

RELEASE IN PART
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From: Sullivan, Jacob J <SullivanJJ@state.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, November 28, 2012 9:51 PM
To: H
Subject: Fw: Fwd: Morsy's decree of decrees

Fyi

From: Martin Indyk [mailto:]
Sent: Wednesday, November 28, 2012 05:27 PM
To: Sullivan, Jacob J
Subject: Fwd: Morsy's decree of decrees

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Thought you should see this from [] who is in touch with the MB in Egypt. Please protect.

Martin

Sorry for slow response on this. I spent a good chunk of today talking to MB/FJP officials and trying to get a sense of how they're seeing things, particularly after yesterday's protests and clashes. Here are some of my take-aways (some of which will find their way into a longer article I'm working on).

First, they may differ on the specific language used or how it was done, but Morsi, MB & FJP are unified on the absolute necessity of the decree. I even spoke to one MB official who's been very critical of Morsi in private, but, on this, he was 100% behind Morsi. They essentially believe that pretty much anything is justified in this period to protect against what they see as the biggest threat yet facing the Brotherhood. They claim they have solid information from sympathizing judges from within the courts themselves that, this Sunday, there would be at least three major rulings, and possibly a fourth: dissolution of CA and Shura Council, revoking of Aug 12 decree (paving way for possible reinstatement of military rule) and one that I hadn't heard before - a ruling against the presidential election law, which could then be used to re-run presidential elections (or so they seemed to think). One official went so far as to suggest that, if they didn't pre-empt now, the closing of MB HQs could be in the cards, followed by the dissolution of the Brotherhood itself. This latter part is obviously a bit of a stretch, but there's no doubt in my mind that many in the MB actually believe this. So essentially, they're saying that pretty much anything is, and can be, justified to prevent all of this from happening even if it's anti-democratic and contrary to the spirit of the revolution (which some of them admit it is). One of my Brotherhood contacts likened it to "shock therapy with the potential of leaving the patient dead." a

The other thing, and this isn't new, is that the Brotherhood believes that the overwhelming majority of Egyptians are with them, and that those who are leading the charge against the decree are a mix of fulool and liberals who are essentially taking advantage of this crisis to improve their electoral prospects. They have little respect for their opposition and view them as fundamentally anti-democratic (for them, the next Algeria 1991 is always around the corner). They cite internet polls, including those on "liberal" pages like "We Are All Khaled Said," that suggest a large majority of Egyptians support the decree. Interestingly, one of my MB contacts insisted that they've been exercising restraint and that they've refrained, for example, from pointing out the "sectarian" nature of their opposition (i.e. that the churches have been mobilizing their congregants). He warned that Salafis are less likely to show the same kind of restraint if the crisis persists in the coming weeks.

As for a "way out," I was more optimistic two days ago than I am today. Both sides have hardened. MB is convinced that if Morsi makes major concessions, then that will open the door to even more demands,

and generally set a bad precedent. They believe they can wait it out, "as long as there's no loss of life, and the protests stay peaceful." That's why they're rushing the constitution - they're convinced they'll get another popular mandate in a referendum.

Lastly, one of Khairat al-Shater's senior aides made a pretty interesting point, that he's been in touch with Western govt officials, including in the State Dept, and that the international community "understands the context that they are operating in," and for that reason aren't likely exert more pressure. He seemed to think that this was quite important.