

## **Saddam Hussein the Fighter, the Thinker and the Man**

**By Amir Iskander**

**Translated by Hassan Selim**

CHAPTER 12

### **The Communists Dismiss their Commitments**

Why has all this happened? Why has the Communist Party been thinking and organizing itself in this way when it was fully aware of the outcome? Can it be said that the demands made in its report represent the pure ulterior motives behind this behavior? Or is there something deeper in its thought and ideology, meaning that what has happened is not only self-contradictory, but also expressive of its true nature?

Let us first of all say that a pure, infallible, and profound "interaction", one of the psychological, intellectual and systematic conditions of which Saddam Hussein is speaking, has not occurred. The Communist Party has remained fixed in its traditional concepts and anchored behind its readymade statements, through which it publicizes its views, its analyses, and its practical policies concerning the nature of authority in Iraqi society, the conditions for the transition to and building of socialism, and the so-called theory of non-capitalistic development.

More important still, it does the same concerning the nature of the nationalist phenomenon in general, and in our Arab society in particular, the meaning of Arab unity and its significance in relation to itself, and the dialectic relationship between unity and socialism in our Arab nation.

Khrushchev's famous saying at the twentieth congress of the Soviet Communist Party was echoed strongly in the third world, and the Arab countries in particular. Here he said that "many Asian and African countries have gained their political independence, and now have to face the question presented by the post-independence stage, namely, which system will they choose for their development? The capitalist or non-capitalist (1)"? This phrase, which created many illusions about the free choice of the methods of development for societies usually described as "newly independent", irrespective of Khrushchev's responsibility or otherwise for this, did not only reveal the false nature of historical events, but also the danger they posed to the struggle of the exploited classes in the third world, and in Arab countries in particular.

The phrase "capitalist development" was not, in fact, the formulation of a practical theory, as it did not positively define the nature of the social setup. The negative definition here does not allow us to acquaint ourselves with the determined fact of any social structure.

If it was said of some Arab countries in the 'sixties that they were progressing along the so-called "non-capitalist" path, then it means a denial that they are following the capitalist route of development. So does this mean they were, and still are, developing along socialist lines?

The phrase capitalist development, in any case, does not correspond in essence and meaning with the phrase socialist development. What do such vague theoretical formulae therefore suggest? They pointed to the concept, widespread in those days, of what was known as a national democratic state which lead the country along non-capitalist lines, and achieved freedom of action for the Communist Party, until becoming a socialist state where the "avant-garde party" supervised the process of building socialism. Here, the party of the avant-garde is the Communist Party of the proletariat.

Such obscure theoretical formulae, which have ensnared many, reveal no less than the theoretical inability to define the nature of social structures in our countries.

What capitalism or socialism were they talking about without concentrating on the nature of the structural link between the Arab social make-up and the world imperialist capitalist make-up? How can development along capitalist lines, as was the case in relation to the capitalist class in the West, occur in the shadow of this filial dependency when it is impossible both practically and theoretically? How can development, from the start, hope to destroy this dependency without this inevitably leading to the foundations for building socialism being laid? Whoever maintains this tie with the world imperialist structure cannot, no matter what he claims, but fail to build another pillar of imperialism on the land of his country, and whoever is able to break this structural dependence must be qualified to build socialism.

Nevertheless, we must say that this inability to analyze the nature of our social structures is not only the responsibility of Olianovski (2), but also, and perhaps first and foremost, that of political parties and organizations originally called upon to understand and define the nature of the social structures resisting change. Some of these were perhaps unaware of the corrupt nature of such theories until their architect himself became aware of and abandoned them. Even so, he would do this with a sense of shame tinged with the pride to be found in the appointed intellects of the super powers, and after he had been shaken in his distant capital by the repercussions of the clash between his theory and reality in many third world and some Arab countries (3).

The official Arab communist parties did not, unfortunately, devote any time to studying the Arab reality. The Arab communists within these parties adopted many of the cliché statements, concepts and analyses, which abounded in an atmosphere of immorality, and under different historical circumstances. In doing this, they made no attempt to examine them, or gauge the extent of their applicability to their social or historical reality.

