

The Peace on The Horizon - 70 Years after The World War 2 in the Middle East (15)

[\(Japanese Version\)](#)

[\(Arabic Version\)](#)

Chapter 2 Global wave – The end of colonial era and the emerging two super powers

2-1(15) Comparison French colonial rule with British one

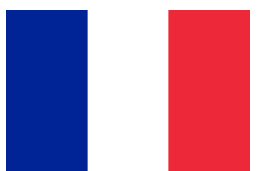
According to the Sykes-Picot Agreement at the World War I (see prologue 5), France has got the area of southern Turkey, Syria, northern Iraq and Lebanon. Britain got southern Iraq, Jordan, Northern part of Arabian Peninsula and Kuwait. Both countries reigned as colonial rulers in their respective regions.

However, the independence movement took in various places after the World War II. The political system after France and the UK granted independence were largely different. During the World War II, France was occupied by Germany. There was no room for France to think about Middle East. Taking one chance in a million, Lebanon and Syria declared independence as republic states in 1941. France could not afford to interfere the independence. On the other hand, the UK has made Jordan and Iraq to kingdoms of the House of Hashim, which was descendants of the prophet Muhammad. The UK fulfilled the promise of the Hussein McMahon Correspondence (see Prologue 4).



It is an interesting fact that France acknowledged Lebanon and Syria as republic states, and the UK acknowledged Jordan and Iraq as kingdoms. One reason was due to the political system of each countries. Both countries are parliamentary democracies, but the UK has the constitutional monarchy as shown in its official state name "United Kingdom". UK people had no objection to acknowledge

Jordan and Iraq as kingdoms.



In France, on the contrary, in 1789 the Bourbon dynasty was overthrown by French Revolution. French people established the republic state waving the three-color flag, so-called Tricolor. France had a long history as republic state. Three colors are symbolizing the freedom, equality and humanity respectively. It was the reason why they allowed Syria and Lebanon as republic states. However, France did not

want to lose substantial control for two countries. Therefore, in Syria, France put Alawi factions of Shiite minority tribes in power. It is a conventional means of the colonial control to leave the power for minorities as nominal rulers under colonial control. France manipulated the minority who needed external assistance behind the scenes and created superiority power structure by repressing or breaking the majority.

France had double face to advocate freedom, equality and humanity in the front, and to manipulate the

colony at will in the back. This was a contradiction of French diplomacy. The Soviet Union has criticized the French contradiction. As the only one socialistic country the Soviet Union deployed class struggle in the Middle East after the World War II. Socialist movement spread accompanying Arab nationalism. The Syrian republic had pierced recklessly against French intention. France was obstructed by its own ideology and could not take strong action. Historically speaking, France opts to escape when everything was in confusion. In the end France asked the United States to take care of the waste. It was totally the same story when France was defeated by Viet Cong (Communist Party of Vietnam) in the Viet Nam war. France left Vietnam and the United States fitted into the mud. It is a fact of history that France could not count on the war. In the Middle East, France has not been able to become a leader to solve problems. The situation does not change even now.

On the other hand, the UK accumulated wise experience through the long colonial control during the British Empire era. The UK assigned Hussein's two sons as the king of Jordan and Iraq respectively. They were descendants of prophet Muhammad, but they were swept away from Makkah by Saudi Arabia. In the Western Europe where democracy is common, the monarchy looks like old-fashioned anachronism. But in the Middle East it was still a world where tribes could make their breadth, and Islamic religion was rooted in life. Western European republican or parliamentary democracy was premature in the Middle East. The UK looked at the reality of the Middle East with cool-headedness.

During the World War I, UK military officer Thomas Edward Lawrence, T.E. Lawrence, being nicknamed "Lawrence of Arabia", helped Abdullah Hussein, the second son of the Sheriff of Makkah and later the king of Jordan. T.E. Lawrence was an advisor of Abdullah, although he was a mere secret agent of British government. In 1921, Abdullah became the ruler of the Emirates of Transjordan, and in 1946 the country became independent as Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. His son, Crown Prince Hussein was sent to UK to study at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. Sandhurst is renowned training institution for young princes in the Middle East studying how to be a good ruler. UK has conciliated Hashemite into the UK's ally.

The Hashemite was the ruler who has been sent to Jordan by UK. But for ordinary Arabs it was enough that the ruler was the descendant of the Prophet Muhammad. They thought UK had given them a precious gift. An Arabic merchant in the capital city of Amman passionately welcomed the ruler. His son, Khatib who was born in 1939 when the World War II began, was only seven years old at that time. He did not know the real meaning of the independence of his country. But he clearly could remember that his father enthusiastically welcoming the new ruler.

(To be continued ----)

By Areha Kazuya
E-mail: Arehakazuya1@gmail.com

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