

Iranians Detail U.S. Plans

By William Tuohy

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TEHRAN—The code name for President Carter was "Golden Leaf." The Joint Chiefs of Staff were "Mail Coach," and the commander of the Joint Task Force that was to attempt to free the 53 American hostages was "Foreman."

The Nimitz, the aircraft carrier from which the ill-fated helicopter rescue mission was launched, was "Tiger Rag," the secret American hideout "Figbar," and the Iranian enemy "Jail Bait."

In Tehran, Iranian authorities released new details for the first time Monday of the daring American rescue mission that failed in the early hours of April 25.

The details were in documents presented at the International Conference on U.S. Interventions in Iran. They were taken from the helicopters left behind in the desert when the U.S. mission withdrew after a helicopter crashed into a C130 transport plane.

The material was unquestionably authentic: pilots' notations on their knee pads with courses, radio frequencies and call signs; maps of the route in and out of Tehran; even a U.S. sat-

ellite photograph of the "Desert 1" refueling point that was taken on March 31, 1980.

There were aerial pictures of the U.S. Embassy compound where the hostages were held, and of the adjacent soccer stadium from where the captives were to be extracted, with the goal posts clearly shown.

And there were copies of the overall plan: "Day 1, ship to Laager [the hideaway point], and "Day 2, Laager to evacuation."

Based on the documents, equipment and material left behind and markings on the U.S. military maps that were recovered, the Iranian military offered the following picture of the American rescue plan:

Just after 1 a.m. on April 25, the eight original helicopters, after refueling, were to have taken off from "Desert 1" on a northwesterly course. They were to fly about 208 miles, landing near Garmsar, about 50 miles southeast of Tehran, at between 2:15 and 3 a.m.

There, the commando team of Marines and soldiers would be unloaded. Then the helicopters would fly for 15 minutes to a hiding site, reaching it about 3:30 a.m.

Camouflaged nettings would be

placed over the helicopters, and infrared protective radar installed to act as a warning against intruders.

A team of 36 persons in four groups, dressed in uniforms of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard and of the regular Iranian Army, would provide armed physical protection around the site's perimeter. The helicopters were to remain hidden for almost 24 hours, until 1 a.m. the following day.

Meanwhile, the commandos who had disembarked from the helicopters were to be driven by waiting trucks to a garage about 700 yards from the helicopter landing site.

The U.S. soldiers and Marines were to remain hidden in the garage until midnight the following night.

After the abortive raid, Iranian authorities said Monday that they had discovered five new trucks loaded with tents and two Mazda pickup trucks hidden on the road to Tehran.

"The garage and its owner, who was an agent of the CIA, have been identified," said the official report.

At midnight on April 26 the commandos in the garage were to board the trucks and drive along the main highway leading into Tehran, finally arriving at their Amjadieh Stadium

for Rescue Mission

across from the U.S. Embassy compound.

The commandos and Marines were then to enter the embassy through the annex of the compound, using ladders and "special equipment," rescue the hostages—exactly how was not specified in the report—and then take them to Amjadieh Stadium.

At the same time, a few commandos would drive in a van to the Iranian Foreign Ministry complex to rescue the three diplomats who have been kept there ever since the rest of the hostages were seized in the embassy on Nov. 4.

Three diplomats would be evacuated from the Foreign Ministry and driven back to the stadium.

As the rescue operation progressed, two helicopters were to orbit to direct the commandos and stand by in case the Foreign Ministry group needed help.

Four other helicopters were to land in the stadium to carry out the hostages. The other two helicopters were to "hide somewhere as a reserve force."

Communications between the assault team and the helicopters were to be supervised by the first two helicopters. Twelve sites in Tehran—mainly

stadiums and riding tracks—were selected as emergency landing points.

By 2:30 a.m. on April 26, it was planned that all the hostages and commandos would be extracted from Tehran. Using a refinery south of town as the night disembarkation point, they were to fly to Manzaryeh near Qom, an auxiliary airfield about 49 miles southwest of Tehran where the C130s would be waiting for them, having landed a short time before.

The helicopters would be abandoned and destroyed, with their crews boarding the C130s.

As the transports became airborne, Navy fighter planes—F14s, F4s, A7s and A6s—were to be on hand to escort the transports from Iranian airspace.