

**SHARI'A LAW, CULT VIOLENCE AND SYSTEM CHANGE IN EGYPT:  
THE DILEMMA FACING PRESIDENT MUBARAK**

Stephen C. Pelletiere

April 5, 1994

\*\*\*\*\*

The views expressed in this report are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Department of the Army, the Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government. This report is approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.

\*\*\*\*\*

Comments pertaining to this report are invited and should be forwarded to: Director, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA 17013-5050. Comments also may be conveyed directly to the author by calling commercial (717) 245-4080 or DSN 242-4080.

## FOREWORD

Egypt is one of the more economically deprived countries in the world. Societal stress is a major challenge. Few believe that Egypt will escape the poverty that has for so long oppressed it. For all its challenges, Egypt is of strategic importance to the United States, because of its leadership position in the Arab world. It would be extremely difficult for Washington to safeguard its interests in the Middle East without support from Cairo.

Recently, Egypt has been hit with an outbreak of religious strife that poses a threat to the rule of President Husni Mubarak. This study looks at the unrest, identifies the forces behind it, and prescribes steps that can be taken to alleviate the situation.

The Strategic Studies Institute is pleased to publish this monograph. We feel that it can contribute to serious discussions on the Middle East situation.

JOHN W. MOUNTCASTLE  
Colonel, U.S. Army  
Director, Strategic Studies Institute

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR

STEPHEN C. PELLETIERE received his Ph.D. in political science from the University of California, Berkeley, with an area specialty in the Middle East. From 1969-71 he studied Arabic at the American University in Cairo on a Center for Arabic Study Abroad (CASA) Fellowship. He returned to the Egyptian capital in 1975 on a Fulbright Research Fellowship. Dr. Pelletiere wrote his doctoral dissertation on Egyptian nationalism and the press during the pre-World War I period. He taught Middle East politics at the University of California, Berkeley; at Ripon College, in Wisconsin; and at Union College, Schenectady, NY. From 1982 until 1987, he was an intelligence officer in Washington monitoring the Iran-Iraq War. He came to the Strategic Studies Institute in 1988, and became a full professor in 1991. He has written two books on the Middle East: *The Kurds--An Unstable Element in the Gulf*, and *The Iran-Iraq War--Chaos in a Vacuum*. He is currently working on a book on the war in Kuwait.

## SUMMARY

This study looks at the system of rule in Egypt and discusses why it is in such trouble presently. In the eyes of many, the days of Egyptian President Husni Mubarak are numbered, because of the mounting violence inside his country.

The study concludes that Mubarak's difficulties stem from the economy, which is seen to be distributing wealth inequitably--it enriches the few, while the masses are driven to make more and more sacrifices to preserve a deteriorating standard of living.

Into this disturbed atmosphere has come the powerful Muslim Brotherhood, which has sparked a religious revival against corruption that apparently has gotten out of hand. Numerous religious cults have sprung up, calling for the restitution of the ancient law of Muhammad, the *shari'a*. The cultists are taking action against elements they feel have betrayed Islam.

To date, the religious forces have failed to win support they need to achieve their aim. However, a further serious decline in the standard of living could provide the opening they seek. Ironically, this may happen because of measures being taken by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which is pressing Mubarak to undertake free market reforms. The reforms would cause widespread unemployment, something the masses will not tolerate.

The study warns U.S. policymakers that before proceeding with the reforms, the mood of the Egyptian people, as well as the religious movement, should be carefully assessed. Signs indicate the religious forces are split, and--this being the case--it may be possible to exploit this schism in ways that support the interests of the United States.

## SHARI'A LAW, CULT VIOLENCE AND SYSTEM CHANGE IN EGYPT: THE DILEMMA FACING PRESIDENT MUBARAK

### Introduction.

Egypt's security problem must be seen in context of its economic plight. The country has been in economic difficulty for years. However, it is now entering a particularly dangerous phase, trying to move to a market economy from one that is state-controlled. This is always hard and is frequently accompanied by violence, but in Egypt it is doubly difficult because few countries in the Third World have turned more to socialism than Egypt.<sup>1</sup>

An additional complication for the Egyptians is their demographic situation. Egypt has too many people and not enough resources to support them. Over 56 million Egyptians live in a restricted area along the Nile River (in Cairo alone there are over 16 million).<sup>2</sup> Further, since World War II, Egypt has been moving people out of the countryside (the *baladi* areas, i.e., the villages) and into Cairo and Alexandria, the two major cities where they are finding it increasingly hard to support themselves.<sup>3</sup> Millions are on the dole; if they are not on it outright, they are subsisting on something akin to it. In the public sector the mass of civil servants performs essentially meaningless tasks created to provide them a living.<sup>4</sup>

Egypt owes its bloated public sector to two factors. First, it had been the policy of Egyptian governments since World War II to provide free education through college. Second, anyone who could obtain a degree was guaranteed a government post. Practically all government-provided jobs, however, are dead ends. At the same time, for many Egyptians, until recently, this was not a problem; to be an *effendim*, a man of education (if not of property), was something avidly sought.<sup>5</sup> An educated Egyptian could expect to live in a reasonably tolerable fashion. Given the current difficulties, however, this is no longer certain.

Recently, conditions worsened to a degree that has become disturbing. For example, in trying to move the country to a market economy, Mubarak has focused on the civil service. He withdrew the commitment to employ degree holders, and seemingly has abandoned the policy of providing free education through college. This has caused widespread consternation, raising the prospect of increased hardship for many.

A general belief about Egyptians is that, of all the world's peoples, they are the most stoic. However bad things get, it is claimed, Egyptians will submit without protest.<sup>6</sup> This is a misperception. Egypt has gone through some violent periods recently, in which the Egyptians have nearly torn the country apart. In each case where this has occurred, the regime subsequently sought to appease the aroused populace. No matter

how dictatorial, no Egyptian leader in modern times has dared stand against the mob. Some argue that Egypt is on the verge of another such explosion.

Throughout Egypt there are increasing signs that something is amiss. The author visited Cairo last September. Three weeks after he left a gunman walked into the lobby of the hotel near where he had been staying and fatally shot three guests in the main dining room.<sup>7</sup> Apparently by design, the gunmen targeted foreigners. This was a shocking incident, but other equally sensational incidents have occurred, including an attempt to bomb the Prime Minister on the main thoroughfare in the center of the capital.<sup>8</sup>

What is causing the present unrest and what does it portend? Mubarak claims to be the victim of a plot, masterminded by the clerics in Tehran.<sup>9</sup> Along with this he maintains that the unrest is controllable, perpetrated by a small group of terrorists. This may be; however, the killers' activity seems to be symptomatic of a broad current of unease gripping the country.

Tourists in downtown Cairo, especially those who have previously visited the capital, probably do not sense the dangerous social unrest. The city looks more attractive than ever. The heart of downtown (Tahrir Square) is almost pristine, which is extraordinary. Under Mubarak's predecessors Nasser and Sadat, *Maidan Tahrir* was incredibly dingy; now it is bright and clean.<sup>10</sup>

However, one should not attach great importance to the superficial appearance of downtown. Conditions in the outlying, medieval quarters of the city are quite bad. Indeed, a sense that one should avoid these quarters prevails. This in itself is something new; previously one could walk virtually anywhere in Cairo without fear.

It appears that Mubarak may be keeping the *baladi* people out of downtown, turning it into a tourist area. How the country folk are induced to stay away is a mystery, but this appears to be happening. As a consequence the picture one gets--of a society at peace with itself--most probably is false.

This would explain the seemingly inexplicable acts of violence that have been occurring--the bombings, the attacks on tourists, the assassination attempts. It would appear that tensions, normally kept under control (or at least out of sight), are no longer containable.

As stated, the study will attempt to prove that Egypt's security problem is tied to its malperforming economy. Therefore, we will begin by examining the economy, and to do this we need to go no further back than 1952 when the last king of Egypt, Farouk, was deposed.

## The Economy.

Gamal Abdel Nasser, the country's first republican ruler,<sup>11</sup> more than any other brought about Egypt's present plight. Nasser was known among Egyptians as the *ra'is* ("boss"), and that certainly was the way he ruled the country.<sup>12</sup> Nasser was ruthless in implementing his policies. Once set upon a particular course, he would not be dissuaded from it; effectively he lost his sense of proportion. To a degree, Nasser behaved this way with the economy.

In moving Egypt along the path to industrialization, Nasser sequestered the fortunes of thousands of Egypt's former elite. He seized vast holdings under the land reform. Indeed it is likely that Egypt's land reform was the most thoroughgoing in the Middle East.<sup>13</sup>

Nasser's motives for undertaking this ruthless confiscatory program were mixed. On the one hand, he wanted to hold on to power; by expropriating the *ancien regime* he rid himself of many potential enemies. Along with this, however, he sought to improve the lot of Egyptians by making the country economically independent; he hoped to convert it to a modern industrialized society. To do this he had to obtain capital, which he got (initially, at least) through the forced sequestrations.

The sequestrations worked well up to a point. Ultimately, however, more capital was needed and there was none to be had; Nasser had squeezed all that he could from the old elites.<sup>14</sup> To maintain the momentum of his industrialization drive, the President might then have cut back on subsidies to the poor; he might have scaled down the large and growing public sector. He did not do either, because, it is claimed, he held the people in too high regard.<sup>15</sup>

It seems likely that something else was operating; Nasser feared the loss of control. By 1965, when he confronted the capital shortage, enormous numbers of Egyptians were on the public payroll. Dependent as they were on the government, they were unlikely to oppose the *ra'is*. But who could tell what they would do, if they were suddenly thrown onto the street.

In any event, Nasser lost the prize that he sought. The industrialization drive foundered. For a time, failure was masked due to the 1967 war. But ultimately elements of the population, primarily the students, rebelled, and shortly after that Nasser died of a heart attack.

Nasser's successor, Anwar Sadat, inherited a dreadful situation. Egypt's public sector was bloated almost beyond belief, with virtually no resources to keep it up. Moreover, Sadat had the additional handicap of not being taken seriously by Egyptians, who scoffed at his pledge to retake land lost to

Israel in the 1967 war. Yet, of course, he did just that. The Egyptian army's successful canal-crossing was one of the more astonishing events in modern history.

