



The Guardians of the Cedars issued the following communiqué:

It was very difficult to find in the Syrian president's recent speech about Lebanon a single honest word, but we were not surprised because a regime such as his, which was built on a culture of deception, evasiveness, misleading and distortion of facts, cannot change overnight, especially if that culture and its policies have allowed that regime to isolate and rape Lebanon for thirty years in full view of the international community and often with its approval!!!

He says that "Resolution 1559 aims at internationalizing the Lebanese situation and returning it to the climate of the 1980s, and targets the nature of Syrian-Lebanese relations that are built on the symbiosis of the two societies, the solidarity between the two peoples, and their ties in history and geography..."

We say that from the start of the war the Lebanese dreamed of internationalizing their cause and extricating it from the tentacles of the Syrian spider and the Arab bazaar. The nature of relations between the Syrian and Lebanese peoples is fundamentally a confrontational one throughout history, and in particular during the 1980s that witnessed the fiercest and bloodiest of battles between the Syrian army of occupation and their local agents on the one side, and the Lebanese resistance on the other. As to geography, the mountainous nature of Lebanon is in stark contrast to the Syrian desert, and as we have often said, the war of Syria against Lebanon is the war of the desert against the mountain – indeed, the hatred that the desert harbors to the mountain.

He says "he did not interfere in the Lebanese presidential election, and the constitution was not breached but rather amended according to a procedure common to constitutions everywhere, and the behavior of the United Nations is a flagrant interference in Lebanon's internal affairs..."

We say that no one believes these lies, and no one, including the Syrian president himself, believes that divine inspiration suddenly prompted Parliament members to change their minds overnight and, like sheep, line up to amend the constitution and extend the term of the sitting president. No one believes either that the extension was in Lebanon's interests, when in fact it was in Syria's interests, much as no one believes that the insistence of the international community on Lebanon's sovereignty and freedom is an interference in its internal affairs, or that Damascus' round-the-clock violation of Lebanon's sovereignty, hijacking of its decision-making, occupation of its land and repression of its people did not constitute such interference!! This is simply insolence in addition to the lies.

He says that "one country offered a boat to the 'Christians' to let them emigrate, and Syria intervened in 1976 to rescue the 'Christians' from a massacre that was on the verge of taking place within two weeks..."

We say it is true that the West at the time conspired on Lebanon as part of the Saudi plan aiming at emptying the country of its "Christians" and implanting the Palestinian refugees in their place. But the Syrians were accomplices of the Saudis in this conspiracy and their forces entered our land under a global Arab and Western cover. And what the young president ignored – he was 7 plus years old then – and what all the liars and the fools who believe them need to understand, is that the Syrian army entered Lebanon in the summer of 1976 when the Lebanese resistance was at the climax of its military victories, immediately after the fall of the two camps of Tal Zaatar and Jisr El-Basha and the district of Nabaa in June 1976. Our forces were sweeping out the Palestinian organizations from Salima, Arsoun and Ras El-Maten in the stronghold of the Palestinian-Leftist coalition, the Marada and their allies in the north had, in the aftermath of the Shekka massacre, invaded the Koura district and liberated it from Palestinian-Leftist control, stopping in Bahsass at the gates of Tripoli but not entering the city in order to avoid giving a sectarian appearance to the war. At the time, we were also drawing plans to seize the Khaldeh triangle from the Aley-Souk Al Gharb Road to seal off the Western sector of the city and bring down the Palestinian camps located in it.

And to further enlighten those who need it, I say that the writer of these lines is a living witness to these facts and a contributor to the achievements of the Lebanese resistance, as he was one of the planners of the idea of sealing off the Palestinian camps of West Beirut through control of the Khaldeh triangle. I can confirm that we would have easily seized the Khaldeh triangle were it not for the intervention of the Syrian army. At the time, Yasser Arafat sent an urgent message to Hafez Assad asking him to intervene and rescue his Palestinian organizations that were faltering under the blows of the Lebanese resistance. The Arabs then issued a call for a summit in Riyadh at the behest of the Saudi regime and its partner the Syrian regime, and decided to send the Syrian Deterrent Forces camouflaged under an Arab cover, and they entered to rescue the Palestinians and not the "Christians as some claim. It is important to emphasize the dexterity of the Syrians at distorting undeniable facts! Clearly, the situation of the "Christians" began deteriorating when the Syrian occupation began tightening its grip on Lebanon and today anyone can see that it has reached its abyss. We cannot overstate the fact that Lebanon and its "Christians" were never threatened with annihilation during the 400 years of Ottoman occupation as they have during 30 years of the ongoing Syrian occupation.

He says that "The Syrians sacrificed their blood in Lebanon and lost in a matter of weeks thousands of 'martyrs' in confronting the Israeli invasion of 1982, while some Lebanese were welcoming the Israelis with rice. Syria does not want hegemony over Lebanon, as evidenced by the periodic withdrawals of its forces over the past 5 years. A weak Lebanon harms Syria, and a weak Syria harms Lebanon, etc..."

We say it is true that thousands of Syrian soldiers fell in Lebanon, some to the bullets of the Lebanese resistance that rejected their hegemony, and some to the bullets of Israeli forces that came to evict them from Lebanon. But not one Syrian soldier has died on Syrian soil in defense of Syria. All the Syrian soldiers who died were killed for the control of Lebanon, period. How can he call them martyrs?? As to the Lebanese people who welcomed the Israeli forces with rice in some of the southern villages, they did it in reaction to the bitter hardships they had to endure under the Palestinian occupation, ranging from attacks, pillaging, rape and murder. As to the statement that Syria does not want hegemony over Lebanon, this is an absolute insult to the intelligence of people and mere blather. The five Syrian withdrawals over a period of five years is also an insult and a lie because all those withdrawals were only for show and not of any substance. Incidentally, how colossal is this Syrian army that needs dozens of years to withdraw if it really wanted to withdraw? And to say that Syria's weakness harms Lebanon is a complete falsehood because in fact Syria's weakness is a source of strength for Lebanon, and vice versa, because a strong Lebanon goes against Syria's expansionist nature. The Syrian president ought to remind himself of this historical fact: **Lebanon's strength comes from Syria's weakness, and Lebanon's weakness comes from Syria's strength.**

He says that he does not want anything from Lebanon and he never took anything from Lebanon, that Syria and Lebanon are, relatively speaking, two of the most stable countries in the region, and that if an explosion were to happen in the region, it is bound to reach countries near and far. The responsibility of Syria toward Lebanon shall remain in spite of circumstances and by force of history and geography, and by the grace of God and the will of the two peoples.

We say, have the Syrians left anything that they did not pilfer? Haven't they robbed its resources and its wellbeing like a leech sucking every last drop of its blood? And how can Lebanon be stable when it is living a state of coma financially, socially, economically and demographically? As to the threat of the explosion, it does not scare the Lebanese. It scares only the Syrians because the Lebanese have nothing left to lose, whereas the Syrians have everything to lose if they lost Lebanon. We say, let the temple come down on everybody if that is the price to pay to rescue Lebanon from the claws of the Syrian. Finally, Syria's responsibility toward Lebanon will not stand as the Syrian president wishes. It will fall like all the other invaders before him, by the will of God and the determination of the Lebanese people that never faltered before throughout history and will never be defeated through the ages.

Lebanon, at your service

Abu Arz

October 15, 2004