

Answer to Question

Popular Movements in Iraq, Lebanon and Iran

(Translated)

Question:

We know that popular movements in Iraq, Lebanon and Iran began spontaneously as outlined on 5/11/2019; are they still so? Are there any European roles in these three countries where America is influential? Will the situation in these three countries remain the same, or is America in the process of changing these agents or some of them by a normal change or through the military as it did in Egypt and Sudan? May Allah reward you.

Answer:

In order to clarify the answer to the above questions, we will review to some extent the following:

First: The causes and motives of the protests:

Yes, the protests started spontaneously in the three countries, and their motives were briefly as follows:

1- **Protests in Iraq:** Protests broke out in Iraq in early October 2019 in the form of demonstrations and sit-ins that developed into the closure of bridges in Baghdad and other major roads in protest against the deterioration of the economic situation of the country, the spread of administrative and financial corruption in government agencies and against the widespread unemployment. And the protests started spontaneously after they became too distressing and the people's livelihoods were confined. The regime was unable to solve the electricity issue through the 16 years of the regime's span, nor provide job opportunities for young people and graduates, nor satisfy people's hunger despite the huge oil resources. The protests then exploded with nearly 350 people killed, in addition to thousands wounded and detained. The offices of pro-Iranian government parties were burnt, then setting fire to the vicinity of the Iranian consulate in Karbala on 4/11/2019, throwing stones at them, demanding their removal from the city, and burning of the Iranian consulate in Najaf on 27/11/2019. What made the Iraqi government more shaky and stunned is that these protests have pervaded the cities of Baghdad, Nasiriyah, Karbala, Najaf and other cities of the south; those areas which were considered by the regime as areas of popular weight. Its impact were so severe that Abdul Mahdi was unable to continue to cling to the rule, thus he resigned on 30/11/2019 and the parliament approved the resignation on 1/12/2019.

2- **Lebanon's Protests:** The economic situation in Lebanon has reached the brink of complete collapse or almost did! "Lebanon's public debt at the beginning of 2019 was 85.32 billion dollars" (Al-Arabi Al-Jadeed, 15/3/2019), and this is a large debt that the usury on it consumes about half of the state revenues in Lebanon. "The country's debt-to-GDP ratio is 1.52 percent, and the interest on debt uses almost half of the state's revenues" (BBC 28/10/2019), and these capital crimes have left "a high rate of unemployment in Lebanon estimated at 37 percent for those under 35 years old..." (BBC 26/11/2019). In the face of this economic devastation brought on to the people by the political class, the spark of a WhatsApp Tax on 17/10/2019 ignited the streets in Lebanon, set fire to the offices of deputies especially in southern Lebanon and enraged Beirut, Nabatieh and Tyre, so massive demonstrations came out. And then it quickly turned to demanding the resignation of the government, and even the change of the entire political elite in Lebanon. And with the security mentality from which the state and its followers in Lebanon draw, the supporters of the Iran Party tried to intimidate the demonstrators on 24 and 25/10/2019 by storming the squares, and then repeated by the supporters of the Iran Party and the Amal Movement in Beirut!

3- The Iranian Protests: The Iranian regime was no better than its pivotal states - Iraq, Lebanon and Syria before them- as it lacks a pastoral view of governing the country, which has led the Revolutionary Guard to control large sectors of the Iranian economy and marginalize the non-Persian regions on the periphery, creating a belt of cities of misery on the outskirts of the state, and an economic situation on the verge of explosion in the center and the peripheries alike, and it was shameful for the regime that boasts of the nuclear program and missiles that popular protests explode due to lack of gasoline! This shortage is due to the lack of refineries, an uncomplicated industry for countries that take care of their people properly. Then, despite the nearly 40% increase in gasoline consumption in Iran since 2017 and the failure to operate a refinery in Hormuzjan province, much of the gasoline is smuggled abroad because of the price difference by gangs that are not difficult for the state to know, which is another manifestation of the state's failure to manage one of the most vital resources "oil"! The state then raised the price of gasoline by 300%, and the protests broke out on 15/11/2019 in Tehran and dozens of other Iranian cities. The protests intensified, where banks were set on fire, Iranian estates, security and government offices were attacked, and the government cut off the Internet to prevent the communication among the protesters. The regime resorted to the highest level of violence in dealing with this protest movement and suppressing it with iron and fire. "As the Iranian security forces continue their crackdowns on protesters, the Iranian opposition, on 23rd November that the death toll of the protests exceeded 300 people, it documented the names of 99 of them, and that more than 4,000 people were injured, and more than 10,000 people were detained, and it indicated that the Revolutionary Guards pulled dead bodies from hospitals to an unknown destination" (Arabic Independent 24/11/2019).

