

Organization

Taha Hussein

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A ministry is not resolute, nor anything resembling resolute, unless it organizes everything into an order that lets it extend its authority over it, and bend it to its will.

And who could possibly claim that our ministry lacks resolve, near or far, and who could possibly deny that our ministry is resolute on every side and in every direction, with resolve reaching it from every quarter, and resolve springing from it as water springs from gushing fountains?! A resolve fierce and fearsome.

The accredited ministers tasted it, and the English tasted it, from the good man, and knew it to be bitter and galling, with no way to bear it; and the people of Mansoura, and the people of Qalyubia, tasted it from the minister of the interior, and knew it to be scorching and searing. And the professors and schoolteachers, and the university students and schoolchildren, tasted it from the minister of tradition, and knew it to be a bitterness that breeds gloom in the soul, and makes hearts bleed with sorrow and pain. And the royal advisers tasted it from the minister of finance, and knew that it first stirs anger and later stirs a smile, that it is bitter yet sweet, sour yet pleasant. And the brokers tasted it from the minister of finance, and loved it and hated it, feared it and coveted it; so they grew angry, then content, then angry again, and now sway between anger and contentment. They wish the pleasure to last, the delight to continue, and the joy to remain. And the lawyers tasted it from the minister of justice, and grew ravenous for it, and devoted to it, throwing themselves upon it as birds throw themselves upon water after crossing the desert; whatever flavor of it the minister of justice let them taste, they asked for more, and craved yet another flavor. He warned them, and they found the warning sweet, and were not satisfied by it, seeing in it nothing but a preamble, of the kind that precedes a meal to awaken one's appetite and desire for it; so they pressed the minister to give them more, and he obliged them with a law.

It appears the minister's fare is delicious, and that the lawyers are hungry, for they had scarcely tasted the law before they craved another law, or other laws besides. Watch them receive the law rejoicing in it,

their joy all but carrying them into the air and up to the sky. They gather and deliberate, then declare their rejection of the law, their disagreement with it, and their refusal to carry it out, claiming it violates the constitution, and that no ruler is owed obedience in violating the constitution, and insisting that Makram remain their head, though the ministry has ordered that Makram not be their head, and they charge their head with announcing this stance of theirs to the ministry, which their head does without hesitation and without any pretense of deliberation.

I owe the lawyers an apology if I declare to them that I do not understand this stance of theirs as they declare it and as they wish people to understand it, but understand it instead for what it truly is. They reject the law only out of craving for another law, and they disobey the minister only to provoke him into pressing legislation upon them further, for they have tasted the pleasure of this particular flavor of persecution.

For the minister is Egyptian, and the Egyptian is generous by nature [never asked] without giving, never called upon without answering. The lawyers asked, and the minister gave; the lawyers renew their asking, and the minister renews his giving. So the council of ministers met yesterday, and this morning's newspapers tell us that generosity has stirred the minister of justice, and that this stirring has passed from the minister to his colleagues, so that generosity now stirs the whole council, and the whole council is open-handed, generous, poised to give, eager to satisfy those who ask.

The native-court lawyers asked for a law, and the ministry will be bountiful with two: one for the native-court lawyers, and another for the sharia-court lawyers; for the ministry does not wish to give to one party and deny the other, does not wish to feed the native-court lawyers while leaving the sharia-court lawyers with their hearts burning in envy, their mouths watering for what their native-court brethren eat. The native-court lawyers asked for a law, and they will win it tomorrow or the day after, and the sharia-court lawyers will win its like.

Nor will the native syndicate alone be suspended, for the sharia syndicate will be suspended along with it, out of kindness toward it, and pity for it — for what would it do alone with life, once its sister had gone before it to death?! Both syndicates, then, will be suspended, and suspended by a law — God forgive us — nay, by two laws. And the lawyers are hungry, so let the ministers hasten in preparing the meal; let

the law — God forgive us — nay, the two laws, be drawn up with a speed no speed can match, and let the ministers approve them today or tomorrow, and let them be laid before parliament and considered without delay, and approved, and issued by the state, and let the meal be served to these hungry lawyers before the week is out. Statesmen have claimed that governing is nothing but foresight into the consequences of things, preparation for tomorrow, and readiness for emergencies. And our ministry excels at governing, knowing tomorrow as well as it knows yesterday.

It reckons that the lawyers will not be satisfied, and that the two new laws will not quiet this hunger that burns through them; and so it prepares for them yet another law, to be issued after these two, bringing order to their affairs, reform to their business, and a return of them to the right path. It appears this law, which has been in preparation for a long while, will be persuasive and sufficient, leaving the lawyers never hungry again; it will teach them what obedience is, and teach them what submission is. It will take their affairs out of the hands of the many among them and place them in the hands of the few, and will take the choosing of these few out of their hands and place it in other hands, better suited to choosing than they are. It will return them to what all Egyptians were returned to when the constitution was changed, for unchecked democracy had corrupted the people, and there was no way but to return them to moderation. And unchecked democracy had corrupted the lawyers too, so there is no way but to return them to moderation. And it had corrupted the students as well, so their clubs must be closed, their unions dissolved, and they themselves placed under new clubs and a new union, safe from the recklessness of democracy.

Have you seen, then, how truly resolute our ministry is, with resolve springing from it as water springs from gushing fountains? Every day a law, and every day an order; for everything a law, and for everything an order: laws for lawyers, laws for teachers, laws for students, laws for whatever you wish, and laws for whatever you do not wish.

And what worth would the ministry have if it did not prepare laws? And what would parliament do if it did not legislate laws? And what would the official gazette do if it did not publish laws? And how would Egyptians live if their lives were not ordered by laws? But what does the ministry make of the fact that the lawyers will remain hungry, unsatisfied by the laws it will issue, just as they were not satisfied by the laws issued thus far — for they hunger for justice and right, not for ordinances and

laws. Laws will follow upon laws, should the ministry's life be long enough, and the lawyers will devour them utterly, and there will be a race between the lawyers and the ministry, this one legislating and those devouring, and we shall see which of the two sides exhausts the other — whether it is the ministry that drives the lawyers to surfeit, or the lawyers who drive the ministry to exhaustion and ruin.

As for me, I am an adviser to the ministry, sincere in my advice to it, and I wish it would heed the advice I offer; let it abandon legislating, for legislation will never satisfy the lawyers nor achieve anything with them through it. The only way is to refer all the lawyers to the disciplinary council, for they all deserve referral to the disciplinary council; the order was given to them and they disobeyed it, the revelation descended upon them and they defied it, and the due reward of one who disobeys the order and defies the revelation is nothing but to be led before the disciplinary council. It would truly be remarkable if all the lawyers were referred to the disciplinary council, and in that there would be a lesson for those who heed no lesson, an admonition for those who heed no admonition, and a discipline for those who accept no discipline.

The lawyers will then look for someone to defend them before the disciplinary council, and find none, and so they will seek defenders in the lands of East and West; and trade will flourish as a result. And the disciplinary council will prove unable to try these hundreds, so judges and counselors will be appointed, and Egypt will witness an activity no country has witnessed before, a vigor unknown to nations and peoples, and the ministry will offer the whole world proof that resurgent Egypt has taken its place at the forefront of living nations, blazing a path to progress and leading itself toward perfection, and proof that the English are harsh, severe, and excessive in withholding independence from Egypt, and that all foreigners are harsh, severe, and excessive in their hesitation to abolish the Capitulations.

O God, I am sincere in the advice I offer the ministry; make our ministry one of those who listen to counsel and follow the best of it!