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A Life on the Line:
the *Christian Science Monitor* and the kidnapping of Jill Carroll

On Saturday, January 7, 2006, *Christian Science Monitor* Managing Editor Marshall Ingwerson was woken by a 4:30 a.m. phone call—and it was not good news. A *Monitor* stringer in Baghdad, Jill Carroll, had been kidnapped. No one knew who had taken her, nor whether the kidnappers were motivated by money or ideology. Kidnappings had become only too common in Iraq; journalists in particular were favorite targets. The *Monitor* itself had even experienced another freelancer kidnapped and killed. Ingwerson knew the paper would have to make decisions quickly.

Trying to manage a kidnapping in any context was a challenge, and involved a staggering array of players. That Carroll was in Iraq only multiplied the numbers. There were the many editors at the *Monitor*, Carroll's family members, news media, US government agencies, and non-governmental organizations. There were also the bureau in Baghdad, the US military authorities in Iraq, Iraqi government officials and purported go-betweens to terrorist organizations. *Monitor* editors had to decide not only whom to work with, but when to call on which group or individual.

As a start, Ingwerson and a few key editors each took specific responsibilities. One represented the *Monitor* in public; another worked with the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and its counterparts abroad; another dealt with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI); and still another stayed in constant communication with Carroll's family members. The reporters in the Baghdad bureau were also eager to assist in any way possible. The question was: who could really be helpful?

As the first shock of the kidnapping wore off, the *Monitor* team found it confronted a host of terrible dilemmas. Should the paper make a public statement of support for Carroll, or play down the incident in hopes of resolving it quietly? Should it welcome the intervention of Arab media organizations or liaisons to the kidnappers? Were a ransom demanded, should the urgency of the situation trump US laws against paying off terrorists? Should the paper promote Carroll from stringer to full-fledged correspondent or would that only increase her value to the kidnappers?

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Within a week, the kidnappers had publicized their demand: free all Iraqi female prisoners or they would kill Carroll. This was not under the *Monitor's* control. One deadline passed, and Carroll was apparently still alive. But as a second deadline approached, *Monitor* editors were receiving conflicting advice. On the one hand, CIA sources were adamant: speak up, make a lot of noise, and the stringer would be freed. On the other, the FBI and a private security agency urged Ingwerson and his colleagues to keep quiet, use back channels, and resolve the matter privately. The kidnappers had set a second deadline of February 26. The editors knew that their next steps could spell life or death for the young woman they had engaged to report on Iraq.

A Newspaper with a Mandate

For the *Christian Science Monitor,* whether to send reporters to cover the Iraq War was never in question. Even as the conflict worsened and the number of insurgent attacks increased, the *Monitor* maintained its Baghdad bureau, with its two veteran Middle East reporters and two or three stringers. Other news organizations shuttered their Iraq bureaus because of the danger and the expense. But even though financially strapped, the *Monitor* never relied on wire service stories to fill its pages and prided itself on its independent international coverage.

That attitude could be traced to the newspaper's creator, Mary Baker Eddy, who founded the First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston in 1879. Nearly three decades later, at age 87, she launched the *Christian Science Monitor* in response to the "yellow" journalism of her day. The mandate she set for her new publication was—and remained—"to injure no man, but to bless all mankind." Although affiliated with the church, the *Monitor* was not intended to propagate Christian Science. Eddy wanted her newspaper to be nondenominational, though she insisted the newspaper's name contain the words "Christian Science."

Since its founding, the *Monitor* had won numerous awards for its coverage, including seven Pulitzer Prizes; the most recent was for international reporting in 1996. The recipient was David Rohde, whom the prize committee lauded for "his persistent on-site reporting of the massacre of thousands of Bosnian Muslims in Srebrenica." Rohde had gone behind Serb lines, unbeknownst to his editors, while covering the Balkan war and found evidence of the massacre. He was detained by the Serbs, jailed and interrogated because he didn't possess the proper papers. The *Monitor* editors tried to negotiate his release. Ingwerson, then a reporter in the *Monitor's* Moscow bureau, appealed to the Russian foreign ministry to pressure the Serbs for Rohde's release. "But I didn't get anywhere," Ingwerson says.[1] Rohde was freed after 10 days in captivity.

By 2006 the *Monitor*, which published Monday through Friday, maintained eight bureaus around the world despite its budget constraints.[2] The newspaper operated at a deficit; the church

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1 Author's interview with Marshall Ingwerson in Boston, MA, on May 27, 2008. All further quotes from Ingwerson, unless otherwise attributed, are from this interview.

2 E-mail dated September 11, 2008, from Amanda Caswell, assistant to the editor, *Christian Science Monitor*.

supported it financially. Over the years, it had endured budget cuts, staff layoffs, a decreased page count, and a declining readership. At its height in the 1970s, the newspaper had a circulation of nearly a quarter-million; by 2005, its circulation had fallen to about 58,000.[3]

Past lessons

During Ingwerson's tenure of nearly a decade as managing editor, his experiences with journalist abductions and murders thankfully were limited. But there had been incidents. Only months into his new position, one of the paper's stringers was shot in the back and killed by Indonesian troops in East Timor. In 2004, a British journalist on assignment for the *Sunday Times*, who occasionally wrote for the *Monitor*, was kidnapped in southern Iraq. Ingwerson remembered making a few fruitless inquiries, trying to learn the journalist's location and his captors' identity. The reporter was released after less than 24 hours in captivity.

The most recent abduction of a *Monitor* contributor (technically, a freelance writer) had occurred a few months prior to Carroll's kidnapping. In July 2005 Steven Vincent, an American journalist based in Basra, had written three articles for the newspaper, including one about the rise of political assassinations in Iraq. The following month, gunmen posing as police seized Vincent and his Iraqi translator.

At the time, Ingwerson contacted full-time *Monitor* correspondent Dan Murphy in Baghdad, asking him to check with his sources—US officials, the embassy, Iraqi civilians, reporters, Iraqi police—for any information on Vincent, his whereabouts or his kidnappers. Meanwhile, Ingwerson obtained payment records to find Vincent's US address and phone number to inform his wife of 13 years of the abduction. "We were kind of working the lines, especially Dan," Ingwerson says. But within three hours, Vincent's body was found on a Basra street. Vincent and his translator, with their eyes blindfolded and their hands tied behind them, had been shot multiple times and left for dead. The translator survived. Vincent was the first US journalist kidnapped and murdered in Iraq since the start of the war in March 2003.

But the case that weighed heavily on any editor whose correspondent was kidnapped was that of *Wall Street Journal* reporter Daniel Pearl. Before Pearl's 2002 abduction, journalists had enjoyed a kind of quasi-protection from violence thanks to their profession. The attacks of September 11, 2001, seemed to have changed the rules; Al Qaeda and its sympathizers did not care whether a captive was a journalist or not. Joel Simon, director of the non-profit Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), comments:

> In some of these places, your press pass has traditionally been your 'get out of jail free' card. In other words, no matter who had you, you could say, 'Look, I'm a journalist. I'm here to tell your story, and I can't tell your

[3] Frederic M. Biddle, "Is it a savior—or a fatal mistake?" *Boston Globe*, November 20, 1988. Also Caswell email.

> story if you're kidnapping me…' They traditionally cared about the way the public perceived them, particularly the public in the West. They're fighting a propaganda war as well as a military war, and the press is important.[4]

Pearl's kidnapping on January 25, 2002, while on assignment in Karachi, Pakistan, changed all that. A previously unknown group calling itself the "National Movement for Restoration of Pakistani Sovereignty" took responsibility for his kidnapping. It claimed that Pearl, 38, was a CIA and Israeli intelligence officer "posing as a journalist of the *Wall Street Journal*."[5] Pearl was captured when he went, alone, to a rendezvous with a source for a story.

