

THE MESOPOTAMIAN

News From Our Ancestral Homeland Iraq

Volume 1, Issue 4 - JANUARY 2005

Inside this issue:

- Vote for the Rafidain National List—Slate Number 204 under the leadership of Yonadam Kanna - Pages 2-3
- A vote of confidence for the Assyrian Democratic Movement - Pages 4-5
- Speech given by John Michael on behalf of the Rafidain National List 11th January 2005 - Pages 5-7
- Assyrian G8 - Pages 8-9



**Vote for
The Rafidain National List, under the leadership of
Mr. Yonadam Kanna, Secretary General of the
Assyrian Democratic Movement (Zowaa).**





Vote For The Rafidain National List - Slate Number 204 Under The Leadership Of Yonadam Yousif Kanna

“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thorn bushes or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore by their fruits you will know them.” Matthew 7: 15-20.

Our beloved people - Assyrians, Chaldeans, Syrians,

The day of reckoning is almost upon us, history in the making as Iraqis worldwide prepare to cast their ballots for the first time since the establishment of the Iraqi State.

At this time our thoughts are with all the peace loving Iraqis, particularly with our Christian brethren – the sons and daughters of one nation known by several ancient and glorious names – Assyrian, Chaldean, Syriac. We pray for the safety of all Iraqis.

We must not lose sight of the dangers that confront the electorate in certain parts of Iraq, and no doubt there will be those that will choose life over ballot and remain at home. This makes it even more so important that every eligible member of our nation in Diaspora votes, but for whom?

There are a few individuals that have hijacked the Assyrian name, albeit in vain, a name in fact exalted by the Assyrian Democratic Movement (ADM) for over 25 long, hard and painful years. These unidentified characters have been taught to play fanatical politics, just as much as our enemies, those that oppose our national rights have mastered the skills of division. It is nothing short of scandalous to be asked to pin the hopes of our nation on a few anonymous individuals of whom we know nothing of, not their names, past nor credentials! Whereas the names of the Rafidain National list number 204, headed by Yonadam Yousif Kanna, secretary-general of the Assyrian Democratic Movement was released weeks ago.

In an open letter (copy enclosed) addressed to our ChaldoAssyrian community, the Reverend Cannon Andrew White of Coventry Cathedral, director of the International centre for reconciliation and also the director of the Iraqi Institute of peace describes the ADM as “a movement of vision and purpose”. This statement is made by a man who has nothing to gain nor lose other than his exemplary reputation, and a man that is familiar with our nation in Iraq after having spent a substantial amount of time amongst them. He appeals to you by saying, “place your vote for the Assyrian Democratic Movement so that the Christians of the great nation of Iraq may again have a voice that will care for, and protect them.” Just as Christ instructed, so he recognized them by their fruits.

During the course of its 25 years history, the Assyrian Democratic Movement took up an armed struggle to defend our people in the towns and villages inhabited by ChaldoAssyrians. The ADM established Syriac schools teaching exclusively in our Syriac language, built clinics, supported the rebuilding of villages and churches, built dormitories, irrigation canals, transportation for school children, publishes a weekly newspaper in Syriac & Arabic, founded Ashur TV and Radio and a great deal more. Therefore by their fruits we have come to know them also. We implore you to conduct your own research, the following websites should help you to distinguish between those false prophets who come to you in sheep’s clothing and those that have dedicated their lives, and in many cases martyred for the sake of our one nation.

www.zowaa.org Assyrian Democratic Movement
www.assyrianaid.org Assyrian Aid Society
www.aina.org Assyrian International News Agency
www.zindamagazine.com Zinda Magazine
www.themesopotamian.org The Mesopotamian



Vote For The Rafidain National List - Slate Number 204 Under The Leadership Of Yonadam Yousif Kanna

VOTE FOR HOPE, VOTE FOR A BRIGHT AND PROSPEROUS FUTURE FOR OUR NATION IN IRAQ. VOTE TO ENSURE THAT OUR NATIONAL RIGHTS ARE ATTAINED AND GUARANTEED IN A FUTURE IRAQI CONSTITUTION. VOTE FOR THOSE WITH A PROVEN TRACK RECORD WHO HAVE SACRIFICED THEIR LIVES AND GIVEN MANY MARTYR'S FOR THE SAKE OF OUR BELOVED NATION. VOTE FOR A SLATE WHO HAVE NOT HIDDEN THE NAMES OF THEIR CANDIDATES. VOTE FOR THOSE WHO HAVE DEVOTED THEMSELVES TO THE PRESERVATION OF OUR NATIONAL IDENTITY, THE PROMOTION OF OUR LANGUAGE, CULTURE AND TRADITIONS. VOTE FOR THOSE WHO ARE WORKING TO ENSURE THAT OUR ANCESTRAL TOWNS AND VILLAGES ARE RETURNED TO THEIR RIGHTFUL OWNERS. VOTE FOR THOSE WITH A SOLID FOUNDATION IN OUR HOMETLAND AND WITH THE UNWAVERING SUPPORT OF OUR PEOPLE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. VOTE FOR THOSE WHO HAVE, CAN AND WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE NOW AND IN THE FUTURE.

