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Think Cole attack, recall Pearl Harbor  
By FRANK MICHEL

Seaman Apprentice Andrew Nemeth was standing in the morning chow line when, he remembered, suddenly "being up in the air, falling down and having fuel spray over me." The explosion that rocked his ship left him stunned and bleeding from a head wound. The only reason the 19-year-old made it out of the smoke-filled mess hall and to medical treatment was because he had been trained to find his way out of the ship blindfolded.

Many of his shipmates would not be so lucky.

Gunner's Mate Second Class Edgar B. Beck realized, not long after sunrise, that his ship was going down and trying to make his way to his battle station was futile. He decided to concentrate on helping shipmates through a shell hoist, their only escape route before the ship capsized and anybody remaining would be crushed by the 1,200-pound artillery shells.

Just after his ship heeled over, came a nearby tremendous blast that, in a single frightful instant, snuffed out 1,000 lives.

The two American sailors escaped a surprise attack.

But, what separates Beck and Nemeth is half a world and more than half a lifetime.

Beck was aboard the USS Oklahoma. It was early Sunday morning, Dec. 7, 1941. Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

Nemeth was aboard the USS Cole. It was late morning, Oct. 12, 2000. Aden, Yemen.

And, as we approach the anniversary of the Japanese sneak attack on Pearl Harbor, it's worth pondering things that unite these two men and their comrades in harm's way.

The Cole terrorist attack, which claimed 17 American lives, was, of course, not nearly on the scale of the Pearl Harbor attack that sent so many to their deaths and sent the nation into a global war.

But they were both sudden and deadly reminders to too-complacent Americans that the world is a dangerous place, often aflame with anti-American sentiment and the potential for war.

Our military terms it today "asymmetrical warfare," and some have suggested the shadowy terrorist war that stalks us now is the price we pay for being the world's only superpower.

Here, too, are dual lessons. Our nation was unprepared for World War II. We've spent most of the time since that war ended preparing ourselves to defeat a huge Soviet menace on a broad global front. In recent years, the emphasis has been on our ability

to fight on two major fronts simultaneously. But, we're barely under way in understanding and coming to grips with the nature of this newest threat.

Both the aftermath of Pearl Harbor and of the Cole attack are also reminders of the patriotism, dedication and honor of men and women who put on the uniform.

As the aging veterans of World War II now so quickly pass from among us, it more important than ever to recall the horror that hit us so hard in 1941, that "date which will live in infamy," and their heroic responses in the aftermath. Too many know Pearl Jam but not Pearl Harbor.

As we continue to wrangle with ourselves over presidential politics and grow ever more polarized and embittered with one another here at home, it's also important to remember how the sailors on the Cole responded together to save their ship and shipmates just a few short weeks ago.

Among the many Pearl Harbor sites on the Internet is one which includes a digital camera focused on the memorial to the USS Arizona, the battleship that lies beneath Pearl's quiet waters. It's the ship upon which those 1,000 souls perished in the blink of Gunner's Mate Beck's eye that day.

If you can hone your computer in upon it, you can watch the tides rise and fall, the clouds hover and the occasional boat disgorging tourists onto the solemn floating memorial.

As a young navigator on his way to and from Vietnam years ago, this writer stood several night watches aboard a Navy ship anchored near that memorial.

When I think back on those silent moments spent with the ghosts of Pearl, I sometimes think of Adm. H.E. Kimmel, who was in command of the battle force anchored there on that infamous December morning.

Gordon Prange, in his *At Dawn We Slept* account of the attack, tells how a spent .50-caliber bullet crashed through a window during the attack, thumped "the admiral on chest, left a dark splotch on his white uniform, then dropped to the floor."

Such was his anguish for his men that Kimmel murmured, "It would have been merciful had it killed me."

The bullet had not torn his tunic, but his heart was torn. To the admiral, the men lost were not neat rows of statistic or historical irrelevancies, as they seem to have become to too many Americans today.

Maybe the Cole will be like that bullet that thumped the admiral's chest and wake us up a bit -- at least long enough to observe Dec. 7. Maybe not.

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## TROUBLING GAPS IN THE COLE PROBE

November 15, 2000

A few things are already known about the terrorists who bombed the destroyer USS Cole on Oct. 12, killing 17 American sailors. They went by the names Abdullah Ahmed Khaled Ali al-Musawah and Muhammad Ahmed al Sharabi, although those were aliases. They watched U.S. ship traffic in Aden for months before they blew up a skiff alongside the Cole. They have been linked to a network of Islamic terrorist groups active in southern and eastern Yemen for the past decade.

So far, so good. By all accounts, Yemen has cooperated in helping investigators unearth information about the two. As for a broader question the FBI is asking--whether the two had help from political or military figures with close ties to the Yemeni government, or even within it--that may be impossible to answer as long as Yemeni officials control whom to detain and interview.

Though the FBI and the State Department deny it, The New York Times reports that the two agencies have locked horns recently over the extent of Yemen's cooperation in that wider investigation.

Yemen needs to be more cooperative. There are reports that some potential witnesses, including people who may have met the bombers, have not even been interviewed. The State Department view is that the Clinton administration should move cautiously, mindful of Yemen's cultural sensitivities, and that this will elicit more cooperation from Yemen's president, Ali Abdullah Saleh, which is crucial to the investigation.

Enough of that. If the probe needs to be widened to target powerful Yemenis, inside or outside the government, that should be accomplished, whatever toes must be stepped on to do it. The deaths of 17 Americans are an outrage and the FBI should be getting all possible assistance from Yemen. Let the chips fall where they may.

FBI agents have had to endure Yemen's total control over interrogations. They were forbidden from doing their own interviews. Now they are allowed to watch Yemenis question suspects through one-way glass or on closed-circuit TV. That is not adequate.

There are troubling signs that the Clinton administration is putting its hopes to improve relations with Yemen ahead of the investigation. That's the kind of thinking that may have led to the Cole being exposed to terrorist attack in the first place.

At the time it was bombed, the sailors on the Cole did not have ammunition in their guns and were not authorized to shoot unless fired on. How could that be? And how could the rules of engagement allow any ship to approach the Cole without authorization? Yemen needs to provide answers. So does the Clinton administration.

Is America reaping what it sowed?  
By Daniel Schorr

## WASHINGTON

The USS Cole comes limping home, an ugly gash in its side, a visible symbol of the impotence of American omnipotence in the face of elusive terrorism. The very presence of this warship in Arabian waters was meant to signal American strength. Now, American warships have been withdrawn from Arabian ports.

To the attack on the Cole, President Clinton, like presidents before him, delivered a ritual response: "We will find out who is responsible and hold them accountable." President Reagan said it better in 1985 of Mohammed Abbas, who masterminded the hijacking of the Italian cruise ship, Achille Lauro: "You can run, but you can't hide." But in the end, Mr. Abbas got away, released by Italy despite American protests.

Since the bombing of the US Marines in Beirut in 1983, it has turned out that most terrorists do go unpunished, in part, because America cannot enforce its will in locating them. After the 1996 truck bombing of the Air Force barracks in Saudi Arabia, the Saudi government stubbornly refused the FBI access to suspects and witnesses, apparently more concerned about superpower influence than terrorist influence.

Something like that seems to be happening now in Yemen. Despite a letter from Mr. Clinton and an appeal from FBI Director Louie Freeh on the spot, Yemen has refused American access to scores of suspects and witnesses. The FBI contingent has moved from an Aden hotel to an American ship at sea.

### Under public

pressure to do something about terrorist outrages, the US government sometimes lashes out, as with the bombing attack on Libya in 1986 that Mr. Reagan ordered after a bomb incident in a Berlin cafe. Or the missile attacks ordered by Clinton after the bombing of two American embassies in Africa in 1998. One attack, on the Afghan headquarters of terrorist chief Osama bin Laden, did him no harm. Another attack was launched against a pharmaceutical plant in Sudan suspected, without convincing evidence, of making weapons of mass destruction.

Now, at the height of the presidential campaign, we get strong words about the Cole. From Governor Bush: "There must be a consequence." From Vice President Gore:

"This is a situation that will bring a response." The rhetoric of America's supremacy persists, but the reality has changed.

Another thing we are learning from the bombing of the USS Cole: Yemen's investigation has tentatively concluded that the suspects belonged to the Islamic Jihad, veterans of the American-backed anti-Soviet war in Afghanistan. This may be the latest of the CIA's chickens come home to roost.

During the 1980s, the CIA, mainly under William Casey's stewardship, poured \$3 billion into supporting the mujahideen guerrillas in Afghanistan. From across the border in Pakistan, the agency helped to set up camps to train militants in bombmaking, sabotage, and guerrilla warfare. Many of the 15,000 trainees were volunteers from other Islamic countries. One was a young man from Saudi Arabia named Osama bin Laden.

Once the Afghan war was ended, some of the American-supported militants found new targets. Ramzi Ahmed Yousef and Sheik Omar Abdel-Rahman became ringleaders in the bombing of New York's World Trade Center in 1993. Mir Aimal Kansi pumped bullets into cars near CIA headquarters in suburban Virginia, killing two and wounding three. Mr. Bin Laden is believed to have been involved in several anti-American terrorist acts before the attack on the Cole, including the bombing of the two American embassies in Africa in 1998.

The mujahideen in Afghanistan had been divided into 12 factions, two of them as virulently anti-West as they were anti-Soviet. The late CIA director Casey cherished them all as freedom fighters and persuaded Reagan to give full support to all the factions.

After the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1992, mujahideen extremists moved into Egypt with a series of attacks intended to undermine President Hosni Mubarak by scaring tourists away.

Then came America, the "Great Satan" itself. After the trade-center bombing, a letter claiming credit arrived from something calling itself the "Liberation Army, 5th Battalion." That was mujahideen language.

And now the attack on the destroyer Cole in the harbor of Aden. Some dividend on the Reagan administration's investment in freedom fighters!

Lines of fire: Risks to U.S. forces are unavoidable

(Published Oct. 31, 2000)

It may be some time before it's known who was responsible for the bomb attack on the destroyer USS Cole that killed 17 sailors, hurt 39 others and provoked demands on Capitol Hill for explanations -- in particular, why the Cole was using the Yemeni port of Aden as a refueling station and why the warship was not on a higher state of alert. And so far that task has not been helped by Yemeni authorities' refusal to let U.S. investigators interview suspects and witnesses who have been detained.

However that problem is resolved, the mission of the United States -- in the Middle East and elsewhere -- must not be fundamentally altered.

Congress is right to demand a full explanation of the administration's strategic rationale for using Aden as port of call, and to insist on better security procedures consistent with a mission that is inherently risky in a region where hundreds of U.S. service personnel have been killed since 1983, when 241 Americans died in a suicide bomb attack on a Marine barracks.

Part of the rationale for involvement in Yemen concerns its strategic location at the tip of the Arabian peninsula, its excellent harbor and its improving relations with Washington. Whether the American people understand that or not, in this instance they have, to their credit, not reacted in the way they did seven years ago, when the killing of 18 U.S. Army Rangers in Somalia provoked such an outcry that American troops were pulled out within months.

The judgment then was that America had gone beyond its humanitarian mission in a country ravaged by famine and internal warfare; now, most people seem to understand that the Cole was part of a mission that this country must continue as part of the effort to build a more stable Middle East.

That maturity will be needed in the future. Even a cursory glance at a list of international areas of conflict makes it clear, first, that their resolution will take time and, second, that a U.S. military presence is an essential ingredient in the most critical cases.

