

**Middle East Bulletin**  
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**Turmoil**

Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Sudan, Libya, Egypt, Syria, the Palestinian territories Jordan, Yemen, Bahrain, Oman, Iraq, Kuwait, and Iran, – a near-complete list of the countries whose societies are presently in turmoil and whose governments are threatened. All but one of these (Iran) is Arab and all are Muslim.

It is not without reason that unrest has broken out in each of these countries. The cause lies in a deadly concoction of societies held back by their own worldviews, an educated minority exposed to Western freedoms, rising food prices, an oppressive Islamic culture in which the individual has little if any value, and dictatorial governments (some benign, some less so) that have created a sense of frustration which gave rise to El Qaida's appeal on the one hand and to a call for societal and political changes on the other. Since the West has, so far successfully, withstood a radical Islamist onslaught, Islamic frustration has turned inward, toward Islamic governments.

Islamic societies are massively uneducated. Familial and tribal loyalties are guiding principles while democratic processes remain as foreign as they are both appealing and incomprehensible. Allah is All-Merciful only toward his own. Those outside the circle of Islam belong to *dar el harb* (the region of the sword). They are to be suppressed, used and discarded at the will of the strong-armed (Muslim) ruler.

The overthrow of present Arab governments will not solve the problems facing their societies. At best, the people will be allowed to choose their next dictator, who will vacate his throne only upon death, or another revolution. Meanwhile, pent-up frustrations and increased disappointment will revert once again toward the West, a process that will be encouraged by oppressive governments seeking a scapegoat for their people's rage.

The issue is not one of intelligence but of thought patterns, of cultural assumptions, and of social and political philosophies. These lay behind the differences between the various kinds of democracies in the West, as they do, say, between the Western Europe democracies and Russian Putinism.

A Pew poll released on December 2, 2010 found that 85% of Muslims in Egypt welcome Islamic influence over political life. The majority of Egyptians (54%) support segregating men and women in work places and instituting amputations or whippings for stealing. Some 82% of Egyptians endorse the stoning of adulterers and a death penalty for those who forsake Islam.

The BBC described the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood as "conservative and non-violent," while President Barack Obama's Intelligence Chief, James Clapper, naively stated that the group was "largely secular...one that has eschewed violence and decried al-Qaeda." Interesting. In a sermon delivered by the Muslim Brotherhood's Supreme Guide, Mohammad Badie, in September 2010 the recently-appointed Brotherhood leader stated, "Muslims crucially need to understand that the improvement and change that the Muslim nation seeks can only be attained through jihad and sacrifice". In case his hearers would take Jihad to be a benevolent endeavor, he went on to say, "and by raising a jihadi generation that pursues death".

On the official Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood website in English and there is a panegyric commemorating one of the movement's major thinkers, Sayyid Qutb. Qutb was born and raised in Egypt. He spent time in America in the 1940s, studying educational administration at Colorado State College in Greeley and later working at Stanford University. His time in the US left him disgusted with the West. He described America as devoid of moral values, promoting the primitive and the animalistic. He insisted that anything non-Islamic was evil and corrupt, and that Sharia (Islamic law) freed both society and individuals. On the basis of the Koran he declared that all Christians are destined for hell. Qutb, who inspired al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden, continues to leave a lasting mark on Muslim Brotherhood and the Muslim world in general.

At the end of the day, the Arab Muslim countries, including Egypt, will continue to view the West largely through Qutb's eyes. The conflicting cultural mindsets are doomed to clash, no matter what attempts are made to gloss over reality with irresponsibly naïve Western verbiage.

### **The Decline of the West**

Will the West be up to the challenge?

Toynbee stated that civilizations perish at their own hands, not by murder. Rome, Byzantium, Feudal Europe and, most recently, Communism, all collapsed internally before they were overrun by the then-contemporary Vandals or the ideological vacuum that sucked away their strength. The value-system that once informed and motivated the West toward its amazing achievements is now largely eroded. Western civilization seems to have lost its drive, not only toward further achievements but even for a mere existence.

