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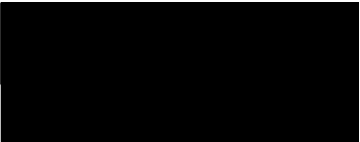
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RAMSEY CLARK
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November 17, 1982

LEON FRIEDMAN
KATHLEEN PERATIS, P.C.
COUNSEL

Ken Follett



Dear Mr. Follett,

Your letter and enclosures of June 15 arrived while I was out of the country. By the time I got around to seeing it, I assumed I was too late for your purposes.

Though I think this "little incident" has been magnified beyond meaning, I will comment on your draft in light of your letter of November 5.

Realizing with the French that nothing in life is so cruel as the brutal murder of a noble idea by a violent gang of facts, I nevertheless tell you I think Mr. Perot's conduct is romanticized and the Iranians stereotyped beyond fairness to truth.

Ross Perot came to the prison in an Embassy Volkswagen minibus with three E.D.S. employees and some embassy personnel. He must have come from the Embassy. The Embassy people must have known who he was. He could have hardly been in better company.

From your description E.D.S. personnel were going in and out of Qasr like it was the Intercontinental. We had tried every way we knew to get into the prison for years. This was the first time even Dr. Minachi, executive director of the Iranian human rights organization, was permitted inside as a visitor. We were still encountering delays in getting inside when the Embassy group breezed through as if on a magic Persian carpet.

The Shah was still in power. Ross Perot was one of the safest people in Tehran. The idea that he might have been arrested is fiction intended to create a sense of adventure.

You write on page 145 that Perot gave the guards \$5 tips "as was normal." I've been in hundreds of prisons and jails over a period of more than thirty years on five continents, including Qasr and other prisons in Iran and have never given or seen anyone give any tip. I don't recommend it.

His prisoners were privileged as was his visit: three men in a cell twenty feet by thirty: apparently dealing directly with the head of the prison. The prisoners we visited were crammed together, miserable and angry. We ate lunch on the floor with our fingers in a cell no bigger than 20 by 30 that had about 25 prisoners in it.

I do not know the names of the prison officials I talked with in the prison. They did have on resplendent uniforms. If one was a General Mohari as you suggest on page 151, you know something I don't.

I have no recollection of having ever met Ross Perot before the day in question. If we had met it was at some large function with many people present. I had seen pictures of him. I knew my brother-in-law had been at Annapolis with him and that my sister knew him. When he walked in with six or eight Americans, he seemed the central figure and looked familiar. I thought it might be Frank Borman. When he introduced himself I knew who he was. If he did not give his name, I did not notice it. Either he or I mentioned my sister Mimi and brother-in-law Tom.

The thing that was most obvious and we discussed after Perot's group walked through was how the U. S. Embassy helps people like Ross Perot obtain entry to prisons, but does nothing to help human rights efforts.

I assume you are writing about the prison break as well. There were hundreds of angry, hurt, anxious people outside the prison constantly. There were machine gun positions on top to prevent the crowd from rushing the prison. There were hundreds of political prisoners inside.

Some had engaged in hunger strikes and other protest activity over a period of years. International efforts had been made for years to secure the release of many prisoners. The prison was a famous focal point in the struggle against the Shah.

When the Shah left, it was inescapable that Qasr prison would be opened. The idea that several clever Americans manipulated the opening is false. A rich and clever American executive was not the only person who wanted people out of Qasr prison. There were husbands, wives, brothers, fathers, sisters, lovers, friends who had ached many for years for the release of loved ones.

I hope your book goes well.
Sincerely,

I hope your book goes well.

Ramsey Clark
Ramsey Clark