

RELEASE IN
PART B6

From: Sidney Blumenthal [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, September 13, 2012 12:29 AM
To: H
Subject: H: More Magariaf privat reax (sent now as memo). Sid
Attachments: hrc memo more magariaf private reax 091312.docx

B6

CONFIDENTIAL

September 13, 2012

For: Hillary
From: Sid
Re: More Magariaf private reax

SOURCE: Sources with direct access to the Libyan National Transitional Council, as well as the highest levels of European Governments, and Western Intelligence and security services.

1. On September 12, 2012 Libyan President Mohammed Yusef el Magariaf told senior advisors that the death of the U.S. Ambassador at the hands of Islamist militia forces represents a threat to the future of the newly elected General National Congress (GNC) Government. According to a sensitive source, el Magariaf believes that the primary goal of this and other attacks on Western facilities is to demonstrate that the GNC cannot protect its non-Islamic friends. Libyan security officials believe that the attack was carried out by forces of the Islamist militia group calling itself the Ansar al Sharia brigade; working out of camps in the Eastern suburbs of Benghazi. These officials added that their sources indicate that this group is led by former members of the old Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG), some of whom are loyal to Islamist General Abdelhakim Belhaj. The same officials were quick to point out that they have no evidence that Belhaj had any direct involvement in this attack. They also have no direct information as to whether this assault has anything to do with the death of Libyan born al Qai'da leader Abu Yahya al- Libi, but they are pursuing this theme. These officials do believe that the attackers having prepared to launch their assault took advantage of the cover provided by the demonstrations in Benghazi protesting an internet production seen as disrespectful to the prophet Mohammed.

2. According to this source, the immediate events were set in motion by a statement made by a Muslim Cleric in Egypt saying that the internet film was going to be shown across the United States on September 11 in an effort to insult Muslims on the anniversary of the attacks on the New York World Trade Center in 2001. This statement inspired increasingly hostile demonstrations at the U.S.

Embassy in Cairo, and at diplomatic facilities in Libya. In Benghazi, reporting from security sources states, approximately twenty one (21) Ansar al Sharia fighters left their base in East Benghazi just after sundown infiltrated the crowd of about 2,000 demonstrators at the U.S. Consulate. These forces, operating under cover of darkness, opened fire on the consulate, eventually setting it on fire with rocket propelled grenades. These fighters then withdrew to their camp. El Magariaf ordered security officials to identify and arrest the attackers, adding that he had been in touch with Egyptian President Mohammed Morsi, and the two agreed that their intelligence and security personnel will cooperate in this matter. (Note: Some of the Libyan officials believe that the entire demonstration was organized as cover for the attack, however; they point out that there is no evidence of such a complex operation at this time.

3. (Source Comment: In the opinion of this individual, Libyan security officers also informed el Magariaf that the attacks had been planned for approximately one month, based on casing information obtained during an early demonstration at the U.S. consulate in Benghazi. The attackers were, in the opinion of these individuals, looking for an opportunity to approach the consulate under cover in a crowd. These officials add that government security officers admitted to el Magariaf that they do not have the physical capacity to locate, attack, and destroy the Ansar al-Sharia brigade, among others. They describe these forces as well-trained, hardened killers; many of whom have spent time in Afghanistan and Yemen. These fighters are located in camps in Eastern Libya; and Libyan officials doubt they can penetrate these camps because the militia's are better armed than the forces of the new National Army.

4. In the opinion of a separate source El Magariaf continues to believe that the attacks were planned and carried out in a political atmosphere where a portion of the Libyan population is focused on past cooperation between Western intelligence and security services, and the regime of former dictator Muammar al Qaddafi. According to this source, el Magariaf realizes that the death of the U.S. Ambassador dictates that he must find tangible solutions to the problems tied to disarming the militias, dealing Salafist violence against the followers of Sufi beliefs, and efforts to discredit his government through linking him to Western intelligence services. El Magariaf instructed his security officials to cooperate with their U.S. counterparts. He also warned all of his advisors to be prepared for U.S. retaliation against the suspected perpetrators of this attack, and the angry public reaction that is sure to follow.

5. (Source Comment: A separate, particularly sensitive source added that in private conversation el Magariaf stated that if his government cannot protect a senior diplomatic official, foreign businesses will not be willing to risk opening up new operations in Libya. According to this sensitive source, el Magariaf believes that a number of the Islamist militias are now being influenced al Qai'da and other radical groups; working out of camps in the Eastern and Southeastern parts of the country. These groups are receiving aid and weapons from supporters in Sudan. In the end, el Magariaf added that while he does not expect U.S. officials to focus on this point, he believes the attacks against the interests and citizens of the U.S. and other Western states are aimed first at overthrowing his government, and replacing it with a strict Islamic Republic dominated by Salafist leaders. Magariaf also warned that tribal militias loyal to the Qaddafi family continue to present an equally dangerous threat to the new Government.)

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