

Pastor Saeed Abedini's Story Adds to Iranian Ransom Controversy

As the nation continues to ask whether or not the Obama administration paid \$400 million to Iran as a ransom for several American hostages, one of those hostages has offered his unique perspective on the matter.

Pastor Saeed Abedini, an Iranian-American Christian who spent 3 1/2 years in Iranian prisons on charges of undermining the government through his past involvement in Iran's house-church movement, shared the details of his release with FOX Business Network's Trish Regan. In his interview, he said his captors said they were waiting on a second plane to arrive before he could be released.

"I just remember the night that we'd been in a airport—just take hours and hours there," he said. "And I asked one of the heads of prison police that was with us, that, 'Why are you not letting us to go to sit on the plane?' And he told me we are waiting for another plane, and if that plane take (sic) off, then we're going to let you go."

Abedini said he and the other hostages had been kept at the airport "for a night," waiting on the arrival of the "other plane." He said the police who were holding them said they would only be waiting for 20 minutes, "but it was hours and hours," and eventually the Americans were forced to sleep at the airport while they waited.

"When I asked them why you don't let us go, because the plane was there, pilot was there, everyone was ready that we leave the country, they said we are waiting for another plane, and until that plane doesn't come, we never let you go," he said.

Abedini said money was never mentioned, just the “other plane.” The Swiss plane that would eventually take them away was already there, so he wasn’t sure at the time what “other plane” they were talking about.

“They just told us about the—they told me about the plane,” he said. “So, the reason that they said, ‘You’re here in the airport is’—was just because we are waiting for another plane.”

He said he arrived at the airport around 2 p.m. the day prior to his release, waited the rest of that day and the overnight, and eventually left at 10 a.m. the next morning. He said he never saw or heard another plane, and he declined to say whether or not he thinks a ransom was paid for his release.

“We called these people terrorists, and for a reason. I don’t think this money will be used to build orphanages, which is what I was arrested for,” he said. “I would prefer it if the politicians would answer that question.”