

Withdrawal/Redaction Sheet

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
001. report	re: Egypt (9 pages)	n.d.	P1/b(1)
002. cable	re: Egypt (5 pages)	07/29/1999	P1/b(1)
003. memo	To File from Melanne Verveer re: Pre-Advance to Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia (partial) (1 page)	02/12/1999	b(7)(E)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
First Lady's Office
Melanne Verveer
OA/Box Number: 20031

FOLDER TITLE:

Egypt

2013-0534-S

rc1491

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
- P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
- P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
- P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

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PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).

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Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
- b(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
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- b(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
- b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

Loar, Theresa A.

From: O'Reilly, Maureen T.
Sent: Tuesday, August 15, 2000 5:22 PM
To: Loar, Theresa A.; Soto-Harmon, Lidia E.
Subject: PROMOTING THE ROLE OF EGYPTIAN WOMEN IN POLITICAL LIFE

*file Egypt
women's political
participation*

Q Middle East

SUBJECT: PROMOTING THE ROLE OF EGYPTIAN WOMEN IN POLITICAL LIFE

SUMMARY

1. (U) FIRST LADY SUZANNE MUBARAK, ADDRESSING A CONFERENCE OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR WOMEN, URGED WOMEN TO PARTICIPATE IN POLITICS, REGISTER TO VOTE, AND RUN FOR OFFICE. SHE CHALLENGED "MYTHS" THAT WOMEN DID NOT AND SHOULD NOT PARTICIPATE IN POLITICAL LIFE. SHE CALLED UPON POLITICAL PARTIES TO SUPPORT FEMALE CANDIDATES FOR THE UPCOMING LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS. FEMALE POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN THE ARAB WORLD IS "DISCOURAGING," ACCORDING TO AMBASSADOR MERVAT TALLAWY, HEAD OF THE COUNCIL. A PALTRY 3.3 PERCENT OF EGYPTIAN LEGISLATORS ARE FEMALE. THIS NEITHER REFLECTS THE SIZE OF THE FEMALE POPULATION NOR THEIR LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION IN OTHER IMPORTANT FIELDS. PRESCRIPTIONS FOR THE MALAISE INCLUDED A WIDE SPECTRUM OF MEASURES, FROM MORE ACTIVE FEMALE PARTICIPATION IN VOTING AND CAMPAIGNING TO ESTABLISHING A QUOTA SYSTEM FOR WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS. DEPRIVING GOVERNMENT SUBSIDIES TO PARTIES THAT DO NOT RUN FEMALE CANDIDATES WAS ALSO SUGGESTED.

COMMENT

2. (U) IN ONE RESPECT, THIS HIGH LEVEL, NATIONALLY TELEVISED CONFERENCE WAS SURREAL IN LIGHT OF RECENT CRACKDOWNS ON CIVIL SOCIETY AND INCARCERATION OF DR. SAAD EDDIN IBRAHIM. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE PROMINENCE OF THE SPEAKERS AND AUDIENCE HIGHLIGHT THE IMPORTANCE OF WOMENS' ISSUES IN EGYPT TODAY. ANOTHER NGO, THE EGYPTIAN CENTER FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS, SPONSORED IN EARLY JULY AN ELECTION CAMPAIGN TRAINING SEMINAR FOR CANDIDATES FOR THE UPCOMING LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS. THE CENTER RECEIVED MORE THAN 150 APPLICATIONS FOR TRAINING. WOMEN IN EGYPT HAVE TRADITIONALLY PLAYED IMPORTANT ROLES IN EDUCATION (35 PERCENT OF UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS) AND GOVERNMENT (20 PERCENT OF EGYPTIAN DIPLOMATS, MORE THAN 30 PERCENT IN NON-SECURITY MINISTRIES). PROMOTING THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE LEGISLATURE WOULD SEEM A NATURAL PROGRESSION. INCREASING THEIR NUMBERS AND VISIBILITY WOULD BE VIEWED AS "PROGRESS" IN CIVIL SOCIETY, WITHOUT THREATENING THE STATUS QUO. UNSPOKEN, OF COURSE, IS THAT THESE WOMEN WOULD LIKELY SUPPORT THE RULING NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY WHICH PROMOTED AND EMPOWERED THEM. END SUMMARY AND COMMENT

MRS. MUBARAK LENDS HER PRESTIGE TO WOMEN'S ISSUES

*- fax to MV
please
1 extra copy for K*

3. (U) MRS. SUZANNE MUBARAK, ON JULY 12, CHAIRING A ONE DAY FORUM ON WOMEN IN POLITICAL LIFE, SPONSORED BY THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON WOMEN. FEMINISTS, POLITICAL ACTIVISTS, ACADEMICS AND FORMER FIRST LADY JIHAN SADAT PARTICIPATED IN THE WELL-ATTENDED FORUM WHICH TOOK PLACE AS THE VARIOUS PARTIES PREPARE LISTS OF CANDIDATES FOR THE UPCOMING PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS.

MUBARAK'S MESSAGE: WOMEN MUST PARTICIPATE

4. (U) IN HER OPENING REMARKS, WHICH WERE TELEVISED NATIONALLY IN THEIR ENTIRETY, SUZANNE MUBARAK STRESSED THREE POINTS:

-- PARTICIPATE: PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL LIFE DOES NOT NECESSARILY REQUIRE A SEAT IN THE PARLIAMENT. IT REQUIRES SUSTAINED, DAILY INVOLVEMENT IN THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS. WOMEN MUST BE ACTIVE NOT ONLY AT HOME, BUT IN THEIR JOBS, IN CLUBS, NGO'S, SYNDICATES, AND POLITICAL PARTIES. THEY MUST VOTE AND HAVE A SAY IN DECISIONS AFFECTING THEIR LIVES AND THEIR FAMILIES.

-- HOW TO PARTICIPATE: REGISTER TO VOTE, GET OUT AND VOTE, BE A CANDIDATE - RUN FOR THE LOCAL COUNCIL OR THE PARLIAMENT. WOMEN MUST PARTICIPATE ACTIVELY IN LEGISLATIVE AND SUPERVISORY POSITIONS.

-- MYTH AND FACT: MRS. MUBARAK CHALLENGED THE "MYTH" THAT EGYPT'S HISTORY AND SOCIETY DO NOT ENCOURAGE OR CONDONE FEMALE PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL LIFE. THIS IS A FALLACY THAT HAS ENCOURAGED POLITICAL PARTIES TO SHY AWAY FROM NOMINATING WOMEN. HISTORICALLY, EGYPTIAN WOMEN WERE POLITICALLY AND SOCIALLY PROMINENT AND SUCCESSFUL. GIVEN THIS HISTORICAL PROMINENCE, POLITICAL PARTIES SHOULD RE-DOUBLE THEIR EFFORTS TO IDENTIFY AND SUPPORT FEMALE CANDIDATES.

TALLAWY: SHAMEFUL STATISTICS

5. (U) IN HER SPEECH, COUNCIL HEAD AMBASSADOR MERVAT TALLAWY REVIEWED THE HISTORY OF FEMALE PARTICIPATION IN EGYPTIAN POLITICAL LIFE. SHE TERMED CURRENT LEVELS OF FEMALE PARTICIPATION "DISCOURAGING," NOTING:

-- AVERAGE FEMALE PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL LIFE IN ARAB COUNTRIES IS 3.5 PERCENT. TUNISIA HAS THE HIGHEST RATE - 11.5 PERCENT AND EGYPT ONLY 2 PERCENT.

-- EGYPTIAN WOMEN REPRESENT 3.3 PERCENT OF THE PARLIAMENT. NINE WOMEN ARE IN THE PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY, 5 OF THEM APPOINTED BY THE PRESIDENT. WOMEN OCCUPY 15 SEATS OUT OF 264 IN THE SHURA COUNCIL. ALL OF THEM ARE APPOINTED.

-- IN 1984 WOMEN OCCUPIED 10 PERCENT OF THE LOCAL COUNCIL SEATS. THIS FIGURE HAS NOW DROPPED TO 1.1 PERCENT.

-- IN 1987, POLITICAL PARTIES NOMINATED 22 WOMEN FOR SEATS IN THE PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY, RISING IN 1990 TO 25 WOMEN, DROPPING IN 1995 TO ONLY 17.

WE EGYPTIAN WOMEN MUST ASK OURSELVES, TALLAWY SAID, WHAT IS CAUSING THIS REGRESSION? WHY DO POLITICAL PARTIES REFRAIN

FROM NOMINATING WOMEN? DOES PUBLIC OPINION TRULY REJECT THE FEMALE CANDIDATE? SHOULD WE ESTABLISH A QUOTA SYSTEM (PERMITTED UNDER EGYPTIAN LAW) FOR FEMALE CANDIDATES?

ROUNDTABLE PRESENTATIONS
-----)

6. (U) ASSISTANT FOREIGN MINISTER AND MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON WOMEN MUSTAFA EL FIQI DISCUSSED THE CONCEPT OF CITIZENSHIP, ARGUING THAT A GOVERNMENT THAT IS BIASED IN FAVOR OF ONE GROUP OR PARTY IN THAT SOCIETY IS A DICTATORSHIP. HE STRESSED THAT SOCIETIES MUST ADOPT MECHANISMS WHICH WILL OPEN THE DOORS TO PERMIT POLITICAL PARTICIPATION TO ALL FORCES AND PARTIES AND PROVIDE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY FOR REPRESENTATION IN PARLIAMENT AND DECISION MAKING CIRCLES. HE ADDED THAT DEPRIVING OR MARGINALIZING A SPECIFIC GROUP WILL ULTIMATELY HAVE A NEGATIVE IMPACT ON POLITICAL LIFE, NATIONAL HARMONY AND SOCIAL RECONCILIATION. RELIGIONS HAVE PLAYED A ROLE IN PLACING THE MALE IN A SUPERIOR POSITION. HOWEVER, TOTAL CITIZENSHIP REQUIRES THAT MEN AND WOMEN BE EQUAL. EL FIQI SEES IN THE UPCOMING PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS A TEST OF THE CONCEPT OF CITIZENSHIP. THE PROOF WILL BE FOUND IN THE LEVEL OF REPRESENTATION OF COPTS, WOMEN AND YOUTH.

7. (U) DR. JANNAT EL SAMALOUTY, POLITICAL SCIENCE PROFESSOR AND WOMEN'S COUNCIL MEMBER, CONCENTRATED ON THREE POINTS: AMBITIONS, IMPEDIMENTS TO THEIR REALIZATION, AND CHALLENGES AHEAD.

-- AMBITIONS: REAL FEMALE EQUALITY REQUIRES EQUAL ACCESS AND MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL LIFE. WOMEN MUST BE EQUAL PARTNERS IN LEGISLATING AND POLICY MAKING. EGYPT HAD A HISTORY OF ACTIVE AND PROMINENT PARTICIPATION BY WOMEN IN EGYPTIAN SOCIETY. PARTICIPATION IS EVEN MORE NECESSARY TODAY IN LIGHT OF RAPID DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL DEMANDS FOR UTILIZATION OF ALL HUMAN RESOURCES TO ENRICH POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENTS.

-- IMPEDIMENTS: WOMEN ARE MARGINALIZED IN THE POLITICAL PARTIES AND IN THE PARLIAMENT. THEY ARE MORE EFFECTIVE AND ACTIVE IN PROFESSIONAL SYNDICATES AND TRADE UNIONS.

-- CHALLENGES: RESPONDING TO SOCIAL PRESSURE, ESPECIALLY FROM FEMALES WHO BELIEVE THAT A WOMAN'S PLACE IS IN THE HOME; ALTERING SOCIETY'S PERCEPTION OF A WOMAN'S ROLE AND HER ABILITY TO MEANINGFULLY PARTICIPATE IN POLITICAL LIFE AND SHOULDER HEAVY RESPONSIBILITIES; OVERCOMING THE MALE MONOPOLY IN DECISION-MAKING CIRCLES. MEETING THE CHALLENGE OF PARTICIPATING IN THE UPCOMING PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS, EVEN IF IT REQUIRES ESTABLISHING A QUOTA FOR WOMEN; AND POLITICALLY EDUCATING, MOTIVATING AND MOBILIZING THE SILENT AND APATHETIC FEMALE MAJORITY.

8. (U) CAIRO UNIVERSITY POLITICAL SCIENCE PROFESSOR, DR. NEVINE MOSAD REVIEWED THE 1995 ELECTIONS AND THE LACK OF FEMALE NOMINEES. SHE REVIEWED STEPS TO BE TAKEN BEFORE THE NOVEMBER ELECTIONS AND STEPS TO IMPROVE THE GENERAL ~~ATMOSPHERE~~ SURROUNDING THE ELECTIONS.

SHORT TERM MEASURES:

-- STRENGTHEN CONFIDENCE THAT THE ELECTIONS WILL BE FAIR AND INDIVIDUAL VOTES WILL COUNT;

-- LAUNCH MEDIA AND POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS TO ENCOURAGE THE PEOPLE TO VOTE;

-- TRAIN WOMEN TO BE EFFECTIVE CANDIDATES - HOW TO SET A POLITICAL AGENDA AND RUN A CAMPAIGN;
-- URGE POLITICAL PARTIES TO NOMINATE WOMEN;
-- SUPPORT FEMALE CANDIDATES EITHER FINANCIALLY OR THROUGH THE MEDIA;
-- ENCOURAGE FORMER WOMEN MP'S TO EXCHANGE VIEWS AND MENTOR NEW CANDIDATES;
-- COORDINATE EFFORTS BETWEEN PARTIES, NGO'S, AND OTHERS. INTERESTED IN PROMOTING WOMEN.
LONG TERM MEASURES:
-, FACILITATE VOTER REGISTRATION;
-- ASSIGN A QUOTA FOR WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS;
-- RETURN TO THE PARTY LIST SYSTEM;
-- FORM A NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR ELECTION SUPERVISION/MONITORING HEADED BY A TRUSTED NATIONAL FIGURE;
-- URGE WOMEN TO DEVELOP THEIR LEGISLATIVE SKILLS AND PERFORMANCE.

