

CHAPTER 7

Clarion 2

October 8, 1860¹

Countrymen,

When news of the unrest and transgressions that befell this country reached Sultan 'Abd al-Majid, he was deeply moved. This is evident to anybody who reads the decree issued in early July 1860 to his excellency, the great statesman Fu'ad Pasha, who was sent by the High Porte as an emissary to these lands. Imperial measures to avert inequity, stop the continued disturbances, and achieve peace and security are further proof of his highness's concern for the seriousness of the problem, his care for his subjects' welfare, and his compassion for them.

Moreover, the written and spoken statements that General Fu'ad Pasha expressed in this Sublime Decree upon his auspicious arrival on the shores of this country have promised peace, security, and justice to all subjects, and have raised everybody's expectations that his highness will fulfill those benevolent intentions and righteous promises.²

Countrymen,

You must be running out of patience because you have spent so much time humiliated and away from your abodes. You have

grown homesick and want to return to your birthplace; or, as they say, the country misses its people. Many of you have since lost your dearest friends and children and many of you are sick, bare-foot, and needy. Your whole condition elicits sadness and grief. The lack of adequate retribution for the wrongdoing that you have suffered and the lack of compensation for the damages that you have incurred have undoubtedly worsened your plight and anxiety. As you know, to build is more difficult than to destroy, especially when the destruction is committed by the troublemakers of a vast country and in such a short period of time. Can a single engineer, no matter how competent, restore its former state of beauty as quickly as it has been destroyed—especially if he is a perfectionist? This is what the current state of affairs has come to.

Countrymen,

We lament your condition. We are aware of your distress and your loss. They add to our pain and sadness and force us to excuse your obstinance and your complaints. However, we consider that the best approach to set things straight is not to rush things, but to deliberate carefully and to avoid measures that would only worsen the devastation. The only way going forward is to place your confidence and trust in those in charge and to give yourselves reason to hope that they will exert their efforts in supporting the oppressed and carrying out the justice that is due to them. The fact that the greatest powers of the world are lending you their attention in the desire to alleviate your hardship, grant you your peace, and help you obtain your rights should fill you with trust, confidence, and patience.

Countrymen,

Many of you say, “Whoever is patient succeeds and whoever is obstinate sins,” and “Patience is the key to relief,” and

“Obstinence is followed by regret,” and “It is prudent not to rush things so as not to spoil them.” Yes, blindness of the heart befell the Israelites because of their impatience.³ Rather than follow their example, would it not be better for your own sake to take their fate as a warning and a moral tale? How we long for your prompt return to your abodes so you may live in security, comfort, and luxury. Your way out of this is to be thankful and patient and ask God to bless those who saved you by preventing the spread of destruction, sedition, the meddling of the wicked, and the bloodletting. Pray to God that those in whose hands the affairs of the people are entrusted will guide you onto the righteous path. May He support them in their initiatives to do good deeds and protect the rights of man.

Countrymen,

It may occasionally cross your mind that this country was punished by God. It’s true. Do not think otherwise, but welcome this idea with an open heart so that it may remind you that to Him you shall return. For then He shall hold back from inflicting harm. Otherwise, His hand may weigh down heavily because God will not change the state of a people unless they change themselves.⁴

Our hope is that you read through this and the previous pamphlets with a spirit of love, goodwill, and simplicity. Both were written with good intentions and without prejudice by someone who shares your feelings and is pained by your calamities, which are also his. May God preserve you.

From a patriot