforms, came in and said that we were here for a medical check-up. First, we were to have showers. The nurses turned around and left. Showers!! The word was music to my ears. I had almost forgotten what the feel of running water was like. Immediately, the hands of competing hostages shot up, much like any first grade classroom of eager children. One or two of the hostages tried to advance their case by pushing forward in the line that was already beginning to form. The Syrian soldiers, looking a little uncertain about how to handle this minor crowd panic that was developing, and unable to communicate in either English or in Urdu, decided that a rifle spoke clearest us. So, they took their rifles off their shoulders and started aiming at us. The "crowd" responded immediately, as any police officer would tell you.

After finding myself about twentieth in the line, I was able to move into the men's restroom, was given a towel and a bar of soap, and I proceeded to spend the next ten minutes in sheer luxury. A jacuzzi has never felt as good. Afterwards, I moved to a cracked mirror in the bathroom and



CHAPTER SIXTEEN: STRANDS OF A FABRIC

*At last, the puzzle comes together. The Syrian connection is apparent, and that of the Soviet Union as well.*

This tale has been like patchwork and it couldn't be helped because events that clarified some of the remaining puzzles and outstanding questions only occurred later, sometimes much later. Four of the key puzzles that lingered were: *What ever happened to Alamgir and his accomplices? What happened to the 55 released prisoners? Who really was behind the hijacking of PK326? And what was the eventual fate of Peter William?* As time has unfolded over these past ten years, some of the questions have been answered. Time will tell whether the outstanding questions will be clarified or will they remain perplexing puzzles?

About two years subsequent to the hijacking of PK326 the co-pilot called me up and said that he was doing some research for PIA in his days off in between flying the jumbo flights to and from Karachi to New York. It was good to hear from him and we had a busy lunch recounting stories and impressions. The Pakistani hostages did return to their country via Jeddah and the co-pilot chuckled about that conversation that I had engaged in with the Ambassador. Yes, the main pilot had come under a cloud in Pakistan when he returned home and at PIA's "thank you" celebration, Major-General (Retired) Rahim Khan handed out the President of Pakistan's commendation certificates, as well as cash awards amounting to Rs. 10,0000 (about five hundred U.S. dollars) to each of five persons -- the co-pilot First Officer Yunaid Younus, the two stewardesses Naila Nazeer and Farzana Sharif, and two of the Pakistani passengers, who lived in Peshawar and had performed some special act of service on board, of which I was unaware. The apparent reason for Captain Saeed Khan not having been given any commendation or cash award was because he had relinquished his responsibilities as skipper of the aircraft in the midst of the two week ordeal. This seemed rather unfair to me, since Captain Saeed Khan was clearly ill and was feeling a tremendous amount of psychological pressure, as we all were. Nevertheless, PIA did not look kindly on his conduct during the crisis. PIA's displeasure may also have been because the captain was seen as too yielding towards the hijackers demands and instructions.

"But, Yunaid...." I asked "of the co-pilot "what was the Captain supposed to do?"



CHAPTER SEVENTEEN: MANILA SUNRISE

*The meeting up of friends, some two years later after the demise of Rajiv Gandhi. And so, the Indian dynasty has ended, yet in neighboring Pakistan the Bhutto saga lives on.*

It was 7:00 o'clock in the morning and our United Airlines Boeing 747-400 was descending for its landing at Manila's international airport, named after Benigno Aquino. The bay was a beautiful sight. The water glistened as the rays of the early morning light bounced off the placid waves. The large tankers were moored out to sea. I looked at one sad specimen in particular: its sagging hull bore their usual decrepid look. Peeling black and grey paint was everywhere, separated by long streaks of orange-red rust. Foul water was being disgorged out of the starboard porthole. Manila port was always overcrowded with the wait to obtain permission to dock lasting sometimes 5-6 days, at least. On board the plane. I got my things together and bid farewell to Surjit Singh.

"Hope to see you one day, Alistair -- look me up in New York, I'm sure I will still be working at National Airlines. We can trade more harrowing stories."

"You bet, ...take care and have a good time in Manila, ... there are some wonderful fish restaurants in the city where you can pick out the whole fish right there as though you were in a supermarket, throw it into your shopping cart, and give it to the restaurant to cook it for you according to the style you like. Once I watched as one of their chefs prepared shashimi for a couple of Japanese customers by serving them yellow tail fish so fresh that it was still quivering on the plate next to the green mustard and soy sauce. A sharp knife to the head took care of that yellow-tail fish..... try it, you will enjoy the food.... The Open Seafood Market, right there in Makati and there's another one in Ermita, near Roxas Boulevard."

