

Are We Truly a Civil, Chivalrous Nation?

The Assyrians have continued to live through painful consequences and paid a high price as they supported those who posed as the Assyrians' elite, the knowledgeable, or those who immorally and illegally imposed themselves as representatives of the Assyrian people knowing that they were either not elected by the people or were, more dangerously, empowered by the enemy.

The oppressive Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the illegal Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) have not been the Assyrians' friends. Events since the creation of the KRG (1992) have proven this fact beyond any doubt. Yet, the Assyrians have continued to support those Assyrian leaders (religious, civic, and political) who have been simply a tool in the hands of the Kurdish leaders. Assyrian religious and political leaders have continued to support the oppressive Kurdish leaders and institutions and have misled the world in regards to the actual treatment of Assyrians within the KRG, and they must understand that their actions will not be tolerated any longer.

The KDP and the KRG plans to end the presence of the Assyrians on their ancestral lands are not hidden. In 2014, with the help of ISIS, Turkey, and a few Western governments, the KDP and KRG succeeded to a large degree to lessen the presence of Assyrians in the Nineveh Plain. This was coordinated with their earlier ongoing plans in the remote Assyrian farm lands and villages by Turkish borders. Turkey has been bombing Assyrian villages close to the Turkish borders on the pretext of chasing away the Kurdish PKK rebels. This has been going on for a while to keep the Assyrians living in the region in fear. And more recently, the KDP has directed its operatives to ignite fires in the Assyrian farmlands in those remote villages to end the sole source of income of the Assyrians there, and force the Assyrians out. The existence of Assyrians in the large cities, such as Arbil and Nohadra (Dohuk) in northern Iraq (occupied Assyria), or Assyrian ownership of lands in those cities can not be denied, but Assyrians in the big cities will continue to remain as a minority among other people, including the Kurdish majority. However, the existence of the indigenous Assyrians either as the predominant or sole inhabitant on their hinterlands and remote villages in northern Iraq has a different significance and meaning.

For those Assyrian civic, church, and political leaders who have continued to praise the KDP and the KRG, I say: "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like tombs painted white, which look beautiful from the outside, but inside are full of dead bones and all kinds of corruption. Even so, from the outside you appear to men to be righteous, but from within you are full of iniquity and hypocrisy."¹ As if this was not enough, these so-called leaders have turned their misled followers to attack the nationalist and independent Assyrians who expose the criminal and oppressive acts by the KDP/KRG. These unelected Assyrian leaders have incited their followers to attack not only the outspoken Assyrian nationalists, but to harass their families and encourage them to boycott Assyrian businesses that support the nationalist Assyrians who speak out against the KDP and KRG and against the corruption within the Assyrian institutions.

People have the right to express their opinion freely, without any fear of retaliation. This is the gift to human beings from countries run under democratic institutions. The principle of freedom of speech was best quoted by Evelyn Hall in her book "The Friends of Voltaire". Hall wrote: "I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it".² How can we, as civilized people, steal

1 Matthew 23: 27-28

2 Evelyn Beatrice Hall wrote under the pseudonym S. G. Tallentyre. She was an English writer best known for her biography of Voltaire entitled "The Life of Voltaire", first published in 1903. She also wrote The Friends

the right of individuals to express their pinion? What are we saying about ourselves? What is the difference between we who are living in the civilized West and those living in the backward, chauvinistic, and oppressive regimes of the Middle East? Did ANB Sat deserve to be forcefully closed down because the channel exposed the KDP and KRG's unfair, oppressive, illegal actions against the Assyrians and shed light on the corruption, hypocrisy, and recklessness of certain empowered and self-appointed Assyrian leaders? Many hope that these growing pains will lead to a better tomorrow.

Awake my brethren, awake my fellow Assyrians! Assyria is whimpering and then wailing. Assyria is reaching out to you, her sons and daughters to end this unforgiving, self-inflicted national catastrophe. End your sectarianism, end your tribalism, be an Assyrian first and foremost, yet better: be an informed Assyrian and think as a nationalist Assyrian.