

On Sunday, February 25, acclaimed Lebanese journalist Joseph Nasri Samaha passed away at the age of 58. Samaha was the editor in chief of the newly formed Al Akhbar daily in Lebanon, having previously served as the editor in chief of the Lebanese daily As Safir from 2001 to 2005. The following are six selections from his columns in Al Akhbar, including his last, translated by Mideastwire.com. For other material related to Samaha, contact info@mideastwire.com.

“A blue helmet's occupation”

<http://www.al-akhbar.com/ar/node/2051>

Joseph Samaha, the editor-in-chief of Al Akhbar, an independent daily, wrote on August 23, 2006 that: “The world is preoccupied with Lebanon, which is something that tickles the national narcissism. This is wrong. The world is truly preoccupied... with Israel. In the Security Council, the capitals of decision, and in dozens of countries that are candidates in partaking in the UNIFIL, there is a lot of commotion. However, after scrutiny, it becomes obvious that the preoccupation with the aggressed is due to the attention given to the aggressor. What does this remark reveal to us:

“Firstly, the Israeli approval, even if only in form, that UN forces which are affiliated to the Security Council be positioned at the border, contradicts with a constant creed. The rule is that the army protects the state along with the agreements that are imposed on its neighbours and which only require the presence of monitors or multinational forces. The Israeli approval is a sign of relative relief to the American role in defining the mission of these forces and controlling their components. In other words, Israel is comforted by the ‘New World Order’ which is predominated by America, a predominance that is trying to translate itself, in vain, into a ‘New Middle East Order’.

“This predominance is not just the one that was revealed after September 11, but more particularly after the retreat of the wide criticisms against the American venture in Iraq. We must add that this Israeli and (American) relief is somewhat necessary. It also expresses the discovery of the ‘limits of strength’, i.e. the discovery of the limits of the Israeli capability to conduct its desired and proclaimed tasks in Lebanon... This leads to the conclusion that Israel is dealing with a world that has truly changed and [it] needs to catch its breath in order to realize all the changes it must make following the recent war.

“Secondly, Israel is not about to accept similar forces in the occupied Palestinian

territories. It has recanted the 'Disengagement Initiative' and only sees escalation on the horizon. Yet, it does not perceive any role for the UN, its committees, forces and resolutions. The Arabs will discover that, yet again, when they head for the Security Council to 'revive' the settlement process. The approval in Lebanon and the refusal in Palestine, are two sides of the same coin.

"In Lebanon, the approval provides the chance to demand the implementation of tasks that are an extension of what Israel tried to achieve and failed. For Israel, the UN forces are the left arm that is supposed to do what the right arm failed to achieve... In other words, this transferral changes the tool while the task remains the same. The secret of the aforementioned Israeli wager is its trust in Washington's ability to subdue the international agenda to carry out its wishes and those of its ally.

"Thirdly, there is no wonder about Israel's relief vis-à-vis the Security Council. It has violated the UN charter for it, and instead of being concerned with maintaining international peace and stability, it started talking about 'a cessation of hostilities, in preparation for a permanent ceasefire', which entailed the death of hundreds of victims. It took a whole month to hold its meeting because America and Britain wanted that and because France took a long time to change its mind.

"The Council's delay, the resolution bills which it addressed successively, and the Arab complicity, were all factors which contributed to the Israeli delight. Hadn't it been for the military resistance, the field confrontation and the wisdom of the Lebanese people, Resolution 1791 would have been an Israeli resolution in full, instead of being inclined towards Israel like is the case now.

"Fourthly, Israel is surely following the talks that are ongoing in countries which might participate in the UNIFIL, and follow-ups bring comfort. There are countries that are eager to partake in the sea blockade to avoid any confrontation with Israel. There are countries that want to isolate Lebanon from Syria. The Germans are bearing the weight of their history and have no bigger fear than to attack a 'Jewish' soldier. The Italians are asking for a ceasefire from Israel in order to come. Moreover, it is said that Israel's request that any country which does not recognize the [Israeli] entity be banned from partaking [in the UN forces] was approved...

"Fifthly, it has become legitimate to ask whether the 'seventh chapter' was removed, in response to a hidden Israeli request. It is true that it was exclusively addressed to the Lebanese side, but there is a possibility that it might be interpreted in a way that imposes the fight against the Israeli aggressions. In this regard, one must point out the 'preferential treatment' that the Israeli violations are getting.