The *Journal* exerted every effort to find out what had happened to its South Asia bureau chief. The editors knew they could count on Pearl to do whatever he could to secure his own release; with years of reporting experience in dangerous places, Pearl had even drawn up safety guidelines for overseas staff. Meanwhile, they orchestrated a campaign on his behalf. The CIA was persuaded, against every precedent, to state forcefully that Pearl had no connection to the intelligence agency. Terry Anderson, a reporter held hostage in Lebanon for seven years, published a piece in the *New York Times* in which he noted that his captors had admitted that kidnapping was not a "useful tactic."[6] Anderson, clearly hoping his words would be read by Pearl's kidnappers, wrote that "the kidnappings stopped because they just weren't worthwhile… Unfortunately, the kidnappers in Pakistan seem to have forgotten that lesson." Other appeals came from around the globe to release Pearl.

They were to no avail. On February 22, 2002, the world learned that Pearl had been executed. A videotape left at the US Embassy showed one of his captors slitting his throat. The equation for journalists had changed. Observes CPJ Middle East Program Director Joel Campagna: "The status of journalists as neutral observers has eroded over the years. I think a worrying trend is that the journalists… are being exploited for their potential political value. "[7]

Security. As the security situation for journalists in Iraq deteriorated, news organizations took a variety of steps to protect them--from kidnapping, explosions, suicide bombers and so forth. News organizations as a matter of course staffed their bureaus, as well as reporters' homes or hotel rooms, with armed guards. Some shared these costs; others chose to have an exclusive contract with a security agency which could advise on individual reporting assignments.

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4 Author's interview with Joel Simon in New York City, on June 12, 2008. All further quotes from Simon, unless otherwise attributed, are from this interview.

5 "Pakistani Group Says It Seized Daniel Pearl, Journal Correspondent," *Wall Street Journal*, January 28, 2002, p.A1.

6 Terry Anderson, "Pearl's Kidnappers Won't Win," *New York Times*, February 1, 2002, p.25.

7 Author's interview with Joel Campagna in Newton, MA, on July 8, 2008. All further quotes from Campagna, unless otherwise attributed, are from this interview.

Disagreements arose, however, over how best to protect reporters outside the bureau. Sometimes the stiffest resistance to increased protection came from reporters themselves, who argued that they were safest if they traveled "under the radar"—meaning without elaborate precautions. Some preferred to move around in small sedans, dressed in Iraqi clothing. Other news outlets, by contrast, provided armored cars, armored guards, even "chase" cars which made it hard for gunmen to be certain in which vehicle a kidnapping target was traveling. Some provided training in how to handle an attempted kidnapping. "The news organizations that send journalists to cover conflicts have to recognize their responsibility to their employees," said then CPJ-Director Ann Cooper.

> They need to talk about security in detail and make sure their journalists are properly trained. But on specific questions like whether to travel with bodyguards or not, there are different opinions—and no right or wrong approach.[8]

By 2006, US television correspondents tended to travel with armed guards. But "others, including many European television journalists said, 'This is the last thing we want to do.' Traveling with gunmen, they argued, tainted the image of journalists as neutral observers," elaborated Cooper. At a journalists' conference in Budapest in late 2003, some European reporters argued that "the presence of outside security people in battle zones is unhealthy for the newsgathering process, and in fact endangers all journalists because it blurs the line between reporters and combatants. In the heat of battle, the argument goes, nobody consults a copy of the Geneva Conventions."[9] National Public Radio, for example, split the difference—its reporters traveled in armored cars, but without armed guards.

Carroll herself had been well aware of the hazards facing journalists in Iraq. In early 2005, she wrote in the *American Journalism Review* that "the anger and violence have only gotten worse since [the US siege of Fallujah and simultaneous Shiite uprising in April 2004], and a new terror has been added: kidnapping."[10] In her story, she noted that 200 foreigners, including several journalists, had been kidnapped, cowing other Western reporters into remaining "virtual prisoners in their hotel rooms."

By the beginning of 2006, the Committee to Protect Journalists had tallied 36 reporters—Americans and non-US—covering the Iraq War who had been abducted by rogue groups. As Managing Editor Ingwerson learned on the morning of January 7, the *Monitor's* Jill Carroll was the 37th.

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[8] "Cooper: Reporters in Iraq Increasingly in Danger," Interview with Ann Cooper, January 20, 2006, Council on Foreign Relations.

[9] Neil Hickey, "Bodyguards and the Press," *Columbia Journalism Review*, Jan./Feb. 2004, Vol. 42, Issue 5, p.5.

[10] Jill Carroll, "Letter from Baghdad: What a Way to Make a Living," *American Journalism Review*, February/March 2005, p.54.

First facts

The CBS news desk in New York awoke Ingwerson, asking him to confirm a report that *Monitor* stringer Carroll had been kidnapped. Ingwerson could not. After hanging up the phone, he called David Clark Scott, his foreign editor, who was about to dial his boss with the news. *Monitor* Middle East correspondent Scott Peterson had just called Foreign Editor Scott from Cairo to tell him about Carroll's kidnapping.

As far as Peterson could determine, on Saturday morning local time, Carroll had been abducted on a street in western Baghdad while on assignment for the *Monitor*. As usual, Carroll wore a *hijab*, a woman's head covering, and an *abaya*, a full-length black overgarment, out of respect for Iraqi customs and to "pass" as an Iraqi woman. On the ride back to her office, after the sudden cancellation of an interview with a Sunni politician, a large truck pulled out and blocked the road. Men jumped out, one pointing a gun at the *Monitor's* longtime driver. The gunmen killed Carroll's interpreter and commandeered the car. Her driver was left behind, and saw Carroll through the car window. She was still alive.

Ingwerson listened as his foreign editor relayed these details on the other end of the line. When Scott finished, they agreed to meet at the *Monitor's* newsroom in Boston immediately. The only other person to contact at that point was then-Editor Richard Bergenheim, but he was on vacation—his first since assuming the position nine months before—in Oaxaca, Mexico, outside cellphone range. Ingwerson left a message at his hotel.

Driving to the *Monitor's* newsroom in downtown Boston, Ingwerson considered the situation. The *Monitor's* first step should be to verify the report. If true, what should they do next? Were the kidnappers part of the al Qaeda terrorist network or thugs hoping to cash in quickly? Why Carroll? What might be the leverage points with the kidnappers? Who could help free her? How much public scrutiny would the newspaper face? How much time did they have? As managing editor since 1999, most of his day-to-day decisions had not involved life and death matters. By the time he arrived at the *Monitor's* newsroom before dawn, Ingwerson had more questions than answers.

Taking stock

Once in the office by about 5 a.m., Ingwerson and Scott reviewed the situation. The *Monitor's* two full-time Middle East correspondents were Scott Peterson and Dan Murphy, known in the newsroom as the "Baghdad Boys." Typically, the two rotated in and out of Baghdad for four to six weeks at a time. But neither was in Iraq at the moment. They had returned to their home bases in Istanbul and Cairo respectively just before Christmas, leaving Carroll in charge.

