



The Commander

The Guardians of the Cedars issued the following communique:

Although internal and external pressures keep mounting on it, Syria is persisting in its policies of rejection and maneuvering in order to delay its withdrawal from Lebanon. Here it announces its acquiescence to the Taef Agreement and to withdrawing to the Bekaa Valley, and there it alludes to the fractioning of the Lebanese Army and the destabilization of Lebanon that its withdrawal might cause. Then it links its withdrawal to a peaceful settlement with Israel as declared by the Syrian President to the Italian daily "La Politica" a few days ago, and on and on with the litany of known lies.

But the quickening pace of events on both the Lebanese and international arenas has pulled the rug from under the feet of the Syrian regime's ploys and put Syria into an unprecedented conundrum: Either it withdraws completely from Lebanon with all the dangerous consequences that obtain on its internal situation and its political regime, or it stays and confronts the international community with the resulting isolation and additional sanctions, not to mention the continued and high-pitch pressure coming from the Lebanese street.

Also, the world has become more mature in dealing with Syrian deception after it became convinced that Syria is not a factor of stability in Lebanon, but rather one of tension and trouble. No one believes the Syrian lies anymore about a split among the Lebanese and a return to the "civil war", now that the Lebanese people have demonstrated a stunning unity and proved to the world that the Lebanese nation is an undeniable fact and the unity of its people a historical constant that is not breakable.

The fall of the Syrian dummy that calls itself a Lebanese government is but one station on the path to the independence uprising to be inevitably followed by others, the least of which is the fall of the Lebanese regime along with its figures and instruments and the resulting ominous repercussions on its cognate, the Syrian regime.

It is critical that the opposition keeps its ranks closed and united in thought and decision. Its objective must remain strictly focused on removing the Syrian occupation before addressing any other minor objectives. All other demands, such as uncovering the killers of Rafik Hariri, the resignation of the security agencies chiefs, the formation of a neutral government, securing fair and transparent elections and others, are not achievable under the occupation. They can only be addressed in an environment of freedom, sovereignty and independence, which Lebanon is virtually close to achieving if the opposition keeps its eyes on the liberation process, does not distract itself with secondary issues, and watches out for the Syrian mines planted all over the place.

It is equally critical that the opposition not be seduced by such offers as dialogue with the regime or participation in consultations over a government or joining the next cabinet or accepting partial withdrawals and other such proposals on the regime's political bazaar table. The opposition must clearly recognize that a return to pre-February 14 is unacceptable and a red line.

More importantly, our people in the street must remain steadfast in their stand on Martyrs Square that has become Freedom square, and not leave until their goals of freedom, sovereignty and independence are achieved.

Last, it is critical that the opposition take its inspiration from Martyrs Square itself and refers to it in charting its course. The people's sense cannot be wrong. Genuine legitimacy is right there on the Square, and the government fell under the pressure of the people before it fell inside Parliament. The Independence Uprising begins and ends there.

The Lebanese giant has finally emerged from the mountaintops, and Lebanese freedom which was assassinated thirty years ago has risen again to exact vengeance upon its murderers. The winds of democracy blowing from Martyrs Square will sweep the countries of Greater Middle East and scorch to ashes all the extant regimes and their rigid policies. Their end is near.

Finally, we owe a salute of admiration and reverence to our young men and women who stand on Freedom Square. We owe great respect and appreciation for those bright and promising faces, those arms that never tire, those voices chanting day and night "freedom, sovereignty, independence". To those heroes we say: All Lebanon looks up to you, our destiny rests on your shoulders, and in your hands a new Lebanon is being born... To you the glory, and to Lebanon the immortality.

Lebanon, at your service,
Abu Arz
March 4, 2005