

A Bahrain emergency appeals court upheld death sentences on Sunday for two men found guilty of killing police officers during recent unrest—punishments human rights activists said were designed to prevent more protests.

Saleh's New Conditions For Transition Plan

Gunmen shot dead an anti-regime protester Sunday in the Yemen capital, medics said, as President Ali Abdullah Saleh set new conditions for signing a PGCC-brokered plan to end deadly protests against his 33-year-rule.

Members of the opposition said the protester was killed by pro-regime 'thugs' who had blocked roads in Sana'a as hundreds of thousands of Saleh opponents took to the streets, AFP reported.

A statement by Saleh's ruling party said he does not recognize the opposition's signing of the plan as US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said he 'needs to follow through on his commitment' to cede power in accordance with the proposals from Yemen's wealthy Persian Gulf neighbors.

But the opposition vowed it would press on with four months of deadly street protests until Saleh signs up to a PGCC-brokered plan for his departure.

"If Saleh does not sign, the revolt will escalate and he will be thrown out of office," Mohammed Al-Qahtan, spokesman for the Common Forum opposition umbrella group, told AFP.

Opposition sources said on Saturday that they had signed the accord for Saleh to cede



Ali Abdullah Saleh

power, with the president expected to follow suit on Sunday.

The bloodshed came as hundreds of Saleh loyalists armed with batons blocked roads in Sana'a leading to the presidential palace, to the airport and Tahrir Square near government headquarters.

Hundreds of thousands of Saleh opponents also took to the streets of Sana'a in

their biggest rally since protests began in January.

Doctors marched in their white coats while young protesters wore the colors of the Yemeni flag—red, black and white.

Meanwhile, soldiers from the Republican Guards, which are led by Saleh's son Ahmed, opened fire on demonstrators wounding seven in Yemen's second-larg-

est city Ta'izz where hundreds of thousands demonstrated demanding Saleh's ouster, witnesses said.

Similar protests erupted across the strategic Arabian Peninsula country in Al-Hudaydah, Ibb, Al-Baida, Marib, Aden and Hadramawt.

State news agency Saba quoted a statement by the ruling General People's Congress (GPC) party as saying that 'the agreement must be signed at the presidential palace and in the presence of all concerned political parties'.

An accord 'inked behind closed doors cannot be recognized and reflects bad intentions', said the statement, apparently referring to the late Saturday signing of the accord by the opposition.

But Qahtan said, "We will not take part in any signing at the presidential palace."

Under the terms of the proposal, Saleh would hand power to the vice president 30 days after the signing, and he and his aides would be granted immunity from prosecution by parliament.

A national unity government led by a prime minister from the opposition would be formed, and a presidential election would follow 60 days after Saleh's departure.

Israel Approves New Settlements

Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak has approved construction of 294 new homes in the West Bank settlement of Beitur Illit, anti-settlement NGO Peace Now reported on Sunday. Peace Now made its announcement as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was in Wash-

ington, preparing to address the US Congress and the powerful pro-Israel lobby, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC).

It said Barak also approved building of homes for the elderly and a shopping center in the settlement of Efrat.

The group could not say exactly when Barak signed off on the two projects.

In response to AFP's queries, the defense ministry issued a brief statement saying only that 'since the end of the freeze period a few building permits have been approved for communities

situated in (the settlement) blocs to meet their living needs'.

Peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians have been on hold since late September, when a 10-month, partial Israeli settlement freeze expired and Netanyahu declined to renew it.

News in Brief

Bomb Blasts Kill 16 in Iraq

More than a dozen bomb attacks in and around Baghdad on Sunday left 16 people dead, including 10 people killed in a suicide attack, and more than 70 wounded.

According to AFP, the series of attacks comes just days after blasts against police in a tense northern city killed 29 people, with just months to go before all US forces must withdraw from Iraq amid question marks over whether local security forces are up to the task of maintaining stability in the war-ravaged country.

A total of 12 roadside bombs, three vehicles packed with explosives and one suicide attacker struck in the space of morning blasts on Sunday, although it was not immediately clear to what extent, if any, the violence was coordinated.

The deadliest attack saw 10 people killed and 15 wounded in a suicide bombing in the town of Taji, 25 kilometers (15 miles) north of the capital, officials from the interior and defense ministries said, on condition of anonymity. Among the casualties were six police killed and 10 wounded.

Sudan Army in Control of Abyei

North Sudan's army appears to have gained control of the main town in Sudan's disputed Abyei region after fierce fighting with the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), UN and rebel sources said.