Stalin's theory on the nation and nationalism is dependent on four basic elements, namely, one language, one land, one joint economic life, and one psychological formation. This theory is taken as it is, in block like geometrical formulae, to judge the process of forming the Arab nation and Arab nationalism, as well as the resulting struggle for Arab unity.

When disputes erupted and divisions took place within the ranks of the Syrian Communist Party in 1972 over the questions of the Arab nation, Arab nationalism, and Arab unity, they pushed all their intellectual weight against the doors of Marxism. In the old rooms of the Kremlin, we shall hear the voices of Soviet "leaders" and "academicians" talking in obvious Stalinist tones, even though thirteen years have now passed since the twentieth congress of the Soviet Communist Party, which condemned Stalin in clear Stalinist tones.

Regarding the current existence of one Arab nation, the Soviet "academicians" said: "We must take the characteristic features of the nation as defined by Stalin. One of these, namely a joint economy, is lacking. Stalin did not say a common market, but a joint economy, and to now consider the Arab nation, as one is not objective. One can talk about the Arab people and the process of forming the Arab nation, but this is not a newspaper report. It is a programme. We cannot therefore say that the Arab nation is perfectly formed. The economic factor is decisive in the establishment and formation of

the nation, and it is an issue where the people, not nationalism, must be discussed. The nation is an objective because it has not yet been formed (4)."

But what about Arab unity? The Soviet "academicians" said: "Unity is not an aim in itself which may have a different content. Unity cannot be the principal objective of the Communists. Their main goal is socialism, which is the most important issue, followed by communism. This we cannot replace with any other issue. The slogan, Arab unity, can sometimes hinder the struggle for social and socialist progress. The Trotskyites before, like the Chinese today, were asking the Soviet Union to dissolve and halt its development for the state of the international socialist movement. Should social progress in any Arab country be sacrificed for Arab unity (5)?"

Unfortunately, the matter does not end there, and many questions emerge, not in relation to the Arab nation itself, to Arab unity, or to Arab nationalism and the concepts it has adopted, but in relation to the Stalinist theory itself. This is because this theory is a product of the situation in Europe during the nineteenth century, and is therefore unable to interpret other nationalist phenomena, which grew up outside Europe several centuries earlier. Stalin attributes the emergence of nationalist realism to that of modern capitalist growth in production, which in his view demands a basic condition of nationhood, namely the oneness of economic life, or the existence of the integral capitalist market. He therefore not only strongly emphasized this element in the fundamentals of the nation, but also stressed discussions between Soviet academicians and members of the Syrian Communist Party's politburo when the dispute between them occurred. However, does not the acceptance of Stalin's theory, lock, stock and barrel, mean that the responsibility for completing the formation of the Arab nation falls squarely on the shoulders of the Arab capitalist systems?

These will look to unify their market, a matter which has become almost a joke to those who know the extent of their development, and just how limited it is as dictated by world capitalism today. The Arab nation then, which is claimed to be in "a state of development", will not be formed at all as long as it can only be within the framework of capitalism, local capitalism in particular, and within the world capitalist system. Such disastrous results can only be achieved if we continue to apply ready-made theoretical models stemming from localized situations in Europe which are radically different, not only in terms of development, but also in terms of the nature of the social formation itself.

This way we shall only accomplish either an absurd simplification or a theoretical maze. This is because the Arab reality must not only resemble, but also actually correspond to the European reality if the same results are to occur. In other words, we must make the transition from feudalism to capitalism, and from they're to the nationalist state. The way will then be open across the contradictions of capitalism to socialism. But what if we had no feudalism? And what if we had no local capitalism capable with its bourgeois authority of anchoring the one nationalist power? Would the historical process come to a standstill?

However, this inability on the part of the official communist parties to understand the development of the social phenomenon particular to the nation and nationalism was also accompanied by a large reduction in its status and importance within the Arab world. As long as this continues to be a bourgeois phenomenon in their view, then concern and emphasis on it will be considered as having fallen into the trap of bourgeois thought, and

a "rival", according to the Soviet academicians, to the nationalists in their positions. The political discussion of the Arab nation and Arab nationalism in the literature of most parties is closer to newspaper reporting than to intellectual statements based on ideological conviction.