America's presence is clearly needed in the Balkans, where U.S. leadership, however belated, has ended most of the violence and laid the ground for political and economic progress; on the Korean peninsula, where Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's recent visit has raised hopes of reconciliation between North Korea and its neighbors, but where U.S. troops must remain until that happens; more broadly in Western Europe, where a diminished but still substantial contingent of American forces underlines the U.S. commitment to European security; and in the Western Pacific, where U.S. forces are a pointed reminder that this country is as determined to discourage military aggression as it is to build stronger economic and political relations with China.

Future attacks are inevitable -- not only abroad but, quite possibly, in this country -- for as long as America plays the leading role it must in the world. At the moment, at least, the American people seem to understand and to accept, however sorrowfully, that the price to be paid will sometimes be very painful.

U.S. intelligence has limits

From the Journal Sentinel

Last Updated: Oct. 29, 2000

The terrorist bombing of the USS Cole on Oct. 12 did more than damage one of America's warships and kill 17 American sailors; it shattered some myths about the nature and limits of U.S. intelligence. When Congress and the Pentagon go about the needed business of trying to make sure such attacks don't happen again, they need to understand what spies and satellites can and cannot do.

In the aftermath of the bombing, congressional investigators were told that intelligence agencies repeatedly picked up indications of a possible terrorist attack in the Persian Gulf, but that the warnings were not always relayed to military commanders in the area. All this suggests an appalling breakdown of communications. Or does it? Such a breakdown may have occurred. But it's far from certain.

U.S. intelligence analysts do not suffer from an absence of information. In fact, one of their burdens is information. They are sometimes buried in facts. The communications revolution has made the tidal wave of data even more overpowering and confusing. You don't have to be a CIA spy to understand this.

What's important is evaluating information and passing it along to the right people so it can be used. It's also important not to build bureaucratic barriers that suffocate innovation and cause delays. All this is not easy. It requires, among other things, sophisticated judgment.

Intelligence agencies can be reasonably faulted if they ignored what they knew or should have known were reliable indications of terrorism. But they can't be blamed if the indications were ambiguous, or if they were contradicted by other facts.

There is some reason for concern here; a Pentagon specialist has resigned because his supervisors refused to pass along what he thought was clear evidence of a terrorist attack. The specialist was not a lower-ranking analyst, but a high-ranking official.

Congress and the military have a legitimate role in helping to get to the bottom of the Cole disaster and punishing anyone in the U.S. chain of command who can be found guilty of dereliction of duty by sitting on information that might have saved lives. But they also have an obligation not to seek scapegoats or to make facile judgments.

## Lessons from USS Cole

Keep up U.S. vigilance against terrorist acts on our forces.

By Bert Useem

The bombing of the USS Cole, killing at least 17 crew members, would seem to demonstrate once again the vulnerability of the U.S. military forces to terrorist attacks - different only in magnitude from the 1983 bombing of the Marine barracks in Beirut, Lebanon (241 U.S. servicemen killed) but on the par with the 1996 bombing of Khobar Towers, in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia (17 servicemen killed).

But this criticism is naive and ahistoric.

The best anti-terrorism/force protection (AT/FP) practices cannot ensure success in warding off terrorist attacks. But defective organization increases many-fold the likelihood that such attempts will be made, and of casualties when they do occur. Terrorists are a reactive adversary: searching for vulnerabilities in existing defenses, acquiring new tactics and weapons, and looking for lines of least expectation.

For example, the on-site commander at Khobar focused his AT/FP efforts almost exclusively on preventing the penetration of the compound by a bomb on a vehicle – the terrorist tactic at Beirut that proved so costly. With this avenue cut off, the attackers used a truck bomb of such large magnitude that penetration was unnecessary. Its detonation, outside both the compound's perimeter and the designated standoff distance, pulverized one side of a housing unit. The security officer at Khobar would later comment that he did "not in any way, shape or form" expect the 5,000 pound bomb that was used.

The key point is that a closing off of most direct vulnerabilities provides some protection but does not eliminate the full spectrum of terrorist threats.

Following Khobar, the Department of Defense undertook a major effort to build AT/FP competency at all levels. AT/FP now is under the direction of a single office within the Joint Chiefs of Staff ("J-34"), which assists commanders in the field in AT/FP issues, channels resources toward anti-terrorism efforts, and establishes anti-terrorism strategic goals and standards.

Defense Department sites, both within and outside the U.S. borders, are inspected for their vulnerability to terrorist attack on a routine basis. Defense Department commanders and other personnel receive much more training and education in anti-terrorism than prior to Khobar. In short, before Khobar, there was no single core group within Defense Department with broad responsibility for force protection. Such an element - staffed with competent, motivated personnel - now exists. Force



protection has been given much higher priority for funding, the formulation of policies and standards and technology development.

But the USS Cole did happen. Ironically, this demonstrates the partial success of the existing efforts. Apparently terrorists believe that the traditional venues are closed off to them. The point then is to further close off the newly discovered one. A more powerful explosive device, if used against the USS Cole, could have caused another Beirut in its magnitude. Anti-naval terrorism could well escalate, unless countermeasures are taken.

There are historical lessons to be learned. One is that terrorism tends to come in waves, rather than isolated incidents. Prior to both the Beirut and Khobar Tower bombings, there were smaller but still deadly attacks against local targets. In Beirut, 57 were killed in a bombing of the U.S. Embassy; in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, five were killed in the bombing of an Army office. The attack on the USS Cole could be the start of such a wave.

In addition, there are risks involved in establishing a military presence overseas, and there are additional risks from an increased presence in heretofore neglected countries such as Yemen to "engage" the populace and to gain allies (or at least neutrality) against the risk of attack on the Ugly American. When viewed in this manner, it seems ill-advised to inundate a sovereign country (Yemen) with FBI investigators as we are doing at the moment. The Saudi Royal Family still seethes from the indignity of flooding their country with FBI officials during the Khobar Towers probe. We must avoid pat, cookie-cutter solutions to complex issues.

## Lessons From USS Cole

Friday , October 27, 2000 ; Page A34

THERE CAN be no complete victory over terrorism, not so long as the United States projects power around the world. U.S. personnel, buildings and equipment offer too many targets, and America's might ensures that enemies resort to scattered bombings rather than open war. But even if terrorism can never be defeated, the risks can be minimized. In the wake of the suicide bombing of the USS Cole in the Yemeni port of Aden two weeks ago, some are suggesting that efforts to do so have been inadequate.

At congressional hearings Wednesday, it emerged that a Pentagon intelligence analyst has resigned, claiming that superiors failed to pass on information that would have helped to anticipate an attack. Congressional critics have questioned the decision to

send the USS Cole to refuel in Aden at a time of heightened Middle East tensions, especially since Yemen is known as a hotbed of radical Islamist groups. The Cole entered port under the lowest grade of security permitted in the Middle East, even though the local U.S. Embassy was on a high state of alert.

What's more, there have been suggestions that the attack was carried out by terrorists associated with Osama bin Laden, who was responsible for the bombing of two U.S. embassies in 1998. If the nation's counterterrorist services can't track their most notorious enemy, what can they do?

Set against all that, the Pentagon maintains that there was no specific warning of a plan to attack a warship; and that more general warnings are so common as to make it impossible to act on them. The Cole had to refuel somewhere, and there was no reason to believe other Arabian Gulf ports were safer. The Cole's crew should in retrospect have challenged the small boat that approached it laden with explosives. But no U.S. warship had been attacked in this manner before.

After a truck bomb killed 19 U.S. airmen in Saudi Arabia five years ago, the Pentagon held one general partially responsible, and learned some other lessons too. The post-attack inquiry came up with some 30 recommendations for improving security, ranging from strengthened perimeter defenses to a stronger focus on counterterrorism among the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The 17 servicemen who died aboard the USS Cole deserve no less an effort to draw useful lessons.

Everything in Clinton's past record -- and in America's foreign policy -- tells us that justice will not prevail for the sailors killed in the terrorist attack on the USS Cole.

Why Justice Will Not Prevail

By Robert Tracinski (October 23, 2000)

[CAPITALISMMAGAZINE.COM] At a memorial service for the sailors killed in the terrorist attack on the USS Cole, President Clinton declared, in the tone of intense emotional sincerity he is so practiced at faking, that "justice will prevail." It was a cruel lie to tell to the sailors' mourning families, because everything in Clinton's past record -- and in America's foreign policy -- tells us that justice will not prevail. Did justice prevail in 1998, when Osama bin Laden orchestrated the bombing of U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania? Sure, we rounded up a few small fries from bin Laden's gang and launched a few missiles at his training camp. But bin Laden himself is still safely ensconced in Afghanistan, still under the protection of the country's radical Islamic rulers. Justice has not prevailed.

Did justice prevail in 1996, when terrorists bombed the Khobar Towers apartment building in Saudi Arabia, killing 19 U.S. Air Force servicemen? The evidence pointed to Iran, but the administration quietly quashed the investigation and simply did nothing. Justice did not prevail; it was not even attempted.

Did justice prevail over the past seven years, as Clinton rewarded a career of terrorism by elevating Yasser Arafat to leader of a would-be Palestinian state? Has justice prevailed in the past few weeks, as Arafat responded to Israeli concessions by initiating a war -- only to be asked back to the negotiating table yet again? Justice has not prevailed; it has been turned on its head.

This is what made the attack on the USS Cole possible. Terrorist leaders -- and the governments that harbor and support them -- know that they are safe from retribution. They know that justice, for Clinton, is just a catchphrase.

It's no wonder that our military's morale is low and dropping lower. Our soldiers, sailors, and fliers are being murdered, and their commander in chief has no intention to bring the killers to justice -- ensuring that our servicemen will be in even greater danger in the future.

The blame lies partly with Bill Clinton's belief that words and symbols are more important than reality, so that public expressions of outrage and token bombings are a sufficient response to terrorism. But the betrayal is much deeper than that. America's surrender in the face of terrorism is not merely the policy of one president. It is the status quo of our foreign policy establishment -- and both candidates in this year's election accept that status quo.

In their second debate, George W. Bush and Al Gore disagreed on many minor issues -- but they both agreed that America's foreign policy should be based on "humility." Well, no one can claim that America hasn't been humble in dealing with terrorism.

We refused to capture Osama bin Laden and bring him to justice. Why? To avoid upsetting Afghanistan and its Islamic allies. We dropped the investigation of the Khobar Towers bombing. Why? To improve relations with the bombing's perpetrator, Iran. We refuse to hold Arafat accountable for his crimes of the past few weeks, much less the past 35 years. Why? To preserve the very "peace process" that put Arafat in power and gave him an army in the first place. We sent the USS Cole to Yemen's crowded port, despite that country's history of terrorist attacks on American targets. Why? To pursue better relations with Yemen's government.

At every stage, our policy has been to sacrifice our interests, our security, our allies, and the lives of our troops -- for the sake of appeasing every Third World demagogue and tin-pot dictator on the planet. The candidates warned that American "arrogance" would provoke the world's hatred. But our humility is merely earning the world's contempt.

The solution to America's prostrate humility is precisely what Clinton promised, but will not deliver, to the families of the Cole sailors: justice. As a first step, we need to track down the perpetrators of these bombings and bring them in, dead or alive. But this would only be a start. We must assert our right to go to war, if necessary, against the governments who sponsor terrorism -- including Syria, Iran and Afghanistan.