Vote 204 – The Rafidain National List – Under The Leadership of Yonadam Yousif Kanna, Secretary General Of The Assyrian Democratic Movement (Zowaa).



The Reverend Canon Andrew White
Director of the International Centre for Reconciliation &
International Director of the Iraqi Institute of Peace

E-mail: andrew.white@coventrycathedral.org.uk
Iraq Mobile +964 7902360139
UK Direct Dial: +44 (0) 24 7652 1201
UK Mobile: +44 (0)7778 782 324

10th January 2005

Dear Friends,

Greetings and blessings from Coventry Cathedral and from the Iraqi Institute of Peace. It gives me great pleasure to be able to greet you the Diaspora ChaldoAssyrian Community.

I count it one of my great privileges in life that I have spent a substantial amount of time over the years in Iraq. Part of that privilege has been getting to know the ChaldoAssyrian Community. It is a community of faith, vision and hope. Now however we know that this community faces some of its greatest challenges in its thousands of years of history. Saddam may have gone but the suffering of the Iraqi Christians is reaching a new level.

I long to be back in Iraq with the people I love and respect. Among them are Mr Yonadam Kanna and my friends at Zowaa, The Assyrian Democratic Movement. This is a movement of vision and purpose. A body totally dedicated to the ChaldoAssyrian cause. You may not live in Iraq now but your people do and for their sakes I would urge you to register to vote. Place your vote for the Assyrian Democratic Movement so that the Christians of the great nation of Iraq may again have a voice that will care for, and protect them.

I am not an Iraqi or a ChaldoAssyrian but I have learned to love this great people and for this reason I urge you to support the ADM in the coming election, possibly the most important in history. May God bless you and protect the ChaldoAssyrian Christians of Iraq

The Reverend Canon Andrew White
*Director of the International Centre for Reconciliation &
International Director of the Iraqi Institute of Peace*



A VOTE OF CONFIDENCE FOR THE ASSYRIAN DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT

By Miss Eva Shamouel

I am beginning to hate the sound of my own voice. The only thing that we seem to discuss these days are the Assyrian elections (did I say Assyrian? I meant Iraqi of course). No matter at what volume the conversation starts, and whether the participants sympathise or oppose, one finds themselves coming away with a raised temperature, heart pumping and adrenaline rushing. Who needs the gym?

It is a shame that the elections are taking place in the context of such upheaval, instability and bloodshed. I wish the situation in the homeland was more peaceful but who knows how long that will take? Unfortunately, there is a great chance that the election turnout will be so low that the very legitimacy of the result will be questionable. It is said that optimists live longer so let us not think about that for now, but let's think of the immediate future. Namely, this weekend.

Many people have already decided which list they will tick. However there may be some of you that are still undecided. It's very unAssyrian to be undecided about anything, don't you think? We are traditionally very opinionated! So in the interests of tradition, let us have a look at the evidence before us. Where do we find the real facts? It is very easy to create a political party these days and make loud speeches which contain big promises. But surely, if we are going to put responsibility in the hands of any group, it must be a group which have shown they can handle that responsibility in the best way. We must look at historical and factual evidence.

The fact remains that in the homeland, the young and old men and women of Zowaa have worked diligently and fruitfully and have achieved what no-other group has achieved.

Zowaa is truly a 'movement' like their name describes. They have built schools and clinics, helped rebuild churches and villages and sacrificed their lives for us and continue to do so to this day as we sit in the comfort of our homes. Their experience in international political arenas, such human rights organisations and foreign governments, is unsurpassable and has cultivated some very professional and eloquent diplomats such as Yako Yonadam. It is so refreshing to listen to this humble, unpretentious man. He does not make the robotic "we must raise Atour from the ashes" speeches that are so common these days. He speaks in a modern language with forward-thinking ideas, without losing touch with his ancient heritage. In any case, it's not about the personalities or even the message, but about the attitude and direction of the whole movement. One of pragmatism and realism – not dogmatic ideology.

