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Al-Qushaibi's funeral draws tens of thousands



The corpse of Brigadier Hameed Al-Qushaibi, former commander of the 310th Armored Brigade, was buried on July 23 in Al-Shuhada Cemetery on Khawlan Street in Sana'a. Tens of thousands flocked to Al-Sabaeen Square near the Presidential Compound to join Al-Qushaibi's funeral. Al-Qushaibi's death was reported on July 9, after Houthi rebels took control of Amran city and seized the headquarters of the 310th Armored Brigade.

Photo by Ali Ibrahim Al-Moshki

NEWS UPDATE

Relatives of Al-Qushaibi who staged a sit-in and camped near the defense minister's house, calling for his removal

and demanding clarity about Al-Qushaibi's death, declared on Tuesday that they dissolved their camp.

According to Abdulmajeed Al-Ghawi, a relative of Al-Qushaibi, the Supreme Security Committee promised to replace the de-

fense minister after Eid and to hold those who fought against the 310th Armored Brigade in Amran accountable.

Tribal mediation committee continues efforts to end fighting in Al-Jawf

Amal Al-Yarisi

SANA'A, July 23—A tribal mediation committee in Al-Jawf governorate is trying to salvage an existing ceasefire agreement that has been violated.

The Houthis and members of the Islah Party each blame each other for breaking the agreement.

Mohammed Al-Bukhaiti, a mem-

ber of the Houthis' Political Office, said that the Islah party did not abide by the ceasefire agreement.

"Islah militants are targeting the Houthis," he said.

Mubark Al-Abadi, head of the Islah Party's Media Department in Al-Jawf, said that Houthi-affiliated tribesmen are targeting the Al-Saqia location, one of the highways leading to Sa'ada.

"The tribesmen target Houthis transferring weapons from Sa'ada to Al-Jawf," he claimed.

Several checkpoints were established by security forces in areas of Al-Jawf, such as Al-Ghail, Al-Barat, and Al-Safra, in anticipation of any clashes.

Faisal Al-Aswad, a journalist based in Al-Jawf, said that the checkpoints aim to prevent the

Houthis from expanding their control to other areas.

Fierce clashes have taken place during the past few days between the two parties as they try to exert control over the Al-Safra location, which is currently controlled by the Houthis.

Al-Safra is a strategic location because it overlooks the Marib-Sana'a highway.

Government allocates YR5 billion to reconstruct Amran

Ali Saeed

SANA'A, July 23—President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi announced during a visit to Amran city on Wednesday that the government allocated YR5 billion (\$23 million) to reconstruct battle-damaged Amran city, 50km north of the capital Sana'a.

President Hadi was accompanied by several government officials to Amran city, which was his first visit since being elected on Feb. 21, 2012.

The financial allocation to reconstruct Amran was initially declared by the Cabinet on Monday during a

meeting to discuss the impact of the conflict in Amran.

The Cabinet established an executive unit for the reconstruction of Amran, composed of technicians from all concerned state departments, to calculate the damage and support reconstruction efforts, the state-run Saba News Agency reported.

According to the Cabinet, the YR5 billion for reconstruction is an initial allocation, with additional aid pending further assessment by the executive unit. The executive unit will be run by the governor of Amran.

Amran city sustained massive

damages during the more than two months of fighting between a military unit, backed by Sunni tribesmen, and the Shia Houthis rebels. Damage to state departments, residents houses and property, municipal infrastructure, and an unknown number of casualties resulted from the conflict.

The Cabinet also said that the government's actions in Amran must be accompanied by humanitarian efforts to decrease the suffering of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and assist the Ministry of Health in treating injured persons. The Cabinet tasked the defense and interior

ministries with enforcing the rule of law in the city and protecting state offices.

The government until now has not said how many people were killed or detained by the Houthis. It did, however, repeatedly demand that the Houthis release detainees, return bodies of the deceased, hand over weapons stolen from military camps, and evacuate their militants from the city.

It is not clear if the government has sufficient funds to allocate YR5 billion to the reconstruction of Amran. The government called on Monday for a meeting with donor orga-

nizations to mobilize humanitarian and relief support for Amran.

The Houthis, who have controlled Sa'ada governorate since March 2011, took over Amran city on July 8, killed the commander of the 310th Armored Brigade, and stole weaponry of the brigade.

The clashes in Amran city have caused many residents to flee their home town, leading to a stark increase of IDPs in Yemen.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said that as of July 17 they transferred 71 bodies from Amran to Sana'a and other governorates at the request of the

families of the deceased.

Farid Chrabieh, ICRC coordinator in Yemen, is quoted as saying that "under international humanitarian law, families have the right to know what has happened to missing relatives... The military authorities and armed groups must all do what they can to account for people who have gone missing, and they must give families all the information they have."

The governor of Amran, Mohamed Saleh Shamlan, called on the displaced people who left their homes in Amran city during the fighting to return home.



Number of IDPs continues to rise as 100 families displaced in Al-Jawf

Story and photos by **Ali Ibrahim Al-Moshki**

SANAA, July 23—About 100 families were displaced in Al-Jawf governorate from Al-Ghail district to Al-Hazm district since the breakout of violence between the Houthis and tribesmen affiliated with the Islah Party. Their displacement adds to the half a million internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Yemen, as estimated by multiple relief agencies.

"Al-Hazm district struggles with a shortage of basic services such as electricity, water, health, and education. The arrival of the displaced [from Al-Ghail] has further increased the suffering of Al-Hazm residents," Faisal Al-Aswad, a local journalist in Al-Jawf, told the Yemen Times.

He continued, "some of the displaced are housed in schools and others reside in relatives' houses. They suffer from a shortage of food items. Many of the displaced peoples' houses were shelled after the displacement. This will delay their return."

The displaced in Al-Jawf are not alone in their suffering. Upwards of

half a million people are currently displaced or have recently returned but into temporary housing.

According to the government's Executive Unit for IDPs, between 2004 and April of this year about half a million people were displaced in Yemen. Alys Mane, the field coordinator of disaster management at the Red Crescent, said this figure is in line with the statistic he has for that time period, pointing out that this figure does not take into account recent events in Amran.

Since June of 2013 to July of 2014, Amran saw a huge level of displacement after the outbreak of fighting between the Houthis and opposing tribesmen and some military units. Mane said last week that the number of IDPs from Amran has reached about 70,000, according to statistics by Red Crescent field teams, and this number has certainly risen.

The biggest source of IDPs is in the north, particularly Sa'ada, Amran, and Al-Jawf. Sa'ada governorate witnessed six rounds of fighting from 2004 to 2010 between the Houthis and government forces, which displaced hundreds of thousands, and fighting is ongoing in the other

two governorates. Additionally, Abyan and Shabwa saw significant displacement because of the military campaigns against alleged AQAP militants in the south.

Saddam Al-Kamali, the media officer of the Executive Unit for IDPs, told the Yemen Times that many of those forced to flee their homes in Sa'ada as far back as 2004 have not returned. They are living in Haradh of Hajja governorate, Al-Azraqain of Amran, and Sana'a, according to Al-Kamali.

The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) also released IDP statistics in April, estimating there are 321,282 IDPs and 225,905 IDP Returnees. These numbers are in line with the figure released by the Executive Unit for IDPs, though there are differences in classification between IDPs who have "returned" and those who have returned but are living in temporary housing.

"Though 99 percent of the IDPs from Abyan returned home, they do not live in their houses because they were shelled and have not been reconstructed," said Al-Kamali. Al-Kamali said that IDPs from Amran will return soon because the situation has calmed, and only a few

houses were exposed to shelling.

In contrast, Al-Kamali said that many IDPs from Abyan lost their houses during the war between the military and Al-Qaeda in 2011 and 2012. Other clashes broke out between Al-Qaeda and the military in Abyan and Shabwa on April 2014 and left tens of thousands displaced.

"Most of the IDPs have returned to their areas but not to their destroyed houses and this is the biggest problem for them, although they do have shelters in their areas," he added.

