

Saddam Hussein The Fighter, the Thinker and the Man

Part II

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CHAPTER 17

The Strategy of Liberation and the Policy of Stages

Saddam Hussein strongly urges the possibility of using the given factors, which increase the national and Pan Arab self-capacities of the Arabs to use "more pressure in a wider area in international politics to counter the enemy in the interests of liberation (1)". This essential point is considered by the self-proclaimed "realistic" Arabs, and by those who waver and hesitate, those who adopt a central position, and those prepared to grant concessions, as their prop in describing Saddam Hussein's Iraq as radical. They attribute him with declaring the need to destroy the Zionist entity now, and with rejecting all interim solutions. But does Saddam Hussein now want to destroy the Zionist entity as they say? We shall leave it to him to express his viewpoint:

"Some of our brethren say so. It is my view, however, that they do not understand international politics, because they think the West can now destroy the Zionist entity, whereas they cannot. This is true. We do not indeed understand international politics if we aspire to destroy the Zionist entity at this stage. The truth, however, is different. We have not said any such thing, nor are we following such a policy. We have no illusions that the Arabs are now capable of destroying the Zionist entity, nor that the world would allow such a thing at this stage. We do say, however, that as Arab brethren we must look into the matter together, and ask if we have used all the given factors which increase our national and Pan-Arab self-capacity to put more pressure in a wider area in international politics in the interests of liberation and countering the Zionist enemy. This is the essential difference between us and them, but we will be taken by surprise, as if we are the bidders, with the others having a more realistic understanding of the situation (2)."

Saddam Hussein does not reject the policy of "stages", provided that each is linked to the other, and that all have the same ultimate aim. The fact of "today" is not the end of the matter. "The facts of international politics are relative to the factors effecting its trends and movements.

The strength of the Arab nation plays a decisive role in developing the facts related to its struggle (3)."

This requires mobilizing the masses in the light of the central strategic aim at a time when the Arabs can use all opportunities to achieve the aims of the various stages.

Saddam Hussein clearly says: "We are not against political activity, but flexibility, if not linked to a central strategic aim, or to the serious requirements for achieving a leap forward, is transformed into a cover for reversion at a subsequent opportunity. However, when flexibility is part of the revolutionary process affecting the central aim's direction, then it is a step forward (4)." "Each part of Palestine we can liberate must be an ultimate aim of our struggle, which we cannot delay if the opportunities and factors to achieve triumph are there.

"The Arab nation will always find additional energies before it for creating new elements, both nationally and internationally, in order to move forward (5)."

To where? To meeting "The Jews" in the sea, if we are to believe the misleading counter propaganda? ...No.

"World public opinion must understand that the conflict is not a religious conflict between the Arabs and the Zionist entity as the Zionists try to make out, or as some Arab policies and media previously gave the impression.

In order to understand the reality of the long-term Arab viewpoint advocating a secular Palestinian state where all citizens, no matter what their religion, live together on joint territory, under one rule, and with equal rights of a Palestinian essence, we must demonstrate it by taking practical and convincing measures. One of these is to extend the opportunity to Iraqi Jews to return to their original homeland of Iraq, to Syrian Jews to return to Syria, and to Moroccan Jews to return to Morocco, just as the American, French and German Jews return to their original countries. Our advocating of forming a democratic Palestinian state from the original citizens of Palestine will thereupon find understanding in the world (6)."

However, what happened in Camp David undoubtedly represents a setback to Arab policy, and is a logical result of what may be caused by "realism" or "moderation", by understanding "the circumstances of the contemporary world" and "the international balances of power". All that Saddam Hussein said before reaching this deep gulf was tantamount to a warning against the foolishness of falling into it if the Arabs followed any route other than adhering to the original strategic aim, without ignoring any positive "move" in the conflict.

Yet even when the Egyptian president was falling hopelessly into the depths of the chasm, and "the others" were in a state of confusion, Saddam Hussein maintained his vigilance and awareness. He fearlessly pushed the others away from the edge of the chasm, and again urged them to take a united stand maintaining the minimum solidarity and coherence on their part, so that they could once again join and continue along the road. He expressed the significance of Iraq's struggle in endeavoring to hold the Baghdad Summit as quickly as possible when he said the following to Fidel Castro:

"Sadat betrayed the Arab cause when he dared to visit Jerusalem, and when he signed the Camp David agreements with the Americans and Zionists. This had an effect more serious than anyone outside the area can imagine. The American imperialists were trying to force the Arabs to surrender. After succeeding in winning over certain governments they concentrated their efforts on convincing the Arab people that they would be unable to achieve any important objective, or that they would feel bewildered over their conflict with Zionism. They then planned to use this inability and confusion against the Arab people's struggle to build their society and free themselves from independence.

"The situation has now reached a stage similar to this, and when Sadat signed the agreements even the leaderships were blinded by confusion. The nation should have got out of its predicament and the psychological attitude, which inevitably has a practical outcome in terms of policy. The leadership convened a series of meetings, and we were convinced we could not counter these circumstances using current conventional formulae. We needed new formulae, a method of stirring up Arab sentiment to make it positive and forward-looking. The psychological attitude was one of the central issues, which needed changing.

"On this basis, we made three major resolutions.

