

consular immunity was deliberately designed to provide for a kind of neutral ground. The site of Expo 67 had been chosen for the temporary extension of the Cuban Consulate to assure these people also that they would be coming to a wide-open space, an area that was familiar to them.

The arrangements for clearing and protecting the site were made known. The fact that aircraft were standing by was publicized for several weeks. It was obvious that everything was ready if only the kidnapers would come forward.

In the end, as you know, the kidnapers did not give themselves up voluntarily. They were discovered by the police. The safe conduct was offered to them in order to avoid a shoot-out and to ensure that Mr. Cross would not be injured.

It was stated clearly right from the start that they could keep their weapons and their hostages—in other words, maintain their own bargaining power all the way until they were in the hands of the Cuban representatives. A further guarantee was that the hostages would not be turned over by them directly to the Canadian authorities. They themselves would not surrender to the Canadian authorities but to the Cuban authorities. The hostages would not be released until the kidnapers had reached Cuba.

Was there a contingency plan for what would happen to the hostages if the kidnapers did not make it? Were they told what would happen to Mr. Cross if they did not reach Cuba?

In other words, if they had been seized by the Canadian authorities, or something like that?

Their principal guarantee was that any such development would have caused an international scandal of major proportions. The Canadian government, in effect, was putting itself deliberately in a situation where any double-cross would have been quite an intolerable development. We had built a situation where we were compelled to stick to our bargain, precisely because we intended to do so. We had no other wish than to abide scrupulously by every detail of these arrangements. This is what happened.

The mechanism for safe conduct in this case was different, to my knowledge, from anything that has happened in any other country. There have been kidnappings elsewhere. People have been released from prison and shipped abroad, and the victims subsequently released. That kind of operation is relatively simple because the kidnapers themselves do not feel trapped. They are not apprehended. They continue to hold their hostage. The local government in that type of situation merely tries to protect itself from any double-crossing. For instance, it arranges for prisoners to

be sent out of the country and put in the hands of an impartial third party, say the government of 'X'. Once the prisoners are there, they await the release of the hostage. When he is released the government of 'X' proceeds to send the prisoners on to 'Y', their final destination. If the hostage is not released, the government of 'X' presumably returns these people to their country of origin, in accordance with prior undertakings. In our case, we had to devise a system whereby the kidnapers would come forward of their own free will and release their hostage before they had attained safe haven abroad. It was quite tricky.

The kidnapers obviously expected that the Canadian government would play fair. The way they behaved when they arrived at Terre Des Hommes, the way they behaved during the trip was not suspicious. They obviously thought the mechanism provided quite reasonable assurance.

There was never any problem in the fact that Canadian officials would accompany them?

No, because, first, they were accompanied by the Cuban representative who had received them at Man and His World. Secondly, they seemed to find it quite natural for Canadian officials to accompany them. After all, we had to satisfy ourselves that the arrangements were complied with. There was no surprise, no resistance.

Can you describe the flight?

Did you talk with the kidnapers during the trip?

The flight itself was in a Canadian aircraft manned by Canadian personnel. The atmosphere was quite relaxed, quiet, and subdued. There was no unpleasantness. We spoke with the kidnapers, who seemed to react quite well to our presence. The Canadian government had made available a doctor on the flight—one of the women was expecting a child at almost any moment.

What is the status of the Task Force now?

The officers who comprised it have now returned to their regular duties and the operations center has resumed its normal function. There may, incidentally, have been some misconceptions among people about how the center in fact did carry out its activities—that the electronic gear we had at our disposal may have constituted a super electronic brain thinking out our whole plan. Nothing could be further from the truth. What the center's equipment did do mainly was to serve as a mechanism for accelerating the flow of information, sorting it out, and enabling a group of people from various departments and agencies to consider situations methodically. In the end all the thinking was done by people, in the same way that the kidnapping and, unfortunately, the killing had been done by people.

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