

From: Sultan Bin Sulayem <[REDACTED]>

To: Jeffrey Epstein <jeevacation@gmail.com>

Subject: UAE leadership as well Moroccan and Jordanian royals are most effective

Date: Sun, 06 May 2012 05:22:24 +0000

Lead, Follow or Get Out of the Way

By [THOMAS L. FRIEDMAN](#)

Published: May 5, 2012

Dubai, United Arab Emirates

TRAVELING in the post-Awakening Arab world, I have been most struck by how few new leaders have emerged from the huge volcanic political eruption here. By new leaders, I don't just mean people who win elections, I mean *leaders* — men and women with the legitimacy and the will to tell their people the truth and build the coalitions required to get their societies moving forward again.

Discussing this problem with Arab friends, I am always quick to note that my own country — not to mention Europe — has a similar problem. There is a global leadership vacuum. But in the Arab world today it is particularly problematic, because this is a critical juncture. Every one of these awakening countries needs to make the transition from Saddam to Jefferson without getting stuck in Khomeini.

Why has the Arab awakening produced so few new leaders? Partly because the electoral process is still playing out in places like Egypt and Yemen, and partly because it hasn't even begun in places like Libya and Syria. But these are technical explanations. There are deeper factors at work.

One is just how deep the hole is that these societies have to confront. Who will tell the people how much time has been wasted? Who will tell the people that, for the last 50 years, most of the Arab regimes squandered their dictatorship moments. Dictatorship is not desirable, but at least East Asian dictatorships, such as South Korea and Taiwan, used their top-down authority to build dynamic export-led economies and to educate all their people — men and women. In the process, they created huge middle classes whose new leaders midwived their transitions from authoritarian rule to democracy. Arab dictatorships did no such thing. They used their authority to enrich a small class and to distract the masses with “shiny objects” — called Israel, Iran and Nasserism to name but a few.

Now that the dictators are being swept away, Islamist parties are trying to fill the void. Who will tell the people that while Islam is a great and glorious faith it is not “the answer” for Arab development today? Math is the answer. Iran could afford to get stalled in Khomeini Land, because it had oil to buy off all the contradictions. Ditto Saudi Arabia. Egypt and Tunisia have very little oil, and both need loansharking from the International Monetary Fund. In order to secure those loans, their rising Islamist politicians are going to have to cut subsidies and raise taxes. But they are used to giving things away, not taking things away. Are they up to this?

Who will tell the people that, yes, the way capitalism came to the Arab world in the last 20 years was in its most crony and corrupt mutation, but that the right answer now is not to go back to Arab socialism, but better capitalism: better market-based economics, emphasizing expanded exports, but properly governed by the real rule of law and targeted safety nets.

FACEBOOK

TWITTER

GOOGLE+

EMAIL

SHARE

PRINT

REPRINTS



Who will tell young Arabs that they have as much talent as young people anywhere? Look at the worldwide trend their uprisings sparked. But many of them still lack the educational tools to compete for jobs in the private sector and, therefore, need to study even harder — because the days of easy government jobs are over.

And then there is the Sunni-Shiite divide in Syria, Bahrain and Iraq, or the Palestinian-Bedouin divide in Jordan, or the Muslim-Coptic Christian divide in Egypt. These sectarian divisions have prevented national leaders from emerging — and no Arab Nelson Mandela or Martin Luther King Jr. has been able to rise above them to heal the rifts. Without such leaders there is too little trust in the room to do big, hard things together, and everything that these Arab societies need to do today is big and hard and can only be done together. Who will tell the people that Arab societies have no time anymore to be consumed by these sectarian divisions, which just drive everyone into their own ghettos or out of the region altogether?

The Arab world has steadily been losing its diversity, “and without diversity there is no tolerance,” says Hassan Fattah, the editor of *The National*, Abu Dhabi’s best newspaper. And without diversity, new ideas are harder to spark.

The new-generation royals in Morocco, Jordan and the United Arab Emirates, who *do* have the legitimacy to pull people together and drive change, are probably the most effective leaders in the region today. Burson-Marsteller just published [its annual Arab Youth Survey](#), which found that more young Arabs said they would like to live in the United Arab Emirates than any other Arab state, because of how it has built Dubai and Abu Dhabi into global hubs and job engines.

Leadership matters. Education reformers will tell you that three consecutive years of a bad teacher can hobble students for years, while just one year of a highly effective teacher can catch them up or vault them ahead. The same is true of leaders. Pushing out the autocrats in Egypt, Yemen, Tunisia, Libya and, maybe soon, Syria is necessary. But it is not sufficient. This region doesn’t only need to get rid of the old, it needs to give birth to the new — new leaders able to tell hard truths and build broad domestic coalitions to implement them. It is not happening yet. Who will tell the people?

Sent from my iPhone

NOTE: This e-mail message is subject to the Dubai World Group disclaimer see http://www.dubaiworld.ae/email_disclaimer