Several organizations, such as Islamic Relief, UNICEF, the Red Crescent, and the Red Cross work to assist the IDPs. However, the number of IDPs is increasing due to ongoing clashes in Yemen and it is difficult for the agencies to keep up.

Back in Al-Jawf, Jameel Al-Amos, one of the IDPs in Al-Hazm, told the Yemen Times, "we hope the clashes between the warring groups will end soon so that we can return home. We lack basic services. We lack water and food in Al-Hazm. We are also in need of health services."

"We provide food items for the IDPs of Sa'ada and we have a



A displaced family from Amran lives in a public school in the capital Sana'a.

branch there in the governorate. International organizations are in charge of health and education and UNICEF has established several camps to provide education for the IDPs' children," said Al-Kamali.

Marie Claire Feghali, the spokesperson for the Red Cross in Yemen, told the Yemen Times, "we have several teams in all

governorates where IDPs are positioned but we pay more attention now to Amran governorate to provide shelter and food items to the IDPs there."

Journalist Al-Aswad said people in Al-Hazm are voicing their concern that they too will become displaced if the conflict spills into their territory.



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Taiz Bureau:
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OUR OPINION
Should dealing with Houthi expansion be our priority?

It is the talk of the town, and it should be after hundreds have been killed and thousands have been displaced. Yemenis, and those interested in Yemen, are analyzing the situation in the country's northwest, discussing how the state, or the Security Council, should react to the Houthi expansion.

The Yemeni government has taken a backseat in the recent developments, allowing the bloodshed to take place. I think President Hadi is using the same tactics as his predecessor, Saleh, by allowing—even helping—rivals to weaken or eliminate each other.

The difference is that Saleh had control over many more powerful actors and networks, including security institutions, tribal affiliations, and energy industries, than Hadi does today. Also, Saleh had no shortage of money and was able to pay the right price to exert control over developments inside the country, often changing them as he wished.

While analyzing the local context one must not forget to factor in important regional players. It is said that Yemen is a new battlefield for Iran and Saudi Arabia, now that the power struggle north of the peninsula is becoming increasingly fruitless and logistically infeasible.

Yet, all that being said, the true issue in Yemen is actually its weapons industry. Or rather, the abundance of arms and lack of control over them. In this unregulated environment, any ambitious group with enough money can pose a serious threat to the Yemeni government.

My understanding is that President Hadi is not going to allow the Houthis to enjoy their victory for long. In the next couple months I am expecting more violence on many more fronts. The state will come into play, reminding all of its existence.

I am also expecting a national campaign against unlicensed weapon carrying; increased military engagement with armed groups, including those who used to be run by the former regime; and attempts to retrieve state arms that have fallen into the hands of non-state actors.

That is a good strategy. A hard one, but one that deserves support even if it means we have to struggle a bit longer as citizens. Only by doing this can we balance out the playing field and establish an environment which allows for the constitutional referendum and, hopefully, a new beginning for Yemen.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf

Saudis see Houthi gains in Yemen as advance for Iran

Abdulmajeed Al-Buluwi
 al-monitor.com
 First published July 22

Yemen-based Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) attacked a Saudi border post along the Yemeni border on July 4, killing a Saudi border guard and a Yemeni soldier. Concurrently, Shia Houthi rebels in Yemen seized control of the city of Amran. The events have once again prompted Saudi Arabia to put Yemen at the top of its national security concerns.

Some observers see similarities between developments in Yemen and what is happening to the north of Saudi Arabia with the escalating Sunni-Shia sectarian conflict in Iraq and Syria and the advancement of the Islamic State (IS). IS has managed to gain strength and territory through an alliance with tribal forces that provide it with a popular base and means of support in both Iraq and Syria.

The progress of the Islamic State and its allies in Iraq and approach to Baghdad, which represents an Iranian red line, has been mirrored in the southern Arabian Peninsula by the advancement of the Houthi forces to the point of their approaching the gates of Sana'a. With the Middle East a chessboard in a match between Tehran and Riyadh, some Saudis are drawing parallels between current events, theorizing that if Baghdad or part of it falls into the hands of Sunni groups, Sana'a might well fall to Shia groups.

The Houthi advancement in Yemen is purely Yemeni, but this does not lessen the significance of the ties between the Houthi movement and Iran. In 2013, US Sen. John McCain declared the Houthis in Yemen more dangerous than Al-Qaeda, given the relationship between the Houthis and Iran and Tehran's agenda in the region.

At the same time, the expansion of the Islamic State's influence and declaration of an Islamic caliphate represent a challenge and a threat to Al-Qaeda's main branch and its affiliates in Syria, Iraq and Yemen. The IS declaration was primarily addressed to jihadist groups and stands as an attempt to seize leadership of the international jihadist movement from Al-Qaeda, headed by Ayman Al-Zawahiri.

The rise of IS in Iraq likely prompted Al-Qaeda to attack the Saudi border post. It serves as a reminder of its existence and its key role in the leadership of the international jihad. AQAP code-named the operation Invasion of Revenge for Female Captives, referring to female Al-Qaeda supporters held in Saudi prisons.

Riyadh is concentrating its efforts on border control to stop Al-Qaeda members from entering the country. Regardless, the Islamic State enjoys greater capacities than AQAP, because it boasts thousands of Saudi members and can therefore potentially strike from within.

The rivalry between IS and Al-Qaeda to gain jihadist movement supporters in the Arabian Peninsula, particularly Saudi Arabia, will likely increase, and this may push both of them to conduct operations inside and outside Saudi Arabia. On July 7, Al-Hayat reported on signs of this conflict between AQAP and IS supporters on Twitter, the latter demanding that the former pledge allegiance to Caliph Ibrahim (aka Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi) and stand against Jabhat Al-Nusra, Al-Qaeda's affiliate in Syria.

The threats to Saudi national security in the south posed by Houthi and Al-Qaeda expansion and in the north by IS and the re-emergence of Shia militias in southern Iraq are the outcomes of the collapse, weakness and failure of the state in Iraq, Syria and Yemen. In the face of this complex reality, the

Saudis' options have come to revolve around its traditional tribal allies rebelling against these failed states on the one hand and opposing the influence of Al-Qaeda and the Houthis on the other.

In Iraq, Saudi Arabia has allied with tribal figures, including Ali Hatem Al-Salman, sheikh of the Dulaim tribe. Hatem participated in the rebellion against Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri Al-Maliki and has a history of fighting Al-Qaeda. Saudi policy in Syria depends on tribal figures as well, such as Ahmad Al-Jarba of the Shammar tribe in the east and Abdullah Al-Bashir, the Free Syrian Army chief of staff and member of the Naim tribe in Daraa. In Yemen, the Saudis have strong relations with Yemeni sheikhs, particularly in the Hashid tribe around Sana'a, which is important given the political influence these leaders enjoy.

The Saudi-Iranian chessboard straddles the region from the Mediterranean to the Gulf and the Arabian Sea. Riyadh's use of tribal forces to counter movements linked to Iran and Al-Qaeda jihadist groups might succeed in Iraq, where the state's authority has collapsed in the western and northern parts of the country. The Saudis envision a rivalry in Iraq for influence and power between Sunni tribes, which it supports, and the jihadist groups. Yet, there is no guarantee that such a rivalry will emerge in Yemen, as jihadist groups survive under the influence and protection of local tribes. With non-state actors gaining strength along Saudi's borders, the threat of terrorist acts in the kingdom is more real than ever.

Abdulmajeed Al-Buluwi is a political writer who covers Saudi Arabian and Gulf policy for Saudi newspapers and websites, and publishes some political articles on his blog albuluwi.net.