DISCUSSION

9. (U) DISCUSSANTS INCLUDED NO'MAN GOMA AND AYMAN NOUR (AL WAFD PARTY), RIFAT EL SAID (NPUGP), MOHAMMAD ABDELLAH (NDP), LAWYER TAHANI EL BEGALI, NGO DIRECTOR NEHAD ABOUL KOMSAN AS WELL AS FORMER PARLIAMENTARIANS. OPPOSITION MEMBERS STRESSED THEIR SUPPORT FOR WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL LIFE, SPECULATING THAT A LACK OF TRUE DEMOCRATIC PRACTICES AND TRANSPARENCY MAY DISCOURAGE POTENTIAL CANDIDATES. BOTH GOMA AND EL SAID THOUGHT THE GENERAL ATMOSPHERE OF RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM IN EGYPT TODAY WORKS AGAINST WOMEN CANDIDATES. AYMAN NOUR ADDED LOGISTICAL COMPLICATIONS TO THE MIX. VOTERS HAVE TO GO TO THE POLICE STATION TO REGISTER AND CANDIDATES HAVE TO CAMPAIGN IN THE MANY POOR AREAS TO BE EFFECTIVE.
10. (U) ABDELLAH ARGUED IN FAVOR OF ESTABLISHING A QUOTA SYSTEM AS A TEMPORARY AIDE TO ENABLE FEMALES TO GET PARLIAMENTARY EXPERIENCE, BUILD PUBLIC REPUTATIONS AND CONSEQUENTLY GARNER PUBLIC RESPECT AND SUPPORT. HE ARGUED A HARD LINE BE EMPLOYED ON CAMPAIGN FUNDING: THE GOE SHOULD STOP SUBSIDIZING PARTIES THAT DO NOT NOMINATE A GIVEN NUMBER OF WOMEN. A SIMILAR ARGUMENT WAS PUT FORWARD BY LAWYER EL GEBALI, WHO STRESSED THAT THE ATMOSPHERE HAS BEEN "POISONED" BY RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM AND BY THE CULTURAL INFLUENCE OF SOME ARAB COUNTRIES WHICH PREFER TO SEE WOMEN MARGINALIZED. NEHAD ABOUL KOMSAN CITED EXAMPLES OF SUCCESSFUL WOMEN WHO PERFORMED ADMIRABLY IN LOCAL COUNCILS AND DISCUSSED HER OWN RECENT EXPERIENCE TRAINING FEMALE PARLIAMENTARY "HOPEFULS".

11. (U) IN CONCLUDING THE PANEL, MRS. MUBARAK CALLED UPON SEVERAL LAWYERS WHO DIFFERED ON THE LEGALITY OF A QUOTA SYSTEM, TO EXPLAIN THE ISSUE. IN CONCLUSION, SHE NOTED THAT THE QUOTA ISSUE NEEDS TO BE ADDRESSED AND THE QUESTION OF ITS LEGALITY RESOLVED IN ORDER TO FIND THE BEST WAY TO ENCOURAGE WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION AND TO INCREASE THEIR CHANCES OF WINNING IN THE UPCOMING ELECTIONS.
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Suzanne Mubarak

file Egypt



^H
Cairo, ²⁴ January, 1998.

Dear Hillary,

As you know from the IAA's Director General, Norman Vale, I was given the privilege to chair the Worldwide Advisory Board of the IAA's "Project of Hope".

When Mr. Vale was in Cairo last week, we agreed that the working title of the project will be replaced from now on with the line that summarizes the principal theme of the project - GIVE A KID A HAND. All future messages will reflect that change.

We expect to launch an all-media, global communications effort which will focus entirely on young children (0-5 years of age) and what volunteer help can do to give them the best possible start in life. Our children are our future and I personally cannot think of a more worthwhile cause.

The IAA will not be competing with existing charities that are already doing so much work in this area. The IAA's effort is not to raise money but to encourage personal participation. As the slogan suggests, they want each and every one of us to look for a way to "give a hand" through personal contact.

Suzanne Mubarak

- 2 -



The "hand" that you can give is to accept the IAA's invitation to become a member of our Advisory Board. Your public support through lending your name will add considerably to the prestige of this global endeavor and help ensure its success.

To paraphrase one of the campaign's ads - it's not your money, it's not even your time ... it's your blessing we want.

We look towards your cooperation in helping us give the world's kids a hand.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Mubarak

Suzanne Mubarak

Mrs. Hillary Rodham-Clinton

file Egypt



Fax Transmission

U.S. SENATOR RICHARD LUGAR



To: Melanne Verveer

Office: First Lady

Fax #: 456-6244

Page 1 of 20 Date: 3-19

From: John Hanford 224-1290

PLEASE NOTE:

Melanne,

Thanks again for your interest in these
materials and the tragic issues they raise.
John Hanford

Senator Richard G. Lugar
306 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-1401
Phone (202) 224-4814

Melanne,

Thank you for the chance to talk on the phone earlier today. I am sending along, here, several items which will supplement the letter you will receive from Congressman Clement and his staffer, Laura Bryant, concerning recent problems of the persecution of Christians in Egypt. Thank you very much for your and the First Lady's consideration of these materials and the issues they raise.

By way of my own background, the issue of religious persecution has been my expertise during my 11 years with Senator Lugar. Mrs. Clinton graciously agreed to a request we previously made of her on her trip to Pakistan, where she raised concerns about the anti-blasphemy law with the Prime Minister. I also was asked by the White House to assist in preparing her remarks for the Beijing Women's Conference. Last year, I led the team which drafted and negotiated the passage of the International Religious Freedom Act, which the President signed in October. Laura Bryant and I worked closely together on the development of that bill.

I am enclosing:

- (1) A *Boston Globe* article on the arrest and torture of hundreds of Christians in Al-Kosheh. Laura is sending you a copy of a recent letter to Mubarak signed by over 100 members of Congress, asking for a proper response by the government to such horrible police abuse.
- (2) A *Washington Times* article on the same issue.
- (3) A *Christian Science Monitor* article on Egypt's crackdown on human rights groups, prompted, in part, by the Egyptian Organization of Human Rights report on the Al-Kosheh incident.
- (4) A *Freedom House* report on the abduction of Christian women, providing details behind two of the cases cited in Congressman Clement's letter.
- (5) The investigative report by the highly-regarded Egyptian Organization for Human Rights on the arrests and torture which occurred at Al-Kosheh.

This story ran on page A01 of the Boston Globe on 10/15/98.

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Coptic cleric's plight fuels a religious rift in Egypt

By Charles M. Sennott, Globe Staff, 10/15/98

EL BALYANA, Egypt - A bishop of the Coptic Church here faces charges that carry the death penalty under government sedition laws after speaking out against "systemic, inhuman and unspeakable" police abuse against Christians in this remote region of Upper Egypt.

The five-count indictment against Bishop Wissa - as well as allegations of torture and brutal interrogations of hundreds of Christians in a small farming village in the Nile Delta - has triggered a national wave of anger in recent days among the minority Coptic Christians in this overwhelmingly Islamic nation.

"Rather than address allegations of torture, they arrested the bishop. It is an outrage. The Christian community was already angry and now it is furious," said the Rev. Pula Fuad, a Coptic priest from the diocese who has been working with the families who suffered at the hands of the police.

This case has enraged Muslims and Christians alike. The story has unfolded amid rising claims of discrimination against Christians in Egypt, where Islamic fundamentalism has easily taken root in many levels of society.

The Coptic Church is the native Christian church of Egypt. It traces its roots back to St. Mark the Evangelist, and prides itself on orthodoxy. Egypt's Coptic minority represents roughly 9 percent of the country's population of 60 million.

Wissa's arrest last weekend brought to a boiling point tensions that began simmering two months ago. On Aug. 14, two Christian residents of the village of Al Koshah, within Wissa's diocese about 35 miles north of Luxor, were killed and their bodies dumped in the Christian section of town.

Christian religious leaders, human rights workers and residents of the town believe that the two men were killed by five Muslim men and have offered evidence to substantiate their case. But the Christians say that police have dismissed claims against the Muslims and have run roughshod over the Christian community to frame a Christian suspect.

They accuse the police of ignoring evidence incriminating the Muslim suspects to avoid the potential unrest that could erupt between Muslims and Christians if Muslims were arrested.

What began as murder - not uncommon in Upper Egypt, where internecine clan wars and honor killings abound - has stirred deep emotions over religious differences in a town that is 30 percent Christian and 70 percent Muslim.

In the past six weeks, police have rounded up more than 1,200 Christian residents of Al-Koshah for questioning. Many of these allegedly included the use of blindfolds, beatings and electric shocks. There are also reports of victims being bound and hung from window grates inside police detention centers. Detainees have been held for as long as two weeks without being formally charged.

Several women interviewed by the Globe said they were verbally assaulted and threatened with rape. They also said that two children under the age of 2 were thrown to the floor in an attempt to force testimony that their husbands did the killings.

Wissa claims that two Christian conscripts from the Army were forced to testify against a Christian man who now stands charged. The father of one of the men told Wissa that the testimonies were forced and that they wanted to retract them. When Wissa intervened and brought the issue to the attention of Coptic Pope Shenouda III in Cairo and the office of President Hosni Mubarak, the local police grew furious and called in Wissa for questioning about what they termed "obstruction of justice." Wissa, a respected, 60-year-old Christian cleric who wears the traditional long beard and black vestments of the Coptic clergy, was detained and interrogated on Saturday and then released on bail pending a hearing. "What happened here," Wissa said in an interview, "was systemic, inhuman and unspeakable ... The police have treated the people of our church as less than human. And apparently they see me as a terrorist. Do I look dangerous to you?"

Inside the courtyard of the Church of the Angel in Al-Kosheh, hundreds of residents gathered Monday to make their own claims of police abuse.

Dozens held up arms and ankles that appeared raw from rope burns and bruised limbs. They charged that the police had used an electric generator with a hand crank to shock their ears and in some cases genitals.

A man named Moris held up his 14-month-old son, Gamel, and showed a baseball-sized bruise on the child's lower back that he claimed was inflicted when the police threw the child to the ground in front of his mother.

Human rights lawyers interpret the indictment against him as trumped-up charges presented by a regional court. It contains five counts, including "threatening national security" and "spreading extremist ideas to cause sectarian strife."

Because the charges fall under Egypt's antiterrorism laws, lawyers for the Coptic Church and human rights organizations said that they could carry the death penalty. But they also hoped a higher court would dismiss them.

Government officials have not commented other than to say that they are investigating the allegations of police abuse. Senior presidential adviser Osama El Baz said in an interview "What has happened in Al-Kosheh is a local criminal matter and it does not reflect any wider problem between the Muslims and Christians of Egypt."

Hafez Abo-Saada, secretary general of the Egyptian Human Rights Organization, said, "This is a dramatic case of random arrest, torture, and degradation of hundreds of people. We have never seen a case as widespread and systemic as this."

But Abo-Saada said the significance of the case has less to do with problems between Egypt's Muslims and Christians than with human rights violations by the state.

"The violations of human rights by the police and security forces in Egypt is a national problem," he said, "not just a Christian one."

The Washington Times

PAGE B2 / SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13, 1998 *

Persecution and coverup in Egypt

Egypt celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights this week by launching an offensive on Egypt's human rights activists. Held for 15 days without trial in prison, the leader of Egypt's oldest human rights organization was finally released last Sunday, but his charges were not dropped.

Hafez Abu Saada, the fourth of five human rights advocates who have been arrested for publicizing rights abuses occurring in the Egyptian village of al-Kosheh, was charged with accepting funds from a foreign country and disseminating false information abroad after publishing a story about police torture of over 1,000 Coptic Christians in the Egyptian village. The government claims he used a \$25,000 check from the British parliament's human rights committee to publish the report (citizens of countries with true freedom of the press may wonder what's wrong with that, but Egypt doesn't qualify.) Mr. Saada, himself a Muslim, insisted the check was being used to give legal advice to Egyptian women and to the disabled, according to Reuters reports. He said the investigation into the persecution of Coptic Christians was done with the use of volunteer labor, and only cost the rights group itself \$95, according to Freedom House, one of America's oldest human rights organizations.

Mr. Saada, head of the Cairo-based Egyptian Organization for Human Rights (EOHR), said his head was shaved and he was placed in an unventilated cell for the first two days, but that he was finally ordered released — at least for now — due to international pressure, according to press reports.

Saying that human rights groups were involved in a "slander campaign" against the government, Interior Minister Habib al-Adly said Monday that he didn't understand why the groups weren't looking for truth.

But the government has an interesting way of helping them search for truth. Two days after his boss was released, EOHR attorney Mustafa Zidnane was arrested for his part in helping produce the report about the Christians. One bishop and two priests have been arrested for their complaints to authorities about the torture, and though they have been released, the charges are still outstanding. Moris Sadek, another lawyer who helped publicize the al-Kosheh incident, is still being followed, he told Freedom House this week.

The Egyptian government insists that all is well in al-Kosheh. Not to worry: "There is no conflict at all," the Egyptian Embassy minister Abdelaleem El Abyad said in an interview Thursday about the relationship between Muslims and Christians in al-Kosheh. "The relationship is quite peaceful and quite friendly."

