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EGYPT'S STOLEN "REVOLUTION"

Cairo's Tahrir Square is fast losing its appeal for the western media. In Pakistan, there has been little awareness of the momentous events unfolding in Egypt. The Arab world is seized by it, but mostly because of Al-Jazeera and because of the possible implications it carries for the dictators who rule it. Yet, for all practical purposes, Egypt's youth has become hostage to those who have stolen its revolution.

What started rather abruptly saw some of the best on-site reporting. The use of the internet and Facebook also took a new turn. Together, they produced stunning images and captivating narratives during the last three weeks. These can easily be called the best of what has appeared in the media in recent years. But is that all? Is this the end of this strange uprising which has been called a revolution?

To be sure, a revolution it is not. Anyone serious enough to look up the word "revolution" in a dictionary is bound to find its use problematic for what took place in Tunis and what is taking place in Egypt. To be honest, one cannot speak of the Tunisian or the Egyptian "revolutions" in the same manner in which one speaks of the French Revolution (1789-1799); the Russian Revolution (1917); and the Chinese Revolution (1927-1949). True, there is a certain amount of energy akin to a revolutionary zeal, but Cairo's Tahrir Square has nothing in common with any known revolution in history. It is a mass of oppressed people who have found a voice, but the best a mass of vocal people without a revolutionary leadership can hope to do is bring down one dictator and replace him with another face. That is exactly what happened in Tunis

and that, sadly, may be the end of this saga in Egypt. Yet, one hopes it will not end with a whimper.

Initially, there were comparisons with the fall of the Berlin Wall, but soon, those were set aside and focus shifted to violence and the death of as many as 302 people. But the blood has hardly dried and the western media has already found other topics more appealing. Or is it Mr. Obama and Ms. Clinton who have finally put a gag on the sound and the fury?

No matter how one looks at these tremendous events, there is no better proof of the west's hypocrisy, that is, if one needs one more proof. From Washington to Bonn, there has been a unanimous display of the same double standards one is loath to repeat. Ultimately, the script reads: "Democracy must remain a catchword for the Muslim world, but it must never be put in place. If one ex air-force general, Mubarak, is in danger, find another ex intelligence general, Suleiman, who can take over and safeguard our interests." No wonder, Fox News has already raised flags about the Muslim Brotherhood just about to take over America's key partner in the Middle East!

There is nothing new in these double standards. Anyone who has studied American foreign policy already knows this. But this time around, it is particularly painful because the youth in Egypt has put all it has on line for a change that they cannot seem to bring about because there is no leadership. The so-called "wise elders" they initially found turned out to be such a disappointment for them, although if one had just looked them up on the internet, one would