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The Grand Scam: Spinning Egypt's Military Coup

Exposing the Hypocrisy of ElBaradei and His Liberal Elites

by ESAM AL-AMIN

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Every *coup d'état* in history begins with a military General announcing the overthrow and arrest of the country's leader, the suspension of the constitution, and the dissolution of the legislature. If people resist, it turns bloody. Egypt is no exception.

As the dust settles and the fog over the events unfolding across Egypt dissipates, the political scene becomes much clearer. Regardless of how one dresses the situation on the ground, the political and ideological battle that has been raging for over a year between the Islamist parties and their liberal and secular counterparts was decided because of a single decisive factor: military intervention by Egypt's generals on behalf of the latter.

As I argued before in several of my articles (as have others), there is no doubt that President Mohammad Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) committed political miscalculations and made numerous mistakes, especially by ignoring the demands of many of the revolutionary youth groups and abandoning their former opposition partners. They frequently behaved in a naïve and arrogant manner. But in any civilized and democratic society, the price of incompetence or narcissism is exacted politically at the ballot box.

Elections and Obstructionism: Do Elections Matter?

To their frustration, the liberal and secular opposition failed time and again to win the trust of the people as the Egyptian electorate exercised its free will when tens of millions went to the polls six times in two years. After overthrowing the Mubarak regime a month earlier, they voted in March 2011 by seventy seven percent for a referendum, favored by the Islamists that charted the future political roadmap. Between November 2011 and January 2012, they voted for the Islamist parties with overwhelming majorities in the lower (seventy three percent) and upper (eighty percent) houses of parliament. In June 2012, they elected, albeit narrowly, for the first time in their history, the civilian Muslim Brotherhood candidate as president in a free and fair election. Finally, last December the Egyptian people ratified by a sixty four percent majority the country's new constitution. The next parliamentary elections were scheduled for this summer had not the Mubarak-appointed Supreme Constitutional Court (SCC) intervened yet again and invalidated the new election laws.

From the standpoint of the MB and its Islamist allies the SCC played an obstructionist role throughout this process. To their consternation, in June 2012 the court dissolved the lower house of parliament within four months of its election on technical grounds. It was also aiming to dissolve the upper house of parliament as well as the Constitutional Constituent Assembly (CCA) – the body charged with writing the new constitution – days before it was to finish its work. This forced Morsi to intervene and issue his ill-fated constitutional decree on November 22, 2012, in order to protect the CCA from judicial nullification. In an attempt to force its collapse, all secular members of the CCA resigned en masse even though its formation and the parameters of the process were agreed upon in advance, as evidenced by an opposition member who announced it in April 2012.

However, Morsi's declaration proved to be a watershed moment that galvanized the opposition, which predictably accused him of an authoritarian power grab. In turn, Morsi argued that his decree was necessary to build the democratic institutions of the state that were being dismantled by the SCC one by one. Under intense public pressure he backtracked and cancelled the decree within three weeks, but only after he ensured that the new constitution would be put to a referendum.

After a vigorous public campaign by the opposition to reject the constitution, it was approved by the public by almost two to one. The next constitutional step would have been parliamentary elections within sixty days. But even though the election laws were similar to the laws agreed upon by all parties in the 2012 elections, the opposition complained that the laws favored the Islamist parties and threatened to boycott the elections. Within four months, the SCC twice rejected and halted the elections on technical grounds, thus further solidifying the perception in the eyes of the Islamists that the Mubarak-appointed court continues to thwart the country's budding democratic institutions.