The embassy says that the murders of two Coptic Christians in that town were perpetrated by Christians, not Muslims. Maybe that view explains why the local authorities' response to Christian complaints

that the murderers were Muslims was to round up over 1,000 Christians for investigation — and abuse. The embassy admits to abuses by the accused police officers and said Thursday that according to a high-level Cairo official, they are still being investigated.

But according to a letter written by an eyewitness to the police abuses obtained by the Washington Times, case 2062 against the five police officers in question has been closed. Egypt's government newspaper, Al-Ahram, also reported Thursday that no police officers were currently being investigated for the abuses. According to the eyewitness, two of the officers in question said they were on vacation during part of the time of the abuses, that only 15 people were victims of abuses, and that there was no proof of injuries.

The four men accused of torture have been transferred to administrative positions, according to AFP. At least one of the men accused of abuses, Hani Gamal, has been promoted to the position of Chief of Investigation in Sohag's second district, according to the letter from al-Kosheh. The Egyptian embassy denies any promotions have taken place. It also points to ads published by Copts recently that say no persecution is taking place there.

The ads signed by Coptic Christians have appeared in the Washington Post, the Sunday Telegraph, the International Toronto Globe and Mail and other newspapers around the world, but the Egyptian government itself paid for the ads to run in cash, according to a Nov. 6 article in the Sunday Telegraph. And State Security Inspectors have been calling Coptic Christians, asking them to sign a statement that says they are not a persecuted people, a religious leader in upper Egypt told Freedom House.

If this isn't a cover-up, why are Egypt's human rights activists being put in jail, and why have the stories of the al-Kosheh villagers prompted such strong accusations of sectarianism from the Egyptian government? The al-Kosheh matter is obviously not a simple case of religious tension in one village. If it were, both Muslim and Coptic human rights advocates wouldn't have been targeted. Beside imprisoning the Muslim Mr. Saada, police raided the Cairo-based Arab Program for Human Rights Activists in the middle of the night Oct. 15. On Tuesday, the Islamist Cairo-based paper El-Shaab published a report accusing human rights leader Said Ibrahim, a Muslim, of the independent Cairo-based Ibn Khaldun Center for Development Studies of taking money from a suspicious German organization to foment sectarianism. At this rate, human rights organizations will exist only in Egyptian history books in the not so distant future.

Our tax dollars provide Egypt with \$2 billion in aid a year. In exchange for it, the least we ought to be able to expect is that the Egyptian government refrain from acting in silence to the voices of al-Kosheh Christians and the Muslim rights activists.

WORLD

Egypt's crackdown on rights groups reverberates in region

■ Law could immobilize human rights movement. Other states may follow suit.

By Diana Digges
Special to The Christian Science Monitor

CAIRO — Since the human rights movement began in the Arab world more than a decade ago, Egypt's has been recognized as the strongest. The groups that proliferated here have served as crucial political opposition to the government.

But now a string of events — including legislation awaiting action by parliament — has many fearing that the Egyptian human rights movement is in danger. It's also feared that human rights advocates in other Arab countries may soon face challenges as well.

"A crackdown on Egypt means a crackdown for the whole region," says Hafez Abu Saada, secretary-general of the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights (EOHR). Mr. Abu Saada was arrested Dec. 1 and detained for six days for allegedly receiving foreign funds with the intention of "harming national interests."

Thirteen years ago, the human rights agenda — freedom from political persecution, freedom of association, and freedom of expres-

sion — was too explosive for formal discussion in the Arab world. Instead Egyptian activists and representatives from other Arab countries flew to Cyprus to establish a regional organization.

Some of the fledgling national organizations that came out of that regional conference were shortlived. In Egypt's case, however, the organization survived and has spawned a host of other groups in the 1990s.

"Human rights groups have become the last resort for criticizing Egypt," says Bahey el-Din Hassan, director of the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies. "The position of political parties has been contained and marginalized. There's no serious critique of the government."

Rights violations on the rise

Reports of gross human rights violations in Egypt have increased in recent years, culminating in a letter from New York-based Human Rights Watch in November that appealed to President Hosni Mubarak to acknowledge and stop the "widespread" use of torture by the country's security forces.

Activists say Abu Saada's detention came as a form of punishment for a report published by the EOHR in late September. That report described the mass arrest

and torture of residents in the predominantly Christian village of El Kosheh in Upper Egypt.

Western countries often maintain that Coptic Christians are a persecuted minority in Egypt, despite denials from prominent Copts. The EOHR was adamant to point out that the alleged abuse and torture it documented in El Kosheh was a matter of police brutality.

"The government knows perfectly well that the EOHR said it was not a matter of religious persecution. They used what happened in El Kosheh and the response to it in some foreign circles as a golden opportunity to mobilize public opinion against the human rights community in general," says Mr. Din Hassan.

The more immediate reason for Abu Saada's arrest was an investigation undertaken after a series of articles appeared in November in the private weekly El Osboa, a paper widely seen to be doing the government's work.

The articles accused the EOHR of accepting a \$25,703 check from the British Parliament's human rights committee in return for publishing what the



ENRIC MARTINAP

ON TRIAL: The hands of a suspected Muslim militant hang out of the cell where he awaited ruling in 1997 in Cairo.

organizations by requiring them to submit projects and funding proposals for approval; and to dismiss board members it finds objectionable.

"The new law is extremely ugly," says Yehia al-Rifai, one of the country's most eminent judges and honorary chair of Egypt's Judicial Club. "And it's unconstitutional." Egypt's Constitution guarantees the right to establish a non-governmental organization and to participate in NGO activity.

"It appears that the Egyptian government is trying to intimidate and silence the voices that continue to expose its grave human rights record," said Hanny Megally of Human Rights Watch in a statement this month.

Ripples are already being felt in other Arab countries. In Yemen, for example, a law on voluntary associations was drafted by the human rights community. A counterlaw was then drawn up by the government, and both laws were to go to parliament.

But when the Egyptian government drafted its restrictive law, says Abu Saada, Yemen quickly followed suit, and the other two laws were withdrawn.

paper claimed was a false report on religious persecution in El Kosheh. Documents from the British Embassy in Cairo and the EOHR indicate the check was to continue funding a program of legal aid for Egyptian women.

Restrictive legislation

Meanwhile, legislation will come before parliament this session that could effectively immobilize the human rights movement in Egypt. The law would empower the government to intervene in board decisions of non-governmental organizations such as human rights groups; to acquire direct control over these or-

Freedom House
Report

> In a number of cases that Freedom House investigated in Egypt, young
> Christian girls were taken by Muslim men to be forcibly converted to
> Islam, often with the cooperation of local police. This has even
> involve girls below the legal age in Egyptian law at which a person can
> change his or her religion.

> The Center's forthcoming report, Egypt's Endangered Christians
> (available April 1), finds the following: Vulnerable Christian women and
> girls are one of the primary targets of Muslim militants who are
> determined to transform Egypt by force into a fundamentalist Islamic
> state. They often pressure young girls to convert to Islam and offer
> financial incentives to encourage their conversion. Sometimes the girls
> are manipulated by offers of wealth and security. In other cases, they
> can be abducted or coerced into conversion. Six hundred cases were
> reported to the office of the Coptic Patriarch, Pope Shenouda III, in
> 1997.

> SOME CONVERTS TO ISLAM

> A different set of problems arises for people who may want to change, or
> are accused of wanting to change, their religion from Christianity to
> Islam. In a number of cases that Freedom House investigated in Egypt,
> young Christian girls were taken by Muslim men to convert to Islam,
> often with the cooperation of local police.

> Since the conversion of a Christian to Islam also brings shame upon
> Christian families, such families may be reluctant to admit that one of
> the members, typically a daughter, has in fact converted voluntarily
> because she wishes to marry a Muslim. Consequently, there are cases
> where a family claims that a relative has been kidnapped when in fact
> she has eloped. Nevertheless, there are credible reports from many areas
> of Egypt that militant Muslims kidnap or manipulate Christian girls into
> converting. This can even involve girls below the legal age in Egyptian
> law at which a person can change his or her religion.

> Vulnerable Christian women and girls are one of the primary targets of
> Muslim militants who are determined to transform Egypt by force into a
> fundamentalist Islamic state. They often pressure young Christian girls
> to convert to Islam and offer financial incentives to encourage their
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> security. In other cases, they can be abducted or coerced into
> conversion.

> One Protestant pastor told the Freedom House delegation that girls in
> his town near the city of Minya are targets of manipulated conversion to
> Islam. Christians in the area are very poor, so the young girls can be
> easily deceived with promises of money, apartments, and husbands. The
> pastor also said that these girls usually discover that the promises
> made to them turn out to be untrue, but they fear returning to their
> families. Not only is it unacceptable in Egyptian society for unmarried
> women not to be virgins, but they may face death from family members who
> believe them to be sexually promiscuous.

> This targeting of young Christian girls for conversion is not confined
> to Upper Egypt, where the majority of Christians live, but also occurs
> in the large cities in the north. The following two cases reported to
> Freedom House concern the coercion of an underage girl and a case of
> kidnapping. They are similar to other incidents that were described to
> the Freedom House delegation.

> THE SHAKIR FAMILY

>
> On March 6, 1997, 13-year-old Teresa Shakir, a Coptic Christian who was
> in the 8th grade at a state school, was taken by her teacher, Osama Abdu
> Youssef, believed to be an Islamic extremist, to the police station in
> Wasta, a village near Beni Suef. There the teacher and the local police
> tried officially to declare her a convert from Christianity to Islam.

>
> Her family went to the Chief of Police in Wasta and signed a form
> stating that the underage girl should be returned to her father.
> However, the local police who held her at the station did not comply.
> The family then contacted several human rights organizations, Pope
> Shenouda, the head of the Coptic Orthodox Church, and the office of
> President Mubarak. The central government intervened and Teresa was
> released from the local police station on March 15. Security officials
> had held Teresa incommunicado for nine days. Police sources told the
> family that in this period she had changed her religion to Islam.

>
> According to defense lawyers and family members, Teresa's older brother,
> Adly Shakir, testified to prosecutors that on November 30, 1997, he
> returned home at 4 a.m. to discover that his parents and his younger
> brother Adel had been shot to death, and his sister, Nadia, had been
> wounded by gunshot. Teresa was also dead, her stomach cut open and
> disemboweled (this method is said to be used by the extremist Islamic
> Group al Gama'at Al Islamiya, for those it accuses of apostasy). Adly
> said that when he ran to the police station to report the incident, the
> police immediately arrested him and accused him of the murders. He was
> subjected to electric shock torture and beatings to force him to
> confess. As a result of the beatings, he was paralyzed on one side of
> his body, and could not stand. The electric shock had burnt circular
> marks on his wrists and ankles, which were observed by Egyptian human
> rights workers.

>
> Defense lawyers maintain that a number of critical due process
> violations occurred during Adly's trial and that the eyewitness
> testimony of a neighbor was ignored. Adly was convicted and sentenced to
> death by hanging. Since the conviction, he has been denied access to his
> lawyers, denied family visits, and an appeal filed on his behalf has not
> yet been acted on. The family say that the American Embassy refused to
> give them assistance.

>
> Teresa's sister, Nadia Shakir, was hospitalized for nine days for her
> wounds. Although Izzat, another brother, says that he asked that she be
> returned to him, she was released to an uncle on the condition that the
> surviving members of her immediate family not be allowed to see her. The
> uncle died shortly after and the police took custody of her. At this
> time, her whereabouts are not known to the family.

>
> Freedom House is concerned that Adly Shakir may have been falsely
> convicted and that he has been subjected to torture. Freedom House is
> also deeply disturbed by the police's refusal to allow the family access
> to Nadia Shakir. Finally, we are concerned that the police were
> complicit in declaring a thirteen-year-old girl a convert after holding
> her incommunicado.

>
> THERESA ANDRAWES

>
> Family members report that on April 2, 1998, Theresa Andrawes, a
> 22-year-old Coptic woman who worked at the Agricultural Research Center
> at Giza, near Cairo, was kidnapped. They say she was an active Sunday
> School teacher at St. Mark's Church and was known to be a devout
> Christian.

> Some colleagues had accused Theresa of making anti-Islamic statements, a
> charge that she denied. One co-worker, Ala'a El Din Salah Tantawi, an
> engineer, reportedly threatened that she had blasphemed and would face
> the consequences under sharia law.

>
> According to family and lawyers, on April 2, as she left work, Ala'a,
> along with others believed to be members of the militant Islamic Group,
> Al Gama'at Al Islamiya, followed her. Eyewitness accounts by her
> employer and other co-workers said that the four physically dragged
> Theresa into a taxi in front of the Research Center. Her father, with
> whom she had been living, reported this to the police in Shebeen Al
> Qanater, but unbeknown to the father, who is illiterate, the police
> reports listed her case as a "missing person report," not as a case of
> kidnapping.

>
> When there was no action by the police, the family sent appeals to the
> Minister of the Interior, the Prime Minister, the President, and the
> American Embassy to no avail. They also appealed to the office of Pope
> Shenouda, who intervened directly on their behalf with the State
> Security Investigative police (SSI). The SSI promised the Pope that it
> would arrange a meeting between Theresa and her family. The SSI also
> reported that Theresa had freely converted to Islam and that as soon as
> it had time to complete the documentation of her conversion, she would
> be able to meet with her family.

>
> Several months after these events, there had still been no contact
> between Theresa and her family. She had not returned to her job and had
> not been seen publicly. The police and the SSI claimed they were not
> holding her captive. The family did not know her whereabouts and had not
> seen or heard from her since April.

