#### My value is Morality

#### My Value Criterion is maximizing expected wellbeing

#### Pleasure and pain are intrinsic values that we desire

#### Death is the worst pain as death results in the preclusion of future pleasure and itself is the most painful process

### advantage

#### Plan: The government of the Arab Republic of Egypt ought to recognize an unconditional right of workers to strike.

#### 1] New anti-strike laws worsen unemployment, the poverty crisis, threaten the sanctity of unions, and will collapse Egypt

Boukhari 10/11 — (Jamal Boukhari, Jamal Boukhari is an Egyptian journalist., “A dangerous new law in Egypt allows for the dismissal of any public employee who opposes the regime“, 10-11-2021, https://www.equaltimes.org/a-dangerous-new-law-in-egypt?lang=en#.YZQnPL3MJ6d, accessed 11-16-2021, HKR-AR)

On 1 August, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi approved a law, previously approved by parliament, allowing for the non-disciplinary dismissal of public employees. Referred to in the media as the ‘Law on the Dismissal of Employees Belonging to the Muslim Brotherhood’, the new legislation allows public administrations to dismiss any civil servant suspected of belonging to groups classified as ‘terrorist’ in Egypt, as well as those who ‘harm public services or the economic interests of the state’.

It began with a series of fatal railway accidents. On 26 March 2021, a train collision in the Sohag Governorate in Upper Egypt killed 20 people and injured 165. Twenty-two days later, another accident occurred in the north of the country, killing 11 and injuring 98. Faced with criticism of his management following the accidents, the minister of transport and former army general Kamel al-Wazir accused “extremist and rebel elements” allegedly belonging to terrorist groups including the Muslim Brotherhood, banned in the country since 2013, of being behind the “sabotage.”

As proof of his charges, the Minister announced that he had identified 268 Muslim Brotherhood-affiliated “elements” within the transport sector, whom he could not sack as Egyptian law did not allow the dismissal of civil servants or employees of state-owned companies except for disciplinary reasons.

On 5 May 2021, a member of parliament from the pro-regime Mostaqbal Watan party introduced the new law before parliament. While characterised in the media as primarily aimed at the dismissal of employees with ties to the Muslim Brotherhood, the law’s ambiguous and wide-ranging provisions are raising fears that any slightly critical voice within the public sector could be targeted.

“The dismissal of employees belonging to the Muslim Brotherhood is just the tip of the iceberg. This law targets any public employee who opposes the regime, regardless of their affiliation. The government is well aware that most of the Muslim Brotherhood are either in prison or in exile,” Kamal Abu Aita, the former minister of manpower, tells Equal Times. He argues that the law is being presented as anti-Muslim Brotherhood in order to gain public approval.

While the text of the law does not explicitly mention the Muslim Brotherhood, its second article authorises the dismissal of any public servant whose name appears on the terrorist list. But as Abu Aita argues, in a country where any opponent or trade unionist who is arrested can be charged without hesitation with belonging to a terrorist group or sharing the objectives of a terrorist group, “the circle of public employees targeted by the legislation exceeds those who belong to the Muslim Brotherhood.

“I know several trade unionists and liberal labour activists who appear on the list of terrorist organisations due to their political affiliation, including the architect Mamdouh Hamza who was placed on the list for criticising the regime’s policies on social networks, and Yehia Hussein Abdel Hadi, who has been detained without trial since January 2019 for participating in an event commemorating the 8th anniversary of the 25 January Revolution. They could be targeted by this law,” adds the former minister. More than 60,000 political prisoners are currently behind bars in Egypt, including 30,000 in pre-trial detention, according to NGOs.

According to Ahmed al-Naggar, former editor-in-chief of the government-owned daily Al-Ahram, the law aims to dismiss any official whom the regime finds undesirable, as it judges employees by “their political intentions and positions, not by their actions”. As al-Naggar warned in statements made to the local news website Daaarb: “The law constitutes a return of the inquisition in the public sector and will have very dangerous social consequences.”

The new law could further increase workplace monitoring of employees’ political affiliations. “The law would turn employees of public authorities and administrations into informers who help the security apparatus to hunt down any opponent, as well as any honest employee who criticises corruption in the institution where he or she works,” Ammar Ali Hassan, professor of political science at Helwan University, tells Equal Times.

After the law came into effect on 1 August, the government sent a copy to all state institutions in order to begin reviewing employee profiles, an unnamed official source told Sky News Arabia on 10 August. On 22 August, the ministry of transport announced that it had transferred 190 public servants allegedly belonging to the Muslim Brotherhood to positions unrelated to the operation of the railways, pending an investigation into their political affiliation, with a view to dismissing them.

In a statement issued the same day the law came into force, the supreme council of universities announced that it had begun to draw up a list of university professors and staff who “belong to terrorist groups and who try in various ways to prevent universities from carrying out their educational mission”.

Targeting workers who call for strikes

But according to activists and members of opposition parties, article 1 of the law presents even greater danger. It stipulates that all public employees who have “failed to meet their duties, as part of a bid to harm public services or the economic interests of the state” will be dismissed.

“This article represents a trap for employees. It paves the way for any public servant to be punished for calling for or participating in a strike or in any independent trade union activities. According to this law, they would be failing in their duties and hindering production or the functioning of state services,” warns Wael Tawfik, a member of the workers’ committee at the Socialist Popular Alliance Party (SPAP).

While the law provides the state with a means for keeping in check the highly politicised working class, which has always been a key player in and even the driving force behind most of the uprisings in modern Egypt, it will also be a significant instrument for reducing the number of employees in the public sector, which the regime and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) consider to be bloated. According to official figures, the public sector and related services employ around six million people (not including the armed forces).

“This new legislation gives the state new reasons to reduce the number of public sector employees. This is in line with the demands of the IMF, which granted Egypt a US$12 billion loan at the end of 2016,” adds Elhami al-Merghani, vice president of SPAP.

Since 2020, thousands of employees have organised sit-ins in protest of the government’s policy of closing large companies and factories that it deems to be in debt. Seven thousand workers and employees of the Egyptian Iron & Steel Co took part in the most recent sit-in in January 2021 following the government’s decision to close the company and turn its six million square metre site into a residential development. According to certain analyses, this policy is also aimed at paving the way for the economic ambitions of the army, which is increasingly expanding its presence in civilian production.

“The regime has adopted a policy that is hostile to the working class. It has closed several companies and dismissed thousands of workers in recent years on the pretext that these companies are not profitable,” says al-Merghani.

While the government may be pleased with its hostile policy towards opponents and redundant public sector employees, this policy could have disastrous long-term effects as it risks increasing unemployment and unrest in a country where a large part of the population has long depended on the public sector for its income. As al-Merghani warns: “The government can use the machinery of repressive laws to silence employees, but this oppression always leads to disaster.”

#### 2] No RTS provides the sole legal impetus for mass incarceration, intimidation lawsuits, cancelled wages, detentions, and arrests

FLD 19 — (Front Line Defenders, Front Line Defenders was founded in Dublin in 2001 with the specific aim of protecting human rights defenders at risk (HRDs), people who work, non-violently, for any or all of the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Front Line Defenders addresses the protection needs identified by HRDs themselves., 1-14-2019, Available Online at https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/sites/default/files/frontline\_defenders\_egypt\_english\_online.pdf, accessed 11-18-2021, pages 28-30, HKR-AR)

Egyptian workers who organise labour rights movements in factories, hospitals, oil companies and transportation centres have been arrested, interrogated, and often charged with criminal offences related to their peaceful labour rights activism. The most common accusations and charges include instigating a strike, halting or obstructing production, and membership in a banned group – widely understood to be the Muslim Brotherhood.

Arrests have occurred before, during, and after planned sit-ins and strikes, at which **large numbers of workers** and HRDs are often usually detained at once. In several instances, security forces have raided HRDs’ work dormitories and family homes at night. The independent Egyptian initiative DemoMeter, which tracks popular movements and mobilisations across the country, documented at least 151 workers and unionists arrested, prosecuted or referred to trial between Labour Day (1 May) 2016 and Labour Day 2017.45 While the vast majority of arrests and detentions occurred in connection to a strike or sit-in, Front Line Defenders spoke with one WHRD who was violently detained while attempting to enter a union meeting and distribute legal information packets related to labour rights.

After arrests, authorities often pressure detained HRDs and workers into resigning from their jobs in exchange for release on bail. In several cases, State Security officials and military officers have threatened detainees’ families to persuade the workers and HRDs to resign. Resignations often lead to release, but in several cases criminal charges were not dropped and HRDs remain on civilian or military trial even after leaving their jobs.

Instances of mass arrest, detention, or prosecution of workers related to their labour rights activism occurring from June 2016 to October 2018 include:

June 2016: 26 workers at Alexandria Shipyard company were prosecuted by a military court for staging peaceful protests, several were detained for up to five months, and all remain on trial as of November 2018. See section IV.

