



The Commander

The Guardians of the Cedars issued the following communiqué:

After two weeks of thorough and expansive debates, the Lebanese people had expected more courageous and objectives resolutions out of the Maronite Synod than were ultimately issued in the final statement. Especially since this was the first synod to be held in 268 years, has been 15 years in the making, and to which has participated a large gathering of spiritual and lay leadership of the Maronite Church, both resident in Lebanon and from the Lebanese Diaspora worldwide.

Although the final statement contained positive developments on certain issues, it nevertheless remained generally below expectations considering the historic and fateful circumstances which Lebanon is facing at the present time.

First, there is nothing new to the reference to liberty and shared living as “inseparable conditions for the true identity of this nation...” because freedom is a Lebanese conviction that is deeply-rooted in the soul of the people of Lebanon from ancient times, thousands of years before the advent of Christianity and Islam. The epics of heroism of the Lebanese people in their wars against the barbaric invasions that successively came their way from Babylon, Assyria, Persia, Greece, Arabs, and others testify to this conviction. Moreover, shared living is a historic fact that the Lebanese people have deliberately chosen to practice in their daily life for many decades.

Second, the “call on everyone to adopt the values of sharing and freedom in order for Lebanon to recover all the attributes of sovereignty, independence and free decision-making...” without making any reference whatsoever to the party that violates its sovereignty, independence, and free decision-making!!

Third, the mention of the decline in the standard of living and “the dangerous lack of basic needs that the Lebanese suffer from, the unemployment that continues to push young people into emigrating...”, again without any reference to the causes of this dangerous crisis and who is behind it, as well as the practical solutions to deal with it that the Synod knows will stem the flood of emigration of the young people who are essential for such solutions to succeed.

As to the negatives, they generally are in the weakness and ambiguity of positions, and occasionally in the making of flagrant historic mistakes!!!

First, the lack of mention of the Syrian occupation or its condemnation, or the demand that it ceases since it is the cause of all the problems and the cancer that is on the verge of killing both Lebanon and the Maronite Church.

Second, the statement that “the Maronites are part of the Arab world...” when history says they are part of Lebanon and nowhere else and that Lebanon is a self-standing final nation within a well-defined distinct geographic and historic context. As to the so-called “Arab world”, it has no existence in fact. The states that make up the Arab League are a mosaic of diverse nations and different races that have no common geography or history.

Third is the call for “just solutions to the causes of the Arab world, its peoples, and its states, with Palestine as the leading cause...” instead of saying: with Lebanon as the leading cause, for there is no cause that is more important than its sacred cause, especially when it is in mortal danger. All Lebanon’s problems have been caused by the Arabs. Lebanon suffers today from all its miseries as a consequence of the fact that it has been forcibly pushed into the Israeli-Arab conflict in general, and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in particular.

The Lebanese people ask the Maronite Synod, which holds its second session in the fall of next year, to take patriotic positions of greater courage, determination, and objectivity, in match with the dangers that threaten Lebanon. The Synod must call the Syrian occupation for what it is and without any equivocation. It must shy away from cajoling and hand-kissing according to the Lord: “Let your yes be yes, and your no be no, and anything else is the devil”, and his saying: “You shall say the truth, and the truth shall set you free...”. And finally, the Synod must adopt objectivity in what concerns Lebanese affairs, an objectivity that stems uniquely from the authenticity of this nation, its historic uniqueness, and its glorious heritage.

Lebanon, at your service,

Abu Arz,

June 27, 2003