As the 400 plus passengers disembarked from the huge plane, I looked back at the front of the aircraft's nose and gazed at the cone-shape looming above me. Strange how uncomfortable I had felt sitting downstairs in the front section, the previous evening after we had taken off from San Francisco. The cockpit window was reflecting the sun's bright rays, and I could see the pilot beckoning to his co-pilot. Being able to see them sitting there gave me a sense of relief -- this vehicle did have a driver after all. Perhaps I might indeed be able to fly another jumbo 747 without having to be in direct



view of the cockpit door. The flight attendant who had given permission for me to switch to the other seat approached me in the terminal building as she was walking by towards customs.

"Did you find that other seat to be better, Mr. Smith. ... hope you had a chance to get some sleep?"

"A little, perhaps .... I never sleep well on planes, you know, but your food was good and Patriot Games was even better!"

"Yes, flying can be uncomfortable at times.... especially these long trips across the Pacific....I get quite stressed out. It's better for you, the passengers."

*Not always.....I thought ... Little did she know how uncomfortable it can get.....* but I decided not to tell her about my 13-day experience back in 1981. Besides, she would have likely been in junior high school then, and therefore would not have known much, if anything at all, about the odyssey of PK326.

"Have a good rest now, Mr. Smith and perhaps we will see you again on United."

"Not likely.....you know what Manila's like, but see you again one day, maybe on flight 808 on return to the U.S. mainland." I knew that I was unlikely to see her in Manila again, as United's crew hung out at the Philippines Plaza, down at the other end of the bay from the Manila Hotel. One long road, but a world apart in ambience...the old and the new...*Gosh, if you weren't so colonial, Alistair* I thought. However, there's always the Open Seafood Market, where one might be able to, lo and behold, "bump into her." I knew that the airline crews liked to frequent that place as well, in addition to the casino up on the 23rd floor of the *Silahis International Hotel*. I glanced at her shining, streaked blonde hair as it bounced off her shoulders. She whisked by, a strong whiff of Chanel perfume following in close order. Her whole image was extremely pleasant, if not a trifle enticing.

After proceeding through immigration and customs, instead of going straight to the taxis, I left my baggage with the dispatcher, and turned around to go back into the departure lounge as I had to get some ticket re-writing done for a change in flights. I wasn't going to stay more than a few days and it was necessary to re-book my flights. On walking by the duty free shops, I noticed that in one of the electronic shops, they were playing a video of "Tequila Sunrise" with Mel Gibson and Michelle Pfeiffer. I was drawn, like some magnet, to the images of the fiery boat explosion in the last scenes as Gibson escapes the ring of drug traffickers and corrupt police and manages to find the alluring Pfeiffer again. I was riveted on the scenes of the shoot-out, my mind till whirling around with



Alamgir/Ghandhi/Mel Gibson images -- a potpourri of unconnected violent images hanging together like some string of brightly colored clashing beads. Would I be able to set aside those images? The beauty of Michelle Pfeiffer was replaced by Gwynn's striking countenance and I longed to return home again. I wished that I could just keep on going on through departures and leave my suitcase on the sidewalk to be auctioned off to some pawn shop. Vistas of my conversation with the Pakistan Ambassador, when I had last told someone to auction my case flooded back into my mind. *The world is like a slowly (or at times rapidly) rotating record album -- only that the location and characters change*, I thought to myself. Should I just keep on proceeding through departures and jump on -- if I could -- the next plane bound for the U.S. or should I keep to my Manila itinerary? Reason came back to me and I proceeded to the ticket counter to have my ticket re-routed for departure the following week on the usual United flight 808. I then made my way back to the sidewalk to pick up my suitcase and proceed onto the the Manila Hotel.

At the hotel, Premchand, who had been so helpful to me in May 1991, was again visiting Manila and had checked into his "home away from home" the night before. We encountered each other in the hotel's sumptuous lobby and exchanged warm handshakes.

"So how are things in India. It didn't disintegrate after Rajiv Gandhi's death...." I said.

"No Alistair, but look at all of the recent violence that erupted after the burning down of that Moslem mosque in Bombay. I see no end to this....And you, how are things in America?"

"Well, I feel good, ... Clinton is really going to shake things up and I think it's long overdue. .... my friends there are so enthusiastic. I must say,.... things do seem quite different to the gloom that I was feeling in 1991."

"We will see, but you know people in India would like to see some attention paid to issues that concern us back home, and also the tension that we still have with Pakistan.

We said goodbye as each of us had to move onto our respective appointments. I shuffled on and made my way up to the ninth floor: Room 904 again -- the very same room as I had on the night of May 22, 1991. I strode into the room, almost bowling over the surprised porter who was laden down with my two bags.

"Ever been here before, Sir?"



"Several times, the last one was in May 1991. You might remember that the Prime Minister of India was killed in that month. A woman blew him up, and herself as well in the process. Things are quieter here in Manila, aren't they, at least for now" I asked with a hopeful expression on my face.

