

# **What sort of uprising do we need in Iraqi Kurdistan?**

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Before the uprising of March 1991 in Kurdistan, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) armed forces (Peshmarga) virtually did not exist, except for the ones on the borders with Iran and in very remote areas. This new situation resulted from the Iran/Iraq war and the Anfal campaign run by the former Regime that cost the life of over 180 thousand villagers who were evacuated and disappeared with their villages completely destroyed by way of demolition. When the uprising happened, the government forces were kicked out by the mass movement, and then the PUK and KDP with the help of US and Western countries came back. In the short time, they controlled these towns and cities that liberated by people. In May 1992, they formed and shared Administration through a scenario of the fake election. On 05/10/1992 they started fighting the PKK, this lasted about 3 months. In 1995, PUK and KDP became separated and started fighting one another and divided Kurdistan between them.

During the fighting PUK had defeated KDP almost completely, therefore, the head of KDP, Masoud Barzani, asked the former Iraqi president Saddam Hussein for his support.

On 31/08/96, the former regime's army had arrived Erbil and rescued the KDP. Afterwards, the KDP launched attacks on PUK and managed to control many areas including towns, cities and villages, which were under the control of the PUK previously. The PUK had no choice but to ask the Iranian regime for support, so with the help of Iran, PUK managed to gain control of those places that been lost to the KDP and set up its own administration. After this fighting, PUK and KDP controlled different regions of Kurdistan. KDP set up its Administration in Erbil and the towns around it. PUK set up its own Authority in Sulaymaniyah and the towns around.

In 2003 the former regime fell after the invasion of Iraq by the US and Western countries, nonetheless an extraordinary opportunity was created for PUK and KDP to form Kurdistan Regional Government, the KRG has formed as the result of the election of 2005. The second election after the invasion was in 2009. From 2005 to 2014 both parties (PUK & KDP) were the major powers in KRG. In the last election of 2014, the balance of power slightly changed. The so-called Movement of Change (Goran) that was formed in 2007, came second in the election, it entered the government shared power with KDP, PUK, Islamic organizations and other small parties. However, the corruption, terrorizing of people, disappearances, killing and assassinating of political activists, writers, journalists and women continued.

In short, no serious reforms took place while 'Goran' shared power with KDP, PUK and the rest. In fact, the situation has got worse. In October of 2015, the KDP sacked all the MPs, Ministers and the heads of Parliament from 'Goran', Movement of Change, and were not allowed to return to Erbil. Since then there has been no effective parliament in Kurdistan.

## **It is People who are in crisis not the KRG**

Kurdish people in Iraqi Kurdistan (Bashur) under the control of KRG have dramatically suffered economically and politically. KRG has failed to pay its employees of 1.4 Millions since October 2015. From this month the teachers are supposed to receive only half of their wage. The KRG blamed the Iraqi central government for not sending the proportion of its annual budget of 17% when due. The KRG supposed to export 550 thousand barrels of oil daily via central government, then the central government should releases the proportion of the . I, the KRG has been selling the oil directly bypassing the central government and kept the money without showing any official record of the detail income, or how it was sold and to whom.

The KRG stated there are also other reasons contributing to the drying up its budget such as the tumbling of oil prices, war with Isis and the cost of having over 1.5 Millions of refugees from Syria and the south/ middle regions of Iraq.

Since October of 2015 trade, market, construction work has all slowed down and all projects have almost been stopped due to running out of money. In addition, thousands especially young people have left Kurdistan heading to Europe. It is difficult for people in Kurdistan to live in such miserable situation under the KRG. Therefore, people do not have any choice other than protesting and boycotting work, mainly in the towns and cities under the control of Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK).

From the start of this month demos and protests of small scale have started in Erbil, the capital of KRG, that controlled by Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP). Many of the offices and schools from primary to secondary have been closed because the teachers and other employees have no money to pay transports fares to reach their workplaces. The prices of everything has risen consequently, many shops and companies have been closed.

Like elsewhere it is the people who are in crisis not the system, not the government. It is people who are lack of confidence, dependent on political parties. It is the people lost faith in themselves and look for a leader to lead them. It is the people who have not learned from previous experiences, they still believe in the notorious and powerful historical lie of Parliamentary election.

## **We do not need any kind of uprising**

There have been many uprising in different countries in the past. More recently 1979 in Iran, 1991 in Bashur, Iraqi Kurdistan, and in the last five years the “Arab Spring” continues. However, the uprising in all these countries ended up with a terrible civil war or Regime change that in fact was not much better than their former rulers. The reasons for that are simple, either led by political parties or by people with no plan for the post-uprising and eventually tamed by US and Western countries. They mainly wanted to change the power not the society, they wanted the political revolution, not the social revolution, and they wanted to make changes from the top not the bottom of the society. Because of this they easily fell under the influences of the US, and other western countries’ political and neo-liberal economy. In the end, not only have failed to bring real changes, in fact, the post- uprising served the elites, upper class and the interest of the current system much better than previous regimes. The failure also disappointed people and made them not to believe in most of the protest, demos, and even uprising.

At present, there are lots of talks and suggestions among the Iraqi Kurdish especially into the ranks of communists, authoritarian socialists, lefties and the liberals for the uprising. What they want will not bring the better outcome than what has happened in the Arab Countries in my opinion.

In order to avoid that rout and bring the real changes we need to form radical, non-hierarchical local groups that are anti-authority, anti-state and anti-power. We need to organize ourselves in the neighborhoods, factories, work places, schools, universities, on the streets, and the villages. We need to form communes and cooperatives, to set up people’s assembly, citizen assembly, libertarian municipalism in every village, city, and town. Using direct action and direct democracy

in decision making that should be the way of progressing and developing people's power. We need to do all these independently of the political parties.

Our goals must be to change the society from the bottom to the top, from the political and regime changes to economical, educational, social and cultural changes. We need to work on building people's power instead of the dictatorship of the proletariat or any other class power.

We do not just need an uprising. We need a kind of uprising that enables us to make real changes in establishing a socialist/anarchist society. This can be done through Democratic Confederalism, Libertarian Communalism.

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