"Sixthly, there is a new outlook over the international balance of powers and the post 'global war against terror' world, at the base of the Israeli position. The best portrayal of these developments, resides in the way with which Georges Bush addressed Jacques Chirac, his 'rival' in the Iraqi war. The American is almost reprimanding the Frenchman and is almost reiterating the contempt shown by his country's press towards France, its policies and president. Not only is he waving a second Security

Council resolution while Paris is not uttering one word, but he is also luring France by allowing it to hold a position in Lebanon.

“Bush scorns the French: ‘Yesterday they issued a statement and today they issued another one’, then raises their status the way he does with his Third World allies: ‘France is a friend and an ally’..., and finally gives his blessing when he issues his ruling: ‘France will remain a key player on the international scene, and a highly important player in Lebanon.’ In other words, the emperor is granting the former mandatory power a share in Lebanon, as long as it improves its services...

“Yet Israel does not seem completely satisfied and is objecting to the fact that the complementarity between its army and the UN forces is not literal. What it really wants for Lebanon, is a ‘blue helmet’s occupation’.”

"Europe and 'King George'"

<http://www.al-akhbar.com/ar/node/3238>

Joseph Samaha commented in the September 1, 2006 issue of Al Akhbar, an independent newspaper, about the deployment of the European troops in southern Lebanon and its possible repercussions. Samaha wrote: "The Europeans are coming. In days, thousands of them will spread out in southern Lebanon. The 'old continent' has never before participated so heavily in any of the peacekeeping missions set about by the United Nations. The question that immediately comes to mind is: do the European elites realize the critical nature of the situation and its sensitivity? We say that the easiest thing that could happen is that those troops could come as the vanguard of a belated 'crusade' cobbled together and sent to us by 'King George' to fight the 'Fascist Islam'."

Samaha added: "This is not only the easiest possibility but it has already the perception among Arab and Islamic mediums. In this case, we are facing a dangerous escalatory period in the 'clash of civilizations' which started as a mythical hypothesis and then started gaining credibility day by day due to the arrogance of the American administration and its endorsement of Israel's wildness. France and Italy are two central states in the European presence in Lebanon. A sort of switching of roles took place between them in the last few years. During the war on Iraq, Paris led the dissenters from Washington's policies, while Silvio Berlusconi's Rome was following a course expressed rudely by the then Prime Minister and which was exposed by the media of Oriana Valachi. But in this war, the partnership of Broody-Massimo played a fairly moderate role while Jack Chirac stuck himself to George Bush before attempting to separate from him in what was similar to the separation of a Siamese twin."

Samaha continued: "It is a bit too early to ascertain what the European middle stand will settle to. But the influential and ruling European elites are called upon to realize the vitality of the role played by their countries. It was said before that Europe is an economic giant but a political midget. But the Lebanese mission suggests today that Europe is a giant when it wants to be or at least a proxy giant militarily. Can it be so

preset on the field while not possessing a foreign policy, lacking so far, worthy of the name? Honesty demands that we say that there is a bit of anxiety about the European heading. Europe seceded during the Iraq war and the German-French axis (endorsed by Russia) led the objection front to the American individuality. But a short period hence following this occasion which damaged the NATO relations produced a different reality but also under the leadership of the France- German axis."

Samaha added: "Paris is responsible, to a certain extent, for the blunders of the American policy in Lebanon for reasons too lengthy to recount. The replacement of Gerhard Schroeder by Angela Merkel caused a clear shift towards going along with American policies. Thus, after the 12th of July, what used to be a double cessation on Iraq became a double agreement on Lebanon. Anxiety is a must then despite the early signs of moderation in the most recent speech made by the French president. The European change in attitude is not only discernible in the Lebanese subject, but it is also strongly present in what relates to the Palestinian cause as well. The states of the Union have gone over philosophically to the Bush administration. The occupation is no longer the problem but 'terrorism' is. The difference between the two concepts is so wide and will lead eventually to the starvation of the Palestinian people as a punishment for its democratic choice. It is unnecessary to say that the European alignment with the American policy in the Middle East is the royal entrance to marginalization..."

“Europe is yawning”

<http://www.al-akhbar.com/ar/node/3663>

Joseph Samaha, editor in chief of Al Akhbar, an independent newspaper, commented in the September 5, 2006 issue about the latest developments in the European attitude towards the events in the Middle East. Samaha wrote: “The most recent meeting of the foreign ministers of the European Union witnessed an unprecedented event. It seemed as if this organization has suddenly matured and wanted to wrestle away its right of independent thinking and free speech. The meeting took place to the rhythm of military landings or the promise of landings in southern Lebanon. The mission is dangerous and sensitive. Thousands are participating in it. The ‘rules of engagement’ imply a dose of seriousness. This mission could not have come off without an accompanying speech of the same calibre.”

