

### Disinformation

Just over a year later, many are questioning how the mainstream media could have gotten it so wrong about the Arab Spring. News reports and articles on radio, TV and in newspapers and magazines worldwide trumpeted the flowering of democracy, pluralism, freedom and tolerance in the Middle East. A new era of democratic freedom was dawning!

### Stubborn Reality

Now as radical Islamicists replace previously moderate governments, the enthusiasm is waning. A seemingly never-ending stream of stubborn reality are shaking the enthusiastically proclaimed illusions. Tunisia used to be recognised as the most tolerant of all Muslim states in the Middle East. Now Egypt Today has screened graphic footage of a young convert to Christianity being beheaded, while Islamic militants recited the Quran and chanted Islamic slogans and curses in Arabic. The popular support for murdering of Arabs who convert to Christianity, bodes ill for *the Arab Spring*.

### Islamic Violence Against Christians

Car bombs, assassinations and mob attacks on Coptic churches in Egypt, murders and bombing of churches in Iraq, car bombs in Northern Nigeria attacking Sunday congregations, are stubborn facts that challenge the talking heads and editorialists who celebrated the demonstrations and uprising throughout the Middle East last year.

### Emotive Opinion Presented as News

BBC Head of News, Helen Boaden has admitted that her journalists got "*carried away*" with events and produced "*overexcited*" reports. She told the BBC Trust report, that in Libya, where her reporters were "*embedded*" with rebels, they may have failed to explore both sides of the story properly. BBC Middle East Editor, Jeremy Bowen was among those criticised in the study into coverage of the uprisings. The study found that excitement infected the reporting, which was described as too "*emotive*" and "*veering into opinion*".

## Media Manipulation

The document also raised concerns about the BBC's use of footage filmed on mobile phones and other user-generated content. It noted that the BBC failed to warn its viewers about the questionable authenticity of such footage in most of the cases. The report also warned that the BBC ignored major events in some countries, as it concentrated on selected stories.

## Overexcited and One Sided

Miss Boaden said: *"In the conflict in Egypt in the beginning... we might have sounded overexcited – you can take on the colour of who you are with. I had to say just be careful about your tone... In Libya too, where we were essentially embedded with the rebels at the start, we might have sounded overexcited - you have to be careful if you can't get to the other side of the story..."*

## Irresponsible and Unaccountable

The Daily Mail (25 June 2012) reported: *"Our coverage of the Arab Spring was overexcited admits BBC."* Fox News has commented that none of the pundits, even though they are consistently wrong, are ever held accountable for the disastrous movements that they promote.

## Warning Vindicated

On 10 February 2011, I wrote in an article for JOY! Magazine and circulated throughout the Frontline Fellowship e-mailing list, [What is Happening in the Middle East?](#) In this article we warned: *"radical groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood are tempting to exploit the instability and hijack the popular revolution to turn Tunisia from a mostly secular state to a radical Islamicist regime."*

## Egypt on the Brink

We also warned: *"An Islamicist takeover in Egypt would be a massive crisis, because the country has so much influence in the peace process with the state of Israel. Egypt is America's*

*key regional ally and was the first Arab state to make peace with Israel. The vital Suez Canal is controlled by Egypt... the popular uprising in Egypt is being described by Iranians as an Islamic Awakening, which could lead to the establishment of an Islamicist Middle East led by Iran, dedicated to the extermination of the state of Israel.*

### **Increased Persecution**

*"Along with this tidal wave of popular Islamic fanaticism on the streets of the Middle East has come a sharp increase of violent persecution of Christian communities. Many hundreds of Christians have been wounded, or killed in violent attacks on Christian churches and neighbourhoods, especially in Iraq and Egypt. Tens-of-thousands of Christians are packing up and fleeing the region.*

### **The Myth of the Moderate Muslim Majority**

*"With the crisis escalating throughout the Arab world, Western governments are facing a conundrum of their own making. For many years Western governments and media have been repeating the liberal mantra that the vast majority of Muslims are moderate and against terrorism. This is now being shown to be a self-deceiving fantasy. Surveys and opinion polls in Egypt have revealed that 59% of Egyptians back Islamicists; 50% of Egyptians support the radical Hamas terrorist group; 30% of Egyptians support the even more violent and radical Hezbollah. 20% of Egyptians express support for Al Qaeda terrorist group.*

### **The Failure of Democracy in the Middle East**

*"The proposed solution by Western liberals to virtually any problem worldwide, that of ballot box democracy, is plainly not going to work in the Middle East. After the American military succeeded in toppling Saddam Hussein's dictatorship in Iraq and making possible the first democratic elections in that country, the result was more radical Islamicists in power and far more severe persecution of Christians than had ever been experienced in Iraq before.*

### **A Radically Different Concept of Freedom**

*"The religion of Islam does seem to be diametrically opposed to the Western world's concept of freedom... The Islam concept of freedom bears no resemblance to the Western understanding of freedom. What Islam defines as freedom, most Westerners would understand as slavery. In fact that is exactly what Islamic scholars define freedom as. Ibn Arabi, a noted Islamic scholar, defined freedom as: "being perfect slavery" to Allah. The Muslim definition of freedom is submission and subjection to Sharia law."*

### **Deadly Democracy**

Our article on the Middle East in February last year also pointed out that a Pew Opinion Survey found that 84% of Egyptians favoured the death penalty for *Apostates* (those who choose to leave Islam). 74% of Egyptians favoured a strict enforcement of Sharia law. 67% of Egyptians favoured a *Caliphate* (a military dictatorship uniting all Muslims under Sharia law).

### **Freedom for Islam Alone**

Islam does not recognise any other religion as valid. What we in the West understand as freedom of religion, to Muslims is freedom for Islam alone.

### **A Clear and Present Danger**

The Muslim Brotherhood, which seems posed to hijack the popular revolution in Egypt, has been responsible for the assassination of President Anwar Sadat in 1981, the birthing of the Hamas, Hezbollah and Al Qaeda terrorist movements. For some Western leaders to claim that the Muslim Brotherhood is "*a force for moderation*" in Egypt (despite its radical statements and bloody track record) is incredible.

### **The Threat of a Caliphate**

We concluded in our article of February 2011, What is Happening in the Middle East?: "*Those who understand Islam and the Middle East are warning that democracy will bring change, but it would be in the form of the worst nightmare - An Islamicist crescent spreading from Pakistan in the East, to Morocco in the West, a pan-Arabian Caliphate, where the word Islamicist would no longer just be shorthand for terrorist, but describe official government policy, even in capitals such as Cairo.*"

***"Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter. Woe to those who are clever in their own eyes and clever in their own sight. ... but deny justice to the innocent."*** Isaiah 5:20-24

Dr. Peter Hammond

Frontline Fellowship  
P.O. Box 74 Newlands 7725  
Cape Town South Africa  
Tel: 021-689-4480  
Email: [mission@frontline.org.za](mailto:mission@frontline.org.za)  
Website: [www.frontline.org.za](http://www.frontline.org.za)

See also:

**[Pray for Christians Under Fire in Nigeria, Sudan and Tunisia](#)**  
**[Bombing of Churches in Nigeria Intensifies](#)**  
**[The Church Under Attack in Nigeria](#)**  
**[Persecution of Christians Increases](#)**  
**[What is Happening in the Middle East?](#)**