



**The Commander**

The Guardians of the Cedars issued the following communiqué:

The Lebanese people remain in shock at the rapid and radical changes that have taken place in their country over the past weeks. They just cannot believe that the nightmare of the Syrian occupation has effectively been removed from their lives and that they have reached the end of the tunnel in which they lived for 30 years. The empire of evil that was painstakingly built by the occupation for the duration of three decades has collapsed in an instant like a paper tiger.

And now that the truth has become reality and a new glorious dawn of freedom is shining on us, with all the bright hopes it carries with it for a promising future, a quick awakening is needed to deal with the new facts on the ground with a novel mentality different from the past. The objective is to build a new State that is absolutely the opposite of the one in the process of extinction. In other words, we should not be content with merely replacing a few corrupt symbols with new ones, or return to the policies of patching up and improvising half-cooked solutions inherited through generations since Ottoman times. We have to be resolute and transform Lebanon from a country of backwardness, ignorance, decay and corruption into a nation of science, ambition and transparency that is up to par with the greatness of its people, and the dreams and aspirations of its youth and future generations.

1- To begin with, it is imperative that political and popular pressures be relentlessly maintained and increased until the liberation of the last inch of our international borders with Syria is complete.

2- There is an urgency to deal with the problem of the Lebanese and Palestinian armed militias, and eliminate all the security gaps that they cause. The Lebanese Army must be empowered to be the sole unchallenged military authority that is in control of all Lebanese regions. We must find a rapid solution to the heavy Palestinian presence on our soil through allocating the Palestinians to neighboring countries until a regional settlement is achieved. The southern front must be permanently and definitively closed to those who created it and abused it under groundless pretexts.

3- It is essential to return to our authentic Lebanese roots in matters of identity and belonging. We must abandon foreign affiliations and deceptive language such as "brother" and "sister" countries, "privileged relations", "unity of path and fate", and other such conventions of deception and lies. Suffice it for us to have the honor and privilege to belong to the Lebanese identity, and neighboring countries must be dealt with from the standpoint of the interests of Lebanon and no other.

4- It is also indispensable that the current corrupt political establishment be tried in a court of law, particularly those who sold Lebanon to Syria. A new leadership must be enabled that has the extraordinary attributes of knowledge, courage and integrity. State institutions must be cleansed of excessive corrupt bureaucracy, and modern state-of-the-art institutions must be created to meet the challenges of our time and lift Lebanon to the standing of a developed nation.

5- In parallel, the Taef Agreement, which transformed government into a three-headed monster, must be abrogated. The Basic Law of the Constitution must be reinstated after eliminating confessionalism, separating State from Religion, and opening the doors of opportunity for every Lebanese to occupy any position in government at all levels of the hierarchy.

6- Organize the large Lebanese Diaspora and vest its enormous potential in the protection of Lebanon and its defense against future outside conspiracies. The Lebanese Diapsora must participate in elections and polls, both as candidates and voters, and Lebanese young emigres must be invited to return and contribute their share in re-building the new Lebanese edifice.

These are some of the principal headlines for rebuilding the new State that we have always called for and dreamed of, and we warn against a return to the State of pre-February 14 with all its treason, corruption, subservience and decay. We ask our young people standing in the tents of freedom on Martyrs Square not to give up on these matters so that their dreams are not in vain. The Independence Uprising must not end with liberation and the uncovering of the killers of Raifk Harii.

We are hopeful and confident that our great people, who embodied the legend of the phoenix on Martyrs Square by shaking off their butchers and rising from death, are now capable of coming forth from the ashes to rise again and fly high, and send their universal message and pursue their pioneering role in spreading love, freedom and peace among people.

Lebanon, at your service  
Abu Arz  
March 25, 2005