SECRET

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO LOG-00 ADS-00 INR-07 SSO-00 AMAD-01 INRE-00 ONY-00
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FM AMBASSADOR CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9421
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DIA WASHDC

SECRET SECTION 01 OF 03 CAIRO 09981

DEPARTMENT ONLY FOR NEA/EGY, INR/DB, INR/NBSA

E.O. 12356: DRCLE:OAMR
TAGS: POSV, ASECA, DINS, KG, SA, IR, DK, AF, AC, UR
SUBJECT: CONVERSATIONS WITH A MEMBER OF "THE ISLAMIC GROUP": (1) IDENTITY AND LEADERSHIP

REF: A. CAIRO 9476
    B. CAIRO 5506 (AND PREVIOUS)
    C. CAIRO 8608

1. SECRET - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY: A YOUNG LAWYER OF "THE ISLAMIC GROUP" (OR "JIHAD", AS IT IS CALLED BY THE GOVERNMENT) ASSERTED THAT HIS WELL-ORGANIZED GROUP NUMBERS SOME 150,000 - 200,000, IN ADDITION TO THE "SMALL NUMBER -- 1500 -- DETAINED SINCE APRIL 1," GROUPS SUCH AS JIHAD, AL-NAGUN MIN AL-NAR, TAKFIR WAL HIJRA, ETC., EITHER NO LONGER EXIST OUTSIDE PRISON WALLS OR HAVE FEW FOLLOWERS. INSTEAD, AL-GAMA'A AL-ISLAMIYA, OR THE ISLAMIC GROUP, AND THE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD, ARE THE ONLY SUCH ISLAMIC GROUPS ACTIVE ON THE NATIONAL LEVEL. THE SECRET

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GROUP DIFFERS WITH THE MB BOTH IN MEANS AND "SOME OBJECTIVES," SMALLER GROUPS EXIST ON THE LOCAL LEVEL, BUT LACK THE KIND OF CORRECT RELIGIOUS GUIDANCE PROVIDED BY "THE GROUP'S MUFTI OR PRINCE", DR. 'OMAR.
ABDURRAHMAN, WHO WAS JAILED IN FAYOUM ON APRIL 7, OPERATIONAL LEADER, HOWEVER, IS
EXPECTED TO BE RELEASED FROM PRISON SHORTLY
AFTER HIS DETENTION WITHOUT CHARGES SINCE LAST
DECEMBER. [ ] HAD BEEN A MEMBER OF THE GROUP'S
11-MAN "CONSULTATIVE ASSEMBLY" WHEN HE WAS IMPRISONED
IN SEPTEMBER, 1981, FOR SEVERAL YEARS; THE OTHER TEN
LEADERS REMAIN IN PRISON OR WERE EXECUTED. THE ISLAMIC
GROUP IS NEITHER "SECRET" NOR "VIOLENT", HE CLAIMED;
HIS MOTIVE IN INFORMING US ABOUT HIS GROUP WAS TO
PRESENT A "TRUE" PICTURE IN THE FACE OF GOVERNMENT
MISREPRESENTATION OF THEM. (REF A SUMMARIZES THIS AND
ADDITIONAL MESSAGES REPORTING IN GREATER DETAIL THE
ISLAMIC GROUP'S RELATIONS WITH THE GOVERNMENT AND WITH
FOREIGN COUNTRIES.) END SUMMARY.

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BACKGROUND
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3. SETTING AND BIO: IN REPEATED RECENT CONTACTS,
SEVERAL AT THE EMBASSY, RELATED TO
EMBOSSES HIS VIEWS AS A FOLLOWER OF 'OMAR ABDURRAHMAN,
AND THUS A MEMBER OF "THE ISLAMIC GROUP" (REF B), WHICH
THE GOVERNMENT CALLS "AL-JIHAD".

HE HAS BEEN IMPRISONED AND TORTURED SEVERAL TIMES.