On the basis of this extraordinary achievement, Sadat believed that he could reverse the economic decline of decades. He determined to take yet another daring step; he would remove Egypt from the socialist camp completely, bringing it into the free market system.

To do this, he initiated the so-called *infatah*, or "opening" to the West. Sadat invited Western capitalists (and others, particularly the oil sheikhs) to invest in Egypt, offering various inducements. Then, anticipating a favorable response, he drafted an ambitious 5-year plan.<sup>16</sup> The response, however, did not materialize (the sheikhs in particular stayed aloof).

Undaunted, Sadat went ahead with his plan, borrowing the necessary capital from the International Monetary Fund.<sup>17</sup> The IMF, as is its wont, lent the money with strings attached. Primarily it wanted Sadat to dismantle the inflated public sector. He promised to do so, but in the end did not do it.

From roughly 1973 to 1976, Egyptians lived in a dream world. Still euphoric over their victory in the Sinai, and encouraged to believe that the economy was mending, they spent money in a burst of consumerism after years of deprivation under Nasser. This acted to relieve tensions, for a while.

However, it began to be apparent that Sadat had practiced a deception. The economy was barely viable. Money was needed urgently, and by 1976 the IMF was adamant that reforms must be made. Sadat tried in 1977 to cut subsidies on basic items, and the people rioted. So fierce was the rioting the President appeared never to recover from it. He continued to rule until 1981, but it was a different society that he ruled over. All economic reform ended, and although Sadat continued to liberalize in some areas, he more and more relied on his security forces to run the country (ultimately those same security forces failed to prevent his assassination). Sadat's successor, Husni Mubarak, was left to pick up the pieces; the bloated bureaucracy, the society that could not produce, and hanging over all, the burgeoning debts to the IMF.

Both Nasser and Sadat had gotten into trouble, basically, by deceiving the people. They promised to create conditions whereby Egyptians could influence international politics, and then had failed to deliver on their promises.<sup>18</sup> The people cooperated until they realized that the dreams were empty. Once appreciation dawned, they rioted. For Nasser the turning point came in 1968; for Sadat, 1977.<sup>19</sup>

**President Mubarak Takes Over.**

Husni Mubarak did not make the mistake of his predecessors. He promised nothing, but rather presented himself as a healer. Indeed he emphasized the very colorlessness of his personality, and Egyptians seemed to respond.<sup>20</sup> They did not want another visionary, rather someone who would set his sights on what was obtainable, and who would bring the country along, gradually, but surely.

For awhile it appeared that Mubarak was doing this. He perpetuated Sadat's *infitah*, moving further away from the planned economy. He reinvigorated the liberalization policy promoted, and then neglected, by Sadat. To be sure, Mubarak surrendered little of his own power; he remained the *ra'is*. But at least on the surface there appeared to be movement toward a democracy; it might come later rather than sooner, but it would come, Egyptians felt.

In one area where changes were desperately needed, however, Mubarak did nothing. He maintained the compact with Egyptians whereby the state agreed to employ degree holders, and he continued the policy of free education through college, which effectively perpetuated the bloated bureaucracy.

One could argue that this is the policy that has ruined Egypt. It has certainly destroyed the educational system, there being no way it could process all of the demands upon it. At the same time, most Egyptians do not get useful degrees, or at least ones that they can convert to remunerative employment. The majority are employed in the civil service, where they have to work two and three jobs (illegally) to make ends meet. Probably no people in the world moonlight more than Egyptians.<sup>21</sup>

Just before the eruption of DESERT STORM, Egypt's economy was a shambles, hopelessly inefficient, virtually unproductive. The society subsisted on four main sources of income--Suez Canal fees, revenue from oil from the Sinai, tourism, and remittances from Egyptians working abroad.<sup>22</sup> Three of these producers were down. As a consequence, Egypt's deficit was up, and the international banking community was growing increasingly concerned.

With nowhere else to turn, Mubarak went back to the IMF for a standby loan. By now, however, the fund was used to dealing with Egyptians. Mubarak's appeal was accepted, on condition that he do what Nasser and Sadat had failed to do--cut subsidies, privatize the public sector, and impose real austerity. In this way, it was argued, Egypt might become self-supporting. To be sure this would cause pain, since an almost certain result would be widespread unemployment. But, the IMF counselled, out of pain would come greater prosperity, as the economy began to produce new industry, and jobs.

Mubarak agreed to follow the IMF's prescription, but before

he could act, DESERT STORM blew up. Mubarak, by joining the coalition, performed a great service for the West, for which it was suitably grateful.<sup>23</sup> European and American banks virtually halved Egypt's debts. Some were forgiven outright, others remitted conditionally. In the latter case, debts are forgiven in stages. In each stage, Egypt must implement specific measures, after which a portion of the debt is relieved. Mubarak now had a strong foundation on which to enact the IMF reform program, and he has started in this direction. He has reduced, or totally eliminated, subsidies on a number of basic commodities; he has substantially lowered the budget deficit, and he has floated the currency. Perhaps most noteworthy, however, he has ended the government's commitment to employ degree holders, and is apparently on the verge of promoting a private school system, to complement the public schools. All this, however, is as nothing compared to what he must now attempt, i.e., to privatize the many publicly run firms in Egypt. This is a tremendous undertaking, which the President has not begun seriously to address.

In justifying his delay Mubarak has cited the rising opposition in Egypt. He argues that privatization will cost jobs, and now--with violence increasing--he fears an explosion. The President claims that Egypt is the target of Islamic fundamentalists seeking to establish a religious state. To thwart them, he says, he must proceed slowly, lest by an injudicious act he assist their takeover.

The IMF appears to have accepted Mubarak's view, at least for the time being. It has allowed several deadlines to slip whereby stages of the reform were to have been accomplished. However, the Fund still insists on full compliance, and in recent months has begun to press Mubarak to get the process moving again.

This has shifted attention to the supposititious opposition forces. Who are they? Are they so formidable? Indeed, what exactly constitutes the opposition in Egypt? To answer this we need to look at the whole range of opposition in the country, although, as we shall see, the only significant antigovernment activity comes from a relatively small segment of the population.

### **Egypt Under President Mubarak.**

President Mubarak's approach to liberalization has been ambivalent. On the one hand he has perpetuated reforms begun by Sadat. At the same time he has not surrendered any of his own power--he remains the *ra'is*. So it is difficult to see where he has made an advance in this area.

The keystone of Sadat's liberalization program was the multiparty system, which he introduced (his predecessor Nasser had no patience with parties, at least none on the true Western model).<sup>24</sup> The parties that Sadat sanctioned, and which Mubarak

subsequently has endorsed, do not amount to a great deal. To begin with they were all thoroughly vetted by the government, and some groups--like the Muslim Brotherhood, for example--were not allowed to form. The party system, as a consequence, tends to be vapid. Parties in Egypt do not comprise much more than personality cliques, groupings of individuals around semi-charismatic figures.

Moreover, the parties have no programs. Lacking this, they have no large followings either. It is virtually certain that none of them could take power, at least not in the form they are presently constituted.<sup>25</sup> Were the government to relax controls over the parties, and let them reach out to the public, then--perhaps--constituencies might form, and a robust party system emerge.

In the meantime, party leaders appear to be content to function as gadflies. Their favorite tactic is exploiting issues, which they do in no very effective manner. They do not mount sustained campaigns which might eventually bring about meaningful changes. Rather they skip from issue to issue. Opposing Israel is popular. Opposing Mubarak--directly at least--is not done. This may account for the general apathy of the Egyptian electorate.<sup>26</sup>

In a similar fashion the Egyptian press gives the appearance of being feisty and combative, but it is as insubstantial as the parties. The press does not hesitate to take on the men around Mubarak, but rarely will it print anything derogatory of the *ra'is* himself.

Thus what one encounters in Egypt (on the secular side, at least) is a sham opposition, one that goes through the motions of opposing the regime but is not effective. Egyptians call their system *multipartisme*--democracy with all of the forms, but practically no content. It is possible to write off the civilian opposition in Egypt as hollow. The religious opposition, however, has some substance.

### **The Brotherhood.**

The principal component of the religious opposition in Egypt is the Society of Muslim Brothers. The Brotherhood originated before World War II. Its ways are devious and not easily discovered, but there is no doubt that during the Nasser and Sadat years (and now under Mubarak, as well) the Brotherhood has been the major opposition force in the country.

The Brotherhood first appeared in the late 1920s as a response to colonialism.<sup>27</sup> Its founder, Hasan al Banna, opposed the presence in Egypt of Great Britain. He therefore formed a society of Muslims who would take the country back from the British by perfecting themselves morally and physically. In effect, the Brothers established themselves as role models whom

the mass of Egyptians could emulate.

Once in power, the Brotherhood's professed aim was to reinstitute the *shari'a*, the legal code of Islam. This code, which governed the early Muslims, has been virtually superseded over the years by Western mores. If the *shari'a* could once more become the law of the land, Al Banna argued, the glory days of Islam would be born anew.

Apparently the Brotherhood's message touched a chord because from 1928 to 1948 its membership soared to well over 500,000.<sup>28</sup> Hasan al Banna became a powerbroker in Egyptian politics, extraordinary since--by Palace decree--the Brotherhood could not contest elections. (The Brothers adopted a tactic they have employed to this day, running candidates on other parties' lists.<sup>29</sup> In this way they show their strength.)

Under the monarchy (and this is true at present), the Brotherhood was an extremely conservative organization. It almost consistently backed the King. However, on certain issues it would break with him, as, for example, when he yielded to pressure from the British. Then the Brothers would take to the streets.<sup>30</sup>

The issue that first attracted world attention to the Brotherhood was Palestine; the Society led the Arab world in rallying to the side of the Palestinians. To be sure, at the time many Arabs supported this cause, but few put themselves on the line to defend it.<sup>31</sup> The Brothers actually went to what today is Israel and fought against the Zionists. The literature implies that because of Palestine the Brotherhood received its first serious check.<sup>32</sup>

Throughout 1948, as the Egyptian army fought in Palestine, at home tensions mounted. There were attempts at assassination, bombings of public places, and pitched battles against the police, in many of which incidents the Brotherhood figured prominently.<sup>33</sup> In the summer of 1948 serious anti-foreign rioting occurred in the capital, and the Jewish quarter was gutted.<sup>34</sup>

Shortly afterward the Palace ordered a mass roundup of Brothers, including Banna. In addition, the society's property was seized, and its records (including its membership rolls) impounded. The Brotherhood went to court to reclaim legal status, but the Palace successfully countered this effort. In the end, the 1952 Revolution rescued the Brothers; the army overthrew the monarchy. The Free Officers esteemed the Brotherhood for its early championing of Palestine, and on that basis it was rehabilitated. For a time the Society was a mainstay of the new regime. Ultimately, however, it fell from favor with Nasser and was driven underground.

