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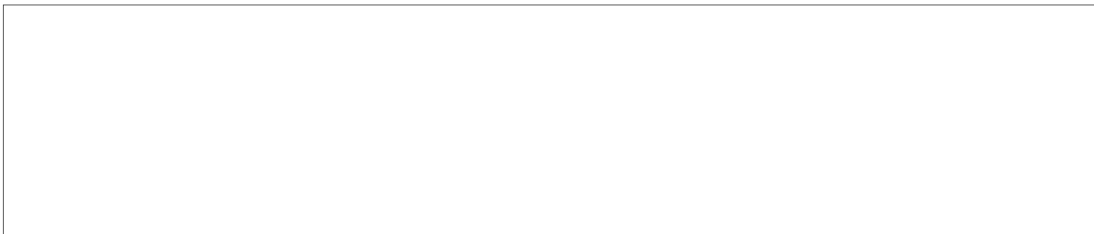
ENVELOPE

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WARNING: TOPIC: DOMESTIC POLITICAL, INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL, LEADER

SERIAL: GMP20050419035001

/***** THIS IS A COMBINED MESSAGE *****/

BODY

COUNTRY: EGYPT, UNITED STATES

SUBJ: TAKE 1 OF 3--Cairo Paper Interviews Muslim Brotherhood
official

SOURCE: Cairo Afaq Arabiyah (Internet Version--WWW)
in Arabic 14
Apr 05

TEXT:

[Interview with Dr Abd al-Mun'im Abu-al-Futuh, member of the
Guidance Bureau of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) Group in Egypt and
Secretary General of the Arab Medical Association, by Muhammad
Husayn, in Cairo; date not given]
[FBIS Translated Excerpt]

[Husayn] Why has the MuslimBrotherhood [MB] taken to the street

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to declare its position toward the issue of reform?

[Futuh] MB activity has never been at any one day isolated from the feelings of the rank and file. In the last two years, for example, we went out to hold a rally at the sports stadium to express our rejection of the war against Iraq. We also staged a rally, which started from the al-Azhar Mosque. This was not the first time we took to the street on the issue of reform. Moreover, the MB young men at the universities and professional associations staged rallies to declare their position toward reform.

The reason we took to the street was that as an MB and as an Egyptian national faction, we discovered that there were attempts to impose foreign hegemony over our country and that the ruling regime was backing down in the face of these attempts. Our national and Islamic sense of belonging has imposed on us specific duties, i.e. that we should not stand by as spectators or with our hands folded, or allow the infringement on our national sovereignty, or tolerate the attempts at foreign hegemony or the marginalization of Egypt's role on the national or international levels, or the scientific, technological and cultural backwardness, or the strangulating economic crisis, or the political, economic or social corruption.

[Husayn] However, some people said that the MB took to the street as a reaction to the US pressure on the Egyptian regime, not the contrary. What do you think?

[Futuh] Let them understand it as they want. However, what is certain is that the MB, which is the largest political force in the arena, was perhaps the only force, which the Americans did not make any contacts with. The MB did not make any contacts with the Americans either. The MB was perhaps the only political force, which the US ambassador did not confer with. In fact, we refused to confer with him while he conferred with heads of political parties, politicians and other officials.

We did so for the purpose of coping with the US pressure, because we knew that while the apparent goal of this pressure was to demand democracy and freedom, they want for Egypt a freedom and democracy in the US style. As for us the MB, we want for Egypt democracy and freedom that is compatible with the Egyptian Islamic culture. Consequently, we had to say: "We had our own platform on the basis of which we are demanding reform."

We are offering ourselves to God:

[Husayn] But there are people who believe that through this action, the MB tried to offer itself to the US administration as the strong alternative to the ruling regime?

[Futuh] We only offer ourselves to God and then to our people. We do not offer ourselves like others do because from the standpoint of our religion, ethics and patriotism, we refuse the interference of the US administration in our internal affairs. How would we then offer ourselves to the US administration? It is others who are

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living on political opportunism, who have offered themselves to the Americans. They thought that everything that moved and worked did the same thing as they did.

[Husayn] Despite the MB denial more than once of not making any contacts with the Americans, there are those who insist on leveling this charge to the MB. What is your answer to this?

[Futuh] It is easy to accuse others. However, what is difficult is to provide evidence and proof of such accusations. All this is dishonest and untruthful talk. We challenge all honest nationalists to say that we are acting at the instructions of the US administration. We are only acting at the instructions of our Islamic and national conscience.

Regulation, not prohibition:

[Husayn] But why has the MB insisted on staging this rally despite the disapproval of the security services?

[Futuh] We have staged this rally because the Interior Ministry regrettably departed from the constitution and law. The role of the Interior Ministry is to regulate not to prohibit the rallies. We support the regulation of the rallies because everything should be regulated. We, as members of the MB, were raised on the respect of law and order. The principle of prohibition is applied by a despotic regime.

Instead of regulating the growth of the political parties, the regime prohibited them. Instead of regulating the publication of newspapers, it prohibited them. Consequently in such a case, no one should imagine that we would continue to be inactive toward a regime that was incapable of holding out in the way of foreign hegemony and did not want the people to hold out in the way of such hegemony. As the old saying goes: "It is not helping and it is not allowing others to help."

A New beginning:

[Husayn] In your view, was the MB rejection of the security ban on the rally a beginning of a new strategy of the MB dealing with the security service?

[Futuh] As MB's, we are still for regulating the rallies and the Interior Ministry should perform its duty in undertaking this regulation, not the prohibition. The security service would have done better had it deployed the thousands of officers and Central Security soldiers to do something productive for Egypt or to defend its national security instead of using them to confront our people, such as the MB and others.

[Husayn] Has not the MB exploited the weakness of the regime in the face of the US pressure and sought to make one step on the path of obtaining legitimacy?