Strange Bedfellows: The Unholy Trinity of Gulf Sheikhdoms, the *Fulool*, and Egypt's Secular Opposition

On April 22, 2011, UAE Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Zayed brought his intelligence and security chiefs to meet with King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia and his security officials to discuss the ramifications of the Arab Spring. Bin Zayed warned that unless the GCC countries developed a proactive policy to preempt the wave of popular uprisings sweeping the Arab World at the time, none of the region's monarchs would survive. Three weeks later in an emergency summit meeting in Riyadh he delivered the same message to all the GCC heads of state. While Qatar remained indifferent to his message, the other five countries were receptive. Bin Zayed and Prince Bandar Bin Sultan, the Saudi intelligence chief, were tasked with submitting an effective plan to counter the Arab Spring phenomenon in the region. Subsequently, King Abdullah solicited and received the help of King Abdullah II of Jordan to join this effort while Qatar was excluded from all future meetings.

For decades, the UAE had been very close to Mubarak and his cronies. Billions of dollars of ill-gotten fortunes looted from the country were deposited in banks in Abu Dhabi and Dubai. After the overthrow of Mubarak, dozens of security officials and corrupt businessmen quietly left Egypt and relocated to the UAE. When Mubarak's last Prime Minister, Ahmad Shafiq lost the presidential elections to Morsi in June 2012, he also moved to the UAE. By the fall of 2012, it became evident that the UAE hosted a web of individuals who were plotting the overthrow of Morsi and the MB.

Within a few weeks of the formation of the new government, Shafiq supporter and spokesman for his political party Mohammad Abu Hamid, announced on August 21, 2012, fifteen demands culminating in the goal of toppling the "Muslim Brotherhood or *Ikhwan* Government." He warned against the "ikhwanization" of the state, i.e. the appointments of MB members in crucial state positions, and blamed them for the lack of basic services to the public. Abu Hamid also called for subsequent mass protests in Tahrir Square as he accused Morsi of power grab, dictatorship, and judicial interference, long before the president issued his hapless constitutional decree three months later. He further demanded the banning of the MB and its political affiliate, as well as the arrest of its leaders, who he accused of treason. All of his demands would subsequently become the talking points of every opposition party and anti-Morsi media outlet.

Even though Morsi took the reins of powers in the country and was able to force the retirement of the most senior army generals in early August, his authority was thin. Instead of purging the most entrenched elements of Mubarak's centers of power, namely, the army, the intelligence services, the security apparatus, and the police, he naively thought that he could appease them. He was lulled into believing that he had earned their loyalty. In fact, these agencies, along with the judiciary, the public and private secular media outlets, as well as most of the bureaucracy, represented the interests of the "deep state," a decades-old web of corruption and special interests entrenched within the state's institutions.

One way corruption proliferated during the days of Mubarak was by appeasing each critical segment in society, such as the judiciary or the police, at times through the distribution of vast parcels of land at hugely discounted prices to their constituents, who in turn sold them to the public for millions of pounds. For example, when Shafiq was in charge of the Military Pilots Association in the 1990s, he sold Mubarak's sons over 40,000 acres of prime land in the Nile Delta for a dollar per acre, while the actual value for each acre was in the tens of thousands. This

sale was subsequently called the ‘Scandal of the Lands of the Pilots’ after it was exposed last year, and where Shafiq was charged with embezzlement and public corruption in connection with the scandal. But despite the overwhelming evidence to the contrary, the corrupt judicial system earlier this year absolved Shafiq of any wrongdoing.

Slowly but surely remnants of the Mubarak regime and related corrupt businessmen, better known as the *fulool*, regrouped and coalesced around the elements of the deep state. Meanwhile, the secular opposition, which was in disarray, formed for the first time a united movement called the National Salvation Front (NSF) after Morsi issued his decree in late November. It included most of the failed presidential candidates and several dozen secular parties, which combined did not receive more than twenty five percent in the parliamentary elections. Its leaders included Amr Moussa, Hamdein Sabbahi, Elsayed AlBadawi, Mohammad Abul Ghar, and billionaire Naguib Sawiris. The NSF chose former IAEA head, Mohammed ElBaradei, to be its spokesperson.

