

Ayman Nour to WSJ: Clarify misleading points from op-ed

Contributed by Egypt News
Thursday, 29 October 2009

bikyamasr.com

Dear friends: it has come to my attention that an op-ed in the Wall Street Journal dated October 26, 2009, entitled "Why Are Egypt's Liberals Anti-Semitic?" has reportedly quoted me at a conference I was invited to attend in the city of Port Said shortly after my release from prison after contesting President Hosni Mubarak in the presidential elections in 2005.

I would like to clarify a few points regarding the statements attributed to me in the article. First, neither myself nor my party, Al Ghad, were the organizers of this forum. I was invited to attend in my personal capacity, and to make a short statement. I was not responsible for any graffiti or items placed on the banners in the conference.

Furthermore, the statements attributed to me in the article referred to a specific context, namely the conduct of the state of Israel during the Gaza war, which in my opinion was highly objectionable. I was distraught over the excessive loss of civilian life in Gaza, and I regret that my comments were expressed in a way that was unclear that may have understandably offended.

Any observer examining my record can easily discern that I have always supported and upheld Egypt's peace treaty with Israel, and have strongly opposed calls of aggression against Israel. I have also consistently called for a peaceful and just resolution to the Arab Israeli conflict.

In an interview published in Commentary magazine recently I stated, "Al Ghad supports every treaty made by Egypt before and will keep it going. We want to ensure peace with every country in the world."

I would like to conclude that the "anti-Semitic" label is one that I strongly reject. My critiques pertain to the conduct of the state of Israel in certain contexts and not to the Jewish people as a whole. The history of Egypt is replete with contributions from Jewish Egyptians, and that history of pluralism that once defined Egypt is one that I recall fondly and deeply respect. Principles of religious pluralism and mutual respect and tolerance are principles that I strongly advocate not just in my position as a political activist, but as a human being.

Anti-Semitism, Ayman Nour, Egypt, Jew, Wall Street Journal

EGYPT NEWS