

HOTFOOT 69

COBURN

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- JC You know that's a lot of responsibility for someone that age. When you asked the question about Scott, what I think about is I'd really like him to have that experience, but not necessarily from a combat standpoint because I saw enough guys that I predicted would do well. I mean they did well in flight school in my experiences with them, and I thought they would continue to do well. But combat's one of those funny things. It really gets quite personal. That was my feeling. You know when you go back to your high school class reunion, and I went back to my 10 year class reunion in 1974. There were peers that I felt like, and not from the standpoint of necessarily accomplishments, I'm just talking about being able to sit down and carry on a meaningful conversation in a group type environment and how all that works. Especially after being apart from each other for 10 years. And the people you thought would end up being successful and achievers; it was just incredible to sit there and evaluate it. I really think that year had a lot to do with my development, and I would like to have Scott experience something similar to that. I'm not sure I would want him to have an experience in combat. For a couple of reasons. I have a selfish reason for that. My only son, and I really wouldn't anything to happen to him. So that's a very selfish reason.
- KF But listen, isn't essential to the experience that it was combat. You could go through all kinds of challenges as a young man, but what you're talking about is a life and death challenge. A challenge is either a life and death challenge or it's not.
- JC That's true. But I think there are some things--no there really isn't. There isn't any equivalent. You're right, it either is or it isn't. But I think there are some experiences that can, even in fact if you were in the military, and you never went to combat, but you were in the military, it's a little different circumstance. But the military has a way of taking young people and giving them a lot of responsibility quick. I'm not saying that that's all that smart from the standpoint of trying to run a profitable business. But since the military's objective is not to make a profit anyway, who gives a shit. What they do is they take a guy that doesn't really know how to do what they are giving him the responsibility to do and then he either does it or he doesn't. And I really believe that that's kind of what the military is all about. There is no way that some young green behind the ears second lieutenant should have the responsibility for leading other people and making the kinds of decisions he does. He's not prepared to do that. But yet the military has a way of putting him in there--they prepare you, but they don't prepare you to the extent that they should have--and give you the responsibility and let you run with it. I don't think a corporation is gonna do that. I don't think a corporation can afford to do that. So it's not a life or death thing, but I think there are some real world types of experiences that people can get themselves into where they can speed up this development process, this learning process about themselves and about others and what motivates people and how you motivate people. That's really what it's all about. I always feel like I have such an advantage over other people because if you could figure out, if you're capable of figuring out; and it really doesn't matter what you're objective is, it could be just to have a conversation or it could be just selling something or it could be that your his manager, it really doesn't matter; but if you could figure out what that other person's need is, once you know that, then you've really got the upper hand.
- KF Sounds very similar to what Reza says. But he calls it the psychology of the human being. It is not a lot different, is it?

