

ALBERT ZUCKERMAN, D.F.A.
FELICIA ETH
AMY BERKOWER
SUE RAPP
MERRILEE HEIFETZ

February 26, 1982

Dear Ken:

What a wonderful yarn this is!

As we discussed, I think the best way to approach this draft is to consider it as a sketch for a painting, something in black and white which is waiting for a color to be added. Another way to look at it is as an extended and detailed outline.

At the moment what we have are the events; bizarre, exciting, full of fear and heroism and fierce loyalty; but they are largely events still as opposed to human dramas, and it's human dramas that we are going to need.

As in any of your thrillers, there are several individual stories here which intersect at key points, and I think your next job is going to be sorting out and focusing on these individual stories.

The "initiating" story plainly is the one of the men in prison. I think we lose by trying to treat them equally; and I would suggest that this strand be written entirely from one man's point of view. If the emotional impressions which you have are more powerful from Gaylord than from Chiapparone, then I think that Bill should be our man. We can experience Paul through Bill's eyes as well as Bill's sense of the action.

Our key character Number Two, I think, has to be Ross. Lots of people are doing things in Dallas, once the news of the arrest comes in, but he after all is the one that is orchestrating all their movements. He's the one to whom they report. He's the one that ultimately decides on a rescue operation; so that I think that the whole managing of the attempts to first free these guys legally, and then illegally, all could successfully be told from his point of view--and that would eliminate lots and lots of characters in Dallas and Washington who from my point of view clog up the story.

In other words, what we would have in the book is not what these people do, but rather the news of what they do as it reaches him. What we are interested in then is how he thinks and feels and reacts as he gets the news. And as the story proceeds, he of course makes new decisions based on information and based on his intellectual reactions to that information. With each decision, he takes on greater and greater risk. Good stuff.

Once Ross undertakes the notion of calling Simons, he then is less personally involved in the active planning of the mission; and at this point we are going to need an additional point

of view character, either Simons himself or Coburn. If you choose Simons, you of course are going to have to fantasize as to his hopes, fears, plans, contingency notions etc. With Coburn, you could get a bit more reality, maybe a lot more; but then of course there are all sorts of situations in which he was an observer and not the prime mover, someone participating as opposed to someone who would be taking responsibility for the basic risks. But you have met Coburn and I have not, so you'll have to make that choice.

For example, when the men are training together, it would be interesting to imagine what Simons thinks of these men, what he believes are their capabilities and limitations. But similarly, it might be interesting to know what Coburn thinks of each of them and also what Coburn thinks of Simons as a leader, as a teacher, and also we have very little sense in this section, for example, of what sort of danger is anticipated. Do these guys, for example, really take seriously the notion that they may all get killed trying this? I would imagine that they would have to. And I would imagine that their terror must come out in some private but also interesting way.

You say things like, "the original plan had been to stage the team in Istanbul." It seems to me that we always should begin with some individual who formulates a particular plan. In other words, we must try always to talk about these actions as ones originating with particular characters. *No corporate style. No use of the royal "we."*

No corporate style. No [illegible] of the royal "we." Another "character" if you will is, Iran and in particular Teheran. We need to experience this place through all of our senses; sight, sound, smell etc. And ideally, we should see it through the eyes of either Coburn or Simons--maybe both.

John Howell and Keane Taylor seem to be the leaders of the "clean team," and this is a somewhat separate strand, so probably one of these guys also ought to be a point of view character. My sense is that you prefer Howell which suits me fine.

A character who in his own way is as fascinating as Simons and Perot does not appear in your present draft until about forty percent of the manuscript is complete, and I am talking about Rashid. Maybe we could introduce him earlier, when he first learns of Bill's imprisonment. At that point we might get into his head in terms of where he wants to go with the rest of his life, how he feels about the pending revolution in Iran etc. If you handle it that way, he would be well integrated into the story as one of the key characters, so that when he is called upon actually to help with the rescue, he won't seem merely to be a "hired hand."

Then Jackson and Ralph Boulware both have their own separate strands, pieces of the story in which they operate independently of the other major characters. Your choice here is either to write these strands from their own points of view or alternatively you could write about them as their news comes either to Coburn or to Simons or to Perot. Jackson has only a very short adventure, so in his instance you might be better off not using him as a point of view character, whereas Boulware's story is much more substantial, and he probably would have to be a point of view character.

