How many days are left until a “color revolution” in Saudi Arabia? Part 2

The suppression of women’s protests on October 26 and criticism that has appeared in this regard in the international media, has forced the authorities to talk defensively about their past successes on women’s issues. In this, they were aided by their Western allies, who shield their clients on human rights forums in every possible way. However, these successes relate to the period of active reform efforts of King Abdullah, who had been seriously ill for two years already, of course old age (over 90 years old, the exact age is unknown as in the early 20th century, authorities did not keep records) had an effect. In addition, these “successes”, namely the increase in the numbers of working women since 2006 by three times, from 90 to 330 thousand, widely opening doors of the universities for them, is a double-edged sword. The more educated and literate the women are, the more rights they demand. However, what rights are we talking about, if in the country more than 1.2 million women are divorced and cannot re-marry, because of sharia laws, ancient custom sand a lack of divorce documentation!

They do not have their own funds for living (everyone who has been to Saudi Arabia has seen the beggars at the gas stations), and the list of occupations allowed to them is extremely short – they can work in reception offices in hospital sand hotels, as sales persons in huge malls, etc. Only in October of this year, were they granted the right to practice law.

The process of growing demands on the part of women overlapped with the period of the beginning of the coming back of the students, who were sent to study abroad by the King Abdullah in the second half of the first decade within his program. There were a lot of them – about 150,000. The education was free, and they were also granted good stipends. However, these people, including women, coming back to Saudi Arabia upon studying in democratic countries cannot adapt to the orders of the 7th century.

Many people leave, but for women this way is closed – they cannot travel alone. As a result, young, educated, energetic girls, who have tasted the delights of life in the West, are staying at home, waiting for their relatives to marry them off. They express their protests in tweets now, and mostly about the ban on driving, but it is clear that this situation cannot continue indefinitely.

Young people, migrants, unemployment, women's issues, poverty, the gap between the rich and the poor, archaic governance system are not the only problems in society, rapidly grow in gin numbers, due to the Islamic refusal from introducing restrictions on fertility. There are Shiites from the Eastern Province, who are not allowed in to the public service, there is a historic confrontation between the conservative Najd and freedom-loving Hijaz, Yemeni Highlanders in the South, and the northern tribes, attracted to Jordan, and further a field, to historic Palestine.

And the response to these challenges cannot be found. Or rather, the recipes found bya wise monarch and reformer King Abdullah no longer work. Hewas betting on a slow but steady modernization measures, the gradual expansion of women’s rights, the development of industry and infrastructure. However, everything has its limit, and now the limit has been reached. Society is demanding more and the need for radical breaking of the old foundations is needed. Otherwise, there will be an explosion.

However, radical reforms are strongly opposed by Wahhabiclerics, having great power in society and in the country. This power derives from the covenant of King Abdulaziz, the founder, who concluded a “lifetime contract” with them,
as the Wahhabis initially supported his project of consolidation of the Arabian Peninsula lands into a single state. A violation of this covenant, taking into account the weight of the religious factor, will lead to the collapse of the country. The authorities know this, and have actually winded down the major reforms, in order to please the religious circles.

Moreover, the overgrown Saudi ruling family itself, being faced with serious problems, is looking for support from Allah, appealing to loyalty to the Quran and the Sunnah, strongly emphasizing that Sharia will solve the country's problems. The fact that the issue of human rights (and others) is intended to be solved in this way, is also evidenced by the government's latest decision on October 28. Bright, but very religious speeches of the king, Crown Prince Salman (who reads them), governor of Mecca, Khaled al-Faisal looks like a confirmation of the course of "relying on the foundations".

Let us recall that the slogan “Islam is the solution” was the slogan of the Egyptian “Muslim Brotherhood” who are so disliked here, and who came to power in Egypt in 2011 under this slogan. The result is well known. However, long ago it was said, that the lessons of history teach – that they teach nothing. It seems that we are dealing with such a case now.

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