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Deputy Security Director	Senior-level security professional who understands Yemeni culture, can speak the language, has existing contacts / can create new contacts within Yemen's various governmental organizations in order to conduct liaison and obtain timely and useful information in matters pertaining to the security of Palm Yemen Staff. Can communicate effectively with local and foreign staff, colleagues and counterparts.	\$800 US Dollar (Gross)
Lady Receptionist	Perform in a pleasant, professional, and efficient manner, a combination of duties mainly related, but not limited to, check-in and checkout of guests which contributes to an overall positive experience. Greets, registers, and assigns rooms to guests. Issues room key and escort instructions to Bell person or directly to guest as appropriate. Transmits and receives messages using equipment such as telephone, fax, and switchboard. Answers inquiries pertaining to hotel services, registration of guests and shopping, dining, entertainment and travel directions. Keeps records of room availability and guests' accounts. All other duties as assigned by a manager or supervisor.	\$400 US Dollar (Gross)
Interpreter	Interprets spoken statements into/from English into Arabic. Translates documents, correspondence, forms, and other written material from one language into another. Rewrites material from English into Arabic vice versa. Maintains records of materials translated and interpreting contacts. At least 3 years' experience in interpreting and translation or Project Administration. Computer skills with working knowledge of MS Office applications, such as Word, Excel and Power Point required. All other duties as assigned by a manager or supervisor.	\$1,000 US Dollar (Gross)
Hospitality Support Specialist (Waitress)	Presents menu, answers questions and makes suggestions regarding food and service. Writes order on check or memorizes it. Relays and/or enters order into POS system for the kitchen and serves courses from kitchen and service bars. Observes guest to fulfill any additional request and to perceive when meal has been completed. Totals bill and accepts payment or refers patron to cashier. May ladle soup, toss salads, portion pies, and desserts, brew coffee, and perform other services as determined by establishment size and practice. May clear and reset counters or table at conclusion of each course. All other duties as assigned by a manager or supervisor.	\$410 US Dollar (Gross)
Time keeper	The Timekeeper is responsible for recording staff, vendor and visitors in and out timesheets and ensure the accurate attendance. Maintain and record manually and daily basis in and out time list for the staff, vendors and visitors. Make sure the staff submit Pass gate ID and receive Work ID when he/she shows up to work, and do the opposite in the exit time. Report immediately any suspected identity or behavior during the time of entrance or exit. Make sure of the staff shift work time and maintain note in case of change in the shift work. Monitor staff use of the biometric (Finger Print) system for Staff during the in and out time. Monitor and control bring in or taking out of the facility unpermitted stuff. All other duties as assigned by a manager or supervisor.	\$385 US Dollar (Gross)
Event / Fitness Center Coordinator	Responsible for planning and organizing all operational implementation and post event activities, fitness center functions. Proven negotiating skills with hotels, entertainers and other events. Ability to develop professional relationships in all aspects of the position that result in stable, consistent reliable, and courteous communication when dealing with other organizations. Ability to problem solve and work independently in a changing and multitasking environment with numerous deadlines. Excellent organizational, planning and project management. Proven ability to take direction and input and to develop effective and engaging branded events that will achieve the organizations goals. All other duties as assigned by a manager or supervisor.	\$1,000 US Dollar (Gross)

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Israel/Gaza—how does it end?



The recent outbreak of violence has destroyed large parts of Gaza's civilian infrastructure and resulted in the deaths of nearly 600 Palestinians.

IRIN
First published July 22

The latest round of violence between Israel and Hamas militants in Gaza is now two weeks old, with nearly 600 Palestinians and 29 Israelis—all but two of them active duty soldiers—dead. A ceasefire deal proposed by Egypt last week collapsed after Hamas, which rules the Gaza Strip, said they had not been consulted. Since then, Israel has rapidly expanded its operations, with a ground invasion leading to over 100,000 people fleeing their homes.

Fresh attempts are under way to negotiate a settlement to the crisis—but what are the key points of dispute? And can there be any hope of a longer-term peace for both sides?

What does Hamas want?

Hamas has stated that its aim is to ease the restrictions on entry of goods and freedom of movement in and out of the densely populated Gaza Strip. In a recent interview, the group's political leader Khaled Meshaal said it would only accept a ceasefire that included long-term commitments to improve the "rights of the Palestinian people."

Among these goals are the lifting of the Israeli and Egyptian blockade on the enclave, which currently severely restrict imports of vital goods including fuel, food and building materials.

Salman Sheikh, director of the Brookings Institution in Qatar, says Hamas is looking to use the conflict to achieve medium-term goals. "They don't just want a pause—that's why the initial Egyptian [ceasefire] effort didn't work—they want an agreement that would allow for an opening of the border and the release of those arrested by Israel."

In more practical terms, Hamas—as the vastly inferior military force—is also looking to survive the Israeli assault without being crippled and will see that as a victory to some degree.

"As an insurgency, you typically define success as outlasting the other side. This is typical to show that the conventional authority is not capable of providing security for the public," said Firas Abi Ali, Middle East forecaster at the IHS research institute.

What does Israel want?

When Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced the ground invasion on the evening of July 17, he stressed that the purpose was to destroy Hamas' military capacity, including its network of underground tunnels. He added that his aim was to "restore quiet and safety to Israelis for a long time to come, while significantly harming the infrastructure of Hamas and other terrorist groups in the Gaza Strip."

Abi Ali pointed out that according to Israeli figures, 87 rockets were fired into Israel on July 20—down from a daily average of around 140 in the previous two weeks. He added that while it marked an improvement, the number was still "probably too high for the Israelis—they probably need to bring [the number] down significantly in their assessment."

Yet Netanyahu has steered clear of stating grand goals of destroying Hamas once and for all. Daniel Levy, head of the Middle East and North Africa Programme at the European Council for Foreign Relations and

a former adviser to the Israeli government, said he thinks Israel has learned from the 2006 war with the heavily armed Lebanese political party Hezbollah—where promises to destroy the group proved unrealistic. "He hasn't talked about purging all Hamas. He has just talked about [attacking] their rocket capacity, launch sites and tunnels."

Ali agreed with this assessment, saying that Netanyahu had been careful to present the attacks as something necessary every few years. Many on the right of Israeli politics have referred to the attacks as "mowing the grass."

"The narrative the Israelis are trying to present is that this type of limited conflict against Gaza and other areas where militant groups may take hold is something they have to regularly engage in to keep the capability of these groups in check," Ali said. "They haven't got a permanent solution so regular military conflict becomes a fact of life."

Who is negotiating?

All European Union (EU) states have a policy of refusing contact with Hamas, thus making it almost impossible for them to meet directly with the party's political leadership—including its Qatar-based leader Meshaal.

Norway, which is not part of the EU, has no such pact and the country's foreign minister, Borg Brende, has been shuttling between Israel, Egypt and Qatar seeking to mediate an agreement. UN chief Ban Ki-moon has been to Doha, while Mahmoud Abbas, president of the Palestinian Authority, has also held meetings with Meshaal.

The USA, led by Secretary of State John Kerry, has also been involved in negotiations—though it, too, refuses to meet Hamas directly. On 21 July, Kerry said he was working towards a ceasefire as well as a "discussion about the underlying issues."

The Brookings Institution's Sheikh said he was concerned that the multiple mediators had not "joined up" as yet. "That's what Ban Ki-moon is trying to do, to provide a glue on these matters."

The chaotic nature of the negotiations contrasts with the last time Israel bombed Gaza in November 2012. At that time, the then Muslim Brotherhood-led Egyptian government was strongly supportive of Hamas—with numerous top leaders visiting the enclave while also negotiating with Israel on Hamas' behalf. Diplomatic efforts started immediately and the violence only lasted eight days, with both the Egyptians and the Israelis agreeing to a ceasefire in which they promised to significantly ease restrictions on Gaza.

Since then, however, a military-backed ousting of the Muslim Brotherhood government has brought to power Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi, a former Egyptian military general who is hostile to Hamas. Restrictions on the enclave have returned to levels similar to those before 2012.

Levy said Hamas' lack of a strong ally had led to the chaos of last week's ceasefire attempts—when the party had not been consulted by Egypt and Israel before the deal was offered.

"If we are going to get a successful ceasefire, the difference will be that Hamas will have to be part of the ceasefire rather than having a ceasefire dictated to it," he said.

What could a ceasefire deal look like?

