

## Australian government persecutes ASIO whistleblower Mamdouh Habib in Egypt

Whistleblower Mamdouh Habib is accusing the Australian government of obstructing and sabotaging his

ongoing court case in Egypt, in retaliation for allegations Habib levelled at ASIO over its highly unusual activities before and during the 15 December Sydney siege.

The Citizens Electoral Council reported those allegations in a 30 January media release headlined, Sydney siege inquest: What role did ASIO play?<sup>1</sup>

In February, Habib travelled to Egypt, where he is seeking redress in an Alexandria court for the torture he suffered in Egypt in 2001–02 under the discredited Mubarak regime, after having been rendered to Egypt by ASIO. He reports that although the Australian government is not a party to his case, the Australian authorities through an embassy representative have interfered twice in the court proceedings, first on 15 March and then on 28 May.

The interference Habib is alleging includes: an Australian embassy lawyer participating directly in the court hearing, even though the Australian government is not a party to the case; blocking Habib's star witness from entering the country to testify; and persuading Habib's lawyer to withdraw from the case and hand over his evidence to the opposing lawyers. These instances of recent interference follow years of Australian government obstruction of his case by, among other things, refusing to certify documents he successfully used in evidence in Australia, so he can use them now in Egypt.

Following the 15 March instance of alleged Australian government interference, Habib on 27 March wrote to Attorney-General George Brandis to accuse ASIO of responsibility for the interference. He then made the following explosive allegation about the Sydney siege:

"I further bring to your attention, that I believe ASIO's interference in my case [is linked] to what's being said [by Habib –ed.] publicly about ASIO and the 15 December 2014 Sydney siege terrorist attack. I have reported that I first met hostage-taker Man Haron Monis in 2007 when I was

1) [http://cecaust.com.au/releases/2015\\_01\\_30\\_Sydney\\_Seige\\_Inquest.html](http://cecaust.com.au/releases/2015_01_30_Sydney_Seige_Inquest.html)



running for office. Haron offered to help me in my campaign, and I knew Haron well from that time until the siege at Sydney's Martin Place 15 December 2014."

Habib continued: "On the day of the siege, I offered to negotiate with the gunman, but police refused. I contacted the Commonwealth Attorney-General office twice to negotiate with Haron. My call was transferred through to ASIO to whom I repeated my offer but was more careful, because I feared ASIO was involved. I contacted police again and explained that I knew Haron well; that Haron might be mentally disturbed but he was not violent and he wouldn't harm anyone. I confirmed to the officer, if I was given the chance to speak with Haron I could get him to surrender. My offer was rejected, and this is when I realized that the siege was being handled as a terrorist attack, I told police that ASIO was intending to kill this man, and if that happens the Government would be responsible if any lives were lost.

"That raises serious questions about the handling of the siege, as it is a common practice to use someone that the hostage-taker might respect."

Habib then revealed, "Prior to the Sydney siege, Haron informed me that ASIO wanted him to do some sort of job in order for him to be reunited with his children and leave the Country with [sic] different identity and that he needed someone else to help him. He never confirmed what the job ASIO wanted him to do was. But ASIO said to him that if Habib helps in that job they would assist in settling my case overseas. I will release the full story in relation to this matter if I receive a fair public investigation."

These revelations from Habib, and his allegation against ASIO, are so explosive that he must be called to testify before the inquest presently underway into the Sydney siege. However, when the Attorney-General's Department replied to Habib, on 1 June 2015, their letter completely ignored his allegations pertaining to ASIO and the Sydney siege. The department chose, instead, to deny any interference in his civil case in Egypt (although they did concede an Australian embassy lawyer attended the hearing, which is itself an admission, given that Australia has no involvement in the case).

## Credibility

Mamdouh Habib is a credible witness against ASIO. In December 2010, following years of denial, the Australian government suddenly reached a confidential financial settlement with Habib, to settle his claim for damages against the Commonwealth Government for his detention and torture in 2001-2002. Habib had insisted that not only had ASIO rendered him to Egypt to be brutally tortured, but that an ASIO officer had actually been present during his torture. Habib was vindicated when an Egyptian official came forward and confirmed his charge, and even named the ASIO officer.

The Australian government admitted ASIO's wrongdoing by its actions, if not its words. Aside from the financial settlement, ASIO went into full damage control, returning Habib's passport and declaring him not to be a threat to national security. In Habib's final security assessment interview with ASIO in early 2011, a senior ASIO officer said to him and his wife Maha, "You have every right to be mad and angry at this country."

Habib's present experiences raise the question: is ASIO again targeting him, because of his willingness to speak out about firsthand knowledge of ASIO's involvement with Man Haron Monis? Habib isn't just embarrassing ASIO, because the latter is both historically and presently merely a branch office of Britain's intelligence services (in particular of MI5), and these British agencies are deeply involved in running international terrorism and provocations of all sorts, as the CEC and the LaRouche organisation internationally have exposed for decades now, most recently in a featured speech at the CEC's 28-29 March international conference in Melbourne, "Who is sponsoring international terrorism?"

It is of vital importance to Australia's national security that Mamdouh Habib give his testimony to the NSW Coronial Inquest into the Sydney siege, and that the Australian government cease any actions to obstruct Habib's legal case.

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