

RELEASE IN PART B6

From: sbwhoep [redacted]
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CONFIDENTIAL

December 16, 2011

For: HRC
From: Sid
Re: Egyptian Politics and Security/Army & Muslim Brotherhood

SOURCE: Sources with access to the highest levels of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, The Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, and Western Intelligence and security services.

1. On December 15, 2011, an individual with access to the highest levels of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) stated in strict confidence that Supreme Guide Mohamed Badie and his closest advisors are developing plans for managing Egyptian security matters following the adoption of a new constitution, and election of a civilian government in 2012. According to these sources, Badie is convinced that the new Egypt will be an Islamic state, loosely based on the Turkish Model, with the government and military establishing a working relationship under Islamic principles. Advisors to Badie and Mohamed Mursi, leader of the MB's Freedom and Justice Party (FJP), are confident that they can establish a business environment that will promote cooperation with Western firms. That said, these individuals say that these Western firms must adapt to the fact that Egypt will not return to the days of former President Hosni Mubarak, when, they believe, Western companies and governments dictated policy to the government in Cairo.

2. In the opinion of these individuals, the FJP and the Salafist al Nour party will reach an understanding that allows them to establish an Islamic regime. Badie realizes that he must proceed at a reasonable pace, and avoid alarming the senior ranks of the military under the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF), or the Western governments in question. However, these MB leaders are now confident that while Field Marshall Mohammed Hussein Tantawi and the senior levels of the SCAF will feel threatened by the establishment of an Islamic government, the rank and file of the army, including members of the officer corps at the rank of major and below will support the new Islamic regime.

3. According to these sources, the MB quietly monitors the opinions of the rank and file members of the Egyptian military, and they believe up to 90 percent of these troops will support the establishment of a government that follows strict Islamic principles. This is particularly true in terms of the relationship between Egypt and Israel. Badie strongly believes that these soldiers and junior officers wish to follow a policy that does not support close relations with their Israeli counterparts, particularly regarding operations against Palestinian forces under Hamas. At the same time, Badie and his closest advisors agree that the security services in Egypt must work to avoid radical or terrorist groups using the country as a base for operations against the West and Western interests in the Middle East.

4. (Source Comment: Speaking in confidence, Mursi states that, despite Badie's best intentions, it will be difficult for this new, Islamic government to control the rise of al Qaeda and other radical/terrorist groups. According to these individuals, discreet MB surveys of the officer corps have found that many of the young Army and Air Force officers who have either traveled to the United States for instruction, or trained with American military forces, have returned to Egypt with a deep hostility toward Western society in general, and the culture in the United States in particular. In the opinion of these individuals, while these young officers find the level of democracy in America fascinating, they are hostile to the activities of Christian and Jewish religious organizations, which they believe are the enemies of Islamic thought. These sources believe that Tantawi, his generals and senior colonels are, for the most part, well disposed toward the people and government of the United States. However, they also believe that after the new government takes power in Egypt these senior officers will be in no position to control their troops and will, in short, order be replaced by the current group of captains and majors. These individuals point out that the moderate Islamic government of Turkey has followed a version of this strategy: replacing established, secular generals with younger officers, who support the new regime.)

5. In the opinion of these very sensitive sources, the developments associated with the establishment of even a moderate Islamic government in Egypt will complicate the efforts of Western firms and banks to carry on business in that country. These institutions must follow the development of the new government with care, and plan accordingly.