Ken, I think I made all my other general suggestions earlier

in the week.

I don't think that these people all need large chunks of biographical material as you introduce them. The lesser characters need only some description, preferably something about them which distinguishes them from other people and serves to pinpoint their uniqueness. The major characters obviously could have more, but in the cases of characters like Simons and Perot, I think that the background material ought to be parceled out through the first four or five chapters of the book. As you have things now, the action stops dead as you introduce each of these major characters, with the result that when we pick up the story, it's hard to keep in mind names of characters you've introduced earlier, place names, etc.

Missing from the book also is what is at issue. In other words, I think that the reader will want to know more specifically about what EDS is doing in Iran, the problems they had there, and of course the problems that Iranians such as Dadgar had with EDS-- or that Dadgar's associates, colleagues, etc had with EDS. As I mentioned Dadgar is engaging in very extensive daily negotiations, and we know that what the Americans want is to get their two men out of jail, but it's entirely unclear as to what Dadgar is after, and how the Americans are reacting to this or how they are negotiating with Dadgar to get what the Americans want while perhaps giving Dadgar something. Finally, we don't want a great deal of this, or it too would stop the action; but we need enough to really feel that we know what the hell is going on.

Another thing you might try for in the next draft is to get some of the special music in the way these people speak. Here and there you do have some wonderful turns of phrase, but having listened to people like Ross myself, I'd love to have more of that flavor in the book.

escape A passing thought I had which might be helpful is that the most successful ^{escape} novel in the last twenty or so years has been PAPILLON. There everything revolves around the dealings of one central character, but those doings are handled with enormous verve; and if you're not familiar with that book, it might be worth taking a look. You might get some helpful ideas.

Finally, I should say that facts are ^{con}straining. Truth is limiting or can feel limiting; and I think now you are going to have to let yourself play with this whole thing a bit, fantasize, using your rich imagination, test that against reality; and I feel confident that you'll come up with a book by far as exciting and wonderful as any you have written.

Love,



Al

AZ/rm

ALBERT ZUCKERMAN, D.F.A.
FELICIA ETH
AMY BERKOWER
SUE RAPP
MERRILEE HEIFETZ

June 28, 1982

Mr. Ken Follett
Tancreds Ford
Tilford
Surrey GU10 2AJ
England

Dear Ken,

Mostly I was very impressed with THE BULL AND THE PEACOCK. About half-way through, I got up and danced around, because I couldn't believe how well everything was organized and put together; how interesting it all turned out to be; and because I knew the foreign publishers were going to get what they paid for!

My main criticism has to do with the fact that as a point of view character, Ross is wonderful--but he's only involved in the first half of the book. My feeling is that the second half really needs at least one point of view character through whose eyes we experience all the tension, fear and excitement of the rescue mission itself. It seemed to me that just as tension was building in one segment of the mission, you'd switch to another segment. Instead of all that tension building into one wonderful climax (or a series of them), it all kept dissipating. It seemed very long and very drawn out. (I know those are the facts of the situation; but if this were a novel, you would have had things happen much more quickly, one thing on top of the next.)

I thought Rashid was good, although a bit over psychologized. What disappointed me the most with his character was that he was so one-track minded, caring only about getting to America. I wanted to know how he felt about the revolution, about the blood and the torment his fellow countrymen were undergoing. For instance, in the beginning, the violence didn't really reach me. I felt I had the nonchalant, Americans-can-do-anything attitude of Paul C. Perhaps someone else's view, i.e. Rashid's, could get across the point that the country was undergoing a goddamned revolution. Though Paul and Bill experienced great physical discomfort in jail, I never had the sense that they were scared to death. When they meet high Iranian officials

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in the jail, they are only ^(their presence) relieved to meet other English-speaking folk. To me, that would indicate that things were very very bad. Later (page 123), Bill gets a photo of his son Christopher--but we get no reaction to this. For a religious man, I would think perhaps that his soul, or at least his thoughts, would run a bit deeper than we're shown. On page 125, I was even more surprised to learn that Paul would give away a picture of his kids he was fond enough to have posted on his wall to a man you describe as having "apparently grown fond of them" (Paul and Bill).

