



## LEAVE IT TO THE PEOPLE TO CREATE REAL CHANGE

By Rana Odeh

For decades, we have seen enough American and European interventions in the Middle East, and with that interference, an insurmountable amount of corruption, oppression and violence. It is time for the voice of the people in the region to be heard, and it is their right to fight for democracy, equality and freedom.

If the U.S. truly supports democracy, freedom and human rights, then it should support the current revolutions in the Middle East by not interfering with the Egyptian grassroots democratic movement, and by withdrawing its support to Mubarak. U.S. policy toward the Middle East in the past six decades has supported ruthless dictators for the sake of having strategic U.S. presence in the region to control oil resources and to protect Israeli interests.

If history is any indication, it is clear that U.S. interference in the Middle East is troublesome. The U.S. interfered and managed to replace democracy with one of the most oppressive dictators in the history of Iran. What the U.S. does not advertise is the fact that U.S. foreign policy is to blame for the return of the Shah in Iran in 1954 after a CIA sponsored coup against a democratically elected government.

The U.S., U.K. and the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (now known as British Petroleum, BP) collaborated to bring down Iran's democratic government to reinstate the Shah back into power to serve their greedy oil interests, which took away the people's voice and freedom in all aspects of life. The return of the Shah

and the confiscation of the people's rights is what eventually led to the Islamic revolution, however, the general American public does not know America's role in re-creating such an oppressive regime. Now, when Mubarak, the U.S. and Israel are attempting to frighten the people by spreading propaganda about another

Islamist movement in Egypt, what they have failed to mention is that U.S. foreign policy and intervention in democratic revolutions is what will lead to a more oppressive dictatorship, which may lead to another Islamist revolution.

Although the Muslim Brotherhood is participating in the Egyptian revolution, it is certainly not leading it. The vast majority that started the revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt are unemployed youth, exploited workers, secular groups, women's organizations and human rights groups.

Despite biased media coverage, the popular revolution is a peaceful movement amongst the Egyptian civilians. However, Egyptian leaders have hired thugs and criminals to raid the demonstrations and unleash violence through the crowds of people, to make it seem as though the revolution is a violent one, to scare people into staying at home and to not support the movement. Fewer people on the streets, would result in a weaker revolt, and would enable the police state to regain control. Fortunately, the Egyptian people know who is unleashing the

violence and are determined to sustain the protests until their demands for democracy, freedom and dignity are met.

Two weeks in, and the Egyptian people are still met with opposition, and the reason President Hosni Mubarak feels so confident is that his regime is being supported by the U.S. and Israel. If the U.S. had absolutely no interference at all in the popular revolution against Mubarak's regime, it would have collapsed long ago and he would have fled the country. If we take a look at the Tunisian revolution, which sparked the uprisings throughout the Middle East, we can see how successful it has been in removing the oppressive President Ben Ali within days of protesting, and that is because there was no outside involvement.

When Israel expressed its concern over the thought of an Israel-friendly regime being ousted, Israel's best friend, the U.S. stepped in and felt it had the right to appoint one of Mubarak's top intelligence officials, and a key partner in Israeli-Egyptian ties, as vice president in Egypt. Calling for one of the regime's most influential leaders to gain more power is not replacing the regime with democracy, if newly appointed Vice President Omar Suleiman takes over the Egyptian government, it will be the exact same regime in power, and the same miserable living conditions for the people of Egypt.

The U.S. is about to miss yet another great opportunity to restore the image of the U.S. in the Middle East and around the world, as a nation

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that truly believes in freedom and democracy. The people of the Middle East have proven that they can stand up for themselves and build a democratic society. Since the U.S. claimed it invaded Iraq to bring about democracy (as if the U.S. is that selfless to care for the rights of people, and killing thousands of civilians will bring democracy to Iraq), America should understand by now that the region does not need U.S. involvement or a \$3 trillion dollar war (Joseph Stiglitz estimates), to create democracy, or a failed version of it as we have seen in Iraq. If the U.S. wants to “help” anybody in the Middle East, it should stop interfering in the region, and let the people take action and create change for themselves.

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## AND WE WONDER WHY ARAB MUSLIMS HATE US

By Mark Luedtke



Much as the government of the Soviet Union propped up tyrannical governments in Eastern Europe for the benefit of the Soviet ruling class, the U.S. government has long propped up tyrannical governments in the Arab world for the benefit of our ruling class. These tyrants – like the Shah of Iran and Saddam Hussein – murdered, raped and pillaged their own people while the U.S. government armed them, trained their secret police and paid them blood money euphemistically called foreign aid. The predictable and predicted consequence of this is that Arab Muslims in general hate Americans. The Muslim terrorists who tar-

far better than Americans.

Understanding this, the direction the U.S. government should take is obvious: stop oppressing Arab Muslims. Stop motivating them to hate us. Let them determine their own fates. That's how we'll win the war on terror and regain respect in the world.

President Obama appeared the ultimate hypocrite in his speeches about these protests. While killing Muslims in Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan and Yemen, he called for non-violence in Egypt. He slammed Mubarak for Egypt's bad economy while the official U.S. unemployment rate is over nine percent. He praised freedom of the press while plotting to imprison Julian Assange for publishing leaked documents. He criticized Mubarak for shutting down the Internet while trying to obtain

“They hate us because of decades of U.S. government aggression in their countries.”

an Internet kill switch. He claimed government must be based on consent, not coercion, while imprisoning tax protesters and recreational drug users and molesting air travelers.

Obama again failed to empathize with the protesters. He instinctively identifies with tyrants. Instead of championing freedom, he was wishy-washy until Mubarak named his head of the secret police, another CIA asset, as VP. Only after another U.S.-backed dictator-in-waiting was in position did Obama call for Mubarak's resignation. But even though America's rulers try to retain control, they will ultimately fail. These events signal the collapse of the U.S. as a superpower.

The spark that set off these protests has been largely unreported: inflation. Ben Bernanke's destruction of the dollar has caused food commodity prices to nearly double. Poor people in developing countries can't feed themselves. Bernanke blames increased demand, but demand did not double last year. Investors are fleeing the dollar into commodities to preserve their wealth from Bernanke's counterfeiting. Price inflation is here. Rebellion will spread. Countries will abandon the dollar. Inflation will explode.

Another important lesson from the protests is the power of the Internet. Because it empowers people to instantly organize, a free Internet is the most powerful tool to overcome oppression ever invented. That's why the FCC, the FTC and Congress are seizing control of it. But we need it to remain free. As the U.S. government follows the Soviet model of plunder, oppression and collapse, we're going to need the Internet too.

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