December 2016: 55 workers from two privately owned fertilizer companies in Suez were arrested in dawn raids for organizing and participating in a strike. All were released except five well-known labour rights defenders, who were remanded in custody for 15 days and investigated on accusation of instigating a strike and obstructing work. The HRDs were tried for inciting strikes and obstructing production, and acquitted by the Suez Misdemeanour Court on 25 February 2017. 46

January 2017: Authorities charged 19 workers and trade union leaders from an oil company in Suez with halting production and inciting a strike at an oil products factory, following a peaceful sit-in in December 2016. A Suez Court found them innocent, but 17 – including the president, vice president and secretary general of a local trade union – were prevented from returning to work and had “damage” deductions taken from their salaries.

February 2017: Five WHRDs and female workers were arrested at the El-Ghazl factory in Mahalla, one of the biggest textile companies in Egypt where over 20,000 workers are employed in eight factories. The labour rights defenders were arrested after approximately 3,000 workers (mostly women) were on strike for two days to demand payment of withheld benefits.47 The strike ended after the arrest of the five women and threats to others.

April 2017: Using Egypt’s anti-protest legislation, 16 workers from a telecom company in Cairo and Giza were arrested for peacefully demonstrating to demand unpaid wages and an increase in salaries. At least nine more workers in Suez Canal were arrested for protesting in front of the company’s officers in Ramses against the continued detention of their colleagues. One known HRD and strike leader was interrogated and accused of using social media to incite a strike and harm public interest, before all workers were released following solidarity protests at dozens of telecommunications hubs across the country.

June 2017: 32 workers from a cement company in were sentenced to three years in prison after being charged with obstructing justice, assaulting a police captain, and using violence to resist authorities. They were arrested after police dispersed a sit-in on 22 May demanding full-time contracts and retroactive pay for more than a decade of partially unpaid wages. The trial was delayed several times in May when police failed to transport the detained workers to court. Families, independent observers, and journalists were barred from entering the court room. Two weeks after the three year sentence was issued, and following a large national and international labour rights campaign in solidarity with the workers, a Cairo appeals court reduced the sentence to two months. The appeals court found them innocent of all charges except “resisting authorities,” ruling that they obstructed police by assisting a wanted worker to escape the premises.

July 2017: Three workers died at an Aswan cement plant when an unidentified substance spilled into a worker area and burned them to death. Workers went on strike to demand an investigation into the deaths and the plant’s safety procedures. Police raided the workers' dorms and arrested 25 people. When other workers tried to follow them to the station in solidarity and for protection, the company threatened that anyone leaving the factory campus would be fired. Authorities later released 17 detainees. Eight remained on trial for nearly one year on charges of obstructing means of production, inciting strike, using violence and threatening public employees. Charges were dropped in May 2018.

September 2017: A leading HRD and labour organiser from the Public Transportation Authority was detained and questioned along with five of his colleagues, among them strike organizers. All six were later interrogated and accused of membership of a banned group.

October 2018: Eight nurses, including WHRD and labour rights activist Sayda Fayed, were arrested at night and detained at Helwan station in Cairo without access to a lawyer or their families, who were not able to speak with them until more than two days after their arrest. Sayda was charged with membership in a banned group and distributing false information, an allegation she has faced repeatedly in the past related to her distributing articles on labour rights, trade unions and freedom of association. The nurses were released and charged dropped in November 2018.

#### 3] Strikes and the labor movement’s effectiveness have quantitatively decreased during Sisi’s attacks on strike rights – our evidence is casual

Charbel 17 — (Jano Charbel, Jano has been a journalist for the last eight years. He took to journalism his passion for labor issues, which he has studied academically, becoming an authority in the field. He is also drawn to environmental issues, which he has also covered., “State responds to recent labor protests with heightened repression and exceptional legal measures“, 1-24-2017, Available Online at https://www.madamasr.com/en/2017/01/24/feature/politics/state-responds-to-recent-labor-protests-with-heightened-repression-and-exceptional-legal-measures/, accessed 11-18-2021, HKR-AR)

Recent nationwide labor protests have found themselves confronted by extraordinary measures of repression as the country continues to weather economic struggles, austerity measures and rising inflation.

The Egyptian government has deployed security forces to quash any suggestion of labor action in the public or private sector, arresting workers and subsequently imposing exceptional legal measures to punish those detained.

Since 2016, the state has increasingly moved toward suppressing labor protests. According to an annual report published by the Egyptian Center for Economic and Social Rights (ECESR), there were 726 labor protests over workplace demands, claims of administrative mismanagement and corruption in 2016. These protests have particularly been driven by grievances over working conditions and demands for increased wages and bonuses in light of recent economic reform policies.

However, the ECESR report also noted that 2016 saw a decline in the total number of labor protests compared to 2015, in which there were 933 labor protests. In 2014, there were 1,609 labor protests, while, in 2013, there were 2,239.

The latest ECESR report states that the 726 labor protests in 2016 made up the majority of the 1,736 protests witnessed throughout the year. **This report attributes the decrease in the total number of protests to restrictive legislation regulating the right to demonstrate and security crackdowns on dissent.**

#### 4] A strong labor movement and RTS is the only preventative measure to halt large-scale authoritarianism, state collapse, and statewide social inequality that will hurl Egypt into violent conflict

Hamzawy 17 — (Amr Hamzawy, Amr Hamzawy studied political science and developmental studies in Cairo, The Hague, and Berlin. He was previously a senior associate in the Middle East program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace between 2005 and 2009. Between 2009 and 2010, he served as the research director of the Carnegie Middle East Center in Beirut, Lebanon. He has also served on the faculty at the American University in Cairo, Cairo University, and Stanford University., “Egypt’s Resilient and Evolving Social Activism“, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 4-5-2017, https://carnegieendowment.org/2017/04/05/egypt-s-resilient-and-evolving-social-activism-pub-68578, accessed 11-18-2021, HKR-AR)

Despite security surveillance, forced dismissals of labor activists, and referrals of labor activists and protesters to military trials, labor activism remains at the forefront of societal resistance to authoritarian policies and practices. Unionized workers in public and private industrial facilities, as well as civil servants in the state bureaucracy and local government, continue to demonstrate and organize strikes to articulate their economic and social demands and to defend workers’ rights to freedoms of expression and association.150 Protests by labor activists have even impacted key service sectors, such as public transportation and healthcare.

Over the last several years, labor activism has primarily focused on Egypt’s growing economic and social crises and the ongoing deterioration of living conditions for a majority of Egyptians.151 Workers and civil servants have been using different tactics to make their voices heard: formal complaints, gatherings and rallies, protest vigils, media campaigns, sit-ins, work strikes, and hunger strikes. Work strikes and protest vigils remain the most widely used tactics.152 While the total number of protests declined from 1,655 in 2014 to 933 in 2015, the frequency will likely hold steady, given that 493 were recorded between January and April 2016.153

Economic and social demands were at the center of the majority of protests in all three time periods: 49 percent in 2014, 27 percent in 2015, and 27 percent between January and April 2016. These protests called for the payment of workers in public and private facilities who have had their salaries withheld, wage increases to balance the rising inflation rate, improvements in working conditions and safety benchmarks, and safeguards for the rights of temporary workers and civil servants. Other protests called for ending punitive measures (especially dismissals and arbitrary transfers), improving transparency and accountability standards and introducing systemic anticorruption measures in the workplace, increasing efficiency and productivity standards, and recognizing the right to enjoy freedoms of expression and association without fear of intimidation or repression.154

In response, the regime has used various administrative, security, legislative, and judicial tools to reject most of the protesters’ demands and to punish protest leaders. While the Ministry of Manpower and Immigration has settled some formal complaints and requests filed by workers and civil servants, most cases have been referred to labor courts in the absence of acceptable settlements with public and private employers. In the first quarter of 2016, the ministry settled 1,392 of 5,322 individual complaints and 303 of 1,561 collective complaints, referring the rest to courts.155 This equates to low rates of settlement for individual and collective complaints: 26 percent and 19 percent, respectively. Furthermore, in line with common governmental practices in Egypt, the ministry has resorted to providing temporary financial assistance and other short-term benefits to appease some workers and civil servants during times of frequent labor protests.156

Since 2013, authorities have arrested dozens of workers and civil servants for demonstrating and have enabled the arbitrary transfers and dismissals of dozens of others involved in protests in both public and private facilities.157 The government has co-opted the General Union of Egyptian Workers, which has helped the regime attack labor activists and suppress their protests. In 2015, the security services–controlled leadership of the union asked the president to issue a **decree that criminalizes all work strikes** for a year.158 Several union leaders also announced their intent to form so-called committees of workers to resist sit-ins and strikes and to participate in counter-protest activities aimed at safeguarding the stability and security of the nation.159

No presidential decree criminalizing strikes was issued, so in 2016, the union’s leadership reinforced its anti-labor-activism position. Union leaders continued to ignore the well-founded economic and social grievances of workers and civil servants.160 Of particular note, the union backed the government’s decision and various court rulings161—and later the Labor Unions’ Act162—that banned the formation of independent labor and trade unions and ordered the dissolution of existing independent unions. All of these unions have helped organize labor activism since 2011.163

Since 2015, the new authoritarian government has been undermining labor activism, using the same legislative and judicial tools it has used against professional associations and student movements. In 2015, the government built on the legislative prerogatives of the president to pass a new Civil Service Law, which significantly changes the employment conditions of civil servants. The law, approved in 2016 by Parliament after the insertion of a few minor amendments, makes civil servants’ jobs easier to terminate and undermines their right to regular wage increases.164 It affects more than **5 million Egyptians** within the state bureaucracy and local government.

