



Armenian Genocide, the Darfour situation and Turkey's European ambitions

IF THE PAST DID NOT HELP US IN THE PRESENT, WILL IT BE ABLE TO DO SO FOR THE FUTURE?

While reflecting on the tenth anniversary of the horrors of the Rwandan Genocide, the international community finds itself distraught once more by the tragic events taking place in Darfur, western Sudan. At least 30 000 civilians have lost their lives and a million more are deported. Two million people are considered in urgent need of food and medicine. The United Nations considers Darfur to be the worst current humanitarian crisis in the world. The violence that is now generalized in the region has been described as a genocide by the U.S. congress. We have not started off this century on the right foot, and we reserve the right to ask ourselves if our planet will once again be witness to the recurrent epidemics of genocides, massacres, deportations and exterminations, corroborating the existence of groups and organizations bent on destruction and annihilation, with the latest technologies at their disposal.

Ironically, this period has coincided with the visit to France of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey Mr. T. Erdogan, and his aides, with the goal of wooing the political elite of France in a blatant attempt to "charm" the said republic and to mask the flaws of the Turk, in order to give themselves an artificial credibility for the upcoming negotiations regarding Turkey's joining the European Union. Of course we cannot overlook the fact that as a reward, the Prime Minister of Turkey reserved the right to offer lucrative contracts regarding the sale of helicopters on the one hand and Airbus plane on the other. How Turkey will pay for these contracts is another matter. Thus the "tipping" policy, which constitutes a milestone, triggers another disgusting episode identical to the previous ones that went on for decades, when military and economic alliances and international agreements were stepping stones in the effort to buy back the crimes of the past and to bury a bloody history. However, this does not exclude the great responsibility that the international community holds, who by its pacifism has become an accessory to State Denial.

We are convinced that the two most recent examples of horrors experienced in Rwanda and Darfur are the direct consequences of the indifference of western powers regarding the Armenian Genocide of 1915. For a predator capable of committing such a heinous crime as

genocide, Turkey of the 20th century constitutes the ideal model of an aggressor who has committed all possible and imaginable violations without receiving any form of punishment. It would suffice to remember the events of the last century that have marked Turkey during the infamous operation of "turkification", when the culture of violence of all sorts, massacres, deportations, genocide, looting, pillaging, torture, illegal taxation (economic genocide) etc. reached their pinnacle. The following is an extensive but non-exhaustive list of the crimes:

- The first decade of the 20th century, the massacre of 30 000 Armenians in the city of Adana in 1909. (warm-up phase of the genocide of 1915)
- The next decade will see the destruction of the Greeks, Jews, Assyrians and finally the Armenian genocide of 1915.
- In September 1922, the massacres at Smyrna by the Turkish military reduced the city to rubble and ash. Citizens of mostly Greek and also Armenian descent were targeted.
- In 1923, the year of ratification of the Lausanne Treaty, 1 500 000 Turkish citizens of Greek origin were deported from their homelands of Asia Minor to Greece. Only those that lived in Istanbul were spared.
- The fourth decade will hit another victim, the Jewish community. Already victims of systematic violence, pillage, rape and pogroms, thousands of Turkish citizens of Jewish faith had to flee Thrace leaving their belongings due to decree #2510, made in 1934 which is the source of these forced deportations, towards Istanbul.
- A decree (no. 4305) adopted on November 11 1942 is the most appalling event of this decade. It consists of the establishment of a "special tax" on the net worth of citizens. Random and arbitrary methods were unjustly overused for the purposes of the government, targeting specifically non-Muslim ethnic groups. If the demands of payment were not met, the victims were deported to concentration camps in Easter Turkey. Most scholars refer to this period as the "economic genocide" of

Turkish minorities.