Most of all, we must have the moral self-confidence to assert our right to defend ourselves -- and to declare that American interests and security are more important than any diplomatic process or UN resolution.

If President Clinton had done this seven years ago, he could have spared us his phony display of empathy for the Cole families -- because their loved ones would still be alive today.

America's problem with its power

By Tahir Mirza

THE vicious Israeli attack on Ramallah following the arrest of three Israeli soldiers by the Hizbollah and the explosion that hit the US destroyer Cole in the port of Aden pushed the American presidential campaign into the background during the past week.

The Cole incident came within days of the second presidential debate, when both Democratic candidate Vice-President Al Gore and Republican nominee Governor George W. Bush had bragged of American power and prowess and the need to maintain it. Apart from others, many Americans, too, must have wondered why the US feels itself under such a compulsion to show the flag everywhere and to send its heavily-armed ships to patrol the high seas, exposing US servicemen to danger.

Mr Bush had said in the debate the US did not want to be the world's policeman; it wished to be the world's peace-maker. Mr Gore had agreed with the sentiment. Yet, there is this constant, almost imperialistic urge to display American might. It is not easy for the average American citizen, largely unaware of the history of US meddling in Asia, Africa and Latin America, to understand that the mere presence of American warships or other symbols of militarism is considered provocative.

It is often asserted that the US now stands alone as the greatest military power. Mr Gore said there was no previous precedent in history when one country had been so powerful, or words to that effect. This should have brought confidence, confidence that America is secure against any outside threat. Instead, curiously, it appears to have engendered a certain jittery cockiness which requires to be manifested in a worldwide display of American military muscle.

If it is argued that American military presence is necessary to protect American values and interests and to extend protection to its allies, then it must be asked whether such military presence ensures security or puts it in greater danger.

Whether the values are concerned, the heavy US military encampments in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait have singularly failed to promote democracy or liberalization in those kingly states. In fact, if American backing was withdrawn from some of the regimes in the region, democracy might come to them sooner. But, then, there is oil, and there is Saddam Hussein whose ambitions must be countered by US objectives in the area. Rhetorically speaking, if the US had not helped and plotted to overthrow Mossedegh, wouldn't the monarchy have been overthrown sooner in Iran?

It is often underlined here that the US is genuinely concerned about terrorism because it alone seems to be the target of terrorist attacks. This is true, and American worries about terrorism in which innocent people are killed and maimed are shared by everyone. There have been widespread expressions of horror, sympathy and condemnation at the casualties suffered by those on board the Cole. But the point has to be emphasized again that it is often America's own policies that breed terrorism.

Support for unjust causes leads to frustration and violence. Nowhere is this more evident than in the Middle East. However, in none of the learned commentaries heard on the major television networks or in the sharp and pithy newspaper editorials written on the Palestinian uprising and the Cole incident has the Anglo-French-Israeli invasion of Egypt in 1956 been recalled. Was that assault in reaction to a terrorist threat or was it meant to nip Nasser's nationalism in the bud, before it spread to other Arab countries? How much of the turmoil that has gripped the Middle East over the decades is due to that single act of aggression?

There has also not been a single recall in the mainstream US media of how Israel was carved out of Palestine and peopled with European Jews or of the original United Nations partition resolution that had talked of two states, a Jewish entity and a Palestinian state. Now when Yasser Arafat talks of declaring an independent Palestine state, it seems as if he is almost giving voice to some kind of blasphemy.

The events of the past few days have made it even more difficult for Mr Arafat to carry out his promise to announce an independent Palestine state next month, and you sometimes wonder whether the chain of incidents that led to the violent turmoil of this month, beginning with Ariel Sharon's visit to the Haram Al Sharif, wasn't somehow orchestrated to queer the pitch for Mr Arafat.

The Hamas, too, it must be remembered, has its own interest in making life more difficult for the Palestinian leader. And here again American attitudes may have precipitated the militancy and extremism that now hold the region and, further west, Afghanistan in thrall and cause profound anxiety in Pakistan.

Overall, a little less blind trust in the power of American power and a slightly diminished sense of righteousness in what America thinks it stands for will benefit both the US and the rest of the world.

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BUT now to some of the softer, lovelier aspects of America. A day's outing last Sunday to the Shenandoah national park provided a breathtaking glimpse into the colourful onset of autumn, which, in typical straightforward American fashion, is simply called fall.

It was a mild, sunny afternoon, and the trees on the hills and along the park's winding road unabashedly flaunted their yellow and russet finery. The remaining patches of green provided a deep contrast to the autumnal hues, and as the declining sun cast its lengthening shadow on the far hill-tops, the orange and mustard of the leaves, still thick on the trees, stood out in greater splendour.

Amidst all this calm beauty, the questioning from friends about Pakistan persisted. Will things ever improve? The elderly gentleman asked. The tape in the friend's car sang out its own questions as Nayyara Noor recited Faiz's poem about how many more monsoons it will take to wipe out the blood stains from the grass. We in Pakistan also have a problem remembering our history or learning from it.

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enandoah river, its name meaning 'Daughter of the Stars' in native American lore. This region, too, has its own politics and history. It was here that Jim Brown, who must have been something of a revolutionary in his time, had tried to organize a slave uprising and captured an armoury. The slaves hadn't risen because they had no idea of what was intended until the event actually took place. The revolt inevitably failed. Jim Brown was captured and hanged. He was a staunch abolitionist, and after his death he was given the status almost of a martyr by the North. That was when the stage was set for the war with the slave-owning and secessionist South.

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GUS Hall, who led the little known Communist Party of the USA during the height of the cold war, died in New York on Monday at the ripe old age of 90. He had exceptional credentials as a crusader for people's rights, and in the post World War II era, he was recognized abroad as the only spokesman for American progressivism.

His parents were Finnish immigrants who belonged to the Industrial Workers of the World, the labour organization. His father was a miner, and he himself worked as a lumberjack and steelworker. He served eight years in prison for his political views and ran four times for president. He was greatly saddened by the collapse of the Soviet Union, and considered Mikhail Gorbachev as a person whose reforms destroyed the very basis of socialism.

Hall was indicted on explosive charges during a 1937 Ohio steelworkers' strike that had led to the calling out of the National Guard. He was fined \$500 for vandalism, but the steel company against which the strike was held was forced to accept the workers' demand for the recognition of their union.

I  
t was not easy  
for an American to espouse communist causes in the materialistic atmosphere that prevailed in the US then (and now), but Gus Hall ploughed on nevertheless, braving even the McCarthy witch-hunts and the ideological evangelism of FBI boss Edgar Hoover. He supported the re-election bid of President Bill Clinton in 1996 and urged communists to vote for the Democratic candidate because the Republicans represented "pro-fascist forces". He also backed President Clinton during the impeachment proceedings over the Monica Lewinsky affair. He considered the move against Mr Clinton to be an attempted right-wing coup d'etat.

But it is a measure of the political realities here that not a single important American leader came out with a message of condolence on Gus Hall's death. The newspapers ran obituaries on him, with The New York Times devoting almost two-thirds of a page to a detailed but largely unsympathetic appraisal of the man.

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THE ritual of the presidential debates has ended. Commentators have talked about the suits the two candidates wore and the ties they sported. No one has told us what colour of socks they wore. Did their socks match their ties? That once used to be the ultimate test of a gentleman.

In the third and last debate on Tuesday, a stunning pair of long legs in stockings in the background attracted much notice. Owner unknown, alas.

Remember the Cole

Thursday, October 19, 2000

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ABOUT 5,000 mourners gathered at Norfolk Naval Station in Virginia yesterday to honor the 17 young sailors killed in a terrorist attack against the guided-missile destroyer Cole in Yemen last week.

The somber memorial was attended by President Clinton, Defense Department and Navy top brass, tearful relatives of the dead and 32 injured shipmates brought home after last Thursday's suicide attack.

"To those who attacked them we say: You will not find safe harbor. We will find you, and justice will prevail," said Clinton.

Other speakers echoed the sentiment that America will never forget the lost sailors and will find and punish whoever is responsible.

Yet, despite the family tears and vows of vengeance, there is a curious lack of national outrage about the bombing of the Cole, in which 17 were killed and 39 others were wounded. It was the deadliest attack on the U.S. military since 1996, when a truck bomb killed 19 at an Air Force housing complex in Saudi Arabia.

Perhaps it is the frustration of not knowing who to blame or how to respond against fanatical enemies willing to die. Maybe we have become inured to terrorist attacks and chalk them up as the cost of doing business in the fractious Middle East?

Or has the all-volunteer military removed the threat of such danger from the vast majority of the population, confident neither they nor their family members will ever be sent into harm's way?

If that is so, it is a disgrace and a national tragedy.

Yesterday's memorial was a reminder that we are engaged in a low-level war against a ruthless and implacable foe that despises everything America represents.

As long as the United States commits military men and women to serving in such hot spots around the world, our troops must know their country supports them, appreciates their sacrifices and will stop at nothing to avenge their deaths.

America must always remember the Cole, and honor the memory of the brave sailors killed on a difficult mission to bring peace and stability to the Middle East.

Respect is due for those who help keep peace  
10/19/2000

The long line of ambulances moved slowly into the Norfolk Naval Base Wednesday morning, reminding us that loyalty and service have no boundaries.



These were the men and women who were injured in the ruthless suicide attack on the USS Cole last Thursday in Yemen. Their primary concern should have been about wounds that could take weeks or even months to heal.

But that isn't where their hearts and minds were Wednesday. They wanted to be at the memorial service for their 17 Navy comrades who won't be coming back. They wanted to share this time with the grieving friends and family members. And they wanted to let terrorists know that explosives cannot tear apart the commitment of U.S. military personnel to duty.

The gray Virginia skies set a somber tone at the hourlong memorial service for the young men and women who died in the assault on the U.S. destroyer. Tears flowed steadily for the loss of so many in such an act of cruelty.

And yet the message at the service was about those who continue to serve our nation as well as those who have died. President Bill Clinton pointed it out. So did Defense Secretary William Cohen and others who did not want to let this hour pass without making certain Americans understand what their military personnel do for them.

Mr. Clinton said it isn't hard to write books about the bravery of U.S. forces in time of war. "But I fear the story will never be written about the wars we never fought because of people like the men and women on the Cole who were preserving the peace."

Mr. Cohen said people in this nation "each day sleep safely under the blanket of freedom because these men and women are willing to serve. No one should ever pass an American in uniform without saying, 'Thank you. We're grateful.'"

The memorial service should remind this nation how much we owe those who continue to risk their lives in the name of preserving freedom. And it also reminds us we have a duty to give value to the lives that were lost in defense of our liberties. We must not take for granted the benefits we enjoy because of the sacrifices they have made.

Mr. Clinton appropriately used the gathering to warn terrorists that their efforts to discourage or demoralize are destined to fail. America will stay the course. Those who planned the attack on the USS Cole will be found and brought to justice.

That was a message the world as well as the crowd at Norfolk Naval Base needed to hear.

## Casualties of a Shadow War

By Jim Hoagland

Thursday , October 19, 2000 ; Page A31

The terrorists who bombed the USS Cole in Aden climbed an important rung on the ladder of terrorism. Americans can no longer turn away from the ugly realities of the shadow war directed against their nation. Nor can they ignore the ineptness of U.S. responses.

