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EDITORIAL: Obama embraces Islam

If Islamism is OK for Egypt, why not America?

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By [THE WASHINGTON TIMES](#) - The Washington Times

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The Obama administration is doing its utmost to promote the fortunes of the Islamist parties in Egypt. A State Department official declared that with the rise of these radical groups after the Arab Spring, "people who once might have gone into al Qaeda see an opportunity for a legitimate Islamism." They see this as a victory. The problem is, so do the terrorists.

Last year, the White House began peddling the line that the uprisings in the Middle East were a repudiation of the al Qaeda model of seeking change through terrorism. The argument was that while America opposed violent extremism, the rise of nonviolent radical movements was just fine, and even commendable. Al Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahri quickly dismissed this claim, saying that from the terrorists' point of view, it didn't matter whether an Islamist victory came through violence or not. The means were unimportant except as they related to the end state: the imposition of hard-line Shariah-based laws and policies.

From Zawahri's point of view, it makes no difference whether the caliphate is born of the ballot, bomb or bullet. The important thing is the victory of Islamism, which the White House also seems to endorse.

The notion that there is a legitimate form of Islamism reflects a serious intellectual failing on the part of the Obama administration. President Obama seems to believe the Islamists are legitimized simply by participating in the political process. Some argue that the demands of electoral politics will moderate the Islamist parties, whose members will evolve from stern-eyed theocrats into social reformers. Others believe the only path to modernity is through embracing the Muslim Brotherhood's barbarous values.

No matter what the source of the delusion, no political movement that exalts the Koran can peaceably coexist with the concept of freedom at the root of Western governance. Islamist notions of democracy are constrained by the strictures of their religion. Radical Muslims reject the humanistic values that gave birth to modern Western government; the self-evident truths regarding everyone's inalienable rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness are just so much infidel heresy to the Islamists. There are no inalienable rights under political Islam, only submission to the will of Allah.

The Islamist parties in Egypt and elsewhere are promoting democracy simply as a means of consolidating their power. They see the process as a ratchet effect, with every gain they make as one more step toward erecting a Shariah-based theocracy. Increased power will not lead - and in fact, never has led - to moderation, but to further demands to implement their blueprint for Koranic rule. The model is the Iranian Revolution, in which a brief period of openness was followed by the ascent of Islamic hard-liners who snuffed out any hint of liberty and executed those who had the nerve to differ.

To anyone who believes in the Western concept of freedom, Islamism by its nature cannot be legitimate. The White House needs to answer the question: If Islamism is a legitimate political movement, should it come to America, and if so, how soon?

The Washington Times