Joe Subic opens up on captivity; says spy 'confession' was phony

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By Bill Casper
staff writer

Former Iranian hostage Joseph Subic Jr. is gearing up to cash in on his 444 days in captivity.

The 24-year-old intends to leave the U.S. Army. He's considering book and job offers. And he may enter politics.

"I have an option to get out and I'm going to. I'm going to request a lieutenant's commission as an Army reserve officer," Subic said in an exclusive interview with the Observer & Eccentric.

"I have received numerous offers to write a book about my experiences during captivity, and I'm in the process of considering which offer to accept." He already has hired an attorney to negotiate a book contract.

"I've also received several job offers, which I can't talk about now," Subic continued. "But let's say it'd be foolish of me not to take advantage of them.

"I'm also considering a political career.

"I have received quiet offers from politicians of both political parties to run for the state Legislature or a local office."

STILL GUARDED because of his status as an Army staff sergeant, Subic talked Friday night for the first time about his fears for his family's safety in Redford Township during his captivity, the "professional" beatings imposed by his captives and his reaction to the militants' "spy film" portraying him as an American agent.

While his family members dined at a party they hosted to thank local VFW members and township police for their help during his captivity, Subic said that while a hostage he had feared for the lives of his parents.

"During my captivity, the militants showed me several pictures of my family around the house I had never seen before," he said.

"They showed me the pictures during interrogation, indicating that the lives of my family would be in jeopardy if I didn't cooperate with them. I never did, but that's just another example of the mental torture techniques the militants used in attempting to get information from us."

"Khomeini sympathizers" got close enough to his parents' Redford Township home to take photographs of his family and to put letters into the mail box, he said.

Subic also admitted to being subjected to Russian roulette and mock executions along with other hostages. He said he still experiences stomach pains from physical beatings at the hands of his captors.

"The interrogators were very professional. They punched me under my ribs, but their beatings left no marks on my body. After being released, doctors in Wiesbaden (West Germany) found I had a tender stomach and I still experience stomach pains," Subic said.

He also developed a bleeding ulcer as a result of his mental and physical treatment. But he refused medical aid while in captivity.

"I didn't want to give the militants an opportunity to turn any medical treatment into another propaganda show-and-tell film to the highest American (television) network bidder," he said.

Subic said his return home went "better than expected." But after returning home and seeing the public celebrations for the former hostages, Subic said, he went through a period of depression, "trying to settle into a normal life again."

Each of the former hostages has a personal psychiatrist assigned, he said, and will be evaluated at a future reunion.

SUBIC SPOKE bitterly about the manner in which American television covered the hostage crisis. He also denied confessing to being a CIA agent on a filmed segment. Subic said the film was prepared and sold by the militants to U.S. television networks.

"The militants spliced used filmed footage of me taken on various occasions during my captivity and one of them faked my voice in the film where I supposedly admitted to the militants as being a CIA agent," Subic said.

"Everything we did on film was either manufactured or staged by the militants for propaganda purposes. I told Bishop Thomas Gumbleton that when they (the militants) were filming his Christmas visit.

"If the military really suspected that I had admitted to being a CIA agent, I would have been arrested for a military court martial. But there has been and there will be no military investigation relating to my actions in Iran.

"It aggravates me that the American networks bid on the films made by the militants, knowing that it was all staged for propaganda purposes," Subic said.

"I read an article in an English newspaper criticizing the American television media for supporting the militants' cause, giving them money for the films and televising their propaganda to the American people. The film only resulted in a lot of people making rash judgments about me without knowing the facts."

Alan Raymond, director of news information for ABC in New York, denied bidding on the film but said the news media did buy the film from the militants at a specified price. Raymond also denied knowing the films were falsified or doctors.

ALTHOUGH LITTLE has been said about intelligence operations at the U.S. embassy in Tehran, Subic hinted there is much yet untold.

Subic said while in Iran he was assigned to the Defense Intelligence Agency of the Department of Defense as an administrative specialist, a position he described as being intelligence-related.

The agency's task, he said, is to report on military matters in foreign countries.

"I spent a week in Washington being debriefed by the officials of the Defense Intelligence Agency, their main concern being an assessment of the damage caused to the United States by highly classified material seized by the militants during the embassy takeover," Subic said.

He also hinted that the classified documents seized by the militants were indeed damaging, but he declined to explain.

REDFORD POLICE Chief Michael Manoog, also at the Friday night party, talked of intrigue surrounding the Subics' home and police efforts to insure the family's safety.

"On my first visit to the Subic home shortly after the embassy takeover, Joe's father showed me a letter we determined was written and delivered by a Khomeini supporter," Manoog said. "The letter was written in broken English with red ink on a piece of parchment we don't use in this country.

It had no postmark and apparently was delivered through the embassy's diplomatic pouch system by a pro-Khomeini courier, Manoog said.

