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## I. Egypt Escalates vs. Britain

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# Egypt may take case to World Court

The Egyptian government escalated its campaign against Britain on Dec. 15, when its newspaper, *Al Ahram*, raised the threat that Egypt might go to the International Court in The Hague, over British safehousing of terrorists.

On Dec. 14, the *Al Ahram* reporter in Qatar, asked UN High Commission on Refugees official Adel Yassin what Egypt could do about Britain providing safehousing for terrorists, under the cover of "political asylum." *Al Ahram* prominently published the UN official's response: "Egypt has the right to seek international arbitration, to force Britain to extradite wanted terrorists. In this case, the Court can decide in favor of Egypt, especially because Britain is one of the signatories of the refugees agreement, and is committed, thereby, to extradite those who are convicted for crimes against humanity."

That Egypt might go to the World Court, or similar forums, had earlier been suggested by coverage in the Egyptian government media, in their ridicule of Britain's perverse use of the concept of "asylum" to justify harboring terrorists.

On Dec. 7, the Egyptian government news agency MENA issued an international wire on an *Al Ahram* article of the same date, which, MENA said, "violently assails Britain and other countries that shelter terrorists."

*Al Ahram* emphasized, MENA reported, that: "Political asylum as understood by Egypt, and as recognized by international laws and norms, is one that is granted to those who are persecuted in their own countries because of their political views, or those who are waging a national liberation revolution against foreign occupiers or fascist governments, not to those wanted by justice because of the crimes they boast of having committed, or terrorists who aim their weapons against innocent people, including pupils and tourists. Noting that Egypt has submitted to the British government documents incriminating terrorist Yasser al Sirri in several terrorist operations, *Al Ahram* expresses regret and surprise at the lack of any British reaction to the charges."

### Egypt calls in British ambassador

Meanwhile, on Dec. 14, Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa summoned British Ambassador to Egypt David Blatherwick, to hand him an official note, demanding Britain "stop providing a safe haven to terrorists, and cooperate with Egypt to counter terrorism," *Al Ahram* reported on Dec. 15.

Following the meeting, Musa, in an interview with the London *Times*, the British establishment's foreign policy

mouthpiece, blasted British culpability, and "called on Britain to stop the flow of money from Islamic radicals in London to terrorist groups in Egypt, and to ban preachers in British mosques calling for the assassination of foreign leaders," the *Times* reported. The *Times* said that Musa "was outraged by reports that £2.5 million had come from exiles in Britain to the outlawed Gamaa al-Islamiya," that is, the Islamic Group, which has claimed responsibility for the Luxor massacre.

The *Times* added that the Egyptian government "has blamed the Luxor massacre on terrorists funded and encouraged from abroad, and identified Britain as the main center for radicals plotting assassinations."

## Mubarak: British 'laxity, if not collusion'

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, referring to the terrorists responsible for the massacre of 62 people in Luxor, Egypt, on Nov. 17, said in a press conference in Aswan, Egypt on Nov. 23, that they "live in Britain, Afghanistan, and other countries, where they plan and finance their crimes. If these states had cooperated in eliminating these criminals, such crimes would not have happened."

"If a terrorist group has committed a crime, we have to find out who is behind them," he continued. "The terrorists live in England, and in other countries, like Afghanistan. They have committed crimes, and some of them have been sentenced. Despite all that, they are still living on English soil, and raise money, and plan [their actions], together with fugitives in Afghanistan. The whole lot of them are murderers."

"All these terrorist actions would not have happened if European states had not protected these terrorists," he concluded. "The harboring and financing of these terrorists by foreign powers, has helped increase the violence."

When a journalist suggested that Sudan, a frequent scapegoat for British crimes, was responsible, President Mubarak replied: "No. No. They exist in Europe and Afghanistan. Sudan has changed, and the situation is better there now. But there is coordination between those who are in England, and those in Afghanistan."

Asked about dialogue with the terrorists, President Mubarak responded: "Dialogue with whom? We tried for 14 to 20 years, and each time we had a dialogue with them, they became stronger. And if these foreign states had not harbored those who received hard sentences, all this would not have happened!"

European complaints that Egypt failed to protect foreign tourists were raised. President Mubarak exclaimed: "The terrorists who make the plans, and have the money, are living in Europe. And now, the terrorists have killed their children."

Therefore, they shouldn't be attacking us. How long are they going to protect terrorists? If you don't want your children killed, why do you protect terrorists, and give money to the murderers, who violate human rights; and they will continue to do so, as long as you give them safe haven."

