

Stop the holocaust in Lebanon!

by Helga Zepp-LaRouche

The following call was issued on Aug. 15 by Helga Zepp-LaRouche, chairman of the Patriots for Germany party in the Federal Republic of Germany.

For the genocide of Christians in Lebanon being played out before the eyes of world opinion, there exists only one adequate comparison: What the Syrian troops of Hafez Assad are perpetrating is exactly the same as the Nazi SS storming of the Warsaw Ghetto; and the Christians who are putting up resistance, are comparable to the Jews threatened with genocide.

The fact that no Western government has put a halt to this holocaust, is the greatest declaration of moral bankruptcy of this so-called free West, which, at least until recently, pretended to found its identity on the values of Christian civilization. But now a holocaust in the Nazi tradition is being carried out and reported in careful detail by the media; but the politicians, with very few exceptions, do not even find it necessary to allow their vacations to be disturbed, in a situation in which it is very obviously the aim of the Syrians to eliminate the Christians from the Mideast and to take over the region for fanatical Islamic fundamentalism.

When Lebanese Prime Minister Gen. Michel Aoun expresses his longing for an American President like Dwight Eisenhower, a President who would give the Syrians a 24-hour ultimatum to withdraw its forces, then we can only support him wholeheartedly. What a glaring light is cast on the United States, when Aoun demands an American policy corresponding to the dignity of the American people, instead of unworthy, impotent appeals to Syria—a regime which only understands the language of power. The generous promises that President Bush made to the Pope regarding Lebanon, during his Rome trip, were apparently worthless.

But even Western Europe could stop the holocaust, if it wanted to. It would have to pose the ultimatum suggested by Aoun. Or, do the Europeans trust so little in the “Common European House” that Gorbachov is hawking, that they fear Moscow might respond with a war against Western Europe, in defense of its satellite Syria?

Time has run out

Taking quick action is a question of life or death, because if the bombardments of Christians in Beirut continue two days more, the situation will become catastrophic; they have no place where they may seek refuge. There is also the immediate danger that the Syrians will move to air strikes, because the Lebanese resistance of Aoun’s ground forces is as yet unbroken. But the Christians will not be able to withstand this assault, because relief aid deliveries of Christian organizations have not reached Lebanon for weeks.

The ongoing Syrian military onslaught against East Beirut and the Lebanese national forces, Christians and Muslim, led by General Aoun, is the logical outcome of the last 13 years of Syrian military occupation of some 70% of Lebanese territory. Since Syrian forces entered Beirut in 1976, they have never concealed the fact that their ultimate aim was to establish a “Greater Syria” of which Lebanon was to become the first annexed province. The present battle aims at annihilating physically the last bastion of Lebanese resistance to the Syrian occupying forces, even if—as Druze leader Walid Jumblatt put it—“Beirut has to be leveled to the ground, like Stalingrad.”

This is the latest in a series of massacres that the regime of Hafez Assad has perpetrated in Lebanon and in the region. Everyone remembers the massacres of Palestinians in Tel al Zaatar in 1976 directly sponsored by the Syrian army, and

subsequent sieges and massacres of Palestinian camps throughout Lebanon in recent years. Everyone remembers the tens of thousands of Syrian citizens massacred in the city of Homs in the early 1980s. The massacres of Lebanese Christians, the last phase of which is unfolding in the ongoing battle, will not be forgotten.

In addition, the following must be kept in mind:

1) It is under the direct sponsorship of the Syrian regime, in agreement with the ayatollahs in Iran, that Lebanon has become the hotbed of Islamic fundamentalism in recent years. The establishment of such groups as the Islamic Jihad, responsible for the deaths of hundreds of American and French soldiers, and the creation of the Lebanese Hezbollah, responsible for the kidnaping of all hostages—European, American, Israeli, and Arab—were only made possible because of their cooperation with Syrian intelligence.

2) It is under the direct sponsorship of the Syrian regime, especially Syrian Vice President Rifaat Assad, that the Lebanese Bekaa Valley has, in less than a decade, become a major opium-producing area and international center for narco-terrorism.