When I first heard about the compound name of 'ChaldoAssyrian', I would be lying if I said I was comfortable with it. Is that my new name? Does it mean I'm half Assyrian? And so on. Through listening to people from all walks of life (from Iraq as well as here) about the rationale behind this name, I and many other people have seen that this move was a very necessary and logical one. In an ideal world we would be living in a country called 'Assyria' and we would dance khigga all day and drink *doweh* under the hot sun. But this is not an ideal world. In Iraq now, everyone is raising their voice and demanding their rights. Let's look at how loud the Assyrian voice is...

The total number of Christians in Iraq is less than 1 million, therefore if Iraq has a population of 25 million, Christians make up under 4%. Out of that 4%, Chaldeans make up 70%, Syriacs make up 15% and Assyrians make up 15%. As Assyrians, we are much less than 0.6% of the overall Iraqi population. Those statistics speak for themselves.



A VOTE OF CONFIDENCE FOR THE ASSYRIAN DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT



Assyrian General, Agha Petros

The name ChaldoAssyrian only refers to our community in Iraq and is used to unify it so that it has a louder voice. It simply means 'Assyrians and Chaldeans'. One of Zowaa's aims is to ask for administrative autonomy in certain towns in Iraq, and if in those towns, the majority of people want to be known as 'Chaldean', it is not viable to impose the name 'Assyrian' on them. We need to present a united front when we claim our rights. For example, if here in London we go to our MP and say, I am a *t'yaraya* and I want my rights' or 'I am a *bazneta* and I want my rights', how likely is it that we'll get anything? It is the same principle. We are a minority in Iraq, just like we are a minority here.

Although the compound name was not specifically meant to be used in the West, some societies and clubs have decided to use it because they too, have seen the benefits of unification. In France, the term 'AssyroChaldean' has been used for many years to unite our communities - it is not a brainchild of Zowaa. In fact, even as far back as the beginning of the 20th century the term 'AssyroChaldean' was used by Agha Petros.

The importance of voting cannot be stressed enough. Voting for Zowaa members through the **Rafidain National List 204** is the most viable way to make socio-political progress. Our brothers and sisters in Iraq who make the decision to go out and vote are potentially risking their lives. The only thing we will risk is being stuck in the weekend traffic of Wembley High Street for an hour!

This is a crucial point in our history. The window of opportunity is very, very small and this is not a time to be insular or vain or '*shooharaneh*' and let our Assyrian patriotism become so excessive that it drowns our political progress.

The Assyrian name has survived for 5000 years. It will not die as long as Assyrians are alive and able to live in peace and stability in the homeland. Some people have said that "We have to remember that if our name dies, our nation is lost forever..." I think that is fair but I think that what is much more important is that if our *nation* dies our name will be lost forever.



Flag used by our forces under General Agha Petros

SPEECH GIVEN BY JOHN MICHAEL ON BEHALF OF THE RAFIDAIN NATIONAL LIST AT THE ASSYRIAN CLUB ON 11th JANUARY 2005

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you all for coming this evening. Before I begin, I would like to apologise in advance if my speech may be deemed a little harsh by a few amongst you, however, our nation has arrived at a critical juncture, I would even go as far as to say that we have arrived at the final crossroads in a journey that has spanned over 6000 years. Today, we are faced with two paths, one that leads to prosperity and the other to annihilation (destruction). Therefore, it is imperative that I use words, which are indeed harsh but are unfortunately the reality of our nations situation.

January 30 will be marked as a historic day in the Iraqi calendar, for the first time since the establishment of the Iraqi state, ordinary Iraqis, men and women will be able to exercise their democratic right and vote to elect a new interim national assembly who will be tasked with writing the new permanent Iraqi constitution.



SPEECH GIVEN BY JOHN MICHAEL ON BEHALF OF THE RAFIDAIN NATIONAL LIST AT THE ASSYRIAN CLUB ON 11th JANUARY 2005

Although a small minority and as democracy dictates, we have a choice to make, there is more than one slate that we can cast our vote towards. However, before we cast that all important vote, we must ask ourselves a few fundamental questions, such as:

Who are the candidates that we are voting for?
 What is their history as far as nationalistic and political affairs are concerned?
 What have they accomplished for our nation?
 Do they have an established political presence both at home and abroad?
 And finally, if they are successful in being elected what can they possibly achieve for our nation?

We should never base our decision upon glorified words and fancy declarations, for words are easily uttered and written declarations in most cases are not worth the paper that they are written on. We must consider our actions when voting and think carefully about the consequences of our selection.