Nasser turned on the Brotherhood after--he claimed--it had tried to assassinate him.<sup>35</sup> He extirpated it root and branch, putting thousands into jail. Those who escaped a jail sentence

fled overseas into what appeared in the late 1950s to be permanent exile.

However, the Brotherhood returned; Sadat revived it. In the mid-1970s--after he had thrown out the Soviets--Sadat needed allies against the Nasserists (hard core followers of the former Egyptian leader, who rejected Sadat's assumption of rule). He rehabilitated the Brotherhood, inviting its members to return from exile.

In the late 1970s, the Brotherhood turned against him, after he had initiated his famous opening to Israel and had journeyed to Jerusalem. The enraged Sadat followed Nasser's example, jailing thousands more of the Brothers, and starting a power struggle that ultimately caused his death by assassination.<sup>36</sup> And now it's back under Mubarak.

The Brotherhood seems to lead a charmed life. Written off as dead on several occasions, it yet revives. It has immense resources; many of the Brothers became millionaires working in the Gulf. They tithe to support the Society and this has provided the funds needed to push its program.

Since the Brotherhood has never regained legal status in Egypt, it operates on the edges of the polity. It has developed a modus vivendi with Mubarak whereby he tolerates, but does not encourage its activities. This has given it leeway to branch out, making its influence felt. For example, the Brotherhood operates hospitals and schools; it funds charities and performs other works that we will discuss below.

The Brotherhood responded to the Cairo earthquake in October 1992. It set up relief tents and distributed food and blankets, while the official government relief agencies seemingly were paralyzed.<sup>37</sup> For reasons never made clear, Mubarak's people barely moved during the crucial initial stage of this emergency. The spectacle of the religious community taking charge angered Mubarak, and he subsequently ordered private relief workers out of the quake area. This provoked major rioting, after which the President drew back, obviously shaken by the intensity of the reaction that he had triggered.<sup>38</sup>

Some say that the earthquake episode caused the Brotherhood to tip its hand. It showed the government how powerful it had become, so as to threaten Mubarak's government. That the Brotherhood has a considerable following cannot be disputed. It remains to be seen, however, to what ends it means to use this constituency. The Brothers say that they will never seize power violently; although they admit that coming to power is their aim, they say that they will do this peacefully.<sup>39</sup>

This may be so. Certainly the Society seems peaceful. On the other hand, activities of the Brotherhood have created a climate of violence in Egypt, even though this may not have been the

leadership's intent. How, then, has this climate been created?

### **Tactics of the Brotherhood.**

Egypt, prior to 1952, was a largely rural society. Nasser turned this situation around by enticing masses of villagers into the capital where he co-opted them into the labor force. They were the means whereby he intended to build the new society. To do this he had first to upgrade their capabilities. This was what universal education was all about--making *baladi* Egyptians into superior factory workers, and ultimately technocrats. Nasser evidently thought this possible since he forbade Egyptians from taking jobs overseas, fearing to lose them as a valuable human resource.<sup>40</sup>

The villagers went along with this, as they continued to hope for an improvement in their condition. For a time, the reward of jobs in the bureaucracy was enough; becoming an *effendim* was seen as a great achievement. Moreover the villagers' craving for status suited the regime--it guaranteed order. The lowest ranks of the *effendim* deferred to those above, and ultimately all bowed before the power of the *ra'is*.<sup>41</sup>

The change came under Sadat, who began to move the country toward capitalism. Initially this was seen as sensible, after socialism had proved so disappointing. Overlooked, however, was the social disruption that this would cause. Capitalism encourages a different type of individual than socialism. Egypt began to witness the appearance of so-called "new men," really men on the make--private sector entrepreneurs, who, by exploiting public sector contacts, made fortunes.

The entrepreneurs drew attention by making ostentatious displays of wealth. In the 1970s in Egypt it was not difficult to stand out in this way--Egyptians had nothing. To own a car was extraordinary (a Fiat 500 was the object of intense admiration).<sup>42</sup>

As "new men" proliferated they influenced the larger society. Youths particularly were affected by them, submitting to the compulsion to dress well--that is to style. Levis, team jackets, Nike sneakers--anything western was *in*. At the same time, few Egyptians could afford this way of life (a cheap imitation Guicci bag, for example, was priced beyond the reach of most everyone).

The issue was forced in the universities. The *baladi* students could not conform to the new ways, most being of limited means. To be sure, tuition was free. Nonetheless, every child in school represented a sacrifice for the family, a substantial one in most cases.

At this point religious elements within the community (and

we presume the Brotherhood was involved) began manipulating the situation. Through religious clubs on the campuses, they promoted the "Islamic way of life."<sup>43</sup> Students were urged not to ape the West; in particular western dress codes were condemned. The students were encouraged to dress modestly, i.e., *Islamically*. Simple shirt and slacks for men, a proper-length dress and head covering for women.

Many Westernized Egyptians have come to fear the retrogressive effect that the Islamic movement would have on youth. In fact, it was clear to anyone who examined the phenomenon that "Islamicness" was--for many young people--a way of coping with stresses emanating from the society.

The clubs were active in other areas. For example, they attempted to alleviate the difficult conditions at the universities. As stated, the schools were terribly overcrowded. For this, the professors made little accommodation. If they lectured to 600 students or 60 it made no difference--they read their notes from the podium, voices barely audible in the backmost rows of the lecture halls.<sup>44</sup> The clubs xeroxed the professors' notes and distributed them gratis. They also tutored students having difficulty. For women students, too, they provided special services, such as arranging for buses to convey them to classes, relieving them of having to ride the overcrowded public transportation.<sup>45</sup>

In return the clubs asked the youths to become better Muslims. Much of this was probably well-intentioned. At a point, however, the clubs went over to the offensive. First they compelled Muslim-style dress. Then they demanded certain courses be taught and others dropped from the curriculum, as "un-Islamic."<sup>46</sup> This trend gathered force in Upper Egypt, and in particular in the university at Asyut, a long-standing stronghold of religious reaction.

Clearly a kind of fanaticism was operating here. But fanaticism was not all on the side of the Islamicists. Many liberal professors, affronted by the militancy of the youth, struck out against it. A professor, at the sight of a university woman wearing a veil, snatched it from her, to find himself surrounded by angry male students threatening to cut off his hand.<sup>47</sup>

One assumes that this was a moment of truth. This incident and others like it must have led the authorities to ponder where all this was headed. Ultimately, appeals were made to the government to act. When fights broke out on campus (between Islamicists and secularists) the police intervened. This led to arrests and some expulsions which provoked large demonstrations--with this, the religious issue was taken up in the press.

In the late 1980s, columnists began deploring the Islamic trend overwhelming Egypt. They exaggerated the seriousness of the

confrontation, for at this point there was no cause for alarm. The serious violence was yet to come--the attacks on tourists, the assassinations, the bombings. Such things began happening in 1990, and they came about in the following manner.

### Revolt in Upper Egypt.

The Brotherhood-supported Islamic clubs were established all over Egypt. However they mainly flourished in Upper Egypt. (See Figure 1.) The area has always been backward, i.e., tradition-bound. If anywhere in Egypt there exists the beating, pulsing heart of *ruralness*, Upper Egypt is it. Along with this, the groundwork there was laid for a religious revival. The Muslim Brothers had moved into Upper Egypt after Sadat invited them back from exile, and they quickly began to exploit conditions in the area.

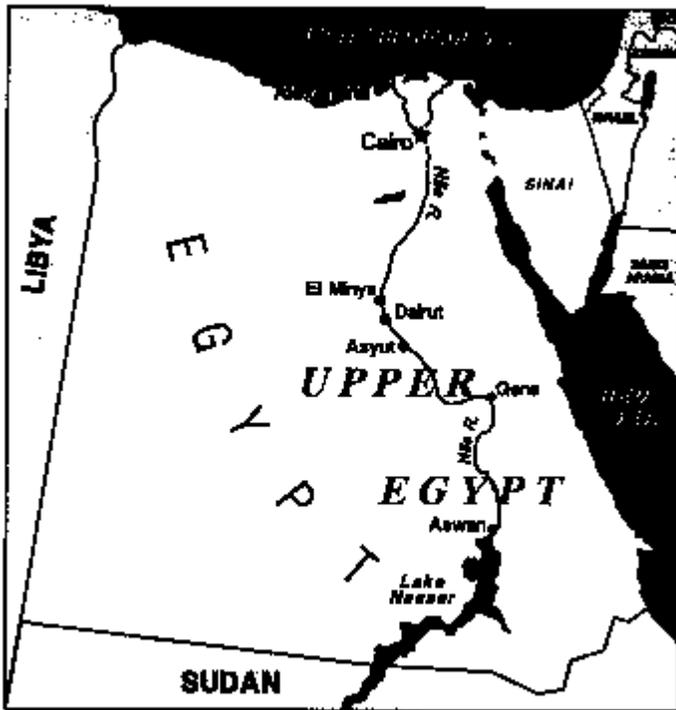


Figure 1.

As previously stated, many Brothers were wealthy from business dealings in the Gulf. Some of them established firms in Upper Egypt which, they announced, would be run on "Islamic lines."<sup>48</sup> In practice this meant hiring only Muslims, who were encouraged to live by the *shari'a*, the legal code of Islam. It derives from the practice of the Prophet. After he died in 632 A.D., Muhammad's followers sought to emulate his piety by adopting his lifestyle. Recalling how he had conducted himself in this or that instance, they set down in writing what was deemed

proper behavior and what sort of activity ought to be shunned.

Given the manner in which it was compiled, the *shari'a* tends to be rigorous; it is not something that one lightly sets about to emulate. Nonetheless, for the Upper Egyptians this seemed not to present a problem. They easily embraced the *shari'a* and a great religious revival developed.

