



# Chaldean Leadership: Stray or Evolution?

By: Joseph T. Kassab

Today, most of the Chaldean organizations are short managed and underled. Yet the factor that ultimately determines which organizations succeed or fail is their leadership. It is widely accepted that leadership policy significantly affects the life of each member of any community in not just one way but in many ways, some of them familiar and some unexpected. Citizens have the right to freely confront any leadership when it becomes helpless or suspicious. Indeed leadership policy affects a vast range of community activities, from social, cultural, educational, political, and business matters. In this article we will try to assess some key diminutions of this ubiquitous influence on the Chaldeans' life and to initiate them into debates swirling around its major controversies.

Defining any leadership in clear and unambiguous terms is not easy. Many previous leaders devoted considerable attention to the problem without reaching consensus. Nevertheless, the community leadership means the assumption of command and the intention to make decision for all. Any implementation of leadership includes outputs and impacts. Outputs: are the tangible manifestations of policies, the observable and measurable results of leadership adaptation and implementation. Impacts: are the outcomes or the effects that policy of outputs has on society. These effects can be either acceptable or completely unacceptable by the people.

It is no secret that Chaldeans leadership has deteriorated, as a result for this deterioration, many groups of concerned people from different sectors of the community has emerged to the rescue. At this time it is not known what the main intentions are or will be. The community elite already fired their engines, many meeting took place and some are scheduled to discuss and assume leadership. We must admit that the elite can be best capable and well connected to create a fast recovery of the current leadership, but the danger of elite come from their socialization to special leadership roles which can be carried on to a great extent by their peers. In conclusion elitism is the belief that elite rule the community on behalf of their own values and interests as compared to pluralism which belief that major decision results from interactions and compromise among a diversity of competing people within the community.

The decline in confidence in any leadership is no doubt tied with the decline in trust and leadership efficacy. Despite declining confidence in community leadership, Chaldeans seems to be fairly contented with leadership system at some general level. Based on this fact, recently many groups of concerned people started to meet and discuss this critical issue. It is well-accepted fact that discussions concerned issues related to the whole community and its destiny should be held in public and should not be limited to certain kind of people. This will encourage everybody to explore this issue and to participate in the process of identifying the best leadership for this community.

Time has come for the Chaldean community to have a strong leader who is able to bring all people together under one umbrella. This leader should be selected by the majority of people and able to work with all of them without bias or discrimination.

Here are the ten most distinctive characteristics for the ideal Chaldean leader:

- 1- A strong leader should have deep heart beliefs in the cause of his community i.e. must be ideal Chaldean.
- 2- Any leader must have a strong dose of egoism, pride, heartiness, and cunning with great vision; best of these things will be regarded as high quality if he can use them to achieve great ends.
- 3- A great leader must be willing to accept criticism rather than be ruined by praise.
- 4- The quality of a leader should be reflected in the standards he set for himself.
- 5- A wise leader should be colorblind, swimming between the optimist who sees green everything and the pessimist who sees black everything.
- 6- A good leader should be more concerned with his character than his reputation, because a reputation is merely what others think about him.
- 7- A successful leader is to be measured not so much by the level he reached, but by obstacles that he had overcome while trying to succeed.
- 8- The best leader is the one who has sense enough to pick good men to what he wants done, and self-restraint enough to keep meddling with them while they do it.
- 9- The honest leader is the one who can lead his people rather than using their cause to achieve his personal ambitions.

- 10- The ultimate leader should believe that coming together is a beginning; keeping together is a progress; working together is a success.

These provocative and competing criteria will encourage all inspired leaders to take risks, embrace changes and transform their vision into reality. The real leader, to reach his ultimate goal in becoming a great leader should closely follow these pearls of wisdom. It is important not to forget that for our community to remain competitive in the new millennium, Chaldeans will need the assistance of the new generation who can shape rather than surrender to our increasingly demanding and fast developing society. These youth must take a visible and advanced rank in our leadership process.

It is frequently heard that our community leaders were not aggressive or competitive enough in winning the heart of many funding agencies to obtain funded programs that can support the community needs. The notion is that our organizations and its leaders were preceded by similar organizations in obtaining funds for the very same cause. It is important to mention that we are not ready for such massive programs that require a highly supportive professionals and staff, being prepared first can be very much of a catalyst. In addition it is not fair to complain how and why others were able to get funded. The just is to direct and encourage capable leaders to do the same or even better, either by sharing others funds or to learn how to beat them to it. This is the sad reality and we should accept it until we drastically make the intended suitable changes, the media once told President Truman that his critics said he gave them hell. He replied, "I did not give them hell I told them the truth and they thought it is hell."

In order to make the Chaldean American community effective, prosperous and visible among other communities the following items are in need to be accomplished:

- a. Establish a strong political interest in the community able to promote the cause of the community and capable of mingling with the local and national politicians. An effective lobbyist is needed to secure and to promote the community needs. The possibility of reviving the Chaldean American Political Action Community (CAMPAC) must be considered.
- b. A foundation dealing with raising funds from Chaldean entrepreneurs and the business corporations they deal with should be established. In addition this Chaldean foundation will be able to raise funds from all community members in order to disperse these funds to the community projects right the way when becomes needed.
- c. Time has come for such unique business community to have its own Chamber of Commerce and even a Commercial Bank.
- d. It is wise to take advantage of the Census 2000 data (Will be available in summer 2002) in order to ask government agencies to support many needed projects for the community per its population.
- e. Assist in the plight of Chaldeans through out the world to insure their security and well-being.
- f. Device a comprehensive plan to identify and solve the most common problems of the Chaldean community in order to achieve a better-enhanced image.
- g. Finally, it is imperative to start a Global Chaldean Organization capable of defending and promoting the human rights, heritage, and the rich ancestor of Chaldeans throughout the world coupled with very effective worldwide public relation campaigning.

A panel of specialists in the above fields should extensively study these matters and submit their recommendations to the community leading organizations.

Finally the Chaldean community cannot afford diminished commitment to its most vital interests. We must tear down the bureaucratic walls that constrain the advancement of this community. We must rearrange Chaldean leaders from every part of the world and equip them with the tools and knowledge to revitalize our community with the next generation. The longer we wait, the more our people there are at risk, and the greater the challenge becomes. Now is the time to consider the alternatives and act.

Let us not forget what the great Charles De Gaulle once said; "Nothing great will ever be achieved without great men, and men are great only when they are determined to be so."

For your comments please e-mail me at: [kassabj@kci.wayne.edu](mailto:kassabj@kci.wayne.edu) or [kassabj@karmanos.org](mailto:kassabj@karmanos.org)