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WHAT IS THE CONFESSSIONAL SYSTEM IN LEBANON THAT "PEOPLE WANT TO OVERTHROW"?

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There are those who believe that the Lebanese have “ignorantly” decided not to discuss the causes of the civil war, which started in 1975 and supposedly ended in 1989. And they are bewildered how a society can move so swiftly from a Hanoi to a Hong Kong. Crimes were committed with impunity and no reconciliation process took place. Yet, we read about national unity everyday and about Lebanon being a unique multi-confessional model of peaceful co-existence. Discussions about how Britain, Germany or Japan re-built their societies after World War II and about conservation of cultural heritage and national memory and how austerity measures were adopted, are not welcomed. This happens for a reason. And the reason is: the war has not really ended. It has just taken a different form and a lower level of intensity. We have simply chosen to jump from the game of blood tinted with money during times of “war” to the game of money tinted with blood in times of “peace”. Considering that we are still in a state of war, denial is convenient and so is the continuous worthless talk about a fictional “national debate”. It would therefore be a good idea to write a new convenient “history” of the civil war that we can teach to new generations, which will also be a novelty to historians. And here is the introduction to the book:

“**Youth of Lebanon**, you have been told that there was a civil war from 1975 until 1989, and that the spark was in April 1975 because of the Ain Al-Roumaneh bus when allegedly tens of Palestinians were killed by the armed militia of the Phalanges. This story is simply not true. The truth is that Lebanon is situated on an earthquake fault line extended from Nahr Al-Kabeer to Naqoura and from the Mediterranean to Eastern Mountains and on that day we had an earthquake rated 9/9 on the Richter scale, which caused the bus accident. Later on, Lebanon witnessed many after shocks and in 1982, coinciding with Israel’s occupation of South Lebanon and Beirut, another earthquake reaching 8 on the Richter scale took place. The intensity of the earthquake caused a perpetual split between Eastern and Western Beirut.

Youth of Lebanon, do not believe that the Lebanese have killed each other. Nor have they committed any atrocities. As for our Zua’ama, they were working hard as rescuers and volunteers in the Red Crescent, Red Cross and Civil Defense. Druze and Maronites did not fight. Muslims and Christians did not fight. Sunni and Shia’a never had a problem. Nor did a Sunni have a problem with a Sunni, a Shia’a with a Shia’a, a Druze with a Druze, a Maronite with a Maronite. We were all one, working to rescue the victims of the earthquake.

Youth of Lebanon, do not believe that anyone capitalized during the earthquake era, stole, killed or embezzled. Afterwards, when things became quiet in 1989, Lebanon’s Zua’ama embarked on a campaign of reconstruction, using their own money and connections to support these efforts. Public land and public money were protected. Most of all, remember that the banking sector worked for the unity of Lebanon and its reconstruction tirelessly after the earthquake with exemplary altruism. Please do not believe those who tell us to learn from Japan. Japan has nothing to teach us. They have been subjected to two nuclear bombs, many earthquakes and tsunamis and damaged nuclear reactors and look how they behaved.

Example 1

Japan: “They” survived with a handful of rice for a family of 4 for 24 hours quietly standing in a queue and bowing.

Lebanon: “We” accept handouts without needing them, no queueing no bowing but we pay back by our votes in elections.

Example 2

Japan: “They” accept calamities in silence. Perhaps you have heard about this Japanese lady who was dug out of the rubble apologizing to the rescuers for not being able to help them.

Lebanon: “We” don’t ... we don’t ... and we don’t ... *

Example 3

Japan: “They” do not raise photographs of their prime minister and do not extend their appreciation for his help.

Lebanon: “We” raise the photographs of our Zua’ama proudly and always thank them while cursing them in our hearts.

Example 4

Japan: “They”, the Buddhists, don’t know God and His Prophets

Lebanon: “We”, the Lebanese, are the cradle of civilization and the example of co-existence and do not pray for idols unless they are Zu’ama.

The Japanese stood for one minute in silence for their victims and carried on working. We are in constant mourning for our earthquake victims while at the same time rejoicing being Lebanese at White and Sky Bar and on Facebook, Twitter and satellites.

Youth of Lebanon, we have never forgotten the victims of the 1975 earthquake including the children of Qana. Japan has a lot to learn from us.”

* Please fill in the blanks

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