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A message to the upcoming ambassador of President Biden to Riyadh

The US President, Joe Biden, plans, after a long delay, to nominate Michael Ratney as ambassador to Saudi Arabia. Well, if Mr. Ratney were to get this great honor, he will be welcome in Riyadh to spend two years with us in the quiet diplomatic quarter. In fact, this is going to be a very short period of time for ambassador Ratney given the enormous damage done to the bilateral ties that need to be rectified quickly and not a mere gloss over.

My advice to the ambassador Ratney, after appearing before the US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, to meet the former US ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Gen. John Abizaid, who was withdrawn by President Biden from Riyadh since he took office, under the pretext that Gen. Abizaid is to retire. Thus, the US embassy has no ambassador to this moment due to a decision made by a president who underappreciated the relationship with Saudi Arabia and sought to isolate it. However, it seems that policy backfired. And now President Biden is experiencing his worst times internally, externally, politically and economically. Indeed, as he is mired in troubles, he finds himself forced to change his position. And at last, he nominated his ambassador to Riyadh out of necessity rather than choice. This was a new presidential low unseemly of the United States.

Ambassador Ratney, if you were to accept my advice and sit down with your fellow ambassador Abizaid, you will find a candid talk about the Kingdom and I think that will help you to succeed in your mission. I urge you to listen to him and you will lose nothing. Gen. Abizaid has had worked previously here as an ambassador and has facts, figures and achieved tangible results. Moreover, he had a long military, security, diplomatic and administrative career and used all that to serve the interests of his country as well as of Saudi Arabia. He has gained experiences from his work in Saudi Arabia, the region and his experience is different from yours, will all due respect. In fact, your experience is drawn from your previous missions and positions in other posts as deputy assistant secretary of State, US envoy for Syria, US charge de affaires to Israel, a diplomat in Qatar, Iraq, Lebanon and Morocco. You are going to be here in Saudi Arabia and working in it is a different story. This is because the people here are different and has a vast experience in dealing with the world in which countries compete to partnership with them. Undoubtedly, your nomination as ambassador to Saudi Arabia at this time where the bilateral relationship is strained and your selection for this task came based on misjudged American perception in its foreign relationship.

For sure your nomination as ambassador to Saudi Arabia comes at a difficult and crucial time that our bilateral relationship is experiencing and your selection for this task comes based on misconceived US calculations at the present time in its foreign ties. Further, it was driven by a partisan political necessity in Washington that fits the phase that no one else understands better than you, if you were to come to Riyadh. In fact, your previous experiences are important, vast and we do appreciate that. Yet, once again, that would not help you much in Riyadh, in which you will find out that things were not said to you or said with inaccuracies and reports that brought embarrassment for those who initiated them and disrespect for others. And in fact, that is where shrewdness of any ambassador can play out. Since any ambassador comes to Riyadh to overcome somewhat engineered problems. And even for the embassy staff in Riyadh who will receive you warmly, you can figure out their real capabilities, smartness and professionalism, if you could understand Saudi Arabia with your own capability as ambassador with your own eyes and judgment and not by the eyes and minds, writings,

impressions, cultural, partisan and racial backgrounds and the influence of the Western media.

I would tell you something that you need to reflect upon. The fact that Riyadh, throughout its relationship with Washington, has not fallen into such deep and deadly holes that some malicious individuals inside and outside the US government are digging. That was due to the fact that Riyadh used to have a deep understanding of the United States, period.

On the other hand, just as an example, go over the statements of Mr. Biden spewing his hatred of Saudi Arabia since he was nominated for the presidency and what he did soon after he won the elections. He intentionally began to destroy this crucial relationship. Then look to where he currently stands of all that. Mr. Biden is a mere single person, with others, who failed in understanding Saudi Arabia due to their narrow-minded positions, personal incapability, overlook of their country's interests and their reliance on reports written by some paid Arabs and other organizations seeking political gains at the expense of everybody else and not in defense of those who they claim to defend their legitimate rights.

I am sure that every US ambassador understands the scale of his country's loss, that can't not be offset, with Saudi Arabia due to the policies of both, President Obama and President Biden.

In the end, as Saudi citizens, we have to understand that an ambassador, in the final analysis, is just a mirror that reflects the beauty or ugliness of his/her government.

Welcome Mr. Michael Ratney, as a potential ambassador of your fabulous country that enjoys great stature, exceptionalism and creative people. Once again, we as Saudi citizens, we like the United States and its people to advance our interests and yours in the journey of our mutual ties. However, we do not like those who hate us and take political stances based on that hatred

Mr. ambassador, the Saudis love their country and take pride in its standing and they close their ranks to stand behind their King and their Crown Prince. And they know who are their friends, who are their enemies and hypocrites.

We acknowledge your technological, industrial, military ingenuity, creative capacity of your people and your overall global influence. On the hand, from your side, you have to acknowledge Saudi Arabia's stature in terms of its history, its Arab and Islamic civilization, wisdom, foresight of its leaders and its role in the region and the world at large. It is impossible to change its position and principles through external pressures. Even its children would not accept disrespect of their country or any of its leaders.

Mr. Ratney, if you come as ambassador representing your country, you will find out through your various means that the Saudi citizens are angry because their American friend has helped terrorism against them. When I say terrorism here, I do not mean the mere abduction of a person or a bombing of an abandoned building, but being shelled, bombed by terrorists at their airports, homes, markets and energy plants that benefit the world, by Iranian ballistic missiles, explosive laden drones from the north, south, east and west. All that takes place while their American friend sees, watches that enjoying their horrendous images and their aggression targeting a country that is your friend and not your foe.

You have to tell them about that in Washington and assert it later to them after finding out about that by yourself and hear the sentiments of the Saudi and Gulf citizens in general, myself, the writer of this article and his family and neighbors. ■