There are a number of ways in which

the crisis could be stopped, ranging from a short-term ceasefire to a more complete truce. The general consensus from analysts IRIN spoke to was that neither side was currently willing to make a long-term pact and the most likely outcome is a ceasing of violence without tackling the underlying causes of the conflict.

Yezid Sayigh, senior associate at the Carnegie Middle East Center, said that would make a similar flare-up in the future all but inevitable.

"Unless the situation changes in Gaza to allow people to live their own lives, then the politics inside it are not going to change."

He added that the failure of Egypt and Israel to abide by the terms of the November 2012 deal—in which the countries promised to ease the blockade on Gaza in exchange for Hamas preventing all rocket fire from Gaza—had made Hamas less willing to negotiate.

"[They] feel they accepted a ceasefire in November 2012 which has cost them politically as they have had to prevent rocket fire in Gaza without having been able to improve Gaza's conditions and lift the siege to the extent that was agreed by Egypt and Israel." As such, he said, Hamas will not make an agreement without guarantees.

Sheikh added that key negotiations would have to focus on a mechanism for opening up the borders to Gaza at the same time as "guaranteeing security on the Israeli side."

How long will it continue?

Neither side, analysts agreed, is either prepared for or seeking a prolonged conflict. Israeli has called up nearly 50,000 reservists, while international pressure on it has been growing due to the high number of civilian casualties in Gaza.

"Economically, Israel can't sustain an operation for months—in terms of maintaining this number of reservists under arms, the actual cost of the military operation and the cost resulting from paralyzing economic activity in southern Israel," IHS's Ali said. "The Israelis can't afford a long war. Throughout history they have looked for fast, spectacular wars rather than long engagements."

The flurry of diplomatic activity in recent days implies that there is increased international pressure to reach a deal, yet the faltering nature of the negotiations raises the specter of the war dragging on. Levy pointed out that while Netanyahu's strategy was clearly for a relatively brief engagement, the killing of at least 27 Israeli soldiers in recent days was likely to increase pressure for a further expansion of operations.

Israel occupied Gaza for 38 years until 2005 when it withdrew its forces but later launched a blockade after Hamas was elected in 2006. "Every day that goes by without a ceasefire, there is [more danger of escalation]," Levy said. "We are still not in the occupation scenario but if it carries on for many more days we could be talking about that."

Sheikh added that the knife-edge nature of the negotiations meant the coming days were vital. "This is a crucial time—things are reaching a critical stage. We could get an announcement of a humanitarian ceasefire or we could get a complete collapse [of negotiations]. With what happened in recent days—the Palestinian civilians and Israeli soldiers killed—the danger is that the conflict takes on a dynamic of its own."

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VACANCIES

DEMOCRACY
REPORTING
INTERNATIONAL

Project: "Supporting Yemen's Transition – reinforcing democratic structures and practices"
Project duration: December 2013 – November 2016
Deployment timeframe: Immediate
Place: Yemen, Sana'a

Project Objective
Yemen is undergoing a complex transition centred on the deliberations of the National Dialogue conference. The National Dialogue is scheduled to task a committee to write a constitution to be put to a public referendum followed by General Elections for the constitutionally-mandated institutions (legislature, possibly bicameral; and possibly a directly-elected president). The Supreme Commission for Elections and Referenda (SCER) will face an enormous challenge in organising the referendum and elections and the stakes are high, as credible elections are critical as they will provide formal electoral legitimacy for the entire transition.

The ERIS/DRI EU-funded project to support Yemen's democratic transition will provide co-ordinated technical support to the SCER and will also offer broader support in helping the SCER to develop public understanding and relations with stakeholders. Further, the project will work in support of civil society organisations and political parties in strengthening their capacity to engage in and contribute to the reform process.

Project Activities
Project activities will be structured around the emerging political calendar, which will include the following milestones:

- National Dialogue Conference (NDC)
- Drafting of a new constitution
- New Voter Registry
- Referendum on the constitution
- Introduction of a voter register update;
- Possible reforms of electoral legislation in line with constitutional provisions.
- General elections

The overall objective of the project is to contribute to enhancing state building and democratic development in the context of Yemen's political transition. The specific objective of this project is to contribute to the improved institutional performance of an independent and competent electoral administration, while strengthening the credibility and reliability of democratic processes through improved communication and transparency on available political choices and electoral processes.

In particular, the project will support the increased transparency of the electoral process in line with international standards as well as the improved institutional capacity of the electoral administration to deliver credible elections in accordance with the Yemeni legal framework. It will also support the establishment of a democratic political culture by strengthening capacities for the preparation of legislation and the monitoring of political party activities.

The intervention aims at supporting Yemen's transition not only by strengthening the SCER's capacity on core issues but also by enhancing a culture of transparency and consultation of the SCER, as well as the Committee on Political Parties (CPP), towards stakeholders and equipping stakeholders better to use opportunities of consultation and interaction with these state bodies effectively. Thus, the project should help connect technical reforms to the broader political debate, thereby enhancing understanding and confidence in the reform process.

Title: (1) Program Officer and Office Manager (ERIS/DRI office in Yemen)

Tasks and Responsibilities

As a Program Officer (PO) you will work closely with Expert 2 and 3 under the guidance of the Team Leader and support the program team in implementing program activities in Yemen. This includes coordination with various partners, as well as planning, organizing, implementing, and reporting on different program-related activities.

Responsibilities include the following activities:

- Support in planning of activities related to program implementation.
- Support in organizing and conducting workshops, seminars, trainings, and conferences.
- Research and understand core electoral administration processes
- Conduct public presentations on electoral issues to electoral stakeholders and civil society organizations; communicate and coordinate with the same.
- Communicate and organize program activities with the Yemen Supreme Committee of Elections and Referendum (SCER) and other democracy and governance partner organizations.
- Liaise with governmental officials, political party representatives, and civil society members.
- Work with international consultants to coordinate logistical and program needs.
- Support the Key Experts and consultants in facilitating their work regarding electoral issues and capacity building activities.
- Work in coordination and cooperation with international and national program team, including management, advisors, consultants, administration, procurement and logistics assistants, and other PDOs.
- Attend meetings, conferences, and other assigned events; take notes; and represent ERIS/DRI.
- Maintain a filing system and record all activities related to the program.
- Prepare reports related to various meetings and outcomes of different activities, including, but not limited to, conferences, field visits, and consultant work.
- Travel to and conduct state-based program activities and perform other assigned duties as required

As Office Manager you will work under close supervision of the Team Leader in strategic office management of the project.

Responsibilities include following activities:

- Assist in the development of office administrative systems and procedures.
- Liaise with vendors, in coordination with admin and logistics assistant.
- In coordination with admin and logistics assistant, develop request for proposals and requests for quotations for procurement actions. Evaluate bids and make recommendations for procurement.
- Organise travel logistics and visas for international staff - including preparing and/or processing administrative requests/ documents (hotel bookings, travel requests, visa applications).
- Oversee recruitment of short-term assistant staff and/or interpreters for implementation of workshops and trainings.
- Liaise with project partners, maintain ERIS/DRI's contact list and contact database. Schedule meetings for team.
- Contribute to ERIS/DRI weekly reporting, by performing research and mapping of political activities in Yemen.
- Prepare financial reporting, expense claims, and cash vouchers.
- Draft correspondence in Arabic/English; on necessity assist the team with Arabic/English Interpretation.

Qualifications:

- University degree in political science, international relations, sociology, development studies, international development, or other related fields.
- At least two years' experience in electoral, civil society or political

party development programs, preferably with an international organization or other development bodies.

- High proficiency with basic computing software, especially Microsoft Office: Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Outlook.
- Diplomatic skills and the ability to function in a cross-cultural environment as a good team player.
- Strong communication, inter-personal, and reporting skills.
- Excellent written and spoken English and Arabic.
- Comfortable with public speaking and interacting with audiences.
- A high standard of accountability, transparency, and integrity.
- Highly organized, able to show initiative and capable of working with minimum supervision to meet strict reporting deadlines.