>
> In August 1998, Freedom House was told by the First Assistant to the
> Minister of the Interior, General Hani El-Ezaby, that Theresa had
> converted to Islam of her own free will. A document presented by General
> El-Ezaby stated that a meeting had taken place between Theresa, her
> father, and her priest in July, 1998. She reportedly had said that she
> loved Ala'a and that she had gone with him freely. The General said that
> Theresa had married Ala'a on July 12.

>
> Theresa's father and uncle then told Freedom House that Theresa's father
> was forced to sign a document stating that he would cease looking for
> his daughter. They said that they were not able to speak to Theresa,
> that she did not come into the room, but only appeared in the adjoining
> corridor in the company of the SSI. The father said "she looked drugged
> ... as she stood in the corridor twenty meters away from me." The priest
> present on this occasion was not the family priest but a man delegated
> by the local diocese for liaison with the police and who has an office
> in the police station. No lawyer was present.

>
> In view of Theresa's known Christian involvement, her active church
> work, sudden disappearance, lack of public contact, testimony of
> abduction, and the security force's lack of cooperation with the family
> in the case, Freedom House fears that Theresa has been held against her
> will and remains concerned for her well-being. Furthermore, the SSI's
> promise to produce Theresa after her documentation had been completed
> implies that they knew where she was, but were not willing to cooperate
> with the family. Meanwhile, the police had harassed the family for
> pursuing the case and had demanded that the family members sign an
> official agreement that they would cease searching for their daughter.

28 September 1998

Collective punishment in
Al-Kosheh village
[Random arrest, torture and
degrading treatment of citizens]

An EOHR report on the fact-finding mission sent to Al-Kosheh village to
investigate the collective punishment by the police of hundreds of citizens

Random arrest, torture and degrading treatment of citizens in
Al-Kosheh

Until mid-August 1998, little was known about Al-Kosheh, a village located in the governorate of Suhag. Al-Kosheh is an ordinary village whose topology, population and living standards make it similar to most villages of the Delta and Upper Egypt. Its only distinctive factor is that its population is made of around seventy per cent Copts and thirty per cent Muslims. Its inhabitants used to live in a cohesive, friendly and harmonic way. According to all the testimonies received by the mission sent by the EOHR to the village, no dispute or tension of any kind ever arose in the village for religious reasons.

In the evening of Friday, 14 August 1998, two young men from the village, Sameer Eweida and Karam Tamer, aged 25 and 27 respectively, were found dead. The circumstances indicated that their killing was one of those common cases which take place from time to time in Egypt's cities, towns and villages. Therefore, in accordance with the criminal law, the police should have started searching for the perpetrators so that they could be brought to justice and receive a fair punishment. However, the police of Dar Al-Salaam Town had another point of view. They parted from the premise that the perpetrator must be a Christian in order to avoid unrest between the Muslim and Christian population. However, their illegal and eccentric

behaviour placed the quiet village of Al-Kosheh suddenly in the spotlight, raising again the issue of the problematic relationship between the police and citizens, both inside and outside police stations. The following is the description of the findings of the fact-finding mission sent by the EOHR to Al-Kosheh.

Who killed Sameer Eweida and Karam Tamer?

With the dawn of Saturday, 15 August, everything changed in Al-Kosheh. The wide security operation launched in search of the killers of Sameer Eweida and Karam Tamer provoked a state of terror and fear among the people. The EOHR regrets to say that the behavior of the police constituted a blatant violation of the Egyptian Constitution and the Criminal Procedure Code, and a gross violation of people's rights and freedoms and of their human dignity.

According to article 184 of the Egyptian Constitution of 1971, "The police authority shall be a civil body ... It shall perform its duty in the people's service, maintain peace and security, preserve order, public security and morality, and undertake the implementation of the duties imposed upon it by laws and regulations, in the manner prescribed by the law." Regrettably, the police members charged with maintaining peace and security, serving the people of Al-Kosheh, and protecting public security did not abide by the duties of their role, which is a major factor for social stability in a state ruled by the law.

The EOHR mission found that the members of the Dar Al-Salaam police station and the Security Directorate of Suhag Governorate overreacted in their use of the practice of collective punishment against the inhabitants of Al-Kosheh for the murder of Sameer Eweida and Karam Tamer. The security response included the random arrest and intimidation of hundreds of citizens, hostage-taking, and the use of torture to extract confessions.

The lists of those detained included whole families, mothers, elderly, girls and children. Also, arresting people from their homes, the police forces insulted and intimidated all family members.

The main objective of EOHR's mission was to elucidate whether or not the crime had special implications or enough gravity to justify the illegal measures taken by the security forces, which constituted grave violations of the rights, freedoms and human dignity of the people of Kosheh. It was important to clarify whether this was an ordinary murder or not, and whether there was any relation between the religious identity of the victims - who were Christians - and the murder.

In his testimony to the EOHR delegate, Bishop Wisra - Bishop of Belina - Sohag, said: "In Al-Kosheh village, and in the whole diocese, there are absolutely no disputes between Muslims and Christians. In this village in particular, in which the number of Christians is very large, they live in peace with their Muslim brothers. This means that the killing is just a normal murder and not a political one."

Various interpretations circulating in the village alleged that the crime was motivated by enmity and revenge between the victims and the Karashwa family. Haris Al-Osoui, from Al-Karashwa family, had died recently and, although the circumstances of the death were normal, the family had accused Sameer Eweida and Karam Tamer of having poisoned him while he was sleeping in his bed. Other stories spoke of the two victims' bad reputation and behaviour, which included gambling and drinking alcohol.

However, there was general agreement among all those interviewed by the EOHR mission that the killing was an ordinary crime that had no religious or political dimensions, and that its perpetrator could be Muslim or

Christian.

The security forces practices, an attack on legitimacy and human rights

According to the accounts of the people of Al-Koshh interviewed by the EOHR mission, following the finding of the two bodies, the security forces launched a campaign of random arrests that did not only include those suspected, but also a large part of the population. ~~Post~~ sources estimate the number of those illegally arrested during the search for the perpetrators to have exceeded 1,250 people. Moreover, it was a common practice to illegally arrest whole families. The lists of those detained included mothers, elderly people, young girls and children.

The EOHR strongly condemns the resort by the police to random arrest as it constitutes an attack on the Constitution and the law, as well as a gross violation of the right to freedom and personal security. Article 41 of the Constitution asserts that "Individual freedom is a natural right and shall not be touched. Except in cases of flagrante delicto no person may be arrested, inspected, detained or his freedom restricted or prevented from free movement except by an order ... by the competent judge or the Public Prosecution ..." In addition, article 34 of the Code of Criminal Procedure permits law enforcement officers in cases of flagrante delicto in criminal or misdemeanors crimes whose penalty is more than three months in prison, to order the arrest of the accused if there is sufficient evidence of his involvement in the crime. By virtue of article 35 of the mentioned Code, if the accused is not present, the law enforcement officer has the right to issue an arrest order and it shall be mentioned in the police report.

In cases other than the flagrante delicto stated in article 34, article 35 permits law enforcement officers, when there is sufficient evidence against an accused person in a criminal or misdemeanors case, to take the appropriate precautionary measures and to immediately ask the Prosecution Department to issue an arrest order.

The events as monitored by the EOHR indicate that during the arrest of hundreds of people of Al-Koshh village, the police officers did not observe the provisions of article 35 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. There was no "sufficient evidence" against those arrested to justify their arrest without prior permission by the Public Prosecution. Testimonies verified, by the EOHR indicate that upon learning about the crime, the security forces arrested more than 1,200 people without sufficient evidence of their involvement in the crime. The very fact of arresting such a large number reveals the lack of any sufficient evidence in the hands of the security forces regarding the perpetrators. This fact is a grave violation of article 41 of the Constitution and of articles 34 and 35 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. It also contradicts an established rule made by the Court of Cassation that "Being informed or notified of a crime is not sufficient to arrest or search the accused. The police must conduct investigations about the report, and in case these result in strong and sufficient evidence of the validity of the notification, the arrest of the accused can be warranted."

In addition, article 36 of the Code of Criminal Procedure commits members of the police, as law enforcement officers, to listen to the accused and in case they find nothing to claim him innocent, they must send him within twenty-four hours to the competent Public Prosecution Office. However, the events which took place in the Al-Koshh village contradicted this stipulation. The police did not observe the mentioned legal period. People were kept illegally detained for days without being presented to the public prosecution. Moreover, during their illegal detention they were exposed to brutal torture and ill-treatment to coerce them to confess to having committed the crime or to give information on the identity of the perpetrators.

Family torture -- a new form of torture

In the initial stages of the search for the perpetrators, suspicions focussed on Doctor Abu Al-Yameen Michael on the grounds that his daughter, Haneyya, 15 years-old, was having a love relationship with one of the victims, and that when the father found out about it, he killed the two young men. To verify this allegation, the police detained all the members of the family of Doctor Abu Al-Yameen and brutally tortured them to make them confess that their father was the killer.

Ayman Doctor Abu Al-Yameen described these events as follows: "I was away from home for twenty-four hours to seek the good offices of some person to release my father, who was arrested on 15 August 1998. When I arrived home, I found no one in. I asked the neighbours, who told me that the police had taken them to the police station. I hurried there and found my sister, Ammoura (aged 13), crying in the corridor of the investigation section. My sister Haneyya [15] was in the investigation office with her hands tied. I also saw my mother at the end of the corridor and heard the voice of my brother Romani [11], who was crying from the torture. I asked a detective to inform one of the officers of my arrival. Then, I was summoned to the investigation office, where many officers, among whom I can recall Hani Gamal, Abu Al-Fadl Thabit and Islam, asked me normal questions and then started to torture me. First, they blindfolded me, forced me to remove my clothes and connected electric wires to my body, one to the penis and a second to the right toe. They kept giving me electric shocks for one hour with some breaks during which they beat me. Then, I was hanged in the slaughtered animal position until, after one hour, I passed out. I was taken to a dark room, tied, for three days during which I was tortured to make me admit that I had helped my father to kill the two men. In the same room with me was a conscript called Abdu Michael, who was in a miserable condition from the torture he had suffered. He was hanged to the window and begged me to make a false confession that I had bought a weapon from him, but I refused. I remained in detention until 18 August 1998."

Torture with a ceiling fan

Ayman's brother, Romani Doctor Michael, 11-years-old, did not fare any better: "On 16 August, they arrested me, my sister Ammoura and my mother. I was blindfolded, hands and legs tied up, and hanged in the slaughtered animal position. They put a wire to my ear and asked me to confess that my father and brother were the killers. Then, officer Abu Al-Fadl ordered them to hang me from the ceiling fan. They turned the fan on and off intermittently until I felt extremely dizzy and lost consciousness. When I recovered, I was in a detention room, where I remained for six days until my release on 21 August."

When asked about the details of his torture, Al-Ameer Doctor Abu Al-Yameen, who was charged with the murder in collaboration with his father, he said to the EOHHR delegate:

"On 15 August, they arrested me from my home and took me to Al-Kosheh police station. There, officers Hani Gamal and Islam Bek tried to force me to confess that I had killed the said persons. When I refused, they hanged me and beat me with hands and whips. They also gave me electric shocks in the penis and toes. On the fifth day, they transferred me to the Dar Al-Salaam police station, where they practiced new ways of torture. Hanging, again, in the slaughtered animal position, they beat me one day and gave me electric shocks on the next, alternatively. They carried this on for 12 days. I was released on 16 September upon a decision by the Assistant Minister of the Interior after 32 days of detention."

Among the signs of torture noticed by the EOHHR representative on the body /

for Al-Ameer Doctor were an infected five centimeter wound in the right hand and many other infected wounds in the left hand; and longitudinal injuries from four to six centimeters in both legs. He moves his right hand with difficulty.

Even the women were not spared the torture

The main police hypothesis on the crime was that there was a love relationship between a daughter of Doctor Abu Al-Yameen and one of the victims, and that her father had killed them when he learnt about the relationship. To prove the validity of this idea, they arrested all members of the family, women, men and children, and subjected them to severe torture to force them to confess that the father, Doctor Abu Al-Yameen, was the killer.

Haneyya Doctor Abu Al-Yameen, 15 years old, said to the EOMR representative: "On 18 August, officer Hani Gamal came to the house and asked me about the accident of Al-Koshuha, and whether I knew the victims. When I said that I did not, they took me and my two little brothers to Al-Kosheh police station. They beat me and then transferred me to Dar Al-Salaam police station, where I was held alone in a room. There, I was tortured to make me confess that my brother or father were the killer. They tied my hands and legs with a strip of cloth and then hanged me from my limbs. They attached two wires to my toes and gave me electric shocks. When I fainted, they poured cold water on my face. This lasted until eleven in the evening, when they took me, tied up and blindfolded, to the detention room with other people. The following day, at about nine in the morning, they took me again to the questioning room. Officer Islam Bek asked me about my relationship with one of the victims and slapped me on the face. The same was repeated in the evening by officers Islam Bek and Hani Gamal. They tried to force me to confess that my brother had killed the victims when he learnt about my relation with one of them. On 19 August, at 12 midnight, I was taken from the Dar El-Salaam station to Al-Kosheh station, and later a guard took me home. Three days later, I was summoned to Al-Kosheh station and held in the room of officer Mohammed Kotb, who tried again to force me to confess. I was released at 12 midnight. This scenario was repeated for many days."

The same story was repeated with Amoura Doctor Michael, 13 years-old. She was tortured in the Dar Al-Salaam police station for four days to force her to confess that her father was the killer. She was tied, hanged, given electric shocks and beaten.