The rest of my comments are sort of line-by-line reactions I had while reading:

page 67: After a good portrait of Simons, I found the last line of this page a bit disappointing. I guess I wanted more of his reaction. Like what he did when he put the phone down--or something. The line struck me as a bit anticlimactic.

page 81: I found this last line a bit dumb on Simons' part and Coburn's reply even dumber.

page 89: You say: It was, of course, Ron Davis who made him mad. Why 'of course'?
It's not clear why Schwebach can't take the bomb ingredients with him.

page 99/100: It's not clear to me why the Shah, of all people, would want the US government to talk to Khomeini?

page 104: I was surprised that Simons, Coburn, Poche and Boulware all flew together on a mission like this. I would think they would have split up just in case one of the planes crashed, or something.

page 115: I loved this whole bit with the code. Around these pages, I wanted to know how Coburn felt being alone in this crazy, revolutionary country, far from family and friends. I wondered if he was suspicious about any Iranians following him around? None of the team ever seems to have a thought about someone, somehow having got wind of their plans. They don't seem scared enough to me.

page 140/1: If Ross Perot's name was on the stop list after having gone to the Embassy, it's unclear what this means about the Embassy: are they feeding information to the Iranians or is there a spy in the Embassy or what?

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page 145/6: Thought you'd want to know that the word 'formidable' is used twice to describe Gasr Prison.

I was interested in knowing for whom Gasr was a palace and wondered if, as representative of a changing Iran, it wouldn't be interesting to also describe the change over of Gasr from palace to prison. This could also give the reader a sense of what the Iranians were rebelling against.

My notes next say: I'm up to page 165 and don't understand what the rescue team is waiting for. Or what they are doing in the mean time. I want to know since the tension and excitement is with them.

page 179: It's not clear until here why they are risking so much to drive to the border.

Somewhere between page 179 and 214, I wrote that it all seemed so straight and serious, humorless. And I was getting the sense that just for these two men-- against the backdrop of a whole revolution, with thousands dying and more risking their lives--it*all seemed somehow out of proportion. Then I wondered if *the rescue mission and all it entailed/

what was missing was a point of view character or two or three to remind me of how important and crucial it really was.

page 214: I was very disappointed with your 'A moment later they walked in, and all hell broke loose.' I want to feel the jubilation, relief, love, happiness...everything; after all they've all been through. Scratch that--I just read page 215 et al.

is
I guess my overall comment/that with the exception of Ross, the characters strike me more as players than real people. Which makes what they are going through less real to me and less exciting.

Ken, I really think you've done a fantastic job. And I think the book is going to sell like mad.

Love,



Sue Rapp

ALBERT ZUCKERMAN, D.F.A.
FELICIA ETH
AMY BERKOWER
SUE RAPP
MERRILEE HEIFETZ

July 7, 1982

Mr. Ken Follett
Tancreds Ford
Tilford
Surrey GU 10 2 AJ
England

Dear Ken:

The book is good, very good even, but it's not yet sensational. I think that you can make it sensational, and here are my thoughts which I hope you'll find helpful.

The markings on the manuscript break ^{into} more or less four general categories. One is just ordinary editing, cutting a phrase or a few lines, adding a few words which I think are clear (or more to the point) or more expressive of what I imagine is really what you want to say, adding a bit more punch to a given moment, or rearranging words for better emphasis, or removing an adjective or adverb which defuses the punch of something else of greater importance in a phrase or sentence. All this stuff obviously is meant only as a suggestion, and you can decide in every instance whether or not what I've done is or is not in your mind an improvement. Second, and I think a lot more important are questions I have inserted, usually about something that isn't there or isn't there as fully as it could be, a request for more information or for more clear information or more descriptive information. You'll have to go over these questions page by page, and decide which ones are worth pursuing, and then probably take them up with the people in Texas. A third category, and one which I'm separating out because it occurs again and again, has to do specifically with helping the reader "see the action." In this draft, the book is much stronger visually than it was in your preceding one, but there are many many pages which don't have anything really visual on them, and this wants further attention, I think, especially in the places I've so marked. And the fourth category has to do with emotions and emotional reactions. Again this draft is far superior in this respect, but many times you give us an event; and yet for the reader the really important thing happening is not the event itself, but the emotional reaction of the key participant. You'll find that I've marked many such points.

