



The Guardians of the Cedars issued the following communiqué:

The Iraqi people have overcome the elections hurdle with noticeable success, and by so doing, have earned the merit of membership in the club of democratic nations after long decades of oppression, repression and humiliation. This is especially so since these elections were held in terrifying security conditions and in the midst of terrorist forces that kill at random and behead without mercy... But the Iraqis have tore down the wall of fear and crawled with their bare knuckles to the ballot boxes in numbers that surpassed all expectations. They practiced their right to vote and openly challenged the bullets, bombs and booby-trapped cars of the terrorists. They have won the admiration of people everywhere and have earned the honor of the freedom that was offered to them.

The world watched these elections with a lot of curiosity since this was an unusual experiment in a country like Iraq that has not known the taste of freedom for a very long time. But the world also watched with a good dose of worrying because this was a battle between the forces of good, progress, emancipation and liberation on one hand, and the forces of evil, darkness, narrow-minded reactionism and isolationism on the other. Everyone sighed in relief and joy at the success of the experiment, with the resounding victory of good over evil, and the fires of freedom proved themselves stronger than the darkness of tyranny.

This victory may be the first step in the thousand-mile journey on the road to the Greater Middle East project, a first step that will spread to many places and countries of the region like a drop of oil. Iraq may be the gate through which democracy will emerge to penetrate the surrounding countries one after the other, and each according to the immunity or weakness of its regime.

Therefore we understand the state of panic that seized the Syrian regime from the first day of the American war on Iraq, and the regime's desperate attempts at defeating this war by supplying terrorists there with all means of support and sustenance. The cause of this panic is that the Syrian regime is the weakest link in the string of fascist states that surround Iraq and the one that is the first slated for collapse in the face of the democracy that is marching to Damascus from the gates of Baghdad in the East and from the gates of Beirut in the West.

The victory of democracy in Iraq has unveiled a number of truths and facts. Most importantly:

1- The American administration was right when it decided to topple the regime of Saddam Hussein and replace it with a democratic regime. The countries of the European Union and others who opposed that war were wrong, since they all rushed to praise the Iraqi elections and the success of the experiment of democracy in that country. President Bush indeed meant what he said when he committed himself to spreading democracy "until it reaches the darkest places on earth".

2- The failure of the proposition that democracy works for some people but not for others, now that the Iraqi experiment has shown that all peoples are ready to absorb democracy and willing to follow its path if they are liberated from their tyrants and provided with the wide spaces of freedom. The Iraqi experiment also showed that democracy can vanquish all hurdles and obstacles in its way if the appropriate conditions are provided for it.

3- The failure of the legitimacy claimed by the so-called Iraqi "Resistance" against the occupation after it became clear that it was imported from outside Iraq and was hiding behind the cover of a conventional resistance in order to carry out the wholesale killing of Iraqis and bring them back to the previous totalitarian regime. Especially after the Iraqis themselves rejected that "resistance" by their massive participation in the ballot exercise. As to those who did not participate, most of them did so out of fear or neglect, and not out of conviction.

We believe that the train of democracy took off with the Iraqi elections in a region that is replete with fascist regimes. The journey of that train may be long or short depending on circumstances, but no one can derail it anymore because the wheel of history does not stop and the hands of the clock do not run backwards. Live and learn.

Lebanon, at your service

Abu Arz

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