That is why I am here today to ask you all to consider voting for the only list that offers our people real hope for a brighter future, I will ask you to vote for the only group who has a credible and visible track record of accomplishments unparalleled in our ancestral homeland. Today I will ask you to vote for the Rafidain National list – slate No. 204, under the leadership of Mr. Yonadam Kanna, secretary-general of the Assyrian Democratic Movement – Zowaa. Slate number 204, under the leadership of Mr. Kanna includes candidates from all the religious denominations of our nation and from all the main geographic regions where our people reside, all candidates are either representatives of political parties, lawyers, doctors, teachers etc. It is the most representative list that we have available to us.

Zowaa, as a political party, is responsible for the rebirth of our nation in our ancestral homeland, it is the only vehicle available to us that can deliver us to our national aspirations, we must therefore ensure that it is nurtured and supported fully and not place obstacles in its path. The sad reality is that there is no other group or organisation that can deliver us to our desired destination, no matter what they say in their glorified speeches in for example their global satellite stations, which may I add are based in the safe and secure west, far away from our homeland.

It baffles me when I listen to such diaspora-based TV stations, read messages, in most cases posted under fake names in various internet forums or hear people spread rumours about our people and their representatives in our ancestral homeland.

I accept that there are a few politicians who, in most cases, live lavish life-styles in the safe and secure West, who disagree with the stance and policies adopted by the Assyrian Democratic Movement, in which case is it not their patriotic duty to return to our ancestral homeland and initiate their party's differing policies and agenda? Surely, such politicians only have two options available to them, if that is, they truly care about the welfare and future of our nation, those choices are either to return to Iraq and pursue their differing policies and agenda or alternatively remain outside and far away from their homeland and neither support nor attack and undermine those who remain in our homeland and risk their lives working for the cause of our nation, in many cases, Zowaa members have paid the ultimate price by becoming martyr's for this great nation of ours.

However, it is very saddening to realise that these few western based political party's and/or politicians have chosen to remain in the west and constantly attack our representatives in our homeland, which directly and indirectly has an adverse effect on all our people in our homeland. I fail to see how such a campaign benefits our nation; surely it only serves to benefit those groups who have been attempting for many centuries, and in the most part successfully, to marginalise our claim to our national rights in our homeland. Therefore, they are either directly or indirectly serving the purpose of our nations true enemies. Over twenty-five years ago a gathering of a few Assyrian nationalists laid the foundations to a movement that would define the meaning of patriotism and sacrifice, a movement consecrated by the blood of its martyrs and a movement that without whom the national aspirations of every member of our one and glorious nation would have faded long ago into the annals of history. The Assyrian Democratic Movement has a unique track record unmatched in Iraq, it was the ADM that mobilised an armed militia to protect our people, was responsible for the building of schools and clinics, initiated the rebuilding of villages and churches, provided clean running water, irrigation systems and much, much more. Perhaps the greatest accomplishment is that the ADM has actively pursued its founding principles and diligently worked towards the unity of our one nation. It is our history, land, language, culture and religion that bind us all together as one distinct and indivisible nation edging ever closer towards our national rights; any distraction that may affect this progress only serves the interests of our nations ill-wishers and enemies.

Allow me to take you back to October 1998. President Clinton signs the Iraqi Liberation Act (ILA 1998) and allocates 97 million dollars to support the transition to democracy in Iraq through regime change. Initially, seven Iraqi political groups were named under the ILA of 1998 to receive financial assistance of which none were Assyrian. Following the 911 attacks, the noose begun to tighten around Saddam's neck as the United States made preparation towards its case for the liberation of Iraq. In December 2002, President Bush issues a Presidential determination of designations under the Iraqi Liberation Act of 1998 and names the Assyrian Democratic Movement (Zowaa) as eligible to receive assistance under the aforementioned act.



SPEECH GIVEN BY JOHN MICHAEL ON BEHALF OF THE RAFIDAIN NATIONAL LIST AT THE ASSYRIAN CLUB ON 11th JANUARY 2005

Also in December 2002 an Iraqi Opposition Conference convened in London, England. Representing the Assyrian nation were the "Assyrian G8" consisting of two independents and five Assyrian political groups, namely, the Assyrian Democratic Movement, Assyrian Universal Alliance, Assyrian Patriotic Party, Assyrian National Congress and Bet-Nahrain Democratic Party. Mr Yonadam Kanna, Secretary-General of the Assyrian Democratic Movement was unanimously elected by the G8 to represent the Assyrian nation. It is prudent at this stage to point out that the Assyrian G8 knew unreservedly that the desired intentions of the Assyrian Democratic Movement was the unification of our nation through the compound name ChaldoAssyrians. Clearly the name by which our nation would be represented in the new Iraq wasn't deemed a contentious issue; otherwise the unanimity of the vote would have been severely affected.