More general points, some of which we discussed together on the phone and which I would urge you to consider are the following:

1. I think it would be great if a bit more of the book could be written from Dadgar's point of view. One possibility might be to see if you could get him on the phone. Or, maybe if he had a superior. Or maybe Rashid, who seems to be so good at ^{psych}ology, could try to approximate for you some of what he might imagine was in Dadgar's mind at the time. I know that you don't much care for Collins and LaPierre, but my recollection is that one of the ways they created suspense in their panoramic non-fiction books was to switch back and forth in point of view to both sides, i.e. the Nazis and the French in IS PARIS BURNING?

2. As you know, we now control the film rights, and I'm hopeful that now with your writing a book in which the major characters are Americans, we may have more solid crack at a big film deal than we've had in the recent past. Perot and Simons are well drawn and fairly clear as characters; but in the book at the moment the man who most continually is in the center of the action is Coburn, and I for one would like to have a much richer sense of him than I now do. I think too that if he becomes more richly drawn, that part might become more attractive to a major star. I think that there are three areas in which he could be fleshed out more, his thoughts and feelings about Simons, Perot, and something in his personal life—perhaps his wife, or it could be a child, a mother, something, someone at home on whom his mind could focus from time to time and give us some further insight into his feelings.

3. We get some fairly good descriptions of the major members of the team when we first meet them; but these don't stick, I'm afraid, in the mind of this particular reader. The result is that later on in the book we have scenes with such characters as Poche, Sculley, Taylor, and even Paul and Bill at the center of these scenes, ^{which} we the readers don't "see" very much. I think that as the book proceeds and as we have scenes with these guys at the core of these scenes, you need to reintroduce some key descriptive and/or characteristic detail. Plainly, I don't want a full description each time, but if one of them has an unruly shock of hair, a prominent scar, an odd way of moving, something to point them out, identify them, the reader who has by now forgotten what they look like can see them or at least imagine that he sees them. With some of these guys, you could use a favorite item of clothing that they might perhaps wear at all times, or some particular type of eyeglasses, or brand of cigarettes or cigars—any distinctive characteristic detail to remember them by over and above their names and what they have to say.

4. Huge amounts of money were spent to accomplish this mission, and I think that the expenditure in toto and in detail is of considerable interest, i.e. the chartering of airplanes on short notice, the renting of busses, the purchase of all sorts of military hardware and ammunition, etc. Probably it would be boring and a nuisance to include a dollar amount for every single expenditure; but here and there when something grand is done like the chartering of the flying warehouse and the repair work which was necessary to make it operational, there I think a dollar amount ought to be included. Also, I think the reader would like to know how much the whole mission cost and who paid for it. Was it Perot or was it EDS?

5. The various reunions at the end moved me almost to tears, and I feel you handled them rather beautifully. But I want to emphasize and repeat the point I made above that there are a fair number of important scenes throughout the novel where the emotional impact is either omitted altogether or passed over much too quickly. I think you will find that I have tried to mark all of these. Ken, I feel that you yourself are now so immersed in the reliving of some of these events that you feel these emotions, and therefore you see no need to write them out. But for the reader (and 99.9% of your readers are going to read this book only once) these major points, highlights of the story really, get missed if you don't underline them. Particularly with a character like Ross you very often have him move on to the next statement, the next bit of action, and skip over the emotional reaction he might have felt before he went ahead with his next speech. I believe that I have marked a fair number of these and it might be worth spending your time and discussing with him what actually he felt before he spoke in some of these more intense scenes.

6. There are some loose ends, some more obvious than others, which it would be nice but not essential if you could tie down. For example, I for one

would like to know specifically what Kissinger did and why he failed. I also would be fascinated to know whether or not such American officials as Ambassador Sullivan or Henry Precht thought that the EDS guys were innocent or guilty. And in fact, it might be interesting to find out (if anyone in W-ashington will tell you) what they really think of a company like EDS and of Ross Perot in particular. Sure, he'll probably get nothing but praise from the military; but in their heart of hearts, what really did American officials think and feel about a company like EDS and the way it operated in Iran. Along the same vein, I think we need more background (just a little bit more), not a hell of a lot, about the prior history of the company's dealings with the Iranians. If we (and you) knew more of this stuff, we might also gain a richer sense of what it was the Iranians might really have wanted from EDS, from the taking of these hostages, etc. The way the book now is written, it almost appears as if EDS had these troubles completely out of the blue with no prior history of difficulty of any kind, and I find that hard to swallow. Sure, the difficulty could have been merely to offend some minor bureaucrat in some obscure way that no one at EDS at the time ever even noticed; but my guess is that there had to be some higher level of friction in various areas, and even if this doesn't connect up directly with the hostage taking, it probably would be worth mentioning.