The mother, Ilma Aziz, recalled the events of her arrest and torture by saying:

"I was arrested on 16 August 1998 by officers Hani Gamal, Abu Al-Fadl Thabit and Islam Bek. In the police station, they took me to an officer's room and started beating me to make me confess that my husband or son were the killer. When I refused, they tied my hands and legs and hanged me in the slaughtered animal position. They also gave me electric shocks, beat me with a stick, and slapped me repeatedly on the face. I remained four days in detention during which I was tortured daily."

Illegal detention of the father for 34 days

The father, Doctor Abu Al-Yameen, suffered the worst torture during the 34 days he was held in illegal detention: "I was arrested on 15 August 1998, at eight in the morning, in the street. At the police station, I was blindfolded and handcuffed before they took me to an officer's room. As soon as I entered, it turned into hell. I think they did not miss one form of torture in their quest to force me to confess to the crime: electric shocks on sensitive parts of the body, rape threats against my wife and

daughters, hanging from the door of the detention room, beatings with sticks and hands. They kept torturing me for 34 days and did not stop until I vomited blood. On 16 September 1998, officer Mohammed Kotb referred me to the public prosecution accused of possessing an unlicensed weapon. However, the prosecution confirmed that the charge was false and that I had been detained in the police station for 34 days, and they released me."

Torture of the victims' relatives

The relatives of the victims were also illegally arrested and tortured to make them confess that Doctor Abu Al-Yameen and his son were the killers. This was the case with the family of Sameer William Saad, a cousin of one of the victims. He along with his wife and three of his children were arrested and tortured to make them confess that Doctor Abu Al-Yameen was their cousin's killer. On this, Alaa Sameer William Saad said:

"On 28 August, a police force headed by officer Mohammed Mansour arrested me, my brothers Nagui and Wael, and my mother Kamala Fayiz Abdel-Massieh, and took us to Al-Kosheh police station. There, the detectives blindfolded me, tied my hands to my back, and took me to an officer. He started asking me about my whereabouts at the time of the crime. Then, they tortured me to make me confess that Doctor Abu Al-Yameen was the killer of my father's cousin, but I denied it. They connected an electric wire to my ear and gave me electric shocks intermittently, and they also beat me. From where I was, I could listen to the cries of my brothers Wael and Nagui, who were also being tortured. We remained in detention 12 days."

On his return from Cairo, on 30 August, the father learnt that his family were in the Dar Al-Salaam police station. He went there and asked to meet officer Islam Bek. As soon as he entered the office, the torture began. Sameer Sa'd described it by saying:

"As soon as I entered the office of Islam Bek, I was ordered to remove my clothes except for the underwear. The officer then beat me with his fist on the breast and I fell to the ground. He told me that either I testified that Doctor Abu Al-Yameen and his son Ayman had killed my cousin or I would be thrown in the detention room. When I refused to comply, I was hanged and given electric shocks. They went mad as I kept refusing to make such confession, they stood on my chest and stomach, which made me lose control of my bowels. That was on 7 September. They also threatened me with fabricating a drugs case against me if I did not confess. I was tortured for 12 days, all through my detention."

The torture of an eyewitness

On 19 August, the police arrested Zakareyya Botrous Berasha, aged 27, and questioned him about the validity of the statement made by his cousin, Ayman Doctor, that he was with him in the coffee shop at the time of the crime. When Zakareyya Botrous confirmed the statement, the policemen tortured him severely to force him to change his statement and confess that his cousin was the killer. According to his story, he was hanged in the slaughtered animal position, given electric shocks, slapped on the face and punched in various parts of the body. He was kept in illegal detention for 20 days, until his release on 8 September.

A second attempt to find a murderer

In addition to Doctor Abu Al-Yameen, the police had another suspect, Morcos Shukralla. They arrested him on 15 August and took him to the Dar Al-Salaam police station. The police also took as hostages his wife and child, Gamal

Morees, eighteen months-old, to force him to confess that he had killed Sameer Eweida and Karam Tamer.

In his testimony to the EOHR, Morees Shukralia said that the police beat him, gave him electric shocks, and hanged him in the slaughtered animal position. They also attacked his wife and little child in front of him. He remained 19 days in detention and was then released.

Third attempt to find a murderer

Several weeks after the crime, security sources announced that the Suhag security forces had arrested the perpetrators of the killing of Sameer Eweida and Karam Tamer. They added that the investigations revealed that the murderer was Shayboub William Artori. He was with the victims in the evening of their murder as they were gambling and drinking alcohol. A quarrel took place on the distribution of the money they had gained, after which the accused took out his unlicensed pistol and shot the two of them killing them on the spot. The accused was arrested and referred to the Public Prosecution Department, which ordered his imprisonment pending investigations.

The EOHR does not wish to comment on the results of the investigations and on whether they are close to the truth or not, but it strongly condemns the torture and other coercive measures used by the police during the investigations. The EOHR was able to obtain information that the police tortured and coerced many illegally detained people to force them to confess that Shayboub was the killer. Even the only witness who confessed that Shayboub had committed the crime was not spared, according to the information received by the EOHR, from the torture and coercion. Here follow some of the accounts received by the EOHR.

Michael Mileik Michael

An EOHR representative interviewed Michael Mileik Michael and three of his children: Abdu, Marzouka, and Nasra. They were all subjected to severe torture by the officers of the police station.

Michael said to the EOHR representative that he was arrested on 14 August by officer Hani Gamal. In Al-Kosheh police station, he was insulted in a very strong language and ill-treated by the officer, who kicked him, tied and blindfolded him, and hit his head strongly to force him to confess that Shayboub was the murderer. He remained in detention three days and was released at the dawn of the fourth.

At the same time, Abdu Michael Mileik, a conscript and the only prosecution witness, was summoned from his unit in the army and arrested. He was held in Al-Kosheh police station for 18 days during which he was held on a window in the position of the cross and beaten intensively to make him confess that Shayboub was the killer. He said that he was not allowed to drink, eat or go to the bathroom to relieve his bowels. He added that he became so thirsty that he had to suck his wet clothes. He only confessed when they threatened him with raping his mother. He mentioned this in the prosecution report, but his confession made him the only prosecution witness in this case.

The EOHR representative also listened to the account of both Marzouka and Nasra, the daughters of Michael Mileik. They said that they were summoned to Al-Kosheh police station five days after the incident. Their brother was by then in detention. Marzouka said that after beating and slamming her, officers Hani Gamal, Al-Zoghbi Ibrahim, and Mohammed Koth threatened her with rape, and that they hanged her in the slaughtered animal position and gave her electric shocks in sensitive parts of the body. All this took place in front of her brother. They wanted her to confess that Shayboub

was the killer.

As for Nasra, she was threatened with rape unless she confessed that Shayboub was the killer and, like her sister, she was given electric shocks in sensitive parts of the body in front of her brother.

Nadi Ayyad Botrous

While the family of Michael was tortured, another family, that of Nadi Ayyad Botrous (aged 30), was also targeted. He said to an EOHR representative that, on 16 August, he and his family were summoned to Al-Kosheh police station. They were tied and blindfolded and then transferred to the Dar Al-Salaam police station. Nadi Ayyad says that he was handcuffed, hanged in the slaughtered animal position, and given electric shocks in the penis and ears. He endured this treatment more than a whole day to force him to confess that Shayboub was the murderer. He was released on 28 August and re-detained on 2 September with the same purpose of making him confess that Shayboub was the murderer. When he refused, he was tortured again until the next morning, when he was released.

Galal Rasmi Kabashi, 27

On 19 August 1998, the police arrested the father of Galal Rasmi Kabashi, Rasmi Kabashi, aged 70. According to the son's testimony, some policemen blindfolded his father and bumped his head strongly against a wall causing him total loss of his eyesight. The son added: "Afterwards, they arrested me too and took me to the Al-Kosheh police station. They asked both of us to confess that Shayboub was the murderer. When I refused, I was beaten severely and given electric shocks in the ears and toes for one full hour. Then, I was released. In the same evening, two police detectives came to my house and asked me to go to the police station to confess that Shayboub was the murderer. When I refused, I was re-arrested and tortured again."

Ayoub Hanna Shenouda, 37

He told the EOHR representative that he was arrested on 12 September 1998 and transferred to the Dar Al-Salaam police station, where he was stripped to the underwear. They made him believe that he was accused of the murder and that they had strong evidence of his culpability. All the while, he was kicked, punched and hit with hard objects by people he was unable to see. He added that an officer said to him: "Say that Shayboub is the murderer and you will go home." When he refused, he was hanged in the position of the slaughtered animal and given electric shocks in the ears and penis.

According to his story, he was suspended from a window for a whole day without his legs touching the floor. They also brought his wife and threatened him with raping her if he did not confess that Shayboub was the killer, but he did not. He was released after four days.

Imposing protection taxes

Many of the inhabitants of Al-Kosheh complained to the EOHR that guards and low-ranking investigation detectives impose a form of tax on them in return for not being reported or arrested as suspects. In this regard, Ghattas Sergius Bolous said that, on 15 August 1998, he was arrested and taken to Al-Kosheh police station, where he was severely tortured for five days before he was released on 19 August. He was re-arrested three days later, on 22 August, and held for three days in Al-Kosheh police station, during which he was insulted, beaten and given electric shocks. He alleged that after his release, a detective came to his house and demanded a payment of LE 200 in order not to inform about him or arrest him.

Also, Ayyad lamei Gad reported that, on 17 August, the police arrested and held him in detention for several days during which he was tortured. He was not released before he had signed a document committing himself to work as a police informer.

Conclusions and recommendations

The regrettable events witnessed by the Suhag village of Al-Kosheh have renewed the EOHR's fears that the grave violations committed by the security forces against the rights and freedoms of the citizens and their human dignity may create a situation of deep animosity between the people and the security forces. Such enmity would be the result of the numerous and continuous illegal practices of police members who, under the uninterrupted enforcement of the emergency law and the absence of any real supervision on their behaviour have started to believe that they enjoy total immunity from accountability and punishment.

The EOHR warns that the failure of the competent authorities to hold accountable those members of the security forces responsible for the grave violations of the rights of hundreds of citizens in Al-Kosheh village may open the door for wide misuse of the events and their depiction as a form of persecution and discrimination against Coptic citizens. The increase use of collective punishment measures by the police in their search for the perpetrators of a normal criminal case, the perpetrator of which may be Muslim or Christian, raises again the issue of the relation between citizens and security forces. Based on the information received by the EOHR, the gross violations that took place in Al-Kosheh village were not isolated individual events of which one or more members of the police can be held accountable. Similarly, it was not a 'special' case in which the nature and characteristics of the place and its population tinted the police practices with cruelty, violence and inhumanity. The grave violations occurred in Al-Kosheh reflect the prevailing relation between police and the people. Violence is the method adopted by policemen to deal with people whether in police stations, during interrogations, or even when dealing with people outside the police stations.

On the one hand, the EOHR observes that torture and ill-treatment of citizens have become a deliberate and common practice by policemen and their assistants. Information documented by the EOHR over the past seven years points out that most cases of torture and ill-treatment of citizens in police stations take place at the hands of policemen directly following the arrest and before they are referred to the competent public prosecution. These practices take place to coerce the victims to confess to having committed a crime. Information received and documented by the EOHR also reveals that as soon as a crime occurs, the police make lists of possible suspects, then they arrest and torture them until someone confesses. In many cases, confessions extracted under torture have proved false when the real perpetrators were later found. Moreover, many confessions are just made to avoid torture and ill-treatment and sometimes, more than one person confess to the same crime.

This was the case with Zeinhum Mohammed Badr, who was arrested on 30 July 1998 and charged with kidnapping a girl called Iman Faysal Farah. He was tortured in the Zawit Ghazal police station to make him confess that he had kidnapped, raped, and killed the girl, and that after that he had buried her with the help of some relatives, who were also arrested and tortured severely. Some days later, after Zeinhum had been imprisoned and charged with premeditated murder by the public prosecution, the girl turned up in the village. It transpired that she had fled to Alexandria to avoid her family's cruel treatment.

The EOHR notes that torture is not practiced against detained suspects only but also against their relatives or those wanted for the implementation of

judicial rulings. This practice is known as "hostage-taking" and it occurs when the police arrests without legal grounds the father, brother, wife and/or son of a wanted or accused person "as hostage" to force the latter to give himself up or make a confession. Usually, hostages are tortured to extract information from them about the whereabouts of their relatives or their involvement in a crime.

An instance of this was the arrest of 12 persons of the same family by officers of the Kasr El-Nil police station on 6 September 1996. They were detained and tortured to force them to confess that one of them had stolen some items from the house of a woman who had strong connections with some police officers.

The various reasons and methods of torture used in police stations seem to point out that there is a deficiency in the definition of the role of the police and the limits of their jurisdiction, and about their authority when dealing with citizens, particularly suspects. They also indicate a blatant ignorance of the rights and freedoms of citizens. A great percentage of the members of the police adopt the old Roman rule that says that a man talks only when he feels pain, and instead of conducting investigations and finding the truth, they resort to torture as a quick way to obtain confessions and information.

On the other hand, the EOHR observes that violence is not confined to police stations, but that the security forces use it also to break peaceful assemblies and demonstrations. It seems that they use collective punishment against the people for their peaceful rebellion against the state of negligence and oppression they suffer.

This was the case in the town of Belkas, which registers numerous reports of ill-treatment of citizens in police station. Nevertheless, the authorities have not taken any action to stop this practice and punish those responsible. Naturally, the policemen feel that they are immune from punishment, so their violations of the rights and freedoms of citizens have increased. When a citizen died as a result of torture and demands for an investigation into the incident were not met, the people organized a peaceful demonstration to express their protest. The police response was to fire bullets and tear gases on the demonstrators, causing the death of one person, and the injury and arrest of many others.

