

RELEASE IN PART B6

From: Sidney Blumenthal <[redacted]>
Sent: Friday, December 7, 2012 5:20 PM
To: H
Subject: Re: H: Dispatch from my son Max in the streets of Cairo. Sid

B6

he's still in Cairo, goes out every day with the crowds, says he'll write another report tomorrow. He's on his way to Gaza, Jordan and then Israel. he's finished the manuscript of his book on Greater Israel to be published next year. will send you his next report.

-----Original Message-----

From: H <HDR22@clintonemail.com>
To: 'sbwhoep' [redacted]
Sent: Fri, Dec 7, 2012 4:50 pm
Subject: Re: H: Dispatch from my son Max in the streets of Cairo. Sid

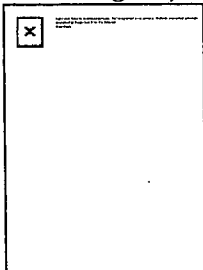
Good stuff. Where is he now?

From: Sidney Blumenthal [mailto:[redacted]]
Sent: Wednesday, December 05, 2012 10:02 PM Eastern Standard Time
To: H
Subject: H: Dispatch from my son Max in the streets of Cairo. Sid

<http://maxblumenthal.com/2012/12/towards-civil-war-in-egypt/>

Towards Civil War in Egypt?

On 12.05.12, By Max Blumenthal



A man succumbs to teargas inhalation near a Roxy Square field hospital
 Last night, thousands of opposition protesters appeared in front of Egypt's presidential palace in the Cairo suburb of Heliopolis to voice their anger with President Mohamed Morsi's draft constitution. Influenced almost completely by Muslim Brotherhood officials and their Salafist allies, the proposed constitution is a divisive document. At the protest, the mostly secular, upper middle class crowd went well beyond the demand for a constitutional dialogue, denouncing Morsi as a dictator and calling for his ouster. "Erhal!" ("Leave"), they chanted; "Dictator, Dictator, Morsi, it's your turn!" was another cadence that filled the air outside the palace.

Though I was unable to confirm reports that state security were driven away from the protest, forced to leave their helmets and even teargas shells behind, I saw them boarding buses and trucks by the hundreds on Salah Salem Boulevard. Soon after, Morsi evacuated the presidential palace, with protesters pelting his motorcade with stones as it pulled away. The protest was apparently seen by the Muslim Brotherhood leadership as a major transgression. A red line had been crossed. As Yasser

Borhami, a Salafist preacher supportive of Morsi, told Al Jazeera, the opposition provoked violence by "saying words insulting of the president."

This afternoon, the Muslim Brotherhood called for a million man march on the presidential palace, where opposition protesters were still encamped. The clashes that had been expected all week were now inevitable, as Morsi seemed determined to prove his political legitimacy through a massive display of street-level manpower. By 6 PM, streets near Heliopolis' Roxy Square were lined with buses and vans used to shepherd in thousands of Brotherhood supporters from the countryside and the provinces. The details of what happened next may require another day to clarify, but what is clear is that the Brotherhood organized a march that was certain to spark violent clashes, and that the decision was made at the highest levels of the organization's political echelon.

I arrived at Roxy Square around 7 PM with Cliff Cheney, a Cairo-based photojournalist and videographer covering the revolutionary tumult. By then the fighting was in full swing. Huge throngs of opposition demonstrators swelled towards the pro-Morsi crowds, pelting them with stones. Fusillades of teargas flew in return, possibly from state security bolstering the pro-Morsi lines. The sound of shotguns loaded with birdshot thundered from inside the melee, and molotov cocktails streaked above the crowd, lobbed from both sides. One by one, young men came stumbling towards a makeshift field hospital and crumpled onto the sidewalk, overcome by gas inhalation. Others suffering more serious injuries were loaded into ambulances roaring through the crowd every few minutes. An opposition protester who had been in the thick of the fighting told me the Brotherhood mustered larger numbers but the anti-government forces were "more daring." To make up for lost ground, he said the Brotherhood activists began firing rubber and possibly live bullets. "Everyone around me was falling," he said. Wael Eskandar, an Egyptian blogger and opposition supporter present during the clashes, claimed firearms, including an automatic rifle, were used by pro-Morsi activists "early and with high frequency." On the other hand, a reporter for the Egyptian daily Al Ahram reported seeing a man "recklessly" using a gun against pro-Morsi demonstrators.

As the night wore on, a spokesman for the Brotherhood appeared on a local Cairo radio show to dismiss claims that the march was a violent provocation. He insisted no opposition protesters were in their tents when the Brotherhood members arrived at the palace. However, other witnesses at the scene told me those who had encamped at the palace were badly beaten. By 9 PM, hundreds were reported injured and each side reported at least one fatality. Among those reportedly killed was Egyptian Popular Alliance activist Mirna Emad.

During the clashes, countless activists told me to leave for my own safety. "This is not a foreign friendly demonstration," one told me. Indeed, Western reporters are not always welcome at such events, and in contrast to my experience at the popular protests in the West Bank, some demonstrators treat those who brandish cameras with extreme hostility. So I could not take photos or shoot video with the kind of frequency I'm accustomed to. When a wave of Brotherhood activists broke through opposition lines, pushing the crowd back and sending hundreds sprinting away from the square, I ran with them. And I did not return. I learned later that a Western photojournalist became trapped in a dress shop as the situation deteriorated.

Each side took casualties and neither appears ready to relent. The polarization is deepening with each passing day. It appears that the fighting will persist as December 15, the date of the constitutional referendum, draws closer. If Morsi's legitimacy is contingent on his ability to maintain stability, he risks forfeiting it by allowing the kind of violence seen in Roxy Square tonight to occur on his watch. Mazhar Shaheen, the famed imam known as the "Tahrir Preacher" for his role in the January 25 revolution, said tonight, "What is happening threatens to lead to a civil war... We should all be ashamed to participate in the collapse of the nation."