

Nubar Dorian vs . Patriarch Mutafian ?

It is with regret that we had to enter into conflict against the CB of AGBU. It was not and it has not been our desire to see the AGBU in the opposite camp, but due to circumstances beyond our control they are where they are.

The court cases in Nicosia and L.A. are not malicious acts against the AGBU, instigated by the Patriarch of Istanbul with the financial backing of the MEI Alumni associations, and should **NEVER be construed** as such. They are wake-up calls to the CB of AGBU to make them aware of our determination to save the MEI, a national treasure.

Following AGBU CB's uncooperative position, it was the only option left to us. Our conflict is not against the AGBU, it is about the CB's aggressive posturing against the MEI. After all, the AGBU is not the possession of the CB, just like a country is not the possession of its government. A decision such as the annihilation of a great national Armenian Educational Institution cannot be left solely to the CB's decision making machinery.

To date, AGBU CB's unrepentant stand on the closing of the MEI forces us to continue in our struggle and we shall not relent.

We shall not relent for the sake of the youth of our nation- our future.
We shall not relent for the sake of our national heritage.
We shall not relent for the sake of our diasporan values,

Referring to Mr. Dorian, as one of AGBU CB's big guns, he is at it again, he has written another article! We have a major problem with its title before even we get down to reading it. In real life and as things seem to be, the case that he is referring to is “Mutafian vs. AGBU”, not “Mutafian vs. Melkonian”, unless he is using some obscure wit in the way he has titled his article.

One wonders if it was the AGBU's CB that requested this article or it was the author's own inspiration and initiative. In either case it reflects dimly on the CB of AGBU which according to Mr. Dorian is “*this God-ordained union*”.

Cutting through the ramblings of the article, one sees Mr. Dorian engaged in a restrained attack on Patriarch Mutafian while deifying AGBU. The above quote is reflective of a malaise that seems to have permeated some of AGBU's rank and file and the supporters of it, at least in the question of the MEI. It is precisely this kind of mindset of some of the AGBU followers that seems to have molded the stand of the leaders (the CB) into thinking that closing the MEI is God-ordained!! Consequently, the problem appears to be more serious than anticipated...

Under the circumstances, Patriarch Mutafian would be more than justified to enter the arena, if for no other reason than to save us from the blind worship of the CB of AGBU in what appears to be emotional extremism.

However, the Patriarch's involvement is for a far more crucial and serious reason than that. As the successor to the office of the Patriarch, signatory to the original agreement, it is within his jurisdiction and legal responsibility, to oversee the transference of the administration of the MEI to an able “body”, seeing that the CB of AGBU has either failed or is not willing to fulfill its commitment. The Patriarch had no option but to interfere, especially, in order to stop the sale of the real estate and assure the re-opening of the MEI on its historical site.

Is Mr. Dorian- whether the mouthpiece of the CB of AGBU or not- asking our courageous Patriarch to abandon his “*virtue, dignity*” and spiritual principles so that the CB of AGBU may continue in its zeal to destroy the MEI? Are not our spiritual leaders also the upholders of the ethical and moral aspects of our worldly business? Has Mr. Dorian ever wondered, why Garabed Melkonian originally wanted the Patriarch in Istanbul to be in charge of his will?

We would suggest to Mr. Dorian that instead of advising the Patriarch to fall in dereliction of his duty, by taking “*the example of all (??) our spiritual leaders, should thank AGBU and ask God to continue blessing this organization*”, he should advise the few spiritual leaders that only he seems to know-obviously of his own persuasion- to join with the **majority** of our spiritual and national leaders to follow the Patriarch in bringing the AGBU back into line with the spirit of their original mandate.

Stop blaming and vilifying the Patriarch and the World Alumni as if they are the culprits for the present situation. After all is said and done, the Patriarch will go down in history as the one who fought to uphold the values that we all hold close to our hearts.

Mr. Dorian asserts that the “*AGBU Central Board, after years of serious examination, consultation and professional advice from educators...*” decided to terminate the MEI operation. By this statement he has confirmed to us what we had always suspected that the CB had already turned the wheels on for the closure of the MEI, while Mr. Setrakian was assuring us that “the CB had no plans to close the MEI!” Thank you Mr. Dorian for revealing the truth.

It's hard to know who will believe in the catch phrase the author uses for the “closure”: “*the CB decided to execute its (AGBU's) mandate and close the MEI, embracing unparalleled programs to better uphold and hail the Melkonian legacy.*” What kind of double talk is that Mr. Dorian? Do you and the CB of AGBU seriously believe it makes sense? **The only way the Melkonian legacy can be upheld is by respecting the benefactors' wishes.**

Even if the CB of AGBU has managed to exhaust the treasure the Melkonian brothers left for the administration of the School, **the real estate and the buildings have not run out of existence.** The buildings and the real estate do not belong to the CB to do as they will. The real estate of the MEI is the property of our nation and the sale of a part of it a few years ago may have constituted an infringement on the rights of our national heritage.

Mr. Dorian seems concerned about AGBU CB's expenses in defending itself against the court cases. With the L.A. case still pending, undoubtedly costs will rise. However, if the CB of AGBU is just as concerned about costs as Mr. Dorian is, they can immediately stop this waste from going on any further by resolving the situation amicably with the Patriarch and the Alumni.

That is what a real friend of the AGBU would wish!

Mr. Dorian quotes Scripture. In closing we would like to leave him and the AGBU CB with the following Scripture:

*“Know well the condition of your flocks,
And pay attention to your herds, for riches are not forever.
Nor does a crown endure to all generations. When the grass disappears, the new growth is seen.”*

Armand Ayaltin
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Vancouver, B.C.