- JC I'm saying it different, but it really isn't all that different. If you can find out...I can relate it back to just dealing with my kids or dealing with my wife or selling a product. Or recruiting somebody into the corporation. Once you learn what the person's need is, you can just about sell them anything. And you really can motivate them once you determine what that is. The key is having, being able to recognize what that is. And there are some techniques for learning from the other person what that is. Like I say, I'm not sure I learned any of that out of a textbook. I think I learned it from actual experiences under certain less than desirable circumstances. And it was a true test. There weren't very many games being played. Which there are outside of combat in a lot of cases, and I'm sure inside combat there are some games played.
- KF Did you have any emotional reaction when the character I called Nabi who is Ahmed?
- JC Baktier.
- KF Baktier. When he said the names of the four people whose passports were demanded, what was your reaction, your feeling?
- JC At first, very first reaction was a curious type thing. Meaning 'what the hell's going on'? It wasn't concern. At this point, it was just god, that doesn't make sense. Why would they want those...it was curious...why. That was my initial reaction. And of course, you've got to understand I'm sitting there across from a person that's concerned about his daughter, that's his concern. Here's a guy that's been in jail half his life; jailed by the Shah. And his daughter has been given a directive by the police official. And now he's come...and told her not to say anything to the Americans. Now here he's coming because he's concerned about us. We're his employer and they have a tremendous loyalty. Especially we felt a tremendous tension between Imir and I. At any rate, he's concerned about his daughter, you know, is she going to get in trouble for him telling me and of course, my initial reaction was totally opposite. I mean I'm not concerned about his daughter. Big deal. You got to assume the difference in perspectives. So when you're dealing with an Iranian, you just train yourself to constantly be trying to look out for where their coming from. If you want to be successful over there, you can't just go over there like the ugly American and just storm troop your way through things. If you really want to find out what they are all about and what makes them tick and makes them successful over there in my opinion what you need to be doing is constantly thinking through things from their perspective. Where are they coming from. So I just trained myself to do this. My initial reaction was curiosity. And poor old Baktier was... I'm asking why, and of course he doesn't know. All he is concerned about his daughter. But that was my first reaction: curiosity.
- KF And then?
- JC I asked a series of questions of Ahmir, not that he necessarily knew any of the answers, but I said, "Now let's back up, Ahmir, let's go through this again." Because maybe I've missed something or maybe he'll remember something. So we went through it all again, and I would stop even asking questions--is that normal, things like that. Because I was trying to piece together what in fact was really going on. Because we had never had a request that I knew about like that before. Very unorthodox. In fact my understanding, because I had lost the passports, I had done some research on this issue, my understanding was that you didn't really have to surrender your passport to any...no it wasn't that I had lost my passport it's that I hit a guy on a motorcycle or the motorcycle actually hit me. But down at the police station they also asked me for my passport. I remember as a result of that later on somebody told me that I really didn't have to surrender my passport; that that wasn't a requirement, I didn't have to do that. So at any rate, I was remembering that and it wasn't making sense

- JC why, what do they want their passports for. And I couldn't figure it out. It made absolutely no sense. And I was convinced that they hadn't told Ahmir's daughter the reason. They had just told her as an embassy to carry out these actions and bring them and it was none of her business. She was just supposed to do it. She had been rather clever as I remember. For a young girl, something she did was rather clever. She told them she wasn't sure that she had those particular...she could have said some fairly damaging things. For example, she could have said that she did have them. But she said something to the effect that I'm not sure we have those particular passports. I'll have to go back and check. As it turned out, Nyfeler was no longer in the country. Bucha was in the country. He wasn't living there anymore, but he was in the country.
- KF Oh I didn't know that. What did he do; did he just go?
- JC Yeah, he immediately got on a plane and left.
- KF That's interesting.
- JC I couldn't figure anything out. It wasn't making any sense to me. Obviously all the names were people that had been in key management slots, but I hadn't really... it's easy to sit here now...but really at the time I couldn't think of any reason why. But I knew I had to get to Paul relatively quick. I also knew we needed to get back with Ahmir and tell him what to do about the case. Meaning, she's gonna have to go back to the Colonel that told her and tell him something. So I rounded Paul up and told him about it. Of course, he just...I think his initial reaction was the same as mine. You know, what the hell for? Except his is a little more personal, since it's his passport. So it's a little different than mine, okay? The sense of urgency in terms of wanting to know why is probably a little greater. But we decided to have Mitra go back down there and tell the Colonel that Nyfeler and Bucha were not in the country anymore, they did not work in Iran any longer; they did at one point but they did not work in Iran any longer. And take the exit visa information, I believe about their departure and their work permits and all that. But at any rate, one way or the other. Some display of cooperation on her part would appease them to a certain extent. And then just tell them that Paul and Bill's passports were not being kept in the office. That it wasn't a mandatory policy that we keep all passports. They had their own passports. Or maybe it was that our key managers we don't keep the passports in the office. But at any rate, words to the effect that it's out of my control; I don't have them.
- KF So that got her off the hook.
- JC That got her off the hook. We had really called the Embassy and asked them an opinion--this is strictly between Paul and I at this point--we called the Embassy to ask them an opinion of how we should handle it. I don't remember exactly what they told us but it was something to the effect, nothing to do with Mitra, that here are your rights associated with your passports, here are some options for you to consider, which one do you think is best. We asked them which one do you think is best. And their best was come down here and give your passports to us. We will then, if inquiries come further about your passports, then we will tell the Iranian officials that we are keeping your passports and we will show them some kind of documentation to the effect that they are in fact in our safe. They had some mechanism where they could prove to them they were in possession of the Embassy. I don't remember the mechanics of all that. But at the time we really looked into it, because even then, even at that early stage, we were somewhat suspicious of the Embassy, as I remember it. We weren't really sure...or maybe that was where it first came up, maybe that's what it is. That's where it first came up. That maybe Al Jordan, who was the Iranian who was close to all those guys down there working in the Consul office. They had been the leak to the police