The judiciary, like Parliament, has enabled the regime to surveil, repress, and punish protesting workers and civil servants. Reportedly, criminal courts have handed down various prison sentences for labor activists, and administrative courts have issued rulings that allow workers and civil servants who participate in protests to be forcibly retired.165

The government has also used the security services to disperse vigils, demonstrations, sit-ins, and work strikes; and the security forces have occasionally resorted to excessive force, using live ammunition and rubber bullets. Instead of holding them accountable, the general prosecutor has issued arrest warrants for protesters and referred them to criminal trials with ambiguous charges that include violent bullying, blocking public roads, disrupting public and private transportation, refraining from work, demonstrating without formal authorization, preventing public and private facilities from carrying out their work, and disrupting public security.166 For example, in September 2014, a workers’ vigil that was protesting management practices in the government-owned Alexandria Spinning and Weaving Company and demanding the payment of late salaries ended in clashes with the security services. Fourteen workers were arrested, and some of them were injured due to the excessive use of force by the police.167 Similar protests have continued to happen elsewhere in government-owned companies across the country, either inspired by economic and social demands or in response to the termination of workers’ contracts and their subsequent dismissal.168

#### 5] Strikes still have revolutionary democratic potential – government suppression nulls collective organizing

Beninin 8/8 — (Joel Beinin, Joel Beinin is the Donald J. McLachlan professor of history and professor of Middle East history at Stanford University. His latest book is Workers and Thieves: Labor Movements and Popular Uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt (Stanford University Press, 2016)., 8-8-2021, Available Online at https://www.jacobinmag.com/2021/08/arab-working-class-uprisings-middle-east-2011-trade-union-federation-tunisia-egypt-joel-beinin-interview, accessed 11-18-2021, HKR-AR) //Joel Beinin is the interviewee. Daniel Finn, who is the features editor at Jacobin and the author of One Man’s Terrorist: A Political History of the IRA, is the interviewer.

All of this was nearly totally repressed in the wake of the military coup of July 3, 2013, which ultimately installed the head of the armed forces, Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, in power. He is now the president of Egypt. There was a wave of strikes in the six months after Sisi came to power. But due to censorship, there has been hardly any news of any labor activity at all in Egypt since late 2015.

Looking at all of what happened in Egypt over the last fifteen years, what we see is a very impressive social movement of workers from below, that appeared to have a lot of democratic and even revolutionary potential, that has been completely repressed. That has to do with the inability of workers — and this is not through any fault of “misleadership” or anything like that; the circumstances were very, very difficult — to coordinate beyond a single workplace.

For example, there were efforts to set up a coordinating committee for the ten textile factories in the Nile Delta, and it simply couldn’t be done. Workers had one day off a week, travel was difficult and expensive and inconvenient. People were going to be surveilled by the internal security apparatus. It was just too big a task. So that’s where we are now in Egypt.

#### Scenario 1 is Terror:

#### 1] Suppression and incarceration causes mass ISIL recruitment and ME instability

HRF 7/15 — (Human Rights First, Human Rights First is an independent advocacy and action organization that challenges America to live up to its ideals. We believe American leadership is essential in the global struggle for human rights, so we press the U.S. government and private companies to respect human rights and the rule of law. When they fail, we step in to demand reform, accountability and justice. Around the world, we work where we can best harness American influence to secure core freedoms., 7-15-21, Available Online at https://www.humanrightsfirst.org/sites/default/files/Time%20Bombs%20Egypt%20Final.pdf, accessed 11-19-2021, pages 4-6, HKR-AR)

The stakes of this decision are extraordinarily high. The testimonies from former prisoners that Human Rights First has collected are frightening evidence that ISIS benefits directly from Egypt’s policies, including the routine and horrific abuse and torture of its prisoners.

Human Rights First has for decades reported on human rights violations in Egypt, perpetrated by a succession of Egyptian governments. This report is based on interviews conducted over several months in 2021 with former prisoners. For security reasons, some names of former detainees have been changed in this report.

Egypt’s prison system has a long history of incubating extremist violence. Al Qaeda leader Ayman Al Zawahiri is believed to have been radicalized while being tortured and humiliated in Egyptian jails in the 1980s. Those interviewed for this report agreed that the Egyptian government’s policies today are strengthening ISIS, and the accounts of those who witnessed radicalization first-hand in detention demonstrate striking similarities across the period from 2015 to 2021.

All of the former prisoners interviewed by Human Rights First for this report said they had personally witnessed the successful recruitment of prisoners inside jails by ISIS. Malek said:

I have an example that I know personally. He was with me in prison – a 19-year-old young man. When he went to al-Natrun prison, he was greatly affected by the ISIS group, and when he returned, he began to say that the Muslim Brotherhood are infidels and that peaceful change is not feasible, and that change must be made by force of arms. The moderate prisoners tried to talk to him rationally and argue with him to change his thoughts, but he was very fierce and did not listen to anyone.4

Mahmoud told Human Rights First:

I saw groups of men in Al Aqrab prison join ISIS after being abused – not just one or two but several. They were just normal prisoners but then they joined ISIS. Young men who used to explain their views in a peaceful way were persuaded to find another, not peaceful, way.5

“It is a crisis,” one prisoner released in 2021 told Human Rights First. “Young, uneducated prisoners are getting an ideology presented as outwardly religious but is really about violence and hatred.”6

Another recounted:

The authorities are creating ticking time bombs by allowing this. I know of three guys who when they arrived in prison weren’t radical. They would smoke cigarettes with us, joked with us; one of them came from a wealthy background and had been mistakenly arrested when he was leaving his university campus. They joined ISIS in prison. When they were released, two went to fight for ISIS in Sinai and one was killed fighting in Syria.7

Another prisoner released in 2020 told Human Rights First:

Unfortunately, they [ISIS] convinced some men, who after some time adopted their ways of violent thinking, and began to prefer a violent way of thinking. I had a friend in prison who they convinced. I found out that he joined ISIS and he was not even greeting people who did not agree with his newfound ideology.8

Those interviewed identified the **main motivations for joining ISIS as revenge against the authorities and the protection and better treatment that come with belonging to ISIS in the penal system.** Former prisoner Mahmoud emphasized the abusive conditions.

Prisoners face many kinds of violence - physical and psychological. There are electrocutions, or you can be hanged from the ceiling by your arms or legs for days. Sometimes they bring members of your family to where you are interrogated, a prisoner’s sister or mother or daughter and threaten them and make the prisoner confess to things he hasn’t done. I know where wives were brought to the investigation offices and the prisoner was told that the officers would ‘do things’ to their wives if they didn’t confess.9

Another former prisoner described the arc of abuse and recruitment as he witnessed it:

When I was first arrested, I was tortured for 60 days by state security. I was beaten, kept naked, and electrocuted, including on my genitals. I needed surgery afterwards. After that I was transferred to the prison and put in a cell for new arrivals. Prisoners are usually kept there for between 11 and 30 days, depending on when the officer in charge moves them to a more permanent cell. During that time in the new arrivals cell a prisoner from the Muslim Brotherhood encouraged me to put my faith in God and trust his ways, telling me that ‘I should pray, and God will give me my rights on Judgement Day.’ But an ISIS prisoner offered me a different proposition. He said ‘We will help you get justice now. We will fight against the forces that did this to you and make them pay.’ After 60 days of torture in which they break your mind, body, and soul – What side would someone choose?10

The interviewed former prisoners emphasized that ISIS prisoners often enjoy ready access to other prisoners. “What is a catastrophe is that authorities have not separated the prisoners connected to real cases of terrorism from those who simply oppose the regime on political grounds. So, ordinary political prisoners, especially the younger ones who are unjustly detained become prey to the terrorists inside the jails,” said Youssef, who was released from jail earlier this year. “I have never seen the prison authorities interfere to prevent this from happening.”11 Another former prisoner, Amr, said “The ISIS leaders in prison can get easy access to other prisoners. Even guys arrested for petty crimes, guys selling hashish, are exposed to the ISIS recruiting in prisons.”12

