

stability and not at its expense. Since the overthrow of King Farouk in 1952, Egypt, unlike many of its Arab neighbors, has enjoyed a political system free of turmoil. Although there has been only one period of political transition (1970), it was carried out without force or violence. The fact that Egypt is not alone in human rights violations does not justify the violations, but a better understanding of why they occur is necessary in order to pass judgement.

HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS: IS THERE JUSTIFICATION?

President Sadat has recently been accused of interfering in the democratic process in Egypt. This essay has pointed out examples of intervention in the judiciary, manipulation of the legislature and promulgation of laws designed to restrict the ability of Egyptians to oppose government policies. Sadat's authoritarian approach to the democratic process has brought widespread criticism from his opponents.²

The motivation for this approach is obvious; in limiting personal liberties, Sadat has sought political order and stability in Egypt. Samuel Huntington, in Political Order in Changing Societies,³ perceives the relationship between political participation and institutionalization as most vital to the stability

2) Looking separately at each of the four political goods gives an incomplete picture of the human rights situation. Certain violations may be necessary in order to insure against violence and instability. Human rights, therefore, does not take precedence over all other political goals.

3) Since absolute rights do not exist, any attempt by a nation to apply a human rights test to another nation (e.g. Carter administration human rights policy) is extremely difficult. Such a policy would be full of inconsistencies and therefore its implementation would be onerous.

4) Human rights do exist in Egypt but to a lesser extent than in many of the more developed political systems. In comparison with most other Arab countries however, Egyptians probably enjoy both a greater degree of freedom and a greater degree of political stability.

FOOTNOTES

¹Raymond D. Gastil, Freedom in the World (New York: Freedom House, 1978).

²R. Michael Burrell and Abbas R. Kelidar, Egypt: The Dilemmas of a Nation - 1970-1977 (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1977)

³Samuel Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1968).

⁴Ibid, p.35.

⁵Raymond D. Gastil, "The Comparative Survey of Freedom - X", Freedom at Issue, January-February 1980 Number 54, p.12.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid.

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