The Aden massacre was an intelligence success of major proportions for at least one of America's enemies in the Middle East. The tradecraft used shows it was not executed by a band of freelancers who got lucky. It is no longer possible to treat a dozen years of high-profile terror attacks on U.S. targets as random, episodic and self-contained events that can be left to the normal procedures of criminal justice and government bureaucracy.

Modern terrorists climb the ladder of technology with determination. They progress from car bombs to truck bombs to nerve gas, as experts like David Kay have pointed out. They have moved on to packing a ton of sophisticated explosives on a small boat to slaughter U.S. sailors.

But a ladder of objectives is being climbed as well. American airliners, the World Trade Center in New York, United Nations headquarters, U.S. military barracks and embassies abroad--and now a warship--have been the actual or intended targets of bombers with roots in the Middle East.

Easy explanations are available: That's the price of being a global superpower. Somebody somewhere is always going to be angry at you for treading on his culture. Bring the boys back home, or grin and bear it. Either answer will seemingly do.

But what if these targets are being attacked because of the principles and policies of the United States? What if the extensive state resources needed to infiltrate the Aden port operation and gather intelligence on the Cole's movements were mobilized by a state friendly enough to Yemen and hostile enough to the United States to achieve the bombing of the Cole?

The outgoing administration has not made a serious effort to confront and answer similar questions in the earlier attacks. It has appointed ineffectual commissions and left anti-terror policy to mid-level bureaucrats at the National Security Council. A policy heavyweight, a Sam Nunn or a Warren Rudman, should be named to head up a blue-ribbon panel to investigate the operational failures that exposed the Cole to disaster and the larger questions about terrorism.

Bureaucracies instinctively understand when they are being asked to avoid forcing hard choices on leaders. And no president welcomes evidence that may require him to undertake acts of warfare in such murky circumstances.

President Bush faced such a choice shortly after his election in 1988 when Pan Am 103 was blown up over Scotland. His administration responded to evidence implicating Libya's intelligence service by ruling out military retaliation and opting for economic sanctions and the slow path of criminal justice.

The sanctions, and the legal case finally brought against two Libyan underlings under Scottish law, were both unraveling as the Cole tragedy happened.

Investigative author Laurie Mylroie's new book, "Study of Revenge," argues that significant leads that tie the Feb. 26, 1993, bombing of the World Trade Center to Iraq have not been followed up effectively either.

Her case is far from airtight. But she advances what former CIA director James Woolsey calls "a testable hypothesis" that has studiously not been tested by the administration. After the attack on the Cole--on its way to enforce U.N. sanctions against Iraq--such views cannot be dismissed as Iraqophobia or paranoia.

Iraqi intelligence has long maintained a significant presence in the former British coaling station of Aden. The CIA upgraded its presence there in recent years to try to penetrate Saddam Hussein's operations. And Saddam has long-standing political and financial ties with Yemeni leader Ali Abdallah Salih, who initially insisted the Cole explosion was just an accident.

That explanation echoes uncomfortably in my ears. In 1987 an Iraqi jet hit the USS Stark with an Exocet missile and killed 37 sailors. Saddam insisted that was an accident, and the Reagan administration quickly accepted his apology rather than aggressively pursue a difficult inquiry. The U.S. team sent to Baghdad meekly accepted the Iraqi refusal to allow it to question the attacking jet's pilot.

Covering that pseudo investigation was my last trip to Baghdad. Three years later Saddam went to war against Kuwait and dared an American nation he was convinced would never respond. Somewhere someone is watching the American response to the attack on the Cole and thinking about the future. So must America, without further illusion.

Published Wednesday October 18, 2000

By Hebah Abdalla

As we watch the bodies of American sailors return home and await the latest reports on the investigation of the explosion on the USS Cole, we may feel an overwhelming sense of frustration. The American media, in their rush to provide the most comprehensive coverage of the bombing have overlooked a key element to the story.

Newspapers and the television news networks have only briefly mentioned the fact that these sailors were on their way to enforce sanctions on the Iraqi people. But the American public will never hear the deadly effect these sanctions have had on more than a million innocent men, women, and children.

Instead, we will only

This morning, the NBC today show conducted a live interview with Randy Kafka, an injured sailor from the USS Cole. He openly wept as he spoke of the men he worked and played with on that ship. He made the point that these men died serving their country.

Certainly, these men did put their lives at risk to enforce U.S. policies abroad. But what about the people who have died as a result of the U.S. led sanctions? Most of those who have died in Iraq did not have the choice of serving their government because they were under the age of five.

But we will never hear about their tragic stories. Not one single funeral will be covered by an American television network, and we may never see a photograph of any Iraqi who died as a result of the sanctions. These are stories that are undoubtedly more tragic and heartbreaking and must be told.

It is doubtful we will have live interviews any time soon from Veterans for Peace, former soldiers who know about the tragedies in Iraq and have launched a signature campaign to see an end to these deadly sanctions.

We will not hear from the numerous groups of American delegates who were firsthand witnesses to the horrors in Iraq. We will not see the tears of mothers who lost their children to diarrhea and malnutrition because water purification plants have been destroyed and chlorine for water purification is banned by the sanctions.

We may never see the images of Iraqi children who are packed four to a desk in classrooms with broken and missing windows. It is a little known fact that glass and other spare parts have become a scarcity over the last ten years.

It is a shame that journalists have not taken the lead in questioning the U.S. policy toward Iraq. The stories would be easy to tell. Reporters wouldn't have to walk far to get their stories in the streets of Baghdad and Basra, where electricity is available only three hours a day, even when temperatures soar well over 110 degrees.

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been ignored? U.S. journalists have failed to provide fair coverage because of an inherent bias that systematically leans toward the U.S. government. It is doubtful that any of these White House correspondents, who arrive in their White House offices and enjoy the luxuries of traveling with U.S. officials both domestically and abroad, have gone beyond their inner circle of Washington's elite power structure to get their news. Many American journalists are unwilling or perhaps unable to go beyond the daily diet of government news conferences, news releases and spin doctoring. More and more, these journalists are sounding like government spokespeople. Although Clinton faced a litany of reports about his sexual behavior involving a White House intern, little has been done to question him on more serious issues, particularly his Administration's hypocritical policies toward the Middle East.

There have been a few exceptions. Perhaps the most memorable one was an interview with Madeleine Albright in May of 1996 on the popular television news program "60 minutes." When asked whether the cost of the lives of over half a million children was worth it in order to get rid of Iraq's President, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, then US Ambassador to the UN, replied "It's a hard decision...but we think the price...is worth it."

Unfortunately few reporters from major news organizations have done much more before or since then to question the Administration's policy toward Iraq.

Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and her State Department cronies will argue that the sanctions will only help Iraqis rid themselves of a ruthless dictator. However, the last ten years have shown that such a strategy has failed. How many more innocent children must die before the American media will awaken?

The policies of the U.S. government are not unlike those of the Nazis who surrounded Leningrad during a three-year siege in which more than half a million people died a slow death of starvation. Like the Americans in Iraq, the Nazis used their formidable air force to ensure that supply lines to Leningrad remained cut off. It is the duty of journalists to remind the American public of this horrific chain of events as history repeats itself.

Undoubtedly there will come a day when the American public will realize our leadership failed to provide a just and equitable end to this ongoing crisis. Perhaps there will also be a day when journalists realize their deafening silence was a form of complicity.

MISSING: THE WARRIOR ETHIC  
Wednesday, October 18, 2000

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SO the search for the USS Cole bombers is now in the hands of Janet Reno and the Justice Department. From this, two conclusions can fairly be drawn:

- \* No information on the event deemed threatening to the political aspirations of Al Gore or Hillary Rodham Clinton will be forthcoming at least until after Election Day, and;

- \* The speech that needs to be made at this morning's Norfolk, Va., memorial service for those who died in last week's guerrilla assault surely won't be.

Bill Clinton and his trolling-for-votes first lady will do their level best to cast the 17 sailors who died aboard Cole - and the dozens who were wounded - as victims of a criminal conspiracy.

But they were not.

Most presidents would know this intuitively. But the incumbent obviously doesn't. And perhaps this explains the crisis of confidence that grips America's military.

The bombing of USS Cole was an act of war - not a drive-by shooting in which innocent bystanders die in a crossfire.

The proper response to such an attack is not the dispatch of FBI forensic teams, the assignment of a sophisticated but politically pliant U.S. attorney as lead "prosecutor" in the case - or endless speculation as to which particular band of terrorists is "responsible" for a gaping hole in the side of a warship of the United States Navy.

What needs explicitly to be said is that this act of war will be handled in accordance with the traditions and customs of the naval service.

John Paul Jones, the spiritual father of the United States Navy and as combative an officer as any who ever served, said "Give me a fast ship, for I intend to go in harm's way."

USS Cole is nothing if not a fast ship. She is the 17th in a class of vessels named to honor another genuine hero of the service, Adm. Arleigh Burke.

Burke came to prominence in battles now known best to naval historians. He personally took the war to the Imperial Japanese Navy at Empress Augusta Bay in the Solomon Islands - and again at Cape St. George, New Ireland - in November 1943.

He commanded destroyers - lightly gunned and armored, but swift as greyhounds and tailor-made for aggressive, valiant officers.

Burke was one of those officers who win wars by making the enemy bleed. The kind of officer who, it is to be hoped, serves America in sufficient numbers today.

Alarming, there is reason to doubt that enough do.

The past eight years have not been kind to warriors in America's armed forces.

With the sterling exception of the Marine Corps, the military seems to have turned its back on the warrior ethic - and quite consciously so.

It is no secret to those who follow such things closely that recruiting and training standards have been dangerously degraded. This has been done in part to achieve gender equity in the ranks, partly to make military service attractive for youngsters who are perceived to have other options in a strong economy.

Yet recruiting goals still cannot be met; just on Monday, the Pentagon announced another series of initiatives meant to stanch an outflow of junior officers.

Oddly enough - actually, not oddly at all - the Marine Corps has no retention problem. And the Marine Corps is the one service that continues overtly to celebrate the warrior ethic.

The Army just pretends.

Yesterday, Army Chief of Staff Gen. Eric Shinseki announced that beginning next June all soldiers will wear berets as part of the standard uniform - not just those elite troops who have earned that distinction.

A small matter to the Clinton-Gore camp, to be sure. But it won't be lost on the warriors.

Such insults never are.

This morning, in Norfolk, the focus will be on the Cole attack.

But the problem is not the bombing. As was once said of the Irish Republican Army, in a war of terrorism, the security forces need to be perfect; the terrorists need only to be lucky. And on occasion they will be; it's the nature of war.

No, the issue is that once again young Americans have died at the hands of a shadowy, yet very real, enemy - an enemy that hates the West in general and the United States in particular. Once again - as with the Khobar Towers bombing - there has been no effective response to the attack.

The president, his first lady and Al Gore need to conjure the spirit of Arleigh Burke - and then seek to make the enemy bleed. Profusely.

They won't.

Explosion alters Mideast picture  
(ARN Editorial)

The rioting in Israel and the bombing of a U.S. destroyer in Yemen have presented the Clinton administration in its waning days with two very tough — and perhaps related — foreign policy problems.

The violent Palestinian riots have gone well beyond their proximate cause, which was an ill-chosen visit to a Muslim holy site — which sits atop a Jewish holy site — by a right-wing Israeli politician, and now raise the serious question of whether Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat is unwilling or unable, or both, to stop the violence.