"Oh yes Sir, yes Sir, you won't have any trouble, just don't walk the streets of Mabini at night

"You know where India is, I take it?"

The porter managed to put on a most knowing look, but I knew that he barely knew where India was situated on the map, let alone who had been its leaders. However, if I had been talking about little league baseball, that would've been different. The controversy of the August 1992 Little League World series was still raging in the local press.

Down on the docks, Premchand was walking around, exercising his weary legs. *Too much flying*, he whispered to himself... *need to slow down*. Premchand was clearly still worried. *Would real peace, devoid of religious and ethnic strife ever descend on India? And what about our neighbors, in Pakistan?*

Meanwhile, I sauntered on downstairs and gazed at the Herald Tribune. A headline read that Benazir Bhutto, leader of the Opposition, might well regain her position as Prime Minister, if the Government of Nawaz Sharif were to fall on a no-confidence vote, or if it resigns because of ineptitude in dealing with the spreading crime in Karachi and the country's fiscal woes, which stemmed in part from the damage caused by the huge floods in Punjab in late-1992. If elections were held today, the Tribune said, Benazir's People's Progressive Party (PPP) would win by a comfortable margin.

That special feeling -- call it trepidation or call it discomfort -- ran down my spine. What will Benazir do about the army's allegations about Murtaza's role in the PK326 hijacking? I chose not to worry about that and to go get some rest in my room.

The white-capped elevator bellman doffed his hat and smiled. The elevator whisked its way to the ninth floor. No cables snapping this time. On alighting, I bounded down the corridor, inserted my computerized card facsimile that serves as a personal key, flung open the door of Room 904 and flopped onto the bed. After pulling off my tie and kicking off my shoes off, I turned over and drifted into a blissful sleep at last.

*The genie was finally back in the bottle and there he shall stay! Insha Allah, I said to myself.*



CHAPTER EIGHTEEN: A PLEA FOR IMPROVED SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

*Regrettably, there is a direct link between the general issue of airline (and airport) safety and specific events like hijackings and the sabotaging of aircraft, either while in flight or on the ground. The issue, it seems, has very much to do with the complex considerations surrounding the public's right to know in advance of certain aspects that might affect their decisions regarding their own personal safety, and that of their families, and balanced against that, the need to not alarm the public unduly. As mentioned in Chapters 15-16, there were three breakdowns in procedure in the case of the hijacking of PK326 that bear directly on the general issue of safety against various forms of terrorism, and general safety precautions for that matter:*

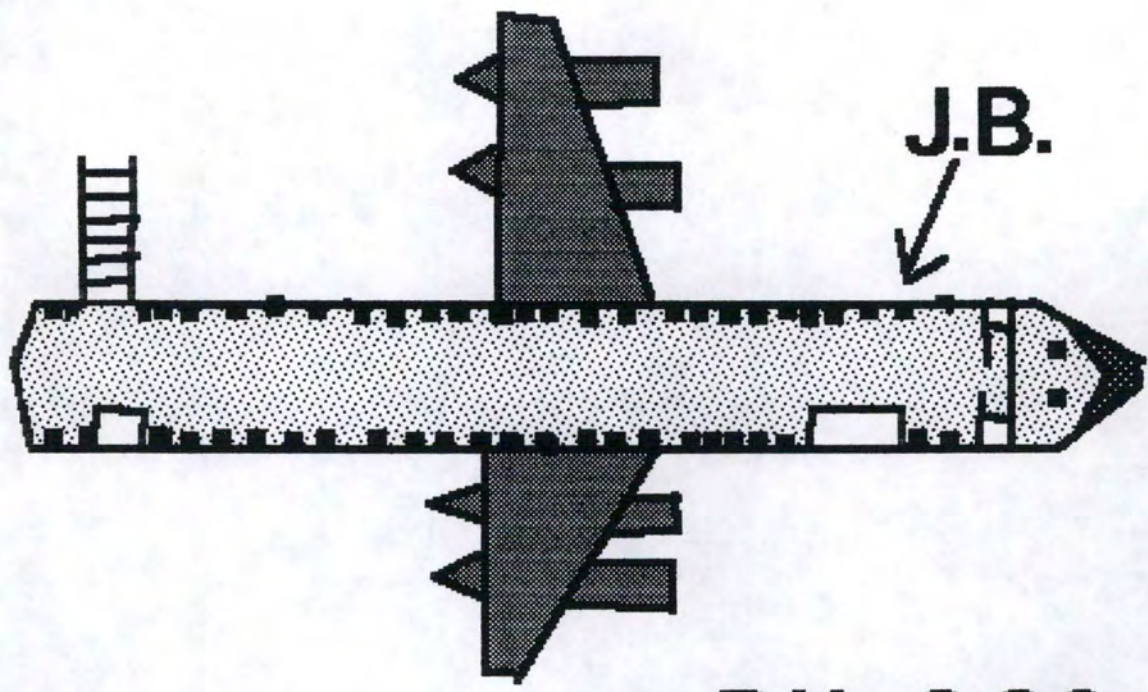
- (i) it is believed that the weapons and ammunition that Alamgir and his two accomplices used were smuggled on board by ground staff, who carried on board a stretcher in which the weapons and ammunition were concealed under the blankets of the "sick passenger", a complete breakdown in procedure, despite the fact that Karachi airport had experienced other lapses (see Appendix);*
- (ii) there was no release of any information (to the passengers at least) that a threat had in fact been made in advance against PIA prior to the flight of PK326;*
- (iii) there was a complete absence of any investigation report thereafter, so the public is none the wiser.*