In November 2012, Prince Bandar presented two detailed plans to the Americans through the CIA. Plan A was a quick plot to topple Morsi in early December while Plan B was a long term plan that involved two tracks. One track was a series of destabilizing protests that would culminate in Morsi’s ouster, while another track included uniting the opposition to form one coalition to defeat the MB at the polls if the first track failed. While the CIA was fully aware of the plan it neither endorsed nor objected to it because the Obama administration, playing both sides, was also pursuing dialogue with the Morsi government.

The plan to topple the MB was built around a plot to assassinate Morsi in his residence on December 5. However, it was exposed by a loyal mid-level presidential guard hours before it was to take place. With the help of the MB, Morsi was able to thwart the plot, though he declined to expose it or discuss it publicly.

In March 2013, NSF leader ElBaradei met with Shafiq and Bin Zayed in the UAE. They all agreed that the only way to dislodge Morsi and the MB from power was by undermining his rule and the stability of the country internally and convincing Western governments, particularly the U.S., the U.K., France, and Germany, to back a military takeover. According to a recent WSJ report, a series of meetings took place in the Naval Officers Club between senior military officers, fulool representatives including the attorney of billionaire and Mubarak crony, Ahmed Ezz, the architect of the 2010 fraudulent parliamentary elections, and opposition leaders including ElBaradei. According to this report, which was not refuted or denied by any side, the army generals told the opposition that they would not move to oust Morsi unless millions of people take to the streets on their side.

The Plot Thickens

While the opposition was sending mixed messages about whether or not it would participate in the upcoming parliamentary elections, the MB and its Islamist allies were preparing for the impending contests. Meanwhile, many of the youth and revolutionary groups, which spearheaded the 2011 uprising, were frustrated with the political scene: A regime that ignored their demands and an ineffective opposition bent on obstructionism. Suddenly, a new youth movement came to

the fore in late April 2013. Its previously obscure leaders called it *Tamarrud* or Rebellion. Their stated reason for launching the movement was to collect 15 million signatures from the public, a million more than Morsi received in his presidential bid, to demand early presidential elections.

Opposition groups immediately embraced *Tamarrud* and promised to help it reach its goal. Billionaire businessman and severe MB critic Sawiris claimed in early July that he gave millions of dollars worth of publicity and support to the group. Moreover, the machinery of the former National Democratic Party (NDP), Mubarak's political party, was in full force, as many of its former officials led the efforts in providing resources and collecting signatures across Egypt. Meanwhile, private media outlets started a vicious vilification campaign against Morsi and the MB. For several months, over a dozen satellite channels were devoted to the demonization of Morsi and his group. They were accused of every crime and blamed for every problem the country faced. At times even the public media, which is supposed to be neutral, joined in this campaign. In addition, the pan-Arab, Saudi-financed, and headquartered in the UAE, Al-Arabiyya satellite channel, joined the campaign in earnest by repeatedly promoting *Tamarrud* activities and featuring opposition figures. In one instance a famous host was inadvertently taped while holding a paper with the answers to his questions as he was interviewing a Tamarrud spokesman.

Strikingly, not only was the MB ill-equipped to deal with this propaganda warfare, but also to its detriment, it did not take it seriously. Even when their Islamist allies warned the MB leadership about the impending potential overthrow a week before Morsi was toppled, they dismissively answered that, "they (the opposition) had previously held twenty-five feeble demonstrations, and this one would just be their twenty-sixth."

There are two major reasons why Morsi and the MB were not worried about the impending demonstrations. First, army chief Gen. Abdel Fattah Sisi repeatedly assured Morsi that the army would not topple the government and would stay loyal to the democratic process. Even when Sisi



issued a call for compromise a week before the fateful day of June 30th, he told the president that he had nothing to worry about and that he had to issue this warning in order to mollify some of his military generals. The second reason was that Morsi and the MB were regularly assured by U.S. Ambassador Anne Patterson that the U.S. would not support any move by the military to depose a democratically elected president.

