



## **Egypt: Freedom versus Democracy**

by

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Once again we have another opportunity to see people struggle with the classic issue. Do I want real freedom or genuine democracy?

Freedom, to me, is all about choice and the right to exercise that choice in a society that recognizes both. Democracy on the other hand, is a form of government based on the majorities collective thinking and agreement about what is best for the people, living under that form of government.

Is there a dilemma between the philosophy of democracy and the pragmatic issues of freedom in Egypt? It seems to me we have a couple of issues to look at. Was the election fair, unbiased and ultimately honest?

Where we trekked by those who ran for election? Was there some sort of hidden agenda, whereby those individuals elected to office agreed, that the moment that they got into office they would abandon the principles and stated beliefs that got them elected?

If this is the case then let's throw the "bums" out and put in our own set of "bums." After all they're not playing fair and are changing the rules to fit their own needs and expectations.

Our history in the United States does not call this a coup d'état but a revolution.

Needless to say, the last presidential election in Egypt was very close. First round election results, for the top two parties, were 24.78 to 23.66. With the second run not quite so close with 51.73 to 48.27.

Perhaps that's the answer to the problem about the unhappiness with the duly elected President of Egypt?

So here are two choices to use to rationalize the actions taken by some of the people of Egypt in these last few days.

1. They discovered the sinister plot of the Muslim Brotherhood and acted quickly to save their country.
2. The basic premises of the Muslim Brotherhood was not clearly understood, and later proved to be anti-democratic and against the new Constitution written by the people of Egypt.

This wrong was discovered over the last year of the President's governance and deemed by the people to be ultimately anti-democratic. And leading the people to do, nothing less than, demonstrate their discontent in an orderly fashion demanding the removal of the President who was clearly anti-democratic in his positions and policies. Moreover, he supported and promoted a group of people (the Muslim Brotherhood) at the exclusion of other political parties holding different positions, regarding how Egypt should be run as a country.

If we hold this perception of reality, the people reflecting their dissatisfaction with the way they are governed in relationship to their genuine desire for democratic leadership, the United States can continue sending one and a half billion dollars annually to Egypt, thereby guarantee the survival of the Egyptian military and subsequently the interim presidency of Adly Mansour. This action ultimately ensures a more stable relationships between Egypt and Israel.

If the Muslim Brotherhood were "allowed" to continue to grow, as a result of the duly elected government of Egypt, then relationships between Egypt and Israel would surely degenerate and stability in the Middle East would be in jeopardy.

So this is the dilemma faced by the Obama administration and those shaping United States foreign policy. Do we want freedom or democracy? It really boils down to the issue of maintaining stability in the Middle East, and the important role that Egypt has played over the decades from, Gamal Abdel

Nasser, Anwar Sadat, Hosni Mubarak, and Mohamed Morsi. In addition, Sufi Abu Taleb acted as President between Sadat's assassination and the election of his successor, and Adly Mansour now currently acting as President after Morsi's overthrow.

The ultimate danger that must be addressed, and hopefully it's being considered in Washington today, is the expansionistic objectives of the Muslim Brotherhood and the provocative actions taken place by the overthrow of their elected President in Egypt.

Morsi's election as President in Egypt was one further step in their legitimacy efforts and larger plan to spread their own brand of radical Islamic beliefs throughout the Middle East.

The dilemma faced by those Western governments promoting democracy in the Middle East countries is that they, in their efforts, are as out of touch with governance in that part of the world as the Muslim Brotherhood are in their efforts to impose their form of government.

So what do we want freedom or democracy? Any student of the Middle East will, more than likely, tell you that freedom in that part of the world doesn't look like democracy at all with sultans, theocracy, kings and potentates exercising authoritarian ruling over their people.

If you believe that the Muslim Brotherhood is seeking world wide influence and ultimately control based on their mandate, as seen by their unique translation of the Koran, then what will the United States do with regards to Egypt's current situation? The answer is of paramount importance!

Washington's breath is being held as it watches an interim President hopefully arrange for early, fair and unbiased elections that will de-escalate the unrest in Egypt.

I do not believe for a moment, that the Muslim Brotherhood will or would ever except a loss of power. They appear to play the "Western game of democracy" as they exercise their hidden agenda of worldwide domination.

The two-valued logic, which sees the world as right or wrong through a distorted theocratic prism, will not yield to logic or reason.

I believe we will shortly hear the Muslim Brotherhood cry for international assistance from neighboring states and loyal Muslims to heed the rallying cry of all-out jihad.

So what do we want? Freedom or democracy? In this situation it seems that what we must do is not just hold our breath but at the same time bite our tongues. Churchill said, *"We are masters of the unsaid words, but slaves of those we let slip out."* The Obama Administration would do well to heed this advice.

We must hope for good judgment, while offering a subtle quiet help from America and the West. Perhaps we can help skillfully guide Egypt away from the choking forum of "pseudo-democracy" experienced under President Morsi to a new type of freedom, loved and experienced in many Western nations.

So what must we do here in the West?

- Ultimately there is no negotiation with irrational individuals or extremist Islamic groups, who denounce the notion of freedom and democracy in the same breath as the foolishness of infidels.

- Be clear that this harkens the continuation of a long struggle before groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood are silenced. There are some who see no hope in this effort. Surly difficult and long days lay before us. But if we support the type of efforts, seen in the current struggle in Egypt, it is only a matter of time until we will be ridded of this scourge.

Winston Churchill addressed this issue when he said,

*"We (league of nations) have passed from the shadow into substance, from theory into practice, from rhetoric into reality. We see a structure always majestic, but hitherto shadowy, which is now being clothed with life and power and endower with coherent thought and concerted action. We begin to feel the beatings of a pulse, which may, we hope and we pray, some day-and the sooner for our efforts – restore a greater measure of health and strength to the*

*whole world. We can these difficulties and dangers for ourselves, but if we confront them with a steady eye. I believe the House and the country will reach the conclusion that the case for perseverance holds the field."*

Gilbert, Martin Winston Churchill: The Wilderness Years p 139-140

The Egyptian struggle is in fact, the human struggle facing all freedom loving persons. It is the fight for those cherish values that we, in the West, have tried to export, with varying degrees of success.

Those values can be summed up in two words, Freedom and Democracy.