Others gave similar accounts of how ISIS approaches and grooms younger prisoners. Nino told Human Rights First he was released in October 2020 after spending four years in various prisons:

I was in Wadi Natron and Ataqa prisons. I saw ISIS inside prison in 2020. They were still trying to recruit other prisoners. It starts with a cup of tea or coffee for hospitality, and they sit to talk with the person…. At first the authorities segregated people who had these ideologies into separate cells, but by the end of 2017, they began to mix those with extremist ideologies with the rest of us. The government is the reason that these ideologies have spread within the prisons to ruin the minds of younger political prisoners.13

Malek told Human Rights First he was released from Wadi Natron prison in April 2019, and that he, too, saw ISIS there. “It is a huge prison with thousands of prisoners. Extremist groups would search for men who are younger, in their twenties. The ISIS prisoners had some special privileges that made other prisoners wish to stay in the same cells as them.”14

Other testimonies speak to how ISIS factions in prison enjoy better treatment and privileges than those afforded to other prisoners. “ISIS prisoners got four hours of recreation a day compared to two hours for the rest of the prisoners,” said Amr. His testimony continued:

ISIS prisoners were allowed mobile phones, and medical care, and their family visits would last 90 minutes. Other prisoners weren’t allowed mobile phones, didn't get proper medical care and had visits of 20 minutes. It’s attractive to prisoners to want to join them. ISIS prisoners could access any books that they wanted - even those promoting extremist ideology - whilst university students could not even get their textbooks. Some prison officers are just scared of ISIS and give them privileges. One officer in Istaqbil Tora prison was too scared to go into their cell.

#### 2] Egypt is key – Sinai Peninsula is a terrorist hotspot that risks global escalation and war with Israel

Kane and Braniff 15 — (Sheehan Kane and William Braniff, Sheehan Kane is a faculty research assistant for the Global Terrorism Database (GTD) at START. She holds an M.A. in Middle East Studies from the American University in Cairo and a B.A. in Political Science and International Studies from Elon University. William Braniff is the executive director of START. Braniff is a graduate of the United States Military Academy where he received his bachelor’s degree. Following his Company Command as an Armor Officer in the U.S. Army, Braniff attended the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) where he received a master’s degree in international relations., “Taking the Sinai Province of the Islamic State seriously without helping it destabilize Egypt“, No Publication, 11-10-2014, Available Online at https://www.start.umd.edu/news/taking-sinai-province-islamic-state-seriously-without-helping-it-destabilize-egypt, accessed 11-19-2021, HKR-AR)

On November 10, 2014, Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis[1] pledged allegiance to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), subsequently changing the group’s name to the Sinai Province of the Islamic State. Following this affiliation, ISIL began marketing the Sinai Peninsula as an ideal location for jihadist activity.[2] In an article entitled, “Come to the Sinai to Elevate the Foundations of Your State,”[3] an ISIL member, Abu Musab al Gharib, stressed that the establishment of a state in the Sinai Peninsula would not only unify jihadists in “Libya, Egypt, and the Levant,” but would also be a stepping stone toward activity in Jerusalem.[4] It is not uncommon for jihadist groups to organize within Egypt or for a jihadist group to invoke the specter of attacks in Jerusalem, but to do both while waging an accelerating campaign of violence warrants more attention than the Sinai Province of the Islamic State is currently receiving.

According to the Global Terrorism Database (GTD),[5] there were 346 incidents of terrorism in Egypt in 2014, 52 of which were either claimed by or attributed to Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis and 17 of which were either claimed by or attributed to the Sinai Province of the Islamic State.[6] According to preliminary GTD data, there have already been 248 incidents of terrorism in Egypt from January - March 2015, 27 of which were either claimed by or attributed to the Sinai Province of the Islamic State; 52% of these Sinai Province affiliated attacks targeted either the Egyptian military or police. Clearly there has been a significant increase in not only attacks carried out in Egypt, but also incidents affiliated with the Sinai Province of the Islamic State.

Since the Sinai Province of the Islamic State’s allegiance to ISIL, the group has attempted to gain popularity by distributing funds and food supplies to those affected by fighting in the area.[7] For example, on January 7, 2015 the group provided financial resources to those affected by military operations carried out in an effort to construct a “buffer zone” with the Gaza border.[8] The Sinai Province of the Islamic State stands to benefit from a large pool of disenfranchised and disillusioned Islamists at the national level following the ouster of the Muslim Brotherhood led government, and from a local population in the northern Sinai that does not favor the government.

The group is attacking Egyptian military and police presence in the Sinai Peninsula and appealing to local constituencies to carve out an operational safe-haven, but for what purpose? Beyond serving as a recruitment outpost for ISIL in Iraq and Syria and evidencing ISIL’s propaganda that the Caliphate is “remaining and expanding,”[9] there are two potential goals which the Sinai Province of the Islamic State may be trying to pursue:

The Sinai Province of the Islamic State is attempting to destabilize Egypt.

The Sinai Province of the Islamic State is attempting to carry out a cross-border campaign against the state of Israel.

Both of these scenarios carry severe consequences for Egypt and the region as a whole, and either would constitute a success for ISIL and its associated movement that al-Qa’ida and its associated movement have thus far failed to achieve.

Following the toppling of the Mubarak and Morsi regimes, the Sinai Province of the Islamic State may smell blood and replicate the destabilization strategy played out in Iraq and Syria over the last decade. While it is easy to assume that Egypt’s long history of suppressing Islamist violence would triumph in this instance as well, popular discontent and recent demonstrations of the government’s vulnerability challenge that assumption. If the Sinai Province of the Islamic State can withstand a heavy-handed response from the Sisi government and continue to attack both government and civilian targets, it could undermine the Sisi government’s security-centric rationale for its repressive tactics, helping the Sinai Province propagandize and recruit.[10] Without Egypt playing its traditional regional role as a “stabilizing force,” the nation-state system in the modern Middle East could be threatened as well.[11] If a direct assault against the Egyptian government proves too daunting, it is possible that the Sinai Province may seek an indirect approach to destabilizing Egypt.

The Sinai Province of the Islamic State’s potential to carry out a cross-border campaign in Israel also holds severe implications for the region, as inciting a cross-border response from Israel would jeopardize a long-standing peace between the two neighboring nations and serve as a rallying cry for Egyptian Islamists to line up with the ISIL affiliate. On July 3, 2015 the Sinai Province of the Islamic State claimed to have launched rockets into southern Israel and stated that the attack was carried out in revenge for Israel’s support of the Egyptian military.[12] Prior to this attack, ISIL had indicated the group’s desire to establish a “fiefdom” in the Gaza Strip with the intention of eradicating Israel.[13] According to preliminary GTD data, there have been 10 attacks affiliated with the Sinai Province of the Islamic State on civilians from January - March 2015, some of which have been motivated by the belief that the targeted civilians were working with the Israeli military. Therefore, it appears that the Sinai Province of the Islamic State may be attempting to draw Israel into the Sinai Peninsula.

Drawing Israel into a battle with ISIL plays into the group’s fascination with internecine conflict and al-Malehem, the **final apocalyptical battle** between the Muslim and non-Muslim worlds. Jean-Pierre Filiu, a scholar of Middle East Studies, describes this fascination as a means to “foster recruitment and propaganda.”[14] By establishing a province on the border of Israel, ISIL creates the potential to declare offensive jihad against the Jewish state, outpacing al-Qa’ida’s defensive narrative and outbidding the “resistance” orientation of Hezbollah and Hamas while baiting an invasion of Egyptian sovereignty.

#### 3] That causes nuclear war with Israel that goes global

Beres 15 — (Louis René Beres, Louis René Beres was educated at Princeton (Ph.D., 1971), and is the author of many major books and articles dealing with Israeli nuclear strategy. For over forty years, he has lectured on this topic at senior Israeli and United States military institutions, and at leading Israeli centers for strategic studies. In 2003, he served as Chair of Project Daniel (Israel)., “Israeli deterrence in the eye of the hurricane“, The Jerusalem Post | JPost, 7-12-2015, Available Online at https://www.jpost.com/opinion/israeli-deterrence-in-the-eye-of-the-hurricane-408747, accessed 11-19-2021, HKR-AR)

Left to themselves, especially as more “normal” hostilities dissolve into a full-blown regional chaos, Israel’s adversaries could drive the Jewish state toward an unconventional war. This fateful endangerment could be produced singly or collaboratively, by deliberate enemy intent or by the “collateral damage” of sectarian strife. Militarily, these Islamic adversaries of Israel, both Sunni and Shi’ite, could be either non-nuclear, or, in the future, nuclear.