Meanwhile, ElBaradei was fully engaged in contacting world leaders to convince them that the only way out for Egypt was the dismissal and overthrow of Morsi. In early July he proudly admitted, “I spoke with both of them (Obama and Kerry) extensively and tried to convince them of the need to depose Morsi.” Furthermore, the leaders of Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Kuwait pressed the U.S. to support the impending military intervention in Egypt. Ironically, during May and June, Western leaders, including Obama and Kerry, pressured Morsi and the MB leadership to appoint ElBaradei as Prime Minister while the latter was arguing for Morsi’s overthrow.

As part of the demonization campaign to convince the West that the popularity of the MB was dwindling, the Arab American Institute (AAI) in Washington D.C. was commissioned to conduct a poll about the declining popularity of Morsi and the MB. AAI president and UAE lackey, James Zogby, called for a press conference on June 28 to announce that “Morsi heads a minority government whose public support is now limited to its own party,” and that, “Egyptians have lost confidence in President Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood’s ability to govern.” He further predicted that, “millions of Egyptians would demonstrate in the streets against Morsi and the MB government.” No one in the press conference bothered to ask who actually commissioned and paid for the survey that claimed to poll more than five thousand people across Egypt.

Unpacking the lies

All Democracies do it: America, France, Argentina, Brazil

By mid-June, the campaign was in full force. Many political science professors and public intellectuals from the opposition including Waheed Abdelmagid and Hasan Naf’ah, as well as constitutional law professors such as Noor Farahat and Husam Issa, were arguing across several television networks that the call for “early presidential elections” was not only an acceptable mechanism available in all democracies, but that it had been used many times before. As examples, they cited Nixon’s resignation in 1974, France’s Charles de Gaulle in 1969, Argentina’s Raúl Alfonsín in 1989, and Brazil’s Fernando Collor de Mello in 1992.

The intellectual dishonesty of these liberal elites is appalling, since none of the examples they cited were actual calls for “early presidential elections,” let alone the deposing of a democratically elected president by a military coup. Nixon resigned the presidency on the eve of his impeachment by Congress. Gerald Ford, his vice president was sworn in as president. No early elections. De Gaulle voluntarily resigned the presidency after more than 10 years in power after promising that he would do so if the public did not endorse his reforms of the Senate and local governments. When the public rejected his referendum, he kept his promise although he was not obligated to do so constitutionally. After six years in power, Alfonsín was not even on the ballot for the 1989 presidential elections. However, both parliamentary and presidential elections were held simultaneously in the summer of 1989. The new president was supposed to be inaugurated five months later, but when his party’s candidate was defeated by the opposition, Alfonsín stepped down early to allow the new president from the opposition to assume power. No early elections. After two years in power, De Mello was impeached by the legislature for corruption in a constitutional proceeding and resigned. The fact that no constitutional mechanism in the world allows for a removal by popular protests did not bother these liberal figures who

were intent on removing a freely elected president by the military regardless of the dangerous precedent it sets.

Noted author Alaa Al-Aswani not only cited some of the above examples as valid precedents to depose and overthrow Morsi, but he did not miss a beat or see the irony when he showered the military with accolades before ending his weekly column with his usual declaration “Democracy is the Solution.” It is a fact that some democracies have a constitutional mechanism to recall a head of state. Although there is no such mechanism for the U.S. president, many state constitutions allow the recall of their governors. In 2003, the people of California recalled Gov. Gray Davis. But that recall was not the result of street protests and the intervention of the National Guard. Rather, it was a constitutional process that involved the signing and authentication of millions of petitions by the State Supreme Court that authorized the recall process. Although the 2012 Egyptian constitution allows for the impeachment of the president by parliament, it did not allow for a recall.