Stringer. In the beginning of 2005, Carroll was hired as a "stringer," someone who took on regular assignments for the *Monitor* and was paid a fee for each published story. She was not a member of the news staff. That meant she had no benefits, such as health or retirement. Her stories carried the tag "correspondent" in the byline, whereas fulltime reporters were cited as "staff writers." The *Monitor* retained some two dozen stringers around the world; in Iraq, there were two or three in addition to Carroll. Carroll answered formally to Foreign Editor Scott, but worked closely with reporters Peterson and Murphy and reported daily to Middle East Editor Mike Farrell.

The *Monitor* editors in Boston worried about the security of all its writers. In general, they took their cues from the correspondents on the ground. "Scott [Peterson] and Dan [Murphy] were very much of the low-profile school," says Foreign Editor Scott.

> [They felt] 'the less we look like something that's valuable, the better. The more we blend in, the better.' And since it was their lives, we in Boston trusted that all for the most part.

Scott himself visited Iraq in 2003, where the head of security for the German embassy told him that "we feel much safer living in a house, low profile, in the neighborhood."

Nonetheless, Scott says the *Monitor* made security provisions for its staff—stringers and fulltime reporters alike. The *Monitor's* Baghdad bureau was in a hotel, where its reporters also lived. The hotel was in a compound shared with other news organizations including NBC News, the *Washington Post*, McClatchy News and *USA Today*. A security unit stood at the entrance to the compound, as well as at the entrance to the building housing the various news organizations. The *Monitor* did not have an independent contract with a security firm. But it did give staff a week of "hostile environment" training from a British security firm, Centurion. Finally, the *Monitor* made a chase car option available to all its writers, if they chose. No preventive measures, however, could completely obviate risk. Notes Bergenheim:

> You have to decide, do you continue to send reporters to dangerous areas… Unfortunately, these are the kind of places news occurs… Why do you send someone into Zimbabwe? Why do you send someone into the border of Pakistan and Afghanistan? It's that if you don't shine a light of some sort, their ignorance of these terrible things going on leaves people to continue to be subject to these conditions and situations.

In February 2005, the *Monitor* published Carroll's first story for them, co-written with Murphy, a profile of a candidate for Iraq's prime minister. During that year, Murphy had mentored Carroll, who was covering the Middle East for several newspapers besides the *Monitor*. By Christmas, Murphy felt she could manage the bureau on her own for a short while, and he and Peterson could take a much-needed break. Carroll had not had a chance to get the "hostile environment" training, but before she took over the bureau for a couple of weeks, Foreign Editor

Scott discussed with her what security measures were available. Murphy and Peterson also reviewed security procedures with her.

Now, barely two weeks after they had said goodbye to her, a British security firm (AKE) that advised numerous news organizations in Iraq had contacted Peterson to inform him of Carroll's kidnapping. At the time of her abduction, Carroll had been in a *Monitor* car with two Iraqi staff members, but with no guards or special protection.

Notify family. Ingwerson decided his first responsibility was to let Carroll's family know what had happened. He found a phone number for her mother, Mary Beth Carroll. He dialed and braced himself to deliver the bad news. But she had already heard from the US State Department. To his surprise, she wasn't upset. Instead, Mary Beth reassured him, telling him that Jill had an IQ of 140, that chances were Jill was mostly worried about their being worried, and that Jill would outsmart her captors. Nevertheless, he promised her that the *Monitor* would do all it could to gain her release.

Next, Ingwerson considered how to deploy his forces. Peterson and Murphy were already on their way back to Baghdad. For his part, Editor Bergenheim had picked up the message left at his hotel in Mexico and phoned Ingwerson. After they talked, Bergenheim immediately booked himself on a flight back to Boston, and was home by Saturday night.

While Bergenheim was enroute, Ingwerson had urgently to decide what to do about Carroll's capture *qua* news story.

Managing the media

From the moment Ingwerson arrived at his office, his phone was ringing. Calls from reporters, senior executives of media outlets, editors and news producers came every two or three minutes. Some called repeatedly. Since dawn, television satellite trucks were parked outside the *Monitor's* entrance on the plaza, visible from the newsroom windows. Local and national networks were seeking a statement, interviews, more details about Carroll, any morsel of information to air on the morning news. Ingwerson put them off. Between calls and discussions with Scott, Ingwerson jotted down some talking points on his legal pad. He considered what he would say to the media.

Ingwerson decided to seek advice from those living daily with the threat of kidnapping—other news organizations in Iraq. The *Monitor* was included on a listserv (a list of email addresses) of Baghdad-based news operations. The listserv of news bureau chiefs was intended to pool knowledge on security issues. The listserv was buzzing with conversation about the kidnapping.

So far, no US newspaper had reported Carroll's disappearance; television and radio were also silent. To Ingwerson's surprise, some of the other Baghdad-based news editors advised a news blackout to keep the kidnapping as quiet as possible. "I had never known that newspapers did that, because it had never come up in our experience," Ingwerson says. But it seemed an idea worth serious consideration.

Blackout? Ingwerson and Scott weighed the pros and cons. There were distinct advantages. For one, a news blackout would stall the publication of any information about Carroll that might raise her value to her captors or make her more vulnerable. Conversely, a *high* profile might spur the kidnappers to hand Carroll over to other groups for money or get al Qaeda involved, if they weren't already, in the bidding process for ransom.

A blackout would offer other benefits. News stories might inadvertently contradict what Carroll was telling her captors; an embargo would at least postpone that. Perhaps she had given them a false name, pretended not to know Arabic or claimed to be a non-American. Ingwerson calculated that less attention would create some breathing space in case the kidnappers demanded ransom or, better yet—ignorant that they had captured a US reporter—released her unharmed.

But a blackout carried its own risks. For one thing, the entire Baghdad press corps knew Carroll was missing. Word of her abduction could leak, blackout or no. A leaked story might be worse than one the *Monitor* released voluntarily; then the paper could at least try to control what was published. Ingwerson also realized that he would need the help and advice of his editorial colleagues around the world. To embargo the story risked alienating other journalists, editors and TV producers at a time when their assistance could be crucial. "If you turn the press into an enemy, then you compound the problems you have to deal with," says Editor Bergenheim.[11]

Ingwerson found his own staff divided. Correspondent Peterson favored a blackout; but Foreign Editor Scott leaned toward not asking for a blackout. While he understood the benefits, the idea "went against every fiber in my body," says Scott.[12] Ingwerson was also aware of how easily a news blackout could prompt charges of press favoritism to its own, and he wanted to be sure the *Monitor* was not asking for special treatment. "Are you asking the press to do something for one of their own that amounts to special treatment that you wouldn't do for anybody else, for a truck driver who had been kidnapped or something?" he asks.

Ingwerson decided to hold a conference call with Carroll's parents, who were divorced and living in two states. Scott, Murphy and Peterson took part in the phone meeting as well. In the end, they all agreed that a news blackout offered more pluses than minuses. "Life trumps most

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11 Author's interview with Richard Bergenheim in Boston, MA, on June 17, 2008. All further quotes from Bergenheim, unless otherwise attributed, are from this interview.

12 Author's interview with David Clark Scott in Boston, MA, on May 27, 2008. All further quotes from Scott, unless otherwise attributed, are from this interview.

stories most of the time, and my thought, too, is that we're not making any news disappear. It's just a matter of trying to delay," comments Ingwerson.

When he returned to his desk to inform the listserv members of the decision, it was 9 a.m. Ingwerson told them and other news organizations that he'd prefer there not be any coverage yet. He then asked his editors and correspondents to trawl the Internet for any leaks of the Carroll abduction story. Without being asked, other news outlets did the same and alerted him when they found any. One of the first stories to slip through the net came from China's Xinhua News Agency. Fortunately, the names and other details were so muddled that no one could have figured out that the story was about Carroll. In the case of other news leaks, *Monitor* staff contacted the offender by phone or email to ask them to drop the story for a while. Most media organizations complied.