- JC department. I think somehow that all fits in. If I really thought about it, I could probably piece it together. Just off the top of my head, I think that's where that first surfaced during that initial passport problem. We went through some kind of elaborate drill. I think to put their passports in the...try to get them in...I can't remember that. I know Taylor was somewhat involved in that. Or maybe even Lloyd Griggs or Rich Gallagher. At any rate, we were...there was some concern on our part that they would somehow end up with a passport. The Embassy would just outright give them to them or maybe Al Jordan would somehow get them to them or something to that effect. And I think that was it initially about the passports. And then it was just kind of Paul and Bill just relegated themselves to the fact that they didn't have a passport. Cause see there were no charges made at this point. No anything. Just that they wanted the passports. That's all we had knowledge of at that point. We were afraid to call the police and say why do you want the passports. Because then Mitra gets in trouble. So really we are operating on real sketchy information. I forget how then how...boy hopefully somebody can remember how that transpired. But how they eventually or maybe it was the Embassy that found out for us, I guess it was, what the police were up to. After we surrendered the passports, then they somehow started communicating with the police department.
- KF Alright a few more questions about the evacuation. You came to Paul in the night. Paul called you and told you to go with the evacuation. That was in the middle of the night; that was about 2 a.m. Now when did you call the team leaders? In the middle of the night or the next morning?
- JC I believe it was the next morning, because it was at least...I think it was a couple of days before the...I don't think I called them because I had to get my act together. I think I called maybe a couple of guys instead of the area coordinators that maybe were gonna have to assist me in getting together the initial communications that were going to go out to everyone. Told them to meet me there at the office right after curfew was over.
- KF What time was it?
- JC 5 a.m. I'll never forget it. It happened to be a very foggy morning. And we had a cuckoo clock that we had bought in Switzerland on the way over. I was all dressed; I got up--I never did go back to sleep--got dressed and everything. Went over my notes and exactly what I needed to do and everything, drinking barrels of coffee. I was standing at the door, stuff ready to go, waiting for it to be 5 o'clock. The little cuckoo came out and I took off. So either my clock was wrong, or the Iranian army's clock was wrong. But anyway, it's foggy, you cannot see from here to the curb. Go down, get in my car; I'm driving, creeping along, can't be doing more than 15 mph cause you can't see. And I've got to get to the Bucharest office. I'm driving along and it couldn't have been more than 2 or 3 blocks from our house. All of a sudden, I am surrounded by the military guys. And I'm saying, "Oh shit". It was really kind of comical--not at the time. But I'm looking back on it now and it was comical. This chief guy leaps out and he says in Farsi, something. But he was going...of course I held up my watch and showed him, and he said "hmm". They stood around there and talked for a little while, and they asked me for my identification. Eventually they just let me go. I think my clock was correct; I think those turkeys were wrong, but who knows. I'll tell you it provided a little excitement at 5 a.m. to be stopped in the fog. These guys were so bad; this one guy, when they jumped out in front of the vehicle to stop it, there were about 5 of them. They were kind of in a semi-circle. They jumped out, and this one guy--they all had their weapons pointed at me--had his clip in his little belt, and he went to put his clip in and he had it in backwards. So it fell on the pavement. And he's fumbling around with his clip trying to get it in his... Anyway I proceeded on to Bucharest. There was a whole...because of my delay I guess, there was a few people there already. Some of the Iranian people were there. I don't remember who was there specifically.

KF You don't remember who the people were that you called.

JC I sure don't.

KF Can you remember...

JC I may have called the area coordinators now that I think about it.

KF I think you must have told me that before.