3) It is under the direct sponsorship of the Syrian regime and of its intelligence services, led by General Ali Duba and Gen. Mohammed al Khouli, that hundreds of innocent victims have died over the last decade during blind terror actions, be they perpetrated under the flag of the Abu Nidal organization, or more recently, in the case of the December 1988 Pan Am 103 explosion in Lockerbie, Great Britain, under the flag of Syrian intelligence captain, Ahmed Jibril.

Yet, the Syrian regime has enjoyed the benevolence of international powers, especially the Soviet Union and the United States. While the Soviet Union and Syria have been associated in a common defense pact for close to a decade, there is officially no such treaty between Washington and Damascus. However, American policy toward Syria, ever since Henry Kissinger was national security adviser, and then secretary of state, has remained unchanged to the present day. It has been U.S. policy under Nixon and Ford, Jimmy Carter, Reagan, and now the Bush administration, to give tacit support to all of Hafez Assad's initiatives.

Kissinger backs the Syrian dictator

On March 20, the U.S. State Department's Lawrence Eagleburger warned that, "If the Syrian troops were to withdraw from Lebanon, the situation would worsen." Such was his response to Michel Aoun's call for a "war of national liberation."

In April 1989 at the Paris conference of the Trilateral Commission, Henry Kissinger, the man known in the country as the author of the plan for the "dismemberment of Lebanon," boasted: "God may punish me, but I rather like Hafez Assad. He has a cold analysis of the national interest and views Syria's interests as making sure that no one becomes dominant in Lebanon. Moral indignation will

not persuade Assad."

Why such support for a bloody dictator? Can it be that Hafez Assad has the power to blackmail a succession of American administrations? In the present situation, is the Syrian regime using its inside knowledge of the last ten years of secret negotiations between Washington and Teheran, starting in the summer of 1980, to bring Washington over to its side? And yet, there are no indications that Washington is being coerced. Supporting Hafez Assad meets the policy goals of those, in the East as well as in the West, who want to keep the Mideast situation hot permanently, never allowing peace.

What must be done

Right now, the stakes are very high. The destruction of East Beirut and of the Lebanese national resistance forces, if allowed to occur, would represent a victory for the forces of darkness who brought the ayatollahs to power in Iran. A Syrian victory in Lebanon would mean a new Middle East war in the short term, with all parties deploying all available weapons, and long-term consequences both for the region and internationally.

Hence, several urgent steps must be taken:

1) The Lebanese national resistance forces, Christian and Muslim alike, should receive full diplomatic, political, economic, and military support to repel the Syrian onslaught.

2) Diplomatic, political, and economic boycott measures against the Syrian regime, including the boycott of Damascus airport, should be immediately considered and implemented, unless it halts its offensive.

3) The European Community in particular, together with the Vatican and the Arab League, should immediately pave the way for an interim political agreement in Lebanon, and:

a) establish a timetable for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon;

b) create the necessary means for the rapid dismantling of all military training camps in Lebanon, especially the Bekaa Valley, belonging to Islamic fundamentalist or Palestinian terrorist organizations;

c) extend the necessary financial and economic support to rebuild the National Lebanese Army to reassert its role and control over Lebanese territory, even if this may include dispatching multinational peacekeeping military units to Lebanon; and,

d) establish an economic program for the systematic destruction of all hashish and opium fields, and provide necessary financial compensation to local farmers to restart Lebanese agriculture.

Today, on the Feast of the Assumption of the Virgin, the Pope dedicated his speech exclusively to the unspeakable suffering of the Lebanese people. I call upon all Christians not to stand idly by and watch this holocaust, but to support the Pope in his efforts, and to force all politicians who call themselves Christian to save the Christians in Lebanon.

World responses to genocide in Lebanon

Pope John Paul II: "Do not assume the behavior of Cain, who made himself responsible for the death of his brother," said the Pope, speaking to pilgrims and tourists at his summer residence of Castel Gandolfo on Aug. 14.

"In the name of God, I appeal to Syrian authorities, asking them to cease the bombings, which aim to destroy the capital of Lebanon and the entire country."

