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With Friends Like These...

June 26th, 2013 By: Raouf Ebeid – Political Islam Online



In speeches and meetings over the past three weeks, the U.S. Ambassador to Egypt, Anne Patterson, has openly signaled total support for Egyptian President Morsi and the Moslem Brotherhood. Ambassador's Patterson support for *Morsi* has been adamant and relentless to the point that this week one journalist mused that the only person missing among the supporters of President *Morsi* during the rally organized by the Muslim Brotherhood last Friday was the U.S. Ambassador. However, the head of the journalistic union *Diaa Rashwan* characterized her meeting with *Khairat Al Shater*, considered the strongest person in the Muslim Brotherhood and the *de facto* ruler of Egypt, as the kiss of death for the organization. If the Americans could protect Morsi, he said, they would have been able to protect Mubarak.

The Ambassador has also met with various members of the opposition and religious figures, including the Coptic Orthodox Pope in an attempt to dissuade them from supporting the "Rebel" movement. To date, the "Rebels" have collected more than 15 million signatures from petitioners calling for early presidential elections, in which the hope is to oust Morsi. The group plans to present those signatures in a public display at the presidential palace on Saturday, one day before the demonstrations scheduled for June 30th, the first anniversary of Morsi's presidency. Ambassador Patterson's public demonstration of support for the Brotherhood seems to have succeeded in rallying even more public opposition to the Brotherhood, and at the same time portray the United States as an adversary of the people.

Some have also called for the Egyptian Army to participate in an interim government until new presidential elections can be held. However, the United States has been instrumental in sidelining the military by insuring they receive the military aid authorized by Secretary Kerry last month, with the understanding that they will not be part of an insurrection against the current government. Once again, Patterson went public in her support for non-interference by the military.

The unfortunate truth is that recent U.S. meddling in Egypt is the product of the myopic vision that U.S. support for the Brotherhood is justified by their ability to control *Hamas* in the Israeli Palestinian conflict. Even some in Israel are starting to question the wisdom of such a short-sighted and overly simplistic policy.

Events over these coming days may prove that the Ambassador has chosen the wrong moment for this public display. Previously, Egyptians saw Ambassador Patterson as energetically trying to attract businesses to bolster Egypt's failing economy. Now, however, regardless of whether the Rebel movement and the opposition succeed in replacing Morsi, the Ambassador may end her tenure on a sour note, harming both her reputation and that of the United States.

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