*On the question of disclosure of full information to the public, these are difficult questions as one does not want to alarm passengers (and their families) unnecessarily. However, all I ask is that each person in the capacity to influence matters, whether they be at the corporate or government regulatory level, consider some of the points that I am raising in this chapter.*

-----  
Manila, May 1991

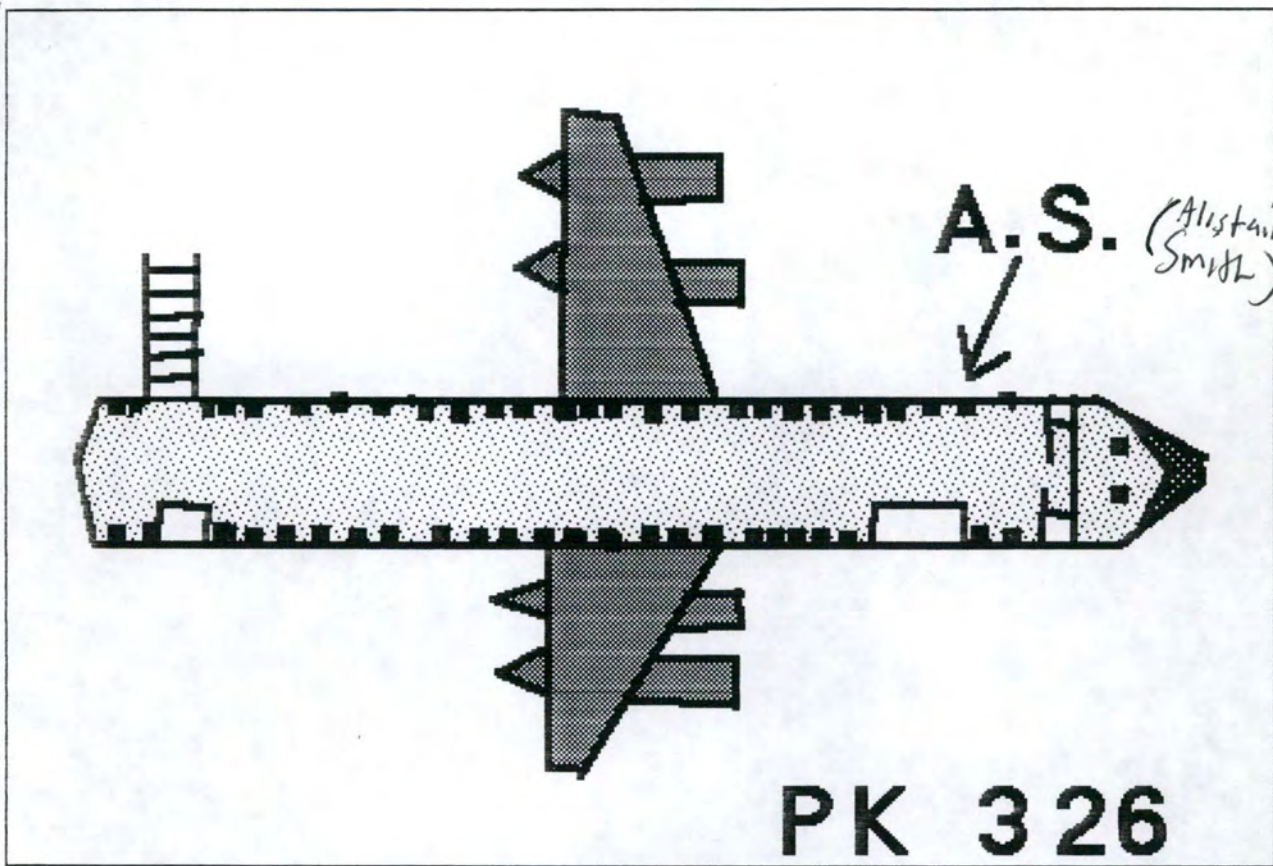
As I finished this recounting of my half-month ordeal of PK326 of more than a decade ago, I reflected on how little things had changed. Yes, the preponderance of hijackings had diminished (see Appendix), but the issue of general airline and airport safety was as pertinent as ever. I was glad that ten years after my particular traumatic incident, after having repressed it for most of those years, I was now interested in it again. Yes, there was a deeper relevance, and it had taken me a long time to fathom it out. I had pursued the issues and the seemingly unrelated events that occurred years later to weave





