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## **"The Peace on The Horizon - 70 Years after The World War 2 in the Middle East"(40)**

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### **Chapter 5: Two calendars (Gregorian & Hijri)**

#### **5-4(40) Tragedy of blowing steam off and tit for tat**

Iraq turned the entire world to enemy by invasion into Kuwait. But strictly speaking, at the Arab summit held immediately after the invasion, several countries including Jordan supported Iraq. President Saddam Hussein used so-called linkage theory and justified his policy, saying that it was contradictory to condemn the consolidation of Iraq while accepting the Israeli invasion of Palestine. Hussein's logic attracted the sympathy of Arab countries like Jordan. In addition, Jordan, a poor and small country, had been supplied oil from Iraq at a lower price than international market. Jordan could not resist to Iraq.

Cunning President Hussein launched a missile attack on Israel 18 times. He explained his people that it was a retaliation against Israeli bombing Iraq's Osirak nuclear power plant taking advantage the confusion during the Iran-Iraq war. It was his intention to allure Israel into the war. Israel who did not hesitate first strike for self-defense could not silent on Iraqi missile attack. Israeli public opinion was focused into a war against Iraq.

That was just as Hussein expected. Once Israel participated in the war, the scheme of the past four Middle East wars would be reproduced, and Iraq's unilateral invasion to Kuwait would be transformed into an Arab-Islam versus Jewish war. In Iraq War Saudi Arabia accepted the ground operation by multinational forces mainly composed by Western Christian countries such as the United States. Therefore, Saudi Arabia was faced in criticism by Islamic religious groups both domestically and abroad. Gulf monarchy countries including Saudi Arabia might be in a bitter situation if Israel had participated in the war.

The US persuaded Israel hard and made Israel to abandon the counterattack. If Israel participated in war (although the word "if" is prohibited in history), Hussein regime would definitely have collapsed because it was Israel's strategy not to stop fighting until the enemy's breathtaking stopped. As a result, the Middle East would be in a great chaos undoubtedly. However, the United States at that time had to keep Saudi Arabia and other Gulf Arab oil-producing countries in its ally. The US wanted to avoid turning Arab countries to enemy in addition to Iran.

It was the Palestinians in the occupied territory of Israel or refugees living in Jordan that welcomed Iraqi missile attacks against Israel. Whenever leaders in Arab countries addressed to the people, they used to say that Israel should be exerted into the Mediterranean. But there was no leader who took real action except Hussein of Iraq. It was natural for Palestinians to be obsessed by the illusion that Hussein might truly realize their dreams. They shouted their support for Hussein loudly and blew steam off.

Palestinians abroad shouted pleasantly in their hearts even though they could not vocalize. It was the Palestinians who came to Kuwait looking for jobs. They obeyed to Kuwaitis like slaves. Kuwaitis were just lazy and arrogant. When the Iraqi army invaded to Kuwait, Kuwaitis escaped into Saudi Arabia in flurry, Palestinians mocked them and felt self-satisfaction. And when Iraq attacked Israel by missile but Israel could not fight back by the objection of the United States, Palestinians expected that Hussein would regain their homeland.

But both Hussein 's ambitions and the Palestinians' expectations were illusion. Six months later, Kuwait was liberalized in the Gulf War. Iraq set fire on the oilfield area as a souvenir before withdrawal. A bright red flame rose in the sky of Kuwait and a black splash of crude oil scatters in the desert of Kuwait. The sky above Kuwait was surrounded by black smoke and the darkness spread even in daytime.



The Emir of Kuwait and the Sabah royal families returned home from Saudi Arabia where the government was in exile. Kuwait regained calm. They deeply appreciated the countries joined to the multinational forces and spared their power to liberate Kuwait including the United States. Kuwait government, therefore, published special advertisement on the newspaper expressing their thanks. In the article there were names of countries that participated in multinational forces such as Pakistan or Sudan. But there was no name of Japan even it donated a huge war chest of 1 trillion yen. Japanese constitution prohibited to send military force abroad.

Kuwait did not allow those who supported Hussein. The government deported all Palestinians and Jordanians. The Japanese oil company in the south of the border was also ordered to deport its Palestine and Jordanian employees because Kuwait held half equity for oil operation. It was a tit for tat by Kuwait after the Gulf War against the blowing steam by Palestinians during the war. But it was obvious what would happen when Kuwait government deported the Palestinians who had underpinned both public and private sectors in Kuwait economy. The economic damage that Kuwait received were serious, and it still does not heal after quarter century.

(To be continued ----)