They might also include certain wellarmed sub-state or terrorist forces. Already, Iranian-backed Hezbollah may have more usable missiles than all NATO countries combined.

To most effectively deal with such interpenetrating threats – including reasonably expected “synergies” and “force multipliers” – Israel’s leaders will first need to consider some largely-opaque factors. These include: 1) probable effects of regional chaos upon enemy rationality; 2) disruptive implications of impending Palestinian statehood; and 3) re-emergence of a corrosively Cold War-style polarity between Russia and the United States. Apropos of a “Cold War II,” there is already evidence of growing contact between Russia and Saudi Arabia, the world’s two largest oil producers.

In essence, Jerusalem must take all necessary steps to successfully manage an expectedly unprecedented level of adversarial complexity and weaponization. Israel’s leaders, in this connection, must take proper measures to ensure that any conceivable failures of its national deterrent would not spark biological or nuclear forms of regional conflict. To accomplish this indispensable goal, the IDF, inter alia, must continue to plan carefully around the core understanding that nuclear deterrence and conventional deterrence are inherently interrelated and meaningfully “seamless.”

Sometimes, in strategic matters, seeing requires distance. A nuclear war in the Middle East is not beyond possibility. This is a sensible assessment even if Israel were to remain the only nuclear weapons state in the region.

How is this possible? A bellum atomicum could come to Israel not only as a “bolt from the blue” enemy nuclear attack (either by a state or by a terrorist group), but also as the result, intended or otherwise, of certain uncontrolled military escalations.

Needed prudence in such narratives calls for additional specificity and precision. If particular Arab/Islamic enemy states were to launch conventional attacks upon Israel, Jerusalem could then respond, sooner or later, with calculated and more-or-less calibrated nuclear reprisals. Alternatively, if some of these enemy states were to launch large-scale conventional attacks, Jerusalem’s own still-conventional reprisals could then be met, perhaps even in the not-too-distant future, with enemy nuclear counterstrikes.

How should Israel prepare for such perilous contingencies? More than likely, Israel has already rejected any doctrinal plans for fielding a tactical/theater nuclear force, and for assuming any corollary nuclear war fighting postures. It would follow further from any such well-reasoned rejection that Israel should do whatever is needed to maintain a credible conventional deterrent.

By definition, such a measured threat option could then function reliably across the entire foreseeable spectrum of non-nuclear threats.

Still, any such strategy would need to include an appropriately complementary nuclear deterrent, a distinctly “last resort” option that could display a “counter-value” (counter-city) mission function. Si vis pacem, para bellum atomicum: “If you want peace, prepare for atomic war.”

A persuasive Israeli conventional deterrent, at least to the extent that it might prevent a wide range of enemy conventional attacks in the first place, could reduce Israel’s growing risk of escalatory exposure to nuclear war. In the always arcane lexicon of nuclear strategy, a complex language that more-or-less intentionally mirrors the tangled coordinates of atomic war, Israel will need to maintain firm control of “escalation dominance.” Otherwise, the Jewish state could find itself engaged in an elaborate but ultimately lethal pantomime of international bluster and bravado.

The reason for Israel’s obligation to control escalatory processes is conspicuous and unassailable. It is that Jerusalem’s main enemies possess something that Israel can plainly never have: Mass.

At some point, as nineteenth century Prussian military thinker Carl von Clausewitz asserts in On War: “Mass counts.”

Today, this is true even though Israel’s many enemies are in chaotic disarray. Now, amid what Clausewitz had famously called “friction” and the “fog of war,” it could become harder for Israel to determine real and pertinent differences between its allies, and its adversaries.

As an example, Jordan could soon become vulnerable to advancing IS forces.

Acknowledging this new vulnerability, an ironic question will come immediately to mind: Should Israel support the Jordanian monarchy in such a fight? And if so, in what specific and safe operational forms? Similarly ironic questions may need to be raised about Egypt, where the return to military dictatorship in the midst of surrounding Islamist chaos could eventually prove both fragile and transient.

Should President Abdel Fattah Sisi fail to hold things together, the ultimate victors could be not only the country’s own Muslim Brotherhood, but also, in nearby Gaza, Palestinian Hamas. Seemingly, however, Hamas is already being targeted by Islamic State, a potentially remorseless opposition suggesting, inter alia, that the principal impediment to Palestinian statehood is not really Israel, but another Sunni Arab terrorist organization. Of course, it is not entirely out of the question that IS’s Egyptian offshoot, the so-called “Sinai Province of Islamic State,” could sometime decide to cooperate with Hamas – the Islamic Resistance Movement – rather than plan to it.

To further underscore the area’s multiple and cross-cutting axes of conflict, it is now altogether possible that if an IS conquest of Sinai should spread to Gaza, President Sisi might then “invite” the IDF to strike on Egypt’s behalf. Among other concerns, Egypt plainly fears that any prolonged inter-terrorist campaign inside Gaza could lead to a literal breaking down of border fences, and an uncontrolled mass flight of Palestinians into neighboring Sinai.

#### 4] Sinai escalates global security crises – nuclear war

Clingan 18 [(Bruce Clingan is former Commander of U.S. Naval Forces Europe and U.S. Naval Forces Africa) "Commentary: The U.S. is right to restore aid to Egypt," U.S., 7-31-2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-clingan-egypt-commentary/commentary-the-u-s-is-right-to-restore-aid-to-egypt-idUSKBN1KK1YE>, accessed 11-18-21]

Egypt’s internal security is threatened by a relentless IS-affiliated insurgency in Sinai. In November the group attacked a [Sinai mosque](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-egypt-security/gunmen-in-egypt-mosque-attack-carried-islamic-state-flag-prosecutor-says-idUSKBN1DO1AN), killing more than 300 people. Egypt also faces the ever-present challenge of preventing the conflict in Libya from spilling over its western border. (While Cairo and Washington both want a stable Libya, the Sisi government is [backing](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-security/east-libya-commander-haftar-returning-after-treatment-in-paris-idUSKBN1HW2EN) Gen. [Khalifa Haftar](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-egypt-security-analysis/is-egypt-bombing-the-right-militants-in-libya-idUSKBN18R2GE), a military strongman who was once a [CIA asset](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/a-former-cia-asset-has-become-a-us-headache-in-libya/2016/08/17/a766e392-54c6-11e6-bbf5-957ad17b4385_story.html?utm_term=.398f156c6caf); the United States is supporting his rival and UN-backed [Libyan government](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-libya-security-usa/u-s-envoy-endorses-libyas-u-n-backed-government-in-whirlwind-visit-to-tripoli-idUSKBN18J2HR).)

Further instability in Egypt would be disastrous for its nearly 100 million citizens, the region and the United States. Regardless of which might come first – the collapse of Egypt’s economy or the spread of Islamist insurgency – the other would surely follow.

The result would be new extremist [Safe Haven](https://store.tcgplayer.com/magic/product/show?ProductName=Safe%20Haven&partner=AUTOANY&affiliate_id=autocard&utm_campaign=affiliate&utm_source=autocard&utm_medium=card)s, millions of desperate Egyptians seeking to flee to Europe, an existential threat to Israel, the disruption of the Suez Canal upon which global economic stability depends and the potential for the United States to get involved in yet another Middle East quagmire.

#### 5] Nuke war causes extinction – won’t stay limited

Edwards 17 [Paul N. Edwards, CISAC’s William J. Perry Fellow in International Security at Stanford’s Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies. Being interviewed by EarthSky. How nuclear war would affect Earth’s climate. September 8, 2017. earthsky.org/human-world/how-nuclear-war-would-affect-earths-climate, accessed 10-15-17] **Note, we are only reading parts of the interview that are directly from Paul Edwards -- MMG**

In the nuclear conversation, what are we not talking about that we should be?