President Mubarak stepped up his campaign later that day in an interview with the French daily *Libération*, in which he accused the British government of "laxity, if not collusion with Islamists who are refugees on British soil." Mubarak specifically denounced the former Conservative government of John Major, and British intelligence, for their failure to act against the London group. "We contacted [British Prime Minister] John Major and his security services. They found all sorts of excuses. We got nowhere. We are now asking the government of [Prime Minister] Tony Blair to return these men to us. If they have a problem with the law, the law can be changed, to protect people."

In an interview with the German weekly *Der Spiegel* on Dec. 8, President Mubarak charged: "I do not understand, why people on whose hands there is blood, are granted asylum in England. Why they are being granted the freedom to call, in interviews and newspaper articles, for the assassination of people who think differently. Why is the convicted assassin of a girl, Yasser al Sirri, being allowed to move and act freely? London asked us for documents on his criminal record. Well, we sent those documents, but nothing has moved, so far."

## Egyptian press exposes London's 'Lords of Terror'

The Egyptian government papers *Al Ahram* and *Al Akhbar*, among other Egyptian press, have repeatedly documented British protection for the Islamic Group, and other terrorist organizations safehoused in Britain. The following is a sampling of coverage since the Luxor attack.

***Al Akhbar*, Nov. 23, 1997:** Editorial by chief editor Galal Dwedar, entitled "Nest of Terror in London, and Murder of Englishmen in Luxor." "Britain harbors the heads of terrorism such as Yasser al Sirri. The British government, through giving haven to these fugitive leaders of terrorism in London, gives protection to the activities of these elements. This protection means an open invitation to commit more terrorist crimes, not only against Egyptians, but against its own citizens, as happened in the massacre in Luxor, where four English citizens were killed."

***Al Ahram*, Dec. 7, 1997:** Article by Mohammed Tuaima, entitled "How Can We Surround and Extradite London's Lords of Terror?" "London's share of terrorist groups alone, according to security sources, is 1,400," the article reports, "which include 4,000 members who are active. Security

sources describe these people as 'the lords of terrorism of England.' They live a life of luxury, preying on the money donated by the millionaires and terrorist organizations, both in Britain and abroad, for their terrorist operations.

"London's 'permanent interests' have always converged with the lords of terrorism who live in Britain, who never underestimate what their existence represents for British interests. Therefore, they behave with Britain in reciprocal manner, realizing the important political and social environment it provides for them."

***Al Ahram*, Dec. 11, 1997:** Egyptian government adviser Yahia Ahamad Al Banna writes, "From reviewing the facts of the Luxor incident, it becomes obvious that the planning was done by the leaders who are living abroad . . . then, after the attack, they—from Britain, where they live—announced their support of the cowardly attack on the innocent tourists. That announcement by itself was enough a reason to demand their extradition [from Britain to Egypt]."

"It is amazing that, while the British Home Minister Jack Straw revealed that the leaders of the terrorist organizations have made of London a center for their groups, the British government decided to grant political asylum to four terrorist leaders who were convicted in Egypt. This means that England has dropped its international commitments toward fighting terrorism, especially as the legions of terrorists threaten the security and stability of the Middle East; thus violating the resolutions of international agreements and the international agreements on banning and punishing terrorism, such as the 1937 agreement, the European agreement on terrorism 1976, the New York Agreement 1973, and the Montreal agreement on avoiding attacks against safety of aviation.

"Britain has become the center of the leadership of Egyptian terrorists; Switzerland has become a center for the Algerian terrorists. This has no explanation. It would not help them to claim 'defending democracy in other countries,' an excuse no longer valid for protecting terrorists.

"What is the U.S. going to do about this? When it had to do with Sudan's harboring of terrorists, President Clinton issued a ban on Sudanese diplomats travelling to the U.S. While in the Luxor attack, the U.S. administration merely declared that southern Egypt is a terrorist-infested area without mentioning the European states that are harboring the terrorists.

"There is no doubt that the direction of the threads of the case reveal eventually that there are common interests [between Britain and its terrorists], despite the difference in objectives. Through targetting tourism, leaders of terrorism are aiming at pressing the government to hold dialogue, in preparation to overthrowing it. Meanwhile, the states that are helping these terrorists are aiming at keeping the countries of the region in a continuous state of anxiety due to the activities of the Islamic groups, to defame Islam, and to give these states the right to fight them as a whole [Muslim states and individuals], as a new enemy following the fall of communism."