



The Guardians of the Cedars issued the following communiqué:

The dangerous crisis gripping the country these days was not born yesterday, but rather it has been brewing for some time. It is the outcome of the accumulation of errors that the political leadership of the March 14 Movement made in tandem and solidarity with the present government, which led to this anomalous and extremely complicated situation.

The first error was in the failure of the March 14 Movement leadership to take that march on that March 14 all the way to the offices of the three presidencies to complete the toppling of the regime that is allied with Syria. As a result, the opportunity was lost to make use of both the popular and the international supports and leverage them in accordance with Lebanon's highest interests.

The second error was with the leadership of the March 14 Movement trying to mix water and fire, meaning to mix between the pro-change March 14 Movement and the reactionary March 8 Movement, and then try to cobble a government together on that basis. This led to this inconsistent mix in the government that could fracture at any moment.

The third error was in the deceiving promises that the Movement made to the international community about its ability to implement the remaining provisions of resolution 1559 pertaining to the weapons of the militias through an internal dialogue, even as everyone knows that the promised dialogue is an illusion whose objective is to gain time and delay the inevitable.

The fourth error was to rush into parliamentary elections on the basis of the 2000 electoral law, which allowed the big election machines to do their job and bring to parliament huge lists of one political persuasion that do not reflect the true will of the Lebanese people.

It is obvious from the preceding that Lebanon is harvesting today what the leadership of the March 14 Movement sowed yesterday, and that the real crisis of this country is primarily a moral and ethical one whose responsibility lays squarely and evenly with the leaderships of the March 14 and the March 8 movements. The former because it sought, as usual, immediate short-term gains at the expense of its own people on the basis that its own political future is more important than the future of Lebanon, and the latter because it committed high treason with its absolute allegiance to the Syrian and Iranian causes at the expense of the Lebanese cause.

As to what is being said about the danger of an American custodianship over Lebanon and mobilizing the street to confront it, it is absolute nonsense. Its goal is to throw a smokescreen in people's eyes, for there is an enormous difference between the American-European-UN custodianship on one hand and the Syrian-Iranian custodianship on the other. The first is a sponsorship that ensures the protection of Lebanon in its security and stability, the respect of its sovereignty and the re-enforcement of its democracy. The second is a hegemony that aims at destabilizing the security of Lebanon, truncate its sovereignty, and eliminate its democracy, not to mention its continuous striving to frustrate the international investigation in the assassination of Rafik Hariri. Because stirring tensions internally, as happened with the recent demonstrations, and the refusal to set up an international tribunal and widen the authority of the international investigation committee to include the other crimes, is a huge service to the Syrian Regime... How else can we explain the following equation: The greater the international pressures on Syria and Iran, the worse the Lebanese arena becomes in perfect synch and timing with those pressures!!!

Amidst this scary local political bankruptcy and the abject and terrifying ethical shallowness, the Lebanese people stand perplexed in the face of this terrible fate that is imposed on them by a sick political establishment and that wants to keep them in a dark endless tunnel. Not only do Lebanese people face the unknown as to their destiny, they are gradually slipping further into the swamps of despair, revulsion and frustration, asking themselves and the political establishment a number of questions that will naturally

remain unanswered: If the United States indeed has special interests on Lebanon, then what interests have the United Nations in it? And why the opposition to setting up an international tribunal and widening the authority of the international investigation commission? Unless, of course, those opposing these propositions are accomplices in these crimes? And if Syria and Iran have problems with the Western world, why the insistence on making Lebanon the stage for the conflict between these other big and mighty countries at the expense of our small nation? Is it reasonable that, in his day and age, there still are groups who support the Syrian regime after all the crimes and serious offenses it has committed on our land during the past three decades? And what kind of country can we build with this sharp division within this useless political class over the principles, positions and objectives?

The only remaining hope we have left is for the people to return to the street, as on March 14, and drive out the merchants and dove sellers from the temple, and seize the reins of the initiative. Otherwise, Lebanon will remain hanging onto a lifeline until God knows when.

Lebanon , at your service

Abu Arz

January 20, 2006