

## **Radical American Policies In ME**

Prof sattar kassem

Every four years, Arab leaders, particularly Palestinian leaders, watch closely the American elections race hoping that the new president will follow even-handed policies in the Middle East. The Arabs think that America is biased toward Israel, and American presidents have always followed discriminating policies against the Arabs. So many Arab leaders are friendly to the US, and they believe that the American administration should be even-handed in its policies vis-à-vis the Arab-Israeli conflict. At least, as they say, the administration should show some respect for its Arab allies by exerting some pressure on Israel to accept a compromise.

Each time the Arabs get disappointed. Regardless of the American Jewish support for the winner in the elections, it became evident that the American unlimited support for Israel is ideological for both the Republicans and the Democrats. President Bush didn't get the Jewish votes in 2000, but he gave Israel every possible financial, political and military support. He spoke of Israel as an ally, and of its security as an American obligation.

Although the Arabs are becoming convinced that it is hopeless to depend upon their American friends to reach a peaceful solution with Israel, they still wait the results of the elections. They already have a tough experience with President Bush, but still say that his policies might change in the second term. They reason that the American president becomes more relaxing and wiser in the second term because he is freed from the ghost of the coming elections.

Due to their weakness, the Arabs continue to seek solutions for their problems with Israel in Washington. This Arab giant is so weak to the extent that they can't decide for themselves. As I said, most Arab leaders are puppets of the US, and those who aren't puppets are extremely scared of American punishments. If somebody insists on his/her weakness, then taking refuge somewhere is expected. And those who seek pity, could never gain dignity. Simply, that is why the Americans give Arab leaders marginal attention.

In view of the above, it is expected that the American policy toward Israel is going to remain stable. The American president will continue to adopt the political initiative named the road map, and to support Sharon's plan to withdraw unilaterally from Gaza. He will also find an excuse for Israel to expand the existing settlements, to proceed in building the separating wall between Israel and the West Bank, and to follow a tough military policy against Palestinian fighters. President Bush have always defended the security of Israel, and Israel's right to take whatever steps it sees necessary to insure its security. The wall and the military campaigns against the Palestinians, in reference to what he said, are necessary.

But the American president will reassert his support for the creation of a Palestinian state without defining it. He will talk about this matter in vague terms without mentioning where exactly this state will be established or the degree of its independence or its relations with the neighboring Arab states.

In as far as Iraq is concerned, it is thought that President Bush has received a mandate that is much stronger than that of his first term. He received the popular and the electoral college votes. In other words, the Americans didn't buy all the criticism directed against Bush's policies in Iraq, and didn't care much about the loss of lives. That is why the

President is going to follow a more aggressive policy in Iraq, and won't busy himself so much in gathering international support. Hard times are waiting the cities of Falluja and Ramadi.

For other states, it is expected that the American administration will increase the pressures on Syria, Lebanon and Sudan. Syria and Lebanon will be pressured for the sake of their cooperation on the Iraqi issue, but Sudan because of its Islamic political trends.

Will that ease the tension in the Middle East? Will it exterminate what is called terrorism? No. These American policies provide the best environment for a flourishing resistance movement. More fighters, or terrorists according to American terminology will appear, and more Arabs and Moslems will flood into Iraq. More intense American reaction produces more fighters and more troubles. American policies aren't going to make peace and stability in the area closer than before. On the contrary, more violence and instability are expected. Not only the Arabs and the Americans will pay the price, but the international community will.