We are not talking enough about the climatic effects of nuclear war. The “nuclear winter” theory of the mid-1980s played a significant role in the arms reductions of that period. But with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the reduction of U.S. and Russian nuclear arsenals, this aspect of nuclear war has faded from view. That’s not good. In the mid-2000s, climate scientists such as Alan Robock (Rutgers) took another look at nuclear winter theory. This time around, they used much-improved and much more detailed climate models than those available 20 years earlier. They also tested the potential effects of smaller nuclear exchanges. The result: an exchange involving just 50 nuclear weapons — the kind of thing we might see in an India-Pakistan war, for example — could loft 5 billion kilograms of smoke, soot and dust high into the stratosphere. That’s enough to cool the entire planet by about 2 degrees Fahrenheit (1.25 degrees Celsius) — about where we were during the Little Ice Age of the 17th century. Growing seasons could be shortened enough to create really significant food shortages. So the climatic effects of even a relatively small nuclear war would be planet-wide. What about a larger-scale conflict? A U.S.-Russia war currently seems unlikely, but if it were to occur, hundreds or even thousands of nuclear weapons might be launched. The climatic consequences would be catastrophic: global average temperatures would drop as much as 12 degrees Fahrenheit (7 degrees Celsius) for up to several years — temperatures last seen during the great ice ages. Meanwhile, smoke and dust circulating in the stratosphere would darken the atmosphere enough to inhibit photosynthesis, causing disastrous crop failures, widespread famine and massive ecological disruption. The effect would be similar to that of the giant meteor believed to be responsible for the extinction of the dinosaurs. This time, we would be the dinosaurs. Many people are concerned about North Korea’s advancing missile capabilities. Is nuclear war likely in your opinion? At this writing, I think we are closer to a nuclear war than we have been since the early 1960s. In the North Korea case, both Kim Jong-un and President Trump are bullies inclined to escalate confrontations. President Trump lacks impulse control, and there are precious few checks on his ability to initiate a nuclear strike. We have to hope that our generals, both inside and outside the White House, can rein him in. North Korea would most certainly “lose” a nuclear war with the United States. But many millions would die, including hundreds of thousands of Americans currently living in South Korea and Japan (probable North Korean targets). Such vast damage would be wrought in Korea, Japan and Pacific island territories (such as Guam) that any “victory” wouldn’t deserve the name. Not only would that region be left with horrible suffering amongst the survivors; it would also immediately face famine and rampant disease. Radioactive fallout from such a war would spread around the world, including to the U.S. It has been more than 70 years since the last time a nuclear bomb was used in warfare. What would be the effects on the environment and on human health today? To my knowledge, most of the changes in nuclear weapons technology since the 1950s have focused on making them smaller and lighter, and making delivery systems more accurate, rather than on changing their effects on the environment or on human health. So-called “battlefield” weapons with lower explosive yields are part of some arsenals now — but it’s quite unlikely that any exchange between two nuclear powers would stay limited to these smaller, less destructive bombs.

#### Scenario 2 is Autocracy:

#### 1] Egyptian autocracy locks-in instability and accelerates regional security concerns

Tamara Cofman Wittes, PhD, 14 [PhD Government Georgetown, Director, Center for Middle East Policy @ Brookings], "Why Democracy in Egypt Still Matters," Brookings, 3-18-2014, <https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/why-democracy-in-egypt-still-matters/> accessed 11-19-21 C.VC

Three years after the hopeful scenes of the Arab Spring, the situation in places like Syria and Libya looks more like a tragic mess. The most dramatic reversal of fortune, perhaps, is in Egypt, whose Tahrir (Freedom) Square came to symbolize the hopes of 2011. Egypt under longtime ruler Hosni Mubarak was an anchor of stability in the region, in large part because of its close ties to Washington and its historic peace treaty with Israel. But Egypt today is in turmoil: Its third post-revolutionary government, installed by the military, is cracking down on basic rights while facing an upsurge in violence from Islamist militants, an economic crisis and vicious anti-Americanism stoked by the media. The decimated Muslim Brotherhood rejects any hint of compromise and talks to its followers of martyrdom. Many outside analysts worry that the zero-sum confrontation now underway in Egypt is dragging the country over a cliff into further violence.

In the face of these troubling developments, some are ready to conclude that Egypt “isn’t ready” for democracy, or that the Arab Spring was just an opening for extremists to pursue an “Islamist winter.” It’s understandable why American Jews in particular wonder if Egypt’s tumultuous politics spell trouble for Israel, and ask whether the old Egyptian regime wasn’t better for stability. But the days of one-man rule in Egypt are gone forever. The future of the Middle East is now up for grabs—a future that matters deeply to both Israel and the United States—and real stability will come only from resisting the urge to clamp down.

For a half-century, the United States worked with a set of regional powers—mainly Israel, Saudi Arabia and Egypt—to protect a stable regional order. But since Mubarak’s fall, Washington policy has been on a roller coaster of its own. The one consistent element of Washington’s approach has been to stay engaged with Egypt and work with whoever is in power. There’s a simple reason for that: The United States has strong interests in Egypt, no matter who is in charge of the country. Even if the United States didn’t import Arab oil anymore, Egypt’s Suez Canal would still be a vital lifeline. The U.S.-Egypt security partnership is valuable for targeting violent extremists and containing Iran. U.S.-Egyptian-Israeli cooperation is crucial to combating terrorists along the Sinai border and from the Gaza Strip. And Egypt’s peace with Israel is a cornerstone of regional—not to mention Israeli—security.

But the old prescriptions for regional stability are not going to work with a new generation. The Egyptian revolution, like the other Arab uprisings, was sparked by a rising young population, empowered by education and technology but constrained by corruption, inequality and leaders who didn’t listen. Nearly two-thirds of Egyptians are now under 30. They learned in school that their nation was a post-colonial leader alongside Indonesia and India, but then they saw how young Indonesians and Indians were thriving in a world of open markets and open societies, while Egypt was left behind. In 2011, they rose up to try and join that world, which my colleague Robert Kagan calls “The World America Made.”

Since then, Egyptians have overthrown three successive leaderships in attempts to bring the change they seek. Each had tried to impose on Egypt a political system that would privilege his allies and contain or exclude his enemies. None has succeeded. Thirty-year dictator Mubarak resigned when his army refused to put down mass protests with brute force. His successor, Field Marshal Mohamad Hussein Tantawi, was forced by public pressure to respect the outcome of free presidential balloting that elected the military’s worst nightmare—a leader from the long-banned Muslim Brotherhood. That Muslim Brotherhood leader, Mohamed Morsi, declared his actions above judicial review and pushed through a constitution written almost exclusively by Islamists. He faced angry mass demonstrations last summer and was ousted by a military coup on July 3.

The crackdown since then has been brutal. With more than 2,000 dead and 20,000 in jail, Field Marshal Abdel-Fattah El Sisi now presides over an Egypt more repressive than that of Mubarak. And yet many Egyptians who supported the revolution in 2011 now support El Sisi for president, hoping he can bring security and stability after three years of chaos.

The United States wants Egyptian stability too—the question is how to get there. El Sisi and his allies see themselves locked in an existential battle with the Muslim Brotherhood for control of the country; they seek U.S. support for a crackdown that includes a draconian anti-protest law and arrests of journalists and peaceful political dissenters. The Egyptian government deserves support in combating terrorist violence, but it must also learn from the failures of Mubarak, Tantawi and Morsi that Egyptians will no longer submit to being ruled through repression by a single man or movement.

Many Israeli analysts I talk to argue that El Sisi can get Egypt under control if given a chance—but then, they said the same about Mubarak. To marginalize the extremists and stabilize the country, Egypt’s current leaders must allow greater freedom and find a way to bring more of Egypt’s diverse population—Islamists, secularists and Christians; young activists and entrepreneurs; textile workers and farmers—into new governing institutions.

The Obama Administration’s emphasis on stability is understandable, and so is Israel’s; both need a government of Egypt that can be an effective partner in regional security. But only an open, pluralist system will bring Egyptians together to make the big decisions the country needs and to reform its politics and economics. Egypt’s youth may not love the United States or Israel, but they want their nation to be part of the globalized world these two countries exemplify. Washington’s task is to stay aligned with that vision for Egypt—one that will advance stability, security and U.S. interests.

#### 2] That escalates – conflicting regional interests ensure war goes global

Larry **Goodson 18**. Professor of Middle East Studies at the U.S. Army War College. 02-02-18. “Five Enduring Barriers to Peace in the Middle East.” Army War College. https://warroom.armywarcollege.edu/articles/five-enduring-barriers-to-peace-in-the-middle-east/

More importantly, America’s position has changed in the world, allowing a resurgent Russia, rising China, and awakening India to challenge each other and American hegemony. The Middle East has become an important arena of their competition, especially because of oil. Half of China’s oil comes out of the Persian Gulf to fuel the economic rise of what is now the world’s largest oil importer. India, the world’s third-leading oil importer, gets more than half of its oil from the region, and India is also the world’s leading recipient of labor remittances from overseas workers, primarily from laborers employed in the Persian Gulf. The second-leading oil exporter in the world, Russia is interested in Middle Eastern oil primarily for what its availability and pricing do to the market for Russian oil. Other Russian interests in the Middle East include arms sales, base access (its only bases outside of the traditional Soviet zone are in Syria), and the creation and expansion of an anti-access/area-denial zone in the Black Sea region. Meanwhile, this is happening as the global position of the United States has slipped during an Obama Administration that struggled to “lead from behind” and a Trump Administration marked by erratic swings from foreign policy adventurism to “America First” neo-isolationism. Powerful nations with competing interests often find that the collision of those interests leads to war. Having so many great power interests converge in a part of the world that has historically been an active arena of conflict is worrisome. Since the late 1970s, the region has had the highest number of fatalities due to war. Three of the world’s top five countries in military spending per capita are Middle Eastern (Saudi Arabia is first, Israel is third, and Kuwait is fifth). Middle Eastern countries have also developed or pursued weapons of mass destruction, with Israel widely known to have nuclear weapons and a robust delivery capability, while seven Middle Eastern countries have or have had biological or chemical weapons. Syria, Afghanistan, and Iraq currently occupy the bottom three spots on the Global Peace Index. As great power competition resurfaces and now takes place in a conflict-prone, unstable Middle East, the question seems not to be if great power conflict will occur, but when.

