The Next War In The Middle East

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One round of a destructive war against Hizballah has ended in favor of Hizballah. For the first time since 1948, "the unbeatable" Israeli army has been defeated. The worst of it is that the humiliation comes from a small armed party not from a regular Arab army. That glorious picture of the Israeli army has been gravely damaged, and that image of a courageous Israeli soldier has gone, for most Arabs, down the drain. Israel has always depended on previously built images so as to implant a feeling of fright and horror in the hearts of the Arabs, but now most of its psychological build up has fallen apart.

Here I should explain what is meant by victory and defeat. For Israel, according to its repeated announcements, the war was meant to disarm Hizballah, to dismantle it as a military organization and to release the two Israeli prisoners. For Hizballah, a victory meant to stay in tact, absorb the Israeli attacks and insist on the exchange of prisoners. Israel was very hopeful to bring an end to the Iran supported organization, and to coin down a kind of political understanding with the Lebanese government. From the side of Hizballah, it never pretended an objective more than rendering the Israeli expedition to failure.

For Israel and the United States, the war had a far reaching objective that has to do with globalization process and the new Middle East. Both countries have been propagating for the new (or the big as sometimes called) ME since 1991 when Madrid conference for peace in ME was held. They thought that they should rearrange the area politically, socially and economically according to their vision which is compatible with the US vision of spreading its own democracy and neo-liberal-capitalism on the international level. The US would be the world leader, and Israel would be leading the ME.

The two countries could make tangible achievements in this regard through the cooperation of puppet Arab regimes and thousands of intellectuals who received huge sums of US dollars to spread the American thought through the establishment of centers that teach democracy and human rights. However, they have been facing resistance not because people don't want to be free but because they have not been convinced that the Americans and the Israelis are true carriers of the banner of freedom and human rights. According to assorted public opinion polls, more than 80% of the Arab public doesn't trust the US, and more than 98% doesn't trust Israel.

The US has failed to realize its objectives in both Afghanistan and Iraq, and has been searching for any kind of success that would restore life to its aspirations in the oil-rich ME. That is why the Americans insisted on the Israelis to proceed into the 2006 war, and prevented the Security Council of the UN from ordering a cease fire. The US thought Israel needed around ten days to accomplish the task.

Should one expect the US and Israel to surrender and accept the result of the war? I strongly believe that the next war isn't far away in time. Both countries have imperialist trends, and don't believe in participation and cooperation, but in domination. Both countries have suffered a major set back in ME, and it is unreasonable to think that they will swallow the bitterness.

The success of Hizballah has asserted the rising power of the Iranian-Syrian-Lebanese axis. So many states in the area will start to take this axis seriously, and will show readiness to cooperate. 19 Arab regimes out of 22 thought that Hizballah will be defeated easily, and they encouraged Israel to go ahead with its military campaign; but, as the war started to show unexpected returns, these countries showed interest in extending a hand to Lebanon particularly in the UN. The loyalty of these 19 states will be torn apart between the US and Iran. Besides, Syria, the only Arab country that stood publicly with Hizballah, will emerge stronger in the Arab World and its influence will increase.

The outcome of the war will also weaken the Arab regimes internally. The Arab public will gain more courage in facing these dictatorships, a thing that might lead to instability. It is also expected that the Sunni resistance movements such as Alqaeda and Hamas will be more active in recruiting people, and they will find more and more people responsive.

In other words, a New ME might emerge but in the Arab or Islamic way. The US and Israel don't accept that.

Under the present circumstances, Israel and the US will work hard toward re-asserting their supremacy and absolute domination over Arabia. The Security Council of the United Nations isn't the right place, but the battlefield is. The only way of reassertion is to re-establish the previous balance of power through waging a swift and extremely destructive war against one member or more of the challenging alliance.

Israel and the US need some time so as to improve their intelligence sources, to find ways to overcome the neutralization (aside from bombing civilian targets) of the air-force in which Hizballah succeeded, and to improve the performance of tanks. As the two countries feel that they have solved these problems, they will wage a war against Hizballah.

The Iranians, the Syrians and Hizballah will not reckon on their existing achievements. They will seek ways to overcome the air supremacy of the enemy, to dig deeper and to improve their anti-tank missiles to make them capable of overcoming any expected improvements on the Israeli made tanks.

I expect the next war to be fierce, and most probably, Syria will be in the middle of it. Who will win? My Korean readers noticed the bid I made at the outset of this previous war in which I expected Hizballah to emerge stronger. Israel will lose the forthcoming war, and it might be driven out of the Golan Hights.