

Back to previous page

document 1 of 1

Egyptian Cleric Calls for Death of Canadian Men

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Abstract (summary)

None available.

Full Text

HOST: LISA LAFLAMME

LISA LAFLAMME: No tolerance from a cleric in Egypt. He's called for the deaths for anyone associated with the video. Now two Egyptian-Canadians are afraid they're on the list. Egyptian prosecutors have charged them with involvement. The men say they had nothing to do with the film and want everyone to know it. CTV's Roger Smith has the details and some advice from the foreign affairs minister.

ROGER SMITH (Reporter): Nader Fawzy is a Coptic Christian who faces blasphemy charges and death threats over the anti-Muslim movie he insists he had nothing to do with.

NADER FAWZI (Coptic Christian Activist): There is no inclination between me and such a movie.

SMITH: Jacques Attalla is targeted too.

JACQUES ATTALLA (Coptic Christian Activist): Our life is threatened.

SMITH: The Egyptian government has accused more than a dozen Coptic Christians in North America, including the alleged filmmaker, of insulting Islam, and Muslim clerics issued a fatwa that anyone anywhere connected with the satire should be killed.

FAWZI: My life would be really in danger. My life, my kids, my family in Egypt.

SMITH: So why was he named? Fawzy heads a group to protect the Christian minority against persecution, and thinks Egypt is using the film as an excuse to threaten all its critics.

FAWZI: They think by this kind of act, they are going to shut my mouth.

SMITH: Likewise, Attalla. He's well known for his Arabic webcasts in defence of Christians.

ATTALLA: And that's why they are intimidating us. They want us to shut down and to stop talking about Islamization of Egypt.

SMITH: Despite his concern, John Baird urged the two Canadians not to fan the flames.

JOHN BAIRD (Foreign Affairs Minister): I'm not sure there's much to be served by talking about these issues publicly. We'll certainly work privately on that issue.

SMITH: Some think the threat is more to appease Muslim radicals than actually harm foreigners.

PAUL SEDRA (Political Scientist): You know they've been caught up in a bit of a political whirlwind, an effort on the part of political forces within Egypt to make a point.

SMITH: Fawzy and Attalla are still worried, yet both insist their criticism of the Egyptian government won't be silenced. Lisa.

LAFLAMME: Alright, Roger Smith in Ottawa tonight.

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