Alongside the Muslim enterprises there also appeared an informal network of independent *imams*, who took over many of the mosques in Upper Egypt. In Egypt, it has long been the government's practice to co-opt *imams* by making them public employees.<sup>49</sup> They thus become advocates of the government's line, acting as kind of grassroots propagandists.

It is a matter of conjecture who pays the "free" *imams*, although it is generally accepted that they are supported, at least in part, by donations from the Brotherhood. The free *imams* inveighed against the corrupt lifestyle of the capital, and some even attacked the President. As stated, activity like this was not sanctioned--neither in the parliament, nor in the press does one encounter direct attacks on the *ra'is*. The effect the sermonizing of the free *imams* had on the Upper Egyptians was considerable.

The *imams* agitated the villagers; during 1990 the level of sectarian strife in the provinces escalated remarkably. Muslims and Christians undertook what amounted to open war against each other.<sup>50</sup> This sort of thing had been going on for centuries in this part of Egypt.<sup>51</sup> However, the outburst was sufficiently serious that the government intervened. Security forces cracked down, and this, unfortunately, made things worse.

The peasants of Upper Egypt regard any physical attack on their persons as an affair of blood. Thus, when the authorities started hauling hundreds into custody, predictably the police themselves were assaulted. Initially, this involved solitary snipings, but soon the villagers began storming police stations and attacking roving police patrols with Molotov cocktails.<sup>52</sup>

In all of this there was never a suggestion of a religious war (*jihad*), as Mubarak has maintained. The violence was purely communal, and in nature resembled traditional feuding (with the unusual element of the police becoming objects of attack).

No one knows what made the unrest in Upper Egypt shift to the capital, but it may have been related to the assassination of the speaker of Egypt's parliament in October 1990. This event was blamed, at the time, on religious extremists, and as a consequence thousands of suspected individuals were rounded up, jailed and interrogated.<sup>53</sup> If this provoked the tension, the result was deceptive. A lull ensued, which lasted a year, and then, in September 1991, fierce rioting erupted between Muslims and Coptic Christians in Imbaba, another of the medieval quarters

of the city.

The government repeated its earlier performance of rounding up anyone who appeared even faintly Islamic (i.e., wore a beard and a *galabeya*).<sup>54</sup> This time, however, there was no deceptive calm afterward. Tension intensified immediately, and there has not been a return to peaceful conditions since. Police and locals are at each other constantly, and here again what appears to be operating are peasant attitudes (if we can call it that). Most ghetto dwellers are transplanted Upper Egyptians, who regard direct action as the only effective means of acquiring satisfaction for a personal affront. When the police went after them, they went after the security forces.

In late 1992, assaults on tourists began. Again the initial attacks occurred in Upper Egypt, by groups claiming to be retaliating for government abuses--closure of mosques, the prevention of meetings and Friday prayers, the arrest of Muslims and the taking of hostages from among their relatives.<sup>55</sup>

Upper Egypt, a region rich in antiquities, is a source of revenue to the government from tourism. The government could not allow attacks on tourists to go unpunished. Once more the police cracked down, and predictably the level of violence increased once again.

While this was going on the earthquake (discussed above) hit Cairo, and due to mishandling of relief work on the government's part, demonstrations erupted.<sup>56</sup> At that, Mubarak ordered widescale sweeps of Imbaba, Bulaq and other *baladi* quarters. Some 700 individuals were detained. In the process, neighborhoods were sealed off and homes systematically ransacked. At this, the tourist attacks--which until then had been restricted to Upper Egypt--began to appear in Cairo. In February 1993, there were three separate assaults on tourist buses near the Pyramids,<sup>57</sup> and also a bomb exploded in a tourist cafe on *Maidan Tahrir*, killing two foreigners.<sup>58</sup>

After this the security forces appeared to lose control. They invaded a mosque in Aswan in Upper Egypt, killing 21 worshippers, who--the police maintained--were actually "terrorists." This brought forth a wave of recrimination throughout the country, as Egyptians maintained such tactics were unconscionable.<sup>59</sup> Then, in April, the police general in charge of the Aswan region was assassinated,<sup>60</sup> and an unsuccessful attempt was made to kill Egypt's Minister of Information, by snipers who surprised him outside his home.<sup>61</sup> Meanwhile an Egyptian military court had sentenced 32 Islamic "extremists," seven of them to hanging.<sup>62</sup> In retaliation for this sentencing, an Egyptian army general was assassinated.<sup>63</sup>

In August, the Minister of the Interior narrowly escaped when a bomb exploded in *Maidan Tahrir*, killing 4 people and wounded 15.<sup>64</sup> And finally, in September, the aforementioned

killings of three foreigners in the Semiramis Hotel and the attempted assassination of Egypt's Prime Minister occurred.<sup>65</sup> These last two incidents followed the executions of seven Islamicists at the beginning of the summer.<sup>66</sup>

Western commentators have speculated extensively about these events, and for the most part have tended to agree with Mubarak--that is, that he is the victim of a plot to unseat him. The author does not believe this to be so--at least it was not so in the beginning.

The events that occurred before 1991 took place in the area between El Minya and Aswan (see Figure 1). Probably no more than a handful of communities were involved. The people inhabiting these communities are extremely provincial, not to say isolated. It is not credible that such individuals would, on their own, try to bring down the government.

Practically all of the activity up to 1991 could be seen as instances of community unrest. That the unrest got so out of control can in part be attributed to the heavy-handed police response, driving the natives to greater and greater excesses. Both Cairenes and U.S. Embassy personnel fault the police for provoking much of the violence that has occurred.

The key question, however, is what changed in 1993? Clearly the character of the manifestation *did* undergo a change at this time. Until then, the violence was concentrated on police tasked with keeping order in the governorates. Today, cabinet ministers are being targeted in the heart of the capital. This would appear to indicate that the disturbances have become politicized; they are no longer mere social effervescences. What happened?

Mubarak's answer is to blame Iran, which, he says, began exploiting the unrest for its own purposes.<sup>67</sup> But, that really conflicts with the evidence. The Upper Egyptians are all Sunnis. Why would fanatical Sunnis enlist in an international conspiracy directed by Iranian Shias, whom they could only regard as heretics?<sup>68</sup> Mubarak skims over this aspect of the affair; neither he nor any of his people address it, even though this would seem to undercut his theory.

Another area in which Mubarak's theorizing is defective is where he claims that a single organization is behind the activity. He calls it the Group, or the Islamic Group (*gam'iya al-Islamiya*).<sup>69</sup> Originally he claimed the Group supplanted another organization, *al-Jihad*, which prior to 1990 was the main perpetrator of the violence. However, within recent weeks Mubarak has gone back to blaming *al-Jihad* and the Group has slipped into the background.

For some of the worst outrages it does not appear that either the Group or *al-Jihad* can be held responsible. Credit has been taken by small, apparently ephemeral entities. Moreover,

individuals claiming to belong to the mini-groups have attacked the Group and *al-Jihad*,<sup>70</sup> so apparently there is rivalry among the various organizations.

It seems likely that many groups are involved. This would account for the government's inability to suppress the violence. A single, highly organized outfit with branches throughout the country could easily be penetrated by police. This would not be the case, however, with many little groups, springing up more or less spontaneously.

Further, assuming that the guilty parties are all Upper Egyptians, they have a place of refuge whenever they want it. They can flee to the old quarters of Cairo dominated by their kinsmen and hide, with little likelihood of being betrayed.

The author's conversation with security officials in Cairo appear to confirm this. The officials claim the quarters are extremely hostile to them. Whenever the denizens perceive that a surveillance operation is underway, they immediately expose it. Moreover, penetration of the groups is practically ruled out by their lifestyle. According to the authorities, the members live the *shari'a* and so can spot police agents attempting to mix among them.

This explains why the Cairo police--in their frequent sweeps--employ such heavy-handed tactics. They go into the communities in force, hoping to snare someone they can make confess; however this rarely happens. Why? Again to quote the authorities, "These people will not confess, because they view that as a sin against the faith."

What we are dealing with then (if the author's theory is correct) are actually two separate tracks of antigovernment activity. One is represented by the Muslim Brotherhood. It basically is peaceful. Wealthy and extremely well-connected Brothers are attempting to take power--through the ballot box, if they can contrive to do so.<sup>71</sup> Once in power, they are determined to set up a government similar to that of Pakistan.

Alongside this trend is another, much harder to distinguish because of its obscurity. The obscurer tendency comprises groups of religious anarchists who on their own--apparently without prompting from the Brotherhood--have begun resorting to violence. The groups maintain that under the *shari'a* they are empowered (indeed obliged) to correct "abominations" wherever they encounter them. It is not enough simply to deplore corruption, they say one must deal with it on the spot.<sup>72</sup> Hence, the anarchists are perpetrating acts of violence, such as the recent assassinations and bombings and all of the other outrages that have gone on. This latter element indisputably is composed of fanatics.<sup>73</sup>

It has been suggested to the author that the Brotherhood is

directing the anarchists. Supposedly the Society has a secret apparatus that arranges the violent acts. This is, however, difficult to accept. The psychology of the "shooters" (as one U.S. Embassy official described the radicals) is so at variance with that of the Brotherhood leaders, it seems unlikely there would be a link. Whatever else, the leaders of the Brotherhood are men of property, who respect authority as exemplified by the *ulama*.<sup>74</sup> They would hardly countenance the kind of anarchic behavior that the "shooters" carry on.

There is probably not a lot of contact between the Brothers and the anarchists. It is even likely that the two sides fear and mistrust each other. At least this is the view of some U.S. Embassy personnel. However, these same officials believe Washington could accommodate a Brotherhood-dominated regime, were one to come to power. That may be so, to a point. If it were possible for the Brotherhood to take power peacefully--without precipitating a social revolution--it might not be inimical to U.S. interests. However, that is a big if, and we will have more to say about it below.

What are the chances of a social revolution actually occurring? At this stage it does not appear likely. The masses do not appear to have been persuaded that "Islam is the answer," as the Brothers aver. They rather appear to be suspicious of the simplistic nature of the Brotherhood's "program." (The idea that the *shari'a*--even assuming it could be enacted--would solve all of Egypt's problems, does not seem sound to them.)