Samaha added: “More than one participating minister repeated that ‘Europe is waking up’ and that contributing to the implementation of resolution 1701 is a turning point in history in the sense that the European paralysis in dealing with Middle East issues now belongs to the prehistoric period. ‘We want a role’ a minister announced. He added ‘We will look into how to exploit the military presence in Lebanon to start regional negotiations’. The commissioner for foreign relations Benita Ferrero Waldner clarified that the gathered will discuss how to ‘enliven an international conference to encourage communications between the Israelis and Palestinians’. The Swedish foreign minister is the one that pointed to a ‘European reawakening’ and called for cementing the ‘European political role and presence’. He added ‘We want

to be credible partners to the people of the region and its governments culturally economically, and politically and even in security issues’.”

Samaha continued: “The German minister Frank Steinmeier added that their interest goes beyond ‘peace on the northern borders of Israel’ and encompasses the ‘heart of the struggle and its solution i.e. the Israeli-Palestinian relations’. The Dutch foreign minister saw that the time is suitable now for more than deploying the temporary force in southern Lebanon, for in his opinion its ‘the time to reopen negotiations about the peace project in the Middle East’... We can’t attribute solely to the events in Lebanon this transformation which allowed the European Union to discover itself. But the aggression on Lebanon and its result came as a midpoint between a past heavy with conflicts and threats and a future open to even more severely violent possibilities. While the events were proving the validity of the past European approach to the crises in the region, they were at the same time highlighting the European absence and the results of the American Israeli monopoly.”

Samaha added: “It seemed as if the Europeans were politically coming to the region and that what is taking place in the Lebanese south is a ‘political invasion’ that will stretch from the beach of the Middle East to the interior of the whole of the Arab world. The European return is good by itself. Any interference that erases the American monopoly is a step in the right direction. But scrutinizing a number of attitudes leads to a decrease in optimism. First when most European ministers talk about ‘restarting the peace process’ they imply that they mean to enliven the ‘road map’. They overlook the fact that this ‘tool’ no longer has any use. They miss the fact that this was used to marginalize them. They forget that the next Arab move will be to call for internationalizing the conflict and returning it to the Security Council. They miss the fact that the unilateral Israeli withdrawal from Gaza directed a heavy blow to this map because it terminated its concept based on ‘parallel moves’.

"They overlook the fact that Ehud Olmert has just cancelled the disengagement plan in the West Bank. They overlook the internal situation in Israel which might endorse extremist rightist headings and the fact that the map leads to the doorstep of negotiations about the major issues while what is needed is to enter into the heart of those issues. They also overlook that the map doesn’t deal with all of the occupied Arab territories. The signal to this map is a return to an ancient past and not evidence of a new ‘reawakening’.”

Samaha continued: “Secondly, the European officials used this occasion to pass off an attitude that George Bush had already mentioned to Ariel Sharon in his famous guarantees letter. In the opinion of the spokeswoman for Solana, the return in the West Bank to the borders of 1967 is now conditional upon ‘slight modifications to the borders on which everyone agrees’. Any start based on this point will result in a cart Blanche to Israel to continue building settlements and stealing land without any return. Thirdly, in the European speeches there appear signs of the siding with the American-Israel attitude which we witnessed in the recent period.

"For example: the obstacles in the way of peace are always either the ‘continued Palestinian violence’ or Hamas refusing the terms imposed on it or to form a national

unity government under the terms of Mahmud Abbas. The statements are empty of any condemnations of the occupation or the violence meted out to the Palestinians. The European ministers overlooked the fact that the number of Palestinian victims during the war on Lebanon is larger than the number of Israeli casualties in the war..."