The government of Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak, having gone further in concession to the Palestinians than anyone would have imagined a year ago, can now legitimately question whether any agreement reached with Arafat would stand up over time.

But the latest cycle of violence, different only in degree, not kind, from previous riots, only points out the importance of reaching a final agreement. The Clinton administration, having gotten so deep into the talks, cannot back out now and must labor to achieve three goals: an end to the violence, some kind of mutually acceptable fact-finding mechanism into the cause of the violence and, somehow, a resumption of the talks that began at Camp David.

Meanwhile, a terrorist attack in Yemen killed a number of American sailors and injured dozens more on the destroyer USS Cole while it refueled in the port of Aden. The motive behind the attack is unknown and really doesn't much matter. What matters is tracking down and conclusively identifying those responsible and, if possible, bringing them to justice and, if not, retaliating with measured and appropriate force.

The United States' best defense against terrorism is its perpetrators' knowledge that they have no permanent safe haven, that the United States will not forget them and that one day, however long it takes, they will be found.

If the bombing turns out to be related to the events in Israel, the Clinton administration cannot let it affect what has been an honorable and well-intentioned policy of insuring that the Israelis and Palestinians can live side-by-side in safety and security.

Arafat's intentions are opaque, especially his refusal to try to halt the violence. Indeed, he has appeared to abdicate to extremists in the streets. Perhaps by a final convulsion of assaults on Israeli police stations and military posts he believes he can claim to the Arab world that the Palestinians somehow "won" their independence.



His inaction, however, has probably cost him a central Palestinian goal. His inability to protect two Israeli military reservists being held in a Palestinian police post and to stop the destruction of Joseph's Tomb shows that the holy sites of Jerusalem — Muslim, Christian, as well as Jewish — are not safe and accessible in the current environment

JIHAD HITS HOME  
Friday, October 13, 2000

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For anyone still in the dark about the Middle East, yesterday's events provided a cold dash of reality.

As violence raged in Israel, enemies of the West brought their war to Yemen, where they bombed an American naval vessel, USS Cole - killing several of the ship's crew, injuring dozens of others and ending their own lives in the process.

The sailors aboard that ship reacted bravely and admirably as they struggled to minimize casualties, contain damage and save the Cole.

True enough, those responsible for the explosion - which ripped a 20-by-40-foot gap in the ship's hull - have yet to be positively identified.

Indeed, the Pentagon officially declined even to commit to the only conclusion that makes sense - that the blast was the handiwork of terrorists.

But who doubts it? The blast had come from outside the ship, and reports cited two men standing - at attention - in a small boat next to the Cole on the site of the explosion when it went off.

There were suspicions, too, yesterday that the anti-Western international thug Osama bin Laden and his Hezbollah allies had a hand in the attack.

Certainly, the assault would fit nicely into the decades-old tactical patterns of the militant fundamentalists of the Islamic world: During the past 30 years, the West - and Americans, Jews and Israelis, first and foremost - have been bombed, shot, kidnapped and tortured in this brutal holy war.

Only seven years ago, the cowards waged their battle right here in New York City, setting off explosives at the World Trade Center and plotting to blow up a variety of

landmarks here. Bin Laden himself is suspected of masterminding the 1998 bombings of two U.S. embassies in Africa.

Yet the West often fails to grasp the links between the turmoil in Israel and the broader, ongoing global jihad.

Washington - in an honest attempt to end the conflict and for other understandable reasons - has sought to set itself apart from the combatants, denying that it is a party to the war.

That's nonsense on stilts.

The attacks on the World Trade Center and the embassies and on U.S. Marines in Lebanon and American citizens - from Terry Anderson to William Buckley to Joseph Cicippio to Leon Klinghoffer to Alisa Flatow - should have dispelled that myth long ago.

But they haven't.

Yesterday, the facts became plain yet again: America, the historic symbol of freedom and democracy, and its free and democratic ally, Israel, were both under attack.

This was no coincidence.

In Israel, a group of soldiers said to have taken a wrong turn into Arab-controlled Ramallah were abducted; three were lynched and killed.

But at bottom, the violence in Israel and elsewhere in the Middle East and the attack on Cole were expressions of hatred - against Western culture and its values: freedom, democracy, tolerance, pluralism.

And that is why America's hope of trying to play "honest broker" and uninvolved bystander is folly.

It is why Washington - no matter how many billions of tax dollars are pledged - will never be the lever that brings about peace between Israelis and Palestinian Arabs.

And the emphasis, when talking about the Palestinian Arabs, is on the second of those terms; remember, they are Arabs - culturally tied to their brethren in an Islamic world that stretches from Pakistan across North Africa to Morocco and beyond.

In that sense, the violence in Israel can hardly be seen as a local squabble over land - or for control of holy sites.

As Yasser Arafat himself claims, his actions are guided by the will of the entire Arab world. Egypt and Syria have hardened his opposition to peace and encouraged his belligerence.

Yesterday, Lebanon's Hezbollah leader called for an "Arab Anger Day." And Iraq was said to have been moving its troops, and called on fellow Arab nations to "liberate Palestine."

Meanwhile, the price of oil - 65 percent of the world's supply of which comes from the region - hit \$37 a barrel, just shy of the post-Gulf War record.

The "honest broker" handcuff has weakened not only Israel's position, but America's. Last weekend, it was partly to blame for Washington's failure to veto a one-sided United Nations resolution placing blame for the violence on Israel.

And the West's misunderstanding of the war has led to an inadequate response: The other reason given for abstaining on that U.N. vote was that we feared terrorism.

Well, good morning, America.

We abstained, but the terror came.

Washington's response, so far, is bewildering. President Clinton called for both sides to undertake a cease-fire.

At the same time, the president was vowing retaliation. Here's hoping it comes in the form of Clinton's reaction to the African embassy bombings in 1998: He caused cruise missiles to be launched at suspected terrorist bases.

Maybe the correct terrorists weren't targeted. But a seemingly random violent response to terrorism - the essence of which is seemingly random violence - is wholly appropriate.

And the president needn't be overly concerned with "due process" this time, either.

On television, one sees wanton violence and destruction in Israel - and one hears the rhetoric of war. The reality: There've been more political casualties since Oslo than in similar periods before it.

The only real change is that the Palestinian Arabs have been given land, an army and an infrastructure to wage their war.

We suggest that there is a cause-and-effect relationship here.

And we believe that it is not only Israel that is at war. The bombing of USS Cole demonstrates that.

There is no peace in the appeasement of "evenhandedness," just as there is no honor in surrender.

We believe that, deep down, Bill Clinton understands this. Our hope is that he does the right thing.

Don't let attackers off

Oct. 13, 2000 - Thursday's dastardly attack on the USS Cole as the Navy destroyer docked to take on fuel in the Indian Ocean port of Aden should not go unpunished.

But the public should stay calm until authorities have determined exactly who is responsible for this outrage that left six sailors dead, and dozens injured or missing. The Cole, a high-tech Arleigh Burke class Aegis guided-missile destroyer built in 1996, was severely damaged in what appears to have been a suicide bombing attack during a four-hour refueling stop in Aden, Yemen. The blast tore a gaping 40-foot by 20-foot hole in the Cole's hull and left the vessel listing noticeably.

President Clinton has dispatched a team of FBI investigators with expertise in terrorist acts in the Middle East to probe the explosion.

Given the current hostilities between our ally, Israel, and Palestinian Arabs, a misstep in rushing to fix blame prematurely could have dire consequences and dash all hopes of a peaceful resolution in Israel.

It is not beyond the realm of possibility that whatever terrorist organization attacked the Cole did so in hopes of provoking a violent reaction from the United States that might push moderate Arab regimes over the edge and array them against the United States and its staunch Israeli allies.

One thing is certain, whoever organized the attack had to have intimate knowledge of operations in Aden and the fact that the Cole was due to take on fuel there. The powerful explosive device that apparently was carried by a small rubber boat that pulled up next to the destroyer wasn't something that could have been hastily thrown together just as the ship appeared in port.

The attack took careful planning and required considerable logistic support.

The United States has a long tradition of severely punishing those who attack our naval vessels, and that shouldn't change. The FBI investigators and American intelligence sources should diligently work to establish who was responsible for the terrorist attack.

Then the White House should wait a respectable period of time to allow the perpetrators to think they've gotten off scot free and retaliate without mercy against the terrorists responsible and any government that may have assisted them.

We owe an unequivocal response to the brave young sailors who crew our ships and keep vital sea lanes free and open to commerce worldwide.

The search narrows  
Ship bombing progress

By Warren P. Strobel

The monthlong hunt for those who plotted the attack on the USS Cole inched closer toward Islamic terrorist leader and chief suspect Osama bin Laden last week. An Arab arrested by Yemeni investigators told them that a similar bombing had been planned on a United States warship in Aden harbor last January but had failed when a small boat, loaded with explosives, foundered before it could reach the vessel.

U.S. News sources described the suspect's arrest and his account of the aborted attack as an encouraging development in the investigation of the October 12 bombing that killed 17 sailors. Investigators have not definitively linked bin Laden to the plot, but evidence increasingly points in the Saudi exile's direction, senior administration officials confirm. Says one: "A picture is starting to come together."

Reports from Afghanistan indicate that bin Laden has moved to a new mountain hideaway in likely anticipation of a reprise of the cruise missile attack on his headquarters that followed the 1998 terrorist bombings of two U.S. embassies in East Africa.

The Cole investigation has been hampered by FBI suspicions that some local officials may have aided the plotters and by Yemen's refusal to allow FBI agents to join their interrogations of suspects. But the two sides are now close to a deal that would let U.S. investigators observe the questioning via closed-circuit TV. "They are," says a U.S. official, "making some considerable progress."

## A hole at the water line

By Richard J. Newman

As is so often the case right before disaster strikes, everything seemed just fine. Half the crew aboard the destroyer USS Cole was getting the ship ready to dock to take on fuel. In the modest Yemeni port of Aden, a half-dozen small boats puttered around the 505-foot-long warship, hauling its huge mooring lines to anchored buoys. In the glare of the broiling noon sun, armed Navy lookouts patrolled the Cole's deck. But there was no sign of trouble. Their sidearms remained holstered.

Almost unnoticed, one of the small boats motored around the Cole's bow. As it sidled up to the massive hull on the port side, the boat's two occupants suddenly dropped the lines they were tending and stood up. Seconds later, the boat erupted in a ferocious explosion. When the smoke cleared, there was a 40-foot hole in the Cole's steel hull. Inside was worse. One of the ship's mess halls had been blasted into the deck above it. Between the collapsed floors, a dozen sailors lay dead or dying. Five others perished almost immediately. Nearly 40 more suffered injuries, including amputations and third-degree burns.

Bin Laden, again? These were no amateurs who blew up the Cole. A group called the Islamic Army of Aden claimed responsibility, but intelligence officials said there was no leading suspect. Almost certainly, whoever was responsible had advance knowledge that the Cole, an Aegis guided-missile destroyer, one of the Navy's most modern ships, planned to stop in Aden. Either Yemeni officials or the contractor that handled the docking could have leaked word. Apparently, the terrorists figured out how to infiltrate the contractor's operation, run the harbor boats, and sneak a huge amount of explosives on board one of them. "It was well thought out and ingeniously planned," says a Pentagon official. The preparation seems to have been so thorough that U.S. officials doubt the attack was thrown together to coincide with recent Arab-Israeli violence.