Shortly after Iraq was liberated, the Coalition Provisional Authority announced the formation of the Iraqi Governing Council (IGC). Together with the 25 members was Mr Yonadam Kanna our nations representative amongst the elite in Iraq. August and September 2003 saw two further ChaldoAssyrians being appointed by Mr Yonadam Kanna to high profile positions. The first, Professor Hikmat Hakim, who holds a PhD in Political Science and Constitutional Law was appointed to the 25 member Iraqi constitutional committee, and Mr Behnam Zia Paulus who was appointed as Minister of Transportation.

In October 2003, all the various religious denominations of our nation, together with political groups, associations, technocrats, academics and many more gathered in Baghdad from all corners of the globe to participate in the Chaldean Syriac Assyrian General Conference hosted by the Assyrian Democratic Movement and the Assyrian Democratic Organization (M'Takasta). The conference concluded that the name by which our nation would be represented constitutionally in Iraq would be "ChaldoAssyrian" and that our language be known as "Syriac". The Conference also stressed the need to designate an administrative region for our people in the Nineveh plains, where a special law be established for self-administration and the assurance of administrative, political, cultural rights in towns and villages throughout Iraq where our people reside.

Shortly after the Iraqi Governing Council was dissolved, the Iraqi National Conference convened in August 2004, our delegates to the Conference elected four ChaldoAssyrians to serve as members of the Interim Iraqi National Assembly, amongst them, was Mr. Yonadam Kanna.

The recent spate of Church bombings and other crimes perpetrated against the ChaldoAssyrian Christians prompted the Assyrian Democratic Movement to mobilize 1500 armed militia men and deployed them in the Nineveh plains. In a recent interview, Mr. Yonadam Kanna said that if necessary the Assyrian Democratic Movement could arm over 10,000 militiamen to protect our people.

In addition to protecting our people, the Assyrian Democratic Movement has been actively working towards the return of ChaldoAssyrian land and villages illegally expropriated by our neighbours in the north, and to obtain support for the reconstruction of ChaldoAssyrian villages and infrastructure

The Assyrian Democratic Movement (UK) branch in conjunction with the Jubilee Campaign – an interdenominational Christian human rights organisation, have been working diligently over the past few months with various MP's in order to bring to the fore the plight of the ChaldoAssyrian Christians of Iraq.

As part of the ongoing process, an early day motion (EDM) was tabled by Mr. Stephen Pound MP regarding the plight of our people in our ancestral homeland, Iraq. Hitherto, 49 MP's have shown their support of the EDM by signing it. The EDM will remain live for a further 3-4 months – it is hoped that over 200 MP's will sign the EDM, this will enable the ADM (UK) to apply pressure upon the British Government to do all it can to support our national rights in our ancestral homeland.

All that can be done is being done by the Assyrian Democratic Movement at home and abroad to ensure that the national rights of the ChaldoAssyrians are granted and guaranteed within the forthcoming permanent Iraqi Constitution.

As I mentioned earlier during my speech, words are easily uttered, well it is also said that a picture speaks a thousand words, therefore I have prepared a few pictures and a short video of our heroic people who remain steadfast in their ancestral homeland, which I will now play.

Before doing so, I would like to plead with you all to go out next week and register and then vote at the end of this month and before making your decision, please, please, please consider carefully your selection and any consequences associated with it.

God Bless you all and God Bless our Nation in Iraq.



ASSYRIAN G8

By Albert Michael

The purpose of this article is to provide the reader with conclusive evidence that the Assyrian G8, in particular Dr Sargon Dadeesho, unconditionally and unanimously elected Mr Yonadam Kanna, secretary-general of the Assyrian Democratic Movement (ADM) during the Iraqi Opposition Conference (IOC) held in London between 13 – 16 December 2002, as our nation's representative in Iraq, despite the signals emanating from the ADM camp of unification under one name, be it AssyrianChaldean, ChaldeoAssyrian etc.

Recently some individuals have tried to debunk this claim, knowing that if the truth is allowed to stand unchallenged, then the credibility and integrity of the Assyrian puritan, Dr Dadeesho will be severely tarnished and brought into serious question. Was Dr. Dadeesho aware of the fact that the ADM were well on track in uniting our one nation known by several names under a compound name? There are three possible scenarios. First, he knew but it didn't matter to him at that time, or, he knew and would put up a stern fight to defend the Assyrian name, or he simply wasn't aware of it. We can discard the second scenario because the name issue wasn't deemed important enough, otherwise written guarantees would have been obtained, but none were ever sought – and we know this because the election of Mr Yonadam Kanna was unanimous! I put it to you that Dr. Sargon Dadeesho knew all along that the Assyrian Democratic Movement under the leadership of Mr Yonadam Kanna would unify our Assyrian, Chaldean, Syriac nation under a compound name, because to suggest that he was unaware all along of what was happening is nonsense, as we shall see.