Enough is Enough: End Electricity Cuts and Fuel Shortages

Throughout the month of June the media onslaught on Morsi’s government not only continued to blame it for all the ills afflicting Egyptian society, but also intensified as three particular problems were highlighted: the deterioration in security, frequent power outages that lasted hours and affected not only residential but also industrial areas, and shortages of fuel, causing hours long lines at gas stations.

Egypt has 2480 gas stations, with about 400 stations run by the government. The other two thousand stations are owned privately by business tycoons who were given these licenses during the Mubarak era because they were close to the regime and considered very loyal. Morsi’s government asserted that each station received its share and that there was no reason for the shortages. In fact, a few days before he was deposed Morsi warned gas station owners he’d revoke their licenses if they refused to provide their customers with fuel. Khalid Al-Shami, a youth activist who was with the opposition until the military coup, exposed the plot when he announced in public that the handful of owners of the privately-run gas stations conspired to create the manufactured fuel shortage crisis in order to build public discontent against Morsi. The best evidence that the problem of fuel shortage was manufactured is that it evaporated overnight. Since the moment Morsi was deposed there has been no fuel shortage.

As for the security deterioration and electricity cuts, the conspiracy was deeper. The police which refused to protect entire neighborhoods during Morsi’s rule has returned back in full force. Criminals and thugs who terrorized people in the streets are back under control by the same Mubarak-era security apparatus, except for the areas where Morsi’s supporters demonstrate. Electricity outages that lasted for hours every day in almost every neighborhood have disappeared overnight. The mystery of solving these two intractable problems were uncovered this week. Out of the thirty-five member cabinet chosen by the military, eight were retained including the Interior Minister in charge of the police and the Minister of Electricity. One would assume that the first ministers to be sacked by the post-coup government would be those whom the public complained about their incompetence. The opposition who called for dismissing these ministers were now hailing them and cheering their retention. In short, many public officials who

professed loyalty to the hapless president were actually undermining his rule all along, while the opposition accused him of packing the government with MB loyalists.

Numbers Game: If you tell a lie loud and long enough, people will eventually believe it

By the second week of June, Tamarrud announced that it had collected more than 10 million signatures within six weeks. Just ten days later, that number had risen to 22 million signatures. Shortly thereafter, Tamarrud's spokesman Mahmoud Badr announced that the goal of the June 30 demonstration had shifted. It was no longer calling for early presidential elections, but now demanded the overthrow of Morsi, replacing him with the head of the SCC, the annulment of the constitution, the banning of the MB and the arrest and trials of its leaders. For the next few days the media kept up the drumbeat until the fateful day arrived.

By June 30, every actor knew his part. By mid-afternoon Tamarrud announced that the number on the streets were over 10 million. Soon the number became 14 then 17 then 22 million. Eventually the media claimed that the June 30 demonstrations across Egypt were the biggest in the history of mankind with as many as 33 million people in the streets. Military planes flew in formations entertaining the crowds in the skies above Tahrir Square throwing Egyptian flags and bottled water, and drawing hearts as a show of love and affection to the demonstrators. The army even provided a military helicopter to Khalid Yousef, a famous movie director known for his support of the opposition and hostility to the MB. Yousef recorded the crowd and produced a film that was immediately shown not only in every anti-Morsi TV network across Egypt but also on state television. Within hours, every media outlet claimed that the numbers were in the tens of millions with people in Tahrir Square alone reaching between 5 and 8 million. On the day of the coup, fireworks, laser shows, and festivities were on full display.

As I have argued before there is no doubt that there was a huge public outcry and anger against Morsi and the MB. But were the numbers as high as claimed? In October 1995, hundreds of thousands descended on the National Mall in Washington D.C. for what was promoted as the Million Man March that filled the entire area. The organizers claimed to have reached one million while the DC Park Police estimated the crowd to be four hundred thousand. The area of the national mall is about 146 acres. Thus, there were between 2750 people (police estimate) to 6750 people per acre (organizers' estimate). In other words, there were 0.7-1.7 people per square meter.