A much thornier question is who masterminded it. Following the 1998 bombings of U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, the United States quickly implicated Saudi exile Osama bin Laden after nabbing a suspect who was one of his operatives. But that might not be so easy this time. The direct perpetrators died in what appears to have been a suicide mission. And the 1998 retaliatory attacks on several of bin Laden's facilities ought to make whoever is responsible for the Cole bombing more careful about leaving clues. U.S. officials hope that a Yemeni videotape of harbor operations at the time of the blast will yield some leads. A team of some 60 American investigators, due in Yemen this week, will scour the ship for explosive residue and other clues that could help determine who was responsible.

Investigators will focus on several other matters, too. One is whether the Cole's skipper, Cmdr. Kirk Lippold, should be held responsible for the disaster. Officials at the Pentagon have broadly defended Lippold, saying his crew had fully trained for a terrorist act and had taken the proper precautions in what was considered a nonhostile environment. While a skipper is ultimately responsible for what happens to his ship, the U.S. Embassy in Yemen and Navy officials at regional headquarters in Bahrain were responsible for making sure the Aden harbor was safe.

These and other questions may lead to a broader inquiry. One key question: Should a U.S. Navy ship have been in Yemen in the first place? Despite warming ties with Washington, Yemen is still viewed by the State Department as a haven for terrorists. But that didn't stop the Pentagon from cutting a deal with Yemen 15 months ago to

conduct refuelings in the Aden harbor. "When Aden opened up," says one Navy officer who was in the region at the time, "we were all on pins and needles." But Navy ships have refueled there about a dozen times since last year. Such partnerships are part of the Clinton administration's "engagement" policy, which includes military ties with dozens of countries that are something less than thriving democracies. "The question is, why are we doing port calls in places like this?" wonders another defense official who has traveled throughout the region. As with other matters in the Middle East, the answers may be about as evanescent as the region's shifting sands.

AS THE United States mourns its seventeen dead soldiers and Yemeni security officials close in on some of the perpetrators, a certain nagging question has been missing from public discussion of the suicide bombing: Why is Yemen the site of U.S. Navy refueling stops and Special Forces training missions in the first place? For about the last two years, the U.S. armed forces have been maintaining a low-key presence in Yemen, sporadically conducting counter-terrorism and weapons training. According to General Anthony Zinni, recently retired chief of US Central Command, this is part of an effort to ward off terrorism. "It's important to not have in the Gulf region places like Afghanistan that become rats' nests of terrorists and extremists," he told the New York Times early this week. "We are helping Yemen to help itself." Zinni's certainly not alone in this sentiment: As a State Department official asking for Yemen aid told Congress earlier this year, "Yemen is at the forefront in promoting democratic change in the Arab world, and we believe it is important to support its efforts." What both Zinni and the State Department official failed to note is that Yemen is at the forefront of something else: arms trafficking.

Home to a collection of cranky Islamists, a perennial kidnapping problem, and one of the most heavily armed civilian populations in the world (fifty million guns to sixteen million citizens), Yemen is also, as the Economist's Intelligence Unit noted earlier this year, "rapidly generating a reputation for itself as an arms clearinghouse for regimes of ill repute." Last year, for example, Poland sold a consignment of tanks to Yemen. Instead of roaming the tip of the Arabian Peninsula, they materialized in Sudan. According to intelligence sources on the Horn of Africa, during the Ethiopia-Eritrea border war (estimated dead: one hundred thousand) a number of Eastern European tanks also found their way to Eritrea via Yemen, as did numerous small arms bound for the clan of Somalia's Hussein Mohammed Aideed. Exacerbating the arms trend is the eastward expansion of NATO; in order for Central European nations to be members, they have to replace their old Soviet era weapons with a Western-made arsenal. This has prompted a fire sale in the Eastern Bloc, and Yemen is only too happy to step in and take those Soviet arms off their hands. After the Polish tanks were found in Sudan, Poland did bow to U.S. pressure and refrained from delivering another twenty tanks. But the Czech Republic quickly stepped in, closing a deal to sell Yemen over a hundred tanks, the first thirty of which were delivered last July. Add to this the cash-hungry Russians, eager to revive the arms-selling deals the Soviet Union had with the former South Yemen. In May of this year, thirty T-72 Russian tanks arrived in Yemen, followed a week later by a Russian Defense Ministry delegation drumming up additional business. Two months later, a Yemeni delegation showed up at the Ural Arms Expo in Siberia, checking out armored vehicles and ordnance. Given that Yemen appears to be selling arms and end-user certificates and spending its recent oil revenues not on its people but on even more weapons (the country jacked up its military budget by one hundred percent this year), it's hard to conclude that Zinni's

initiatives have been thoroughly successful in "promoting democratic change," and some in foreign policy circles are skeptical about just how well they've translated into effective policy. ("I'm a great fan of Zinni's," says a senior U.S. intelligence officer, "but frankly, he was weak on this one.") But the U.S. has plenty of reasons not to rock the diplomatic boat as far as Yemen is concerned. In addition to the predictable oil interests, there is something that makes Yemen especially attractive to the Pentagon: Socotra Island, 220 miles off Yemen's coast. During the Cold War, one of the Soviet Union's prized signal intelligence intercept stations was located on Socotra. According to both U.S. and foreign intelligence sources, the U.S. National Security Agency would very much like to site a station of its own on Socotra -- the island is close to the waterways where oil is transported, and it's a strategic spot for picking up all manner of regional signals. So for now, we can expect the Special Forces training missions to go on unabated, however dubious their accomplishments. And while we may soon exact harsh punishment of the accomplices in the U.S.S. Cole bombing, the joke is on us: Arms will continue to find their way into the hands of terrorists as they're illegally passed across the globe -- with frequent layovers in Yemen.

#### USS Cole: An Act of War By John Lehman

Sunday , October 15, 2000 ; Page B07

From media reports it appears that the skipper of USS Cole did all in his power to protect his ship and crew, and his leadership apparently saved lives. President Clinton described the attack on Cole as an act of cowardice and of terrorism. It was of course neither. It was a well-planned act of war by obviously brave and disciplined warriors almost certainly supported by one or other enemy states who view America and Israel as mortal enemies. The truth is inconvenient to the "peace process," and will be put in the memory hole, just as it was after Syria killed 241 American Marines in Beirut. We will instead blame it on Osama bin Laden or some mythical person. Other than President Clinton's traditional lobbing of a few cruise missiles, we can be certain that there will be no retaliation.

Another inconvenient fact sure to be stuffed down the memory hole is the obscene failure of intelligence. Obviously our vast centralized intelligence bureaucracy did not warn the skipper of Cole of the severe danger. But of course, no one could be surprised by intelligence failure. In 14 years of government service in three administrations I observed many historic crises, and in every one the consolidated product of the intelligence bureaucracy either failed to provide warning, as in Kuwait, or was grossly wrong in its assessment, as in the Yom Kippur War. Every national security adviser and every tactical commander from Elliott Abrams to Norman Schwarzkopf has deplored this scandal, but nothing is ever done. Cole is the latest victim of a \$30 billion jobs program that takes the most wondrous products of space and electronic technology and turns them into useless mush.

If Cole had been warned, the ship would have avoided this notorious port. If for some reason and armed with warning, they were needed in harm's way tried-and-true measures can be taken to protect stationary ships. We kept many ships off Beirut for years without a successful attack, although there were several attempts.

But why was this single ship sent to Aden at the height of an anti-American crisis, in a nation notorious for harboring terrorists sponsored by Iraq and other rogue states? As Nimitz famously signaled to Halsey, "The world wonders."



While state departments in every administration want to treat naval ships like so many cost-free chess men, in recent years the profligate willy-nilly deployments have been running all of the services into tatters. During the Reagan years of Cold War activism, the Navy was deployed to crisis areas beyond ordinary deployments an average of 5 1/2 times per year, which fully stretched a Navy of nearly 600 ships. Over the same time span in the Clinton years, the Navy deployed out of the routine 12 1/4 times per year with a fleet that has been slashed to only 318 ships. This has not only destroyed morale, retention and family life, but it also has exposed a less-ready, thinned-out fleet to many more hazardous duty stations.

As the Navy learned at Okinawa, where 35 ships were sunk by kamikazes, it is impossible to protect completely against suicide attacks. The only defense is good intelligence and the will to retaliate against the source. The American government has neither.

The writer was secretary of the Navy in the Reagan administration.

### 'Doing Their Duty'

Saturday , October 14, 2000 ; Page A22

THE PHRASE "in harm's way" has a face again. Too many faces. Seventeen sailors, including two women, are dead or missing and presumed dead as a result of Thursday's apparent suicide attack on the USS Cole in the Yemeni port of Aden, where it was tying up to refuel. The Pentagon released the names yesterday. They were mostly kids:

Lakeina Monique Francis, 19, mess management specialist from Woodleaf, N.C., who followed her father into a military career. Kenneth Eugene Clodfelter, 21, hull maintenance technician Third class, Mechanicsville, Va., high school wrestler, father of a 2-year-old son, Eagle Scout. Ronchester Santiago, 22, petty officer Third class, Kingsville, Tex. "He was attracted to the adventure in the Navy," said his father, a retired petty officer. "He wanted to see the world."

You recognize such people. "They were . . . doing their duty," the president said. It is duty that even on a highly fortified ship in the midst of a seemingly routine operation carries a high risk. If, as appears, this was an attack, it had to have been carefully planned and prepared for. It had been known for perhaps 12 days that the Cole intended to pay the refueling call. A small boat containing high explosives appears to have been among those helping to moor the destroyer; the explosives were detonated as it pulled alongside.

The president said those responsible would be found out and held accountable, not an easy job but an obvious requirement. The Navy will meanwhile conduct a review to determine whether sufficient "force protection" precautions were taken. The first instinct of senior officials was that they had been. "Understand," said Chief of Naval Operations Vern Clark, "101 ships around the world today, and we do not live in a low-threat environment around the whole world. And so risk does exist . . . we will never be able . . . to eliminate all risk." That's the other truth that a day of loss drives home.

