

## Script for the civil disobedience interview

**Me:** this is Youssef Taha a current AUC student and I have here Omar Rifaat an AUC alumni, who majored in political science, hey Omar how are you

**Omar:** hey how are you

**Me:** hey Omar I wanted to talk to you about your view on the whole idea of civil disobedience which was supposed to take place on the 11<sup>th</sup> of February

**Omar:** ah.. Personally I was with the idea of civil disobedience I think it was a way for the people to pressure the government on handing the ...aah...the power to the people because this was the essence of the revolution, that the people ..that it was the will ,the will of the people not , not just another rule by the government officials or any one , so I think it was ..aah.. it was a way that could've worked to pressure the government into handing the, handing the power a lot sooner than it was expected

**Me:** so , do you think it was necessary or by any means effective?

**Omar:** aah I think if it was..aah, if it was done right it would've been a better success , it would've at least pressured the government, cuz as we know since the past events and everything, the government is pressured..aah..and aah.. this was just icing on top it could've , it could've exploded everything... if it was successful

**Me:** so don't you feel that the American University in Cairo which is just a small scale when trying to address the people in charge of the country, it would have been some how , not effective ?

**Omar:** aaah... I think AUC..aah even if it is small and everything , its not that small but even, even if it's just a fraction of the actual population I think it still does have an opinion and their opinion should be heard ..aah .because those are Egyptians just like any one else and I think their voices should be equal to any other Egyptian in any other university

**Me:** so how did you react several governmental entities opposed this idea and started pointing fingers at the people how first spoke of the idea or tried to tempt it?

**Omar:** I think it was expected....aah... of course, the government doesn't want anymore pressure , doesn't want people protesting in the streets, doesn't want a strike ...aaah... it would've really lost control of the power if such event would've taken place so it was of course expected , the media would portray this as a....as extremely bad for the economy, extremely bad for the country basically to frighten people at home and just keep them at home, not participate in any such in such event

**Me:** so if you were still an AUC student, would you have joined this act?

**Omar:** yea, of course I think I would have joined because I was for that cause, I think it would have , would have changed a bit of what we're dealing with today, I mean with the past events nothing has really happened ....the ...nothing is really going to happen with that pace we are going through

**Me:** so according to your field of study, do you really believe if this act was done be a larger percent of the society it would have forced the SCAF to step down?

**Omar:** as I mentioned before , civil disobedience if it was , if it was successful and really many people had participated in such event it would've pressured the government because its not only one day, it's...it maintains till their demands are satisfied , so in that case it would've continued till the SCAF stepped down and as I said , the SCAF already faces pressure and everything so with that on top of everything it would have eventually cracked in my opinion.

**Me:** so, basically the same act that forced Mubarak to step down, when people are persistent to do something Mubarak stepped down and here with the civil disobedience you wanted to pressure the SCAF to step down and you would have succeeded, right?

**Omar:** yea, it was another, it was another..aah scale , a large scale of people like it was supposed to be another large scale of people like the ones that went in the streets during Mubarak's time and it was supposed to be effective , if it was carried on ..aah..Successfully

**Me:** so didn't you think of how it could have had a major drawback when it comes to the Egyptian economy...which is already deteriorating at this stage ?

**Omar:** well I think we've carried the revolution, the economy has already not been doing very well, well except at times it does exceptionally well but I think that it's a revolution, it is time to change , it is time to move into a new phase and I think yes the economy is important to Egypt and everything , but I think also that we have not been able to really capture everything and in.....with the economy in Egypt for example like, I do not think we were utilizing all our resources and everything to...to

**Me:** (interrupting) to the maximum right?

**Omar:** yes exactly so I think...I think it would've tackled the economy part if the civil disobedience would have been successfully made but I think it would...for me.., of course the economy matters but I think its.....it would've , we would've gained a lot more in return in other aspects and the economy would have gotten better.

**Me:** so your just saying that we should stick on to this transitional period in order to gain more in the future, so fix everything right now until you can be able to start a blank page right?

**Omar:** exactly, we were supposed to get a new president, we're supposed to move out of a thirty year dictatorship regime, so I think it's ....it... we are supposed to just start a new page with everything, try to build up everything from scratch because that is the only way to have a.....aaaah.....a government free of corruption.

**Me:** how did you feel the civil disobedience should have been done to be more successful, where there like ways in order to make it more effective, and convey more pressure on the SCAF?

**Omar:** well I believe that the media is controlled...the media basically especially Egyptian television is controlled by the SCAF and they have guidelines that they should not go beyond and same with private satellite channels, I think they all have limits on where to talk and where not to talk, so basically it was hard for such civil disobedience to be carried on because they split people in two, they told them... They kept informing them about the economy and how bad the economy is and on the other part you have people who don't believe in this and who believe that we need to start a new page and we the power to be transitioned now, so it was a split between two, but back in Mubarak's time it was....i think everyone were united on one cause to make Mubarak step down. So in this case it was not successful because the media was successful in this part, in splitting the people into two so this why it was rather unsuccessful civil disobedience.

**Me:** (tagging along) well actually... well I agree with you on this point because as we know the ... "Al Musheer Tantawai" is the media regulator and I think uses tremendous effort such as agenda setting in order to force the people to think in a...direction .... In one way just to make sure that they do not cause him any harm, don't you think?

**Omar:** aaah... yes I think so because we are now dealing with the leftovers of Mubarak's regime so they're dealing in the same way and nothing basically have changed so...

**Me:** so, I wanted to ask you how do you feel the political stability of Egypt, how do you feel it will gain its stability and when? What do you think must happen in order for the stability to take place?

**Omar:** I think that we have been in a dictatorship regime for the past thirty years, people have not been used to voting, people have not been introduced to the whole idea of who to vote to and what the parliament is for and the “Shoura” council is for, and what the president....what are the president powers and authorities and everything. So I think people are starting to learn that now with the current elections and everything and Egypt will hopefully gain stable political...

**Me:** (continuing his sentence) status....

**Omar:** yes, when people experience that for a second round or a third round in about six years, seven years ...

**Me:** so what about awareness campaigns, should people make awareness...start awareness campaigns in order to tell the people that you have rights and you have to say out loud that you need to change to happen and that you want to witness a new Egypt rather than just the thirty years you just mentioned...the dictatorship of Mubarak’s regime?

**Omar:** of course I believe people should ...people and the government should start on awareness campaigns because people did not really have time to understand about elections because we were rushed into them in such a short notice, so we have four years of presidency coming along and I think that government should then work on moving the Egyptian people into a new democratic phase by teaching them what democracy is about, what are their rights and what are they entitled to ...as Egyptians and what would be the benefit if they go vote for the right person or the person that would actually help them ....aaah... I think that’s the main thing that we should play

on during the four years... the four upcoming years or the four upcoming ten years.

Also education is very important ...

**Me:** okay, thank you Omar very much, I really enjoyed interviewing you, thank you so much for your time

**Omar:** thank you...