Finally, the title. It does have sort of a ring to it, but it also strikes me as inappropriate. The Peacock would refer to the Peacock Throne, and neither the Shah or his throne really play roles in the book. I prefer HOTFOOT or OPERATION HOTFOOT. Those are both so distinctively American, and this whole story is also uniquely American—or at least it seems to me to be. Another thought you might play with stems from "the cavalry to the rescue." In the western movies time and time again, the hero or heroine is about to be shot, hanged, raped by the Indians, etc, and at the very last moment the cavalry comes roaring in for a rescue. If somehow this notion could be used as the title, in some way which I haven't figured out, it would strike me as quite appropriate.

And , there you have it.

Love,



Al

P.S. I congratulate you on ending the book where you have chosen to, much better than the last time; and in fact, the whole arrangement of scenes which you've created with all the intercutting back and forth, I think is just brilliant.

AZ/rm



Goldbric, Pat

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105 MADISON AVENUE, NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10016

We Did It!
EAGLES.

Dear Ken,

Here is a memo to you, a general critique of the book and some suggestions. I've included marginal comments made as I read the manuscript which I then typed.

I wanted you to have this first thing this morning because I know you're meeting with NAL today. I'm sending Elaine Koster a copy of my notes too, as I've done with the other two books. There's a copy for Al as well.

So when we go off to Texas you'll have everybody's comments, and you and I can really get to work.

Love,

Pat

PG: jw
cc: Al Zuckerman
Elaine Koster

Perot: 25-34, 38-41, 50-63, 70-74, 77-80, 100-102, ~~106~~ 128-133
 140-~~144~~ 146, ~~149~~ 151-155, 221-224, 240-243, ~~248~~ 256-259, 289-316-319, 329
 Abram: 1-6, 68-70, 80-82, 83-84, 103-105, 111-21, 137-139, 174-180, 182-183
 193, 204-205, 215-220, 229-240, ~~244~~ 248, 259-267, 273-278, 295-298, 300-307
 Harshid: 184-186, 194-197, 278-280, 287-289, 298-299-307, 309-~~310~~

Minwell: 133-137, 161-164, 187-189, 190-193, 203-204, 206-207, 212-213.
 228-229, 252-253, 320-328.

Paul: 7-13, 14-16, 37-38, 106-111, 146-149, 207-212, 215, 280-282.

Bill: 13-14, 16-24, 45-50, 122-127, 149-151, 198-203.

Bradman: 170-174, 248-251, 268-271, 282-287, 307-309. (69, 75)

Perot's feelings about each of his staff.

Visual setting.

People's appearances.

Want fantasy

What in your part did this remind you of?

Alan
Fredette

Betty - hair Staley

love,



What is the dramatic function of this scene? Middle of it give the
 information some other way.



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105 MADISON AVENUE, NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10016

Ken,

The problem here is that you're dealing with fact that has to be as exciting as fiction, especially since *THE BULL AND THE PEACOCK* is an adventure, a story, such as one might read in a novel.

Fiction is carried by major characters through which readers experience the adventure. One of the things you haven't done here is focus on such characters. However, you are bound by the truth of this story, so you can't create a Vandam, or a Wolff or a Faber to carry off the book.

But you do have three major characters, and the story can fall rather neatly into three sections in which each of these characters becomes a major actor. I see the first part of the book as Perot's, with the mobilization of the rescue army. The middle part of the book belongs to Col. Simons -- the training of the men, the practice, the herding of the army covertly into Iran. The third part of the book belongs to Rashid -- and that includes the storming of the jail, the escape over the Turkish border into freedom.

This structure is there, under the surface, a natural shape. It would provide you with the means to create tension and suspense, to give cohesion to the story, which gets quite confusing. And most of all, it allows you to develop character -- that Follett specialty. Too many of these people in this story are faceless.

Of all the people in this book the most interesting is Perot. He is the most complex, the prime mover, and he comes to us with an a priori background of power, achievement, and stature. But you tell us very little about him. I keep asking throughout the manuscript to know more about Perot -- his reactions, his responses, his character. His complexities and contradictions are revealed inadvertently -- without the writer's awareness or comments. For instance, Perot claims that EDS is an organization of blazingly individual nonconformists -- yet the truth appears to be that he controls EDS like Mussolini did Italy and that his very whim is law. The EDS men follow him like a Duce -- even to the point of risking their lives in a job where such a sacrifice would never be expected. Disobedience (and that's the right word) does not occur to Perot's men. Notice that all the men he asked to join this mission volunteered -- I can imagine what would happen to anyone who did not.