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Thursday, November 30, 2000 Why Yemen May Be Slow to Aid U.S. Bombing Probe  
Undiplomatic Dispatch: U.S. agents are complaining that cooperation in the Cole investigation isn't what it ought to be. Yemen's reticence, says TIME.com's Tony Karon, may epitomize the dilemma of Washington's Arab allies BY TONY KARON  
The Yemenis aren't being accused of stonewalling, as such, but there appears to have been a shoe-challenging case of foot-dragging on the investigation into the bombing of the USS Cole. Speaking off the record, U.S. officials have complained that the Yemenis have limited their access to sites containing possible evidence and barred them from interviews with suspects and witnesses. This despite President Clinton's personal intervention last week imploring Yemen's President Ali Abdullah Saleh to allow a "genuine joint investigation." The Yemeni attitude naturally sets off alarm bells for U.S. law enforcement personnel who recall their deeply frustrating experiences with the Khobar Towers bombing in Saudi Arabia in 1996. Despite diplomatic pressure from Washington, the Saudis never allowed U.S. personnel access to the suspects they tried and summarily executed for their part in carrying out the truck bomb attack that killed 19 U.S. military personnel. U.S. investigators, however, have been quick to point out that the Yemeni experience has been nothing like the stonewalling by the Saudis; only that it has fallen well short of what has been requested. Yemeni reticence, though, may hold some important indicators of the pressures weighing on Arab governments that maintain alliances with the U.S. right now. During testimony to the House and Senate Armed Services committees last week, the U.S. commander for the Middle East and Gulf, General Tommy Franks, apprised legislators of some brutal facts about the region: 19 of its 25 states were concerned areas of high risk to U.S. personnel. This despite the fact that the governments of most of these states are U.S. allies. And earlier this week, it was reported that the U.S. Navy has decided temporarily to avoid the Suez Canal, instead rerouting vessels around the southern tip of Africa to reach the Gulf. This was a troubling indicator of the state of the Pax Americana that has prevailed in the region since the Gulf War. After all, the whole point of deploying your navy in distant waters is the projection of power — it sends a message to your enemies that you are not to be trifled with. Rerouting them from a waterway bordered by no states formally hostile to the U.S. suggests that Washington's allies in the region are having trouble maintaining Pax Americana. Then again, the Navy's decision may be a recognition of a reality that politicians may be slower to acknowledge: that formal political alliances with moderate regimes in the Arab world don't necessarily make them safe for U.S. personnel. Israel is the only real democracy in the region, and most of the pro-Western moderate regimes on whose good offices both Israel and the West rely are not particularly reflective of the feelings of their citizenry — and if they were, it's questionable whether they would be either aligned with Washington or at peace with Israel. So, despite the choices of moderate governments in countries such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Yemen, terrorist groups find plenty of fertile ground in which to operate despite the best efforts of local intelligence services to hound them out. And it's not as if the governments are easily able to rally the population against the terrorists, either. That may be why Yemen and Saudi Arabia have been reluctant to allow the U.S. too visible a role in the investigation process, despite having been the target of attack. To be sure, no government anywhere in the world is easily convinced to allow foreign law enforcement personnel to operate on its territory, but this may be more than just a routine sovereignty issue. For one thing, the Yemeni might be

reluctant to see the investigation stray into uncomfortable areas. While President Salah has worked hard against the odds to close down Islamist opposition groups supportive of Osama Bin Laden's global anti-U.S. jihad, the fact remains that his government had previously relied on some of those same groups to help him win a 1994 civil war against leftist opposition in the south. But there may be more immediate reasons for shutting the U.S. out of the police work: With the Islamist opposition groups using the specter of increasing U.S. involvement in Yemen to scare up support, the last thing the government can afford to do is be seen to be giving free rein to U.S. investigators. Yemen, like a number of other moderate Arab regimes, might now be finding themselves circumscribed in their friendship with the U.S. for fear of rousing the ire of their more hostile citizenry. The latest Israeli-Palestinian violence has prompted fierce demonstrations throughout the Arab world against both Israel and the U.S. And that may leave not only Yemen, but most of Washington's moderate Arab allies, in no rush to publicly proclaim themselves U.S.-friendly.

Thursday, December 7, 2000

#### Pentagon Cautious on Cole Retaliation

Right now there's no one to hit, says TIME Pentagon correspondent Mark Thompson. And the military fears it may not solve the case

BY MARK THOMPSON

As lawmakers prepared to huff and puff Wednesday over the recent terror attack on the USS Cole, Pentagon officials cautioned that a retaliatory strike isn't likely any time soon. One senior officer said the case "looks a lot more like Khobar Towers than the east Africa bombings." The U.S. responded to the embassy bombings by lobbing cruise missiles at targets they associated with Osama Bin Laden, but the 1996 Khobar Towers bombing in Saudi Arabia, which killed 19 U.S. airmen, remains unsolved and unavenged.

"I'm just not sure we're going to catch anybody," a senior Pentagon officer involved in the hunt for the Cole attackers said Wednesday. "If we can find them, I am sure we will retaliate, but finding both motive and targets worth hitting could prove difficult." There is also some skepticism among U.S. officers over the neat dovetailing uncovered by local police work in Aden. "This whole tale of the 12-year old boy, the dinghy and the trailer seems just a little too neat, a little too quick," one senior Pentagon official says. "The Yemenis might be cooperating a little too much, which should raise some flags." Pentagon officials say that any decision to launch a retaliatory strike would have to factor in the current violence in the Middle East and the looming presidential election, both of which might act as a brake on U.S. action. Senior Pentagon officials will be grilled by both the Senate and House armed services committees, but are expected to stick to the account they have embraced since the bombing: That the sneak attack on the Cole was unanticipated and that all prudent steps were taken to prevent it. But that line already is weakening, especially following the Navy's admission last week that the terrorist boat exploded alongside the Cole as the destroyer was taking on fuel. For more than a week after the attack, the Navy had said the small boat had come alongside the Cole among a fleet of small boats guiding the destroyer to her refueling mooring.

Once refueling is under way, no boats are supposed to approach a ship taking on fuel for safety reasons, Navy officials say. That suggests that even if the sailors scouring the horizon in Aden harbor suspected the small boat was friendly, it should have been kept at least 100 yards from the Cole. "Typically, that is the harbormaster's job," one

Navy officer says. "But if he screws up, it becomes the [Cole's] crew's job. And if the crew doesn't do it, it's the skipper's problem."

Updated: Tuesday, October 17, 2000, 7:11:37 PM EDT

### Military Spending and the USS Cole

by Jim Geraghty, Policy.com October 17, 2000 -- While U.S. and Yemeni investigators continue to look for clues in last week's bomb attack on the USS Cole in the port of Aden, military leaders and defense experts closer to home are examining whether the incident illustrates a lack of defense resources or a misallocation of them to the wrong regions. In recent days, some members of the media and analysts on Capitol Hill have questioned the decision to have U.S. naval vessels refueling in Yemen, a nation that the U.S. State Department called a "safe haven" for terrorists. Speaking on NBC's "Meet the Press" on Sunday, national security adviser Sandy Berger said limited fueling options in the Persian Gulf require such stops despite the high risk of terrorism. Pentagon spokesman Ken Bacon said the decision to refuel in Aden is actually intended to improve safety, as it allows ships to vary their stops among several ports available to the U.S. Navy as it patrols Middle Eastern waters. "One thing that commanders like to have is choice, so they're not forced to go to the same place on a regular schedule, particularly in an area like the Middle East," Bacon told The Washington Times. "So we have worked hard to develop a way to use a number of ports throughout the Middle East that best supports our operations and that best supports our diplomacy in the area." The military started refueling in Yemen 15 months ago after a time away from the country of about six years. The military's use of the country's port facilities was seen as a reward for the Yemen government's unification efforts and the abandonment of a Marxist government. "I think the attack on the Cole comes from a desire to use Naval vessels to play diplomacy," says Ted Galen Carpenter, vice president for foreign policy and defense studies at the Cato Institute. "This reminds us that foreign policy gestures sometimes have very nasty consequences." Some analysts, including retired Col. David Hackworth, have charged the decision to refuel in Yemen was forced by excessive cutbacks in the number of Naval tanker ships. Adm. Vern Clark, the chief of naval operations, told Pentagon reporters that the Navy is short on the type of container ship, or "oiler," that can refuel the Cole and other warships at sea. "We do not have enough ships to assign one to — this ship was transiting independently... The Navy has 23. A refueling ship has never been assigned to a single ship such as the Cole." Other experts contend that the reduction in tanker ships is commensurate with the smaller post Cold War Navy, and that the current level of support tankers is sufficient to meet the Navy's needs. "If we want to refuel our ships at sea, we can refuel our ships at sea," says James Schlesinger, who served as Director of Central Intelligence and Secretary of Defense in the Nixon Administration, and Secretary of Energy in the Carter Administration. Schlesinger places the blame on a strategy of "forward engagement" that is part of an ambitious foreign policy. "We have been thrust into the position of the policeman of the world," he says. Schlesinger contends that the U.S. has been on a "procurement holiday" since the 1980s, and has not kept up with necessary expenditures in research and development and equipment upgrades. "We are simply not buying enough to replace the equipment we have." Schlesinger says. Most analysts agree that the current pace of operations could not be maintained at current funding levels, but disagreed over whether the solution was found in less intervention, higher levels of defense spending, or simply a refocusing of priorities. "There is more than enough evidence to show that we have a problem in this area, and the main problem is the

budget,” says Kim Holmes, a Heritage Foundation expert on foreign and defense policy issues. “These operations that are taking place all over the world are being paid for with funds that would be better spent on training and readiness. ... The high cost of these unplanned operations are having an adverse effect on our procurement and our modernization.” Galen Carpenter believes the problem lies in a foreign policy view that overstates the threats posed by other nations. “If Iraq is such a serious security threat, why has the Gulf War coalition shrunk to include basically just the United States and Great Britain? Why are other countries so obtuse that they don’t recognize this threat, and why are they not preparing to do something about it? ... The United States can and should adopt a much lower military profile [in the region]. The incident with the USS Cole suggests what is likely to happen on a much larger scale if we don’t take that course of action.”

Updated: Friday, October 13, 2000, 4:26:48 PM EDT Special Update: Terrorism in Yemen by Jim Geraghty, Policy.com October 13, 2000 -- A U.S. Navy destroyer was hit by a small boat as it pulled into the Arab port of Aden, Yemen, yesterday in an apparent suicide attack that by late Friday was believed to have killed 17 U.S. sailors, and left 36 injured. The USS Cole, an Aegis destroyer based in Norfolk, Va., was moving into the Yemeni port at the time for refueling. A senior Pentagon official told CNN, "We have every reason to suspect it was a terrorist attack, there is no reason to suspect it was anything else." Barely twenty-four hours after the attack on the Cole, a bomb explosion damaged the British embassy in Yemen, according to the BBC. No one was hurt in the embassy bombing, but the attacks have fuelled fears that western interests could be targeted by militants in the Middle East sympathizing with the Palestinian cause. The State Department has ordered the temporary closure of seven diplomatic missions in Africa as a result of increasing tension in the Middle East. The embassies in South Africa, Kenya, Tanzania, Mauritania, Nigeria, Senegal and Djibouti closed this morning. A spokesman at the U.S. embassy in Nairobi told the BBC the closures would be reviewed on a day-to-day basis. The U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania were both bombed on August 7, 1998 in attacks that the U.S. blamed on Islamic militant Osama Bin Laden. More than 220 people, mostly Kenyans, were killed in the explosions, and more than 5,000 wounded. According to State Department documents, Yemen is not considered a hostile state, and has made efforts to cooperate with international counter-terrorism efforts. Yemen expanded security cooperation with other Arab countries in 1999 and signed a number of international antiterrorist conventions. The government introduced incremental measures to better control its borders, territory, and travel documents and initiated specialized training for a newly established counter-terrorist unit within the Ministry of Interior. Nonetheless, the State Department criticized the nation for "lax and inefficient enforcement of security procedures" and the government's "inability to exercise authority over remote areas of the country". Because of these reasons, State Department officials believe the nation is a safe haven for terrorist groups. Terrorist groups that are believed to be active in Yemen include: · HAMAS: Formed in late 1987 as an outgrowth of the Palestinian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood. Various HAMAS elements have used both political and violent means, including terrorism, to pursue the goal of establishing an Islamic Palestinian state in place of Israel. Loosely structured, with some elements working clandestinely and others working openly through mosques and social service institutions to recruit members, raise money, organize activities, and distribute propaganda. HAMAS's strength is concentrated in

