

The Egyptian Intifada; Mubarak's time is up

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Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

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Stocks plunged on Friday following a fifth day of protests in Cairo. Oil shot up more than \$3 per barrel as investors grew nervous about potential disruptions to supply. The Dow Jones tumbled 166 points by day's end.

The Israeli embassy has been shut down in Egypt's capital and its diplomatic staff flown to Tel Aviv (allegedly) disguised as tourists. The Star of David has been lowered and is no longer visible anywhere in Cairo.

There are reports that the United States is behind the demonstrations and is hoping to replace Hosni Mubarak with another US client. But these reports are grossly exaggerated. The protests are a homegrown reaction to high unemployment and ongoing police state repression. Photos of young dissidents gathered atop tanks and armored vehicles arm-in-arm with Egyptian regulars illustrate the tenuousness of Mubarak's position. He faces a popular uprising that is likely to continue until he is removed from office and forced to leave the country.

The US State Department has been working feverishly behind the scenes to influence the transition to another US-friendly client. Mubarak has already appointed two vice presidents who have been approved by Washington. Both have good relations with Israel.

This appeared on the Angry Arab website (although there's no way to verify the information):

"A source from within the Presidential Guard has claimed to my friends in Cairo that the army intends to end the protests on Sunday, by any means necessary even if it meant violence and bloodshed. Junta goons are causing chaos in Cairo to claim an unstable situation which will extend until Saturday. Then under the guise of bringing back order, they will "crush them with any amount of force needed!". The sources are unsure of the American role but believe the Americans will go with it."

The Netanyahu administration is clearly concerned about the deteriorating situation and has instructed government officials to avoid talking to the press. So far, there are no reports of troop movements on Israel's southern border.

The stakes could not be higher for Israel. A charismatic Egyptian leader could put an end to Camp David and demand a settlement to the Palestinian issue. The 40-year military occupation and UN Resolution 242 would again divide the two nations leaving Israel with no allies in the region except for Jordan. Israel's policy of seizing Palestinian land and abusing Palestinians would have to be reviewed and changed. Thus, the fall of Mubarak would improve the prospects for peace in the Middle East.

As the Mubarak regime becomes more wobbly, agents provocateur from the various intelligence services will carry out false flag operations designed to intimidate the public and derail the revolution. The US is determined to maintain its grip on power. But Washington does not own Egypt nor does it control events on the ground. It's powers, while impressive, are more limited than many realize. The Egyptian intifada is gaining momentum. It won't stop until Mubarak is gone. After that, no one knows what will happen.

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