

Sunday, January 23, 2011

## Reflections on the Current Events

Many thoughts are running through my mind regarding the recent events:

### \* **A heroic stance:**

First, I would like to commend the stance that His Holiness, **Pope Shenouda III**, took after the atrocious terrorist attack that took place on New Year's Eve. It is indeed a **Heroic stance**, for he was able, through the divine wisdom, to win all the leaders of Egypt to the side of the church. He didn't cancel the Liturgy of the Nativity Feast, but rather he transformed it to an opportunity for many people to get together with love to offer their condolences with a true heart.

I have always perceived His Holiness to be compassionate towards his children, and empathetic to their various circumstances. He never separated himself from his children and always puts the interest of the church above any consideration. He is truly a compassionate father and a good shepherd and a distinguished leader. Therefore, I thought to myself, "If things go as usual and His Holiness decides to celebrate the Feast of Nativity, will he receive people as congratulators or mourners? The answer came to me through the great wisdom of His Holiness who prayed the Liturgy and received the congratulators as though they were mourners.

With the nobility of heroes, he did not embarrass the government but stepped over his own grief and pain and stood like a lion speaking about the love of Christ, so he compelled everyone to appreciate and respect the wounded Church. Therefore, it is not surprising to see that everyone was moved and tears were filled the eyes of some out of love and respect for this great man who is filled with divine grace which guides him in leading the church despite all treacherous storms.

### \* **Home and abroad:**

When Christians are attacked in Egypt, Christian relatives outside Egypt become troubled and they demand the protection of their families as indigenous Egyptian citizens. They make every political effort with human rights organizations in order to provide justice, equality, and citizenship rights for their families within their own country, Egypt. When all that happens, Copts abroad are negatively perceived a great deal. People start saying that the problems in Egypt can only be resolved from within Egypt, and that any external interference in the country's internal affairs is unacceptable, and other conversations in the same dull tone.

In my judgment, **this preposterous conversation about home and abroad is an outdated one.** It is inappropriate to continue repeating these words in a civilized country of great historical and cultural depth, while the whole world has become a small village that is interconnected on the media, cultural, and economic fronts. Everything is visible to the world and we, in Egypt, are not isolated on a deserted island, separated from the rest of the world. To the contrary, we need to be opened to world to catch up with civilization. We need to cooperate and communicate, we need to give and take, contribute and benefit as well.

It is also understood that **Egypt has joined the majority of the world in abiding by the human rights agreements.** It is imperative that **partners have oversight over each other regarding what they agreed upon**, and they have the right to crosscheck each other's compliance if there is violation of the signed agreements. All countries must respect humans regardless of color, race or religion, while preserving the specific cultural identity and traditions of each country.

We cannot ignore the fact that **the majority of Egyptian families now have relatives outside Egypt.** Many family members are now spread across several countries, while still emotionally and intellectually connected and check on each other through various means. Egyptians, in particular, love their homeland no matter where they physically live, since she is "A home that lives within them, rather than a home they live in" according to the great quote for His Holiness, **Pope Shenouda III**, may the Lord bless him with healthy life. Therefore, **It is absurd to talk about the Copts in the land of immigration as though they are enemies of Egypt, plotting conspiracies against her and causing her trouble. In fact they are rather an integral part of Egypt and a select few of her most talented children.** Their love for their homeland grows more every day despite the distance; their longing for the prosperity of their country of origin is always at the forefront of their concerns. They are always willing to sacrifice for the peace and the well being of Egypt in a practical way not with empty words. They contribute in many ways, the least of which is material contributions to their relatives in Egypt, and generally through many projects that serve the poor in Egypt.



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