**PK 326**

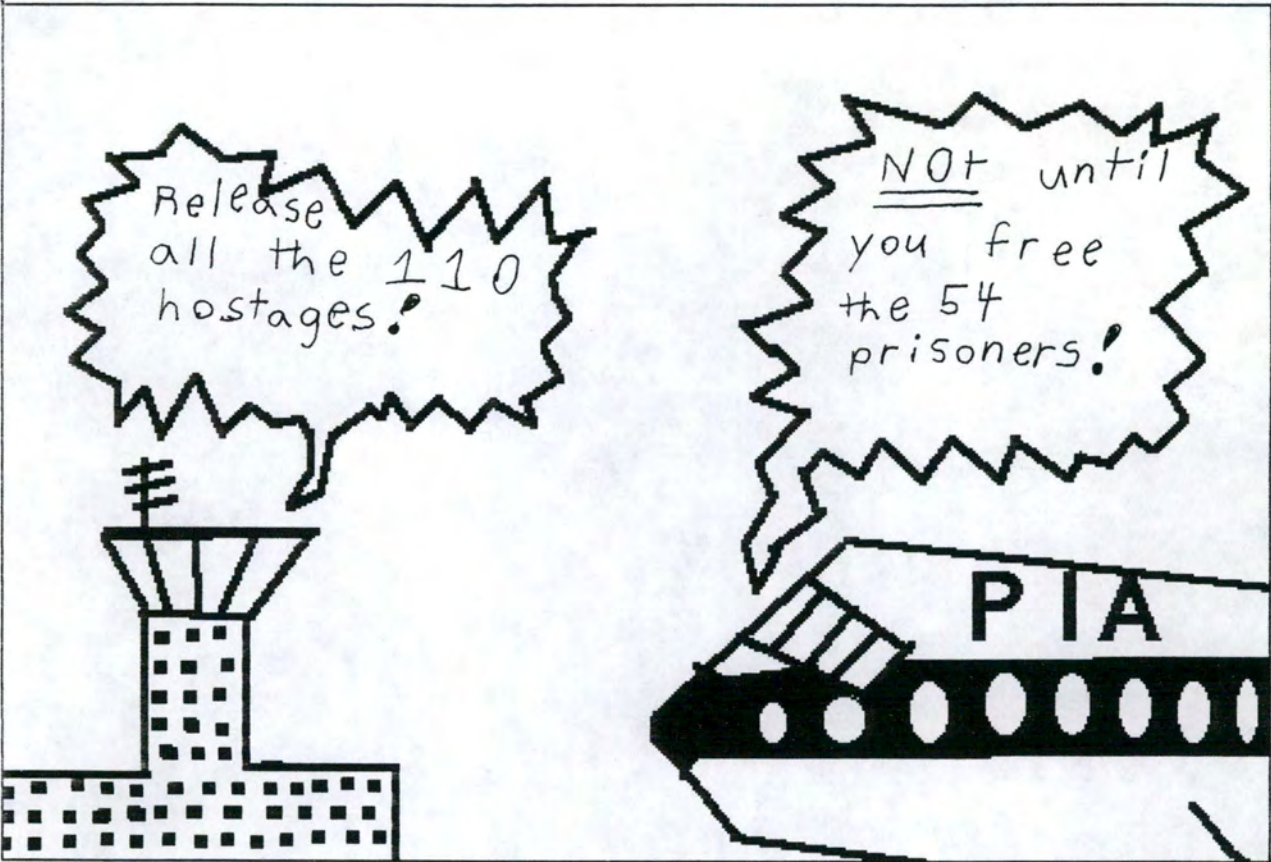




**A.S.** (Alistair Smith)

**PK 326**





Release  
all the 110  
hostages!

