



The Guardians of the Cedars Party issued the following weekly communiqué:

The Army is the Accuser, Not the Accused

Observers are unanimous that the popular protests of last Sunday were not innocent, not in form and not in substance.

In form, because burning tires to shut down main roads in more than one place during the present tense circumstances means to ignite fires in volatile areas of the country, which takes away the peaceful nature of these protests.

In substance, because using the street for political designs packaged in social demands reveals insidious intentions and aims for destructive objectives. First, to drag the army into the existing political conflicts and make it a party to them, and consequently to expose it to various risks. Second, to destroy the chances of the Army Commander of getting to the presidency, thus consecrating the presidential vacuum.

Today, as yesterday, the people embrace the army and grant it complete confidence. They consider the army to have discharged its national duties in the best possible way in all missions entrusted to it so far, the last of which were the disturbances in Shiah-St. Michael where the army confronted the rioters with courage and responsibility. It also defended its dignity in the face of those who tried to assail it and attack the citizens and public property on the basis of a reaction to an action. Therefore, it is not permissible to deal with the army, in the context of the ongoing investigations, as the accused, but rather as the accuser.

The people place their army above internal conflicts. They demand of it greater decisiveness in imposing security, hunting down criminals, tracking hoodlums and those who disturb the public peace. By the same token, they ask the ruling class to stop dealing with the fait accompli forces and the outlaw mini-states with a logic of fear and flattery. For once, the ruling class should exhibit the requisite courage, granting the army the complete political cover in all that it does in the area of restituting the prestige of the state and the rule of law. It should immediately request the help of the international community to enable it to implement the international resolutions, chiefly resolution 1559, even if this leads to the internationalization of the Lebanese problem under Chapter VII. This is critical before the international community gives up in despair and disgust and abandons Lebanon and its condition in the quarantine

room. The loss of Lebanon is at stake, and the ruling class, before anyone else, will be held responsible.

Lebanon, at your service
Abu Arz

February 1, 2008