At the base of their thought is the idea that socialism will put an end to all the ambiguity surrounding the nationalist issue. They will then take the advice of the Soviet academicians to the effect that " Arab nationalism is not our slogan", and the goal we are striving for is socialism", thus confirming "internationally" their theoretical inability to be in close contact with their reality, or at least to understand it from a practical point of view. This is because what has happened, and is still happening, in the world today indicates that the phenomenon of nationalism will not disappear with the appearance of socialism.

So what happened between China and the Soviet Union? And what convincing explanation has been offered by these orthodox parties, which merely repeat Soviet statements regarding contradiction or doubt to a degree that, at times, has almost reached the point of armed struggle. This reiteration is represented in condemning the Chinese in all conferences and resolutions without admitting to being a party to these contradictions. What happened in the bloody Prague spring?

Imperialism alone is responsible for all this, is what these parties say. So what happened before in Yugoslavia then and in Poland? What is the meaning of the phenomenon of European communism? And what happened on the borders between China and Vietnam? How can we explain history as long as we only change its facts to mere conferences, like detective novels, now monopolized by the organs of colonialism and imperialism? Can the Arab reality really be changed, both regionally and nationally, as long as we continue to have intellectual disputes about its different aspects? This too when these differences can only be decided by a humble return to statements which are nothing more than a reflection of a European reality inevitably different to ours, or by meekly listening to sacred advice, offered by a high priest with no relation to the true "church" of our people. Nevertheless, we must now ask if the experiment has ended. Has divorce become a final reality? The recently-published book in five volumes, entitled *Adhwa' ala al- Haraka ash-Shuyu'iyya fil-Iraq (6) (Lights on the Communist Movement in Iraq)*, is full of documents and communiqués, and concludes on a considerably pessimistic note, particularly when mentioning the traditional leadership of the Communist Party. Behind the pessimism, one can perhaps perceive a faint glimmer of hope in the young cadres who may return the true face to Marxism as a method of analysis in a specific time and place. These same cadres may then abandon the rigidity, dependence, and ideological isolationism, which resulted in the masses being isolated from the traditional leaderships. Saddam Hussein, who is now prepared to embody a new democratic experiment, and to hold mass elections to choose the people's representatives in the National Assembly, which will commence parliamentary activity this year, said before the crowd of journalists and correspondents who assembled in Baghdad in July, 1978:

" As long as the different parties to the front observe their commitment to the revolution, the Arab Socialist Baath Party has at no time had any intention of turning the front into a temporary measure, nor of basing its relationship with it on anything other than a sincere historical duty to put society on the road to socialism by building this society itself and its relations along socialist lines, and by making the revolution more capable of carrying out

its tasks with the participation of all Iraqis. You may want the whole truth, and so we say to you that it has not occurred to us, nor shall we allow any side, whether in the front or not, to impose any conditional relationship between itself and the revolution. There are no conditions, and the revolution accepts conditions from no one.

Instead, it prescribes good intentions to be expressed through daily conduct. Absolute loyalty and deference to the revolution are the final truth, although not the absolute final truth, but the truth connected and responding to the laws of development. Truth is not isolated from the laws of development, including what ensues in the world (7)." Sincere relations between the parties to the front and us are based on this, and continue to flourish, strengthen and deepen along the road to accomplishing the fundamental tasks of the revolution and continuing to build with one design.

### **Notes**

- 1) See the resolution from The Twentieth Congress of The Soviet Communist Party, Khrushchev's speech, Cairo, Novosti Agency.
- 2) Olianovski is one of the major Soviet theoreticians responsible for the Middle East area, and one of the most prominent of those to spread these ideas.
- 3) See al-'Usur al-Haditha (The Modern Times), Soviet magazine, French edition, November 1977.
- 4) See Qadhaya al-Khilaf fil-Hizb ash-Shuyu'i as-Suri, pp. 135-136.
- 5) Ibid., pp. 138-139.
- 6) See Ibid., pp. 267-268.
- 7) See The full text of the press conference, pp. 11-12.