

The Ordeal of the Syrian-Armenians

We Don't Have the Luxury to Waste Time

Zaven Khanjian

Hey-ho! Awake if still asleep,
And if a wake saddle your mounts,
Take up your arms; get on your mounts,
Don't say David came like a thief,
Sneaked in on you before you woke,
And stole away in the dark night.

Levon Surmelian
(David's call in) *Daredevils of Sassoun*

We are no fatalist, nor pessimist by nature, and yet so convoluted were the knots, so dark the layers, so profound the conflict and so widespread the polarizations, that no learned person or expert can foretell the outcome of the catastrophe that once again befell us, Armenians, this time striking Syria and the Syrian-Armenians.

Syria, the most peaceful of our colonies, the calmest of Diaspora, the most fundamental of our post-catastrophic reality and the closest to the Motherland of the West-Armenians rescued from the Genocide.

Everyone is playing a role. There is no country, political movement or alliance on the globe that hasn't taken a stand, or more correctly, made to take a stand, vis-à-vis this ordeal.

If you're confused, don't be surprised. You're not alone to realize that yesterday's mutually hostile countries bordering Syria are allied today. I think it was Churchill who said, "There are no eternal friends or eternal enemies,... only eternal interests."

So powerful, potent, willful and determined seem to be the obstinate masters manipulating buffoons from behind curtains that there's no immediate hope of peace.

If only we were mistaken. Nevertheless, a cruel conclusion doesn't seem to be very illogical. The hour is mortal. Critical. If the fire and destruction, explosions and bombs, the armed and the mercenary were parading in the Tilel and Jideideh neighborhoods, tomorrow the same could happen in Nor Giugh, Suleimanieh, the Station and Azizieh, Damascus, Kessab and Kamishli.

David's call is for us, too. If not now, then when? If not the mother colony in Syria, then who? When they are living the anxiety of self-defense, we should go on the offensive. In a constructive spirit, let us become active, swiftly, urgently and with self-confidence.

We do not have the luxury to waste time. To reach you, to reach everybody is humanly impossible.

Therefore, there's work for me and there's work for you. Come, then, let's get to work, let's spread the good news of assistance, let's reach out to everyone together. Let's reach out to family members, friends, neighbors, near or far. Personally, by phone, by e-mail or snail-mail. Let's reach out from street to street, house to house, apartment to apartment.

Let's knock on doors and ask: "Did you make your contribution for the Syrian-Armenians?"

A colony that is a centenarian.

A colony that gave of its body for a century. From its beating heart, blood flowed into the veins of the communities spread worldwide, providing vigor and vitality the newly diffused Armenian body. Stamped by a seal of pure, steadfast, vivid and incorruptible patriotism, it extended to all the corners of the globe and kneaded as ferment it gave life to Armenians by the noble example of voluntary activity, sense of responsibility and earnest service.

"Did you make your contribution for the Syrian-Armenians?"

That receptions should be held, we can and will do.

That telethons should be planned, we can and perhaps will plan.

That packages, paperwork, officiousness, finesse and professional work are necessary, all are appropriate and indispensable.

But please don't wait.

But please don't hesitate.

Don't waste time.

We don't have the luxury to waste time.

Write your donation check even today, at the cost of sacrifice.

The address is:

Syrian Armenian Relief Fund
P. O. Box 1948
Glendale, CA 91209-1948

Awake if still asleep,
Don't say, while we slept
The Syrian-Armenian... fell and perished.

August 24, 2012