Title: (2) Administration and logistics Assistant (ERIS/DRI office in Yemen)

Tasks and Responsibilities

As an administrative and logistic assistant, you are responsible for supporting the organization of activities relevant and appropriate to the project implementation, under the supervision of the Team Leader. This includes but not limited to:

- Assist the Team Leader with strategic office management and project implementation.
- Assist in the development of office administrative systems and procedures.
- Liaise with vendors, in coordination with logistics assistant.
- Oversee, in coordination with logistics assistant all procurement activities.
- In coordination with logistics assistant, develop request for proposals and requests for quotations for procurement actions. Evaluate bids and make recommendations for procurement.
- Organise travel logistics and visas for international staff - including preparing and/or processing administrative requests/ documents (hotel bookings, travel requests, visa applications).
- Oversee recruitment of short-term assistant staff and/or interpreters for implementation of workshops and trainings.
- Liaise with project partners, maintain ERIS/DRI's contact list and contact database. Schedule meetings for team.
- Contribute to ERIS/DRI weekly reporting, by performing research and mapping of political activities in Yemen.
- Prepare financial reporting, expense claims, and cash vouchers.
- Draft correspondence in Arabic/English; on necessity assist the team with Arabic/English Interpretation.
- Perform other related tasks as requested

Qualifications:

- At least High School Education with some specialized diploma or certificate in office administration.
- At least two years' experience in electoral, civil society or political party development programs, preferably with an international organization or other development bodies.
- Proficiency with basic computing software, especially Microsoft Office: Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Outlook.
- Diplomatic skills and the ability to function in a cross-cultural environment as a good team player.
- Strong communication, inter-personal, and reporting skills.
- Excellent written and spoken English and Arabic.
- Able to deal and negotiate with prospective vendors
- A high standard of accountability, transparency, and integrity.
- Highly organized, able to show initiative and capable of working with minimum supervision to meet strict reporting deadlines.

Title: (3) Translator/ Interpreter (ERIS/DRI office in Yemen) (2 posts)

Tasks and Responsibilities

The Translator/Interpreter will work closely with the Team Leader and Key Experts and shall carry out the duties in an expert, diligent and impartial manner, to the best of his/her ability and in accordance with best professional practice.

The Translator/Interpreter will have the following responsibilities:

Meetings

- Provide language support in the form of verbal interpretation and/or written translation to members of the ERIS-DRI Team
- Attend meetings with members of the team, and provide language, cultural and technical support.
- In advance of meetings or events, make calls and/or write emails to support team members in the preparations for the meetings.
- Liaise with the Security provider to ensure the Movement Teams are informed of the location for a meeting, and if necessary travel in advance with the Security team to confirm the location.
- Take notes during the course of the meetings, on behalf of other teams members:
 - Brief the team member on any essential side conversation that occurred that could not be translated for at the time
 - Prepare some short written notes to summarise the meeting, if required.
- Follow up the meeting with messages or emails of thanks and appreciation, and any follow up points as required

Written Translation

- Take a paper or electronic document in Arabic or English and translate it into the other language, in an electronic format, and copy it to a "Drop Box" folder used by the Team.
- Formatting, spacing, indents and paragraph numbers will be replicated as far as possible and reasonable, and context will be transferred to the translated document.
 - Files will be saved in the ERIS/DRI format, with date indicators.
 - Upon completion of the translation, the draft will be shared with an Arabic or English language member of the team to be proofed, before release.
- Preparation of 'daily news feed' from Arabic, English Yemeni newspapers and electronic media sites for benefit of ERIS/DRI staff.
- Perform other related tasks as requested

Qualifications:

- University degree in linguistics, political science, international relations, or other related fields.
- At least two years' experience in interpretation/translation preferably with an international organization or other development bodies.
- Proficiency with basic computing software, especially Microsoft Office: Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Outlook.
- Diplomatic skills and the ability to function in a cross-cultural environment as a good team player.
- Strong communication, inter-personal, and reporting skills.
- Excellent written and spoken English and Arabic.
- Comfortable with public speaking and interacting with audiences.
- A high standard of accountability, transparency, and integrity.
- Highly organized, able to show initiative and capable of working with minimum supervision to meet strict reporting deadlines.

Applying:

Please send or email letter of interest and curriculum vitae to
Parvinder Singh,
Team Leader ERIS/DRI project, Yemen

stating the title of the position in the subject line at:
ERIS.DRI.Yemen@gmail.com.

Deadline to receive applications is 30 July 2014.

Politics of Qat: The Role of a Drug in Ruling Yemen

By Peer Gatter

Book review and extracts
Nadia Al-Sakkaf

The cover page shows an old man with an apprehensive look in his eyes, half-smiling as he hands you a bunch of qat leaves. In the background there is a wild-eyed teenage boy, cheeks swollen from the qat that fills them, peering into the camera.

This 862 page hard-cover book published by Reichert Publications is a weap-

on in all senses of the word. Besides documenting the ever growing role qat plays in Yemen and in the life of Yemenis, the book also analyses Yemen's qat policy, the tribal qat economy, and the qat connections of our decision makers.

I had this huge publication lying by my bedside for months before I summoned the courage to pick it up and start reading. This was not only due to its intimidating size, but probably even more so due to its

topic. Qat, and the political and economic schemes around it, were to me as a Yemeni always a well-known problem. I just was too afraid to read for myself and acknowledge how I as a citizen am part of a society that enables this culture of qat.

I don't chew Qat and personally I am ardently opposed to it. But I live in a society where Qat prevails. After years of research, Peer Gatter, the author of this book, published it in 2012, offering to the

world an insight into this drug and what it has done to my country. Gatter was working for many years for the World Bank and UNDP in Yemen and is now heading the Integrated Expert Program for Afghanistan of the German Development Cooperation (GIZ-CIM).

To read more about the book go to www.qat-yemen.com



PART 7

Changes in qat politics following president Saleh's ascent to power

When Ali Abdullah Saleh came to power in 1978, the office of president was anything but a stable institution. A joke widely circulating in Yemen during the fall of 1978 illustrates the perception of the longevity of political rule and the expected 'half-life period' of the country's leaders at the time:

Al-Ghashmi, just arrived in heaven, waved off Al-Hamdi's angry tirade for having forgotten to bring qat from Sana'a. "Don't worry," said Al-Ghashmi, "President Saleh has promised to take care of the qat—and he should be joining us any time now."

Being a tribesmen himself and having the ill-fated presidency of Al-Hamdi before his eyes, Saleh knew all too well that the tribes were a force to reckon with in Yemeni politics. A ruling bargain was necessary that demarcated spheres and regions of influence and of interest between the regime and the tribes.

There are many examples for the giving and taking that characterized this bargain. While Saleh relied on sheikhs as "ambassadors" vis-à-vis Yemen's difficult neighbor Saudi Arabia, and depended on the tribes to furnish his regime with firepower when needed, the tribes relied on the government to not impede their smuggling operations with Saudi Arabia, to let them set up markets in their territories that escaped taxation, to let them buy and sell arms undisturbed, and to go about their growing and selling of qat without viable regulations.

There are many indications that qat was a prominent factor in this ruling bargain. Coming from a qat-producing tribe himself, Saleh was well aware of the significance of the drug for the tribal economy and

knew all too well that warnings, such as those issued by the tribes a few years earlier against Prime Minister Al-Ayni and his qat-ban, were not mere words. Among the indications for qat being part of this bargain are:

- the sharp reduction of taxes on qat almost immediately after Saleh came to power,
- qat tax exemptions for certain tribes,
- import restrictions on Ethiopian qat that multiplied farmers profits in a protected market,
- manifold subsidies for water exploitation,
- the promotion of chewing in official contexts.

The qat ruling bargain led on the one hand to a successful consolidation of power of the Saleh regime, to decades of relative stability and a comparatively smooth co-habitation of state and tribes. But on the other hand this ruling bargain entailed the emergence of an influential qat oligarchy and an unprecedented accumulation of wealth and firearms among the qat-producing highland tribes.