#### 3] Egyptian autocracy is long-term unsustainable

Kaldas 1/26 — (Timothy Kaldas, Timothy Kaldas is an independent risk adviser and nonresident fellow at the Tahrir Institute for Middle East Policy. , “Arab Spring Showed Autocracy is Anything But Stable“, Bloomberg, 1-27-2021, Available Online at https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2021-01-27/arab-spring-showed-autocracy-is-anything-but-stable, accessed 11-19-2021, HKR-AR)

It has been 10 years since Egyptians first filled Cairo’s iconic Tahrir Square for a series of protests that would, in less than a month, end the 30-year dictatorship of President Hosni Mubarak. Their success turbo-charged an Arab people-power movement that had already toppled an autocrat in Tunisia, inspiring millions throughout the Middle East and North Africa to rise against authoritarian regimes. Two more tyrants would fall, in Yemen and Libya, and other regimes would be shaken to their core.

A decade on, the promise of the Arab Spring persists in Tunisia, and in more recent developments Sudan. But in much of the region there has been a retrenchment of authoritarian rule, or state failure and civil war. Economies have collapsed, tens of millions have been displaced, and in many corners, violent conflict rages on, fueled by the interventions of competing authoritarian regimes.

The region’s autocrats argue that the lesson from the chaos and violence is that the Arab world is simply not suited for democracy. Many Western governments are at least sympathetic to this line of thinking: They embrace autocrats and theories of authoritarian stability, expressing only the faintest murmurs of concern over repression and other excesses all while financing and arming many of the worst violators. This tendency was most recently on display when French President Emmanuel Macron, playing host to President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi, rejected calls to condition arms sales to Egypt on human rights, arguing untenably that such conditions could add to political fragility.

But the Arab Spring actually demonstrated that the opposite is true. The chaotic, unpredictable and uneven fashion in which regimes entered into crisis and collapsed, along with the societies they ruled for decades, shows that authoritarianism is both highly fragile and a major source of violent turmoil. In 2011, the rulers of Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, and Libya were overthrown while Syria fell into civil war and Bahrain had to invite foreign military forces to quash its massive uprising against the monarchy.

This is not to say any particular authoritarian government has an expiration date. But even when they endure, but they face a persistent risk of violent turmoil and sudden collapse.

The turmoil is the product of authoritarianism. The most common cause of violence is the autocrat’s attempt to impede democratic transitions by brute force. This is best exemplified by Bashar al Assad’s repression of the Arab Spring uprising in Syria, with the backing of fellow tyrants in Iran and Russia.

The second source of turmoil is the weakness of states, kept that way by despots who fear strong, credible and diffuse governing institutions. When dictators are overthrown, the absence of such institutions can lead to state failure, as was the case in Libya and Yemen.

In the case of Egypt, regime elites regrouped during the transition from dictatorship, rallied popular opinion and launched a coup d’etat in 2013 against the country’s first democratically elected president. They were able to count on the support of Gulf monarchs who were alarmed by the uprisings that had spread across the region. Following the coup, protestors were subject to alarming levels of repression and brutality, they faced mass arrests, torture in detention and massacre on the streets. Western governments looked away, convinced these outrages were necessary to reestablish stability.

If Western officials believe in authoritarian stability, autocrats themselves are all too aware of how precarious their position really is. Consider the sequence of events that played out in Egypt starting in Sept. 2019, when a former civilian contractor to the military began broadcasting videos on Facebook from his self-imposed exile in Spain, accusing President Sisi and his allies of spending state funds to build themselves lavish palaces and hotels. On Sept. 19, only a few thousand Egyptians heeded his call for protests.

And yet, this was enough to cause conniptions in the government with statements from the presidency, parliament and the defense ministry. Initially, Sisi insisted the new palaces were part of the new state he was building. Following the protests, he struck a conciliatory tone, promising to add more Egyptians to subsidy rolls. At the same time, thousands were arrested to quash the risk of protests snowballing into 2011 proportions.

All this, remember, in response to some Facebook videos and a few thousand protestors scattered across a country of 100 million people. The government’s response speaks not to stability but to paranoia, stemming from the knowledge that authoritarian rulers can fall quickly.

#### Solvency:

#### 1] An unconditional RTS is key—it gives workers adequate leverage and has precedent

Pratt 01 — (Nicola Pratt, Professor of International Politics of the Middle East at Warwick, “Maintaining the Moral Economy: Egyptian State-Labor Relations in an Era of Economic Liberalization“, Available Online at https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/pais/people/pratt/publications/n\_pratt\_maintaining\_the\_moral\_economy.pdf, accessed 11-13-2021, page 123 in book, HKR-AR)

Labor activists and leftists are also calling for an **unconditional right to strike** as workers’ only weapon for securing their rights within a liberalized economy. Current legislation criminalizes any type of workers’ collective action, while the emergency law, in force since 1981, prevents gatherings and meetings without official permission. Unlike many other democratic rights, the government does not even pay lip service to the right to strike. This is despite the fact that there exists judicial backing for the legalization of strikes. On 16 April 1987, the Egyptian Higher State Security Court ruled that striking railway workers were innocent because strikes were legal according to international human rights treaties signed by Egypt.

Egyptian workers urgently need the right to form an independent union and the right to strike in order to protect their interests in the era of a liberalized economy. The logic of action of the moral economy can no longer reap any benefits for workers. Instead, they face increased repression and coercion by a regime that has failed to create new institutions of governance in these new times. However, the continued existence of the institutions of the postcolonial hegemonic project represent an obstacle to the formation of new institutions and logics of action that could serve as effective weapons for workers in protecting their interests.

#### 2] Ensuring the right to strike solves democracy and inequality

Kiai 17 [Mr. Maina Kiai, Special Rapporteur on freedom of peaceful assembly and of association, took up his functions as the first Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association in May 2011. He is appointed in his personal capacity as an independent expert by the UN Human Rights Council. "UN rights expert: “Fundamental right to strike must be preserved”." https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=21328&LangID=E]

The right to strike is also an intrinsic corollary of the fundamental right of freedom of association. It is crucial for millions of women and men around the world to assert collectively their rights in the workplace, including the right to just and favourable conditions of work, and to work in dignity and without fear of intimidation and persecution. Moreover, protest action in relation to government social and economic policy, and against negative corporate practices, forms part of the basic civil liberties whose respect is essential for the meaningful exercise of trade union rights. This right enables them to engage with companies and governments on a more equal footing, and Member States have a positive obligation to protect this right, and a negative obligation not to interfere with its exercise.

Moreover, protecting the right to strike is not simply about States fulfilling their legal obligations. It is also about them creating democratic and equitable societies that are sustainable in the long run. The concentration of power in one sector – whether in the hands of government or business – inevitably leads to the erosion of democracy, and an increase in inequalities and marginalization with all their attendant consequences. The right to strike is a check on this concentration of power.

I deplore the various attempts made to erode the right to strike at national and multilateral levels. In this regard, I welcome the positive role played by the ILO’s Government Group in upholding workers’ right to strike by recognizing that ‘without protecting a right to strike, freedom of association, in particular the right to organize activities for the purpose of promoting and protecting workers’ interests, cannot be fully realized.’

I urge all stakeholders to ensure that the right to strike be fully preserved and respected across the globe and in all arenas”, the expert concluded.

