Beat: Politics

Naeem Qassim paves the way for the long war

Lebanon is not part of it

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Sheikh Naeem Qassim's recent speech was primarily directed at the Lebanese interior and is not a vague or ambiguous discourse, as some have interpreted it. Instead, it resembles a prelude, preparation Lebanese and components for a prolonged war against the occupation.

Qassim stated that the war has deviated from all previous equations, indicating a shift that will lead to changes in the party's strategy or approach to warfare. He articulated this through the concept of a new equation of infliction, raising the question of the party's ability to transition from one strategy to another in light of the structural shock it has experienced and the absence of a "central mind" closely linked to its various factions and fronts capable of managing them effectively.

Despite its relative success in confrontations in southern Lebanon, the party continues to operate within a framework of partial deterrence, which is evident in its "targeting circle" that remains governed or constrained by considerations that the enemy has surpassed.

It is clear that the limited capabilities of the party affect the nature and rhythm of its operations, leading to a deliberate delay in reaching the peak of escalation. However, what the party needs strategically is to extricate itself from the war narrative set by the enemy and return to the principle of creating equations rather than responding to them.

?On the other hand, Israel has vowed that the war will not extend beyond southern Lebanon and has asserted that it will not reach Beirut, emphasizing that it is a war between itself and Hezbollah. This has resulted in a series of devastating successive strikes that enabled Israel to strike Hezbollah's upper command structure, even targeting its historically significant leader. These strikes preceded other engagements, indicated had amassed substantial intelligence capabilities, allowing it to operate within the realm of possibility. These attacks did not solely impact the human element but also targeted the overall structure of the armed party, including its communication systems and various weapon depots.

The most grievous outcome of the aggression is the widespread displacement and destruction in the towns and villages in the border area, extending to all areas that Israel considers the Shiite strongholds in Lebanon. This has exposed the total Lebanese void in preparedness for war. Hezbollah has entirely failed to manage the destruction it has caused to the frameworks of life, which lacks alternatives for the hundreds of thousands of displaced people, who have diverse political affiliations. The burden has fallen on the crumbling Lebanese authority, civil society organizations, and individuals, who have taken insufficient and unsustainable measures to confront a colossal disaster with unknown duration and consequences.

Moreover, the political repercussions of the failure represented by the collapse of the doctrine of containment and deterrence have intensified, as the very support that was meant to open the Lebanese front did not show any effect on the course of the aggression against Gaza. This aggression has continued unabated in all its horrific aspects, while Hezbollah is currently engaged in fierce resistance against what the Israeli leadership claims is a limited ground operation on the Lebanese side of the border, intended to eliminate the immediate threat to its border settlements and secure the hoped return of displaced residents.

?The resistance is fierce, and the precise outcomes of the Israeli attacks remain unknown. However, it appears that the enemy has at least managed to establish a foothold at one or two points that allow it to control part of the Lebanese border strip. This shifts the resistance effort in this sector from a mission of repelling aggression to one of pushing it back to where it came from.

Meanwhile, the exchange of shelling continues to deepen and expand on both sides of the border, with reports of limited destruction and news of casualties on the Israeli side. However, all of this does not seem to equate in any way to the images of the immense

destruction in Lebanon or the increasing numbers of Lebanese martyrs and wounded, which grow more similar each day to the situation in Gaza.

?Is there any indication that this fierce resistance will succeed in forcing the Israeli ground campaign to retreat beyond the borders, abandoning its declared objectives of destroying the resistance units and their infrastructure in a strip left undefined, and removing the residents of the border settlements from the direct line of fire of opposing fighters? This, in addition to keeping those residents isolated from the threat of fighters infiltrating them, has made the Gaza model a persistent concern in their imagination.

Relying on what the resistance effort represents as deterrence against various precedents suggests a certain impatience towards the increase in human casualties, prompting Israeli leadership to retreat. Israel has grown accustomed to short wars, and it is likely to recoil rather than engage in lengthy ones, as these require ongoing mobilization of reserves and a setback in growth, leading to a rise in the direct costs of war and its social consequences. The Israeli leadership has borne the burdens of an entire year of open warfare in Gaza and fierce conflict in Lebanon, including enduring severe external pressures to halt the aggression on Gaza and internal pressures.

In conclusion, the resistance effort is expected to improve the conditions for exiting the war, especially if coupled with a political proposal that hastens this exit and leaves behind objectives such as victory in war, supporting Palestinian resistance, and showcasing the unity of the fronts. What should be prioritized immediately is the cessation of the escalating, barbaric aggression, which brings with it death, injury, and destruction. All of this must be curtailed to maintain a reasonable possibility for the return of the displaced masses to their homes.

The ongoing wave of displacement (which could be considered the major political incident in this war) has not been absorbed by the Lebanese community, nor will it be able to, given its meager resources. Displaced individuals will grow more frustrated with their suffering as it continues to intensify, and host communities will also become increasingly strained despite the appearances of solidarity that deserve pride but are situational. This situation does not shield them from vital interests and the normal operations of their lives, including the presumed safety from aggression. All of this faces a demand for immediate exit from the war, not clinging stubbornly to the hypothesis of victory or the hypothesis of a long, draining conflict, which we claim will exclusively drain one of the two sides. This attachment has little chance of success for the indicated communities that have been imposed upon by the burdens of a war they did not see themselves as parties to declaring or engaging in.

The basis for ending the war was and remains UN Security Council Resolution 1701, which calls for the removal of armed groups from the area south of the Litany River and placing it under the control of the Lebanese army and international forces. This also entails confining legitimate arms to the state. All of this presupposes the complete existence of the state, that is, an immediate national understanding on electing a president and forming a fully empowered unity government. In this suffocating circumstance, a comprehensive roadmap for the country is absent, and it is not permissible for any one party to proceed in leading the country according to its whims and the logic of its alliances.

The Deputy Secretary-General of Hezbollah has expressed approval of a ceasefire without conditions. Subsequently, the resigned Prime Minister highlighted Hezbollah's (represented in the government) acceptance of the full implementation by both Israeli and Lebanese sides of Resolution 1701. However, the media spokesman for Hezbollah could not wait more than a few hours after this statement and announced another position for his party. This statement left the Lebanese government's position gasping in the face of the Israeli strike.

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