And then there is Perot's mother! You have the beginning of a classic psychological portrait of a tyrant, a world-beater, who believes -- with some reason -- that there's nothing he can't do. And it all started with mother... Perot is a force for good here, but he's the kind who could easily go the other way.

You're limited, of course, by fact and because Perot is real and alive. Nevertheless he is the moving force in this book, on stage or off. Somehow you've got to make him more effective as a character, more manipulative, more felt. Even if you center action on three men as I suggested before -- Perot, Simons, and Rashid, Perot's influence would continue throughout. He's the one you must not lose touch with.

Your opening is very slow. Too much explanation and filling in. You may have to start with an episode further into the book and then backtrack. Zoom into the two Americans feeling the cell bars slam as they are locked into an Iranian jail....the call to Perot

informing him that two of his men were imprisoned by the Iranians. Something like that, but dramatic.

Towards the end when things speed up and the plot thickens I had a sense of confusion. I think it comes from too many characters doing so many things in different places. And what makes this worse is that the characters come in from nowhere -- we don't know them, they are faceless.

Coburn is a character I had trouble with -- I was never absolutely clear as to why he seemed to be taking charge so often.

There are long stretches -- too long -- where there's no excitement, tension -- just lots of detail and explanation. Too many of the people have no personalities. The women particularly are lifeless, like dolls. All 1950's home and hearth types without individualization, aspects that would take them out of category. You've got to make Bill and Paul more vivid. They are the reason for this whole caper. They were always shadowy to me.

The ending needs a lot of work. The story is really over when the mission is accomplished. The last chapter should be an epilogue and I don't like the last sentence about the Col. His romance with the stewardess isn't really pertinent, unless you make it so.

I realize this critique is general, but we are all limited by the facts. I can't ask you to create a Faber. The true story though has all the elements of good fiction. It's a challenge, and if anyone can do it, you can.

FOLLETT

6--Was there any dismay among the people who did leave? Was it all so orderly? No fear?

9--What does Paul look like? Does he have an accent? Is he from Texas? Where? He appears to be very American in a foreign land.

25--Now you're getting a real tone. This man we see.

32--All this because of the little boy? Perot's enormous involvement in the Vietnam POWs--it seems to me that Perot's one-man war is more complexly motivated and you haven't given us a clue to it--just a simplistic reason. Also, the rescue attempt of the POWs by Col. Simons led directly to the subject of this story--the second, successful rescue by Perot and Simons. You must give the character of a man who would do this, and build a bridge between the two events.

33--Great quote about John Wayne! We can use!

101-- What did the wives know at this point? Or were they not told? Either way, it's interesting, because it looked like a suicidal mission. I'd like to hear from those wives. Was the tie to the company stronger for these men than the tie to their families? My guess is that if the wives knew--or found out later--they'd be horrified. But maybe women (wives) play a different role with these men. They probably do. Unquestioning keepers of the home fires and all that. Like the Vol and his wife. And all this could be quite fascinating.

114--Where were the safe houses. Why were they safe? Weren't the Iranians suspicious? And if the apartments were rented by Americans, how could they be hideouts? All very unclear. Also, I would like to know what Iran looked like now, and how did it feel to Americans on the run? Want some color, some specifics.

Follett

129--Fascinating about Perot and his mother! I wish you could tell more.

143--But ~~isn't this bribery~~ this isn't bribery, it's ransom. Didn't they think of that? At this point, I began to think "They want their rescue caper and no one is going to take it away from them."

144--All this doesn't ring true. That may be the way it happened, but for the story's sake we have to know why this solution was so summarily dismissed. Iranians don't play by rules, they know that--they were ready to risk their lives at a rescue attempt--and they go all prissy at "corruption." It doesn't add up.

145--Meanwhile, what was the Col doing about this change of jails? It's not been mentioned so far what this transfer means to all those well-practiced escape plans. (In fact, the new jail takes the story out of Col simons' hands into Rashid's, who is your third major figure.)