As for the "shooters", they do not appear to have any following outside their home communities. In Upper Egypt, the groups comprise unemployed youth, who spend their time making trouble for themselves and others.<sup>75</sup>

The nature of the groups in the capital is more difficult to assess. It appears that actual cults have developed--small bands of fanatics, who have made their lives conform to a purist notion of Islam. Who precisely these people are and the stratum of society from which they come are difficult to say.<sup>76</sup>

At the same time, they do not appear to have struck a responsive chord in the wider polity. In this respect they are like the Red Brigades. Indeed, there is no indication the "shooters" are making an attempt to propagandize the masses. As with the French anarchists of the late 1800s, they are interested only in "propaganda of the deed."<sup>77</sup> It is hard to envision how, in its present stage, this sort of behavior poses a threat to Mubarak.

Be that as it may, a qualification is necessary. In the past, religious forces in Egypt have garnered wide public support by exploiting economic grievances. This sort of thing is always possible where discontent is extant. One could argue that this is the situation Egypt is moving toward. Things are occurring there

that are quite extraordinary. The public reaction to the earthquake was unusual. Also strange was the attitude of the collegians to the new Islamicness. And finally, what is one to make of the appearance of cults in the heart of Cairo?

To the author, all of this betokens trouble, arising from the strained economic situation and the perception--on the part of the public--that Mubarak is either unwilling or unable to provide a remedy. In effect, elements of the population appear to have written off the regime as ineffective, and are adopting their own response to events.

The real danger is that, while Egyptians are known to be long suffering, there are limits to their tolerance; when the limit is reached they sometimes explode. This happened in 1952, in 1968, in 1977, and in 1986.<sup>78</sup> It could be that we are heading toward another such eruption now. What conditions, then, might push Egypt toward an explosion?

### **Corruption.**

Cairenes despair over the present state of rule in Egypt. The perception is widespread that Egypt is going nowhere. The President seemingly has no plan to improve the lot of the people. Moreover, along with the Egyptians, U.S. Embassy officials similarly complain about the derelictions of the government.

At the same time a small but significant number of Egyptians *like* the present system, and have no wish to change it. Moreover, those who feel this way are strategically placed to see to it that no changes occur. Since the days of Nasser, an influential group of private entrepreneurs has existed in Egypt who survive by working the system.<sup>79</sup> Some of their deals are legendary; the amount of graft involved is mind boggling. Effectively, however, not only the heavy-rollers deal--corruption exists down to the most penny-ante level.

Now that Mubarak is contemplating opening the system to foreign competition--allowing multinational corporations, for example, to buy into Egypt's economy--the wheeler dealers are opposed. In line with this, they have allied with government bureaucrats, who see their power being curtailed should the transformation occur.

As U.S. Embassy officials describe it, this combination has hit upon a clever strategy to retard the privatization process; the bureaucrats are working to rule. To avoid any hint of corruption (as they carry out the privatization plan), they insist the process be "transparent." This all sounds good, the U.S. Embassy personnel say, but it equates to nothing being sold.

Now it appears that Mubarak may have taken a step that will institutionalize the present stagnation. Under pressure from the

IMF, Egypt, some time ago, devalued its currency. It then eliminated the varying exchange rates, which had the effect of firming up the Egyptian pound. Meanwhile Cairo was the beneficiary of America's gratitude for joining DESERT STORM. At which point, Egypt appeared--in the eyes of the world--to be more stable than it had ever been.

The government capitalized on this perception. Egyptians living abroad (and anyone else who was interested) were invited to purchase Egyptian treasury bills, using dollars. The bills return up to 15 percent interest. There has been an outpouring of subscriptions for these bills, and, as a result, Egypt's foreign exchange holdings are now the highest in its history; \$15-\$16 billion. (In 1990 the country was broke and could not service its debts.)

As a result of the T-bill sales, Egypt has gained leverage against the IMF. Ordinarily, governments turn to the IMF when they are strapped for dollars. The fact that Egypt has found a way of surmounting this difficulty--outside regular IMF channels--means that it can hold out against IMF-mandated reforms.

To be sure, the inflow of dollars is a good thing for the Egypt--it can pay off its debt to the international bankers. Ultimately, however, the effect of the T-bill sales is nil, since the regime is merely substituting domestic debt for foreign. Moreover, there is another complication; as long as wealthy Egyptians can get 15 percent investing in T-bills, they are unlikely to invest in native industry, even though there is a crying need for this investment. Without new industry there can be no new jobs, and the American Embassy estimates that Egypt needs 500,000 new jobs a year just to keep up with its burgeoning population.<sup>80</sup> No new jobs, a steadily deteriorating standard of living, and no way out for the masses (now that the overseas job market has virtually dried up)--all this is increasing tensions among the populace.

How to break out of this vicious cycle? In a society such as Egypt's, there can be no movement unless undertaken by the *ra'is*. Effectively, everything comes back to the President.

Mubarak may be persuaded there is no point in acting on the reforms. After all, his closest advisors are opposed. The people of his class (the T-bill buyers), too, are against them. Moreover, Mubarak must fear the result if the reforms are implemented--the loss of jobs, which certainly will generate unrest. Under the circumstances, would it not be smarter to stand pat?

If this is the *ra'is's* view, it bodes no good for the future. The main problem in Egypt today is drift. Things are stagnating, with no prospect of useful change. For the populace this is unacceptable.

In the meantime, however, the T-bill buyers are growing richer. This lot does not appear to be sensitive to the problems facing the rest of the population. Quite the reverse. By their behavior they appear to be oblivious to the widespread unease.<sup>81</sup> How long will the masses tolerate a system that seemingly works against them? Obviously no one knows. They may go along indefinitely, and, then again, they may not. The author was told by an Egyptian journalist, "no one knows what is in the peoples' hearts. They do not complain, until one day--at a special moment--they explode." This is a chilling prospect for U.S. policymakers, especially after the recent depressing experience with Iran. There is, then, real reason to be concerned about Egypt's future, and this brings us to consider America's part in this whole affair.

### **Recommendations.**

The United States needs Egypt for its security in the Middle East, but it does not need the Egyptian army to help defend the area. Rather, the United States must consider the tremendous weight of Egypt, the cultural leader of the Arab world. Were Egypt (for whatever reason) to turn against the United States, Washington would find it extremely difficult to maintain its position in the area.<sup>82</sup> It follows that the United States must remain engaged with the Egyptians. Washington cannot turn away from Cairo, leaving it to its fate.

There are those who argue against this view, claiming that--with the demise of the Soviet Union--Egypt is bereft. It must either go along with what the United States wants and demands of it, or be left behind in the march of history. That is not a tenable argument. Egyptians *do* have an alternative to the West, namely Islam. The Brotherhood's rallying cry ("Islam is the solution!") has a certain resonance, especially in Upper Egypt. If events in the country continue to sour, many more Egyptians may be expected to embrace the Islamicists' message.

What America has to fear before everything else is a social revolution, a la Khomeini.<sup>83</sup> At present this is a remote possibility. At the same time, however, there is always the likelihood of another major riot, which would have a most deleterious effect on the Mubarak regime. The President's legitimacy would be further undercut, something the anarchists would certainly strive to exploit--as they are doing with a similar situation in Algeria.

In this regard, the United States should be concerned about the reforms of the IMF. How will the Egyptians react to the job losses that are bound to ensue? Economists in the United States, and in Egypt, see dangers ahead. At the same time, however, they know of no other way to proceed. A country like Egypt, asking to be included in the world capitalist system, must conform to the rules whereby the system is run.

Washington should anticipate trouble and try to ameliorate the conditions that added misfortune will bring. Rather than subject the Egyptians to "shock therapy" (as was proposed in the case of Russia) it might be better to initiate programs to alleviate the more severe effects. The religious forces are expending considerable resources in the economic area--building hospitals and doing whatever they can to provide jobs. They clearly expect to benefit from this.

This raises the question of the Muslim Brotherhood. Recently Mubarak suggested holding a national dialogue in which he would attempt to reason with his opposition.<sup>84</sup> Together they would try to agree on a program to bring Egypt through this difficult time. This is all to the good, but as of this writing nothing indicates that he means to include the Brotherhood.

Which presents an acute dilemma. If the Brotherhood and the other religious elements are shut out, this will polarize the country--secularists vs Islamicists, precisely the situation that we need to avoid. On the other hand, if the Brotherhood is included, it may overwhelm the dialogue, given its considerable popular following.

The Brotherhood is a potent political force and cannot be excluded. If the reforms proposed by the IMF are essential, then the whole population of Egypt must get behind them. The Brotherhood, inasmuch as it represents a major segment of Egypt's populace, has, or ought to have, a place at the bargaining table. In the end, U.S. policymakers must see that nothing will be done on these reforms without compromise. What is it that the religious community wants and expects of Mubarak, to ensure their cooperation in pushing the reforms through?

Under normal circumstances, one would hesitate to make any opening to the religious opposition in Egypt; but these are not normal times. There is risk in taking this step, but the alternative is not palatable either--an Egypt torn apart by domestic unrest.

To sum up, Egypt is passing through a bad period. As a consequence, openings have been presented to the religious forces, which they have not really taken advantage of--apparently because the forces are split. On the one hand is the Brotherhood, which because of its affluence rejects violence, fearing to let loose elements that it cannot control. The anarchists, on the other hand, are too disorganized to present a coherent challenge to the government, and so the Mubarak regime has been able to cope with events, although not without some strain.

U.S. policymakers should make the most of this supposititious split, and, in line with this, seek the Brotherhood's inclusion in Mubarak's dialogue. The Brotherhood has been clamoring for official recognition for decades. If it

decides now to go along with Mubarak's offer (presuming one is tendered), this could move the country in the direction the West would like to see it go.

At any event, the situation must be monitored carefully. With Algeria subsiding into civil war, a major upheaval in Egypt would have the effect of a one-two punch and should be precluded if at all possible.

#### ENDNOTES

1. See John Waterbury, *The Egypt of Nasser and Sadat: The Political Economy of Two Regimes*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983, p. 76, "Few developing countries other than those that are professedly Marxist ever cut so deeply into their private sector as Egypt."

2. Waterbury in *The Egypt of Nasser and Sadat*, pp. 41, 42, speaks to this problem. He says that Egypt's 1952 revolution came about because of overpopulation; there were simply too many people and not enough resources to sustain them. Moreover, he says, after 20 years of rule by Nasser the situation had not markedly improved. There was no significant change in the country's resource base nor in its basic modes of production. At the same time, however, the population had risen to 40 million from 21 million. Waterbury also points out that Egypt's principal nonhuman resource is its land, of which 3.5 percent is inhabited, and 15.5 percent is designated habitable. However, the cultivated portion of Egypt's surface is only 2.4 percent of the total (23,928 km).