the Gaza Strip and a few areas of the West Bank. Also has engaged in peaceful political activity, such as running candidates in West Bank Chamber of Commerce elections. · Palestinian Islamic Jihad: Originated among militant Palestinians in the Gaza Strip during the 1970s; a series of loosely affiliated factions rather than a cohesive group. Committed to the creation of an Islamic Palestinian state and the destruction of Israel through holy war. Because of its strong support for Israel, the United States has been identified as an enemy of the PIJ. Also opposes moderate Arab governments that it believes have been tainted by Western secularism. · Egyptian Islamic Jihad: Egyptian Islamic extremist group active since the late 1970s. Appears to be divided into two factions: one led by Ayman al-Zawahiri--who currently is in Afghanistan and is a key leader in terrorist financier Usama Bin Ladin's new World Islamic Front--and the Vanguard of Conquest (Talaa' al-Fateh) led by Ahmad Husayn Agiza. Abbud al-Zumar, leader of the original Jihad, is imprisoned in Egypt and recently joined the group's jailed spiritual leader, Shaykh Umar Abd al-Rahman, in a call for a "peaceful front." Primary goal is to overthrow the Egyptian Government and replace it with an Islamic state. Increasingly willing to target U.S. interests in Egypt. · al-Gama'at al-Islamiyya: Egypt's largest militant group, active since the late 1970s; appears to be loosely organized. Has an external wing with a worldwide presence. Signed Usama Bin Ladin's fatwa in February 1998 calling for attacks against U.S. civilians but publicly has denied that it supports Bin Ladin. Shaykh Umar Abd al-Rahman is al-Gama'at's preeminent spiritual leader, and the group publicly has threatened to retaliate against U.S. interests for his incarceration. Primary goal is to overthrow the Egyptian Government and replace it with an Islamic state. The organization of Bin Ladin has sent trainers to Yemen, as well as Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Bosnia, Chechnya, Somalia, and Sudan. On October 26, 1999 unidentified armed tribesmen kidnapped three U.S. citizens in Yemen. The tribesmen demanded the government release five fellow tribesmen, according to press reports. The hostages were released unharmed on October 28. In August, armed tribesmen kidnapped a French diplomat and his wife when the driver of their vehicle stopped for late afternoon prayers. On September 2, the hostages were released unharmed. No one claimed responsibility. In December 1998, 16 Western tourists including two U.S. citizens were kidnapped from the Yemani town of Mudiayah. A Yemeni Government rescue attempt to liberate the hostages resulted in four tourist deaths and two tourists injured, including one of the American citizens. The organization involved called themselves the Islamic Army of Aden, and its leader, Zein al-Abidine al-Midhar, admitted to all charges against him in the incident and was executed by firing squad. The three other defendants each received 20-year prison sentences

Updated: Monday, July 31, 2000, 10:43:25 AM EDT

### How Secure is Secure Enough?

by Jim Geraghty, Policy.com June 5, 2000 -- The congressionally appointed National Commission on Terrorism is urging the federal government to take a more aggressive stance to prevent terrorism on American soil in a report released Monday. The commission's dramatic recommendations include: monitoring all foreign students in the United States, threatening sanctions against such states as Greece and Pakistan and loosening restrictions on who the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) recruits as informants. The commission has been controversial since Congress created it two years ago in the wake of the bombings of U.S. embassies in Kenya and neighboring Tanzania. It aroused the concerns of civil libertarians and some minority

communities. The Arab-American community was particularly upset when House Minority Leader Richard Gephardt, D-Mo., withdrew his nomination of Salam Al-Marayati, executive director of the Muslim Public Affairs Council in Los Angeles, for the commission. Gephardt's office stated that Al-Marayati's security clearance process would take longer than the life of the commission, but Arab groups and some newspapers including The San Francisco Chronicle accused Gephardt of bowing to pressure from pro-Israeli groups. The commission is composed of academic scholars, retired military personnel, legal experts, a former member of Congress and former officials of the FBI and CIA, appointed by Democratic and Republican leaders in the Senate and House of Representatives. "The threat is changing, and it's becoming more deadly," declared L. Paul Bremer III, the commission's chairman and a former State Department ambassador-at-large for counterterrorism. The new report's most controversial proposal has already been denounced by Arab-American groups. The Commission is urging the government to begin surveillance of every foreign student on U.S. soil, because "a small minority may exploit their student status to support terrorist activity." To keep track of potential student-terrorists, the commission said government officials should be notified if a foreign student changes academic course suspiciously -- say, "from English literature to nuclear physics." The Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee said the recommendations "would severely damage civil liberties and facilitate abusive behavior by the government." Gregory T. Nojeim, legislative counsel of the American Civil Liberties Union, called the report "a virtual smorgasboard of civil liberties violations." Professor Yonah Alexander, director of the Inter-University Center for Terrorism Studies, said that the recommendations in the report have been discussed for years, and that counterterrorism experts have suggested the monitoring of Iranian students for decades. "The focus should be on foreign students from countries that are not friendly to the [United States]," Alexander says. He suggests that a sudden interest in studying strategically important issues, such as physics or computer science, should trigger the surveillance. "Unfortunately, sometimes you have to forgo some human rights and civil liberties issues, if it's in the national security interest and can save lives," he says. The report also alleges that Greece and Pakistan are not cooperating in efforts to stop state-sponsored terrorism and recommends that the two nations should be barred from buying U.S. military equipment. This recommendation is unlikely to be enacted because Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said on Sunday that the U.S. is already pressing the two nations on the subject, and that sanctions will not be considered against Greece and Pakistan, no matter what the report recommends. "There is a difference between Pakistan and Greece," Alexander says. "Pakistan is a very mixed picture. They have cooperated with the U.S. on a number of occasions, but a lot of terrorist groups operate in Pakistan and they support terrorist activities. The Greek government doesn't support terrorists as such, but they have to improve their security." The Greek Embassy to the United States distributed a statement by Foreign Minister George Papandreou calling the report's statements "unfair for Greece and its image." The commission recommended the repeal of regulations that require senior officials at CIA headquarters to approve the recruitment of any counter-terrorist informant who may have committed serious criminal violations. Former CIA director John M. Deutch imposed restrictions on recruitment in 1995, after the agency admitted close ties to Guatemalan military officers who had committed human rights abuses. But the CIA reacted skeptically to the commission's concern that they are not working with the right sources. Mark Mansfield, spokesman for the CIA's Office of Public Affairs, stated, "The notion that our rules and regulations are impediments to our ability to

fight terrorism is wrong. The bottom line is that we would never turn down the opportunity to work with someone, even someone with an unsavory background, if we thought that person would be helpful in our efforts to combat terrorism.” The CIA had no comment on the other recommendations. The Commission also recommended that the president contemplate designating the U.S. military as the organization that should lead the government's response in the event of a catastrophic terrorist attack on U.S. soil. Current government regulations make the Federal Bureau of Investigation or the Federal Emergency Management Agency the lead response agencies.

One cowardly attack

A Mideast military expert discusses the bombing of the USS Cole and the terrorist threat in Yemen.

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By Daryl Lindsey

Oct. 14, 2000 | WASHINGTON -- Thursday's bombing of the USS Cole at Aden, Yemen, appears to be the worst act of terrorism perpetrated against Americans since the 1998 bombings of U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. Experts now believe it signals a return to a terrorism scare that had remained eerily silent for two years. A small civilian boat dispatched by the port authority to aid in the mooring of the ship -- in port for several hours to refuel -- was packed with explosives and at least two apparent kamikaze terrorists of unknown affiliation. The boat exploded while in close proximity to the 8,300-ton cruise missile destroyer -- blowing a gaping 20-by-40-foot hole in the Navy vessel so big it could be seen from across the harbor. When the dust settled, 17 American sailors were dead and 30 more injured.

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Following the 1998 embassy bombings, the United States launched a worldwide manhunt for suspected international terrorism mastermind Osama bin Laden, whose name will inevitably be associated with the bombing until the culprits of the USS Cole attack are identified and apprehended. The bombing is embarrassing for Yemen, a developing Middle Eastern nation that has sought to squelch terrorism and build ties with the United States and the West to strengthen its economy. It also raises questions about the soundness of the U.S. Navy's policy in docking its ships in civilian ports and the strength of American intelligence operations in the region.

Though the USS Cole blast hasn't been officially designated a terrorist incident, that is certainly how the U.S. is treating it. Speaking at the White House in the Rose Garden Thursday, President Clinton said, "If, as it now appears, this was an act of terrorism, it was a despicable and cowardly act. We will find out who was responsible and hold them accountable." And Friday, Navy explosives experts confirmed that the explosion had come from outside the USS Cole, lending credence to theories that it was a terrorist act. Still, no group has come forward to claim responsibility.

Salon spoke with Jamie Etheridge, analyst for Middle East and African affairs at Stratfor, about the USS Cole tragedy and the danger of terrorism in Yemen. Stratfor is an influential Austin, Texas, intelligence consulting firm that made its name by exposing inconsistencies in the official American explanation of its erroneous bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade during the NATO campaign in Yugoslavia. It has since become a fast-rising and reputable source of international military intelligence.

There is a known terrorist risk in Yemen. It's only been in recent months that we have used the deep port at Aden for refueling stops. Why does the U.S. military use the port when there is a known threat of terrorism?



There's a strategic interest in the U.S. military in Yemen, and using the refueling station is an important step in building military relations and a military presence in Yemen. The U.S., Russia and China all compete for control of the strategic shipping lanes around the world, and the U.S. and Russia have both been in competition for a presence in Yemen because it's a choke point. Its location at the tip of the Arabian Peninsula is extremely important for shipping oil out of the Persian Gulf as well as traffic through the Suez Canal, the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean.

Within the last year, the Russian defense minister paid a visit to Yemen to build a strategic alliance. China also recently began building up a presence of corporations and businesses in the Suez Canal region.

Which terrorist organizations have representatives in Yemen?

We identified eight, including two of the main Palestinian terrorist organizations that are designated by the State Department as such -- Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad. The Algerian Armed Islamic Group, the Egyptian Islamic Jihad and the Egyptian al-Gama'at al-Islamiyya also have a presence. There are also a few smaller, local groups that are listed as terrorist organizations. The largest opposition group in the government is a party called Islah. One of the party's leaders, Abdul Majid Zandani, has been reported to have been a close associate of Osama bin Laden. It's said that he sent fighters to Chechnya to fight against Russia, and allowed bin Laden to train some of his Al Qaida fighters there. Zandani has also met with Hassan Turabi, an Islamic fundamentalist leader and the former speaker of Parliament in Sudan.

Have any of these organizations in Yemen been directly linked to terrorist acts against the United States in the past?

The spiritual leader of Al-Gama'at al-Islamiyya, Shaykh Umar Abd al-Rahman, was tried and convicted for the World Trade Center bombing in New York.

Do you think the inevitable speculation that bin Laden might have been involved is premature?

I think it's a natural reaction to associate him with any terrorist attack. It doesn't mean that he is involved, but there have been numerous reports that link him to Yemen. Saudi Arabia and Yemen are neighbors, and he is a former resident of Saudi Arabia with supposed Yemeni heritage. I've certainly seen enough indirect evidence to say that he has a hand in it. Al Qaita, his umbrella organization of terrorist organizations, is active in Yemen. It seems to be similar to Sudan in the mid-'90s -- it's a place of commonality for a lot of different terrorist organizations. And he is a major player in several of those organizations. He's also spent time in Yemen, though I haven't seen anything recent.

There's been talk of an Iraqi "October surprise" terrorist attack during the presidential elections. Do any of the terrorist groups you've mentioned have ties to Saddam Hussein or Iraq?