4. MOTIVES: [ ] CLAIMED THAT HE WAS INFORMING US
ABOUT HIS GROUP AS A RESULT OF A "CHANGE IN THINKING"
WITHIN THE GROUP. THEY WERE CONCERNED ABOUT THE
"RADICAL AND VIOLENT IMAGE" OF THE GROUP PRESENTED BY
THE GOVERNMENT. (A CA. JANUARY 1989 BOOKLET WHICH
GAVE US, TRANSMITTED SEPARATELY, SIMILARLY
ASSERTED THAT ITS PURPOSE WAS TO PRESENT THE TRUE

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WHO ARE THE "ISLAMIC GROUP?"

5. MEMBERSHIP AND ORGANIZATION: [ ] ASSERTED THAT THE GROUP NUMBERS ABOUT 150,000 - 200,000; THUS THE 1500 JAILED SINCE APRIL 1 IS A SMALL NUMBER." MOREOVER, EACH MEMBER HAS A LARGE FAMILY, AND THE FAMILY NATURALLY SHARES HIS BELIEFS AND SUPPORTS HIM. THERE ARE MEMBERS IN EVERY GOVERNORATE. THE MEMBERS ARE UNIFIED IN A SINGLE IDEOLOGY, THOUGH THERE ARE DIFFERENT "STYLES" OF ACTION FROM REGION TO REGION. [ ] PASSED A THICK SHEAF OF PHOTOCOPIED HANDWRITTEN PAGES EXPLAINING THE GROUP'S IDEOLOGY; ALSO BEING TRANSMITTED SEPARATELY.) NONETHELESS WE ARE ONE, ORGANIZED GROUP: A MEMBER IN THE NEW VALLEY (EXTREME SECRET

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6. LEADERSHIP: 'OMAR 'ABDURRAHMAN IS OUR "MUFTI" (GIVER OF RELIGIOUS LEGAL JUDGEMENTS) OR "AMIR 'AAM" (GENERAL COMMANDER OR PRINCE), BUT OUR "OPERATIONAL LEADER" ("AMIR AL-HARAKA") IS [ ] (SEE REF B FOR [ ] REPORT OF 'ABDURRAHMAN'S INVOLVEMENT IN RIOTS IN PAYOUH APRIL 7 AND SUBSEQUENT ARREST.)
8. "THE GROUP" VS. OTHERS: AL-JIHAD, AL-TAKFIR WAL HIJRA, AL-NAGUN MIN AL-NAR, AL-TAWAQQUF WAL. TARAYVIN (WHO ARE REALLY THE SAME AS AL-NAGUN) ARE EITHER NO LONGER IN EXISTENCE, OR HAVE FEW MEMBERS OUTSIDE PRISON, AND THEN ONLY ON A LOCAL BASIS. THE ONLY ISLAMIC ORGANIZATION ON A NATIONAL LEVEL IS THE ISLAMIC GROUP. THE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD (MB) IS A NATIONAL ORGANIZATION BUT THEY ARE PART OF THE GOVERNING ESTABLISHMENT. WE REJECT THE CONCEPT OF "TAKFIR" (NOTE: CONDEMNING OTHERS, SUCH AS THE GOVERNMENT, AS INFIDELS) AND THUS ALSO REJECT THE IDEA THAT WE MUST
SHUN INFIDELS (NOTE: THE IDEA OF HIJRA, OR FLIGHT, OR 'UZLA, ISOLATION FROM SIN). WE REJECT VIOLENCE, BUT

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SECRET SECTION 03 OF 03 CAIRO 09981

DEPARTMENT ONLY FOR NEA/EGV, INR/DB, INR/NESA

E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR
TAGS: DGV, ASEC, PINSS, EG, SA, IR, PK, AF, AG, UR
SUBJECT: CONVERSATIONS WITH A MEMBER OF "THE ISLAMIC GROUP": (I) IDENTITY AND LEADERSHIP
ONLY STRIKE BACK WITH FORCE IN SELF-DEFENSE. THE
GOVERNMENT PINS THE NAME "JIHAD" ON US, AND BLAMES US
FOR ATTACKS ON CHURCHES, BUT NONE OF OUR MEMBERS WERE
INVOLVED IN A SINGLE ATTACK AGAINST CHRISTIAN INTERESTS
ANYWHERE IN EGYPT.