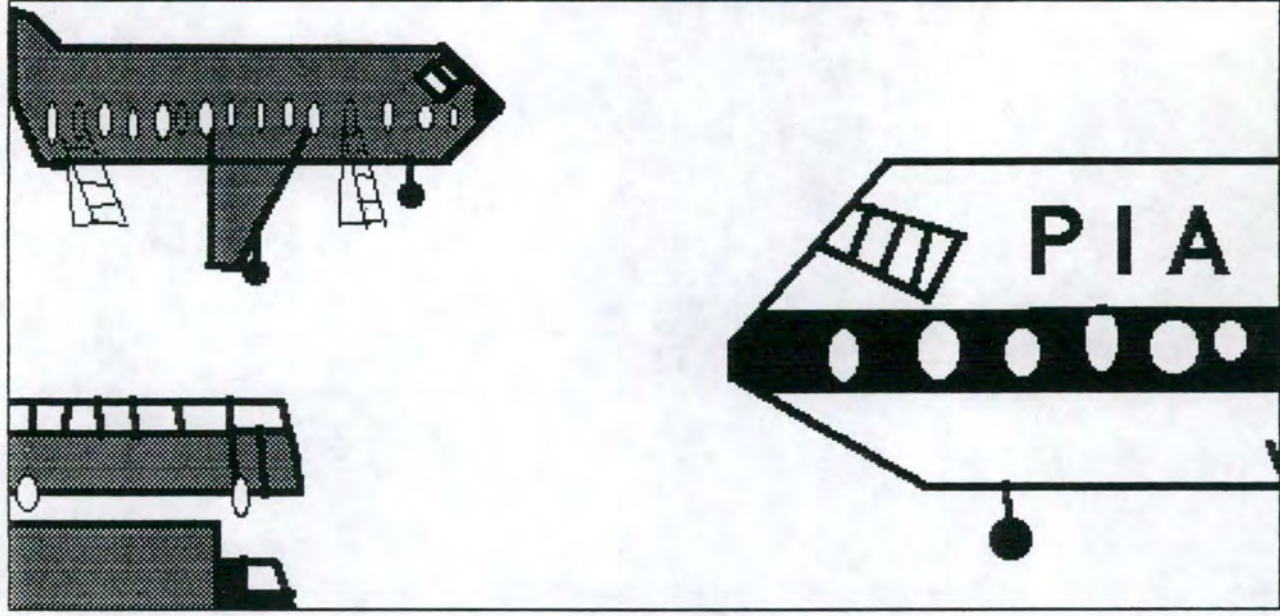
NOT until  
you free  
the 54  
prisoners!