"Lebanon: the class struggle all the way to its sectarian end"

<http://www.al-akhbar.com/ar/node/16165>

Joseph Samaha, editor in chief of Al Akhbar, an independent pro-opposition newspaper, wrote in the daily's December 19, 2006 issue about the latest developments on the Lebanese political scene. Samaha wrote: "Karl Marx used to say that Britain is the country in which the class struggle could go all the way to its end. So can we say about Lebanon that it is the country in which the class struggle could go all the way to its sectarian end? This sort of 'amendment' comes to mind when we follow the latest statements by the prominent figures and the media tools of the 14th of March movement about the open protest in downtown Beirut. The key term in describing the protest and the policies and headings that it represents is that all that we see is closely linked to the 'culture of death'. One of them uttered this description then added, while he was between the ranks of the strong international and regional forces protecting him, 'they won't pass,' thus repeating the famous call of 'La Pasionara' which should have been the purview of those who prevented the Israeli aggression from passing."

Samaha added: "That this 'one of them' was armed with a shallow reading of the western intellect didn't prevent this term from spreading around. The Prime Minister now lectures that the 'majority of the Lebanese chooses the culture of life and not death'. Another March leader, with a bloody military history, translated this by saying that the protestors are trying to make Lebanon 'the country of the poor and poverty' and added that their interest was to spread the 'philosophy of poverty and lack of prosperity'. A person doesn't need much effort to discover how 'poverty' and 'death' are closely linked in the basket of accusations directed against the 'revolutionaries'. When these descriptions come to be used in a media performance hell bent on telling some citizens what other citizens are doing then we would have touched upon the level of moral scandal."

Samaha continued: "Here are samples of what is being written these days: 'water pipes', 'roasting pits', 'cancellation of the holidays is a sign of the culture of death', 'popular markets', 'piles of empty bottles', 'nauseous smells', 'insults', 'sadistic aggressive tendencies', 'frowns, dark glances, and mourning', 'hatred of life', 'as if they weren't from this country', 'total enmity to businesses', 'garbage'... This is only the tip of the iceberg. We are here facing 'Lebanon-nized' class hatreds, i.e. class hatreds that have been domesticated by dressing them in ideological sectarian stigmatizations that draw deeply on the racial sub-consciousness of a chauvinistic rightwing awareness. It is clear here that this hatred is not directed against poverty but against the poor for being poor with all the characteristics that are said to set them apart especially when this is juxtaposed with their sectarian identity with all its aggressive and destructive

tendencies..."

Samaha added: "Those who know of the deep motives that supplied the fascist parties with their most bloody cadres can discover among the Lebanese, in this moment of hostility towards the poor, a new source of supply for a party that hasn't been formed yet... Those who spread such whimsical notions believe that if they change their own political allegiances then they have changed their social class. We see them angry at the 'Riyad-Al-Solh square' [where the Shi'i gather] and wary of the Martyrs square [where the supporters of the Free Patriotic Movements gathered] because the second represents to them a lost paradise because its 'social behaviour' should have resulted in a different political attitude... They hate the protest because it is chaotic and they would have hated it if it had been organized. They hate the 'culture of death' but they support a direction that wants to base political life on martyrs and the absolute priority of punishing the murderers. They condemn the 'cost' of the protest yet they forget the cost of their previous protests. They see a terrible gathering in downtown Beirut but they don't see anything wrong with the protests on the sidelines... There is a class base for the ongoing struggle but we are in Lebanon where a struggle of this type can cause other tensions that are not related to it..."

“Bush’s speech: the meanings behind the words”

<http://www.al-akhbar.com/ar/node/18604>

Joseph Samaha, editor in chief of Al Akhbar, an independent pro-opposition newspaper, commented in the January 12, 2007 issue about the speech made by the American president, George W. Bush. Samaha wrote: “George Bush causes that type of irritation that is caused by a broken record, with the difference that his sort of irritation reaches the extent of torture as a result of his overwhelming ability to spout lies, and repeat them, and bang over people’s heads with them while staying nonchalant at the changes in the situation and the huge humanitarian and material cost in return for this course which hurts millions while the captain remains insistent on it. We were told to wait for a speech to announce a new strategy for Iraq and the region. We waited and we were punished for this with a speech that truly constitutes a test for our nerves and temper.”

Samaha added: “The speech that was made yesterday is only a compilation of the speeches that were made before and they mean only one thing: Bush is not only going forth with his destructive war, he intends to deepen it and even expand it. Thus he used for his own interest a well-known Israeli slogan that says: what is not solved with force can be solved with more force. Let us try to read the speech: he said: the American forces are engaged in a battle that will set the course of the universal war on terrorism and the future of American national security. He means: this explanation for the fighting means that it will continue. The intention behind this explanation is to justify the war with empty threats to scare the Americans so that they will forget that Iraq has never constituted a threat to them and that attacking it was by choice and that terrorism came to its land later on.”