- The sixth decade will bear witness to the riots of Istanbul. On the night of September 6-7 1955, Istanbul will be sacked and pillaged by a large riot coincidentally targeting the property (houses, churches, businesses) of minorities (namely Greeks).
- In 1964, the Greek community only exists in Istanbul. Decree no. 6/3807 was adopted which forced the deportation and expulsion of the Greek minority. All belongings were confiscated.
- During the eighth decade, Turkey will mount an illegal invasion and occupation of Cyprus in 1974, where multiple violations were committed, even under the cover of a cease-fire sponsored by the United Nations in Geneva.
- Thus, the first phase of the "turkification" operation was ended, to start the second phase, this time targeting the Muslim ethnic minorities, at the beginning of the 80's. The Turkish Army will take the reins of an operation that will repress with martial law, torture and corruption. The targets are the intellectuals, the political parties and the Muslim minorities of Turkey. Thus, more than 4 000 Kurdish villages will be completely erased from the map. Tens of thousands of Kurds were victims of the worst atrocities.

This is the list of awards adorning the trophy case of Turkey of the 20th century, where the culture of genocidal acts and exactions of all sorts will make of this list the glory of the machiavellian operation of "turkification" unleashed at the start of the 20th century.

This is an example of a perfect crime, of one that has not resulted in punishment due to the benediction and the blind eye turned to Turkey by the western powers, and that has engendered, because of the impunity, a repetition of inhumane events of the same nature around the world. Our planet has born witness to the Holocaust of the Jews and the Gypsies (41-45), the destruction of the Cambodians (75-78), the liquidation of the Tutsis in Rwanda (94) and now Sudan. It is important to add to this list massacres of genocidal proportions; the extermination for example of millions of Ukrainian peasants by famine (32-33), and this list goes on. It was a century of genocide, when recurrent premeditated and government sponsored genocidal acts took a monstrous amount of lives, the sum of which eclipses the number of casualties of both World Wars. In short, this was a great collective catastrophe and a defeat of humanity, one which concerns all of human civilization. The climbing spiral of atrocities are in direct correlation with the historic events of the beginning of the 20th century, namely the Armenian genocide. The indifference, the forgetfulness and the denial of these historical facts represent the driving force of a state of mind, where we can easily conduct denial, a magnificent platform that could instigate another series of atrocities. That is why State denial (rewriting of factual history, destruc-

tion of "purging" of archives, false documents, subsidization of organizations that are ready to collaborate, etc.) has progressively been installed in Turkey. Geopolitical and strategic issues have forced international bodies and the media keep a collaborating silence, giving this "State truth" international proportions. However, facing the slightest opposition, it will show weakness and disbandment, covered in a deep vindictive nationalism, which would prove the profound paranoia and fanaticism rooted in this false "State truth".

We should remember the insolent sanctions imposed on French media and corporations by Turkey when the National Assembly of France recognized the Armenian Genocide. This delirious period was replaced by an interesting situation: a preparatory phase that would see a political rapprochement, for an eventual joining of the European Union, thus a change of character when forgetfulness is a perpetual chorus line for all parties concerned. Before he left for France, the Prime Minister of Turkey did not hesitate to address a scornful message to the government of Israel, denouncing the latter's attitude towards the Palestinians and condemning its acts as State terrorism. Considering the Israeli Palestinian conflict was not born yesterday, we can hardly understand this last minute strategy, which is another change of character, unwise at that point. Keeping decency and dignity in mind, the Turkish Prime Minister and his accomplices should be wary of using such terms, for he is the last person to be preaching morality or giving lectures on civil rights or to be counselling his counterparts on this issue, when genocidal acts and government terrorism were the fashion in Turkey of the 20th century. The debate engulfing Turkey's joining of the European Unions deserves particular attention in regards to the norms of eligibility of such an adhesion and its geopolitical consequences.