PIA



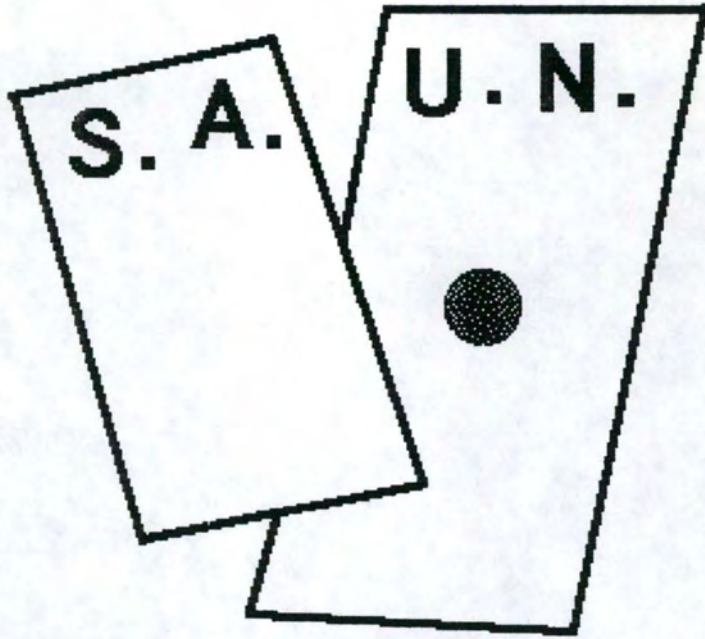
# THE EXCHANGE

54:110

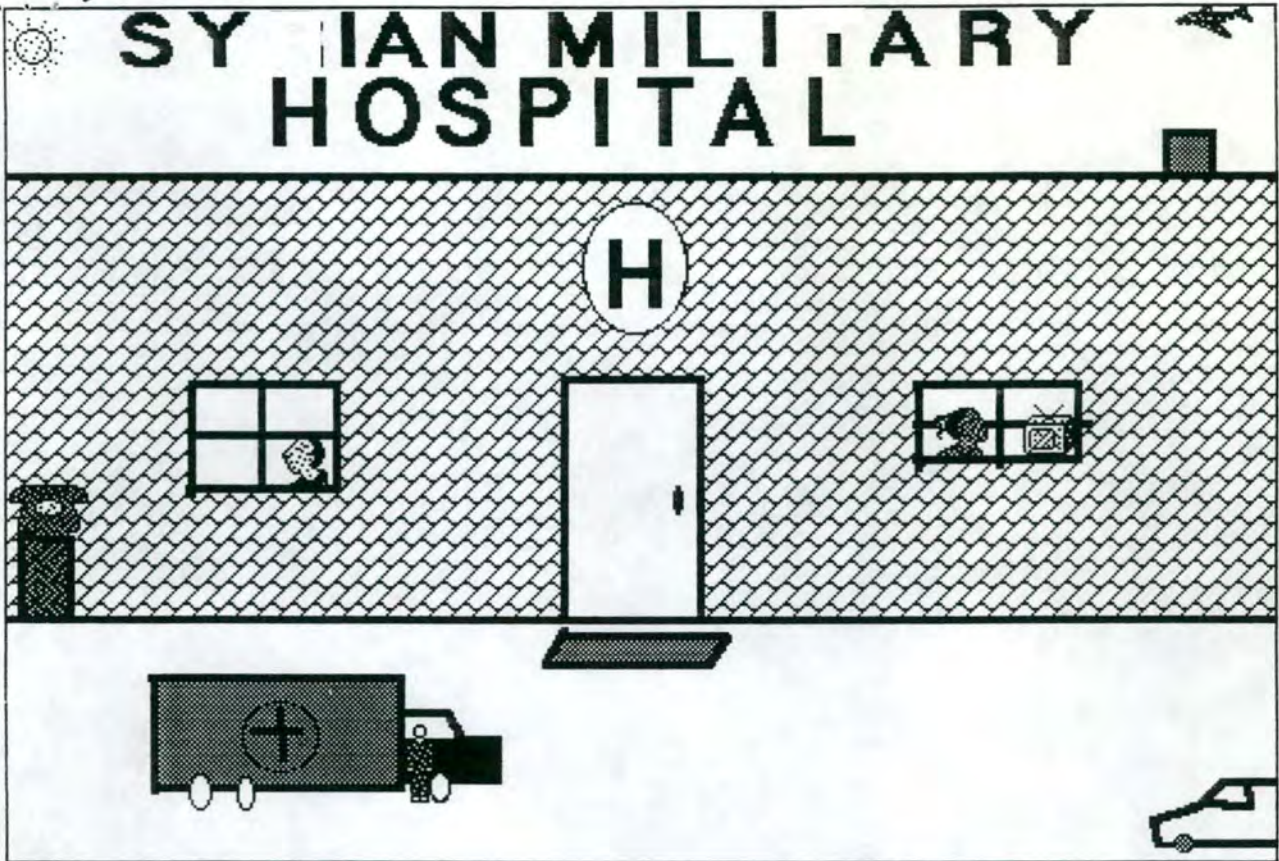




# DOUBLE PASSPORTS











# Record Removal Notice

<b>File Title</b> Notes and correspondence - Life and Death on a Tarmac - The Hijacking of PK326 by Jeffrey Balkind		<b>Barcode No.</b>  30293587		
<b>Document Date</b> March 16, 1993	<b>Document Type</b> Telex			
<b>Correspondents / Participants</b> To: William Hopper				
<b>Subject / Title</b> Message from Hijacked PIA Passanger				
<b>Exception(s)</b> Personal Information				
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June 6, 1994

Mark Tully  
BBC Asian Service  
New Delhi

Dear Mr. Tully,

I am the Bank's Senior Country Officer on Thailand and Malaysia as my enclosed card shows. I am writing to you in connection with the phone conversation in September 1981 when Murtaza Bhutto apparently called you to take "credit" for the ambush of Judge Mushtaq Hussain and the killing of Labor Minister Elahi. In the article that appeared in the International Herald Tribune (copy enclosed, I don't know the exact date of the article; if you do, could you please let me know the date), it mentioned that the Al Zulfikar Organization was responsible for the ambush of the car carrying Justice Hussain and the Labor Minister, as well as for the hijacking of PK326 six months earlier.

I have just completed a six months stint off from my regular job to write a book on our PIA hijacking, as I experienced it at the time throughout the 13 days. The book is written using shifting points of view (you see the story through my eyes and those of the main security coordinator in the Bank at the time) and my wife's eyes, who came to Damascus to get me out of our "incarceration". You will find a number of things of special interest in the story, not least of which is that I lied about my nationality throughout the ordeal to shield the fact that I was, and still am, a South African national. I told the hijackers that I was a British national.

As you might know, the PIA incident of March 1981 was the world's longest and most successful hijacking, it turned out. The 1985 TWA incident lasted two days longer, but some of that time was spent in shuttling back and forth between Algeria and Beirut, and some of the crew left the plane in Beirut, were taken to the control tower and then were returned to the plane by the Jammal Group. In the case of our PK326 incident, we never left the plane in the entire 13 days.

The book includes some photocopies from NEWSWEEK, TIME, the NEW YORK TIMES and the NEW YORK DAILY NEWS that deal with my hijacking, including my "300-hours" quote. We were trapped exactly 300 hours inside the plane.