In contrast, the area of Tahrir Square is 12.3 acres. As Amjad Almonzer, a communication engineer and a Google Earth Expert, conclusively proves: even if all side streets to Tahrir Square were included, the area would not exceed 25 acres. Even if four people were counted per square meter and dozens of surrounding buildings were removed, there would be no more than 400 thousand people on that day. If the 5-6 million number promoted by the proponents of the military coup were to be believed, it means that there were 50-60 people per square meter (5-6 per sq. ft.), clearly a physical impossibility. Even if one million were at every inch in Tahrir Square and all the surrounding streets, there would have to be 10 people per square meter, another impossibility. Even BBC eventually questioned these inflated numbers.

So at best there were less than half a million people in Tahrir Square at the peak of the demonstration and there were probably an equal number across Egypt. Therefore, the will of the Egyptian electorate was sacrificed when one or two million people protested for a day or two.

Can You Keep A Secret? The Anti-Morsi Media spells it out

Even before a single demonstrator went to Tahrir, *Okaz*, a Saudi daily newspaper preemptively published the details of the scenario that unfolded three days later when the military took over. The following day, *Al-Ahram*, an official newspaper and Egypt's largest circulated publication, had the headline "Either Resign or Be Overthrown." This report foretold in frightening details how the events would unfold, including the military ultimatum, the overthrow of Morsi, the arrest of the MB leaders, and the suspension of the constitution. By July 3 nightfall, Gen. Sisi announced the overthrow of Morsi, the suspension of the constitution, and the beginning of a political roadmap. It was exactly the same roadmap President Morsi announced earlier, and the opposition rejected. The only difference was his ouster.

The Americans Fold their Hands

Throughout the crisis, U.S. Ambassador Patterson played the role of defending the democratic process and the rule of law. When Gen. Sisi issued his ultimatum to the president on July 1, the U.S. administration showed its true colors as National Security Advisor Susan Rice told Morsi's foreign policy advisor, Essam al-Haddad, that it was over: either Morsi should resign or he would be overthrown. She advised that he should resign which Morsi summarily rejected. Once told by Rice of the impending coup Morsi videotaped a 22 minute speech on a smart phone vowing not to resign or submit to the impending coup. His aid quickly emailed the impromptu speech to his supporters. Within the hour he was taken into custody not to be seen or heard from again.

Meanwhile, Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel spoke to the coup leader Gen. Sisi at least five times during the crisis. He advised that they announce the elections would be held as soon as possible. In addition, he assured Sisi that the administration would maintain its military aid. Within days, Deputy Secretary of State William Burns went to Egypt and met with the coup leaders and their civilian enablers. While in Cairo he ignored all the facts surrounding the overthrow of an elected president. In essence, his message was to support the coup and its aftermath, as he stated, "The United States is firmly committed to helping Egypt succeed in this second chance to realize the promise of the revolution."

As far back as March 2012, Burns met with MB General Guide Mohammad Badie and his deputy Khayrat Al-Shater. He offered that if the MB maintains the peace treaty with Israel the U.S. would help secure \$20 Billion from the GCC countries to help Egypt's economy. But Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Kuwait declined to offer any real help when Morsi was in power. However, within two days of the military coup, Burns's promise was fulfilled, but to the coup leaders. The leaders of the three countries congratulated Gen. Sisi (not the puppet president installed by the military) for deposing Morsi and pledged to send a \$12 Billion aid package as a gift to help stabilize the economy.

Furthermore, Burns promised the coup leader that the US military aid will continue and that the stalled IMF loan that has been languishing for over two years would be promptly approved. In rejecting to call the overthrow of a freely elected president by the military a coup, the U.S. administration demonstrated, yet again, that lofty ideals and rhetoric are sacrificed at the alter of misplaced short term national interests.