But Saleh's qat policy was expressed most strikingly in the taboo that was put on discussing qat as a challenge or a problem and qat figures were henceforth excluded from national statistics (it was only in the mid-1990s that under World Bank pressure they appeared in annual statistic books again).

Already before Saleh's coming to power, Yemen's first agricultural census had been launched. It was carried out between 1977 and 1983. This survey put the area cultivated with qat in the base year of 1979 at 47,218 hectares with a total of 103,728,000 trees producing 42,047 tons of qat annually. This was equivalent to 4.6 percent of Yemen's cultivated area and represented a six-fold increase since 1970.

At the time, qat farming families represented some 15 percent of the population of the Yemen Arab Republic. Already in some governorates, the share of qat in agriculture was over-proportionally high. Such as in Sana'a where as much as 29.1 percent of the cultivated area was devoted to qat farming and where 36.2 percent of Yemen's qat trees were grown.

In 1989, the second agricultural census was carried out which revealed that qat farming was rapidly increasing and then covered 7.0 percent of North Yemen's cultivated area (74,488 ha). This represented an increase of 58 percent in the absolute surface compared to the findings of 1979. The number of qat trees had increased even by 148 percent and qat production was up by 68 percent (now 70,744 tons). More than a third of Yemen's total qat area (39.3 percent) was concentrated in Sana'a governorate.

Despite the distressing findings that the number of qat trees had increased by two and a half times within just a few years, no action on the side of the government was taken. Nevertheless, it was decided to keep the qat figures under tight wraps, quite likely due to the fear they could trigger further donor demands for counter-measures.

Promoting qat consumption and reducing tax

In terms of using qat for making new friends and buying allegiance, Saleh had learned from his predecessor Al-Ghashmi. In campaigns for presidential elections, at political rallies of the General People's Congress (GPC), and at demonstrations in favor of the regime, as much as at wedding ceremonies of high ranking military officers, Saleh generously distributed qat as reward for loyalty. Over the following decades qat played an ever-more prominent role in official events and in patron-client relationships and became an important motor in corruption.

Despite the worrying pace of qat expansion, the second and third Five-Year Development Plans (1981/82-1986 and 1987-1991) did not provide any clear policies concerning the drug and touched upon the subject only vaguely.

On May 28, 1980, President Saleh thus signed a law that decreased the tax due on qat from 30 percent to just 10 percent and transformed it from a direct duty on qat production collected at farm level into an indirect tax on qat consumption levied in city markets and at military checkpoints at town entrances. The law made qat cultivation even more attractive and increased farmers' profit margins, as despite the tax cuts retail prices of qat did not decline.

Considering Yemen's precarious economic situation at the time it seems rather odd that the state altruistically waived substantial revenues with this new law. Considering, however, Saleh's struggle for stability and recognition as the country's uncontested leader, the law makes perfect sense. It must be interpreted as a well-disguised means of patronage for the qat-producing highland tribes and



A qat farmer in Wadi Sa'wan of Bani Hushaysh district proudly presents qat trees planted in his birth year, 35 years prior (2006).

the qat-consuming tribal population of the countryside—A subsidy in return for tribal indulgence of Saleh's political supremacy at the expense of qat consumers in the cities and in the non-qat-producing lowlands.

For power consolidation, President Saleh relied heavily on his Sanhan kinsmen and on members of the allied Hamdan-Sana'a tribe. Due to the proximity of their lands to the capital Sana'a, Sanhan and Hamdan-Sana'a had always exercised a certain degree of control over the capital's fate.

To secure the continuing loyalty of Sanhan and Hamdan, Saleh together exempted the two tribes from qat taxation. This included also the allied Hashid tribe of Bilad Al-Rus that has its homeland to the south and southwest of Sana'a. Sheikh Al-Ahmar, with whose consent and toleration Saleh ruled, was awarded the prerogative to assess and collect the tax on qat from Hashid's tribal territory in Amran governorate. The proximity of Sanhan and Hamdan to the markets of the capital and the state's waiving of its rights to collect qat taxes has allowed farmers and large landowners in these areas to maximize their profits. They paid low transport costs for expediting their qat leaves to Sana'a, the biggest consumption center of the drug in Yemen.

Following the enactment of the tax law, the Sana'a municipality made several attempts to remove qat markets from the inner city but failed to regulate qat marketing in Sana'a. This is for the most part due to the explosion of the trade and the sharp increase in the number of markets and merchants during the 1980s. Neither the Ministry of Supply and Trade, nor the Sana'a municipality or Tax Authority had the manpower to keep pace with the development of qat marketing and to effectively enforce this law. Despite being in fact illegal until

today, the selling of qat was and is practiced by most merchants without a permit. Traffic on busy streets still regularly collapses during the hours of qat sale. Another reason for the failure of qat market regulation was the circumstance that many of the market owners were well connected to the inner circle of power. Many of them were tribal sheikhs and a sizable number were also members of the People's Constituent Assembly.

Incentives for qat production

Qat was traditionally grown in rain-fed terrace plots of Yemen's western escarpment and in the wadi areas of the highlands it was irrigated by well. With the introduction and proliferation of modern tubewell technology in the 1970s, qat cultivation spread to the dry plateau and basin zone—and thus also to areas where low rainfall had restricted farming mostly to cereal cultivation. To modernize agriculture, encourage the production of high value crops, and counter the decline of the sector that had set in following the exodus of labor to the oil economies of the Arabian Gulf, the government introduced numerous incentives for farmers that encouraged above all qat farming;

Subsidized diesel made pumping of groundwater resources highly profitable; subsidized electricity and the extension of electricity networks into suburban areas; low tariffs and taxes on importing pumping equipment as well as credit subsidies and credit programs for purchasing pumps had made the use of this kind of equipment very attractive to farmers. Also a large share of tubewell pumps introduced into Yemen were directly imported by the government and either passed on to farmers at subsidized prices or given as a form of patronage to clients of the regime. Cheap water was also made available by modern water projects.

Finally, an agricultural quarantine law and a qat, fruit and vegetable import ban, pronounced in 1981 and 1984 respectively, made the agricultural overuse of groundwater and the cultivation of water-intensive crops—notably qat—very profitable.

Moreover, the massive expansion of the road network during the 1970s and 1980s was a further incentive to intensify qat agriculture as it opened new markets for farmers and reduced transport time and cost for agricultural produce and farm supplies.



Cutout of sections from President Saleh's 1980 law that reduced the tax due on qat sales from 30 to 10 percent.

استخدام الفات Using Qat	حضر حضر			ريف ريف			اجمالي		
	رجال	نساء	جملة	رجال	نساء	جملة	رجال	نساء	جملة
يومية Daily	31.7	10.2	21.1	40.0	14.0	27.1	38.0	13.1	25.7
أسبوعياً Weekly	8.0	3.8	5.9	4.0	2.2	3.1	5.0	2.6	3.8
نادرًا Sometimes	11.9	8.7	10.3	12.8	12.2	12.5	11.3	12.6	12.0
استخدام في السابق Previously	2.3	2.0	2.1	2.6	2.2	2.4	2.5	2.1	2.3
لم يستخدم قط Never	45.6	74.6	60.0	40.0	69.0	54.3	41.4	70.3	55.7
لا يعرف / غير مبين Unknown	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
المجموع Total	7602	7428	15030	23492	23076	46568	31094	30504	61598

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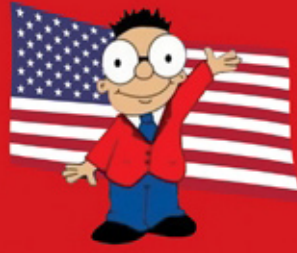
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Reading: The Lost Art

By JAMES M. SUTTON

Ever since our induction to the technological age, we have made a lot of sacrifices and given up many beneficial activities due to our "lack of time" to partake in these hobbies. We have watched the health of most people around the world deteriorate because of lack of activity. Moreover, we have watched the minds of most people deteriorate due to lack of stimulation. However, every now and again you will see people get on this fitness binge and start going wacko with the new fad diets and the new workout routines being displayed in all the magazines. On the other hand, you very rarely see people going on a reading binge and reading the new fad novels or the likes. Well I guess we can categorize this problem of lack of reading into a two part problem: 1) Most of the people just do not read anymore. 2) Most of the people that do actually read, do no read anything that is really mentally stimulating.