But the media were not the only ones eager to learn more about Carroll. Government agencies, as Ingwerson quickly witnessed for himself, were early on the scene as well.

Government agencies

Within a few hours of his arrival that Saturday, Ingwerson received a call from an FBI agent. "I'm on my way," she told him. Ingwerson says, "We didn't even initiate that."[13] He figured someone from the State Department had notified the Bureau of Carroll's kidnapping. When the FBI agent arrived, she stationed herself in his office, where Ingwerson was fielding phone calls from the news media, many of whom he knew. "They were asking me what's really going on," he says. He told them the details. "The FBI agent was wincing, saying, 'You're telling them too much,'" he says. But he disregarded her advice. At that point, Ingwerson found her unintrusive. After a few hours, she sat at another desk in the newsroom, occasionally going back to Ingwerson's office.

Her arrival was not unusual. Kidnappings of US citizens abroad triggered the involvement of various federal agencies: the FBI, CIA, State Department, and others as relevant. In high-profile cases, such as Daniel Pearl, pleas for the release of a hostage might be raised at the highest levels of government, between presidents or ministers.

But even for lesser-known cases, the government stepped in as a matter of course to protect the interests of US citizens overseas. The State Department, for example, organized an interagency unit known as the Hostage Working Group (HWG) to monitor individual kidnap cases in Iraq. While the US government had a policy of "no negotiations" in response to terrorists' political or financial demands, federal agencies did investigate and provide assistance in such cases. As soon as the FBI learned of Carroll's abduction, it assigned agents to her family and to the *Monitor* to offer help and to gather information. Meanwhile, the agencies' affiliated offices in Iraq carried out investigations there. However, the FBI agents stationed in Iraq were essentially limited

[13] Author's telephone interview with Marshall Ingwerson on September 15, 2008.

to the Green Zone, the heavily guarded diplomatic/government area in central Baghdad where US occupation authorities lived and worked. Because of the dangers, the FBI agents could leave the zone only if accompanied by an armed military escort.

Each federal agency played a different role in kidnappings. "[The FBI] were all about the body, that is, free the person," Ingwerson says. The *Monitor's* dealings with the Bureau were direct—consultations, phone calls and so forth. However, "the FBI knew nothing about Iraqi politics or the place itself," he says. Within days of Carroll's kidnapping, FBI Director Robert Mueller called Bergenheim to see if the newspaper was getting the help it needed from the FBI and told Bergenheim to feel free to call him if he needed anything else.

The *Monitor* editors' relationship with the CIA and the State Department, on the other hand, was indirect—through sources or officials in Iraq. For example Faye Bowers, who had covered the intelligence community for the *Monitor*, worked her sources who were inside the CIA or had just left. Because of their thorough knowledge of Iraqi politics, her CIA contacts could tell her who might be holding Carroll, or have knowledge of or be able to influence her captors. Bowers then passed the information along to the Baghdad Boys, who could pursue leads in Iraq. Murphy and Peterson also dealt with the State Department's embassy in Baghdad. They had face-to-face meetings with US Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad or spoke to his staff. The State Department officers indicated that Carroll was a "high priority."

Divvying up Tasks

Ingwerson found himself grateful for outside advice, be it from government agencies or other news organizations. The managing editor of the *Guardian*, for example, called Ingwerson on Saturday to describe his newspaper's experience with the kidnapping and eventual release of one of its Iraqi correspondents. The UK newspaper had assembled a team of staff members to handle it. He suggested that Ingwerson, too, assemble a team—and be sure to include the publisher. "He said, 'You need somebody, who could, if it comes to that, who could write a check or authorize whatever they [the staff] happen to need,'" recalls Ingwerson. In addition, the *Guardian* had designated one staff member as the primary contact for the reporter's family. The editor suggested the *Monitor* do likewise.

Ingwerson thought his colleague's advice wise. Before noon, he drew up a list of reporters and editors whose skills and responsibilities at the paper would make them logical members of a group to help the *Monitor* deal with the kidnapping. To a person, they agreed to join what became known as "Team Jill." Each had an assigned task:

- *Managing Editor Ingwerson*. Consult with other news organizations regarding behind-the-scenes matters; direct efforts with the Arab-based media.

- *Foreign Editor Scott*. Oversee the Middle East correspondents, Peterson and Murphy as they worked with their sources in Iraq and tracked leads; facilitate the flow of information between different parties.
- *Deputy Foreign Editor Amelia Newcomb*. Communicate daily with Carroll's immediate family.
- *Editor Bergenheim*. Serve as main contact with government agencies; lead Team Jill.
- *Washington Bureau Chief David Cook*. Serve as *Monitor* spokesperson; coordinate TV appearances of Carroll family and assist them with media matters.
- *Faye Bowers*, recently retired Washington correspondent instrumental in negotiating Rohde's release. Call upon her numerous contacts within the intelligence community.

On Saturday morning, they met as soon as all were in the Boston office or could be brought in by conference call. They agreed to reconvene as often as every hour for the time being to trade notes and decide the next steps to take.

Voices of experience

Ingwerson also learned firsthand on Saturday just how non-governmental organizations could help him with his campaign to free Carroll. That day, he got two calls from the Committee to Protect Journalists. A nonprofit organization founded in 1981, CPJ documented and exposed attacks on the press around the world. When a news organization faced a crisis such as illegal incarceration, slaying or kidnapping of a reporter, CPJ intervened. Typically, its director or another staff member contacted the news organization with an offer of resources. For example, CPJ could send a delegation to meet with government officials or organize a public protest. Since the Iraq War's beginning, CPJ had kept close tabs on the safety of Iraqi and foreign journalists.

Then-CPJ Director Cooper, a former *National Public Radio* foreign correspondent, gave Ingwerson an overview of how CPJ could help, based on their experiences with other journalist abductions. She suggested, for example, that Carroll's family should be his "key artillery" for publicity. Use them wisely to garner attention and only for a specific purpose, she urged him. CPJ Middle East Program Director Campagna also phoned Ingwerson with an additional piece of advice: Direct your publicity efforts to Arab-language media, which the kidnappers or those who could influence them would see. Appearances by Carroll's family on US television would be of no help. Ingwerson agreed. As he comments, "The kidnappers are not watching Oprah."

The previous decade had seen a steep rise in journalist kidnappings, and CPJ had learned some lessons from the experiences of freed reporters. After their release, reporters had described their captors as technologically savvy, with access to the Internet and satellite television. Kidnappers Googled™ newly captured journalists to gauge their potential value as bargaining chips. It was important, Campagna told Ingwerson, to emphasize Carroll's journalistic "bona fides… Push it to a more positive depiction of this professional reporter." At the same time, the *Monitor* should be careful not to make her seem too important—that could tempt her kidnappers to raise the stakes for her release.

Campagna also described some strategies that had seemed to work in recent kidnapping cases. In one instance, because a British reporter's kidnappers were known to be Shiite militia, his news organization had appealed to Shiite clergymen to help free him. To encourage the clergy to say yes, the reporter's mother appeared on Arab television and thanked them by name in advance. The result: they did cooperate. "That was like a textbook wonderful situation of where you can pull those levers," says Ingwerson. He hoped that if and when the *Monitor* found out who had seized Carroll, Team Jill could also contact an appropriate influential person or group to exert pressure on her captors.

