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The Meddle East – US Policy

Meddling

The extent to which the Obama administration has intervened in present events in the Middle East is disconcerting. The reckless naiveté which has informed and motivated such meddling is far more than merely disconcerting. The US role in promoting the massive demonstrations which took place in Egypt over the course of last week has yet to be fully revealed.

US Administration officials have spoken very publicly about the smooth transition to a new government in Egypt toward which they are working, and have taken extensive behind the scenes action to "move that process forward," as a US national security spokesman chose to put it. Top members of the Obama administration stated on Thursday their desire for the embattled Egyptian President, Hosni Mubarak, to leave office and for negotiations to begin "immediately" with his political opponents. US National Security Council spokesman, Tommy Vietor, admitted that U.S. officials have also discussed with Egyptian officials "a variety of different ways" in which that new government could take shape.

On Thursday, Vice President Joe Biden talked with recently-appointed Egyptian Vice President, Omar Suleiman and pressed him to ensure that "credible, inclusive negotiations (should) begin immediately" with opposition political groups, a statement from Biden's office said. That sentiment was reiterated by White House Press Secretary Robert Gibbs. U.S. lawmakers have also chimed in and, on Thursday night, the U.S. Senate gave unanimous approval to a resolution calling for Mubarak to "immediately begin an orderly and peaceful transition to a democratic political system, including the transfer of power to an inclusive interim caretaker government, in coordination with leaders from Egypt's opposition, civil society, and military, to enact the necessary reforms to hold free, fair, and internationally credible elections this year."

Happily, Admiral Mike Mullen, chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, has not told Egyptian military leaders to pressure Mubarak to step down, US officials insisted when speaking to CNN. "That's not his role," one official explained. Mullen is, however, trying to encourage the Egyptian military to maintain security, not move against peaceful protesters, and restrain the violence so that it does not escalate. Meanwhile, the CIA has set up its own task force to monitor

the crisis. "The Central Intelligence Agency always surges personnel and resources as needed to meet any crisis head-on. This situation is no different, and we've established a Middle East Task Force," CIA spokeswoman Jennifer Youngblood said.

According to Nicholas Burns, a former Clinton State Department official, the Obama administration is handling the Egyptian crisis relatively well. "We've got to stand up, as the president is doing, for reform and democracy," Burns told CNN. The U.S. government needs to "use our influence behind the scenes, and we've got a lot of influence there with President Mubarak to move him towards a fast transition."

Strangely, the American Left has either supported such overt meddling in the internal affairs of another country, or been completely silent on the issue. One wonders how the Left would have acted in President Bush was still in the White House.

Obama and his administration have spoke up in the name of morality and of liberal principles, calling upon besieged Egyptian President Mubarak to protect the freedom of the Egyptian people to demonstrate. They have done so only because they can smell blood – Mubarak's blood. Their lofty liberal ideals led them to say not a word about the repressive regime in Saudia, for example (of course not, Saudia has plenty of oil). Where was the morally courageous, overt American support for the protesters in Iran following the latest round of election frauds, which resulted in the re-installment of Ahmedenijad as Iranian President?

Apparently, Roosevelt was right when he admitted that a certain Latin American President was a SOB with the simple explanation that he was "*our* SOB".

Consequences

US allies in the Middle East have expressed concern regarding America's sense of loyalty. Government's have given anguished expressions of concern over the role the Obama administration has played vis a vis President Mubarak, a close American ally of three decades. American assurances seem to be written on ice: whom will American betray next?

Treaties and alliances are, ultimately, built on trust. If one or both are the parties are not expected to live up to their undertakings, relations collapse. State Department officials had admitted that various regional allies are now concerned: how quickly the might United States turn on them if protests begin in their countries, the officials said. As a result, Western influence is waning, America is viewed as an unreliable partner and threatened regimes are looking elsewhere for support. The West, with America at its lead, can no longer serve as a stabilizing force in the Middle East or elsewhere.