3. *Baladi* means "native," as in "native son" or "man of the countryside," i.e., the rural area.

4. *The Egypt of Nasser and Sadat*, p. 112, says that 61 percent of all public sector companies in Egypt operate only one shift a day, 8 percent two shifts, 23 percent three shifts, and 8.4 percent four shifts (this is on the basis of a survey taken in 1972). Thus, Waterbury concludes that, despite public endorsement of policies to limit hiring and keep down wages, the costs of production are spiralling out of control. "Total public sector employment [is probably] 20 to 30 percent above the requirements of production."

5. From the Turkish, *Afandi*, a title of respect, i.e., Sir!

6. Various authors have expressed this view. For example Fuad Ajami, quoted in Robert Springborg, *Mubarak's Egypt*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1992, p. 238. Also see Nathan Brown, "The Ignorance and Inscrutability of the Egyptian Peasant," in Farhad Kazemi and John Waterbury, eds, *Peasants and Politics in the Modern Middle East*, Miami, FL.: Florida International University Press, 1991.

7. See Mark Nicholson, "Tourism hit by shootings in Cairo," *The Financial Times*, October 27, 1993.

8. See Chris Hedges, "Egyptian Premier Escapes Car Bomb," *The New York Times*, November 26, 1993.

9. See Mark Nicholson, "Egypt fearful of Iran's influence over Sudan," *The Financial Times*, December 18, 1991; also, Caryle Murphy, "Egypt, Algeria Assail Iran for Backing Rebels," *The Washington Post*, April 8, 1993.

10. Much of the construction work to revamp the downtown was done by Egypt's military. For example, they built the Rameses overpass, which has directed much traffic out of the immediate downtown area. They also installed the city's telephone lines. See *Mubarak's Egypt*, p. 116.

11. Waterbury writes (in *The Egypt of Nasser and Sadat*, p. 45) that Nasser was primarily concerned about the poverty of the Egyptian masses; to him, the problem of overpopulation was secondary. The President sought to deal with poverty by redistributing land holdings and other forms of wealth. In this way, Nasser felt that he could overcome the political apathy and alienation which afflicted the masses. His solution was to introduce policies of land reform, state-led industrialization, and political mobilization.

12. In 1960, foreign correspondent Robert St. John published a biography of Nasser which he titled *The Boss*. In the preface he wrote "The Arabic expression for President is *El Rayis*. But in colloquial Arabic the same word, given a slightly different intonation, *El Rayiis*, is the equivalent of boss. Strangers address Gamal Abdel Nasser as Mr. President, but his wife, his friends, and his subordinates call him the Boss." See *The Boss*, New York: McGraw Hill Book Co., 1960.

13. *The Egypt of Nasser and Sadat*, p. 61, 67. "The regime . . . devised the land reform of 1952, which placed a ceiling on individual landholdings of 200 *feddans* (Eg.=4200.833 m)." "Some 460,000 *feddans* were taken over in the 1952 program. . . . In the second reform of 1961, lowering the ceiling to 50 *feddans*, over 257,000 *feddans* were affected."

14. *The Egypt of Nasser and Sadat*, p. 81, 82.

By 1965 the public sector had been expanded to its greatest extent to date, and Egypt's economy as a whole grew at remarkable rates. Never before had such investment ratios been achieved. The public sector accounted for nearly 40 percent of total output, 45 percent of domestic savings, and 90 percent of gross domestic capital formation....The period 1960-1965 represented the most dynamic phase of state-led import-substituting industrialization, but a phase that

ran its course in five years. From then on further accumulation could be financed by a formula combining the following elements: 1) transfer of more private assets to public ownership and the nationalization of profits; 2) the generating of high rates of return and reinvested profits in existing public sector enterprises; 3) increased domestic savings, forced or otherwise; and 4) extended borrowing. Small and tentative steps were taken along the first path while only partial success was achieved with respect to the second. Domestic savings failed to increase as did exports and foreign exchange earnings. The result was major economic crisis that could be met only by retrenchment and increased external borrowing.

15. Robert Springborg cites Waterbury to the effect that, in the case of Egypt, easy money produced a 'softhearted' authoritarianism. Neither Nasser or Sadat felt it necessary to grind significant segments of the citizenry for sustained savings, which might have made autonomous growth possible. See *Mubarak's Egypt*, pp. 5, 6. Also Waterbury in *The Egypt of Nasser and Sadat*, p. 84, says that Egyptian planners (in the 1960s) wanted to advance on all fronts. However, they would not exploit any sector of society except the upper bourgeoisie. This put an enormous burden on this one element of the society, and even though the bourgeoisie were wealthy, there was a limit to what they could contribute.

16. *The Egypt of Nasser and Sadat*, p. 114, 115.

Nineteen seventy-six was a crucial year in enracinating (sic) Egypt in the inflationary game of printing money. In that year the investment budget of the annual Plan was divided into two *tranches* of &E 798 million and &E 574.4. When the Plan was drawn up, domestic and foreign funding were in hand to cover the first *tranche*, but the second would depend on massive infusion of Arab credits. It was announced publicly that these were likely to be forthcoming. At the same time Egypt was negotiating a standby agreement and stabilization plan with the IMF. This would have entailed a substantial reduction in the current account deficit essentially through the elimination of several consumer goods subsidies. The net deficit, which stood at over &E 700 million in 1975, would have been reduced to about &E 150 million. Instead, what transpired was that funding for the second *tranche* did not materialize, but public sector companies had gone ahead and borrowed from Egyptian public sector banks on the assumption that it would.

17. *The Egypt of Nasser and Sadat*, p. 114; ". . . uncovered borrowing by (Egyptian public sector banks) reached nearly &E 400 million in 1976, and they continued to borrow beyond authorized

limits to the tune of &E 389 million in 1977. Meanwhile . . . the price subsidies were maintained."

18. Through the Non-Aligned Movement, Nasser hoped to play a great role in international politics, along with other non-aligned leaders Nehru of India and Tito of Yugoslavia. The Non-Aligned Movement effectively died. As for Sadat, he initially hoped to make Egypt into a great power by defeating Israel in the 1973 War. The victory was not nearly as clearcut as it needed to be, and when Sadat attempted to salvage his position by journeying to Jerusalem, he turned the rest of the Arabs against him, without really getting the concrete support (i.e., financial aid) he needed from the West. Consequently he had almost nothing to offer his people for their sacrifices.

19. In 1968 students rioted against a plan by the regime to deal leniently with army officers responsible for the 1967 debacle. There was no large scale participation in the rioting by the masses. Nonetheless, the fact that the students had rioted was surprising, as, up until this point, demonstrations against the *ra'is* had been unthinkable. It would appear therefore, that there was considerable resentment against Nasser within the society. In the 1977 riots, protests were widespread, and affected all classes of society. The author was in Cairo when that riot erupted, and was in fact caught up in the disturbances.

20. Egyptians have caricatured Mubarak as "the laughing cow," after his alleged resemblance to the cow that appears on the label of a French cheese popular in Egypt. See *Mubarak's Egypt*, p. 20.

21. *The Egypt of Nasser and Sadat*, p. 221.

. . . secondary and university education have grown since 1969-70 at over 70 percent per annum. By contrast public technical institutes that were to have bolstered the ranks of literate, skilled labor (electricians, mechanics, typists, etc.) have languished. Secondary and university education are intimately joined, forming the track to high prestige employment. Those who have already followed this path are an important political constituency, and they want their children to have the same opportunity....The secondary or university diploma has been justifiably seen as a free-ticket to high status employment, above all in the public sector.

22. See *The Egypt of Nasser and Sadat*, p. 203. (Egypt has oil in the Sinai. It is not a great deal, but it is a revenue producer and that helps. It would be wrong, however, to assume that Egypt, as an oil producer, is in the league of the Gulf states.)

23. The United States, for example, forgave \$7 billion in military loans. Western creditors similarly rescheduled Egyptian

debts through the IMF, but this presumably would have occurred in any case, since Cairo had applied for help before the crisis erupted. At the same time, however, it seems justified to suggest that--had it not been for DESERT STORM--Egypt would not have gotten as good terms as she did from creditors.

24. Under Nasser, two political organizations functioned as parties, which would not have been construed as parties in any Western sense--they were the Liberation Rally and the Arab Socialist Union. Both were really mobilization corps. There was never any question that these were Nasser's personal instruments.

25. Information on the parties and press was obtained in interviews in Cairo in 1991 and 1993.

26. See Mark Nicholson, "Referendum pits Mubarak against apathy," *The Financial Times*, October 4, 1993.

27. Richard Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 328.

29. *Ibid.*, pp. 28, 29.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 42.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 30.

32. The author derives this perception from reading Mitchell's book. The Brotherhood was heavily involved in street politics in Egypt in the decade preceding the outbreak of the war in Palestine. However, the crackdown against it comes immediately after it involves itself in the Palestine question. Further, in a memorandum written shortly before his death by assassination Banna makes this claim (that the society's troubles can be traced to its Palestine stand). See *The Society of the Muslim Brothers*, p. 70.

33. The unrest was due largely to the perception that the Palace was not actively pursuing the goal of emancipating the country from the British. Also, the Egyptian army went into battle against the Israelis with equipment much of which was defective. This caused a great scandal, and was a factor influencing the so-called Free Officers to overthrow the King. The Officers acted belatedly however; for a long time it was primarily the Muslim Brotherhood that was carrying the fight against the government. For an account of this activity see *The Society of the Muslim Brothers*, pp. 58-59.

34. *The Society of the Muslim Brothers*, pp. 63, 64.

35. Throughout its career the Society was alleged to have a secret apparatus, used for, among other things, the commission of

various violent acts. There does not appear to be any reason to doubt the existence of this apparatus; however, Banna and other leaders maintained that it frequently perpetrated deeds of which the leadership did not approve and of which it was not aware until after the fact.

36. For background on the period when Sadat was assassinated see Mohamed Heikal, *Autumn of Fury*, New York: Random House, 1983; Gilles Kepel, *Muslim Extremism in Egypt*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984; Hamid Ansari, "The Islamic Militants in Egyptian Politics," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 16, Number 1, March 1984; and Hamid Ansari, "Sectarian Conflict in Egypt and the Political Expediency of Religion," *The Middle East Journal*, Vol. 38, Number 3, Summer 1984.

