THE LAST WORD

Playing in Overtime

In sports, games go into overtime when the regular period of play ends with the score tied and a winner must be determined. This is not the case in wars where the "players" go into overtime when one player (or coalition) loses the game but does not acknowledge the loss. Ego is factored into not accepting defeat, but it is essentially a denial of the facts.

Since the main criterion of deciding who wins a war is determined by whether or not the initiator of the war has achieved his objective, in the case of the Israeli-American war on Iran and on the axis of resistance, Iran and the axis have clearly emerged as the winners. Most serious American and Israeli media and analysts attest to that. The editorial board of the *New York Times*, for example, has warned that President Trump's handling of the war in Iran has pushed the United States toward a "strategic defeat." Also, decorated combat veteran and former US military adviser Colonel Douglas Macgregor, along with many other strategists, has warned that Iran is effectively winning the war. Macgregor adds that the conflict is severely damaging to both the US and Israel.

In a bid to save face, the US and Israel (often with the complicity of Western governments, particularly Germany and Britain) are making futile efforts to buy time, hoping that conditions will change and the losers will reverse the imminent results of the war and come out on top. In my humble opinion, the game is over. Nothing now can be done to reverse the outcome of the war. The Iranian regime will not fall; Iran's alliances with resistance movements throughout the Middle East are getting even stronger; the Strait of Hormuz will remain under Iranian control (a major feat for Iran, if I may say); Iran is on its way to becoming the leading regional power (and possibly beyond), and no, Iran will not develop a nuclear bomb, which incidentally is what Iran has been saying for decades.

Time is running out for President Trump. If the Strait of Hormuz is not open to the free flow of oil and other indispensable material by end of June, the price of a barrel of crude oil will skyrocket, which in turn will cause major economic earthquakes, not only in the US, but worldwide. Much to Trump's dismay, the midterm elections are also coming up, and polls indicate that the Republican Party is doing abysmally. Despite the high and threatening tone of President Trump, Iran is in position to hold on to the strait and so it is effectively dictating the terms of any possible agreement. Without signing an agreement (which Trump calls a deal since he only thinks in business terms), the US and the world are heading toward a major economic disaster. As for Israel, it is a small player when it comes to such global affairs. The Iranian-American agreement will no doubt be humiliating for the US, but it will still be better than calling it quits and pulling out the American forces from the region. An additional outcome of the war is that the Americans will no longer have military bases or even any presence in the Middle East.

Other repercussions are "beyond our imagination," as Nasser Kandil, one of the best political analysts in the Arab world, has stated recently.

Long Live Palestine.



Sani Meo
Publisher