"That letter and two or three others which came later were not threatening in nature but derogatory to the former hostages and sympathetic toward the militant cause," Manoog continued.

"We decided not to take any chances and I ordered a 24-hour surveillance of the Subic house for about two months. After the letters stopped coming, we had patrolmen watching the home during the day to handle any press problems, and we kept a marked patrol car, without a patrolman, in the Subics' driveway at night."

SUBIC SAID he was advised by Army officials not to give any press conferences or interviews for at least a year. So he is careful about what he tells the media.

His first step is an early discharge from the Army so he can tell his story without the threat of a military reprimand.

"As soon as I get back (he reported for duty Monday in Arlington, Va.), I'm going to start the paperwork on a request for an early discharge," said Subic.

Subic said he doesn't have any particular political affiliation and will have to decide which party he wants to join before deciding whether he will enter the political arena.

BILL BRESLER/staff photographer

Former hostage Joseph Subic Jr. talks for the first time about his experience in Iran and his plans for the future.

Apr. 25 art market offers toys, trinkets and tapestries

By Ingrid Tomey
special writer

The annaul Westacres Artist Market in West Bloomfield is full of surprises.

The April 25 art fair covers a wide range of artistic media and always manages to provide some unexpected treats.

One of those surprises is batik artist Sharon Richwine from Ohio.

"Her batiks are really special, full of striking colors and unexpected layerings of subject matter," says co-chairwoman Jaqueline Brewer.

Or Pete Landino's wooden toys. "He lives in Westacres, so you know he'll be at the artist market, but you never know what to expect from Pete," Mrs. Brewer adds. "His wooden puzzles delight everyone, but last year the kids went wild over his carved hero pins."

This year his newest toy, Old Lady in a Shoe, should draw a lot of attention. An exclusive line of Landino's unusual playthings is carried by the shops at the Detroit Institute of Arts.

The mart is slated for Saturday, April 25, starting at 10 a.m. and ending around 5 p.m. at Westacres clubhouse, located south of Commerce Road east of Union Lake Road.

THE REAL treat of the art fair is the return of several of Michigan's most prestigious artists.

More than 35 artists will show their wares and sell jewelry, prints, photography, ceramics, batik, pottery, leaded glass, weaving and wood carving.

Returning this year for their 10th show are Russ and Susan Bolt, who own and operate the Grange Hall Pottery and Print Shop in Charlevoix.

Their blue-faced pots will be displayed along with other ceramics with shimmering glazes.

Another returning artist is weaver Julie Stowe from Walled Lake.

The fair, in its 13th year, started 45 years ago when the first residents moved into the area now called Westacres.

"It was so desolate," recalls one early resident, Unita Llewelyn, "and miles from anywhere. The houses were so ugly that nobody planned to stay. Everyone figured they'd move somewhere nicer as soon as they could afford to."

BUT MANY did stay, remodeling their cinderblock houses, developing their own commuter bus service, credit union, newspaper and library.

"It was this strong sense of community spirit that fostered the idea of an art fair back in 1969," says Mrs. Brewer. "And we've been doing it every year since then."

When their old clubhouse was torn down, residents scouted around for another location for two years.

INSIDE ANGLES

BY LOUISE OKRUTSKY

HELPING HANDS are needed in the Farmington School District and three training sessions are scheduled next week for interested volunteers.

Helping Hands, sponsored by the Farmington Area Parent Teacher Association, involves displaying a card in a window of your home identifying it as a safe refuge for school children in trouble.

More helping hands are needed because of several attempted abductions of school children throughout the district. All incidents have occurred in the past few months.

Police officers from Farmington and Farmington Hills will conduct the training sessions, scheduled at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 14, and 10:30 a.m. Wednesday, April 15, at the Farmington Hills library on 12 Mile Road, and April 15 at 7:30 p.m. at the Farmington branch library on Liberty Street. Each presentation is an hour and a half.

For more information about helping hands, call Sandy Inch at 474-4464.

BIO SCIENCE LABORATORIES wants to spread a little knowledge.

On Sunday, April 12, the lab in Farmington Hills industrial park will open its doors for public viewing of work done in the medical areas of immunology, chemistry, radioisotopes and toxicology.

Staff members will conduct tours from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.

The open house coincides with the fifth anniversary of the lab and National Medical Laboratory Week (April 12-18).

The lab is at 24469 Indoplex Circle, near Grand River and Drake.

SPRING INTO SPRING with a YMCA class or two. To honor the Y's first birthday at 28100 Farmington Road, anyone who signs up for a special interest class will get a coupon worth $3 off a second class.

Classes begin the week of April 27 and run for seven weeks. Registration opens April 13. For more information call 553-4020.

RALPH NADER, America's favorite consumer advocate, will speak at the annual donor luncheon at Adat Shalom Synagogue, 29901 Middlebelt, Farmington Hills on May 4.

Tickets are now on sale for the lunch/talk at $18.