JC And told them, Ken, that we needed to meet at 10 o'clock. In fact, I'm almost positive that's what I told them. That we needed to meet at the Bucharest office at 10 o'clock to discuss the evacuation. I'm almost positive. Because my plan was to get in there early, get prepared for that meeting to give them their first briefing on what was going to be happening and why and all that kind of stuff.

KF But there would have been a couple of people who had to get their at 5 o'clock to help you.

JC To help me prepare for that, yes. To get the maps ready and the handouts.

KF Do you remember who were the nine who stayed behind at that point? A lot of people came back, but there were nine who never left. You, Paul and Bill must have been three.

JC Gayden, Davis, Boulware, Taylor...

KF Sculley? No, he went out and came back.

JC Sculley came back. Schwebach went and came back. See all my team, they were area coordinators on our...I don't know if I mentioned that to you, but most of the people that were on the team I obviously had selected to be involved as key people in the evacuation for the same reasons that they got selected for the team. The same attributes and what not. We had...there were some people that stayed behind that were not there necessarily for business reasons, but they had to stay behind for personal reasons. For example, and I can't remember the name, I don't think. There was a fellow that was married to an Iranian, and it was our opinion...he didn't want to leave in the first place. He had children, too, he had small children. They had some departure problems. There was some question because they couldn't get exit visas. The children couldn't. So we let him stay behind. And I don't know if we ever explained that to Ross. Remember we got in this debate about who was going to stay. I don't think he really knew there were 10 people until we started telling the story. I think he thought it was fewer people than that. Because Gayden had a real hard time convincing him to let very many people stay around. So that's one guy I know of that was, and I can't remember his name. Now that's about 9 people. I don't know who we are missing. Gallagher.

KF But he stayed for another reason.

JC He stayed because he didn't want to go. So that must have been the 10th. And then after that weekend, I believe we brought in about 18 people. If I'm not mistaken, because I remember we were really working on the travel arrangements, trying to get those people back in there. Because Ashura really turned out to be a dud. Just like we thought it was going to be. It was a real big dud. There was no violence, there was no...I mean, it was just a dud. So we determined that we needed to get a skeleton crew of people back in there almost immediately. The people couldn't have been out more than 3 or 4 days before we turned them around and came back. That's when Sculley

- JC and Schwebach and a bunch of people did return. It was generally the management types, project leaders, things like that that we brought back in. And as soon as they arrived, then those of us that stayed with the exception of Paul and Bill, those of us that stayed left to go home for Christmas. Oh I forgot about Bill Dvoranchik. Bill Dvoranchik stayed. I forgot that. He was one of the 10.
- KF Well you said Schwebach at first, then you said, no Schwebach left and came back. So Bill Dvoranchik is the other one.
- JC We had to have a cook, so we kept Dvoranchik. Dvoranchik is a good cook. A whole lot better than Poche. Course I'd never tell Poche that while we were over there, because Poche was our cook. He might have refused to cook then.
- KF Now one more question about the children. Ross told me briefly a story about you taking Scott to the hospital and having a very tough time.
- JC What made him tell you about that.
- KF I can't remember how it came up. The way Ross tells it, you cleared out the Holland Tunnel in New York.
- JC It is kind of an incredible story. I don't know how much of it you want to hear. But when Scott was born, I had been in the company less than 2 years. The company at this point is 800-1000 people. Probably a little more than that by that time. 1000-1500. But I was relatively young. Was recruiting in New York City, living on Staten Island, had never been in that part of the country before. And Liz was about 8 months pregnant when we moved up there. So we had been there a relatively short period of time because Scott was born about a month premature. We were at a little hospital on Staten Island, I think it was St. Vincent's Hospital, but I wouldn't swear to it. Little Catholic hospital. Scott was born through the typical delivery thing; everything appeared to be fine. Doctor gave him a clean bill of health. I went home, came back to the hospital the next day to visit and Liz and I are there and it's time for...a lady came in and said "Here are the pictures of your baby". Of course Liz didn't remember any pictures of the baby being taken. But at any rate she had the pictures, and Liz said "No, those are not our baby." The lady looked confused and she looked on the picture, and said "Oh that's right, you're baby's the one that's got the problem". Jesus Christ! That's how we found out. Can you believe that? So I got really upset. I said, "No you must be mistaken, but I'm going to find out what's going on here." And Liz did say when I got there--then I remembered and took her more seriously--she said he hadn't come in for his morning feeding. I said "Well they'll probably be here." Well evidently, during that evening, Scott had taken a turn for the worse. And the doctors were scrambling around, trying to figure out what it was, and they really didn't know what it was. But in the meantime, nobody had notified either Liz or myself that there was any kind of problem. And we were a little ticked about it, to say the least. Liz was about hysterical. I called her doctor in fact and told him to please come to the hospital that she might need some sedation. He was really the only one we knew at the hospital anyway, was the doctor that delivered the baby. But this pediatrician that they had called in and their staff's version of a cardiac specialist were all in consultation about what to do about Scott. Well in the meantime, I went down there to look in the window and they had him in one of these little incubator things. And he was just blue; he was like your blue jeans over there. Gasping for air, and he didn't look all that good and I was really concerned. They were in consultation, I was waiting for our doctor to get there and I couldn't think of anything else to do. Someone wasn't stacking up right, I don't know why, but I called Dallas. I'm working in New York City, but anyway, recruiting reports to a guy in Dallas. And I thought well there ought to be something maybe somebody can do, but I've got to let them know.

