

Justice for Lebanon Rally II
Peaceful Demonstration & Candlelight Vigil
Copley Square, Boston, Massachusetts, USA
Wednesday, August 2, 2006 at 6:00pm

Kindergraveyards
speech by Loai Naamani
President, Lebanese Club at MIT

37 roses to the little angels of Qana,
37 kisses on the forehead of Lebanon,
For a decade an open wound you stood,
And now they return to rape open another.

They think a nation that bled of its children,
Can – in the name of God – still bleed some more.
For if Jesus could turn into wine your water,
Why can't they turn your riddance into peace?

The Cedars of Lebanon, the Rocks of Raouche,
The Pillars of Baalbeck, and Mount Lebanon almighty,
Bear witness to your harvest, but share not in its shame.
Alone we now lull amid cribs full of sand and stone.

Children of Lebanon's longing for itself,
United we march in your funeral today.
We weep as we see the dust in your eyes,
And loudly we mourn what in silence we killed.

If Lebanon can speak, it will tell of this day,
How united you died, how united we cry.
Your Lebanon is mine; our Lebanon is one.
Lebanon for all? Yes, but a nation for life...

We've been coming to Copley Square for over two weeks now in support of the *Justice for Lebanon* campaign (www.justiceforlebanon.org)
After every rally and vigil we organize, I leave this square while wishing from all my heart that it's the last time this savage war brings us together here again; that it's the last time we have to light yet another shy candle for every fire of war eating away at more and more of Lebanon; that it's the last time we choke on our sighs as we witness more and more of the dusty smiles of our children and the tearful wrinkles of our elderly; that it's the last time I have to give a speech in which I can only pretend that I can describe a fraction of a fraction of a fraction of how terrible we all feel.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am not here today to denounce nor condemn nor demand nor implore. That we've done enough of, and – if it's any consolation – the rest of the world has also done a little of, save, of course, the noble administration of this country.

What world is this anyway... [*referring to statements made during week of August 2*]
Where UN observers get killed and the UN can only *observe* further silently?
Where Israeli ambassadors to Arab states are yet to be rebuked, not to mention expelled?

Where an Israeli Prime Minister apologizes for Qana and then continues to say he needs at least 15 more days – 15 more Qanas – to finish his mission?

Where a Secretary of State says she is *trying* to achieve a ceasefire, while the children of Lebanon only wish they can tell her they are also *trying* to stay alive, *trying* to stay away from Israel's bombs?

Where we are force-fed the noble notions of a “sustainable peace”, an “enduring peace”, while we cannot even sustain life, endure life long enough to glimpse the horizon of peace?

And what peace is this anyway that they speak to us of?

Peace that is raped from us by might?

Might that is nothing but fear coated with armor?

Armor that can only shine as our sunshines fade?

This is not the peace we want.

Our peace begins with justice. This campaign was not called Peace for Lebanon, but *Justice for Lebanon*... the justice of reclaimed land, of reclaimed citizens, of reclaimed sovereignty, of reclaimed pride, and not only this. Our peace also begins with the justice of accountability for an unjust war, for unwarranted savagery.

Anyway, I am only here today to remind you of a plea that we, the free people of this world, made from this very square a few days ago. A plea we failed to heed, but the heavens above heeded instead and handed the little angels of Qana enough wings to escape their scorched land.

It was only Friday when we spoke of a world pretending to be deaf when it really did not want to hear, pretending to be blind when it really did not want to see. And now, I must add, a world pretending to be alive when it allowed itself to allow – with deathlike ignorance – the lives of 37 tiny little children to be bombed out of their tiny little bodies.

This is the world we foretold on Friday that: You are the only sun to which the people of Lebanon can turn their faces, hoping all shadows will fall behind. A world we implored not to let the children of Lebanon down. A world that has, instead, *so* let them down, deep, very deep down, that the earth of Lebanon in which they lie would not hesitate to rip itself open and push them out, if anything could bring back the light to their tiny little eyes.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let it be known by all that, in our silence, we have become the revolving doors to the slaughterhouse of Qana.

You can now join me in adding yet another minute of silence in their memory to an infinitude of silence that turned their kindergarten into the kindergraveyard of Lebanon...

- *Loai Naamani*