

in the Dec. 4 *Jerusalem Post* notes that the “Mossad’s principal function in Britain is to recruit Arab agents,” emphasizing that there are more Arabs in Britain, than Israel and the Occupied Territories combined. Through such recruitment, Netanyahu finds the Arab dupes to launch atrocities against Israeli targets, to justify his British-backed military adventures.

*Al Ahram*’s source concludes: “London’s ‘permanent interests’ have always converged with the lords of terrorism who live in Britain, and who never underestimate what their existence represents for British interests.”

Meanwhile, other Arab and Islamic governments are joining up with President Mubarak’s campaign. According to the Egyptian press, the interior ministers of all the Arab states will gather in Tunisia in January. Included on the agenda will be London’s safehousing of international terrorists. The issue was also raised by Malaysian Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, at the Dec. 9-10 summit of the Organization of Islamic Conference, in Teheran, Iran, where he decried “Western democracies,” meaning in this case, Britain, which “give refuge to those of our people who promote disruptive activities in our countries,” even while accusing Islamic nations of promoting “terrorism.”

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## Documentation

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# Islamic Group praises Britain, condemns U.S.

*Islamic Group leader Yassir al Sirri spoke about his group’s views and policies in the aftermath of the Luxor atrocity, in an interview at his home in London on Dec. 6. The interview was made available to EIR. Also taking part in the interview was his sidekick, Mohammed al Masari, the London-based Saudi terrorist who praised the June 1996 bombing of the U.S. Army barracks in Dharhan, Saudi Arabia, which left 19 U.S. soldiers dead, in an interview with the British Broadcasting Corp.*

*The Islamic Group is part of the network which killed Egyptian President Anwar Sadat in 1981. It has killed 92 tourists in 25 attacks in Egypt since 1992; in possibly its most savage attack, it shot 62 to death on Nov. 17, in Luxor. The Islamic Group is also responsible for the Feb. 26, 1993 World Trade Center bombing in New York City, which left six dead. Al Sirri’s associate, Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman, is now imprisoned in the United States, following his conviction for that incident.*

*According to published statements of the U.S. State Department, both al Sirri’s and al Masari’s groups are funded by Saudi terrorist moneybags Osama bin Laden, who also*

*works out of London, and who has called for a jihad to expel the United States from the Mideast. Their comments show why U.S. President Bill Clinton must impose sanctions on Britain, rather than on innocent third parties, for harboring and sponsoring such terrorists.*

**Q:** In the aftermath of the Luxor incident, the Egyptian government seems to have adopted a policy of further repression of the Islamic Group. Where are things heading?

**Al Sirri:** It was the regime which started the violence. Before the violence started, we operated through charity organizations, through helping orphans and widows. We did that without carrying weapons. But the Egyptian regime started killing youth in the streets.

**Al Masari:** From the Islamist side, Mr. al Sirri himself made an initiative yesterday, calling for a cease-fire for the next two months, which includes [the holy month of] Ramadan, ceasing all activities, military activities, obviously. There were contacts on the Egyptian side, through mediators, suggesting that they would welcome something like that. They were even making some very positive suggestions, that they might release those who have finished their detention period.

But what Mr. al Sirri has received from his sources in Egypt, that there is a detention wave now ongoing against the younger generation of Islamists, does not indicate very great wisdom on the Hosni Mubarak government side.

**Q:** There’s a new wave of detentions in Egypt?

**Al Sirri:** In four big “governates,” there is a big campaign. It’s in the hundreds. There’s no numbers yet; it just started a couple of days ago. All of them are young people, from the universities, a very qualified section of the population. Universities, and also poverty areas, are targeted. For example, government forces ransacked the veterinarian college in Asyut, and an agricultural college, simply because some of the people who were killed in the Luxor affair [that is, the terrorists killed there] were students at those campuses.

**Al Masari:** So, it does not look like the regime is coming to its senses. I doubt that the mediation going on last week and this week, was serious. Or else, there may be different wings fighting within the government. We might have a split, because one wing may be mediating, and another one acting like the Algerian exterminators.

**Q:** What’s the Egyptian government’s objective?

**Al Sirri:** The situation is not the same as Algeria, but it is similar. There are different wings. For example, Abdelrahim Musa, the past interior minister, was one of the rationalists—he was there from 1989-94. He started a dialogue with us, with a green light, obviously, from Hosni, because you cannot, as a minister, act on your own. And he contacted Abbud Azzumar.

**Al Masari:** Abbud Azzumar is the real leader of Islamic Group and Islamic Jihad, the grand old man. Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman is the scholar, the clergyman, but Abbud Az-

zumar is the real commander. He used to be a secret service man, a high-ranking secret service man, once. So, he's a very sophisticated man. He's been detained since the Sadat affair, condemned to 40 years.

