Egypt’s Woes Are Deeply Embedded in an ‘Inherent Complacent Culture’ & Absence of a ‘Political Will’

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Egypt to me is a country and people that I came to know very closely more than any of the people of the world populations ever since I was a child much exposed to Egyptian movies, broadcasting, literature, all, as once Egypt was by far the sole dominant leader in the entire Arab world with the developed capabilities in these spheres in years of the 1940s, 1950s and 1970s.

What further compounded by interest in Egypt that I frequently visited at different stages of my life during the 1960s, and at different intervals of the following decades was the Nasser era that my strong identification with Nasserism prompted me briefly to pursue my last year high school education and months of a first year in University Education in Cairo.

Interestingly, I always, ever since I was a youngster who came in a close contact with the People of Egypt during my visits in the 1960s during the Nasser Era, I pitied Nasser’s misfortunes as an ambitious reform leader as I often repeated same slogan, the Wrong Leader to the Wrong people that the years proved me punctually correct.

A generally Complacent; Overly Vocal and much prone to Exaggerations, trickery and machination; and are very parochial in both the focus of interests, curiosity of knowledge and general outlooks; the Egyptian people in general are the wrong people that a very ambitious, much reform motivated Nasser had fallen upon as an inspiring leader of reform. I, then, even as a fledgling youngster felt the Egyptian people proven lax and very laid back incapable to march to the cadence of a great ambitious leader Nasser, much true to the adage, “You can lead a horse to the water pond, however, you cannot force a horse to drink.”

In the latter years of the 1990s, 2000 and 2001, as I became involved professionally in assisting the Egyptian Government in their Privatization Program in my capacity as an International Consultant retained by US-based consultancy firms, including Price Waterhouse Cooper, and although I had the opportunity to discover more of Egypt’s troves of great antiquities, my skepticism of the Egyptians and the country were further compounded.
This brings me, by sole curiosity, to write the short article below - more in a form of criticism than expecting a responsible reaction – as Egypt’s woes of the Nile Water is getting hopelessly worse by the day; and as Egypt is getting increasingly embroiled to no avail in disputes with the 9 African nations, mainly Ethiopia, over the equitable sharing of the Nile Water.

Helped me in my criticism is a long essay that I voluntarily wrote in 2010 over the Nile Water under the rubric, "Compounding Egypt's Woes: Facing the Inevitable Challenge of Sharing the Waters of the Nile," April 26, 2010, (article80.rrmasri.net). Thought of the essay as an early wakeup warning to the Egyptian decision makers to ponder alternatives as I further wrote more than five years later, on December 29, 2015, in the short article below entitled, “Egypt's Terrible Failure in Espousing a Realistic Approach for the Sharing of the Nile Waters,” advising the Egyptian decision maker to cease their traditional way of "Wailing; Bickering and Polemics" and try tackle the Nile water crisis with the African countries, mainly with Ethiopia, with a statesmanship and businesslike manners that seems to me quite futile to even ponder.

Egypt, with a forever mushrooming, much out of control, population; with ever dwindling national resources, failing education and increasingly environment and ecology, succumbing to a ruthless military dictatorship, is left without a National Reform plan but true to the defensive Complacency of "Wailing; Bickering and Polemics.” A very sad affair.

**Egypt's Terrible Failure in Espousing a Realistic Approach for the Sharing of the Nile Waters**

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Egypt is pursuing a typical "Wailing; Bickering and Polemical" wasteful approach, at times raising the ante with useless and empty threats of resorting to military action as a final option - ineffective and logistically unachievable, as it is - to dissuade Ethiopia from implementing *LEGITIMATE* irrigation schemes and projects to harness a small portion of the Nile water inflow that more than 80% of which originates, to start with, in the Ethiopian high lands.
As I once wrote in a lengthy research paper that I initiated for my own curiosity pondering the Middle Eastern regional economic and political problems nearly 6 years ago that was entitled, "Compounding Egypt's Woes: Facing the Inevitable Challenge of Sharing the Waters of the Nile," April 26, 2010, (article80.rrmasri.net); Egypt has no options but to fairly share the Nile Water with the other 9 Upstream Riparian African states the contributors of the Nile Waters to Egypt’s None.

As I wrote then and I reiterate factually now, the African Riparian States including Ethiopia have every right to receive an acceptable fair share for the benefit of their burgeoning populations from that essential scarce natural resource that originates on their own lands. Egypt cannot simply take it and keep it almost all (With much lower portion allocated to neighboring Sudan).

The current Egyptian political discourse over the Nile Water Crisis with Ethiopia and the other 8 African Riparian states is futile, unproductive and only leaving Egypt helplessly exposed to the dire consequences of the dramatic fall in the Nile Waters Flow into Egypt, thus having a major, rather disastrous economic impact on the country and its future.

Egypt needs to ponder a collaborative and cooperative approach with the African Riparian States, foremost with Ethiopia, to coordinate new policies for the fairer utilization of the Nile Water to the benefit of Ethiopia and the other African Riparian States in a manner that would mitigate the inevitable dour consequences on Egypt’s economy and on the Egyptians in general. Egypt needs to cease the counterproductive and totally wasteful "Wailing, Bickering & Polemics" leading to nowhere but causing the rise in attention and for Egypt to lose its last remaining vestige of whatever paltry influence it might still enjoys, by sheer size and history, with the states of Black Africa.

Egypt, as it should have done a long time ago, should embark on a policy of rationalization and earnestly develop programs of conservation of the Nile Waters flowing into its territories that Egypt of all the 11 African states does not contribute a single drop of water to it.

When I initiated the Research paper as attached nearly 6 years ago, the Nile Water Crisis and the current heated disputes between Egypt and the African Riparian States were not yet perceived, sometime before the eruption of the "Arab Spring."
Egypt needs to develop a well-thought through realistic plan to adjust to the inevitable potential of the fall of the Nile Waters that it enjoys to levels possibly as high as 25% in the minimum. For that, and in lieu of resorting to pointless and counterproductive polemics, Egypt needs to realistically come down to terms and discuss with Ethiopia and the other African Riparian States a plan that would be suitable to Egypt's gradual adjustments to the gradual decrease of its share of the Nile River Water as it currently stands. This, in tandem with a well-thought through and clearly spelled out Egyptian aggressive plan of conservation and better utilization of the Nile Waters to adjust to the inevitable change of lower allocated share.

The Egyptian public need to be responsibly educated on the issue and cease the hoopla of typical Egyptian "Radih," "Bickering and Recriminations," leading nowhere but letting out wasteful hot air serving no purpose but raising pointless tensions.

Nevertheless, all been said, knowing the typical Egyptian way, the tensions and disputes over the sharing of the Nile Waters will only worsen to no avail as the African Riparian States, starting with the "Renaissance Dam" in Ethiopia, will eventually go it their way taking matters into their own hands, forcing the issue being in control there at the upstream of the Nile waters Flow; this, as Egypt sticks to unrealistic demands of changing times and changing realities.