Publicity person Ann Benderoff promises Nader will talk about a variety of scintillating topics, but not automobile safety.

For reservations, call Mrs. Betsy Winkelman at 626-3826 or Mrs. Arlene Klein at 851-9603.

DANIEL SCHORR, one of America's most recognized journalists, is also coming to town. Schorr will talk about "The Media and Democracy" at 8:30 p.m. on April 20 at the Birmingham Temple.

Schorr is perhaps best remembered for his involvement in the Watergate and CIA investigations during the Nixon and Ford administrations, when his name was among the "top twenty" names on Nixon's enemies list.

Admission is $5, tickets are available in advance and at the door. For information, call Mary Lewis at 645-9039.

FANTASYLAND came to Flanders in Farmington yesterday.

Christopher Columbus, George Washington, Betsy Ross and Abraham Lincoln were among the stars in the elementary school play presented by second- and third-graders from Mrs. Shirley Northrop's class.

Media specialist Jean Rice coordinated the "Who Am I" play.

Guests, including School Supt. Lewis Schulman, were challenged to guess not only who the actors were, but in what library book they were the main character.

It was all part of National Library Week.

SCHOOL STAMP CLUBS in search of guest speakers can tap the natural resources of Carol and Dave Mundorf, owners of America's Stamp Stop West, 11 Mile and Middlebelt.

The Mundorfs are willing to visit school stamp clubs free of charge to discuss stamp collecting. Call 474-4460.

A SALUTE CONCERT to Temple Beth El, featuring Leonard Bernstein's Chichester Psalms, is set for Sunday, April 12, at 3:30 p.m.

The concert will be presented by the Wayne State University Choral Union and Orchestra under the direction of Dennis J. Tini, of Farmington.

Admission is free. The temple is at 1400 North Telegraph at 14 Mile.

POP AND HOP are on top Friday night at the Franklin School gymnasium.

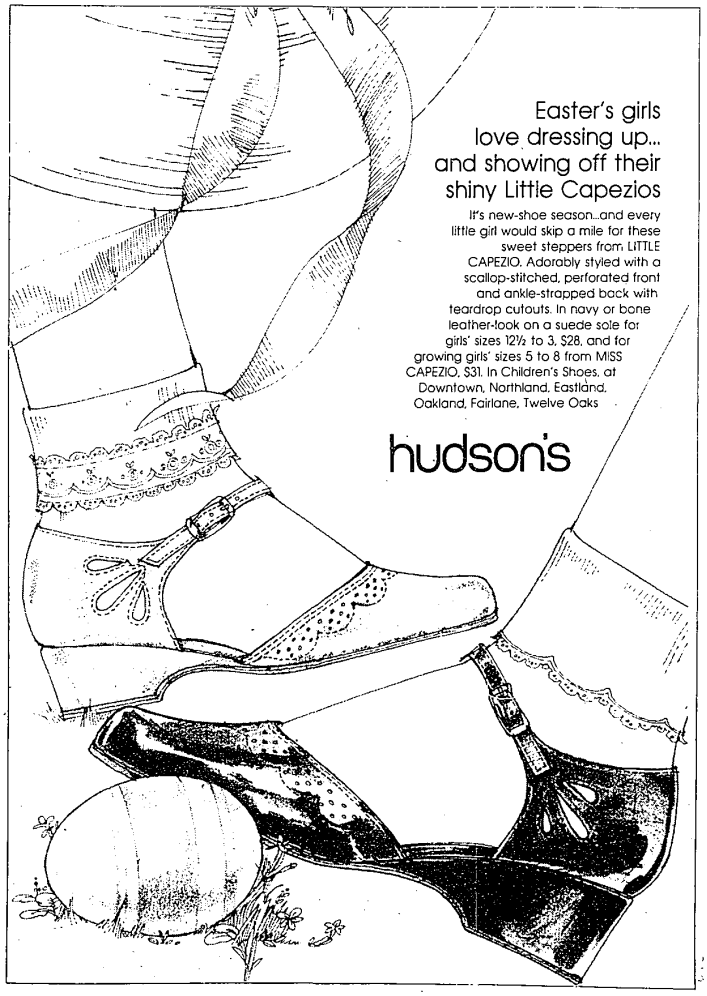
A benefit for community use of the Franklin School features a pop concert presented by the Franklin Village Band and a Bunny Hop dance to the music of Bill Ellison's Village Aires.

It's $2.50 a person. For information, call 626-2386, or 855-2998.

CPR class set

Northwest Post 190, The American Legion is sponsoring a CPR seminar, Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation and Helmlich Anti-choking, at the post home on Nine Mile Road at Middleblet at 10:30 a.m., April 11.

Jimmie Watts is chairman of this community service program.

There is no charge for the training program. The public is invited to attend and to learn these lifesaving techniques. Free coffee will be served.

Jim Johnson, a certified CPR instructor, will be in charge of the training program.