The world is witnessing "a process, I would say, of genocide, which involves the responsibility of international society. It is a process which is bringing about the destruction of Lebanon. In reality, we are faced with a threat to the entire order of international life. It is a threat of a moral nature, so much more so because it is a weaker state which is feeling the violence and indifference of the stronger."

The Pope stressed that those who hurt the weak will be judged guilty by God and history.

Lebanese Prime Minister Gen. Michel Aoun: "There will be no ceasefire unless it is linked to a timetable for a Syrian pullout from Lebanon," said Aoun on Aug. 14. "We are coming to the point of the withdrawal of the last Syrian soldier from Lebanon. On international advice, we will not hand over Lebanon to anyone. We are not fond of war and it's not our hobby. We are fighting for freedom, sovereignty and peace."

Aoun called on the United States to take action, and declared that "it is time to give the American people back their dignity." He called for the U.S. administration to behave like President Eisenhower did during the Suez Crisis of 1956, when he gave a 24-hour ultimatum to France and Britain, and a 24-hour ultimatum to Israel to leave Egyptian territory. Aoun also warned that there should be "fewer declarations of support and more concrete moves."

German Catholic Bishops' Conference: The bishops issued a statement on Aug. 15 supporting the ongoing intensive French diplomatic efforts to find a solution to the crisis. The statement attacks the "aim of certain groups to expel the Christians from Lebanon," and calls on all politically responsible figures to "resist vigorously the attempt to . . . even extinguish a whole ethnic group."

The Bishops urge the government in Bonn to "exert all possible influence and compel Syria to stop the horrifying bombardment." "Political efforts like those launched most recently by the government of France, but also on a European Community level, have to be intensified."

The Times of London: The Syrian occupation of Lebanon "matches anything I have read about the Nazi occupation of France or the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. . . . We have a duty to support General Aoun against the Syrians," wrote commentator Roger Scruton in the Aug. 18 issue. Scruton, who has just returned from Lebanon, claims that the West has been victimized by "disinformation" about Lebanon, especially by the mythology that Syrian forces are in Lebanon as a "peacekeeping force." In fact, "Syria does not recognize Lebanon as a sovereign state," but rather is irrevocably committed to creating a "Greater Syria" that would ultimately include not only Lebanon but also Palestine and Cyprus.

"Nobody should doubt the ferocity of the Syrian occupation. Anyone remotely suspected of opposing the Syrians is imprisoned, tortured, and usually killed. . . . Families of dissidents are taken hostage and killed at the slightest sign of rebellion." All of this is done under "Syrian secret police protection." Meanwhile, "the drug trade, run by Syria, dominates every other sector."

White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater: On Aug. 14, Fitzwater cynically suggested that U.S. opportunities in the Middle East "may even be better now," as a result of the crisis situation. Asked by *EIR*'s Nicholas Benton whether whether all the attention that is now focused on the hostages has "skewed or colored" U.S. policy goals toward the region as whole, Fitzwater replied that it had not, but "If anything, it may be better now . . . because of new opportunities for better relations with Iran that have arisen, and the amount of communications we've had with countries in the Middle East."

The New York Times: An Aug. 16 editorial denounced General Aoun, under the headline, "Suicidally Stubborn in Beirut." "The new carnage has been unleashed by the deliberate, suicidally stubborn strategy of one man, Gen. Michel Aoun, the Maronite Catholic army leader," the editors wrote. "He deliberately provoked a ruthless enemy, Syria, to murderous violence in the hope of compelling the West to come to his rescue. Western leaders would serve the interests of all Lebanese by making clear that they will not be drawn in."

The editorial stated that Syria should not be asked to withdraw "outside the context of an overall Middle East settlement—at the moment a remote prospect. It is equally unrealistic to expect the West to champion the Maronite cause at the very moment it is seeking Syrian help on the hostage issue." The West can do no more than a diplomatic initiative, as France has done, which will produce no immediate result: "If General Aoun's Maronite followers persist in believing his promises of miraculous rescue, all they will achieve is to turn the unimaginably worse into the utterly catastrophic."