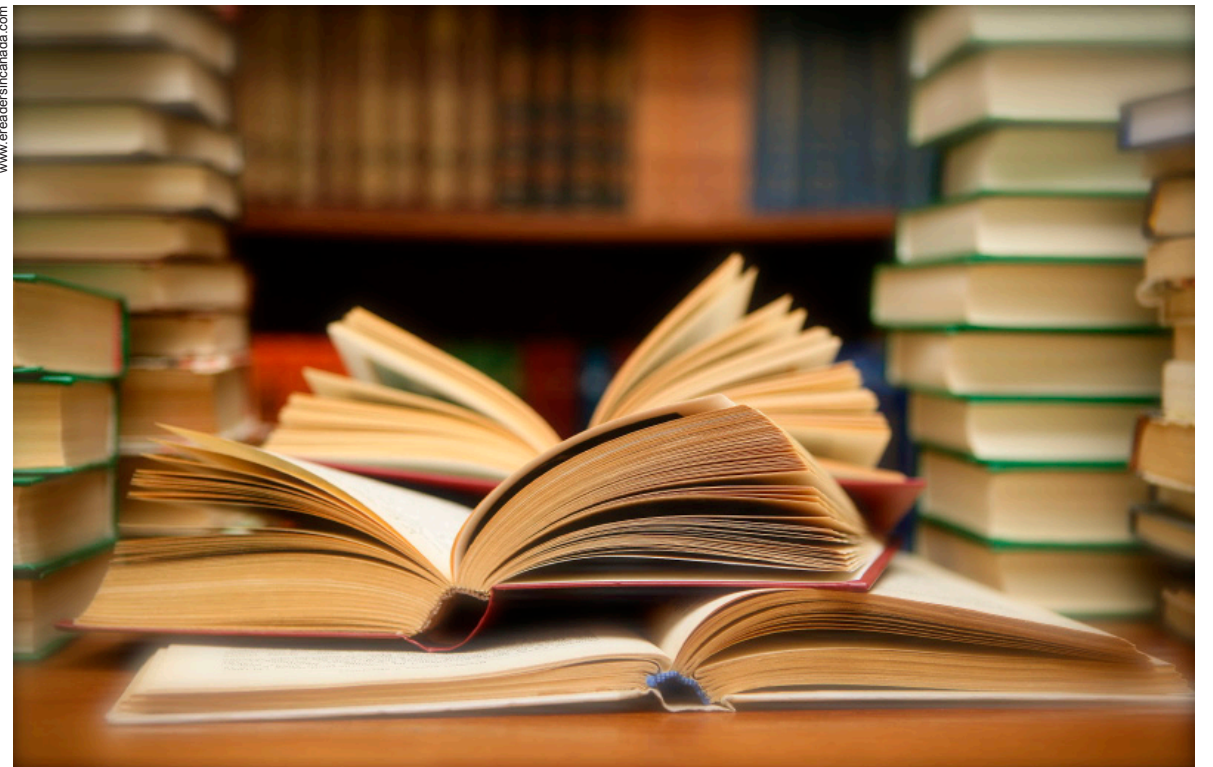
First, allow us to deal with the people who just do not read anymore. Their basic excuse is generally one of the following: 1) I do not have the time to read. 2) I just do not like reading. Firstly, we will deal with the time excuse. The average working person work about 40 hours a week, and this is generally the rule concerning most schools; however, a lot of high schools are even less. Now keep in mind that the forty hour work week also leaves the whole weekend for the person open for anything they might want to do. Throughout the work they will dedicate about 9

– 10 hours a day either working, getting ready for work, or going to work. If you add about another 6 – 8 hours of sleep on a daily basis, you will find that the person has about another 6 – 8 hours of free time daily. What are people doing with all that free time? The answer here is plain and simple: They are mostly just wasting it. Most of the people today are more concerned with personal pleasure and the fulfillment of desires to allot any time for real benefit. You will find people all over the world flocking to all the latest restaurants to eat to their hearts content, they flock to the nearest cinema to see the latest movie, so they can have a good time, and they busy themselves with parties and night clubs, so they can forget the stress of the week. However, you do not see many people trying to relieve their stress with a good book.

Secondly, you will find people all over the world at certain times in the evening after work and school glued to the TV to follow the latest series to find out what is going to happen to their famous fictional character. People nowadays have become infatuated with these series even to the point that most of the content of conversations amongst people is centered on some fictional character's life and what he did this week. People babble on about the person's life and what happened to him as though he is talking about his neighbor or a close friend. You no longer hear any real academic conversations taking place about real issues in life. Even if the conversation is on politics, you will find that most people's sources that they quote from are CNN, Fox News, BBC,

and Al-Jazeera. You will very rarely be in a conversation nowadays in which a person will start to quote John Locke, Niccolo Machiavelli, Plato and his book the Republic, Adam Smith and his book Wealth of Nations (if the conversation was about economics), John Stuart Mill, Plubius' the Federalist Papers, Leviathan, Rousseau, etc. No, you mostly hear some TV watcher talking about politics and he feels that he has the right to talk about politics because he watches documentaries. Or maybe another person feels that he should be the main source for people's political opinions because he reads the newspaper every morning. This is what our societies have become because of a lack of mental stimulation from REAL reading.

The category of people is the people who say that they simply do not like reading; they never found a love for the written word. This mainly stems from a severe weakness in the language skills that are needed to understand the gist of what the author is trying to transmit to your mind. This has now become a bigger problem since most of the focus in education has been taken off reading. People now feel that they can get all the information they need at a push of a button. This in turn causes most people to take on a very lackadaisical attitude in concerns to the authenticity of their information and whether it is from sound authorities or not. Because of the ease of gaining access to vast forms of information, people start to feel smug in their technological world, and they do not feel any reason to tire themselves on a constant basis in a library researching differ-



ent topics and issues. Their worlds start to transform into virtual academic havens full of trivial facts that have no benefit for them and no benefit for anybody who might come in contact with them. If you took the average person who sits on the internet and searches for whatever information he feels he needs to know, you will the person always ready to give a statement, no matter what the conversation is on. If you talk about politics, he has a trivial fact or two. If you talk about history, he knows a few names of people he can throw out for the entertainment of his listeners. If you speak about economic, he is right there with some new trivial fact he read on Yahoo yesterday. However, when you back

him in a corner, and you force him into a true discussion on any one topic, you will find him starting to wither like a flower in the autumn. This is because he has only obtained trivial knowledge, and because of his lack of REAL reading, he cannot stand his ground in a REAL discussion.

It is a sad fact that we have witnessed the downgrading of our nations in such a way as we have witnessed. It is difficult to believe in our day and age that some of the scholars that we read about in our history books actually roamed this very same earth on various journeys seeking different forms of knowledge to benefit the people. It is sad that the seeking of knowledge has now gone from an act one

does for himself and then does to help others, to an act that one does simply for self-satisfaction. We have become so selfish these days because we are only concerned with pleasing ourselves and making sure that 'we' have fun. This has caused us to turn a blind eye to all the problems in the world, and made us even lazier when it comes to finding a solution to those problems. A people who have left reading and learning for personal pleasure are a doomed people. They are doomed to a life of darkness and blind-following until and if they actually find the light of knowledge that is going to take them out of their debasement and raise them to a level of true enlightenment.