37. State Department officials have suggested that some aid was forthcoming from the *gama'aat* (to be discussed later). If so, it must have been minimal. Only the Brotherhood has the wealth and organization to mount an effort such as this.

38. See Chris Hedges, "Egyptian Leader Calls for Patience After Quake Victims Riot," *The New York Times*, October 19, 1992; Tony Walker, "Riot police deployed in Cairo," *The Financial Times*, October 19, 1992, and "Protests Erupt in Cairo Over Quake Aid," *The Washington Post*, October 18, 1992.

39. For official Brotherhood positions on this see *Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS)-NES-90-199*, October 15, 1990, "Condemned By Fundamentalist Leader"; *FBIS-NES-92-155*, August 11, 1992, "Muslim Brotherhood Official on Establishing a Party"; *FBIS-NES-92-128*, July 2, 1992, "Muslim Brotherhood Official on Jihad Organization"; and *FBIS-NES 92-113*, January 11, 1992, "Muslim Brotherhood Official Views Algeria, 'Party.'" Mitchell discusses this point. He says, "...they (the Brothers) would have been no match for any serious resistance by Egyptian security forces, with or without the support from other opposing groups. The capacity for terror is not coterminous with the capability for revolutionary action which would have involved sufficient power not only to mount a revolt but to maintain it." See *The Society of the Muslim Brothers*, pp. 307, 308.

40. *The Egypt of Nasser and Sadat*, p. 204.

41. Under the Turks there existed a hierarchy of titles, from *effendi* to *bey* to *pasha*.

42. The author, who was a student in Cairo at this time, remembers his own amazement on seeing a car parked on the beach at Alexandria with a stereo radio on the front seat.

43. The question of the degree to which the Brotherhood actually finances activities like this is much up in the air. Springborg deals with the question effectively. He introduces the concept of an "Islamic tendency," to which a mass of Egyptians

subscribe, and claims that this tendency is so "dense" that it is impossible to separate moderate Islamicists (such as the Brothers) from true radicals (like members of the *gama'aat*, which we will discuss below). He says that within the tendency the adherents practice *taqiya* (dissimulation), making it difficult to get essential information about their activities. In the end, one is reduced to comparing the Brotherhood's known *modus operandi* from other times. For example, we have a fairly good understanding of its actions in the post-World War II era, when--after it was crushed--much information about it was made public. At that time, it was actively funding campus religious groups. See *The Society of the Muslim Brothers*, p. 172.

44. *Mubarak's Egypt*, p. 228.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 48; also interviews the author conducted in Cairo in 1993. On the particular score of women and buses--Cairo public transportation was a scandal. Buses were so overpacked that riders literally hung out the windows. A young woman forced to insert herself into a situation like this was almost certain to be molested. Hence, the Brotherhood's offer of private transportation was a great boon.

46. *Ibid.*, p. 228.

47. *Ibid.*, p. 229.

48. The best treatment of this is in *Ibid.*, pp. 46-61. Springborg gives some examples of the firms which he breaks down into two types--individual proprietorships, and limited-liability joint stock companies. The companies appeal to Egyptians looking for a greater return on their investment than is available though the public sector. Also, says Springborg, the fact that the firms advertise as "Islamic" attracts many. Some of the firms are run by Muslim Brothers. At the same time, Springborg cautions that it is impossible to say that the Brotherhood is using them primarily as vehicles for social mobilization. Still, he believes, this is the case, given the fact that the charge is repeatedly made, and is apparently believed by the mass of Egyptians. Springborg notes there are also Islamicist Banks (p. 65). These, however, tend to be much more conservative institutions than the investment companies and are presided over by a different element than is involved in the companies. Mitchell in *The Society of the Muslim Brothers* also describes the setup of firms owned and operated by the Brothers. He says (in 1969) there were "some small firms founded, both to relieve post-war unemployment and to dramatize the viability of 'Islamic economics.'" See *The Society of the Muslim Brothers*, pp. 36-37, 290-291.

49. See *FBIS-NES-92-155*, "'Massive' Crackdown on Islamists in the South described"; also *Mubarak's Egypt*, pp. 242-243.

50. For background on these clashes see *The Egypt of Nasser*

and Sadat, pp. 360-3. Also see *FBIS-NES-92-148*, July 31, 1992.

51. Upper Egypt has long been a stronghold of the Coptic faith. Under the monarchy, wealthy Copts owned vast tracts of property there. When Nasser instituted his land reform much of this land was taken from them and turned over to peasants, many of whom were Muslims. This naturally exacerbated animosities that already existed.

52. For discussions of the police-villager relationships see *FBIS-NES-92-126*, June 30, 1992 "'Sinful, Bloody' Battle Viewed"; *FBIS-NES-92-131*, "Fundamentalist Plan to Kill Ministers Reported." For reports of attacks on police, and the escalating nature of these attacks see *FBIS-NES-91-155*, November 25, 1991, "Islamic Groups, Security Forces Clash 18 Nov"; *FBIS-NES-90-103*, May 29, 1990, "Police Vehicle Attacked Four Officers Injured." This aspect of youths attacking police is quite extraordinary and bears further investigation. Under ordinary circumstances it likely would not occur. To be sure, some bolder spirits would always refuse to be ordered about by anyone (see Eric Hobsbawm, *Bandits*, New York: Pantheon Books, 1981, pp. 33, 34). But most peasants more likely would submit. Why then are we witnessing this eruption of attacks by peasants on police officers? An explanation to the author in Egypt makes sense. That is that over the past decade many Egyptians have served in the military, either fighting against the Israelis, or as mercenaries of one sort or another (for example, Egyptians who sought work in Lebanon drifted into the militias; similarly, expatriate Egyptian workers in Iraq were drafted into the war against Iran). As a consequence, many Egyptians today are unwilling to follow traditional mores of the peasant communities and bow to authority. This seems plausible, and moreover--as an explanation--it tracks with the experience of the Algerians. The revolution there was triggered by young Arabs who, having served in the French army during World War II, refused to toady to the *colons* on their return home. For a discussion of the Egyptians' attitude toward revenge, see Nathan Brown in *Peasants and Politics In the Modern Middle East*, p. 207.

53. See *FBIS-NES-90-198*, October 12, 1990, "Assembly Speaker Al-Mahjub Assassinated in Cairo"; also *FBIS-NES-90-208*, October 26, 1990, "'Hundreds of Islamist Suspects Released"; and *FBIS-NES-90-224*, November 20, 1990, "Islamist Leader Denies Role in Al-Mahjub Murder." As stated, originally it was believed that this was the crime of a religious extremist. However, doubt was cast on this theory by the professionalism of the operation, which seemed to point to contract killers. The speaker had been involved in various corrupt deals and was becoming an embarrassment to the government. Along with this, unrest in Algeria may have led security forces to suspect religious involvement. In Algiers, the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) had almost taken over the government, legally, through the ballot box, and had been banned, touching off widespread violence. This prompted a spate of articles in the Western media warning of a

possible Islamic takeover in Egypt as well. For background on this see the Stephen C. Pelletiere, *Mass Action and Islamic Fundamentalism: The Revolt of the Brooms*, Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, March 20, 1992.

54. Springborg in *Mubarak's Egypt*, p. 217, notes that in 1986 the Egyptian government authorized the rector of Cairo University to forbid the wearing of the *galabeya*, "the traditional robe favored by male Islamicists."

55. See Chris Hedges, "Attack on Bus in Egypt Kills a Briton," *The New York Times*, October 22, 1992. For tourist attacks in general see *FBIS-NES-90-136*, July 16, 1990, "Extremist Arrested After Bombing Restaurant"; *FBIS-NES-92-200*, "Islamic Group Briefs Press on Objectives (discusses 'depraved' behavior of tourists)"; *FBIS-NES 92-197*, October 9, 1992, "Islamic Group Claims Train, Boat Attacks."

56. See Chris Hedges, "Egyptian Leader Calls For Patience After Quake Victims Riot," *The New York Times*, October 18, 1992.

57. See "Visitor Attacks in Egypt Spread to Cairo," *The New York Times*, February 14, 1993, Section V, p. 3.

58. See "2 Killed and 16 Hurt in Blast At Central Cairo Coffee Shop," *The New York Times*, October 27, 1993.

59. See Caryle Murphy, "Mosque Raid Stirs Criticism of Police," *The New York Times*, March 12, 1993.

60. See "Senior Official Shot Dead," *The New York Times*, April 12, 1993.

61. "Gunmen Fire at Egyptian Official," *The New York Times*, April 21, 1993. The official was the Information Minister, responsible for television programming, among other things. The militants regard television as an abomination, and would like to see programming devoted to spiritual broadcasts.

62. See Caryle Murphy, "Egypt Convicts 32 In Attack on Tourists," *The Washington Post*, April 23, 1993.

63. See Caryle Murphy, "Egyptian Ambush Leaves 4 Dead," *The Washington Post*, July 19, 1993.

64. See Ibrahim Youssef, "Egyptian Militants Blamed in Attack on Security Chief," *The New York Times*, August 19, 1993.

65. See endnote 7.

66. See Chris Hedges, "7 Executed in Egypt In Sharp Crackdown on Islamic Militants," *The New York Times*, July 9, 1993.

67. In his visit to the United States last year, to call on newly elected President Clinton, Mubarak named Iran as the main culprit in the plot to overthrow his government. See "Mubarak Cautions Islamic Extremists," *The Washington Post*, March 5, 1993. At the same time, both the Egyptian President and others connected with his regime have also implicated Sudan in the alleged plot. See *FBIS-NES-91-247*, December 24, 1991, "Al-Ahram Editor on Iran-Sudan Cooperation."

68. There are the two main sects of Islam: Sunnis and Shias. Their rivalry is ancient and based on doctrinal interpretations that are wide apart. Given this separation, it is highly unlikely a specifically religious movement--as this certainly is--would accommodate a basic doctrinal schism like this. It would be as if President Clinton announced that the FBI had uncovered an extremist religious movement in the United States comprising Lutherans of the Missouri Synod who were taking directions from the Pope in Rome. It's an interesting idea but one would want to see proof. For a recent discussion of this problem see *FBIS-NES-92-113*, June 11, 1992, "Muslim Brotherhood Official Views Algeria, 'Party'."