The two CPJ representatives, says Ingwerson, helped him to think in strategic terms about the campaign to free Carroll. "Their advice was much more sophisticated than simply tamp down the publicity or amp up the publicity," Ingwerson says. "They thought tactically and strategically about it." Their advice would help steer Ingwerson through the coming weeks.

Covering All Bases

But for now, it was a frenzied waiting game. The frenzy reflected the *Monitor's* efforts to be pro-active. The waiting was for contact from the kidnappers. The question of whom Carroll or her captors would most likely contact was a matter of speculation. Ingwerson discussed it with Foreign Editor Scott and the FBI agent. He also retained the private security firm AKE. AKE had its own intelligence capabilities, and could provide security and security analysis for newspapers and their correspondents. An AKE representative agreed with the *Monitor* staff and the FBI agent that the phone number Carroll probably would recall off the top of her head was that of Michael Farrell, the Middle East desk editor.

The FBI created a script for Farrell to stall the kidnappers if they called. The FBI set up Farrell's phone to ring at his desk and at another phone connected to recording equipment in a separate room off the newsroom. The FBI wanted Farrell to urge the kidnappers to call Carroll's father, Jim. "The FBI determined that Jill's father would be the—they had a term for it—like the strong man… that he was the negotiator," Ingwerson says. The FBI had another reason for keeping the kidnappers on the phone for as long as possible. Recording equipment also had been hooked up to Jim's phone, and the FBI also assigned an Arabic translator to be with him. The FBI hoped to trace the call, notify Jim to expect the call and give him enough time to return home when the kidnappers' phone call would come.

For the remainder of that Saturday, members of Team Jill spent hours on the phone. They met every hour or so to exchange information. They approached their tasks like journalists reporting a story, contacting any source they could think of who might have insight, insider information, or leads, all while taking scrupulous notes. To organize the steady stream of information, Scott set up a big white board in a conference room. On it, he drew arrows and lines to track connections between and among various contacts and key facts.

"We had at least seven different tracks that we were pursuing," says Scott. They included anyone who might know something useful, from Iraqis or Arabs with Al Qaeda contacts to those connected to the CIA, or in the Jordanian, Israeli and Egyptian intelligence organizations. At each team meeting, they asked, "Where are we on this?" "Can you try to reach him again?" The board was folded closed after each meeting to keep information confidential.

Just before midnight, the team headed home. No word had come in from Carroll or her kidnappers. Ingwerson couldn't sleep. He reviewed in his head all that he and his team had accomplished that day. "How can I go to bed when I'm not sure that I've done everything?" he thought.

Sunday, January 8

Because of the newspaper's weekday publication schedule, Sunday was a workday for the *Monitor* staff. Team Jill returned to the newsroom earlier than usual, sleep deprived but running on adrenaline. Ingwerson attempted to carry out his managing editor duties, but was constantly sidetracked. The team alternated meetings every hour or two for updates with stretches of phone calls, a pattern that continued throughout the day.

Ingwerson kept looking at previous cases for tips. He had already calculated that it was an advantage to Carroll that, unlike Pearl, she was not a renowned journalist. Hoping to learn more, *Monitor* Washington Bureau Chief David Cook called Gerald F. Seib, his counterpart at the *Wall Street Journal*, and asked him to walk through the Pearl case. Seib confirmed something the *Monitor* already knew: work every avenue—governmental and non-governmental—for Carroll's release. Cook and other *Monitor* staff also got a copy of the memoir written by Pearl's wife, Mariane.[14] Leafing through it, Cook noted useful details about the depth and intensity of the *Journal's* efforts to free Pearl. The paper, for example, had persuaded US Secretary of State Colin Powell to pressure Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf to pledge his support and resources to find Pearl. Should it prove necessary, the *Monitor* might consider a similar appeal.

For the time being, however, it was proving a challenge to keep Carroll's abduction out of the headlines. Sunday evening, Ingwerson received a phone call from ABC. The television networks held a weekly Iraq security meeting by phone, and ABC was inviting Ingwerson to join their conference call to explain why they should continue to sit on the story. During the meeting, Ingwerson asked for more time, and the networks acquiesced. But the next morning, the executive editor of the *Associated Press* called Ingwerson to let him know that the story wasn't going to hold for much longer. She gave Ingwerson an hour. The embargo phase was over.

[14] Mariane Pearl, *A Mighty Heart* (New York: Scribner, 2003).

The Dam Breaks

Ingwerson turned to his computer. He had known for two days that the story would break, and that the *Monitor* would need to make a public statement. He also knew that the importance of the statement could hardly be overstated. It would be the paper's first and best chance to secure Carroll's release because the kidnappers would likely be waiting for it.

Statement. The statement had to emphasize Carroll's professionalism, her sympathies with the Arab world, and her commitment to giving voice to ordinary Iraqis. The *Monitor* had to make clear its commitment to her and her safety, but without making her seem too important. Ingwerson had been keeping notes over the previous 48 hours of talking points he wanted to include. Now he pulled those notes out to compose a statement.

He emphasized that Carroll worked for several news organizations based in the US and abroad, including Middle Eastern and Italian newspapers, and that many of her stories covered the war's effects on Iraqi citizens' daily lives. By downplaying her affiliation with a US newspaper and focusing on her freelancing, Ingwerson calculated that he could lower her value to the kidnappers. Following CPJ's advice, he added details about her track record as a journalist.

Ingwerson also pointed out Carroll's interest in the Arab world. He recalled her own words from the 2005 *American Journalism Review* article she had written: that she "had moved to Jordan six months before the war began to learn as much as possible about the region before the fighting began." She did not want to be a "parachute journalist." She learned to speak Arabic and immersed herself in Middle Eastern culture. Ingwerson added a quote from Editor Bergenheim:

> Jill's ability to help others understand the issues facing all groups in Iraq has been invaluable. We are urgently seeking information about Ms. Carroll and are pursuing every avenue to secure her release.[15]

Ingwerson and the rest of Team Jill fretted over how the word "Christian" in the newspaper's name might sit with the kidnappers, who were most likely Muslim. The last paragraph, Ingwerson hoped, would minimize the word's impact:

> Founded in 1908, the *Monitor* is an award-winning daily newspaper based in Boston… The *Monitor* is a nonreligious newspaper published as a public service.[16]

Ingwerson ran his draft by the team, including the Baghdad Boys, for feedback. Every word was scrutinized for any possible negative connotation. The FBI agent stationed in his office,

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[15] "A Statement From the *Monitor*," *Christian Science Monitor*, January 10, 2006.

[16] *Ibid*.

however, was not permitted to edit it. "They [FBI] certainly had opinions about what we should be saying and what we shouldn't be saying," he says.

The *Monitor* posted the final version of the statement to its website on Monday at 10 a.m. In addition, Peterson filed a story from Baghdad for the Tuesday edition. He included interviews with Foreign Editor Scott, and Carroll's driver. Finally, Ingwerson notified CPJ that the news blackout had been lifted. Quickly, CPJ posted a statement on its own website calling for Carroll's release.

