CONFRONTATION OR CO-HABITATION AND CO-EXISTENCE

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Armenians have integrated superbly in regions and countries they live in such as the Middle East, Europe, Russia, and the U.S. But two major events in the last few weeks raise serious concerns about future developments if no adequate preventive measures are undertaken. The first was the peaceful protest demonstrations against racism and the accompanying riots, including the looting and the destruction of private property in many U.S and European cities. The second is the hate and xenophobic declarations and actions denying the Genocide of Armenians by a minority extremist Islamic group in Lebanon who were encouraged by pro-Turkish or Turkmen associations.

The reaction of a small group of Armenians carrying rifles, machine guns and hand guns in defense of a store in Los Angeles could have had serious consequences. Were they going to open fire on looters? What would have been the response of black, Hispanic, and whites participating in the mayhem?

The situation in Lebanon during the civil war was different from the situation in Los Angeles. In Lebanon Armenians carried weapons in the absence of state authority and the rule of law. They defended the Armenian neighborhoods to prevent the expansion of the war to areas where they lived. In the U.S. riots it is the duty and task of the state to safeguard the security and safety of citizens and their property. Groups of citizens cannot and should not substitute state responsibility, authority, and legal system through mob justice which lead to confrontation and chaos.

Armenians should aim to enhance co-habitation and co-existence. While forging their identity in Lebanon, they should not antagonize other groups and particularly the Sunnis. The community should raise awareness among the young to counter xenophobia, hatred and intolerance thus contributing to the prevention of conflict, injury and murder. As far as the extremist Moslem minority movement is concerned the issue must be tackled by referring to the government and pursue it through the judicial system, subject to the criminal code of the country, realizing that the Turkish government's aim--for geopolitical reasons in provoking dissension among Lebanon's different ethnic, religious, and cultural groups.

Comments

Arusyak Karapetyan – 2020-06-20 02:24:08
I was very happy to see this article on Keghart. I have noticed in social media the vast numbers of Armenians living in the US reacting with anger and fear to what is happening in the States. As Armenians living outside of Armenia we must realize that we play an important role in shaping the countries within which we are living. We cannot pretend that the problems that exist in our adopted countries are not our problems. And reacting with violence as a solution to riots and rebellion will not create any positive outcome or change. It will only complicate the situation and potentially hurt innocent people along the way.