JC So I called the guy that Recruiting reported to in Dallas, Gary Griggs. I explained to him what was happening, he said hold the phone. I didn't know this at the time, but he called Ross and had told Ross just very briefly that he had a guy in New York, Jay Coburn, who's just had a baby.

KF Ross has never met you at that point?

JC Oh no, I had met Ross. In fact it was a policy when I was hired that you had to have lunch with Ross shortly after reporting to work. There weren't very many people in the company at that point so we could do that. Shortly after reporting to work, and we had had lunch together, and we had had a couple of other encounters from a recruiting point of view. He's very involved, he was more involved in recruiting at that stage of EDS than he was later. So we had had some exposure. At any rate, the next thing I know, Ross is on the phone and he is asking me all these questions. You know how he does and I'm answering them and he says "hold on". The next thing I know Dr. Urschel, who is now on our Board of Directors, but at the time was just a close friend who's a cardiac surgeon. And he's asking me questions and he says, "Don't you do a thing, I need to talk to the doctors on that staff. You just stay right there by that phone so we can get back in touch with you." Ross gets on the phone and said "did you get that? How's Liz doing?" And in the middle of that 'how's Liz doing'. You were talking a while ago about his concern for other people and that kind of...how's Liz doing. And I'm sure he had to ask Gary what Liz's name was because there is no way he'd know who my wife is; he barely knows me. In fact probably doesn't. I said "well she's not doing too well and her doctor's here and he's given her some sedation". I didn't know this at the time, but what Dr. Urschel did is he got on the phone, there was this big consultation going on about what they could and couldn't do for this child. And they had even talked about moving the child to New York Medical Center and they had decided not to do that. None of which had been described to us at this point. We were getting pieces of it through her doctor. At any rate, Dr. Urschel had gotten on the phone and had gotten the true story from this nurse about what was wrong with him. To make a long story short, we didn't even know this until much later in the game. Liz's doctor is the one that told us. Ross never told us until months later. Apparently, there was some kind of big powwow after Urschel had talked to the doctors on the phone and the physician there that was in charge. I can't even remember the person's name now, said something like "well I guess since a Texas billionaire is involved in this thing, we ought to move the child". Liz's doctor overheard that and told that to us. They did come in and say "we're gonna move Scott to New York University Medical Center". We're going to have to take an ambulance since we're in rush hour traffic. We'll be taking a nurse along with us. Would you like to accompany us?" And I said yes, of course. We headed out in rush hour traffic. You know, this ambulance, I'm sitting up with the ambulance drive and the nurse is in the back with Scott, and we get to the tunnel. Actually it's not the Holland Tunnel, it's the one that goes from Queens or Brooklyn to Manhattan on that side as opposed to from New Jersey. We get there, and of course it's during rush hour.

END OF SIDE 2