Only a fool would dare think that present unrest in Egypt, or elsewhere in the Middle East, will result in a stable democracy. None such exists anywhere in the Arab Muslim world. At least for a time, the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt would prefer to play a role similar to that played by the Hezbollah in Lebanon. The Lebanese Government is wholly under the control of Hezbollah, which has but a third of the Governmental portfolios. In this way, Hezbollah can hide behind the mantle of a non-radical Government, while exercising all the powers that their position accords them.

Obama and his administration speaks much of “the will of the Egyptian people”. A recent letter from Egypt has this to say:

Please don't believe what the international media is saying! There is a plot to topple the president, and Egyptians do not want that. I have been on the streets with many hundreds of thousands, probably even millions, who want stability, dialogue, and change with Mubarak until the elections in September. There are forces taking advantage of the situation and twisting facts and figures to portray to the international community a distorted image to topple the government.

The vast majority of people in the streets in peaceful demonstrations (I speak as an eyewitness because I took to the streets myself) are carrying banners saying things like:

- *yes to stability, yes to Mubarak*
- *give change a chance*
- *we are sorry Mr. president*
- *we accept dialogue, we trust you*
- *no to El-Baradei, no to the Muslim brotherhood (many like this one)*
- *we are the Egyptians, where is Al-Jazeera, let them come and see*
- *no to corruption, no to vandalism*
- *we got what we asked the president for, so why are people still in Tahrir?*

We met with people who were in the original protest in Tahrir square ... saying: “we got what we asked for, and now we accept Mubarak's changes and proposals.”

I left the street with my wife around 4:15 pm, and the numbers in the neighborhood of Mohandessin where we were gathered had swelled to easily over a million. As we drove home we saw the same slogans on banners all over the city, on cars, on walls, on shop windows. We learned that similar demonstrations are taking place ALL OVER THE COUNTRY, IN MAY DIFFERENT CITIES. THIS IS THE CRY OF THE PEOPLE OF EGYPT THAT IS BEING TOTALLY IGNORED BY THE INTERNATIONAL NEWS MEDIA.

Is this on purpose??!!! I am perplexed!!! I am wondering: How come CNN, the BBC, and others are reporting ONLY the anti-government protests as the voice of the people? This is not JUSTICE. This is not the TRUTH. ... Only a few people (hundreds?) are still there from the original protesters. They have been slowly replaced by other HIGHLY ORGANIZED GROUPS. They all have the same model of cell phones. They all have the same blankets (eye witnesses). THESE ARE NOT THE PEOPLE OF EGYPT. Some witnesses claim that they don't look Egyptians, and don't sound Egyptians (different accent, different dialect). THIS IS A BIG ORGANIZED COUP TO TRY TO CONVINCING THE WORLD THROUGH THE MEDIA THAT EGYPT WANTS MUBARAK TO GO, AND THE MEDIA IS PART OF THE DECEPTION.

... This is TYPICAL OF THE MUSLIM BROTHERS, AND EVERYBODY IN THE STREETS OF CAIRO KNOWS THIS. We heard people on the streets saying that the plot to take over the country is now clear. THE INTERNATIONAL MEDIA DON'T WANT YOU TO KNOW THIS. The escalation of violence in Tahrir square is because of this. Egyptians who love Egypt,

the millions that took to the streets yesterday, want this to end. They fully understand that president Mubarak is between a rock and a hard place, that he cannot quench the unrest in Tahrir through the army, so the people want to go to Tahrir to disperse the crowds there by themselves. ...

This is NOT what Egyptians want! I am an Egyptian. My wife and I were on the streets on Tuesday and Wednesday in support of the current regime, and we saw millions on the streets. If Egypt falls, then neighboring countries are going to fall one after the other. Please help us uncover the deception and spread the truth. Please share with everybody.

President Obama has said, "To the people of Egypt, particularly the young people of Egypt, I want to be clear: We hear your voices. I have an unyielding belief that you will determine your own destiny, and seize the promise of a better future for your children and your grandchildren." Will he hear *this* voice?

Baruch Maoz

Gedera, Israel