



The Guardians of the Cedars issued the following communiqué:

The criminal assassination of Rafik Hariri is part of the pattern of political assassinations that Syria carried out against Lebanese political figures who stood one way or another against its hegemony over Lebanon. The Syrian fingerprints are everywhere on all these crimes, beginning with journalist Salim El-Laouzi whose right hand fingers were cut off after he was killed because he criticized Syrian policy in one of his editorials, and the list is long including Kamal Jumblatt, Riyad Taha, Sheikh Sobhi Saleh, Nazim Al-Kaderi, Mufti Hassan Khaled, Sheikh Ahmad Assaf, Bashir Gemayel, Rene Mouawad, and now Rafik Hariri after Marwan Hamadeh who miraculously escaped ... And this will continue if Syria is allowed to keep its free hand in this sad country and if the free world remains hesitant or derelict in evicting it from Lebanon. Until that moment, one question remains on the lips of the Lebanese people: Who is next? And then what?

As usual, Syria hurried to deny any responsibility in the crime, and was the first to denounce and condemn and call on the Lebanese to "remain united in solidarity". It then sent the vice-president to present his condolences, abiding by the saying "Kill the victim and walk in his funeral..." As to the mercenary Lebanese regime, it also hurried to condemn and denounce and declare national mourning and call for holding national funerals, etc... All of this in order to camouflage and cover up for the criminals, and bury the crime. And then the political choir of pro-Syrian boys started, as usual, to throw accusations against Israel to mask any identity that the criminals have, divert attention and deceive Lebanese and international public opinion.

As to referring the dossier of the crime to the Judicial Council, it is lies that no longer convince anyone. People have long ago lost any trust in a politicized judiciary that is entirely under the authority of the occupation, since the so-called Judicial Council has failed to uncover the perpetrator behind even one crime of all the crimes listed above, and has not even had the courage to open a single file of the pile it has been accumulating for close to thirty years now. This is evidence that the criminal is one and the same and all the orders originate in one instance who address is in Damascus. The decision by the authorities to assign the investigation to the security services and track the perpetrators is yet another lie, for how can one ask the criminals to uncover a crime they themselves are responsible for? France did the right thing by asking that an international investigation committee be set up, which means that the international community itself has also lost its confidence in this regime and its security and judicial agencies.

The Syrian regime was mistaken in its assessment that eliminating Rafik Hariri from the political equation will weaken the opposition and strengthen its influence on the Lebanese arena, exactly as if made the mistake of trying to kill Marwan Hamadeh, insisting on extending the mandate of the dummy in Baabda, and challenging the will of the international community by refusing to comply with resolution 1559. All of this leads us to believe that this regime is living in a state of total confusion and imbalance that will lead it to its demise in the very near future. Suffice it to look into the repercussions of the assassination of Hariri on the Lebanese and international scenes to show the gravity of Syria's miscalculations:

1- The crime has brought together the Lebanese from all corners of the country in a fantastic display of national unity, the best moment of which was when the tolling of church bells merged with the prayers of the Muezzins in the mosques during the funerals, and which was the exact opposite of the wishes of the Syrians and others. This proves again and again that Lebanese society's national fabric is stronger than the schemes of the "Sister" and its desperate attempts to tear it apart.

2- It strengthened the resolve of the opposition and added tremendously to its popularity, making it even more eager to reject the Syrian occupation and demand its end. It emboldened it in challenging Damascus and accusing it directly of being behind this crime along with its partner in crime in Beirut, the mercenary Lebanese regime. The opposition has also become more insistent in demanding the fall of this regime that has lost "popular, constitutional, and international legitimacy". The positions of the opposition have supported the large numbers of demonstrators who have called for the departure of the occupiers and their appendages and burned the offices of the Baath Party in Beirut.

3- It gave an impetus to resolution 1559, prompting the free world to seek its implementation by various means, and pushed the international decision-making centers to take punitive actions against Syria beginning with the recall of the US Ambassador from Damascus, the request to the Secretary General of the UN to prepare an urgent report on the circumstances of the crime, and the demand by France for an international investigation committee. And more is on the way. This is how Rafik Hariri would have served Lebanon more in his death than during his life.

Syria can persist in its culture of death and perfecting the profession of crime.

Syria can silence one voice and eliminate one man, but it cannot kill all the people and silence all their voices and eliminate an entire nation...

One last piece of advice to Syria is to heed the proverb: To the tyrant comes adversity.

Lebanon, at your service

Abu Arz

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