#### Public workers are uniquely key — they’re the most effective at creating social change because they often fight for the people they serve as well as themeslves

#### 

**Beckett 18** (Ben Beckett is a union steward in New York City and a member of New York City DSA./“Public Sector Workers Should Have the Right to Strike”/08/18/Accessed: 11-01-21 /<https://jacobinmag.com/2018/08/taylor-law-strike-nixon-public-sector>) (SPHS,SO)

New York gubernatorial candidate Cynthia Nixon released her labor platform last week. It contains support for a safe-staffing law, a perennial demand of nurses unions that mandates nurse-to-patient ratios that are high enough to ensure nurses aren’t run ragged and patient safety is strong, as well as provisions for increased safety and apprenticeship programs in the building trades —a group of workers Nixon previously upset with remarks suggesting they would have to take pay cuts to help lower the cost of subway construction. Arguably more important are the broader, more ambitious, and more difficult proposals: support for universal just-cause protections, which would shield all workers from arbitrary firings and discipline (standard in union contracts), and a $15 minimum wage across the whole state, not just the New York City metropolitan area. Especially important, though, is Nixon’s call to establish the legal right to strike for public sector workers in New York state. While New York is legally favorable to worker organizing in many ways, it has some of the most draconian anti-public sector labor laws in the country, most of which are compiled in the Public Employees Fair Employment Act, commonly known as the Taylor Law or the Taylor Act. **Public sector worker strikes have been critical in raising class consciousness in the United States, both in 2018 and historically. They can reveal the anti-working-class outlook of the Democratic Party — and even some union officials. Even if the law doesn’t change any time soon, simply raising the issue, as Nixon has, could raise the level of worker militancy in New York and around the country.** The Left should make public sector right-to-strike laws the next “litmus test” for progressive candidates, similar to current demands like supporting Medicare for All and rejecting corporate campaign donations. Kale Chips and Pinkertons The media and the Right immediately seized on Nixon’s right to strike proposal. “That would be really bad for all New Yorkers, especially poor New Yorkers. The more you depend on public services, the more you’ll have at risk if public employees are allowed to strike,” E.J. McMahon, of the anti-union Empire Center For Public Policy told the New York Daily News. No one should be surprised that anti-union hacks would pit elements of the working class against each other. But it was more surprising to watch union-endorsed Democrats like Andrew Cuomo and Bill de Blasio publicly declare their opposition to Nixon’s proposal. “I don’t agree with changing the Taylor Law. The Taylor Law serves an important public purpose and at the same time there are lots of ways for workers’ rights to be acknowledged and their voices to be heard. I think we have the right law now,” the New York City mayor said. Even more disturbing was watching union officials attack Nixon for saying their members should have the right to strike. Civil Service Employee Association president Danny Donohue said, “It is incredibly naïve for Cynthia Nixon to propose that all public sector workers be able to strike. Clearly, she does not have the experience needed to be governor of New York.” CSEA represents more than 300,000 New York state workers and local government workers outside New York City. John Samuelsen, the international president of the Transport Workers Union (TWU), went even further, entering the realm of self-parody by telling the Chief-Leader, “I am extremely skeptical of her newfound support of striking. I believe that she will cut and run when we shut the subway down. As soon as her hipster Williamsburg supporters can’t take public transit to non-union Wegman’s to buy their kale chips, she will call in the National Guard and the Pinkertons.” Samuelsen’s statement was especially out of touch (and not just because there are no Wegmans grocery stores in New York City). TWU’s largest local, which represents transit-system workers in New York City, faced severe penalties under the Taylor Law as a result of the union’s 2005 strike. The union as a whole and individual workers faced heavy fines; the union was forbidden from collecting dues by automatic checkoff for six months, and local president Roger Touissant was sentenced to prison. As recently as 2011, TWU issued press releases declaring New York’s blanket ban on public sector strikes a human-rights violation. One struggles to find a motivation for Samuelsen’s acerbic comments toward Nixon for suggesting the state do away with the ban, other than shortsighted support for Governor Cuomo’s reelection. Ironically, the ban on public sector strikes makes this sort of calculation rational, if craven. Most unions would not dream of cozying up to the boss this way. But with public sector workers denied some of the most powerful tools other workers have, being on the boss’s good side is seen by many union leaders as the easiest way to settle a contract. A Demand Worth Making **After decades with very few strikes in the public sector, 2018 has seen public school teacher strikes in Arizona, North Carolina, Oklahoma, and West Virginia, all states where it is illegal for public workers to strike.** Teachers also struck in Colorado, where public workers may legally strike. And in California, where public strikes are also legal, 24,000 University of California workers represented by AFSCME 3299 recently went on strike. **The other two major public sector strikes of the last two decades were the Chicago Teachers Union strike in 2011 — legal — and the New York City Metropolitan Transit Authority strike of 2005 — illegal, with severe consequences for the union.** Public sector workers have shown a recent willingness to go on strike even when it’s illegal. So why should the Left make legalizing public strikes a core demand? **First, by pushing candidates to back this demand, the Left can isolate them from the Democratic establishment, who make up a large portion of bosses in the public sector and are therefore unlikely to support giving their workers the right to strike. We saw this theory play out in real time last week. Cynthia Nixon and Julia Salazar, who is running for New York State Senate, have made this plank a central demand and have shown a willingness to confront the party’s centrist leadership. But by pushing candidates to make the legalization of public sector strikes a central part of their labor platform, the Left can force more candidates to develop power from the grassroots to make up for whatever funding and other means of support they lose from the party. Second, the prohibition on strikes contributes to the sad state of many public sector unions — especially in New York.** There are many reasons for the decline of militancy and workplace organizing in public sector unions, and many of those factors are beyond unions’ control. But if job action is off the table, one of the few ways public sector unions can defend their interests is to make political deals with officeholders. Such unions are then put in a position where they are afraid to anger the boss, the incumbent politician, by supporting challengers who often advocate more pro-worker policies. Again, we saw this dynamic play out with Samuelsen’s and Donohue’s comments, as well as less colorful comments to the same effect by other union officials. Because their unions are in such precarious positions, these leaders are terrified to get on Cuomo’s bad side. A union that’s afraid to piss off the employer is already fighting with both hands behind its back. By raising this issue, the Left create a clarifying situation where union officials are forced to explain to their members why they support politicians who want to deny them rights. In New York, this situation is exacerbated by the Triborough Amendment, a provision in the Taylor Law mandating that when public sector collective-bargaining agreements expire without a new contract settled, the terms of the previous contract continue. This disincentivizes both sides from conducting difficult and potentially unpopular negotiations and gives union officials little incentive to organize their membership during a contract campaign. This, in part, explains officials like Donohue’s hostility to the idea of giving their members the right to strike. If members could conduct a strike without severe legal repercussions, union officials might have to organize one — or be exposed as unable to do so. However, the Triborough Amendment also gives workers the protections of a union contract during bargaining impasses and prevents the boss from unilaterally dictating new terms. In New York and states with similar provisions, we should be clear that we are demanding the right to strike in addition to and not in lieu of the Triborough Amendment. Even if there is little hope of changing the law in the short term, simply seeing politicians and the media raise the issue may give workers more confidence to break the law and strike anyway. Ultimately what makes a strike successful is not the degree to which it follows the law. Much more important is workers’ enthusiasm, unity, and confidence in their actions. And there is evidence that political campaigns can make a real difference. When Public Workers Strike Politicians have plenty to fear from striking public workers. The public sector remains a comparative bastion of union strength, with unions representing about 38 percent of public sector workers nationwide, compared to about 7 percent of workers in the private sector. In New York state, about 72 percent of public sector workers are in unions, versus 15 percent in the private sector. This year alone, in Arizona, Oklahoma, and West Virginia, striking teachers won major concessions from hostile, right-wing state governments. Reactionary politicians and capitalists from Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker to the forces behind the Janus case understand the potential power of public unions to advance progressive causes — that is precisely why they have attacked them so viciously. **Public sector workers *occupy a strategic place in the labor market because so many of their jobs are critical to society’s functioning.* That means *the potential power of withdrawing their labor is magnified beyond their immediate job site*. The recent teachers’ strikes were so effective because school closures forced thousands of parents to significantly alter their routines. The New York City transit strike of 2005 lasted only three days, but because it made transportation across the city extremely difficult, it was estimated to cost the city and businesses hundreds of millions of dollars in lost fares and revenue. And while conditions vary, public sector strikes generally have a lot of public support. One reason for that is from nurses to teachers to welfare workers, better conditions for the people they serve are often among public workers’ core demands. Even when strikes are not linked directly to social demands, a majority of Americans do not support weakening public sector unions.** However, for unions, a comparison between the West Virginia teachers’ strike and the New York City transit strike is instructive. West Virginia teachers organized parents and community members for months ahead of the strike. They tied their working conditions to children’s learning conditions, making clear how their demands would benefit virtually everyone. Transit workers did not make such arguments, and support for their strike was nowhere near as high as that of the teachers. **Public sector unions have to make clear that when they walk off the job, *they are striking to benefit the people they serve as much as themselves*. When schools are closed, when buses don’t run, when trash goes uncollected and mail undelivered, it affects not just the employer, but nearly everyone. The pressure on government bosses to settle is therefore extremely high. And when public sector workers strike, *they have the power to win transformative victories.*** From both elected officials’ and union heads’ reaction to Nixon’s right-to-strike proposal, we can see that neither side wants to face this prospect. We should make them.