Perhaps one measure to assess the regional ramifications of the latest events is the reaction by Israel and the Palestinians. When Mubarak was deposed on February 11, 2011, the Palestinians were jubilant and dancing in the streets, while Israel was in mourning. But when Morsi was overthrown by the military on July 3 the roles were reversed.

Remember Human Rights? Free Speech? Freedom of Assembly?

By the time the assembled speakers behind Gen. Sisi led by ElBaradei, the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, and the Coptic Pope finished their blessings of the military coup, the security forces were in full force as hundreds of MB supporters including senior leaders were rounded up on the flimsy charge of instigating violence. Their assets were frozen and their buildings seized. Morsi was detained as Mubarak-era prosecutors threatened to charge him with “escaping prison” when he was illegally arrested by Mubarak security officers on January 27, 2011 during the early days of the 2011 revolution. Astonishingly, the prosecutors also announced that they would investigate the president for “contacting and communicating with foreign elements,” such as Western leaders during his tenure. More than a dozen pro-Morsi media outlets including TV channels, websites, and newspapers were raided and closed. By July 8, the army killed over 80 pro-Morsi demonstrators and injured over 1000 when they were praying and protesting peacefully in front of the Presidential Guards Club, where Morsi is believed to be detained. So far, more than 270 people have been killed and thousands injured by the army and security forces across Egypt.

With overwhelming evidence to the contrary, the military claimed that its soldiers were attacked. Liberal elites and human rights advocates as well as the media mouthpieces echoed the military’s claims and blamed the protesters for being near a military installation. But the Presidential Guards Club is no such thing. Though owned by the Presidential Guards, it is a social and sports club, where officers and their families go for recreational purposes. Since the military coup, the Egyptian people have been subjected to a military propaganda unseen since the Nasser era. While Morsi did not shut down a single media outlet despite the demonization campaign against him, all pro-Morsi channels and websites have been shut down or severely curtailed.

Double Standards: No to Morsi’s Decree and Prosecutor. But Yes to the Military’s

The liberal opposition was outraged and went into overdrive when Morsi issued his Nov. 2012 constitutional declaration and sacked the corrupt Mubarak-appointed general prosecutor, a major demand by the revolutionary and youth groups. Despite his good intentions of accelerating the establishment of the democratic institutions that were dismantled by the SCC, Morsi was accused of authoritarianism and heavyhandedness. Yet, most liberals and secularists praised the constitutional decree of the puppet president who was installed by the military shortly after the coup. I will discuss the details of this decree in a subsequent article but suffice it to say that it

bestowed on a president chosen by the military powers that Morsi, the democratically-elected president, did not have, since much of his powers were transferred to the Prime Minister in the 2012 constitution. Moreover, the liberal opposition was in an uproar when Morsi unilaterally appointed a general prosecutor with unquestionable integrity, to the point that corrupt judges and prosecutors harassed him and surrounded his office for days demanding his resignation. Yet, when a new prosecutor was also unilaterally appointed by the new interim president, not a single judge, prosecutor, or opposition leader objected. Upon assuming office, the first order of business for this new general prosecutor was to freeze the assets of Islamist leaders and order their arrests.

If it walks like a duck, and quacks like a duck, you shouldn't call it a chicken

ElBaradei, who was elected to nothing, is now Egypt's Vice President, while Morsi, who was freely and democratically elected by the Egyptian electorate, is detained and his whereabouts are unknown. Both of these outcomes were determined by the will of military generals and cheered on by their civilian enablers. The deceit and lies demonstrated by the Egyptian liberal and secular elites are astounding. For years, they taunted the Islamists to respect democratic principles, the rule of law, and submit to the will of the people. They warned against dictatorships, military rule, or sacrificing democratic principles, human rights, personal freedoms, and minority protections. Believing in democratic principles, human rights, and the rule of law is a lifetime commitment. One cannot say, "I will only have these values on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays. But for the rest of the week, I will look the other way." That is called hypocrisy.