69. The history of this term (*gam'iya*) is interesting. If one goes back in the *FBIS* Daily Reports to 1990 one does not find the word *gam'iya* used, but rather *gama'aat*. The first is a singular form of the Arabic word for "association" or "group." The second is the plural of another word meaning essentially the same thing. The first is invariably capitalized in English translation ("the Group"); the second is not ("the groups"). The author asked an official of *FBIS* why the singular form was being used and was told there was a "concurrence" of opinion on this (i.e., "the Group"). The author then asked, if the singular form was used even when the Arabic indicated the plural, and he was told, "Yes." This is puzzling because Arabic is one language in which it is impossible to confuse number--a plural usage is immediately recognizable. In effect, then, we are dealing with two distinct renderings--up until roughly 1992, we encounter *gama'aat al Islamiya*, which translates as "Islamic groups." After that it becomes *gam'iya al Islamiya*, "the Islamic Group." We will discuss this more below. For examples of the earlier usage see *FBIS-NES 90-202*, October 18, 1990, "Al Ahrar Column Offers Advice," ("First: We are all aware that there are extremist groups among the youth whose extremism stems from their feeling of political emptiness"); also *FBIS-NES 90-068*, April 9, 1990, "Interior Minister on Sectarian Sedition" ("These youths, the oldest of whom is 17 years. Of course, they are backed by certain people with a certain way of thinking. They are the ones who call themselves the Islamic groups."), and *FBIS-NES-91-227*, December 25, 1991, "Islamic groups, security forces Clash, Nov. 18" ("Islamic groups and security forces clashed in abu Tij village in Asyut after midnight two days ago").

70. In addition to the Group and *al Jihad*, other entities are the Islamic Front for Liberation, the *al Shawkiyun* group,

Repudiation and Renunciation, Those Retrieved From the Fire, *al Tabligh*, Stop and Ponder, and the Vanguard of Conquest. See *FBIS-NES-90-199*, October 15, 1990, "Islamic Group Claims Responsibility"; *FBIS-NES-90-086*, May 3, 1990, "14 Fundamentalists Killed"; *FBIS-NES-91-155*, August 12, 1991, "'Large Scale' Muslim-Copt Sedition Threatened," and *FBIS-NES-92-044*, March 5, 1992, "Suspect Apprehended."

71. See *FBIS-NES-92-155*, August 11, 1992, "Muslim Brotherhood Official on Establishing a Party"; *FBIS-NES-92-128*, July 2, 1992, "Muslim Brotherhood Official on Jihad Organization"; *FBIS-NES-92-113*, June 11, 1992, "Muslim Brotherhood Official Views Algeria, Party," and *FBIS-NES-92-072*, April 14, 1992, "Muslim Brotherhood Successor Struggle Viewed."

72. The author dealt with the groups acting as self-constituted morals police in his study, *Mass Action and Islamic Fundamentalism: The Revolt of the Brooms*. There he discussed a particular saying of the Prophet, seized on by the radicals. It goes as follows: "(Muhammed said) whoever among you (sees) the abomination/ on him the obligation (to correct it)/ By hand (i.e. force), or tongue, or heart, and the last is the weakest." The purport of this is that *any* Muslim--not just the religious authorities, but anyone has the obligation to attack corruption. It justifies vigilantism of the sort that we have been witnessing in the Middle East most recently, particularly in Algeria. The authorities in both countries are stymied by their inability to stop recurring acts of terror. At the same time, they have been looking for an organized conspiracy. It may be that--inspired by this injunction--individual Muslims are carrying out such acts. This would explain the apparent spontaneity of many of the attacks. Also, it would make it virtually impossible to stop the violence, since there would be no way of telling which Muslim would act next. Robert Bianchi, *Unruly Corporatism: Associational Life in Twentieth Century Egypt*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1989, pp. 200-204, has a discussion of the controversy over this saying.

73. According to Egyptian sources, the groups take unyielding positions on such matters as whether to celebrate the advent of a certain holy season in the evening or morning, and whether it is permissible to kill someone who is ignorant of the faith. There are also instances of their trashing video stores, entering people's homes and shooting their appliances, and of threatening plastic surgeons and cosmeticians. All this seems very extreme, and not the sort of activity disciplined revolutionaries would engage in. For details see *FBIS-NES-90-087*, May 4, 1990, "Al Fayum Killings Detailed; Background Given"; *FBIS-NES-91-155*, August 12, 1991, "Large Scale Muslim-Copt Sedition Threatened"; *FBIS-NES-92-118*, June 18, 1992, "Confrontation Predicted."

74. The *ulama* are religious scholars, who traditionally have pronounced on matters of morals for the Muslim community. The

conservative *ulama* have always maintained that the average Muslim on his own is not capable of correcting morals--he has not sufficient understanding of the faith. The radicals, however, appear to reject this interpretation (see endnote 72). This obviously would be a crucial concern for the affluent Muslim Brothers. As members of the propertied class they would not condone taking the law into ones own hands, since their standing depends on upholding the law. The attitude of the Brotherhood toward those who are perpetrating the violence is problematical. The Brotherhood's leadership has condemned the violence more than once. Springborg has suggested that the fact that the leadership has not been more condemnatory relates to an understanding among the Islamicists not to quarrel in public. Waterbury adds another dimension to the argument, claiming that the symbols and themes employed by the Islamicists are only potent so long as they are not diluted, i.e., not moderated. It may be, therefore, that the conservative Brotherhood leaders actually fear moving against the radicals lest they alienate the mass audience they are trying to cultivate. In the final analysis, though, the best evidence that the Brotherhood is not behind the violence is the failure of Mubarak to move against it. If he believed that the Society was causing the outrages, he certainly would not hesitate to act. For Brotherhood condemnations of the violence see *FBIS-NES-90-199*, October 15, 1990, "Condemned By Fundamentalist Leader"; *FBIS-NES-92-155*, August 11, 1992, "Muslim Brotherhood Official on Establishing a Party"; *FBIS-NES 92-128*, July 2, 1992, "Muslim Brotherhood on Jihad Organization." For a discussion of the Brotherhood's stand on the question of when it is permissible for a Muslim to act against corruption, see Mitchell, pp. 18, 19.

75. For the youth aspect of this see *FBIS-NES-90-202*, October 18, 1990, "Al Ahram Column Offers Advice"; *FBIS-NES-90-086*, "14 Fundamentalists Killed," (This article is particularly interesting inasmuch as it talks about two sons killing their father, after the latter urged them to give up their violent ways); *FBIS-NES-90-068*, April 9, 1990, "Interview Minister on Sectarian Sedition"; *FBIS-NES-92-155*, August 11, 1992, "Article Views Anti-Terrorism Legislation." That the groups are made up of nonprofessionals seems to be indicated by a survey on the various weapons they employ. According to police, weapons most frequently seized are swords, chains, molotov cocktails, and nail bombs. These weapons would only be resorted to by individuals strapped for cash. Moreover, the groups regularly hold up jewelry stores, and importune recent returnees from the Gulf for "free will" contributions. If the Brotherhood--with all its wealth and power--were bankrolling them, presumably they would not have to carry on in this way.

76. The accounts of radicals seized list agronomists, house painters, electricians, engineers. See *FBIS-NES-90-136*, July 16, 1990, "Extremist Arrested After Bombing Restaurant"; *FBIS-NES-90-187*, March 4, 1990, "Al Fayum Killings Detailed; Background Given."

77. For a discussion of anarchism in France during this period see Richard Parry's introduction to his book, *The Bonnot Gang*, London: The Rebel Press, 1987. In Parry's account the similarities between the French experience and the Egyptians' is striking.

78. The 1986 riot is discussed in *Mass Action and Islamic Fundamentalism*.

79. For a discussion of these corrupt dealings see *The Egypt of Nasser and Sadat*, pp. 150-188. Waterbury's discussion of the so-called *bayyumiyyum* is especially revealing. An Egyptian contractor who has given his name to a particularly sordid kind of thievery bribed Cairo building inspectors to allow him to add an extra four stories to a building he was constructing, against the building code. He might have gotten away with it had he not tried to economize elsewhere by omitting the building's structural supports. The whole thing collapsed killing three people. Also see *Mubarak's Egypt*, p. 34, 39. The original crop of these connivers grew up under Sadat, and, with some changes, the individuals involved have survived into the Mubarak regime. The author was told in the Embassy that this group was very clever, and that to stay in business under socialism was just as challenging as under any form of capitalism.

80. Estimate from the U.S. Embassy.

81. An Egyptian informant told the author that this group wants to "shut the door" of public education for the poor. "They have made it themselves," he was told, "and now they want to shut the door. They say a farmer should always be a farmer; this is a caste system that they are trying to set up."

82. Were Egypt to go, and along with it Algeria, we could expect Tunisia and perhaps Morocco to follow suit. A regime in Cairo, antipathetic to the West, would severely affect the balance of power in the area. Egypt, Iraq and Iran are the three most powerful area states--among the Muslims--and all three would be hostile. The sheer numbers of Egyptians are too intimidating for weak entities such as the Gulf monarchies to disdain. To be sure, the monarchies could seek protection from the United States, but even so they would be highly chary of offending the Egyptians, who have given them so much trouble in the past.

83. The danger would be that in the process of mobilizing Egyptians to displace the secular rule of Mubarak, the Brotherhood would lose control of the situation and find itself swept aside by a radical takeover, as occurred in Iran. The United States would then be confronted by a hostile government in Cairo, dedicated to combatting Israel and the West.

84. For information on the dialogue see "Set for 'national dialogue'," *Middle East International*, January 21, 1994.

U.S. ARMY WAR COLLEGE

Major General William A. Stofft  
Commandant

\*\*\*\*\*

STRATEGIC STUDIES INSTITUTE

Director  
Colonel John W. Mountcastle

Director of Research  
Dr. Earl H. Tilford, Jr.

Author  
Dr. Stephen C. Pelletiere

Editor  
Mrs. Marianne P. Cowling

Secretaries  
Ms. Rita A. Rummel  
Mrs. Kay L. Williams

\*\*\*\*\*

Composition  
Mrs. Mary Jane Semple

Cover Design  
Mr. James E. Kistler