The book also contains (page 102) my actual broadcast from the cockpit. Professor Peter St. John, an expert in counter-terrorism and political science at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, informed me that I'm the only case that he knows of where a Western hostage was taken into a cockpit and made to do a radio broadcast, and where we have the full transcript (after 12 years, I was lucky enough to track it down). A friend of mine in London claimed that he heard my voice on BBC when your organization got hold of a copy of the tape of my broadcast. Apparently, the Indian authorities had passed it onto BBC. If so, is it possible for me to track down a copy of the tape after all of these years?



June 7, 1994

The alleged role of Murtaza Bhutto intrigues me (see Chs. 12, 20 and 21 of my book). In ch. 20 I refer to the article on your conversation with Murtaza Bhutto at the time.

I have been planning to write to you for some time, but what prompted it right now was the BBC broadcast of last night. The news item mentioned that a judge in the Sindh High Court had ordered the release of Murtaza Bhutto on the grounds that the government does not have any hard evidence of his complicity in these incidents. Yet Murtaza Bhutto confirmed that he came to the back of the plane during our incident (see Chs. 20-21 of my draft).

I am passing a copy of my draft manuscript onto Richard Downes for your interest/comment. Please note that I am doing on this a strictly confidential basis. This draft book is not for quotation or use in any publication, meeting or any other setting without my express permission at this stage. Once published (which I hope will happen later this year), you can naturally make whatever reference to it that you may wish. At this juncture, I have yet to approach publishers or literary agents. That is my next step after making some revisions that are still needed.

Were it not for the fact that I have 18 photos that I secretly took inside the plane on the 11th day, I would be less confident of a publication. Frank van Riper, the Washington Post's chief syndicated photography columnist and a political journalist himself, has seen my photos and called them remarkable. Frank will soon be doing a column in the Post on these photos and their relation to the writing of the book. I enclose a copy of the photos (the originals are in color). If my book is published, these will be the first photos ever shown of the inside of a plane during any hijacking. Thus, I plan to embellish the book with blow-ups of these photos, at the beginning of each chapter. Two of the photos won competitions in Washington recently. The one photo shows a sobbing Captain Saeed Khan who was unable to fly our the plane anymore and lost command to Copilot Younus. It was Younus with whom I lunched in Washington a year after the hijacking and he informed me about events subsequent to the hijacking, including what happened in the end to the hijackers (see Chs. 20-21 of my book). Capt. Khan was the only member of the 10-man crew to not receive a medal from the late General Zia ul-Haq.

One fact has surprised me. Even though the phenomenon of hijackings is well known, there has been, according to my search, only one other book written through the eyes of a hostage (a man named Carlson on the TWA plane). The TWA copilot Zimmerman wrote a book, but a crew member is in a different position to a hostage.

I will call you in a couple of weeks once you had time to glance at or read my manuscript. Again, this all is in the strictest of confidence.

Many thanks,

JB

Jeffrey Balkind

P.S. Ajit Majoomdar, a former head of the Indian Planning Commission and former head of the World Bank's Ec. Dev. Institute, and who now lives in new Delhi again) and Gautam Adhikari, who was with our organization and has recently joined the Times of India as Editor, told me that they both know you. If I can arrange it, I would like to stop in New Delhi on way to a work trip in Thailand and Malaysia to come and see you. This whole Murtza Bhutto episode, to the extent that it is connected to the PK326 incident itself, is a strange story, and one worth exploring in a mutual, off-the-record conversation.



Consultants on a project  
financed by WB  
Kidnap Hostage

May 1985

Dr. & Mrs. Williamson

Released Dec 1985

Mahamud Ali

Pakistani Driver

Kidnapped May 1985

Released Feb 24 1987



DRAFT PROPOSAL

SEMINAR ON FIELD SECURITY - OCTOBER 7, 1986

INTRODUCTION

The reason that the seminar is appropriate. This could include the types of security problems facing Heads of Field Offices today, particularly in Third World countries, and how these problems could effect World Bank Staff and operations.

M. Paijmans

THIRD WORLD ABDUCTION

Video on Methods and Organization of Third World Abductors  
(12 min)

Problems Faced By an Organization When Faced With Third World Abductions  
(13 min)

What is Expected of Resident Representatives  
(15 min)

[Handout to be the contingency plan instructions for ]  
[Resident Representatives at incident management team level.]

40 minutes

HIJACK AND SIEGE SITUATIONS

The hijack and siege environment  
(15 min)

How to react as a hostage in siege situations  
(10 min)

How the Head of Field Office and IMT should deal with the problem.  
(10 min)

[Handout annex on hijackings]

35 minutes



BOMBS AND BOMB THREATS

Introduction to bombings and bomb threats (5 min)

Action at Field Offices on receipt of a bomb threat (10 min)

[Handout on bomb threat reactions] 15 minutes

TOTAL TIME: 90 minutes. Allows 15 minutes for questions.

FEES: \$4000 plus expenses, which are expected to be minimal.



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