148--Is "delightedly" the right emotion for such a situation? Descriptions of Paul's emotions make Paul sound like a child. I'm not getting a picture of these men, outside of the Col and Perot. Pace is lagging.

150--Why on earth should EdS have a "dress code?" All this--the kind of obedient adulation regarding Perot, the abiding by rules even if they're whimsical, does not fit the earlier picture of EDS as a company of independent, individualistic people. You--at the writer--can't have it both ways. And there a lot, a whole lot, you're not telling about Perot!

151--Ross leaving prison in Iran is an anti-climax. Sounds like leaving a party. What did Ross think? Feel? After all he had done to get there.

153--I like the Col. He's your most successful character so far.

FOLLETT

155-- Good! Tension at last!

157--Now you've got to the women--what I asked for earlier. Maybe it should go earlier?

159--They sound like army wives!

160--These women are beginning to sound rather soapy. Didn't any of them get mad? At Ross, at their husbands? (If this were fiction you could make them rage, or something equally strong, instead of these lady-like, going-to-the-hairdresser emotions.) There is necessarily a lack of women in this story--the wives are your only chance to give the book that dimension and color that both sexes provide.

167--Good. Simons even thinks in character.

167--Why couldn't Bill and Paul ~~not~~ fly into Kuwait? They were Americans. Why wasn't a friendly nation safe? Safer than Iran? I'm confused.

180--^you really give it to Bryezinski! Good!

184--Good meeting with Simons and Rashid. The story now really becomes Rashid's.

186--Rashid is a terrific character, like someone from your novels. Did you feel freer in writing about ~~him~~ him than the others?

188--Talk between American alwyers, embassies, etc--this kind of description gets mechanical and I feel there's too much of it. There's not enough action.

189--Shorten all this if you don't actually need it. I don't think you do.

190--Instead of this kind of description (Khomeini loyalists and Javadan Brigade fight) could you ~~convey~~ convey it--dramatize it--in an incident that would tie directly to the story?

FOLLETT

~~XXX~~

191--More of the same.

196--Rashid addressing his rag-a-tag army in front of the jail is great!

218--Can we see how Bill and Paul feel? Can you liven up? It is, after all, the whole point of the story so far--getting them out of jail. Simons is wonderful--Bill and Paul are shadows.

221--Perot says, "That's great," and his wife says, "That's good" at the news of the jail breakout. Surely something more than these responses!

Perot's mother told him to risk his life for these two men! That's involvement! If this were a novel you'd milk every bit of juice out of this moment.

222-Perot packs his suitcase--that's much better. But change earlier part, or add something.

235--Idiosyncracies--that's what these characters could use!

240--What happened to the dog? If they kill him, readers will hate it!

They better have a life-and-death reason and be sobbing while they do it!

245--Third paragraph is a repeat.

247--I like Rashid!

249--Aren't they doing a lot of flying in and out of places you can't get in or out?

259--And how did he feel about that? It's the first time, as far as I can see, that there was nothing that Perot could do.

FOLLETT

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267--Waht was the Col doing in all this?

272--I'm confused about who all these men are. Who's the Clean Team, the Dirty Team, who's flying all over the place, etc.

275--~~Arctx~~ Are they still in Iran? How come they are getting an armed escort out? Did I miss something? Or was the explanation to the Iranian soldiers that the American~~s~~s wanted to go home to their families enough? If so, why ?

280--Rashid is great and now center-~~scene~~ stage. The Col has just about disappeared.

282--There's Simons! I guess if I go back and re-read Ill find out--and remember-- why the Col wasn't with them. But I shouldn't have to do that.

285--If Simons is with the Dirty Teams I don't they should be forgotten for so long.

286--At the turkish border: "the only thing to do was to go into Iran and look for him." But weren't they safer in Turkey, no matter what? The point of the mission is to get out of Iran! The turks weren't looking for them to put them in jial. The Turks weren't having a revolution. So they made it to freedom and are planning to go back.? This is not clear.

287--This Rashid is something! Always psyching out people and being right!

288--Fabulous! Perot should put Rashid in charge of EDS. But I suspect that wouldn't work. Rashid is too strong, not a conformer. Perot wouldn't like that.

295--Are the guards helping them or hindering them? Are they there to get them out of the country or keep them in?

304--What! Who is he? (The man who kissed Rahsid at just the right moemnt to save the lives.)

FOLLETT

305--Is the Col losing his cool? (He asks for a hacksaw)

314--"The feeling of freedom." Is the adventure over?