Second: Are the protests still spontaneous without European intervention?

Europe has tried to take advantage of the protests, but it has not been effective or influential in penetrating American influence in the three countries. The clarification is the following:

1- Europe's attempts in Iraq: As we mentioned earlier, protests in Iraq, especially the southern regions, were escalating, concentrated in the Shiite regions, and it is not excluded that Europe, especially Britain, has tried to exploit these protests, and although there has been no credible evidence of British interference in the protests, Iran was cautious about this matter, and is even obsessed with it to the extent that Tehran's Friday preacher, Muhammad Ali Mouhadi Karma, said during the sermon, describing the Iraqi demonstrators as "English Shiites", adding "Some deviant groups that we describe as Shiites of the English crept into the ranks of the Iraqi people..." (Iran International 11/11/2019). His statement was that Iranian officials feared that Britain would take advantage of people's movements, in addition to Iran trying to threaten protesters by accusing them of being agents for the British, especially since Britain's position was almost explicit in supporting the protests "the British embassy said on its official Twitter page, that "Peaceful demonstrations are a right of the Iraqi people." He added: "Violence against demonstrators is unacceptable" ... "Our prayers for the wounded and the families of those who lost their lives in the demonstrations." (Russian agency Sputnik 5/11/2019), which is the same position that had been expressed by British Secretary of State Andrew Morrison as quoted by Al Ain News website on 10/27/2019.

2- Europe's attempts in Lebanon: It is known that the followers of America and Europe roam and wander about in Lebanon, and it is also known that America's followers, whether directly like Aoun and Berri or indirectly like Hezbollah through Iran, these are physically the stronger party... As for the followers of Europe "Britain and France" they are the weaker party, such as Geagea and Jumblatt... As for Hariri, he is the most vulnerable because he puts a foot in Europe and another in the pro-American Saudi Arabia, and these followers cannot resolve the decision, but rather do things that confuse the other side. For example, the ministers of the four Lebanese forces on 19/10/2019 resigned from the government which the protesters demand to bring it down, and Prime Minister Saad Hariri announced on 18/10/2019 a deadline of 72 hours to deal with the crisis, then he submitted his resignation on 29/10/2019 against the wishes of the head of the state and the wishes of Iran's security-dominant party in Lebanon. Then France sent its envoy to

Lebanon the director of The Middle East and North Africa Department at the French Foreign Ministry, Christophe Farno, "to whom – to President Aoun - he conveyed a message from the French President, Emmanuel Macron, and the French government confirming France's interest in the situation in Lebanon and its willingness to assist Lebanon in the current circumstances" (Al-Arabia 11/11/2019). The envoy's visit was not accepted by the followers of America, as the National Agency for Official Information quoted Foreign Minister Basil that he told the French envoy: "No external party should enter the line of the Lebanese crisis and exploit it"... Britain also sent its envoy, Richard Moore, who met with Aoun and said: "The United Kingdom has always been an important partner and supporter for Lebanon for a long time, for example, investing \$200 million last year to support Lebanon's security, stability, prosperity, and sovereignty." He continued, "It is important to continue to respect the right to peaceful protest, and any repression of the protest movement by violence or intimidation by anyone is totally unacceptable." (Arabic Independent 25/11/2019).

3- European attempts in Iran: The Iranian regime, as usual, was claiming that it was responding to external conspiracies and threats. "Today, the head of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards threatened to destroy America, Israel, Britain, and Saudi Arabia, should they cross the "red lines" in dealing with his country. Salami said, in a speech given to pro-government demonstrators in Tehran and broadcast by Iranian television: "I say to America, Israel, the Saud family and Britain you have experienced our power in the battlefield and you could not respond; the world has come to observe some of our slaps." He continued: "We say to you: Do not cross our lines, but if you cross the red lines, we will destroy you" (RT 25/11/2019). The regime wants to give the impression that external forces are behind the protests and are not from the people who tasted the bitterness. Note that all indications show that people's protests are from their hearts and blood! But it seems that the tone of external interference persists in the Iranian regime to the extent that Tehran's Friday preacher, as we mentioned earlier, accused the Shiites protesting in Iraq of being English Shiites! The protests in Iran are not the first, nor will they be the last, and they are probably spontaneous, and there are no signs that indicate international hands. The protests in Iran, like Syria, are a people fighting against the tyrant rulers whose policies has not known the taste of success in taking care of the affairs of the Ummah.

