

Dr Walid Phares criticizes Lebanon's politicians for legitimizing Hezbollah

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Professor Walid Phares powerful commentary on the formation of a new Government in Lebanon, including Hezbollah: "It is unacceptable that after years of struggle by the Lebanese masses and the Lebanese emigres to produce UNSCR 1559 and the Cedars Revolution, Lebanon's politicians have wasted all these achievements to secure seats in a cabinet including Hezbollah." From CRNews Radio

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 Washington, DC, November 21, 2009

In an exclusive interview with CRNews Radio (Cedars Revolution Radio) from Washington DC, Professor Walid Phares criticized Lebanon's politicians, particularly March 14, for forming a Government including terrorist organization Hezbollah and failing to deliver after five years of struggle by the peoples and the emigres. Phares, who is a senior fellow at the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies has been a main architect of the UN Resolution 1559 calling for Syrian withdrawal and the disarming of Hezbollah in 2004.

Let's remember that it was initially a number of strategic mistakes by Lebanese leaders and politicians that led to the Syrian invasion and occupation of the country. These same politicians were the ones who by their actions had led the country to be taken by the brutal Syrian occupation. We'd hoped they would know better.

In 2004 and 2005 two arms led to the withdrawal of the Syrian occupation from Lebanon: Lebanon's pressure groups among emigres and the masses inside the country. The Lebanese Diaspora activists are the ones who succeeded in producing UNSCR 1559 that led to the withdrawal of the Syrians. We will not accept that politicians in Lebanon would claim otherwise. As a result of the voting of 1559, the Lebanese masses inside the country were the ones who took the streets and pushed for the implementation of the resolution. It was a combined effort between the two arms that led to an uprising launching the Cedars Revolution.

Unfortunately, more strategic mistakes were committed by these politicians between 2005 and 2009. After legislative elections in 2005, and despite errors made by these politicians, the people of Lebanon gave the Cedars Revolution a majority in parliament. Unfortunately March 14 formed a Government in 2005 with the organization it wanted to disarm before it negotiate this issue before it invite them to the cabinet. That was a huge mistake. The terrorists assassinated among the best activists and leaders in 2005. Then Hezbollah fooled March 14 with the so-called "dialogue table" for months. Then it waged a war in the summer of 2006, followed with an urban uprising against the Lebanese Government.

And what were March 14 politicians doing? Practically nothing except surviving politically. They harvested the achievements of the Cedars Revolution and spent it in five years. The came the big testing moment in May 2008 when Hezbollah attacked Beirut and the mountain. This episode showed, with its results that there is no strategic leadership in Lebanon that can lead the Cedars Revolution to victory and success. If there is any explanation about how and why these achievements were lost, we'll be ready to listen and accept. There isn't an explanation. Sometimes politicians blame America, sometimes they blame France and on and on. Results tell us that they have failed. And one must simply admit that the Hezbollah leaders have a better strategic intelligence. They are simply more intelligent.

Then came the last chance for March 14 politicians, that is the June 2009 electoral election. Lebanon's citizens were mobilized and told that this will be the major cutting edge to defeat terror and bring back Lebanon to its track. The masses gave March 14 another victory hoping things will start moving again. What happened later? Well these politicians, who were granted a new majority in Parliament formed a new Government and invited Hezbollah and its allies again to sit with them inside the cabinet. Is this a joke or what? The masses gives electoral victories and the emigres help producing UNSCR 1559, and what does the politicians do? Waste all that.

Imagine they gave the Foreign Ministry of Lebanon to Hezbollah ally, the Amal Movement. And how do they imagine we will help Lebanon internationally to disarm the militias and implement 1559? These may be harsh words, but there are no

other words to describe this charade. If these politicians have an alternative strategy we don't know about, let them share it with us. We'll be happy to support it. But we know that there isn't. After five years, they have failed to deliver.

We continue to hope this Government and March 14 politicians inside the cabinet and outside will try to correct that situation and be aware of the dangerous situation for the country. Until different conditions are assembled they need to maintain a minimum responsibility in their actions.

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