317--Simons is not longer the hero of this story. (See other notes)

320--I think the story ended on the last page. Chapter 14 could be an epilogue.

321--Too many facts--like a listing. Whree's the story?

329--I'd cut this (Col and Stewardess) unless you can tell more--or turn it into a drama that shows the full recovery of the Col. Otherwise seems spurious.

And the last line, "But that's another story," doesn't justify its inclusion unless you build.



Golbitz, AT

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28 July 1982

Ken Follett
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Dear Ken,

What I'd really like to do is have a long discussion with you -- hindsight says I should have stayed another day, because the missing stuff in the story is probably now in Ross's comments on the manuscript and the comments of the others too. At one point at dinner I'd whipped out a match cover to note something Ross had said, and he stopped me with, "Don't bother, I wrote it in the margin." They probably needed a first draft to call to mind what they didn't tell you. I'd love to know what some of those things are, but even not knowing, I have a feeling that the new material will make the story a lot richer.

I had a wonderful time in Texas -- more fun than I could have imagined! It is indeed a very good thing I read the first draft, because Ross has that bowling-over charm nobody could resist. And then to meet Margot and the girls -- too much! I fell in love with them all! Riches and success beyond dreams really haven't spoiled them. Can that be true?

I think it is true. Nevertheless I was watching for that other side of Ross that I know must be there, as I said when we were driving to their place for breakfast. Then in the office that day I think I saw a glimpse of it a couple of times -- probably because I was looking for it. In fact I said something about Ross and Rashid in my editorial comments which Ross proved prophetic by what he said about Rashid that day! So

it's one thing to be charmed by the man and another to be riveted by a character created on a page. I think you have to get some of the hard steel that I kept calling for in the manuscript before I met Ross.

I feel more than ever that Ross Perot is the real hero of this adventure. Ross would like that hero to be Col. Simons, when in truth Rashid did as much or more than the Col. to bring the men to safety. I've had other thoughts about using the color photo of Col. Simons as a frontispiece. I think it gives a wrong weight to the Col.'s role, and as the only color photo, and in the front, implies to the reader it's a biography of Simons. It can be the lead, full-page photo in the first black and white insert, which still gives him a star position and is more appropriate to his role. What do you think?

I'll be expecting the copies of the photos from EDS soon, with Rashid cut out. Ross was most definite that Skeeter couldn't have those shots in his possession. I couldn't help wondering if that had anything to do with the way Skeeter was dressed. That dress-code thing really gets to me.

When you were chatting with Margot and I with Ross at dinner, Ross asked me what I thought the most important thing was about the book. I said the most important thing was that it be a Ken Follett suspense story. First and foremost.

One thing that you might keep in mind as you rewrite is the very genuine love Ross Perot has for his country. I suspect I would not agree with his politics but I am impressed by his patriotism. True, it's "the last refuge of scoundrels" but Ross's is real I believe. Americans respond to that when it's a true story. It's fairly easy for someone of Ross's wealth and power to be patriotic, but Ross carries it beyond the easy stage, which is how this story could happen. Of course Iran wasn't a patriotic caper, he just wanted to get the EDS men out, but there's a connection be-

tween this and the Vietnam POWs, as I mentioned in my notes. You'd have to be careful here, because just a little too much will make the patriotism thing sound phoney.

The fact that he was risking a lot of lives for the sake of two did bother Ross, I think more than he is willing to admit, and perhaps that could be made more apparent in the book. It's a dilemma that could provide good dramatic conflict, and give us insight into Ross's character.

As far as the wives go, I don't think you're going to get anywhere. Whenever I brought the subject up with Ross, his answer was, "They were thrilled and proud," Period. I think the wives are taboo. I also think they don't matter a hell of a lot in the EDS pantheon. They are there to be wives, not to ask questions. You'll have to be adroit here, because if EDS won't answer, the readers are still going to ask.

What you'll have to unravel for the reader are the complexities of the plot and that probably means throwing some things out, as we discussed on the plane. It means some restructuring and putting more emphasis on the characters which will be easier now that you have more info from them.

I still think centering the action as it occurs around the three main characters would give the plot clarity and help thread it all together. It would also help you to create the kind of people one finds in your novels, and that's always where the interest is for the reader.

I loved traveling first-class with my first-class writer. Texas was a hoot!

Love,
Pat