

# THE DAILY CALLER

## String of attacks in Egypt raises specter of Islamic insurgency

By: Brendan Bordelon – October 8, 2013

After a series of deadly attacks by suspected Muslim Brotherhood supporters against Egyptian government targets, experts are concerned that an Islamist insurrection may be gaining traction.

The Washington Post reports that a car bomb ripped through a security building in the southern Sinai peninsula Monday morning, killing at least three and wounding 48. Almost simultaneously, five Egyptian soldiers were killed during an ambush near the Suez canal, and a barrage of rocket-propelled grenades destroyed a satellite transmitter at a government TV station in Cairo.

The attacks appear to be a response to Sunday's military crackdown on Brotherhood demonstrations in several cities, which killed 53 people and injured hundreds in the deadliest clashes since mid-August. Demonstrators were protesting the July ouster of former President Mohamed Morsi from power through a military coup, as well as a decision by an Egyptian court to ban the Muslim Brotherhood's political wing and seize its funds.

"The Brotherhood is an integral part of Egyptian society," said Dalibor Rohac, a foreign policy expert at the libertarian Cato Institute, in an e-mail to The Daily Caller News Foundation. "The stronger the crackdown on the Muslim Brotherhood, the more it validates the arguments of religious extremists."

"Sinai Peninsula is a case in point," he continued. "There have been ongoing efforts for quite a while to restore order through a massive military presence, yet all we've seen is a growing sprawl of jihadi groups. I think it is reasonable to expect more unrest, particularly if the economic conditions don't start improving quickly."

Violence has prevented the hordes of Western tourists that usually descend upon the pyramids from visiting Egypt, causing the nation's economy to stumble.

Former Marine Lt. Col. Bill Cowan, who spoke with coup ringleader General Abdel Sisi and other Egyptian military officials in a visit to Cairo last week, told TheDCNF that Egyptian leaders were already prepared for the security situation to deteriorate before Monday's string of attacks.

"They realized there were elements of the Muslim Brotherhood that were going to go to the dark side, and they were very concerned about it," he said, adding that the Sinai peninsula has been a problem for years.

"I think in order to ensure stability and preclude the kind of attacks we saw [on Monday], the military and police have to continue to maintain a strong posture," Cowan continued, adding that he supported the interim Egyptian government and felt both the coup and the resulting crackdown was justified.

Rohac disagreed, calling the ongoing clampdown “all part of the same story — namely a continued effort to restore and entrench Mubarak-style authoritarianism in the country.”

“Continued U.S. aid to the military makes America complicit in this process,” he added. The Obama administration threatened to pull the \$1.3 billion in yearly aid to the Egyptian military after the coup, but has so far failed to follow through.