



February 17, 2013

The Guardians of the Cedars Party - The Movement for Lebanese Nationalism issued the following statement:

It seems that the US administration has borrowed from Lebanon the policy of dissociation and is using it not only to deal with the Syrian crisis but with all the hot spots around the globe. That is precisely what President Obama reiterated in his last State of the Union address.

We are sorry to say that this policy of wavering, prevarication and indecision has so far led to a significant reduction in the role of the United States and its standing on the international stage. Everyone, it seems, is wondering where the United States stands vis-à-vis the crises erupting here, there, and everywhere around the world, particularly with regard to the momentous changes taking place in the Middle East. This in turn is causing smaller countries historically tied to the Western axis to fear for their future from the growing Russian-Chinese-Iranian axis and its hijacking of international policy.

With respect to the Syrian matter, the US administration has merely given paltry support to the opposition, a support that can be best summed up as courteous verbiage, leaving the Syrian people to struggle for 22 months between the hammer of a butcher, backed by the most powerful of totalitarian nations, and the anvil of more than a hundred nations calling themselves "friends of Syria" but that stand for nothing.

When the Syrian regime began using its air force to pound cities and neighborhoods with all kinds of internationally-banned shells and rockets, we thought the West will raise hell and try to deter it somehow to protect defenseless civilians. Instead, it turned a blind eye, and worse, it refused to equip the opposition with defensive weapons to match, saying it is concerned that these weapons might fall in the hands of radical Islamist factions and it wants to avoid the mistakes made in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and others.

However, a realist and objective examination of this decision reveals short-sighted political naïveté, for the following reasons:

1- The influx of Islamist factions from neighboring countries into Syria to rescue its people from annihilation is a natural outcome of Western absence, led by the US administration, and its total dereliction of its historical and traditional responsibilities in protecting oppressed people rebelling against tyranny. As such, the West bears a primary responsibility for the influx of these foreign factions and their growing influence on Syrian soil.

2- If the US administration believes that these factions are a more ominous danger than the Syrian regime, it is patently wrong because established historical facts prove that the regime of the Assads, father and son, remains the top terrorist regime in this part of the world. This is a regime that has founded and sponsored for the past four decades an institution

specializing in the manufacture and export of terrorism to all corners of the world. This institution has graduated the vast majority of professional terror organizations that have metastasized like a cancer in Lebanon and the countries of the region under various names. We, in Lebanon, are prime witnesses to this fact.

3- If the US administration is searching for the roots of its failure in Iraq, it needs only to review its records to find out that the Assad regime, in collusion with its Iranian ally, was the principal factor behind that failure. More than 80% of suicide operations and IED attacks targeting American soldiers were planned, prepared, and executed by this terrorist tandem.

4- The Syrian revolution, in line with the trajectory of history and based on the successes it is achieving in the field, will inevitably win sooner or later without assistance from the West or anyone else. Pursuing the policy of weakness vis-à-vis the revolution and denying it the weapons it needs will certainly raise the standing of the radical Islamist factions to the detriment of the moderate factions.

Accordingly, we believe that the US administration has erred in its reading of the Syrian question. But there is still opportunity to undertake a correction and realign this reading to embrace and sponsor the revolution on firm grounds, to ensure that a climate of moderation prevails over extremism, that power is ultimately transferred to safe hands, and that order be brought to the Syrian house to guarantee and safeguard the rights of all its constituents. Time is not on the side of the West in Syria, and further delay will not serve the interests of the West, the Syrian people, or the region in general. The clock is ticking and we are fast approaching zero hour.

Lebanon, at your service
Etienne Sacre – Abu Arz
February 17, 2013