Third: As for America changing its agents in the three countries, the matter is as follows:

1- The actual influence in these three countries is the American influence, while Europe (Britain and France) has not succeed in sharing this influence with America.

2- Until the Ummah rises up to a correct uprising on the basis of Islam and then the correct change takes place, until that happens, the rulers of these three countries will continue to be subject to American policy to change or keep them.

3- The colonial Kaffir states want the agent to serve their interests. If the people revolted and there was turmoil in his reign, then they will give him a specified period; if he cannot arrange his order in the ruling, then he becomes unable to serve his master, so he changes him. The tool for this is the lie of the so-called democracy by bringing a new agent with a less black face than the expelled agent; that is, if the crisis is not intractable, otherwise the tool is the "military" as it has done in Egypt 2011 or Sudan 20019.

Fourth: Reviewing the expected change in the three countries in the light of current realities, the following is evident:

1- **With regard to Iran:** America declares openly that it does not want to change the regime in Iran; that is, no matter how much the killing in the protests, America believes that this regime serves its interests! At a time when the blood of Muslims in Iran was shed by the regime, American officials were insisting on maintaining order "a senior official at the White House said Sunday that his country does not want to change the regime in Iran..." (Al Arabiya Net Sunday, 11/17/2019);

therefore, no change is expected in the Iranian regime due to the protests of 11/2019 just as there was no change due to last year's protests.

2- With regard to Lebanon: As we mentioned, Lebanon has America's followers and Europe's followers, and the first team is the strongest and this facilitates the concession of the weakest according to the method of compromise, and the two sides are different over a technological government or technocrat government! After all, it is expected that America will change the balance of government in Lebanon, so that the weight will be for America's followers and engage with them followers of Europe but to a certain extent, then engage the street to calm it down.

3- With regard to Iraq: America governs Iraq almost directly from behind a curtain. Its embassy in Baghdad has 16,000 employees, who follow the work of all Iraqi ministries, especially the oil and security sector, and it is the largest embassy for America in the world. It has many military bases in Iraq, the most famous of which is the Ain al-Assad base in Anbar. In the last week of last month, America intensified its delegations, so the sudden visit of US Vice President Pence on 23/11/2019 to the base of Ain al-Assad, and before a week passed the visit of of the U.S. Vice President to Iraq, America sent the commander of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the U.S. Army Mark Milley to Baghdad on 27/11/2019. This is evidence of the relentless American follow-up, especially that Iraq is a sensitive case to America; it occupied it and claimed that it takes its hand to progress but it took it to turmoil and rupture, and now it is in successive crises and it is to be expected that if the conditions do not calm soon America will bring about change through "the military" and engage the street with them in governing as it did in Egypt or Sudan. It has been observed that the Anti-Terrorist apparatus in Iraq, which is a large military force formed by the Americans and equipped with the best military equipment; this apparatus is far from the policy of repression of the protests, and it appears that the protesters in Tahrir Square view this force as their savior from the corrupt politicians, as they raise a big picture of General Abdel-Wahab Al-Saadi, one of the leaders of the agency after his dismissal by Abdel-Mahdi, as if this force is acceptable to the demonstrators to have a role in arranging the solution. This is on the one hand, while on the other hand, the military meetings held by America in Baghdad, and the dispatch of its envoys for that in addition to the activity of its large embassy in Baghdad, all of this are arrangements that America prepares when necessary.

This is not affected by the resignation of Abdel-Mahdi and the appointment of a new president, as this does not solve the problem, but rather is temporary, meaning that the wound remains open until it heals!

However, the mass movement in the three countries has points counted for it and other points against it. As for what counts for it is that its movement is spontaneous, and it is still mostly so. As for what counts against it is that it has not yet taken a sincere leadership to Allah Subhanahu, and sincere to His Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his family, to enlighten his path to the rule of Islam, the true Khilafah Rashidah (rightly guided Caliphate). And if the movement continues without sincere leadership and thus proceeds without guidance, then its efforts and sacrifices will be lost in vain, and the movement will then be like the one who untwisted her spun thread after it was strong! Allah is the guide to the sound way.

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