These were to consider Iraq complementary to Syria, and to introduce the Iraqi army into the arena of conflict in order to raise the morale of the Syrian rulers and people, and of the Arabs in general. We also resolved to prepare the way for building new relations with

Syria, which took into consideration the common danger. The third resolution involved a call to hold the summit conference in Baghdad with the aim of reaching an Arab consensus to reject the outcome of Camp David, and achieving a united Arab stand. We moved quickly before the Americans recovered from surprise. The Baghdad Summit was convened, and the Arabs unanimously agreed to reject Camp David, and to have no dealings with it or its effects. A fund to support the fronts was set up, and it was decided to enforce economic and political sanctions against the Egyptian government. It was also agreed to move the Arab League from Egypt.

"These arrangements were effective and significant, and the direct response to Carter's endeavors was that he imagined the key to the Arab world to be in the hands of Sadat. This in itself constituted an important victory, and the resolutions must now be followed up and executed (7)."

In Saddam Hussein's words, the Baghdad Summit was distinguished by the fact that "its resolutions were Arab, and not Soviet or Western (8)". But what would happen should the Americans be determined to push Camp David, along with Sadat, forward, and attempt to draw Arab parties to it through intimidation?

In his meeting with Francois Deneux, the French Minister for Foreign Trade, in February 1979, Saddam Hussein said:

"There will be two situations, one American-Arab, the other Soviet-Arab. Failing this, there will be an infiltration into the area, unwanted by us both, as you will be the overall losers, just as we will. France and must make this point clear to the Americans (9)."

The Baghdad Summit, however, with its "Arab resolutions", finds the integral expression of its spirit and the most comprehensive shaping of its logic in "Saddam Hussein's Promulgation" made to the Arab nation on February 8th, 1980, which later came to be known as the "National Charter".

The promulgation is based on the following principles:

"One...rejecting the presence of armies, military forces, and any foreign bases or troops in the homeland, and refusing to facilitate their presence in any form, under any pretext or cover, for any reason; and politically and economically isolating any Arab regime which does not abide by this principle, opposing its policy by all means.

"Two...forbidding the resort by any Arab state to the use of armed troops against any other Arab state, and settling any disputes which may arise between Arab states by peaceful means and in accordance with the principles of the joint national charter and with the Arab interest.

"Three...the principle mentioned in the second clause also applies to relations between the countries of the Arab nation and those nations and states lying adjacent to it.

No country can resort to the use of armed forces disputes with these states unless to defend itself and sovereignty against threats to the security of the Arab countries and their essential interests.

"Four...the joint solidarity of all Arab countries against any aggression -or violation committed by any foreign party against the regional sovereignty of any Arab country. Similarly, should any foreign party enter into actual war with any Arab country, all Arab countries must move together to thwart and counter such aggression or violation using all possible means, including military action and joint economic and political sanctions. The same applies to all other instances requiring such steps in the national interest.

"Five...asserting the adherence of Arab countries to the international laws and conventions concerning the use of waters, air space and regional territories by any state not at war with any of the Arab countries.

"Six...the Arab countries remaining far-removed from the field of international conflicts or wars, and maintaining a completely neutral and non-aligned position towards any of the parties involved in the war or conflict unless violating Arab regional sovereignty and the established rights of the Arab countries as defined by international laws and conventions. The Arab countries must also refrain from entering their armed troops-in whole or in part-into military wars and conflicts, whether inside or outside the area, on behalf of any foreign state or side.

"Seven... the commitment by Arab countries to establishing constructive and developed economic relations between them whereby the common ground for building a developed Arab economy, as well as Arab unity, is provided and strengthened. The Arab countries should strive to avoid any behavior, which may harm these relations or hinder their continuity and development, this irrespective of the differences between the various Arab regimes and the destructive political disputes which occur between them, provided that the parties to the relationship adhere to the principles of this promulgation.

"The Arab countries adhere to the principle of national economic solidarity and the economically powerful amongst them undertake to offer all forms of economic aid to other Arab countries in such a way as to disallow the possibility of any dependence on foreign powers which affects their independence and national will.

"Eight...in formulating the principles of this promulgation, Iraq is confirming its readiness to abide by it as regards all Arab countries and any other party also abiding by it. It is prepared to discuss it with its Arab brethren and to hear their comments, whereby the effectiveness of its principles may be strengthened and its content rendered more profound.

"Iraq also asserts that this promulgation is not an alternative or substitute to the Arab League Charter or the joint economic and defence treaty between the nations within the League. On the contrary, it believes it to strengthen and develop both in a manner proportionate to the new international conditions and the dangers threatening the Arab nation and the national responsibilities which result in both present and future conditions.

"I say to the people of Iraq and the masses of the glorious Arab nation that Iraq, in putting forward this promulgation, is using as its starting point its national responsibility which is greater than all self or regional interest. In directing this promulgation to the Arab governments, these being the body responsible for its establishment and the adherence to it, we firmly believe that its principles cannot be realized or become a charter for Arab relations unless the Arab masses demonstrate their struggle and support for it, since it guarantees their basic interests and responds to their national aspirations for freedom and independence, and facilitates the path to Arab unity. "

Notes Chapter 17

- 1) Saddam Hussein, Nidaluna Was-Siyasa ad-Dawliya, p. 71.
- 2) Ibid. p. 70.
- 3) Ibid. p. 97.
- 4) Ibid. p. 98.
- 5) Ibid. p. 99.

6) Ibid. pp. 82-83.

7) From Saddam Hussein's meeting with Fidel Castro in Havana, December 1978.

8) From Saddam Hussein's meeting with Francois Deniau, The French Minister for Foreign Trade, 20-2-1979.

9) Ibid.