Events surrounding the identity of our nation began in earnest way back in April 1999 when the United States Census Bureau tabulated our people residing in America under one designated name of Assyrian/Chaldean/Syriac. This decision provoked controversy as it had changed the previous 1990 classification from Assyrian only, to the new unified name, albeit slashed.

Fifteen months later in July 2000, Dr Dadeesho's Assyrian National Congress (ANC) filed a lawsuit against the US Census Bureau. Three months later the district courts' judgement was ruled in favour of the defendant (US Census Bureau), and Dr Dadeesho's challenge was dismissed. A report was published in the popular Assyrian online magazine [1] Zinda, the following extract from that report should leave the reader in doubt as to whom Dr Dadeesho accuses of being the main culprits. "Dr. Dadesho then began lambasting the other political groups and their leaders, beginning with John Nimrod, Secretary General of the AUA. Dadesho said that "INC does not even recognize the AUA and considers it a civic organization (shootasa shotapaya). Dadesho said that "John Nimrod and Zowaa supported the Census Bureau's decision to adopt the new Assyrian/Chaldean/Syriac category and John Nimrod even commented in one public meeting 'What is the difference between Assyrian and Chaldean anyway?'" Dadesho called John Nimrod and ADM (Zowaa) "our nation's internal foes as is the government of Baghdad our external adversary." It is interesting that Dr Dadeesho refers to Senator John Nimrod, but more importantly the ADM as the enemies of our nation, if that were true whom were they working for? We can rule out Saddam then, and most certainly now. So that would leave the only group that has been gradually Kurdifying our ancestral towns and villages, a group that had ironically forged new relations with Dr Dadeesho's ANC. In that same [1] Zinda report, the following appears. "The 7th ANC Assembly which took place in Sweden, between June 29 - July 1 (See Zinda's August 6th Issue) was a turning point in the politics of ANC and its relations with the Kurdish groups in North Iraq, according to Dr. Dadesho. At this meeting representatives of the Kurdish group, Kurdistan Democratic Party, were also present. Dr. Dadesho explained that the ANC is the only Assyrian political organization that has demanded an independent Assyrian territory, specifically the Assyrian Triangle in North Iraq. He further noted that the plans for this independent Assyrian territory have been discussed with the Kurdish officials and the name of Mr. Fawzi Toma has been brought up as its governor."

At this stage it is strikingly clear that Dr Dadeesho believes in his own mind that the ADM had conspired, if that were the right term, to amalgamate the several names relating to the same nation into one. So one would assume that being an astute politician, Dr Dadeesho would tread carefully if he were ever to interact with the ADM.

In September 2002, merely three months before the IOC, I together with my dear friend Albert Yelda (the current Iraqi Ambassador to the Vatican) were contacted by Mr Yatron Darro and Mr Gewargis Bakoos to help bring together the main Assyrian political groups as one fraternal and national front during, and it was hoped after, the IOC. In addition to lobbying the main Iraqi Opposition groups for more representation, we were regularly speaking with the main members of the group who would come to be known as the "Assyrian G8", including the numerous and lengthy telephone conversations that I had with Dr Dadeesho. On the other hand, I also had the privilege to meet, and on a very regular basis, with Mr Yonadam Kanna, Mr Yonan Hozaya and Mr Ishmael Nanno, executive members of the ADM who had travelled to the UK well in advance of the IOC. I was left with no doubt that the ADM aspired to use the inclusive name as opposed to Assyrian only. At first this drove me livid, I raged at the mere thought of being referred to as anything other than Assyrian in the future makeup of Iraq. Yes it was nationalism, but it was also 36 years of ignorance, 36 years of not feeling the pain and torment of my people in our homeland and 36 years of comfort, living in a secure and democratic environment. For those who'd like to know why I've changed my position please read my article published in [2] Zinda Magazine written shortly after my return from Iraq in November 2003.



