

The Kurdish Latest Propaganda; Boosting Aghajan and Hariri and Undermining Assyrian True Representation

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March 16, 2006

Recently, a well-organized pro-KDP campaign has hit the Internet and many Assyrian forums. This planned campaign coincided with the release of Ishtar TV as a Satellite TV station and as houses and few churches were delivered to certain Assyrians and Christian sects in northern Iraq.

This campaign has a purpose of course, which, in essence, is to present the Kurdistan Democratic Movement (KDP) and Kurds as guardians over the Assyrians. While it is almost impossible for the Kurds to win the hearts and support of the Assyrians directly due to the Genocide they committed against Assyrians for centuries, the Kurds pushed its members, such as Nenif Matran Hariri, the KDP advisor for Christian affairs, and Sargis Aghajan, Deputy Prime Minister of the northern Iraq Kurdish regional government, to be their front image to the Assyrians. Mr. Hariri, on one side, is not shy to express his insolence on his site (www.assyriansofkurdistan.com) when he claims basically that Assyrians have Barazani as their savior and then he marginalize every other Assyrian institution or organization. On the other side, the KDP and Barazani appointed Mr. Aghajan to be in charge of the construction of the new houses, churches, Satellite TV station, bridges, and other projects in selected Assyrian regions.

Now that Ishtar TV is on the air and houses, churches, etc, have been delivered, it was time to present the man who allegedly is the reason behind these projects and build him up for the position that he is groomed to occupy; the leader and protector that the Assyrians need. This, ultimately, is a step to undermine the leadership of the Assyrian Democratic Movement (ADM). The campaign is to present Aghajan as an Assyrian hero for "his" reconstruction projects in northern Iraq post 2003 Gulf War.

There are few important points that the reader must consider, including:

1. While the well-financed and high tech Ishtar TV broadcasts programs in Syriac, it does broadcast in Kurdish and Arabic as well. A newly established TV station must win the hearts of the people to be trusted. It is natural that it must broadcast good quality and trust-worthy programs in Syriac so that Assyrians would watch it. However, the long-term plan of the station is its affect on children and the youth who watch the Syriac programs but will watch Kurdish propaganda as well. In the Kurdish segment, KDP leadership is presented as civil, democratic, humanists, just, and open-minded. Additionally, the real purpose of Ishtar TV is to undermine Ashur TV. The Iraqi constitution institutes the cultural rights of the Assyrians; therefore, the Assyrians can do without a channel infested with Kurdish programming and propaganda. The two Kurdish rivals KDP (Barazani) and PUK (Talabani) have their own satellite TV stations, why do they need to broadcast from a presumably an Assyrian station? If Assyrians want to hear Kurdish, they would watch the two Kurdish satellite stations.
2. Sargis Aghajan is a well-known member of the KDP. The KDP is a Pan-Kurdish organization with well-known political and national goals. Its main goal is to establish the illusive country of Kurdistan that never existed in history. Most importantly, this new country will be established over many Assyrian historic lands. Aghajan's obligations, as a member of the KDP, are towards the Kurds and not the Assyrians of Iraq. Were the obligations of Tariq Aziz towards the Assyrians of Iraq or the pan-Arab Ba'athist movement? One cannot fight for the rights of the Kurds and those of the Assyrians at the same time because there is an obvious conflict of interest on certain important points. The bottom line is, Barazani appointed Mr. Aghajan; he is not an Assyrian representative, period.
3. The KDP and the Kurds are insinuating and making the world to believe that the money spent in the Assyrian regions is Kurdish money and that they are doing the Assyrians a great favor. The fact is that the Assyrians were assigned \$33 million in the Iraq reconstruction plan; however, the United States handed the power to distribute this money over to the Kurds. This money is neither

Kurdish money nor Aghajan's money; it is Assyrians' share from the Iraqi oil proceeds. This money should have been handed over to Assyrian representatives in Iraq and allowed them to oversee its distribution with supervision if required. Furthermore, out of the \$33 million, around \$3 million is accounted for so far only. The rest of the money was perhaps pocketed by the KDP. Finally, the collapse of Nahla Bridge, which was supervised by Mr. Aghajan and constructed less than a year ago, raises more questions about the quality of the material used by Kurds in the construction. Under any civic law in the world, those in charge of building Nahla Bridge that collapsed should be questioned in the court of law.

The Iraqi national elections were held only three months ago. In those elections, the people did cast their vote and made their choices. The Assyrians have an elected representative in parliament, who is Mr. Younam Kanna. The KDP must respect the Assyrians' decision and choice. Barazani is at liberty to appoint anyone he desires to any post in his local government. However, Barazani must understand that these appointees are not Assyrian representatives and they will never be. If Barazani and the KDP are serious about their justice, freedom, and liberal claims, they should honor the decision of the people, stop interfering in the Assyrians' internal affairs and end their wicked and evil ways of dividing the Assyrian people.

As people, the Assyrians and the Kurds could set an optimistic and healthy example of coexistence in northern Iraq. However, this positive example must be created based on true democratic values and good will. The KDP is practicing neither at this point.