UN officials saw 15 tanks of the Sudanese Armed Forces, the northern army, on Saturday in parts of the key town Abyei where earlier mortars slammed against a UN base, Hua Jiang, the UN spokeswoman said on Saturday, Al-Jazeera reported.

One of those mortar rounds exploded, but there were no casualties among UN personnel, Jiang said.

"The SAF have entered (the town) Abyei, there is still fighting but they have come with tanks, they are shooting and shooting," said SPLA spokesman Philip Aguer.

"Our police have been fighting but the SAF have sent many soldiers in," he added, speaking by phone from Juba, the capital of southern Sudan.

The armies of North and South Sudan, which is due to claim independence from Khartoum later this year, have accused each other of launching attacks in the region.

Interview

Part 3

Interview with Phillip F. Tourney, USS Liberty Survivor
Interviewer: Ali A. Jafari
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Q: Mr. Tourney, we have read the attack on the USS Liberty was to serve as a pretext incident to justify an American attack on Egypt, a pretext to bomb Cairo and other Egyptian cities and add all of Egypt to the 'Greater, or Eretz Israel', as part of a plan called, 'Operation Cyanide'. What can you tell us about that aspect of the attack on the USS Liberty and Operation Cyanide?

PT: Yes, as I said, the plan was to sink our ship, blame it on Egypt as a pretext for the US going to war for Israel's benefit and to drive the Soviets out of the region for good. We know that as an official operation, Cyanide was real, as some of the LIBERTY crew working with the US National Security Agency were briefed on it before we headed out to sea from Norfolk, Virginia, our home port. To my knowledge however they did not know the whole scope of the operation, obviously, as they would have been participating in their own deaths.

Another thing that your readers, and indeed all persons around the globe need to realize is that there were US bombers in the air headed to Egypt with orders to drop nuclear weapons on Cairo. According to witnesses serving aboard the aircraft carriers from where the bombers were launched, they were mere 3 minutes away from nuking Cairo. The only reason they did not is because we had not sunk yet, and the US and Israel would have some explaining to do if a nuke was dropped on a major city like Cairo when they were innocent of any wrongdoing. People would have figured out that Israel and America had colluded to sink a US ship and kill all 300 men on board.

Q: Mr. Tourney, let's talk about the media coverage and why the story of USS Liberty has not been and still is not newsworthy. On November 8, 1979, just 4 days after the Iran hostage crisis started, ABC News launched a new program called Nightline, only and specifically to present American viewers with the latest news about American hostages held in Iran on a nightly basis. After 444 days, American hostages came home unscratched, nonetheless, the news coverage and all the sensationalism that went along with it, continued unabated. Ted Koppel invited the hostages to the Nightline numerous times so that they could tell American people about their experience and what happened to them in American embassy in Tehran.

In chapter 5 of your book entitled 'Broken men, Broken hearts' which deals with your nightmare immediately after the attack, you write: "It was a sea of casualties-bleeding head wounds...bones protruding from arms and legs..." On Sept. 26, 2006, former CIA analyst for 27 years, Ray McGovern, 'gave a talk on Iraq to crowd of 400 people at National Avenue Christian Church in Springfield, Missouri... [regarding the Israel Lobby and its power] over your government and Congress'.

When McGovern asked how many in the crowd of 400 had ever heard of the USS Liberty, only three hands went up. Don't you think that you are living in a land of flagrant double standards?

PT: We should change the name of our country from the US to 'the land of double standards'. Everyone in America knows about the USS Cole that was attacked off the coast of Yemen where 17 American sailors were killed, a terrible loss to be sure, but NO ONE knows about the USS LIBERTY, and deliberately so. As I indicated earlier, if the American people were to learn the awful truth of what happened to us and the cover-up, it would result in a domino effect that would be deadly for

Israeli Attack on American Ship

The Forgotten Crisis

Israel and her supporters here in the US. All the sudden, Americans, now overwhelmed with the heavy cost of fighting Israel's wars for her in the Middle East would start asking questions about 9/11 and possible American/Israeli collusion in that. The next thing you know, the entire house of cards would come tumbling down.

Q: And while we are on the subject of double standards, let me ask you another question. You have mentioned in your book that 'Israel rules America'. You also talk about the very powerful Israeli lobby. I cannot think of a better example than John Demjanjuk, former United States citizen who was accused numerous times of Holocaust-related war crimes. The United States government, under relentless pressure from the pro-Israeli groups, once again kowtowed to the demand of the Israeli government and in 1986 deported him to Israel to stand trial. So here, some 45 years later, we have a man whose family went bankrupt in order to prove that this was a case of mistaken identity and that he was not 'Ivan the Terrible', the notorious prisoner/guard at the Treblinka and Sobibor extermination camps during the period 1942-1943. His conviction for crimes against humanity was later overturned by the Israeli Supreme Court in 1993 due to a finding of reasonable doubt based on evidence suggesting that Demjanjuk was not 'Ivan the Terrible'.