9. DIFFERENCES WITH THE MB: WE DIFFER WITH THE MB'S
TACTICS AND SOME OF THEIR OBJECTIVES. OF COURSE, WE SHARE THE GOAL OF IMPOSING ISLAMIC LAW IN EGYPT, BUT WE SEEK THE PUBLIC INTEREST IN CALLING FOR AN ISLAMIC REGIME, WHEREAS THE MB'S GOALS ARE PRIMARILY PERSONAL INTERESTS AND PROPERTY INTERESTS. WE ALSO REJECT THE GAMES THEY PLAY WITH THE REGIME; THEY ARE EVEN PUTTING FORWARD TO THE GOVERNMENT MB CANDIDATES AS CABINET MINISTERS. THEY HIDE THEIR OBJECTIVES; WE ARE OPEN ABOUT OURS. WE DO NOT COOPERATE WITH THEM. FOR EXAMPLE, THEY HAD MEMBERS ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF
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THE LAWYERS' SYNDICATE, BUT WE, NOT THEY, WERE THE ONES WHO PROVOKED THE CRISIS THERE (IN JANUARY). THE "ISLAMIC" COMMITTEE OF THE LAWYERS' SYNDICATE THAT IS PREPARING FOR THE UPCOMING SYNDICATE ELECTIONS [_________________] WE HOPE WE WILL HAVE THREE CANDIDATES IN THOSE ELECTIONS. (COMMENT: THE TWO "ISLAMIC" MEMBERS OF THE PREVIOUS SYNDICATE BOARD WERE MB. END COMMENT.) WE WILL NOT COOPERATE WITH THE MB IN THE SHURA COUNCIL ELECTIONS.

10. OTHER GROUPS: LOCAL GROUPS OF ISLAMIC YOUTH EXIST AROUND THE COUNTRY. BECAUSE THEY LACK PROPER RELIGIOUS GUIDANCE, THEY DO CRAZY THINGS; THEN THE GOVERNMENT GIVES THEM SOME NAME AND FALSELY ASSOCIATES THEM WITH US. FOR EXAMPLE, "AL-GHURABA" ("THE ALIENS" -- CITED IN A PRESS REPORT ABOUT FAYOU0M) IS A GROUP OF TEN OR FIFTEEN YOUTHS WHO ARE NOT CONNECTED TO US; HOWEVER, SOME OF THE PEOPLE INVOLVED IN BOMBINGS AND INCIDENTS IN FAYOU0M ARE GROUP MEMBERS. ONE TIME WHEN I WAS IN JAIL, I MET THE KIDS WHO BOMBED VIDEO CLUBS A FEW YEARS AGO. THE BOYS WERE TEN TO FIFTEEN YEARS OLD. I ASKED THEM WHY THEY DID SUCH A CRAZY THING IN THE NAME OF ISLAM. THEY TOLD ME THEY "WANTED TO DO SOMETHING FOR ISLAM", AND CAME UP WITH THIS IDEA ON THEIR OWN. THIS SHOWS THEIR LACK OF PROPER RELIGIOUS GUIDANCE. WE SHOW VIDEOS, INCLUDING SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT VIDEOS IN OUR MOSQUES. WHY SHOULD WE BOMB VIDEO CLUBS? (COMMENT: __________________ PAMPHLET, HOWEVER, LISTED THE SEIZURE OF PORNOGRAPHIC MATERIALS AS AMONG THE GROUP'S "CONDEMNING OF THE EVIL AND ORDERING OF THE GOOD" ACTIVITIES." END COMMENT.)
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11. IDEOLOGICAL INFLUENCES: SEYYED QUTEH, ESPECIALLY HIS BOOK "MILESTONES ON THE ROAD," IS THE ISLAMIC THINKER TO WHOM WE ARE CLOSEST. THE ME HAS STRAYED FROM HIM LONG AGO, BEGINNING WITH THEIR IMPRISONMENT IN 1964. OTHERS THAT ARE CLOSE TO US ARE [ ]

12. SUBSEQUENT MESSAGES REPORT [ ] DESCRIPTION OF THE GROUP'S RELATIONS WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF EGYPT AND WITH FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

WISNER