These same events were repeated in the towns of Al-Hamoul, Kafr Al-Geraya, Al-Gorna, and Al-Fawakhreyya area, in Old Cairo.

The EOHR asserts that the spread of the use of torture in police stations is the outcome of a combination of factors, among these:

The legal definition of torture does not conform to article two of the International Convention Against Torture, to which Egypt is a signatory. The victims of torture do not have the right to file a direct lawsuit against the perpetrators.

All reports of torture and illegal detention are disregarded. In this regard, the EOHR notes the negligence of the authorities to investigate the gross violations committed in police station, particularly those related to illegal detention, torture and ill-treatment of citizens by members of the police responsible for their detention.

It must be noted that articles 42 and 43 of the Criminal Procedure Code allow the Public Prosecution offices the right to inspect police stations to ensure that no one is held illegally. They are also empowered to go to the police station as soon as there is information of an illegal detention, and to make the necessary investigations and order the immediate release of the detained person. However, the EOHR observes that these safeguards have become insufficient to end violations in police stations. This is

particularly true in the light of the limited number of staff in prosecution offices compared to the large number of cases they have to handle on the one hand, and the huge number of police stations which should be inspected by the Public Prosecution on the other. Moreover, the continuous enforcement of the emergency law for seventeen successive years and the legal amendments introduced to combat terrorism have greatly diminished the powers and jurisdiction of the Public Prosecution to inspect police stations.

It must also be noted that article 260 of the Penal Code states that: "He who arrests or detains a person without an order by the competent authority, and in cases other than those stipulated in the laws and regulations, shall be punished with imprisonment and a fine of LE 200." Also, article 282 states that any case of illegal arrest, death threats, or physical torture shall be punished with temporary imprisonment with hard labour.

Similarly, articles 13 and 15 of the International Convention Against Torture stipulate that torture reports must be investigated, and that confessions proved to have been extracted under torture shall not be accepted as evidence. Moreover, article 12 of the same Convention added that an impartial investigation must be promptly made if there is reasonable belief that an act of torture has been committed, even if there is no official report.

Nevertheless, the Public Prosecution Department usually closes most investigations of torture cases referred to it in spite of the evidence found on the bodies of the victims and the existence of medical reports issued by the Forensic Department or a public hospital proving the signs of torture. The EOHR fears that the investigation into the torture of citizens of Al-Kosheh village will face the same fate, i.e. closure.

The EOHR's fears are accentuated because if fair and impartial investigations are not made into the constant allegations of torture and ill-treatment by policemen, and if those responsible for these violations are not brought to justice (a procedure that should be undertaken by the Public Prosecution as stipulated by the Constitution, the law and Egypt's international commitments), policemen will have a firm belief that torture and ill-treatment are acceptable means to extract confessions. This will naturally encourage the continuation of the practice.

The EOHR would like to note that over the past three years, it has made numerous notifications to the Public Prosecutor on cases of torture in police stations, some of which are included in this report. In them, it demanded fair and impartial investigations and the bringing of the perpetrators to justice. However, the EOHR did not receive any reply about the outcome of these notifications or whether investigations were made.

Recommendations

In its 1990 report, the EOHR issued a number of recommendations to the Egyptian authorities to help stop the tragedy of torture in police stations. These recommendations are still as crucial as when they were first presented given that the government did not adopt any of them.

Hence, the EOHR renews its appeal to the competent authorities to adopt previous recommendations and urges them to promptly implement the following:

To conduct impartial and independent judicial investigations into all allegations of torture included in this report, and to bring those responsible to justice.

To create a permanent, independent and impartial body, formed of judges, lawyers and doctors, to examine all allegations of torture in police custody, and to bring those responsible to justice. Such body must be given access to all detention centres and all necessary information, and be allowed to interview the victims. Its role should not be confined to the legal aspects, but should include the political, social and psychological implications of torture and propose solutions to stop it.

To promptly organize training and educational sessions for police members, especially for those in the criminal investigation departments, on how to deal with detainees in police stations. They must be trained to respect human dignity and the basic rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Egyptian Constitution, the law and international human rights treaties ratified by Egypt. These sessions would complement the human rights course already introduced in the police academy curriculum and all other police training schools.

To amend Article 63 of the Code of Criminal Procedure to grant victims the right to file direct lawsuits in crimes of torture committed by the police.

To introduce the system of judicial police, which would report to the Ministry of Justice, to be responsible for law enforcement and other duties. Such system would guarantee justice and the proper implementation of rulings.

To add a new article to the Code of Criminal Procedure giving an accused person the right to seek the help of a lawyer during interrogations in police stations.

To ratify Articles 21 and 22 of the International Convention Against Torture, which permit the UN Committee Against Torture to consider complaints brought to it by state parties or individuals.

Al-Kosheh is a relatively large village of the Dar Al-Salaam town, Suhag Governorate. It has a population of about forty thousand, the majority of which are Copts (more than thirty thousand). Farming and manual labour are the main occupations. There is also a small percentage of civil servants who work in different departments of Suhag governorate.

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To: Melanne Verveer, Chief of Staff, Office of the First Lady

Fax: 456-7805

From: Karin Finkler, Office of Congressman Joseph R. Pitts

Fax: 225-2013

Date: March 19, 1999

Number of pages: 3

Note: In light of the First Lady's upcoming travels to Egypt, I have faxed the attached information in hopes that the First Lady would raise this case during her meetings with Egyptian officials. Should you have further questions, please contact me at 225-2411.

Thank you for your assistance.



CENTER FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Nina Shea, Director

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URGENT MEMORANDUM FROM EGYPT

For more information contact Joseph Assad, Middle East Research Director, at 202-296-5101

On March 14, the Center for Religious Freedom of Freedom House received the following memorandum from the Cairo-based Center for Human Rights for National Unity, reporting the forced conversion of a 16-year-old Coptic girl in Upper Egypt. The memorandum was written by Samir Shihata, the brother of the abducted girl.

Samir Shihata Gouda writes: "I have a 16-year-old sister and her name is Suhir Shihata Gouda, an eleventh-grade student at the Abu-Tisht Secondary School of Commerce. My father was shocked when my sister did not return home from school on February 25, 1999. We searched for her at her friends and relatives houses. An eyewitness told my father that he saw [Suhir] with our neighbor Saed Sadek Mahmoud, as he and other men took her away in a taxi. My father then rushed to the Abu-Tisht Police Station to report the incident. What happened next is unconscionable. A police officer began assaulting and beating my father cursing him with words I am ashamed to repeat. Since my father is an old man and was afraid [of further police brutality,] he returned home and the case was never recorded. Three days latter, my father and brother went back to the police station, and the same treatment [beating] was repeated on both. Since that day, my father has been laying in a hospital bed at the Dr. Qassab's Hospital as a result of the injuries he incurred at the police station. The neighbors have also cursed us insulting the honor of the remaining family members including two other sisters, one is a student at the same school [with Suhir] and the other is a ninth grade student at a different school. Our mother is in much suffering because she does not know the status of her daughter.

"On Monday, March 8, 1999, Mr. Saed Sadek Mahmoud came to our house along with...[names of 21 individuals are available at the Center for Religious Freedom].

"They and many of their followers surrounded our house and threatened [to harm us] if we took any legal action. They said to us 'your daughter has declared her islamization [converted to Islam] at al-Azhar Mosque.' They also said that Mr. Abdul-Hady al-Saman al-Delyou would get her married to one of his acquaintances. We then informed the police of what was said. They [the police] attempted to enter our town, but Abdul-Hady al-Saman al-Delyou and his followers blocked the road in front of police cars and said to them: 'if you try to enter the town, we will kill all the Christians in the town and burn their houses...we will take away all of their women and young girls.' The police cars then retreated.

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'The following day, the State Security Investigators [SSI] went to see him [Abdul-Hady al-Saman al-Delyou]. We then learned that they [the SSI] pressured her into marrying one of el-Delyou's followers....'¹

In a number of cases that Freedom House investigated in Egypt, young Christian girls were taken by Muslim men to be forcibly converted to Islam, often with the cooperation of local police. This has even involve girls below the legal age in Egyptian law at which a person can change his or her religion.

The Center's forthcoming report, *Egypt's Endangered Christians* (available April 1), finds the following: Vulnerable Christian women and girls are one of the primary targets of Muslim militants who are determined to transform Egypt by force into a fundamentalist Islamic state. They often pressure young girls to convert to Islam and offer financial incentives to encourage their conversion. Sometimes the girls are manipulated by offers of wealth and security. In other cases, they can be abducted or coerced into conversion. Six hundred cases were reported to the office of the Coptic Patriarch, Pope Shenouda III, in 1997.

Freedom House is concerned about the increasing number of cases where underage Coptic girls are abducted and forced to abandon their Christian faith.

¹ Unofficial translation from Arabic text, CFRP, FR, March 14, 1999.

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

March 19, 1999

The First Lady
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mrs. Clinton:

We are writing to you in wholehearted support of your efforts to alleviate the suffering of women and children around the world. We wish to bring to your attention a particularly urgent case as you prepare to meet with the government of Egypt, that of a 16-year old Coptic girl, Suhir Shihata Gouda from Abu-Tisht in Upper Egypt. We are outraged at what appears to be a pattern of abduction, forced conversion and violence against Coptic women and children, and we ask you to forcefully raise this concern in your meetings.

Reliable reports indicate that on February 25, Suhir Shihata Gouda did not return home from her 11th-grade classes at the Abu-Tisht Secondary School of Commerce. When an eyewitness reported seeing several men, including neighbor Saed Sadek Mahmoud, driving her away in a taxi, her father Shihata Gouda Abdul-Noor went to the police station to report the abduction. Rather than file the complaint, the police reportedly berated and severely beat Shihata, an elderly man who returned home in fear. Despite this unconscionable treatment, we understand Shihata and his son Samir Shihata Gouda attempted again three days later to go to the police, and that both were beaten severely, resulting in the elder Shihata's hospitalization.

Reports further indicate that on March 8, 1999, the alleged abductor, Mr. Saed Sadek Mahmoud, and numerous other men surrounded the Shihata house and informed the family that their daughter had converted to Islam and would be "married" to a Muslim man. Supporters of the family informed the police, who abandoned the site when a second man, Mr. Abdul-Hady al-Saman al-Delyou, reportedly threatened to "kill all the Christians in the town" and abduct all their wives and daughters if the police intervened. The State Security police allegedly visited Abdul-Hady the following day and pressured him to marry off the abducted girl.

We are outraged by this report of violence and complicit coercion by the police. We are particularly concerned at reports that Coptic women and girls of this town are living in daily fear of being abducted in their turn. We ask you to request Suhir's immediate return to her family, and the investigation and prosecution of her abductors. We further ask you to request that the police protect the girls and women of Abu-Tisht and immediately intervene against those who would threaten their lives.

The First Lady
Page Two

As you are aware, last summer in Al-Kosheh police reportedly tortured countless innocent villagers, many of whom were women and children, in an attempt to coerce a murder confession. No police officer has yet been prosecuted for these abuses, and Egypt's human rights record internationally is badly tarnished. If, once again, police are proven to abuse those they are mandated to protect, the international repercussions will only increase. Our greatest concern, in the wake of the Al-Kosheh incident, is the growing perception of impunity when police abuse the most vulnerable members of Egyptian society, and the likely consequence of further abuses.

We view Suhir's case as extremely urgent, based on a number of similar reported incidents in Egypt involving young girls. We are particularly horrified by the case of young Teresa Shakir, a 13-year old Coptic girl reportedly abducted by her teacher, Osama Abdu Youssef and taken to the police station in Wasta, where she was declared by Youssef and the police a "convert to Islam". Despite her family's efforts to obtain her immediate release, Teresa was held incommunicado at the police station for nine days, where police continued to allege she had "converted." Several months later, on November 30, 1997, she was found dead and disemboweled in her house, together with her parents and younger brother who had been shot dead. Her sister, wounded by gunshot, was treated but later disappeared after being taken into police custody. Tragically, reports indicate that her surviving brother Adly Shakir, who went to the police station to report the murders, was tortured so badly that he remains partially paralyzed, tried and convicted for the murder of his own family, and now awaits death by hanging.

Another case involves a 22-year old Coptic woman, Teresa Andrawes, active in teaching at her church, who was reportedly abducted on April 2, 1998. Again police were complicit in her continuing custody, claiming she had freely converted, and allowing her father to see her only once from a distance at the police station. He reportedly was then forced to sign a document promising he would stop seeking his daughter's return. Ministry of Interior officials continue to claim Teresa voluntarily converted to Islam and married a Muslim man.

In light of these past cases, and of the well-documented patterns of abuse by police of innocent civilians, we are very concerned that the lives of Suhir, her family, and perhaps of other girls in her town, are in jeopardy. We ask you to seek her release and protection, and to request the prosecution of those who abducted her, including the police officers who reportedly abetted the kidnaping.

We are confident that your advocacy on their behalf can have a tremendous impact on the lives of these girls. Sadly, Coptic women represent the lowest rung of Egyptian society, and seem to be particularly targeted by militants and corrupt members of the police force. We thank you for caring for these women, and wish you the very best of success in pressing for their welfare.

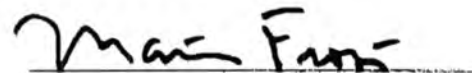
The First Lady
Page Three

Thank you for hearing our concerns. We wish you safe travel and tremendous success.