Full-time staff. On Tuesday, January 10, Bergenheim announced to Team Jill that Carroll now was a full-time staffer. Since day one of her kidnapping, Bergenheim had been in touch with the paper's board of directors almost daily to keep them apprised of Team Jill's efforts. "The decision to make her an employee was something that we addressed with them in just trying to provide for Jill whatever needs she would have when she was released," he says. The board helped him think through the choices, but the decision was Bergenheim's. "After looking at any number of options, having her as an employee was sort of the cleanest and in some ways more generous way of dealing with it," Bergenheim says. As a full-timer, Carroll would receive full health benefits, and he wanted to ensure that she could receive proper medical or psychological treatment if necessary after her release. The move also meant that Carroll would be paid a salary while in captivity. Because her new status could elevate her value in the eyes of her captors, however, Bergenheim asked the staff to keep the change secret.

Loud or soft?

By Wednesday, January 11, it was clear that Carroll was not going to be released quickly. That meant it was time to reevaluate. The news blackout had not triggered her release; neither had the carefully crafted statement. The *Monitor* did not even know whether Carroll was still alive. So now the paper faced a new crossroads. Should it keep the news about Carroll as quiet a possible? Or, on the contrary, should it broadcast her plight as widely and forcefully as it could?

Ingwerson heard divergent views. Many urged him to publicize Carroll's plight aggressively, describing her in terms that would win public support and put pressure on the kidnappers. One journalist, a former captive herself in Iraq and a friend of Carroll's, emailed the *Monitor's* editors: "You need to start framing her public image now. Don't wait." The *Guardian's* managing editor had told Ingwerson that they had "yelled as loud as they could" immediately after their correspondent was taken. The *Guardian* news staff had set up a dedicated website to present him the way they wanted him to be seen. They sought maximum attention to mobilize government officials—both Western and others—on his behalf.

At the same time, Ingwerson heard from others: "There's no hurry on this because you don't know who has her." An NBC news executive praised Ingwerson for remaining low key, a

tactic NBC had adopted when one of its news crews was abducted in Iraq in May 2004. The network had not reported their kidnapping until after the crew was released a few days later. The news executive attributed the release in part to NBC's below-the-radar strategy, as well as to limiting the involvement of extraneous parties.

Ingwerson was torn. If he decided to go loud, that created other challenges. He had to look for voices that weren't seen by the Arab public as Western sympathizers. In other words, "you're trying to reach out to people who, on the surface, hate you," says Bergenheim. The anonymity of the kidnappers added another layer of complexity to a potential publicity campaign. Ingwerson didn't know whether they were Sunni or Shiite, Iraqi or other Arabs, al Qaeda or rogue groups.

The FBI agent assigned to the *Monitor* cautioned Team Jill that there were risks in approaching governments, groups or individuals in the Middle East to advocate for Carroll's release or condemn her capture. Specifically, the *Monitor* might inadvertently request help from a party whom the kidnappers despised. That alone could provoke them to kill Carroll then and there.

Arab media

Keeping that risk in mind, Ingwerson decided to try to split the difference by raising the temperature of the coverage, but in a limited market. He would reach out to sympathetic Arab media. Those who had relationships with the *Monitor,* directly or indirectly, presumably understood the nuances of the situation. Thanks to its focus on global news, the *Monitor* had its own extensive network of Middle East contacts, including members of the media and government officials. CJR's Campagna also supplied a list of Middle East contacts. Finally, there were Carroll's Arab friends and colleagues. One by one, Ingwerson got in touch with them all.

To each, Ingwerson painted a portrait of Carroll they could include in statements, columns and editorials. He emphasized the same characteristics highlighted in the *Monitor's* public statement on Monday: her sincere interest in the Arab world, her love for the Iraqi people and respect for Muslim and Arab traditions, and her stories—written for Arab as well as Western publications. One of his goals was to minimize any sympathy for the kidnappers. A friend and fellow colleague of Carroll's in Iraq provided a photograph of Carroll in the customary *hijab*, which the *Monitor* offered to the news wires. "We consciously put that one up to curry favor with the Iraqi public," Scott says. "We also removed photos from the [*Monitor* Web] site of her with the US marines, where she'd been embedded the month before."[17]

[17] E-mail from David Scott Clark, September 15, 2008.

Jordan Times. One of the people on Ingwerson's list to call was the then-editor of the *Jordan Times*, Ayman al-Safadi.[18] Carroll had done some work for that paper as well. After talking to Ingwerson, the *Jordan Times* on January 15 published an editorial titled "Our Jill." It said: "The kidnappers who abducted her could not have chosen a more wrong target." The editorial noted that her reporting about the human tragedies and hardships of the Iraq war had made her "one of the best ambassadors Arabs could hope for."[19]

Blog. The *Monitor* also started a "Jill Carroll Update Blog" on its website. On January 14, a week after Carroll's kidnapping, Bergenheim posted a statement to the blog that reiterated the *Monitor's* commitment to "pursue every possible avenue… to secure her release" and highlighted the public testimony of Iraqi friends and reporters on her behalf. "This has been a difficult week for Jill's family and for us," he stated.

But the publicity campaign brought no communications from the kidnapper. By then, Ingwerson had given up trying to carry out his regular duties. The efforts to free Carroll had become a full-time job for him and the rest of Team Jill. The newspaper's coverage of the Iraq War dropped considerably. Deputy editors filled in for Ingwerson and ran the daily Page One meeting, which Ingwerson could no longer attend. Instead, he and Team Jill held the last phone call of the day with the Baghdad Boys at about 5:30 p.m. Boston time, 12:30 a.m. Baghdad time. Often, they left to go home only at 10 or 11 p.m.

A videotape

Finally, late on Tuesday, January 17, came the first confirmation that Carroll had been alive recently, and possibly still was. Al Jazeera's editor-in-chief called Washington Bureau Chief Cook. The Arab TV network had received a videotape of Carroll. Typically, Al Jazeera broadcast videotapes of hostages without contacting anyone first. However, the network called as a professional courtesy. Would the *Monitor* want to notify Carroll's parents? Cook called the Boston office. Ingwerson then called the *Jordan Times* editor, whom he thought should appear on the air. In 30 minutes, al-Safadi was at the al Jazeera studio in Amman, Jordan.

Al Jazeera aired a 20-second segment of the videotape showing Carroll. She was speaking, but Al Jazeera did not broadcast the audio. She appeared tired but in good physical condition. The kidnappers demanded that US authorities release all Iraqi women prisoners by Friday, January 20. If they did not comply, the kidnappers would kill Carroll. Although they did not identify themselves overtly, a still shot from the videotape contained the words "Brigade of Revenge," an

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[18] The *Jordan Times* was an English-language daily newspaper in Amman, owned by the Jordan Press Foundation, which also published *Al Rai,* an Arabic daily.

[19] "Our Jill," *Jordan Times*, January 15, 2006, excerpted in "Abducted in Iraq: An Update on Reporter Jill Carroll," *Christian Science Monitor*, January 17, 2007, p.11.

unknown group. After the clip was shown, Al Jazeera cut to the television studio in Amman for commentary by the *Jordan Times* editor.

Ingwerson felt more hopeful than he had since the kidnapping. Carroll was alive for the taping. On the other hand, he realized that meant very little, as the video was undated. "You never know when [the videos] were taken because it could take weeks for them to emerge," he says.