The Veldt Revisited

By MICHAEL CHAVIS

I have memories of myself as a naïve apathetic teenager when I first read *The Veldt*; a short story written by the late great science fiction-fantasy genius, Ray Bradbury. It was a rather dark tale of an American family living in their "Happy Life Home", a fully automated technological wonder which tends to their every need; "this house which clothed and fed and rocked them to sleep and played and sang and was good to them." Problems arise when the parents, George and Lydia become concerned about the children's nursery which has been designed to telepathically sense the youngsters' thoughts and fantasies and then render them graphically on the walls of the room; in full color, three-dimensional imagery complete with vivid sound or "sonics" and even "odorophonics" which make the scenes smell real. Unsettling? Yes, but not quite enough. The parents begin to worry because the fantasies which they consider appropriate and acceptable for children such as Alice in Wonderland or Aladin and His Magic Lamp – "all the delightful contraptions of

a make-believe world" – no longer appear on the walls of the nursery. Instead there are the frighteningly realistic sights sounds and smells of an African veldt.

Bradbury's pointed use of descriptive imagery as he takes us along with George and Lydia to inspect the nursery and we experience the "deep blue sky with a hot yellow sun...the hot straw smell of lion grass, the cool green smell of the hidden water hole, the great rusty smell of animals, the smell of dust like a red paprika in the hot air. And now the sounds: the thump of distant antelope feet on grassy sod, the papery rustling of vultures..." is so real that we forget, momentarily, that what is being presented to us is, in fact, intended to be an illusion. Oh, and did I mention there were lions? The author seems determined to scare us out of our wits as the lions which were "so real, so feverishly and startlingly real that you could feel the prickling fur on your hand, and your mouth was stuffed with the dusty upholstery smell of their heated pelts, and the yellow of them was in your eyes like the yellow of an exquisite French tapestry, the yellows of lions and summer grass, and the sound of the matted lion lungs exhaling on

the silent noontide, and the smell of meat from the panting, dripping mouths..." seemingly come running at the hapless parents. But don't worry; it isn't real. Or is it?

Personification, giving human characteristics to animals or inanimate objects, is another tool of the literary trade which is a prominent feature in this miniature masterpiece. The dark malevolent nature the nursery which makes George wonder: "if it hates me for wanting to switch it off?" is in stark contrast to the cloying benevolence apparent in the rest of the house which cuddles the family incessantly, cooking; "the stove busy humming to itself," and serving them warm meals, "Sorry," said a small voice within the table, and ketchup appeared."; bathing and dressing them and even rocking them to sleep at night.

Eventually, George considers shutting down the nursery and invites his friend, a psychologist, over to examine the room; anxious to discover what its dark images may reveal about his children's mental states. We find out that the two youngsters, Wendy and Peter; have always been given everything they've ever wanted until their parents begin to use a little

discipline in their lives. "Children are carpets; they should be stepped on occasionally." The Doctor's conclusion: "Where before they had a Santa Claus now they have a Scrooge... You've let this room and this house replace you and your wife in your children's affections. This room is their mother and father, far more important in their lives than their real parents. And now you come along and want to shut it off. No wonder there's hatred here." - is

a damning indictment; not only to the parents in the story but also to the parents of the 1950's when this story was first published; who had began to let the recent novelty of television babysit their children. Not to mention the parents living in today's "new world disorder" – some 60 years later, when The Screen has become virulently pervasive and unnervingly invasive.

If we are to consider Ray Bradbury's *The Veldt* as a contemporary

fable, then what's the moral of the story? Perhaps we are being warned that when machines; lifeless and unfeeling, become surrogates for a mother's compassion and tenderness or a father's wisdom and discipline, the results could be fatal to the human spirit, fatal to the microcosm of family as well as to the macrocosm of society. It was definitely fatal to George and Lydia who ended up as playthings for hungry lions in an African grassland.

A BIT OF GRAMMAR

Preposition (In \ for \ about \ etc) + ing

By RABAB AYASH

	Preposition	verb (- ing)	
Are you interested	in	working	for us?
I'm not very good	at	learning	languages.
She must be fed up	with	studying.	
What are the advantages	of	having	a car
This knife is only	for	cutting	bread.
How	about	playing	tennis tomorrow?
I bought a new bicycle	instead of	going	away on holiday.

You can also say ' interested in somebody (do)ing; ' fed up with you (do)ing' etc..
I'm fed up with you telling me what to do .

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German Shepherds: Deployed to sniff out mines



Story and Photo by **Ali Abuloom**

A mixture of English, German, and Indian words have been used to train Tina, a female German Shepherd dog, to sniff out the TNT explosives inside land mines. Tina is quick to respond to orders, being able to sniff out and indicate the location of an explosive deliberately buried

under the soil within two minutes. Khalid Al-Laei, Tina's handler, shares a strong bond with her dog. "Me and Tina survey the lands and detect land mines in a short period of time... we understand each other and she responds quickly to my orders," Al-Laei says.

However great their ability to detect landmines, the number of dogs in Yemen used for de-mining purposes is simply too small to eliminate all the explosives scat-

tered around the country. According to Ahmed Al-Kather, the director of the Qualitative Center for Eliminating Land Mines, the center uses 28 German Shepherds for de-mining operations in lands which are considered to be in critical need of clearance.

There are two other centers in Aden and Hadramout that are tasked with the elimination of land mines. All three centers are run by the National Program for Eliminating

Land Mines, a government program established in 2001.

Mohammed Al-Amrani, one of the program's managers, says that "detective dogs" are more effective than traditional methods of manual detection, as they sniff out TNT explosives directly.

He also revealed that there are 290,000 mines, grenades, shells and other explosives leftover from conflicts in 595 villages in 20 Yemeni governorates. According to Al-Amrani, Yemen's high number of unexploded ordinance can be traced back to its 1962 revolution, which led to the eruption of civil conflicts around the country. In the second half of 2013 alone, Al-Amrani says that almost 750 casualties—most of whom women and children—resulted from land mines.

Mohammad Obaid, a military expert in the Yemeni army, explains that there are two ways of planting mines: The organized method, in which maps are used that allow for the later detection and removal of mines, and the random way, which is intended to cause maximum damage and claim as many enemy lives as possible.

He goes on, saying that "unfortunately, most buried mines and other explosives have been randomly planted without using maps to determine their locations. This is the case in recently effected areas like Amran, Abyan, and Sa'ada governorates."

Al-Amrani stated that the total number of mine victims recorded by the National Program for Eliminating Land Mines was 5,500 between the period 2000 and 2014. In addition, there have been 43 victims among the technical teams tasked with removing mines, 13 of whom have died.

Twelve-year-old Ayman Al-Said, who lives in Abyan, was severely injured when a mine detonated beneath his feet in late 2012. After he and his family were evacuated and fled to Aden in the course of ongoing fighting between Al-Qaeda and the military, they returned to their village in Abyan and its mine-stricken lands.

Two years after his tragic accident, Ayman still suffers from injuries and is unable to attend school.

According to Al-Khather, the Qualitative Center for Eliminating Land Mines made substantial progress since first using dogs in 2004. He details that between January 2005 and December 2013, 6,702,457 square meters of land and 150 fields in Sana'a, Hadramout, Ibb, Al-Beidha, Al-Dhale, Lahj, and Abyan governorates were cleared.

However, Al-Khather states that "the mission is still ongoing as con-

flicts inside the country [and the use of mines] are still unabated."

Ismaiel Al-Er, a trainer for dog handlers, believes that thousands of lives have been saved in Yemen because of dogs.

"I have trained handlers on how to order dogs to sniff out TNT. I am proud of the dog handlers and I am proud of dogs who save the lives of people."

Currently, 15 dogs are deployed in Ibb governorate to detect mines leftover from the civil wars that took place between the north and the south prior to the 1990 unification.

Ahmed Rabei, a 35-year-old resident of Al-Sada district in Ibb, says, "we feel happy seeing the dogs. There are a lot of places we do not visit because mines are believed to be buried there. I hope all the mines in my area will be removed so that people can walk around safely."

Aside from dogs, several other methods have been used in de-mining operations around the world. In Mozambique earlier this year, in order to meet the country's deadline of becoming a mine-free zone, an army of rats was trained and deployed to detect land mines.

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