Sincerely,



Bob Clement
Member of Congress



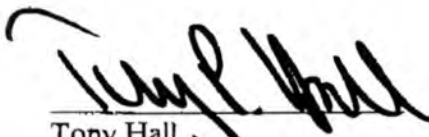
Martin Frost
Member of Congress



Donald Payne
Member of Congress



Joseph Pitts
Member of Congress



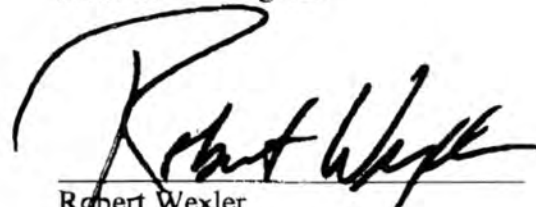
Tony Hall
Member of Congress



Lloyd Doggett
Member of Congress



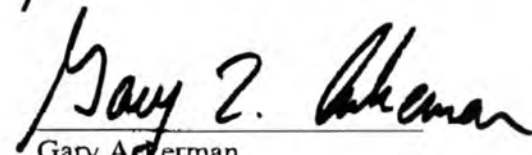
Sherrod Brown
Member of Congress



Robert Wexler
Member of Congress



Tom Lantos
Member of Congress



Gary Ackerman
Member of Congress

file Egypt

Egypt's Women Win Equal Rights to Divorce

By SUSAN SACHS

CAIRO, Feb. 29 — The narrow corridors of Family Court were once painted a cheerful red, but now they are pitted and stained with a dull brown patina of grime and the smoke from countless acrid cigarettes.

The stories told in these trash-strewn hallways are just as dismal: children abandoned, families impoverished and women trapped in marriages they can escape only with permission from their husbands.

"I can't find my husband," said Saida Muhammad Osman, a careworn 50-year-old woman perched on the surviving half of a broken plastic chair in the crowded hallway of the courthouse in central Cairo. "Every few years he comes back for a few days, but usually I am on my own with my children."

Mrs. Osman's hopes have been as meager as her circumstances. She dreams of getting a divorce, required to enable her to collect her dead father's pension — hardly a princely sum at the equivalent of just over \$6 a month. Knowing her husband can delay a final judgment for

years, she feared that any relief would come too late to do her family much good.

But change is about to shake Egypt's crowded and melancholy courtrooms. Beginning on Wednesday, Egypt will put in place one of the Muslim world's most far-reaching reforms of family law. Among countries in the region, only Tunisia also makes divorce an equal opportunity alternative to an unhappy marriage.

"Before this, I really did not want my own daughter to get married because I saw again and again the trap that a woman can be in in this

country," said Muhammad Amer, a Cairo lawyer who is considered an expert on Islamic family law and who lobbied for the changes. "Now I'm not worried, because she can get rid of the man when she wants."

With the new law, a woman will be able to divorce her husband, with or without his assent. And she will also be able to call on the Egyptian government to garnishee her husband's wages if he refuses to provide for her. If he disappears or cannot pay a court-ordered living allowance, she will be able to draw from a special state bank to keep her family afloat.

When they were proposed by President Hosni Mubarak late last year, the changes drew fierce opposition. Conservative lawmakers said women were too flighty to be entrusted with the option of no-fault divorce. The proposals also were widely lampooned in the press as the work of man-hating feminists.

But an alliance of moderate Muslim clerics, women's advocates, civil court judges and divorce lawyers endorsed the reforms. To head off a backlash from Islamic hard-liners, they mounted a public relations effort to convince people that the law is a modern rendering of the equal rights that Islam bestows on women.

"Maybe Egyptian society is not in the best condition now to discuss this law," said Fathi Naguib, an assistant justice minister who drafted the law. "But every society needs a shock, one that doesn't go so far that it can't be absorbed but one that is still a little step forward. This was a necessary and overdue shock."

Family law is generally based on Shariah, or the Islamic legal code, in Muslim countries, including Egypt. This has come to mean that a Muslim man can get a divorce automatically. But a woman must prove to a court that her husband beats her, is a drug addict, is sterile or does not support the family.

In practice, though, they are often stymied by judges who discount their complaints, according to reports by private organizations and the State Department. Even when she is granted a divorce, a woman may not be free because her husband can appeal the decree indefinitely.

In Egypt, where the civil and criminal codes are an amalgam of secular and Islamic law, there have been occasional attempts at reform. In 1979, President Anwar el-Sadat issued a decree allowing a woman to divorce her husband if she objected to him taking an additional wife. But the decree was later declared unconstitutional on procedural grounds.

Mr. Sadat's successor, Mr. Mubarak, did not try to restore that law, but did repeal an Ottoman-era rule making it a crime for a woman to run away from an abusive husband.

The impetus for the new, more sweeping change in Egypt's laws came from people who have spent years watching the system in action.

"I dreamed of having this new law for 28 years, ever since I was just a small judge working in the field of family law and seeing how women suffer from the system," said Mr. Naguib. "I saw how they could stay in the courts 12, 14, 15 years without getting a divorce. It was very painful to witness."

Little has changed in Egypt's divorce courts, where 1.2 million cases are filed a year, but only 71,000 are granted by overworked judges.

Fathi Shaheen, a gaunt man of 75, has made his living for 40 years at the Shobra courthouse helping illiterate women prepare divorce requests. He said he had seen more tears than he cared to remember. "These men, they are greedy and they want to make the woman suffer," he said recently, "so they keep filing appeal after appeal. In my time, men saw women as something sacred."

A few feet away, a young woman named Samia leaned against a filthy wall. People jostled around her, trying to spot their names on a handwritten list of 150 divorce cases to be heard that day by a single judge. Samia, who was granted a divorce three years ago on the ground that her husband beat her, was an island of resigned calm. "I'm an expert at this," she said. "I go to court all the time because my husband keeps appealing our divorce."

Her mother chimed in. "Why can they keep appealing?" she said. "Appeals are for murderers and criminals. Meanwhile, the man goes out and gets married and has a happy life, while the wife has to wait."

Even with Egypt's new law, a wife who wants a divorce over the objections of her husband will have to return to him any money or property that he paid her upon the marriage. That provision was the price paid for the support of leading Muslim authorities. It refers to a decision by the Islamic prophet Muhammad, who once permitted an unhappy woman to leave her husband but required her to return the garden he had given her when they married.

"When you touch a sensitive area like this, you must speak to society in its language," Mr. Naguib said. "And here, the language of religion is most convincing."

1/2

African Dictator Faces Trial Where He Once Took Refuge

By NORIMITSU ONISHI

DAKAR, Senegal, Feb. 29 — In a human rights case that was inspired by the one against Augusto Pinochet, the former president of Chad is expected to stand trial later this year on charges of torture.

The case against the former president, Hissène Habré, is being watched closely in Africa, where brutal rulers have engaged in widespread human rights violations with impunity. The accusations against Mr. Habré are already resonating across a continent where laws are applied inconsistently to the powerful and powerless.

"This is a message to other African leaders that nothing will be the same any longer," said Delphine Djiraibe, president of a human rights group working on the case. "It shows that Africa can also play a role in the fight for human rights and can fight on its own soil."

The case against Mr. Habré, 57, who has lived in exile in Dakar since being toppled from power in 1990, has also stirred some impassioned comments among African intellectuals. Some of them defend Mr. Habré, arguing that guilt cannot be assigned to African leaders of his generation because they were merely creations and pawns of cold war superpowers.

But several human rights organizations have worked quietly for months to collect evidence against Mr. Habré, drawing on the legal precedent established in the Pinochet case: that a person can be tried for crimes against humanity in any country and that former heads of state in particular are not immune. The violators are brought to trial on the basis of "universal jurisdiction" for such crimes.

In the case of Mr. Habré, the human rights groups say they have documented 97 cases of political killings, 142 cases of torture and 100 cases of people who have disappeared in Chad, an impoverished, land-locked desert nation in central Africa.

Still, it was considered an extraordinary sight when the former president appeared in a Senegalese court on Feb. 3. He has been in Dakar under house arrest since being indicted on torture charges by the court.

And perhaps even more startling had been the testimony, a few days earlier in the same court, of a half-dozen ordinary Chadians who told of being arrested and tortured during Mr. Habré's rule.

One of the prisoners, Souleyman Guengueng, was a civil servant who was arrested in August 1988 by the notorious security and documentation squad and accused of being an opponent of the government. Mr. Guengueng, who was still recovering from an operation he had undergone just days before the arrest, said he spent the next two years being tortured.

Mr. Guengueng said he lost consciousness for so long on three occasions that his fellow prisoners left

him for dead. Up to 10 men were kept in one cell built for a single prisoner, and their legs eventually became paralyzed. And he said three to four people died every day from malaria, flea infestation, lack of food, suffocation or sheer heat.

He also recalled how 300 of their fellow prisoners had been jammed into one small cell; the guards would pour water into the cell from the ceiling, forcing the men to lick the floor or their bodies so they would not die of thirst.

Mr. Guengueng, reached by telephone in Ndjamena, the capital of Chad, said he still has trouble walking and has poor vision because of a powerful light that, at one point during his incarceration, was directed continuously at him from a close distance.

"My joy was great in that courtroom," he said. "Hissène Habré never thought that one day he would be brought to justice."

In Chad, the "untouchable" are the elite who gravitate to the president and are above the law, said Ms. Djiraibe, president of the Chadian Association for the Promotion and Defense of Human Rights. Those who engage in the "politics of the belly" are political opponents who make enough noise to earn some money and find some protection under the law. The rest of society cannot count on the law to protect them, she said.

Although the terms may change, inequality before the law is a given elsewhere in Africa. In the Ivory Coast, for example, the three classes described by Ms. Djiraibe are sometimes described as officials of steel, wood and cotton. That is the reason why the case against Mr. Habré — who as a former head of state was the ultimate untouchable — carries great significance in Africa, human rights officials said.

Senegal is regarded as having one of the few independent judiciaries in Africa, and that is one of the main reasons that international human rights organizations, including Human Rights Watch and the International Federation of Human Rights, have joined in the case against Mr. Habré.

"This is now showing that there are African countries in which you can put these principles of human rights in practice," said Reed Brody, advocacy director of the New York-based Human Rights Watch. "The case has profound implications in a way that it would not if it were being held in a European country, particularly a colonial country. That's one of the things that Latin Americans were saying about the Pinochet case — that it was Europe imposing its laws." Spain is seeking the extradition of General Pinochet, the former Chilean dictator, so he can stand trial on charges of torture, but doctors in Britain, where he has been under house arrest, have declared him medically unfit.

Mr. Brody pointed out that while several other African dictators are

in exile — for instance, Idi Amin of Uganda is in Saudi Arabia, and Mengistu Haile Mariam of Ethiopia is in Zimbabwe — the courts in those countries are not free enough to pursue a similar case.

Chad, a creation of French colonial mapmakers who threw together different populations into a desolate patch of land twice the size of Texas, has experienced continual war since gaining independence in 1960. In 1982, Mr. Habré, a rebel chieftain, seized power and ingratiated himself with France and the United States for being a staunch opponent of Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi of Libya.

During Mr. Habré's eight-year

reign, his American and French backers often portrayed him positively, describing him as a charismatic leader and intellectual who genuinely cared about issues facing the developing world. But the French eventually tired of Mr. Habré, who was increasingly being criticized by human rights monitors, just as President François Mitterrand talked of openness and democracy in a post-cold-war Africa. And in December 1990, after a French-supported invasion from Sudan, Idriss Déby — who had been Mr. Habré's military commander and the country's No. 2 leader — overthrew Mr. Habré and sent him into exile.

In Dakar, several Senegalese intellectuals said it was hypocritical of Western human rights organizations to pursue Mr. Habré now, given their governments' previous support. "Hissène Habré was received and honored in Paris as a head of state and ally," said Babacar Sine, one of Senegal's most famous intellectuals. "France never regarded him as a dictator."

Mr. Sine, who has known Mr. Habré for 40 years, added: "This case is much more complex than the role of Habré. There is the role of France that supported him. There is the role of the United States that supported him. If we are to judge Hissène Habré, we have to also judge those who supported him."

Another complicating factor is that Mr. Déby is still president of Chad, where human rights monitors say arbitrary killings by the security forces, torture, beatings and other forms of abuse remain common. Human rights organizations behind the case are pushing for the trial to take place in Senegal. If Mr. Habré were extradited to Chad, they say, a fair trial would be unlikely because his testimony would implicate members of the current government, including President Déby.

Madické Niang, a Senegalese lawyer defending Mr. Habré, said his client acknowledged that human rights abuses had occurred under his rule, but denied the scale.

It is impossible to determine the exact scale of the abuse under Mr. Habré because the only extensive report was made by a truth commission set up by Mr. Déby. The commission said that the Habré government carried out 40,000 political killings and 200,000 cases of torture, and that Mr. Habré gave direct orders to single out certain groups or people. Mr. Habré is said to have fled Chad with more than \$11 million.

POLITICAL MEMO

Yes, It's Still the Economy, Stupid, but With an Asterisk

By RICHARD W. STEVENSON

WASHINGTON, Feb. 29 — If Vice President Al Gore has counted on anything in this tumultuous political season, it is that the strong economy will give him the upper hand in the general election should he win the Democratic presidential nomination.

The economy remains as strong as ever. But Mr. Gore's strategy for using it to his advantage would have to change — and could in the end prove to be less potent — if his Republican opponent turned out to be Senator John McCain rather than Gov. George W. Bush.