ASSYRIAN G8

In response to the proposed Kurdish federal constitution that referred to the makeup of Iraq as “Arabs, Kurds and other ethnicities”, and referring to our people as two separate nations, Assyrians “and” Chaldeans, the ADM issued a press release. The following excerpt is from that ADM press release published in [3] Zinda Magazine November 2002, a month before the IOC. “The proposal dealt with our people as two different nations (Assyrian and Chaldean) overstepping the historical fact of unity of our people and bypassing the laws of the parliament which are still in effect in the region. Additionally, this is considered to be interference in the internal affairs of our people, known by several different names (Assyrian, Chaldean, Syriac). Our nation consists of several different church denominations, Chaldean Catholic, Syriac Catholic and Orthodox, Eastern Assyrian with two calendars, Protestants and others. Regarding this issue, the only point raised by the representative of the Purple List (ADM) whilst parliament was in session and during his discussion with the respected leadership committee of the parliament was in reference to the identification of our people, in which he requested that the word “and” be removed from between Assyrian and Chaldean, as an expression of unity of our people. This was rejected, which means an insistence in dividing our people.” The ADM press release then concludes with the following assertion. “We, the Assyrian Democratic Movement, promise our Assyrian-Chaldean nation that we shall remain faithful to our principles and political path which we have taken since the establishment of the movement, who’s noble and immortal martyrs contributed to erect its pillars. We will endeavour to strengthen the relations of our people with the fraternal Kurdish nation. We will safeguard our national agenda with all the fraternal nationalities in Iraq, Arab, Kurd and Turkmen and with all the patriotic factions regardless of their ideology for a free democratic Iraq.” Just as you have noticed the compound name “Assyrian-Chaldean” being used frankly by the ADM in their declaration, so did all the members of the Assyrian G8, particularly Dr Dadeesho!

A few members of the Assyrian G8 thereafter assured me that they would seek written assurances from Mr. Yonadam Kanna that the name by which our nation would be referred to would remain to be Assyrian before they elected our nations’ representative in Iraq. During the IOC, the Assyrian G8 convened in a private session to elect two Assyrians who were to be appointed to the Iraqi Opposition 65 member follow-up and coordination committee [4], of which one of whom would be elected as our nations’ representative in Iraq. Mr. Yonadam Kanna was unanimously elected as our nations representative in Iraq.

I was sitting in the Hotel lounge when three members of the G8 emerged fresh from their meeting. I was informed of the outcome and that no written guarantees were obtained from Mr. Kanna regarding the name issue. In fact that same evening, I was informed by one member of the G8 – and later confirmed by two others, that he’d sought an undertaking from Mr. Kanna stipulating that the only name to be used was to be Assyrian. According to the testimony of three independent witnesses, it was Dr Dadeesho who intervened and requested not to debate the name issue. In other words, he who had a year earlier called Zowaa “our nations internal foe” and he who had accused Zowaa of being behind the US Census bureau’s decision to categorize our people as “Assyrian/Chaldean/Syriac”, wasn’t in the least bothered about obtaining guarantees that would allay the fears about something he claimed to be so passionate about. The following four options were open to Dr Dadeesho:

- A) Insist on an undertaking in writing that the Assyrian name be used in all cases.
- B) Vote against Mr Kanna
- C) Abstain
- D) Vote unconditionally for Mr. Kanna

He chose option “D” and voted for Mr. Kanna. The point that I make is that whilst you read Dr Dadeesho’s public declarations they fall far short off the mark in practical terms, and this raises many questions shrouded with speculation. So I guess in conclusion I would ask, if it is not the name issue that drives Dr Dadeesho to ferociously attack our brothers and sisters in Iraq, what does?

References:

- [1] <http://www.zindamagazine.com/html/archives/2001/9.10.01/index.php#NewsDigest>
- [2] <http://www.zindamagazine.com/html/archives/2003/12.8.03/index.php>
- [3] <http://www.zindamagazine.com/html/archives/2002/11.11.02/index.php>
- [4] <http://middleeastreference.org.uk/iraqufac.html>





A PICTURE SPEAKS A THOUSAND WORDS



Kha B’Nissan celebrations N. Iraq



Kha B’Nissan celebrations N. Iraq



ADM Guards during Kha Bnissan celebrations in N. Iraq



A few ADM guards who took part in the liberation of our towns and villages in N. Iraq alongside US forces



ADM Headquarters in Baghdad



One of our many schools in N. Iraq



EDITORIAL BOARD

English Editors - Admond Shlimon, Albert Michael, Johnny Michael
Assyrian Editors - Nabil Youel
Arabic Editors - Gewargis Nanno – Wilson Khnano – George Odisho

The Mesopotamian is a non-profit newsletter and is distributed free of charge. Donations to cover the cost of printing and publication will be greatly appreciated. Please make cheques payable to "The Mesopotamian" and mail to "The Mesopotamian, PO Box 46276, London W5 1YU"

The opinions expressed in The Mesopotamian are the opinions of the respective writers and do not necessarily reflect those of the Editorial Board.

