



The Guardians of the Cedars Party issued the following communiqué:

If the objective of the politicians from their sharp divisions and heated arguments is to push the country to another cycle of violence, they have indeed succeeded in achieving this goal since the political scene looks very bleak, tensions are high, and everyone fears a return of trouble and an explosive deterioration of security as the creation of the international court nears.

As for the call by the Speaker of Parliament to a roundtable of consultations to contain the tension, it is in the opinion of everyone a call to a new distraction to add to the preceding distraction of the National Dialogue. It is in fact an admission of the failure of the latter whose decisions were never implemented. It would be foolish to believe that a mere substitution of the word "consultation" for the word "dialogue" will disentangle the intractable disagreements between the opponents, and that is why the Lebanese people are looking at the coming months with fear and anxiety, particularly when they do not trust the State's ability to protect them in their lives and their livelihoods.

The question on everyone's mind in Lebanon is: If the power establishment people are able to protect themselves by increasing the security detail around them and using armored cars, who will protect the ordinary citizens from road side bombs and booby-trapped cars planted by terrorists? How can the citizen trust a State that not only is impotent at protecting him, but is impotent at uncovering the criminals that attack him? And so he asks: What happened to the investigation into the assassination of Gibran Tuani, George Haoui, Samir Kassir and others? And is it acceptable that crimes of such magnitude and files of such crucial nature be relegated to hush up and suppression? Doesn't this cowardly behavior encourage the criminals to persisting in their crimes? And what about the rest of the criminals who have sowed death and destruction in the capital and frivolously gambled with people's lives and livelihoods? Where is the wisdom in keeping their names under cover?

And how can the Lebanese citizen trust a State that has delivered nothing yet on what it promised in its ministerial statement, not in security, not in services, not in improving the administration and fighting corruption. How can he trust a State that does not have the decision of war and peace, but instead acts like an ostrich or like a cheated husband who is the last one to know about vital decisions that determine the future of the country and its people? A State that is impotent at subjugating the outlaw security zones under its own authority, and that shows its muscles in applying the law only against harmless citizens while yielding to the more powerful citizens?

We hope that this difficult phase will go by in peace, but the regime has to realize that it should stop playing the victim and begin assuming its full constitutional responsibilities, which means it has to choose between two things: Either it resigns if it is impotent, or it should stand in a court of law if it is negligent. There is no third option before it. It is simply no longer acceptable to fool around with people's lives without accountability.

At the occasion of the blessed Eid of Al-Fitr, we extend to the Lebanese people our warmest

greetings and best wishes, asking God to bless Lebanon in these delicate circumstances, protect it against its enemies, and bring security, prosperity and peace back across its land.

Lebanon, at your service

Abu Arz
October 27, 2006