To Mr. Gore's team, Mr. Bush, who until a few weeks ago seemed to have a lock on his party's nomination, is in many ways the ideal rival. The centerpiece of the Texan's campaign has been his big tax cut, a proposal that Mr. Gore's advisers are certain they could label fiscally irresponsible, a threat to Social Security and a gamble with the current prosperity.

When it comes to economic issues, Mr. McCain presents a smaller, more elusive target. While he supports tax cuts, they are of a scale closer to those advocated by Mr. Gore. Like President Clinton and the vice president, Mr. McCain emphasizes that saving Social Security is his first goal. And like the administration, he promotes the long-term benefits of reducing the national debt.

"McCain is not challenging the basic framework of the Clinton-Gore administration," said Will Marshall, president of the

Progressive Policy Institute, a research organization created by centrist Democrats. "That will make it tougher for Gore to find points of contrast if McCain turns out to be the Republican nominee."

To Mr. McCain's supporters, his middle-of-the-road approach on economic policy is a crucial element of a driving force behind his candidacy: his argument that he is more electable than Mr. Bush.

"What McCain talks about in policy is politically doable within Washington, and it insulates him and puts him in a position of strategic advantage relative to Gore should he face him in the fall," said Representative Mark Sanford, a Republican from South Carolina who backs Mr. McCain.

"What Democrats have beaten Republicans over the head with — with great success — was the notion that we wanted big tax cuts to the exclusion of Social Security and Medicare," Mr. Sanford said. "McCain's plan allows us to say we agree that Social Security ought to be first, and here's how we propose to do it."

Perhaps just as important, or more so, neutralizing the economic issue could give Mr. McCain a chance to move the campaign to the ground on which he feels strongest: character and reform. Indeed, relative to either Mr. Gore or Mr. Bush, he has little interest in the details of economic policy.

"It won't be a battle over who's a better wonk," said Marshall Wittman, director of government relations at the conservative

Heritage Foundation, who supports Mr. McCain. "The battle would be over who do you trust, and that's where McCain has the edge."

Mr. Gore's campaign, of course, does not see it that way. Advisers to the vice president said they would make a case that Mr. McCain is just as conservative as Mr. Bush. They also said they viewed Mr. McCain as open to attack on some critical issues, especially Social Security. Mr. McCain advocates using a big chunk of the projected federal budget surplus to create private investment accounts within the retirement system. Most Democrats have long said such a step would leave the elderly vulnerable to the volatility of Wall Street and divert money from debt reduction.

"If the issue is, as it should be, who can keep the economic prosperity going," said Chris Lehane, Mr. Gore's spokesman, "then the fact that Al Gore has been a major player in an administration that has created the longest economic expansion on record is going to be the main factor."

It is still unclear whether Mr. McCain's moderate stance on fiscal policy will win the day in the Republican primaries. Mr. Bush has not wavered in his advocacy of sweeping tax cuts as the best way to stimulate growth and, as he puts it, to keep politicians in Washington from squandering the surplus on wasteful government spending.

"People say, 'Well, your tax cut plan isn't taking hold, the exit polls don't show any-

thing, you must abandon it,'" Mr. Bush said after his defeat in Michigan last week. "I'm not going to abandon the tax cut plan."

Mr. Bush is using Mr. McCain's moderate position on taxes to lump him with Mr. Gore and Democrats generally, and is trying to block Mr. McCain's efforts to claim the mantle of Ronald Reagan as the true conservative in the race.

"It's important for Senator McCain and Vice President Gore to hear this important fact: that taxes on working people in America are at the highest level they've been since World War II," Mr. Bush told a rally in Virginia last Friday.

In response, Mr. McCain has emphasized his conservative credentials, especially his advocacy of slashing pork-barrel spending and ending corporate tax subsidies and loopholes. His argument is that it is more conservative to keep spending in check, reduce the national debt and shore up Social Security than to enact a tax cut that would go mostly to the wealthy — a sharp jab at Republican orthodoxy.

"There's no doubt that the Democrats will try to make John McCain carry all the baggage of his party," said Mr. Marshall, of the Progressive Policy Institute. "The question is whether this campaign will be for McCain what Bill Clinton's 'different kind of Democrat' campaign did for him in 1992, which was to show that you couldn't put him into the old categories."

"Our investigation found an alarmingly high number of deficiencies in the hospital's controls and procedures that need to be in place to ensure patients receive proper care," Commissioner Novello said. "Worse yet," she added, the hospital failed to notify the state of any worrisome cases, nor did it move to discipline the doctor or properly investigate the cases when alerted of them."

In its statement, Staten Island University Hospital officials said they would begin instituting new monitoring procedures to ensure patient safety and quality of care within the next few days. But the hospital cautioned that the state's Office of Professional Medical Conduct, which disciplines doctors, had yet to complete interviews with everyone involved or to finish its investigation of Dr. Arbit.

Dr. Novello's announcement of stiff fines and a slew of health viola-

tions yesterday underscored her decision to make the disciplining of doctors and the monitoring of care at hospitals a hallmark of her tenure, which began in June. New York State has only twice suspended doctor's licenses before an investigation is complete, both times in the last few months.

Dr. Arbit surrendered his license on Feb. 18. The other doctor who surrendered his license while being investigated was Dr. Allan Zarkin, who admitted to carving his initials into the belly of a patient on whom he had performed a Caesarean section last fall.

Dr. Novello's tough stance comes as President Clinton is pressing states to adopt strict regulations for reporting medical errors, after a recent report that found that medical errors kill hundreds of thousands of people each year.

"I want to be perfectly clear," Dr. Novello said yesterday. "When and if the Department of Health finds that a hospital is not operating up to high standards, we will move swiftly and decisively."

The state began its investigation into Staten Island University Hospital on Feb. 9, when it received complaints that Dr. Arbit had operated on the wrong side of Mr. Artis's brain. When state investigators called the hospital, Dr. Novello said, its administrators told them "it was a rumor," she said.

The state made an unannounced visit to the hospital the next day, during which several hospital staff members volunteered information about the surgeries, Dr. Novello said. A week later, investigators returned and found corroborating evidence, she said. Last Friday, the state concluded its "intensive investigation" into the hospital, the commissioner

said, concluding that "serious quality problems" existed.

Dr. Arbit was chief of neurosurgery at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center when he mistakenly operated on the healthy right side of the brain of Rajeswari Ayyappan, 59, the mother of an Indian movie star, Sridevi Ayyappan. A cancerous tumor had been found on the left side of her brain.

After the error was discovered, the patient, who had gone to the hospital with a very poor prognosis, had the tumor removed at New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center. She later died in India, and Dr. Arbit was fired from Sloan-Kettering. The state gave him one year's probation in that case. But he quickly found work at Staten Island University Hospital, which has been trying hard to raise its reputation from a community hospital to a world-class cancer center.

Hiring Dr. Arbit was part of that grand plan, several doctors at the hospital said. Before the incident at Sloan-Kettering, Dr. Arbit had a polished reputation in his field as the author of textbooks and an authority on neurosurgery.

He is known for taking on last-resort patients in a field that has few happy stories, and for caring for the poorest of the poor as well as the wealthy. More than a dozen patients have telephoned to express support for Dr. Arbit.

The last time a hospital was fined so much money was in 1986, when Harlem Hospital faced a \$125,000 fine for allowing an unlicensed physician to perform a routine operation in which complications developed that led to the amputation of a patient's leg. The State Health Department eventually suspended \$86,000 of the penalty.

2/2

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
002. cable	re: Egypt (5 pages)	07/29/1999	P1/b(1)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
First Lady's Office
Melanne Verveer
OA/Box Number: 20031

FOLDER TITLE:

Egypt

2013-0534-S

rc1491

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
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- b(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
- b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
003. memo	To File from Melanne Verveer re: Pre-Advance to Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia (partial) (1 page)	02/12/1999	b(7)(E)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
First Lady's Office
Melanne Verveer
OA/Box Number: 20031

FOLDER TITLE:

Egypt

2013-0534-S

rc1491

RESTRICTION CODES

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- b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

file
Egypt

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

February 12, 1999

MEMORANDUM TO FILE

CC: VIRGINIA APUZZO

FROM: MELANNE VERVEER

RE: PRE-ADVANCE TO EGYPT, MOROCCO AND TUNISIA

The following White House staff will travel on the pre-advance for the First Lady's trip to Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt. The number of people traveling is consistent with pre-advances for comparable trips.

<u>Staff Person</u>	<u>Role</u>
Patti Solis Doyle	Head of Delegation
Evan Ryan	Scheduler
Wendy Arends	Scheduler
Whitney Williams	Trip Director
Kelly Craighead	Former Trip Director; Training Current Trip Director
Jaycee Pribulsky	Advance Office Representative
Julie Mason	Press
WHCA	
(b)(7)e	
Medical Unit	

[003]

flee Egypt

Cairo, Egypt
May 4, 1999

Dear Mrs. Clinton:

Let me convey to you again our deep appreciation for your visit to Egypt last month. Your speech at American University, your visits to our USAID and other projects aimed at improving the situation of women and girls, and your tour in Luxor all made a powerful contribution to our bilateral relationship.

As I mentioned during your visit, we would like to invite your involvement in another project aimed at strengthening U.S.-Egyptian ties.

In conjunction with the celebration of the beginning of the Millennium, I would like to invite you to be the Guest of Honor at the opening performance and reception for the New York City Ballet, which we hope to hold in Cairo March 14, 2000. The Ballet is interested in performing in Egypt at that time, provided that the funding can be assured. My plan is for American and Egyptian corporations in Egypt to make it possible to hold this event through their contributions, as they have in the past with similar world-class performers such as Alvin Ailey or the cast of "Showboat."

The performance will highlight and reinforce the strong ties between Egypt and the United States and will no doubt attract global attention as one of the main activities launching the next Millennium in the cradle of eastern and western civilization. As someone who enjoys deep admiration, respect and popularity among Egyptians of every background, your involvement in this undertaking could very well insure its success.

Since my appointment by the President, I have made it a priority to develop an American cultural presence in Egypt to complement our very close political, economic and security relationship. What passes for "American Culture" in much of the world fails to convey the extent of our artistic achievements. This is an area in which we can and

The First Lady,
The White House.

-2-

should do more, and the New York City Ballet is a marvelous example to present to Egyptian audiences.

We would therefore be very honored and grateful if you would agree tentatively to visit Cairo next March as guest of honor for the Ballet premier, and of course to see more of this interesting country.

Sincerely,

Daniel C. Kurtzer
Ambassador

PRIORITY

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WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM

file
Egypt

PAGE 01 OF 02

PRT: FIRST LADY

<PREC> PRIORITY <CLAS> UNCLASSIFIED <DTG> 210813Z MAR 96

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INFO ////

UNCLAS CAIRO 003181

STATE FOR NEA/ENA

E.O. 12958: NA

TAGS: EG

SUBJECT: LETTER FOR FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

1. UNDER COVER OF LETTER TO AMBASSADOR, WE HAVE RECEIVED A LETTER FROM NAWAL EL TATAWY, MINISTER OF ECONOMY AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION, FOR FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON. TEXT FOLLOWS.

2. ORIGINAL LETTER HAS BEEN FORWARDED TO NEA/ENA UNDER REGISTRY NUMBER 3439110.

3. BEGIN TEXT:

DEAR MRS. CLINTON,

I WOULD LIKE TO THANK YOU FOR BEING SO GRACIOUS AND THOUGHTFUL FOR SENDING ME A COPY OF YOUR BOOK "IT TAKES A VILLAGE", OF WHICH I HAD READ NUMEROUS FAVORABLE REVIEWS IN VARIOUS NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES. AFTER READING THE BOOK, I CAN SINCERELY SAY THAT THESE ALREADY POSITIVE REVIEWS SHOULD HAVE BEEN EVEN MORE COMPLIMENTARY. YOUR INSIGHT REGARDING THE TRADEOFF BETWEEN THE BENEFITS OF TECHNOLOGICAL PROGRESS AND INCREASING GLOBALIZATION HAVING ADVERSELY AFFECTED FAMILY LIFE IN AMERICA ESPECIALLY CHILDREN, SERVES AS AN INVALUABLE REMINDER OF HOW IMPORTANT IT IS FOR ALL COUNTRIES TO INVEST IN CHILDREN BY CAREFULLY PAYING ATTENTION TO THEIR NEEDS.

IT IS MOST ASSURING TO SEE THAT WE ALL SHARE, AMONG SO MANY OTHER THINGS, A DEEP CONCERN FOR CREATING A BETTER TOMORROW FOR OUR CHILDREN. AS A MOTHER MYSELF, I CAN EASILY IDENTIFY WITH THIS CRITICAL ISSUE. HAVING RECENTLY BEEN APPOINTED MINISTRY OF ECONOMY AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION, I FEEL VERY PRIVILEGED TO BE

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WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM

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ABLE TO SHARE IN ALL EFFORTS THAT WOULD HELP BUILD A MORE SECURE FUTURE FOR EGYPTIAN CHILDREN. I FIRMLY BELIEVE CHILDREN ARE THE REAL WEALTH OF ANY NATION.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH AGAIN AND I WISH YOU THE BEST OF LUCK IN ALL YOUR ENDEAVORS.

VERY BEST REGARDS, AND MY VERY BEST WISHES,

YOURS SINCERELY,

S/NAWAL EL TATAWY
END TEXT

4. ALSO ENCLOSED WITH ABOVE LETTER ARE TWO PIECES OF ARTWORK DONE ON TYPEWRITER PAPER. ONE WELCOMES THE PRESIDENT TO EGYPT FROM "FRIENDS IN EGYPT" AND THE OTHER IS A COPY OF A CHRISTMAS CARD FOR PRESIDENT AND MRS. CLINTON. WALKER

BT

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