

## **The Peace on The Horizon - 70 Years after The World War 2 in the Middle East (31)**

[\(Japanese Version\)](#)

[\(Arabic Version\)](#)

### **Chapter 4: War and Peace in The Middle East**

#### **4-3(31) Populism brings up dictatorship**

In common, the dictators in the Middle East were from the lower class. They joined in military academy and achieved excellent performance. They climbed up the ladder to officers in the army. At that time only wealthy people were able to go to college in Arab countries. The poor young guys who had a strong desire to study aimed for a military academy. Excellent but ambitious guys gathered at the military academy. They learned state-of-the-art technology and know-how in the academy. The outstanding students were sent to USSR for further studying. In USSR, socialistic ideology influenced and inspired the young officers from Arab countries. Arab nationalism was integrated with socialism. Arab officers advocated anti-capitalism and anti-imperialism.

Arab officers studying in USSR, however, felt somewhat strange about the socialistic ideology. They had already been infected with Islam from childhood. Therefore, they were not completely infected with socialistic ideology. They could not accept the atheism in the communist society. Though young Arab officers were rationalist, they were religious Muslims too. They gradually graduated from the socialism and atheism.

Before World War II Arab countries had been ruled by Western imperialism. After the war, they were fascinated by the socialism of USSR which was linked with the nationalism. And in 1950s, Zhou Enlai of China, Jawaharlal Nehru of India and Josip Broz Tito of Czechoslovakia had deployed non-alliance movement. But in the midst of the cold war between the East and West, the leaders in the Middle East forced to decide whether they belong to the Western ally or the Eastern ally. They had no choice of neutrality in which they didn't belong to either side.

For Arabs who deeply devoted to Islam, atheistic communism was entirely opposite way of thinking. Christianity of Western countries was much more understandable than atheistic communism because both Islam and Christianity were monotheism. They felt for Muslim minorities in Central Asia being suppressed by the central government of Moscow. Middle Eastern dictators gradually inclined to Western countries despite the difference of ethnicity.

Dictators were unwilling to give political freedom to the people. While many of dictators in the Middle Eastern countries put 'the Republic' in their country name to cheat the people and the international community. In fact, however, he established harsh dictatorial authoritarian state. Let's check Libya.

Muammar Gaddafi named his country as "Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya (direct democracy)". The country's name was too much decorative; "Great", "Socialist", "People's", "Arab (ethnicity)" and "Jamahiriya (direct democracy)". Libya in Gaddafi's era was surely an absolutely dictatorial authoritarian state far different from its name. Not only in Middle East but also in Far East Asia, there is another sample. North Korea's official name is "Democratic People's Republic of Korea" (in short DPRK). The dictators always love exaggerated words.

It was not necessarily true that all of ordinary citizens were looking at such dictators critically. On the contrary, some of them welcomed their dictators with applause. The people in the Arab world were disillusioned by corrupt monarchies and bored by the warfare which took place one after another after the World War II. They expected re-construction work by young military officers who tried to overthrow an old system (Ancien Regime). Association of Free Officers were organized not only in Egypt but also in Syria and Libya.

Poor but ambitious young guys who could not participate in higher education acquired the latest knowledge and skills in military academy. They also got the ability of leadership to attract colleagues. Dictators also used to pay great attention to gain popularity of the masses. It was not true that he was a dictator by birth. When he rose to the top, he agitated the people and grabbed the power before the people awoke what the real situation was.

The dictator absolutely would not give up the power once he got it. His inner circle might support the dictator and take the lion's share behind him. They could enjoy such privilege only during dictator's tenure. However, they were not so courageous to become dictators by themselves. They were acquainted with the fact that the status of dictators was fragile. In any case they would hope the boss to keep his position as long as possible.

Every country has a democratic constitution and clearly stipulates the tenure of president and ban on life-time re-election. However, dictator and his inner circle deliberately raise the popularity and change the constitution easily. As a result, dictator becomes the lifetime ruler. Then the dictator would become a monster. It was too late to control him when people noticed the reality.

Even though the dictator got a lifetime tenure, human life was not immortal. When the dictator was in nearing death, he would think about the successor. But he could not trust anyone at that time. He would be afraid that he might be assassinated by his inner circle. He might suspect even his brothers and deport them one after another. Only his son was the last candidate as successor. Every dictator spent different life style. But the end of their days was surprisingly similar.

Anyhow, while the dictator reigned, the society was peaceful and the people was satisfied moderately. In any history, dictator was a monster created by populism.

(To be continued ----)

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