Samaha continued: “He said: The new strategy will help win the war. He means:

victory is still a viable target which necessitates dropping any call for a settlement. Bush had already announced that the “mission is over” then he had announced the first “strategy for victory” and now he is doing it again in the consideration that adding the adjective “new” to the strategy is enough to get results that were impossible to attain before. He said: we wagered on the elections and the training of the Iraqi force but. He means: we, the administration, do not understand a thing about the complex Iraqi reality so that the elections and the training of the forces came out as part of building up and arming the Iraqi divisiveness. He said: the result of 2006 was negative especially after the attacks on the shrines and the start of the sectarian violence. He means: the situation was better before that then bang! And since the attack happened less than a year ago and caused confrontations that wasted the lives of dozens of thousands of people, we waited all this [time] to do something.”

Samaha added: “He said: the current situation is unacceptable and I am responsible and there must be a change. He means: I want to “amend” the desire expressed by the American people in the congressional elections. They didn’t vote for pulling out of Iraq but for “changing” the plan. Since I am responding to the desires I attribute to the people then, although I am responsible, I shouldn’t be punished. He said: We held some negotiations and we benefited from the Baker-Hamilton report and we confirmed that there is no magical solution but failure will be catastrophic for the United States. He then concludes after spelling out the results of failure by confirming that success is a must. He means: We faked listening to other opinions but we arrived at a result that says that the current failure being used against us is the best argument we have so we are continuing down this road because we have failed as failure justifies even more failure.”

Samaha continued: “He said: the security in Baghdad is a top priority because the sectarian violence is entrenched over there. There are promises from the Iraqi government that they will help. He means: the essence of the solution in Iraq is military and not political. The new American role will be connected to the sectarian violence (he doesn’t use the words “civil war”) as we will stand first with this side [the Shi’is] then with the opposing one [the Sunnis]. If we didn’t succeed then we will blame the Iraqis for not helping us enough. He says: we committed two mistakes: not providing enough forces and the constraints on the operations of the forces. He means: search for those responsible for these mistakes. I have always repeated that I will obey the field commanders as long as they agreed with me so when they differed with me I fired them. He says: in the past, we cleared an area then pulled out but this tactic will change as we will enter all the areas. Al-Maliki has given us a green light. He means: this time I will lie to the Americans and the world more fluently. The slogan that was used in the previous victory strategy was “liberate, control, and build”. We didn’t implement it. It seems that Al-Maliki, or those who preceded him, had not found the button for the green light.”

Samaha added: “He said: I clarified to the Iraqis that they might lose our support and they seem to have understood this. He means: we will not be held responsible. But the American citizens have to forget what I said earlier in the speech about the terribly dangerous results of not succeeding. He said: there are other procedures demanded from the Iraqi government: the securing of the provinces, dividing the oil wealth,

spending ten billion dollars, creating jobs, expanding the political process, re-evaluating the de-Ba'athification policies, developing a compromise over the amendments to the constitution...He means: the Iraqis have to correct the mass of mistakes committed by the occupation that I didn't mention in the speech. The victim has to help organize the operations of the executioner. The reward for this will be that what Halliburton and its friends have stolen will be given to the Iraqi "friends". He said: we will benefit from the Baker-Hamilton recommendations concerning the training of the Iraqi army. He means: since I don't want anyone to say that I threw the report of the "wise men" aside, I chose from it only one recommendation which happens to be, coincidentally, the one directed to me by my national security advisor Steven Hadley."

Samaha continued: "He said: we will continue to hunt Al-Qa'idah and we will pay special attention to the Al-Anbar province. He means: the war is endless. While we are waiting for 4,000 new soldiers for Al-Anbar we hunted Al-Qa'idah in Somalia!. He said: Iran and Syria are responsible for the deterioration in Iraq. We will face all those who give weapons to our enemies and we will seek out their networks and destroy them. He means: forget any dialogue with Tehran or Damascus. The United States will continue deepening the war and even maybe expanding it. The Baker-Hamilton report and any other suggestion about preparing a stable environment to treat the Iraqi situation is meaningless. I wasn't under the influence of the "neoconservatives" because, in this regard, I am one of them."

