

“Shoot Demonstrators!” Israeli Media and the Egyptian Revolution

Thursday 3 February 2011, by [WARSCHAWSKI Michael](#) (Date first published: 30 January 2011).

Fuad Ben Eliezer (Labour) does not understand what happened, and on all the radio stations he lays out his embarrassment: What happened to his friend Hosni Mubarak? Why didn't he order the military to shoot the masses and thus end the “riots”, in his words?

In light of his acquaintance/friendship with the Egyptian dictator, in recent days Ben Eliezer has become a senior analyst on Egyptian affairs, only that this time he admits, in uncharacteristic modesty, that he simply does not understand: a few hundred more dead and everything would return back to normal.

The truth is that not only Ben Eliezer didn't predict anything and understands nothing: all of the Israeli “analysts for Arab affairs” and “Middle East experts” – all of them graduates of Israel's military intelligence or the Mosad – are forced to admit their ignorance. Yet again we were surprised, just like every time we are surprised: surprised by the crossing of Suez Canal in 1973, surprised by the Palestinian-Lebanese resistance in 1982, by the steadfastness of the Hizbullah in 2006, from the Hamas victory in the Palestinian elections and so on.

In his words, Ben Eliezer reflects the Israeli media, which immediately chose a side: together with the forces of order, against the popular movement, even if, as in Tunisia, it involves the entire people. The Arab masses are always the enemy and the regimes – partners. The fact that these are authoritarian regimes, murderous and corrupted is perceived not as a downside, but as testimony to their welcome ability to control their populations. In simple words: while the Arab masses are a horde, a flock of inflamed savages, their leaders are guarantors of order, even if at times Israel is forced to go to war against them.

Another surprise, and this time for the political and intellectual elites of the entire world, and not only for Ben Eliezer and “our commentators”: popular masses, from Morocco to Iraq, from France to Bolivia, did not read Fukuyama's End of History and if they did, they refused to get off the stage of history: when they are stepped on, pushed to starvation or humiliated – sooner or later they rise up and remove the corrupt and arrogant dictators. Although it may be delayed, the revolution will eventually break out. To break out, not necessarily win, and it's not inconceivable that Mubarak will listen to the advice of the Israeli press and of General Ben Eliezer and order the military to suppress the uprising with blood.

It is already possible to guess the headline of the next stage of the press and expert commentators' propaganda campaign: Al Qaeda. The dictatorship of Ben Ali and Mubarak is justified as they stop militant Islam and behind the popular demonstrations stands no less than Bin Laden. Zvi Barel (Haaretz, 30 January) is one of the few commentators who refutes the contention concerning the centrality of the Muslim Brotherhood in the Egyptian uprising. He emphasizes that its slogan isn't Allah Akhbar but “down with the dictator, down with corruption”. Also in Tunisia the Islamic Al Nahda party didn't play a role in the uprising, if only because it has yet to recover from the cruel oppression of Ben Ali and his gangs.

Neither Al Qaeda nor the Muslim Brotherhood are behind the angry mass in Cairo, Rafah and Suez, but thirty years of authoritarian rule, oppression, poverty. As long as the Israeli commentators and politicians fail to understand this, they will continue to be surprised every time the masses (an “archaic” word long ago erased from their lexicons) take destiny in their own hands.

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P.S.

* Translated to English by the Alternative Information Center (AIC).

<http://www.alternativenews.org/english/index.php/blogs/michael-warschawski/3236-shoot-demonstrators-israeli-media-and-the-egyptian-revolution>