Mr. Tourney, on pages 134 and 135 in your book, regarding the scheduled meeting between you and other survivors of the USS Liberty with President George Herbert Walker Bush which never took place, you go into details of the most tantalizing moments and how, after breathtaking moments, your president was 'too busy to meet with you'. Then you blame all these on the Israelis. You have and I quote "It was obvious to me that the 'fix' had been put in." So, once again the pro-Israeli groups had directed Bush not to meet with you. Again, here we have Israelis who destroy a man's life based on their 'suspicion' that he might be 'Ivan the Terrible', and you and the rest of the USS Liberty survivors, who were 'live witnesses' to Israel Holocaust of USS Liberty on June 8th, 1967, cannot even get a chance to see your president so that you could talk about your side of the story personally. How frustrating is this?

PT: As I said in my book, we were crushed. We had thought amongst ourselves "This is it... Our day has finally come... Our president, sitting in the very White House, will hear our story, feel our pain and do what any leader of a country so grievously wounded would do. When he refused to even meet with us, we realized (or at least I did) that our country was gone and that there was little, if any, difference between the president who consigned us to our deaths many decades before and every president since who has participated in the cover-up of the murderous attack on our ship.



Q: A.J. Cristol, a federal judge, a Navy captain, author, scholar, former Navy lawyer and apparently a combat fighter pilot who claims to have studied this matter for 15 years, with an open mind, has as his mantra, "Thirteen investigations have all exonerated Israel." What is your reaction to his mantra?

PT: Well, as I said earlier, remember that it is Israel's motto that 'by way of deception thou shalt do war.' Cristol is a liar. No one who has spent 5 minutes looking at the evidence walks away thinking it was a case of mistaken identity. Cristol, who is not only Jewish but a big supporter of the Jewish state, is no different than a lawyer hired to defend some Mafia boss in court who knows his client is guilty of all the crimes he has been charged with but will still work his fingers to the bone in getting his client acquitted so that he can be set loose on society to continue on with his criminality and mayhem. In a better time in our country's history, men like Cristol would have been tried for treason and upon conviction, executed.

Q: The Israel Lobby instills fear in the heart of everyone in the United States. It tries to crush those who stand up against them: some suffer but persist, and the pragmatics survive by changing their tune. Nobody is immune; reporters, editors, columnists, professors, academics, politicians... Everyone is labeled 'anti-Semite' when he/she criticizes the power of the Israel Lobby or talks about what happened to you and your shipmates on that day. With pusillanimous and spineless politicians and members of congress kowtowing to special interest groups such as AIPAC, how do you ever hope to get justice served, in other words, punish those who were responsible for attacking USS Liberty and killing 34 of its sailors?

PT: As sure as I am here today having this conversation with you, I know there is a power higher than that of Israel, and it is the God who saved me that day when we were under attack, because the fact is that we should have sunk that day. He saved us men of the LIBERTY for a reason, and I believe it was for us to warn the world about the danger it faces from this dangerous animal roaming our planet earth known as Israel. Israel plots but God is the wisest of roammers and I know as sure as I stand here today speaking to you that He will have the last say on this matter and justice will be served. I don't know how or when, I simply know it is and I will leave it up for Him to decide the how and when.

Q: With the advent of the Internet, it is obvious that the mainstream media monopoly has been broken. Some people say that the Internet has functioned like a double-edged sword. No wonder that here and there, we hear Liberals, conservatives, Democrats, and Republicans—all are united on the alleged necessity of reigning in the Internet. For and your shipmates who are tasked with penetrating the fog of lies and deception of the pro-Israeli apologists, Internet has offered a great opportunity to tell your story. Have you taken all the advantage that you could of the Internet? Where can our reader get the latest information about the latest developments on your story?

PT: Well, I have certainly utilized the tools at my disposal to the best of my abilities. I write articles, I wrote a book, I have my own radio program. Yes, the Internet has given us a mighty tool to fight back against the lies. And as much as I hate to sound like I am promoting myself, the truth nevertheless is that I recommend people read my book if they want to find out what happened to us. It is not a difficult book to read in terms of being technical and tedious. It is the story of one man and what he saw that day and it is explained in easy to understand, very human terms.