Public response. The video did bring one benefit. Combined with the *Monitor's* Arab media outreach campaign, it sparked a flurry of public condemnations of Carroll's kidnappers. The next day, Adnan al-Dulaimi, the Sunni political leader who had cancelled his appointment with Carroll the morning of her kidnapping, called for her release. He held a news conference in his office at the headquarters of the General Conference of the Iraqi People and stated:

> By kidnapping her you are insulting me. You're insulting the work that I've been doing for Iraq. To the men who are kidnapping her: You know that the woman has a special status in our religion, our culture, and our principles. I'm asking those men who have kidnapped her to release her unconditionally, and I promise, with the help of God, to work on releasing Iraqi prisoners in Iraqi and American jails.[20]

Others made appeals : the Council on American-Islamic Relations, the Liberties Committee of the Egyptian Lawyer's Syndicate and the militant Palestinian organization, Hamas. On January 19, eight Egyptian human rights groups released a joint statement. Also calling for her freedom were Iraq's Muslim Scholars Association, Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood, and the Iraq Journalists' League.

Next steps

Following its airing on al Jazeera, Ingwerson, Bergenheim and Scott wanted to see the entire videotape. They hoped it would yield clues about Carroll's location and the group holding her. However, Al Jazeera "waxed hot and cold on making the full tape available," Bergenheim says. The network feared that cooperating with a Western news organization could damage its credibility with its sources, and ultimately did not provide the tape.

The arrival of the videotape did persuade Ingwerson that the time had come to enlist the help of Carroll's parents. The question was: how? In preparation for this eventuality, the FBI had drafted a statement for Jim Carroll to read. The gist of the message, says Scott, was that the kidnappers were "these murderers and thugs who have taken our daughter… Don't you dare hurt her." The *Monitor* staff, especially the Baghdad Boys, felt that approach would be insulting. They lobbied instead for a more heartfelt message of how much the parents loved and missed their

[20] "US Muslim Group in Baghdad to Plead for Hostage," cnn.com, January 21, 2006, 11:18 p.m. EST.

daughter. Most importantly, said Murphy and Peterson, the appeal should come from Mary Beth because Iraqi men revere their mothers.

From the start, the *Monitor* tried never to put Carroll's parents in the position of choosing between the *Monitor* and the FBI. The *Monitor* presented the alternatives about what they should say on TV, then let them make the decision. After deliberations, the family opted to follow the *Monitor's* advice. The FBI was not pleased, but could do little about it. However, the family agreed to appear on CNN, a network that, Ingwerson says, "the FBI was partial to."[21] On January 19, Mary Beth Carroll appeared on CNN with a scripted statement. The Baghdad Boys were disappointed that the chosen broadcast outlet was CNN; they argued that the only people in Baghdad who watched CNN were foreigners who understood English. But they did applaud putting Carroll's mother on TV first. The next day, Jim Carroll made his appeal, a version of the FBI's statement, from Al Jazeera's Washington studio. Jim softened the message somewhat: "I want to speak directly to the men holding my daughter," he said.

But again, it was like performing to an empty house. The January 20 deadline came and went. Nothing. Six days later, the US released five Iraqi female and over 400 male prisoners, although officials denied the move was a response to the demand of Carroll's kidnappers. While Ingwerson and his staff were gratified at the absence of bad news, the constant rollercoaster of hope and disappointment was starting to take a toll.

Stressed Out

By late January, Team Jill was feeling the strain of the situation and was exhausted from its protracted efforts to seek Carroll's release. The kidnapping had become an obsession. Initially each lead, each contact had raised their hopes. But as days turned into weeks, morale waned. When the occasional faint lead popped up, it could be days or weeks before they discovered that they were being used or that it was an inaccurate report. They were second-guessing themselves. Still, Ingwerson was glad they were working as a team who could put their heads together and talk things through.

Carroll's kidnapping weighed especially hard on Peterson and Murphy because of their friendship with her and their role in mentoring/recruiting her for the Baghdad bureau. "They were there. They knew Jill," Ingwerson says. He was aware they were wearing themselves out chasing leads, their days ending at 3 a.m. only to begin again a few hours later. The two correspondents resisted taking a break, which became a point of contention between them and the Boston newsroom. Foreign Editor Scott, says Cook, was "just beside himself.[22]"

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[21] Ingwerson, telephone interview, September 15, 2008.

[22] Author's interview with David Cook on June 11.2008 in Washington, DC. All further quotes from Cook, unless otherwise attributed, are from this interview.

Scott raised the idea of going to Baghdad to give his two correspondents some time off. "The guys weren't keen on that, because even though I'd been a reporter, and I have good relationships with them, I still think I'm a little bit of a suit to them," he says. Nonetheless, Bergenheim, Ingwerson and Scott debated the idea a little longer before abandoning it. Bergenheim felt Scott would be more valuable to the team in Boston. Scott eventually agreed. "I would play a much more limited role there than I would here," he says. "But I felt I needed to at least raise the question of, 'would it be better?' Also as a signal to the family, like how committed we are to this, that we would send someone higher up in the organization there, to be on the scene."

Like the others, Ingwerson could not leave his work on behalf of Carroll at the office. One night at home, seeking diversion, he turned on the TV to watch a drama. "Should I be doing this?" he thought. "Here's this phony adventure of life and death and terrorism." He could be doing more for Carroll instead of watching an hour-long show. But the distraction helped him relax temporarily.

On weekends, he spread his notes out on the kitchen table and made more phone calls. His wife found their 8-year-old daughter crying on the porch one evening. She told her mother, Ingwerson recalls, that "I feel so bad about that girl, and I wish it could be me who was caught instead. I wish she was let go so that Daddy could have fun again." Ingwerson comments: "I hadn't been aware that I had been morose."

Another Deadline

The kidnappers, however, did not give the *Monitor* staff any respite. On January 30, a second video of Carroll aired on Al Jazeera. On February 8, Kuwaiti television station Al Rai broadcast a third one. Along with the videotape, Al Rai said that the kidnappers set a second deadline. Again, they demanded the release of all Iraqi women held in US captivity—this time by February 26. The station owner told the *Monitor* that his sources indicated Carroll was still alive and somewhere in Baghdad.

But it was no longer clear what the *Monitor* could do about it. Ingwerson was torn. The videotapes put Carroll in the spotlight again. Would more publicity be a good idea? He wanted to let the kidnappers know "we're still paying attention" and, if by chance word got through to Carroll, to let her know "we're still on it; nobody has forgotten." In the interim, Ingwerson's earlier publicity effort took on a life of its own. The group Reporters Without Borders, an international group that worked for freedom of the press, orchestrated a demonstration in Paris on February 6, the 30th day of Carroll's captivity, and called for her release. An enormous banner bearing the photo of Carroll in her black head covering hung from Rome's city hall.

Agency relations. To make matters more difficult, the *Monitor's* relationship with the FBI was growing strained. Bergenheim had grown to admire a number of individual FBI officers he

was working with, and was grateful for their help. But "we were frustrated in that they would never take us in their confidence," he says. "We made it clear every way we could that whatever we learned in that regard we would only use for finding Jill, not for any journalistic purpose. But they never believed us… I'm sure they found working with a news organization like ours unbelievably difficult." Editors had the clear impression that the FBI did not consider the *Monitor* a full partner sharing a common goal. Someone at the FBI told Ingwerson: "We collect information. We do not give it out." More often than not, the paper learned what the FBI knew from off-the-record sources that reporters and editors had cultivated within government agencies over the years.

Ingwerson understood the source of the tension. The FBI and CIA, he knew, feared that as the *Monitor* dug through leads and made contacts, that activity might disrupt their own investigation and could even jeopardize Carroll's life. Nonetheless, the lack of communication was frustrating. What made it worse was that the FBI, the State Department, and the CIA didn't cooperate with one another, either. "Why isn't the FBI talking to the CIA?" Scott remembers fuming.