**Al Sirri:** So, Abdelrahim contacted Abbud Azzumar, and there was very positive signs coming forward. But suddenly, the extermination wing moved, and Abdelrahim was kicked out of the government.

So, we have two wings. One thinks it can exterminate the opposition, by killing them, and forcing others to repent. And the other, thinks that there are some midway solutions. The liquidation wing is coming back to life again, and trying to mess with the situation. But nevertheless, the offer is still on the table, it has been publicized for two months, to give the government sufficient time to come to its senses.

There was also an Islamic Group initiative six months ago. But the initiative was weak, since the people who issued it, may have been high-ranking, but are in jail. Being in jail, means you cannot be considered a proper leader or respectable. So, their initiative was not received with warmth at that time.

Moreover, their initiative was one-sided. It offered to cease all of the Islamic Group's activities, but it did not ask the government to do anything. And even this was mocked by the ex-minister of interior, Hasan al-Alfi, who was fired, and then it ended in this disaster. So, hopefully, the rationalists will get the upper hand.

However, if, two months after this cease-fire, the regime does not respond to our demands, we will hold a press conference, and present evidence proving that Hosni Mubarak lied in his statements to international media recently, in which he denied the existence of any dialogue between his regime and us in the period from 1981-93.

**Q:** What about foreign pressures on Mubarak to have a hard line against the Islamic Group?

**Al Sirri:** This is quite likely. It is now clear that Hosni Mubarak is acting hysterically. He is focussing a campaign on Britain. But he's only acting within the larger framework of the United States' policy, acting as a dog or agent of America. His campaign against Britain is part of a comprehensive U.S. plan and general policy to unleash its dogs against Britain.

**Al Masari:** You know that there are certain circles in the United States which would like to weaken Britain more, to marginalize it more. There's a world struggle between the big powers.

**Al Sirri:** American policy is to support Hosni Mubarak officially and substantially. The U.S. is the only state which still allows its tourists to visit Egypt [following Luxor]. The U.S. is sacrificing the lives of its citizens, through supporting the Egyptian regime. The U.S. is still giving support to Mubarak, despite his violations of human rights. We appeal to the U.S. administration to stop its support to Mubarak, and to put pressure on him, until he regains his senses and respects human rights.

**Al Masari:** Mr. Sirri believes that American appeals for human rights are just for international public consumption. The American government is still very firmly behind Hosni Mubarak; it gives intelligence support, and also torture support — the equipment comes from America.

**Q:** Do you think the reason Mubarak is denouncing the British, is because of fighting between the U.S. and British governments?

**Al Sirri:** That's what I said.

**Al Masari:** That's also what I believe. Because these are two cousins, they speak the same language, and come from the same roots. So it is very difficult to fight face to face directly, especially because they are in the same alliance. So, if they can find someone like Mubarak to be their barking dog, it is much more convenient for them. But, I think the British know that. The American public may not know that, but the relevant people in every quarter know what's going on.

**Al Sirri:** The Egyptian government demanded many times that I be extradited to Egypt. But, Britain, every time, required they submit proof against me. The only proof that the Egyptian regime has presented to the British authorities, was a sentence against me by an Egyptian military tribunal. Mubarak is trying to cover his failure internally by attacking other states. Mubarak tells Britain that "law is the creation of man and not a divine revelation, therefore it can be changed." Mubarak is used to changing policy, and he demands these governments, like Britain's, change theirs, too. [Al Sirri is referring to Mubarak's demands that Britain change its laws, which permit plotting foreign terrorism from its soil.]

**Al Masari:** The Egyptian government has made several diplomatic protests, I think three or four times, to deliver Mr. al Sirri. And every time the British ask, "What is the evidence against the man? There's no evidence." Sometimes they bring the court ruling against him, the accusation that he was involved in the [Prime Minister] Atif Sidqi assassination attempt affair. So the British government said, "Okay, if you have other evidence which British courts or British police could check, we would do that. Even though there is no exchange treaty for criminals, we can still accommodate you." The Egyptians were at a loss every time, to bring forward anything respectable, which could withstand the scrutiny of Scotland Yard or any British court.

**Q:** What is the Islamic Group's view of an acceptable form of Egyptian society?

**Al Sirri:** What we are demanding, is next to nothing. We are demanding the removal of the infamous laws, the law on journalism and unions, and the one on the transfer of power. Of course, the implementation of Islamic *Shariah* [Islamic law], is the ultimate hope of every Egyptian. Amnesty International, in its communication with us, told us that what we are demanding is not something impossible, that they are simple, human demands. . . .