Determined, well-meaning but misguided forces continue to gnaw at the fiber of Western societies in the name of a liberalism that despots love to quote. Familial and social cohesion is increasingly diluted. Europe is losing its sense of national history, with nations fading into the Greater European Family that will soon be overrun by waves of Islamic immigrants. The USA has also largely lost its sense of moral vision.

Let's not kid ourselves. Western attitudes toward the Middle East turmoil are not the product of lofty ideals but the weak, confused response of societies torn between a sense of threat and of confused inability. Long-time allies (Egyptian Hosni Mubarak) are abandoned at the twirl of a pen. Dangerous madmen (Libyan Moamar Ghaddafi) who happen to sit on one of the world's largest oil deposits are allowed to bomb and strafe their people. Strategically powerful governments (In China and North Korea) are allowed

to suppress their people with barely a whimper from Western ideologues – more examples could be multiplied.

It took NATO a week to make the momentous decision not intervene in Libya, nine days for US the President to condemn “Colonel” Ghaddafi’s atrocities against his own people, and ten for the UN Secretary General to call for a Security Council session that mulled “far-reaching”, wholly ineffective sanctions against the Libyan regime. A wagging of the finger was all that the West, with its military might, was able to produce in the face of a nutty leader and a dissipating military that is no match for the smallest contingent of NATO forces.

A reckless civil rights discourse is no substitute for moral values. A call for international peace and universal affection is no substitute for firm action against Muslim erosion of European social and political culture. Osama Bin Laden will negotiate nothing but the West’s demise, as will Hamas Israel’s. Anything less is not the victory to which totalitarian Islamic civilization has been taught to aspire. Radically liberal NGOs in the West, supported by well-meaning but hapless individuals ready to strike out at anything, so long as they can leave their mark on the ravished world they leave behind are threatening the foundations which made the West great. Petrodollars are funding the West’s self immolation.

Until recently, Libya chaired the United Nations Humans Rights Organization. Djibouti, Mauritania, Mauritius, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, China, Kirgizstan, Russia and Cuba still make up another nine of the Organization’s 47 member-champions of human rights and liberties.

China’s tens of thousands of political prisoners, Iran’s harsh suppression of the opposition, Hamas’ strong-armed control of Gaza, Myanmar’s harsh military rule, Russia’s slash and burn tactics in Chechnya have all evoked not so much as a whisper from Western do-gooders. Israel, struggling for its physical existence (and by no means perfect) has become the butt of students in universities and the lightning rod of United Nations’ hypocritical narrative while the United Nations cowers at Hezbollah’s threats and declines to name that organization as responsible for the murder of former Lebanese president Hariri.

Rosenfeld, an Israeli reporter for Yediot Acharonot, has recently described the West as “afflicted by symptoms of Abulia (a mental disorder manifested by lack of will or initiative)”. Signs, he says, of this disconcerting illness are present when radical liberal bodies within a civilization continuously erode its stamina; when the international legal system is increasingly shaped by such bodies while curbing the ability of states to engage in an effective campaign against enemies; when the press praises vacuous notions of world peace, and public opinion becomes increasingly intolerant of the price involved in maintaining superiority, freedoms or national identity; and when leaders are afflicted by pathetic, embarrassing feebleness.

Dear reader, how fares *your* society these days?

There is solid ground for the concern attributed to historian Bernard Lewis and to former US diplomat Edward Djeredjian, that Islamist democracy would amount to “one man, one vote, one time.” Islamist parties may succeed in gaining power through the ballot

box. So did Adolf Hitler. It is unlikely that they would relinquish power at the end of their terms. Is that not what is happening in Iran? Or take, for example, Hamas in Gaza. Lagging behind the PLO in public polls, Hamas has announced its refusal to participate in the oncoming elections. Can anything else be expected in Turkey, Algiers, Tunisia, Morocco, Libya, Sudan, Egypt or any of the other Islamic countries now being rocked by outrage?

Israel is being asked – no, pressured – by Europe, Latin American and the USA to negotiate peace agreements with such volatile societies, most of which (including the Palestinians) are liable to fall into the hands of radical Islamists within the next decade or so. The only kind of peace such societies will accept is a Middle East rid of the onerous presence of “those Jews, the descendants of pigs and monkeys”.

What then?

The West will remain within the domain of *dar el harb*, an object of Islamic aspirations.

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