[Futuh] It is true that the Egyptian regime is weak. Had we

/***** BEGINNING OF SECTION 2 *****/

SUBJ: TAKE 2 OF 3--Cairo Paper Interviews Muslim Brotherhood

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official

REF: 1. GMP20050419035001 Cairo Afaq Arabiyah (Internet Version--WWW) in Arabic 14 Apr 05 ///weak. Had we.

SOURCE: Cairo Afaq Arabiyah (Internet Version--WWW) in Arabic 14 Apr 05

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wanted to exploit the weakness of the regime, we would have done so on many occasions in which the regime was weak. Since when was the Egyptian regime strong in the face of the US pressure. For well over 20 years, the Egyptian regime was retreating in the face of the US pressure. It was weak when it released Israeli spy Azzam from prison, when it signed the nuclear non-proliferation treaty, when it retracted from many positions that infringed on national security.

All these were symptoms of the weakness of the regime, which we did not utilize. On the contrary, in the initiative launched by his eminence the General Guide about one year ago, we called on the regime to derive strength from its people and to unite itself with the people to confront foreign intervention. However, the regime did not heed our call. We do not want the Egyptian regime, whether it is headed by Husni Mubarak or someone else, to be weak. We are demanding that the regime become strong with the support of its own people, not by seeking protection from foreign and US forces.

We do not beg our rights:

[Husayn] However, have you not acted to achieve gains for the MB?

[Futuh] We have clearly declared that our movement as an MB seeks no personal gains or gains for the MB. We are not begging our rights and we accept any regime elected by the people. We have paid the price of defending Egypt since 1948. The sons of the MB are being arrested, imprisoned, executed and their blood spilled while the MB did not retaliate in reprisal for themselves or for their own group. They demanded their reward from God.

They devoted themselves to the service of Egypt through their educational, social and cultural work in the many institutions they run. Meanwhile, at a time when the regime recognized the Communists and the nationalists and allowed their parties to function, it did not recognize us. It is still using various forms of resistance against us, such as arrests, imprisonment, terrorization and even the killing of our sons.

No deals with anyone:

[Husayn] In your view, why is this duplicity in dealing with the political forces?

[Futuh] Because the regime does not want any political force in Egypt to become strong and does not want Egypt to become strong.

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Otherwise, it would have sought to create a strong civil society and strong groups and parties. Nonetheless, it is working for weakening society so as to continue to exercise its despotism, tyranny and corruption without anyone confronting it.

[Husayn] Is the regime afraid of the MB?

[Futuh] It is natural for the regime to be afraid of the MB. It is even afraid of everything in Egypt. The more popular any political force grows, whether it is the MB or others, the more scared the regime becomes. The regime is not fighting the MB because of its Islamic orientation, but because it is a large popular force. Consequently, the policy of the regime is to weaken the Egyptian people so as the Egyptian people would not be able to exercise their control on the regime's practices and corruption?

[Husayn] What is the truth about what has been said that the MB only took to the street to support external issues such as Palestine, Iraq and others, that their rally on 27 March was the first in which they held to support local issues, and that this step was very belated?

[Futuh] It could be that this step was belated because a large organization should have comprehensive calculations. However, it is untrue that this was the first time we took to the street to support a local issue. We took to the street when the Camp David Treaty was concluded in 1979 and many MB members were arrested. We also staged demonstrations in 1981 to stop the sectarian sedition, which some people tried to bring to a head. [Passage omitted on the rally held at the Cairo sports stadium]

[Husayn] What is your perception as an MB group of the relationship between you and the ruling regime in the upcoming period?

[Futuh] The future of our movement is clear. We will not allow the outbreak of chaos in Egypt. We will confront any party or persons trying to create chaos for the benefit of the Americans. We are also determined to exercise our legal and constitutional rights through gatherings, processions and political action. We are also determined to complete the upcoming presidential and parliamentary elections through fair methods. We will respect any People's Assembly or president elected through free and fair elections. These are the landmarks of our movement. Moreover, we will not clash with anyone or be the cause of hurting anyone. We will seek cooperation with all the Egyptian political forces to stop the onslaught on Egypt.

[Husayn] What is your platform for executing this perception?

[Futuh] We shall exercise all forms of constitutional and legal pressure on the regime, which does not want reform, through peaceful gatherings, processions and conferences. We hope to stage these processions under a regime that can safeguard the image of the Egyptians as a cultured people. [Passage omitted noting that the more danger is posed to Egypt, the more concessions are given by a

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regime that should abandon power]

[Husayn] President Mubarak excluded impress statements what he described as the rise of religiously based political parties and added that the MB could join the already existing parties. What do you think?

[Futuh] In many of his statements, president Mubarak insisted every time the subject of the MB was mentioned on saying that "we rejected the establishment of religious parties" although we were clear. We have declared dozens of times and our declarations reached the president himself through his assistants that as MB's, we rejected the rise of religious parties.

The MB is demanding a political civil party with an Islamic term reference as is the case with the National Democratic Party [NDP]. The difference is only in the function. The NDP is a corrupt

/***** BEGINNING OF SECTION 3 *****/

SUBJ: TAKE 3 OF 3--Cairo Paper Interviews Muslim Brotherhood official

REF: 1. GMP20050419035001 Cairo Afaq Arabiyah (Internet Version--WWW) in Arabic 14 Apr 05 ///is a corrupt

SOURCE: Cairo Afaq Arabiyah (Internet Version--WWW) in Arabic 14 Apr 05

TEXT:

party and we do not want a corrupt party. The NDP shelves the Egyptian constitution, which affirms in its second article that Islam is the main source of legislation. No party could ever rise in Egypt with a term reference other than Islam. Otherwise, it would be violating the constitution.

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