Samaha added: "He said: we will encourage the countries in the region, especially the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and Egypt and Jordan, to support Iraq. These countries must understand that America's defeat in Iraq constitutes a threat to them. Condoleezza Rice is going to the region to build up support for Iraq and to continue the necessary diplomacy to bring about peace in the Middle East. He means: there is a basis for an alliance between the United States and the "Arab moderates": both factions are fighting extremism. We will not use democracy to pressure our friends if they start considering the occupation as a guarantee for themselves and if they help convince the Iraqi insurgents to give up sovereignty. If the Arab moderates want to settle the conflicts in the region then they have to forget about a comprehensive solution and settle for cosmetic movements in the Palestinian-Israeli tracks, despite the knowledge that this might lead to internal Palestinian fighting."

Samaha continued: "He said: we are fighting the decisive ideological battle in our time and the American interests necessitate that we advance freedom. He means: I haven't forgotten that democracy is the excuse that I used to justify the war after the bankruptcy of the weapons of mass destruction excuse. It is ok to bring it back to mind as a long term goal. But politically, the duality of moderation-extremism is the replacement for democracy-totalitarianism. He said: we expect losses but we will succeed. He means: I will not commit any of my previous mistakes. It is ok to introduce a little bit of forewarning. We must alert the Americans that the battle is tough while promising them that we will succeed, they hate losing and not the occupation. He said: our enemies' surrender will not come through celebrations. The democratic Iraq will not be perfect but it will fight terrorism. He means: the battle is long and Iraq might not leave the tunnel into which it has entered."

He said: we studied the other options available to us but we found them unsuitable. But dispute this - we will continue consulting with the congress and we will form a special committee for this end. He means: Bush is the same before and after the congressional elections. He sees no harm in negotiating as he will not act on any opinion that disagrees with him. The president is the one that makes the decisions, those who do not like this, then let them try to break these decisions.”

"The failed meeting: quartet and not tripartite"

<http://www.al-akhbar.com/ar/node/22833>

Joseph Samaha, the editor in chief of the independent pro-opposition newspaper Al Akhbar, commented in the February 20 issue about the results of yesterdays meeting between the American foreign secretary Condoleezza Rice, the Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, and the Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas. Samaha wrote: "Condoleezza Rice failed in her first Palestinian test. She didn't come this time to discuss the details. She wanted, based on Tzipi Livni's advice, to "open a political horizon". This means inaugurating the discussion in the issues of the final solution which should have started in 1999 according to the Oslo agreement. What was called "opening a new political horizon" is a tactic in the general Americans strategy whose motto is to continue the attack on the region and using the political track as a base on which a new regional alliance is built under the headline of "realignment" and pitting the "moderates" against the "extremists"

Samaha added: "When Rice scheduled her visit, the American administration didn't hide the fact that the goal was to distance the Fatah movement away from Hamas, since both movements are positioned in separate camps, and to subordinate the relationship between them to the relationship between the two camps: confrontation. To this was added signals to a "political horizon" that would arm the "moderates" by freeing them from the "extremists" as a prelude to harvesting the "fruits of peace". The infighting in Gaza started in this context. But the Palestinians, when faced with the wide open doors to disaster, took the obvious choice and decided to prefer the minimum limit of civil peace over self-annihilation that won't leave any of them alive to harvest the "fruits of peace", if these fruits exist."

Samaha continued: "The Palestinian body couldn't lose a limb and remain alive. The Palestinians preferred to remain alive so Rice came to tell them that since they avoided death, then they will remain in the prison of the occupation. The only Palestinian to receive his national rights is a dead Palestinian. This is a quick prelude to what made the "tripartite meeting" so miserable. The main reason behind this which called for the punishment of the Palestinians is the Mecca agreement which was called for, endorsed, and blessed by the Saudi kingdom and for which it received praise. The Saudi king Abdullah Bin Abdul-Aziz reiterated his attitude towards the aforementioned agreement on the eve of the tripartite meeting. He spoke the day before yesterday in front the members of the Saudi human rights committee and explained the reasons behind calling for it..."

Samaha added: "If this is the attitude of the kingdom towards the agreement, the American-Israeli alliance is not only punishing Fatah and Hamas but also the Saudi role in the Palestinian arena. In this sense, we can say that the failed meeting was a "quartet" meeting and not a tripartite meeting. This is a noteworthy development that Rice refused to comment on when the reporter in Haaretz asked her: are you angry at Abbas or the Saudi king? She presented an answer that is a masterpiece in hypocrisy as she reiterated that she is against the deal but also against the shedding of Palestinian blood! The truth is that Rice took an attitude towards the "ruler of Mecca" when she took this attitude towards the Mecca agreement..."
