

1. What did the harbor look like the day of the explosion?

Looked like any other busy port we had been to. Two other ships were transferring goods between the ships. COLE was refueling with a refueling dock. Off the portside another ship was being set up for mooring by tugs. A couple of hundred yards away from COLE, I think. The oiler transferring goods that was in front of us had a yellow ferry going between the ship and shore. Not a lot of harbor activity immediately near COLE. Most of the activity was on the portside of COLE.

What was the boat's situation?

We were in THREATCON BRAVO as in other foreign ports. Security was relaxed, for the middle east. 50 cal was not manned. We were refueling at an extremely fast rate. We had expected the refueling to take approximately 8 hrs, however it looked like it would only take 1 hr. The XO stated over the ILC that refueling was going faster than expected and they would be out of Aden after lunch. To the best of my knowledge I think THREATCON BRAVO measures were set.

2. What activity was occurring?

Refueling. The trash boat and sewage boat both were gone by the time of the explosion. Nothing else was going on, other than the refueling, prior to the explosion.

[REDACTED]

Encl (92)
Page 1 of 2

5. In light of the questions I have asked here, is there anything else you would like to add that may shed light on this incident?

No.

A large black rectangular redaction covers the signature area of the witness.

GSMFA, USN

Sworn to before me this 16th day of November 2000.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Robert J. O'Neill".

ROBERT J. O'NEILL
LT, JAGC, USN