One instance of interagency dissent arose at the end of January. Cook received a call from a US TV network source in Washington that Israeli-American independent journalist Daphne Barak was trying to sell a videotape of an interview she had made with Sheikh Sattam Hamid Farhan al-Gaood, a confidant of Saddam Hussein. During the interview, al-Gaood, who according to CIA reports handled clandestine business transactions such as smuggling oil out of Iraq, had told her he could help free Jill Carroll. After further questioning by Barak, he implied that he could get her freed and would use his own money, but no one had asked him. Cook relayed the information to Bergenheim. "[Barak] was not someone who could be ignored," Bergenheim says.

That information raised the hopes of Team Jill; perhaps Carroll's parents could make an appeal to the sheikh on television. But the possibility of appealing to al-Gaood also created tension at the newspaper and at the various government agencies. "We wrestled with it enormously ourselves," Bergenheim says. The sheikh, all agreed, was not a credible figure. The Baghdad Boys were suspicious of al-Gaood's motives. The FBI opposed any contact but, in keeping with its policy of not sharing information with the *Monitor*, would not tell Team Jill why. Ingwerson recalls:

> The FBI may have had another agenda. Gaood was caught up in the UN oil-for-food scandal, which the FBI was investigating. We suspected that the FBI may have been building a case against Gaood and didn't want to be in a position of having to cut him a deal in exchange for helping to free Jill. They were adamantly opposed to involving him.[23]

[23] Email from Ingwerson, November 4, 2008.

The *Monitor's* CIA sources, on the other hand, encouraged communication with him because al-Gaood might have the contacts to help Jill. The CIA also provided the *Monitor* with some background information on the sheikh in order to help editors assess the opportunity. To the *Monitor's* dismay, Bowers' CIA let her know that the CIA had checked with the FBI before handing over the information, and that the FBI told the CIA to stop talking to the *Monitor* about Carroll. Because of this inter-agency squabble, Bergenheim called FBI Director Mueller to say that the *Monitor* was not getting the cooperation it needed. "They went to some extent to be helpful, but their definition of helpful and ours was totally different," he says. Bergenheim's call had another chilling effect: suddenly, Bowers' CIA sources would no longer talk. "Our back channels were shut down," Ingwerson says.

Until then, Bergenheim had not told Carroll's family about al-Gaood's interview and the possibility of using his services. Whenever Team Jill got a lead, they tried to verify it before letting the Carrolls know because they did not want to raise the family's hopes falsely. After some thought, and despite the opposition of the Baghdad Boys, Bergenheim told the parents. Eventually and as a compromise, Carroll's parents did appear on the NBC program "Good Morning America" to ask for help, but their February 9 appeal was directed at an unnamed sheikh. All they got was more silence.

The FBI also had ongoing disagreements with other federal partners. The Bureau's Washington office, for example, refused to pass along information to the interagency Hostage Working Group (HWG), organized by the State Department to monitor American hostages in Baghdad, because one HWG member had given an interview to the *Washington Post* in which he described in general terms what HWG did. "That's what ticked the FBI in DC off," Ingwerson says.[24] Adds Scott: "We're just sitting there, saying, 'Why can't you just get along? You have the same goal.' For all of us, I think, it was a difficult realization of how ineffective different government organizations could be, even with such a simple task as… trying to find this one individual and get her out."

Whom to believe?

Another source of tension was the agencies' contradictory advice. As the days turned into weeks and then neared two months, everyone was trying to come up with an effective strategy. The second deadline of February 26 only sharpened their determination. The problem for the *Monitor* was that the CIA's proposed strategy, which the CIA communicated to the *Monitor* through Bowers, was diametrically opposed to what the FBI recommended.

In mid-February, Bowers received a call from one of her CIA contacts. The agency was adamant that the *Monitor* turn up the publicity thermostat even more. Bowers transferred the call

[24] Ibid.

to Ingwerson. "They all but said, 'If anything happens to her, it's your fault because you're not doing the right thing,'" Ingwerson says. At the same time, and confusingly, the CIA did not want the *Monitor* to "make noise" if that meant contact with other embassies or governments. CIA sources told Bowers unofficially that the Agency did not approve of such activities.

Nonetheless, Ingwerson and his staff continued to gather information and make inquiries of non-US governments. Washington Bureau Chief Cook, for example, met with officials at Israel's embassy in Washington because they had extensive experience with kidnappings. They told him, "If you haven't heard anything at this point, she's gone." Alas, that was not what Cook or his colleagues wanted to hear.

The FBI, on the other hand—as well as AKE, the security firm the paper retained immediately after Carroll's abduction—wanted the *Monitor* to dampen its efforts. "The FBI didn't want us to go loud, didn't want us to put any information out, and didn't want us to create political pressure," Ingwerson says.[25] The Bureau argued that the measures already taken needed more time to work. They were encouraged by the successive videotapes, especially those which came after the lapsed deadline. They thought the tapes were a good sign: that Carroll's captors had come to know her a little and were reluctant to kill her. With her fluent Arabic, she would be in a strong position to show them her human side.

Meanwhile, the Baghdad Boys analyzed previous kidnappings. They determined that fliers which friends and colleagues had posted in Iraqi neighborhoods seemed to help. If fliers were so effective, they reasoned, surely a short video clip on Iraqi TV would be even better. With the help of CNN's Baghdad bureau, the two produced—but did not immediately air—two public service announcements (PSAs), one 60 and the other 90 seconds long. One PSA opened with these words: "Please help with the release of journalist Jill Carroll." A narrator, speaking in Arabic, spoke of Carroll's love for Iraq. Photos of Carroll included one in which she wore a headscarf.

But Ingwerson had reservations about airing the PSAs, especially in light of recent events. In February, emotions ran high in the Islamic world after several newspapers reprinted 12 cartoons depicting the prophet Mohammed.[26] Muslims considered any physical renderings of the prophet blasphemous. In response, protests and threats of violence against Westerners erupted in Muslim nations and elsewhere around the globe. The *Boston Globe* reported that "gunmen in the West Bank reportedly combed hotels, possibly in search of Westerners to abduct."[27]

On February 22, a revered Shiite Muslim shrine, al-Askari in Samarra, Iraq, was bombed, leaving its golden dome in ruins. Shiite militia then turned their machine guns on Sunni mosques. In one day, 27 Sunni mosques were destroyed. The *New York Times* reported that some Iraqi leaders

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[25] Ingwerson, telephone interview, September 15, 2008.

[26] The cartoons had appeared originally in a Danish newspaper in fall 2005.

[27] Colin Nickerson, "Islamic Anger Widens at Mohammed Cartoons," *Boston Globe*, February 3, 2006, p. A12.

"blamed the United States for failing to prevent [the attacks]."[28] Mob violence against US troops increased.

As the February 26 deadline approached, Team Jill stood at a crossroads once more. Carroll had been held captive for over six weeks. Stirring up publicity about Carroll again in Arab countries could backfire in such a hostile climate. More demonstrations by voluble groups could drive a wedge rather than "keep things open," thought Ingwerson. Then there were the PSAs, which had yet to be broadcast. Several media colleagues reminded Ingwerson that mounting publicity on behalf of kidnapped aid worker Margaret Hassan in 2004 may have resulted in her death in Iraq. A former UK citizen married to an Iraqi and living in Iraq, Hassan was never found. "All the phony leads and stuff had all gone away," Ingwerson says. "We were not hearing anything. We didn't know where to go."

[28] Robert F. Worth, "Blast at Shiite Shrine Sets Off Sectarian Fury in Iraq," *New York Times*, February 23, 2006, p.A1.