To subscribe or to send articles etc. please use the following contact details

Email - enquiries@mesopotamian.org
Address - PO Box 46276, London W5 1YU
Website - www.themesopotamian.org
Fax - + 44 (0) 20 8993-2141

المنظمة الأتورية الديمقراطية
المكتب السياسي

بيان بمناسبة الانتخابات في العراق

بعد سنوات طوال من الظلم والاستبداد طال الشعب العراقي بكافة مكوناته وانتماءاته القومية والدينية، نتاح الفرصة أمله للتعبير عن إرادته الحرة في انتخاب ممثليه لمؤسساته التشريعية والتنفيذية، وفي إعادة بناء مؤسسات نظامه السياسي وفق أسس عصرية قوامها الديمقراطية وحقوق الإنسان والإقرار بالحقوق القومية لجميع شعوبه على قاعدة من العدالة والمساواة. في الانتخابات المقبلة في نهاية شهر كانون الثاني الحالي لاختيار الجمعية الوطنية التي ينال بها إقرار دستور دائم للعراق، وهذه خطوة هامة وأساسية في مسيرة الانتقال ب العراق إلى الديمقراطية والحرية والسيدة الحقيقية الكاملة. مما يؤمن لشعوبه التقدم بالازدهار والحرية والأمن والاستقرار بعد عقود من الفهر والقمع والقتل والتشريد.

إن شعبنا الأتوري الكلداني السرياني في العراق وهو أحد مكوناته الأساسية والأصيلية، يرى في هذا الحدث الوطني فرصة حقيقية لتثبيت وترسيخ وجوده في الوطن، وتصميم على ممارسة دوره الوطني والقومي وحضوره السياسي إلى جانب بقية شركائه من خلال هذا الاستحقاق الوطني الهام في تاريخ العراق.

إن المنظمة الأتورية الديمقراطية إذ ندعو أبناء شعبنا في العراق ومن هم خارجة الممن أركة الفاعلة في هذه الانتخابات، ورغم إدراكها لحجم وجدبة المخاطر التي تواجه العملية الانتخابية من قبل قوى التطرف والإرهاب، فإنها تهيب ببناء شعبنا لحمل مسؤولياته بالمشاركة في هذا الاستحقاق الوطني بحزم وإرادة صلبة، والتوجه لصناديق الاقتراع للإدلاء بأصواتهم لمن يروه معياراً حقيقياً عن تطلعاتهم القومية والوطنية. وإن المنظمة الأتورية الديمقراطية التي كانت تامل أن يقدم شعبنا بقا ثمة واحدة تمثل وحدته وإجماعه، ألمها هذا التفتت في فواتم معددة ليست في أية حال في مصلحة شعبنا رغم سعيها عبر مبادرات وجهود عديدة بذلتها قب ل شهور من أجل التوصل إلى قائمة إجماع قومي. ندعو الناخبين من أبناء شعبنا منح أصواتهم لمن يستحق تفهم ممن كانوا عبر تاريخ تضالي طويل يحملون هم شعبهم وتطلعاته القومية ومن قدموا من أجل ذلك تضحيات وعذابات جسام، ممن يمثلون ويجسدون وحدة قومية حقيقية من كافة أطراف شعبنا ومناطقه.

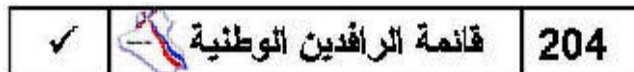
إن المنظمة الأتورية الديمقراطية وانطلاقاً من موقف قومي لا مكان فيه للعواطف، تعلن عن تأييدها " لقائمة الرافدين الوطنية"، لما تمثله من حالة قومية حقيقية هي الأكثر نجسدا لوحدتنا وشعبنا وتطلعاته القومية والوطنية، وندعو أبناء شعبنا في العراق وخ ارجه دعم وتأييد وانتخاب هذه القائمة وتوظيف كل جهد ممكن في سبيل دعم وإضاعة أي صوت انتخابي من أجل كسب أكثر مفاعد ممكنة في هذه الاستحقاق الوطني والقومي الهام في مسيرة نضال شعبنا.

النصر لفضيلة شعبنا

النصر لفضيلة العراق وشعبه في الحرية والديمقراطية

المكتب السياسي

سوريا في 22 - 1 2004



من أجل عراق آمن.. تتعزيز فيه السيادة والوحدة الوطنية



انتخبوا

قائمة الرافدين الوطنية برئاسة السيد يونادم كنا