



Written by [James Heiser](#) on January 5, 2011

Muslims Cheered Bombing of Coptic Church in Egypt

In the aftermath of the attack by Muslim terrorists on a church in Alexandria, Egypt, new revelations are casting further doubt on claims by the Mubarak government that “all Egypt is the target” of the bombings, and not just members of the Coptic Christian community.



[As reported previously for *The New American*](#), a bomb was detonated outside al-Qiddissin Church just as the New Year’s midnight Mass was coming to its conclusion. Initial press reports indicated that over 20 people died in the explosion and nearly 80 were injured. After the explosion, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak appealed for calm; [according to a BBC New report](#), he declared, “This act of terrorism shook the country’s conscience, shocked our feelings and hurt the hearts of Muslim and Coptic Egyptians. ... The blood of their martyrs in Alexandria mixed to tell us that all Egypt is the target and that blind terrorism does not differentiate between a Copt and a Muslim.”

However, information has come to light in the aftermath of the bombing which calls into question whether foreign terrorists were responsible for the explosion.

Assyrian International New Agency (AINA) has released a story implicating Egyptian government security guards in the blast. Furthermore, Mubarak’s claims of a shaken national conscience aside, it appears that Muslim mobs greeted the explosion with shouts of triumph. [In the words of the AINA story](#):

According to eyewitnesses, a green Skoda car pulled up outside the church shortly after midnight. Two men got out, one of them talked shortly on his mobile phone, and the explosion occurred almost immediately after they left the scene. On the back of the Skoda was a sticker with the words “the rest is coming” ([video](#) of car explosion and Muslims shouting “Allah Akbar”). ...

“Security should know that those who demonstrated are the hand of Al-Qaida in Egypt,” said Hany el-Gezeiry, head of Copts4Egypt. “They should have arrested them to investigate who was behind them. They want to destroy Egypt from inside and the government kept quiet, giving them a free hand to do what they wanted. I believe Al-Qaida achieved what it wanted.”

El-Gezeiry asks why this Skoda vehicle was allowed to park in front of the church in an area cordoned off by security, when it was known that Al-Qaeda had already announced its intention of



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carrying out criminal acts against churches.

Eyewitnesses confirmed that security forces guarding the church withdrew nearly one hour before the blast, leaving only four policemen and an officer to guard such a big church and nearly 2000 people attending the midnight mass. "Normally they would have waited until the mass was over," said el-Gezeiry. He also commented on the Muslim's schadenfreude at the massacre at the church, who were heard chanting "Allah Akbar."

"Is this a victory?" he asks. "Whoever saw this fire and people dying and body parts all over the place and could still chant 'Allah Akbar' is a terrorist."

Such accusations of possible complicity between security forces and those who carried out the bombing might seem farfetched to some, but the testimony of eyewitnesses certainly demands an investigation and explanation for the alleged withdrawal of security immediately prior to the attack.

Regardless of whether government security forces were in some fashion complicit in the bombing, it appears certain that the church was among those which had been specifically targeted by al-Qaeda. As noted in an Associated Press article entitled, "[Anti-Christian drumbeat loud before Egypt attack](#)," it was no secret that al-Qaeda had been encouraging an increase in attacks against Coptic churches:

In the weeks before the New Year's Day suicide bombing of an Egyptian church, al-Qaida-linked websites carried a how-to manual on "destroying the cross," complete with videos on how to build a bomb and the locations of churches to target — including the one that was attacked.

They may have found a receptive audience in Alexandria, where increasingly radicalized Islamic hard-liners have been holding weekly anti-Christian demonstrations, filled with venomous slogans against the minority community....

Only two or three days before Saturday's bombing, police arrested several Salafis [a hardline Muslim sect] spreading fliers in Alexandria calling for violence against Christians, a security official said. He spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to the media.

According to authorities, the strong belief among investigators is that local extremists who knew the area and the nature of their target were behind the blast. The Egyptian weekly Al-Youm Al-Saba said police were examining photos of the Salafis' weekly protests for suspects.

In the weeks before the attack, al-Qaida militants on the Web spewing calls for "jihad," or holy war, on Egypt's Christians laid out everything anyone would need to carry out a bombing.

The new information coming to light in the aftermath of this horrific attack highlights the plight of Egypt's Christian minority. With eyewitness reports which fundamentally challenge the government's pronouncements, it seems highly unlikely that a public accounting will ever be made for all the details of this murderous deed. In fact, the government's preliminary claim that a single suicide bomber may have been behind the explosion makes it all the more likely that the matter may simply be considered "concluded"—until the next attack.

Regardless of whether or not al-Qaeda was directly responsible for this horrific crime or the terrorist organization inspired Egyptian Muslims to murder Egyptian Christians, several central facts remain unchanged: There were Muslims who were more than willing to blow up a church, and there were Muslims prepared to greet such mass murder with cries of joy.



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