



The Commander

The Guardians of the Cedars issued the following communiqué

Since September 14, the Party's leaders remain in detention on the following charges: Form an association with the purpose of committing crimes against people and money, undermine the authority and dignity of the state, stir sectarian fanaticism and incite to murder.

On reading these charges, our first reaction was to briefly think we were still under Syrian tutelage and that the Ruler of Damascus has returned to Anjar.

Who in Lebanon does not know, particularly those with a memory and a conscience, that this "association" was formed with the aim of defending Lebanon on April 13, 1975, the day that the State collapsed under the Palestinian hordes and its civilian and military institutions fell apart? And who does not know that, were it not for that "association" and with it the parties of the Lebanese Resistance, including the Kataeb, the National Liberals, the Tanzim, the Marada, the Forces of the North and others, Lebanon would have fallen then and the State that is taking us to justice today would not even exist.

As to committing crimes against people and money, this is indeed funny and sad because every honorable citizen of this country knows can testify to the clean hands of this "association". We challenge anyone to prove a single crime we committed against any individual. For the money charges, let them lift the bank secrecy off our accounts and perhaps participate with us in the fund raising campaigns that we hold each month to cover our expenses and basic necessities.

And how can we be accused of harming the authority of the State when it bullies only the honorable of this country and is weak to stand up to those who bully it under the pretense of defending the South or recovering a non-Lebanese land that the UN has found outside the Blue Line... But if this dignified State brags about arresting the four generals, the credit first and foremost goes to Mr. Detlev Mehlis, for without him they would not even have dared to utter their names... And where is the dignity of this State whose corruption is rampant throughout its institutions and its stench has reached the four corners of the world, causing all international aid to Lebanon to come to halt?

And how can we be accused of inciting sectarian strife when the foundation of our ideology rests on the belief in a secular State and on the allocation of posts, including the highest, on the basis of merit and not on sectarian and religious allotments? We have practiced secularism on the ground, in word and in deed, and we have gathered among our ranks fellow party members from all denominations of whom we are proud and honored.

As to the incitement to commit murder, we have previously said that this is fabricated insidious charge. The press conference did not make a single allusion to this, and behind the charge there are ulterior motives aiming at destroying the known credibility and high ethical standards of this "association". If this State is truly a State, it would have charged the big criminals in the political establishment with premeditated deliberate murder for killing an entire country by selling it wholesale - land, people, institutions and existence - to the Syrian occupation, and providing the latter with the legal cover during 30 years, and to add insult to injury, who remain in their posts as if nothing has happened!!! And if the State is really concerned about people's money, let it please arrest the grand thieves who pilfered the people's money and the Treasury and brought it under a deficit of more than 37 billion dollars!!!

And if faith in the Lebanese identity of Lebanon is the undeclared crime on whose basis the party leaders remain in detention, let them then open their jails to all the party's members, supporters and partisans.

Gentlemen, the people have given up on this country, its rulers and its politicians. What we fear most is that people will start feeling nostalgia for the era of the Syrian occupation.

Lebanon, at your service

Abu Arz
September 23, 2005