

RELEASE IN PART B6

From: Sidney Blumenthal [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, September 12, 2012 12:50 AM
To: H
Subject: H: Magariaf on attack on US in Libya. Sid
Attachments: hrc memo magariaf, attack on US in Libya 091212.docx

B6

CONFIDENTIAL

September 12, 2012

For: Hillary
From: Sid
Re: Magariaf and the attack on US in Libya

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. During the afternoon of September 11, 2012 new interim President of Libya Mohammed Yussef el Magariaf spoke in private with senior advisors, including the members of the Libyan Muslim Brotherhood, to discuss the attacks by demonstrators on U.S. missions in Tripoli and Benghazi. According to a sensitive source, el Magariaf was shaken by the attacks, and gave permission to commanders on the ground for security forces to open fire over the heads of the crowds in an effort to break up mobs attacking the missions. During this session, a senior security officer told el Magariaf that the attacks on that day were inspired by what many devout Libyan viewed as a sacrilegious internet video on the prophet Mohammed originating in America. The Libyan attacks were also inspired by and linked to an attack on the U.S. mission in Egypt on the same day. At the same time, el Magariaf noted in strong terms that the atmosphere that made fostered these incidents in Libya is the product of widespread publicity regarding the security situation in the country between 2004 and 2010 and

the cooperation that developed between a number of Western Intelligence services and the regime of former dictator Muammar al Qaddafi.

2. This source added that el Magariaf's advisors believe that this situation adds to the President's growing concern over the unpredictable effects that will follow current covert efforts by his political opponents to link him directly to foreign intelligence services. According to a separate sensitive source, el Magariaf noted that his opponents had often tried to connect him to the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) through the National Front for the Salvation of Libya (NFSL), a group established in opposition to former dictator Muammar al Qaddafi, which el Magariaf led in the 1980s. In the opinion of this individual el Magariaf believes that he can survive potential negative publicity in this regard, but if this situation continues to develop in this manner it will complicate his efforts to establish an orderly administration in the country. Again, he stated that the attacks on the U.S. missions were as much a result of the atmosphere created by this campaign, as the controversial internet video.

3. At the same time, this individual noted that several of el Magariaf's advisors share his concerns in this matter, pointing out that the return of Qaddafi's intelligence chief Abdullah al-Senoussi for trial in Libya has heightened public interest in the liaison relationships conducted by the CIA and British Secret Intelligence Service (SIS) with Qaddafi's intelligence and security services. These same individuals note that they believe Islamist militia forces under the command of General Abdelhakim Belhaj captured files and documents describing this relationship from Qaddafi's offices in Tripoli. This fascination with Western intelligence operations in Qaddafi's Libya is also driven by Human Rights Watch (HRW) and its efforts to tie Western governments to human rights violations committed under Qaddafi. In this regard HRW has interviewed at least fourteen (14) individuals claiming that they were turned over to Qaddafi's forces by the Western powers. Belhaj is included in this group.

4. (Source Comment: In the opinion of a very sensitive source, el Magariaf's enemies are working to take advantage of his suspected links to the CIA at a time when Western intelligence services are under scrutiny in Libya. They also fear that this situation will only grow more complex as Qaddafi's son Saif al Islam Qaddafi and al Senousi are brought before Libyan courts to answer for their crimes under the old regime, particularly during the 2011 revolution. These individuals believe both men will be linked to Western Intelligence during their trials.)

5. According to this individual, el Magariaf is working with the Muslim Brotherhood and other Islamist groups to defuse this situation. He is particularly concerned by the level of violence between Sufi Muslims and Salafists, and believes he must maintain his reputation for impartiality if he is to defuse this growing problem. As he works to organize the government, and disarm the militias, he cannot afford to lose the respect and trust of the Libyan people, especially at a time when cultural clashes between followers of the mystical Sufi tradition and ultra-conservative Salafis

have taken central stage in the new Libya. This source adds that these religious conflicts were largely unknown during Qaddafi's rule.

6. (Source Comment: This source added that the individuals interviewed for the HRW report were former members of the Libyan Islamist Fighting Group (LIFG), an Islamist group formed in opposition to Gaddafi's controversial interpretations of Islam. These LIFG fighters fled the country in the late 1980s and went to Afghanistan to join the fight against the Soviet Union while also gaining training and experience for their own struggle. A separate source adds that messages to Libya from the CIA and SIS were found among the Tripoli Documents published by HRW, indicating that the United States and Britain were eager to help Libya capture several senior LIFG figures, including its co-founders, Belhaj and Sami al-Saadi.)

7. As Libyan authorities struggle to control the armed rings that refuse to surrender weapons following last year's civil war, Salafis, who say Islam should return to the simple ways followed by Mohammed, have established their own armed gangs in post-Gaddafi Libya. They view Sufi practices as idolatrous. Since the start of the Arab Spring uprising across the region, a number of Sufi sites have been attacked in Egypt, Mali and Libya. Magariaf is determined to establish a democratic state based on Islamic principles. This individual adds that Magariaf remains dedicated to the idea of building a tolerant Islamic state in Libya. El Magariaf's opinions continue to be shaped by his experience with Qaddafi, whom he felt built a cult of personality in violation of all of the basic ideas of Islam.

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