Considering that:

- Turkey is not European, weather we consider geography or culture and traditions.
- The democratic process in Turkey is lacking and the rule of law is non-existent where the army occupies an important part of political life.
- Turkey is consistently on the spot, holding an impressive track record of violations of human rights, of freedom of expression and of any basic universal right that is traditionally recognized and respected.
- There is deep collusion between the security forces the "Grey Wolves" (extreme right) and the mafia.
- A network of corruption is part of a global system, which results in incalculable damage.
- There exists a mechanism of denial that holds the power to purge all collective memory and historical precedent that could question the "state truth". Thus the "purification" of state archives in regards of the Armenian Genocide and the process of its denial.
- Sharp social problems cannot be solved in the

The right thing to do

AT LEAST A MAJORITY OF PARLIAMENTARIANS, IF NOT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, IS WILLING TO ACKNOWLEDGE THIS CRIME AGAINST HUMANITY

BY MICHAEL PETROU

In the Turkish city of Diyarbakir, city employees work diligently to convert centuries-old church steeples into mosque minarets.

Nearby lie the haunting ruins of the Armenian Surpagab Kilesi church. Once the place of worship for thousands of Armenians who used to live here, it is now home to the last family of Armenians in Diyarbakir. They live in a small building adjacent to the ruined courtyard.

Tens of thousands of other Armenians from Diyarbakir and surrounding towns were murdered in 1915 by Ottoman Turks as part of a systematic genocide directed against the Armenians of Anatolia. Thousands more were deported, usually to starve to death in the

desert or to be gang-raped and murdered by Ottoman soldiers and marauding Kurds. As many as 1.5 million died.

The modern Turkish authorities have not yet destroyed all of the Armenian churches in Diyarbakir, or converted them all into mosques, but perhaps one day they will. They have been working for decades to cover up the crimes of their Ottoman predecessors. And Wednesday night they got help from Canada's Liberal government.

A private member's motion acknowledging and condemning the Armenian genocide was passed by a majority of MPs sitting in the House of Commons in a non-binding free vote.

Genocide denial is not resolution, indeed, in some countries it a

crime.

But not, it would seem, in Canada, at least when the genocide in question involves the Armenians.

The motion read simply: "This House acknowledges the Armenian genocide of 1915 and condemns this act as a crime against humanity."

But the government opposed the motion, and even issued a press release shortly after the vote reiterating its position that the mass murders, deportations and ethnic cleansings were "tragic," but avoided any reference to the term "genocide."

Many Liberals honorably broke rank with their party and supported the motion. Prime Minister Paul Martin, who never met a contentious issue he couldn't avoid taking a stand on, was absent for the debate and vote.

Foreign Affairs Minister Bill Graham concluded his statement with what can only be described as cynicism or gross ignorance, suggesting the issue should be re-

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current circumstances.

- *An unsteady economy is combined with a series of ever-present scandals on all official levels.*
- *The political system is in crisis, where the major actors are not bonded by ideology or cohesion, but by opportunism, marking their vulnerability.*
- *Conflicts with its neighbours, drug trafficking, arms trafficking and human trafficking are leading exports of Turkey.*
- *The real inflation rate is vastly higher than the declared one (which is already very high).*
- *The European Union is not a place of rehabilitation where future members with overflowing and disturbing criminal records would be admitted with their shortcomings reformed and rectified.*

It is in this frame of mind that we can assert that the request of admission of Turkey into the European Union should categorically be refused, unless European leaders have nostalgia regarding the "good old days" of the Ottoman Empire, or would take the risk of a collective suicide by acquiring a member with a background as degrading and humiliating for the Union as that of Turkey. This would launch the Union in a dangerous endeavour with consequences such as:

- *A dramatic social, political, demographic and economic change of the E.U.*
- *The omnipresence of secret overview of an army (tak-*

ing into account that Turkey is the republic of the military) that would jealously want to keep control of the political and military spheres of the European Union. Something it has already done in Turkey.

- *The obligation of the member states to coexist with a partner who has a double identity and double language, is known for its flip-flopping and lack of political stability, and is still the country that is "dreaming west, but moving east" (exploiting the West to dominate the East—i.e. the vision of Panturkisin).*
- *Having a partner in the Union that has all the possibilities to promote and favour the interests and the profit of another political power, which could radically destabilize the E.U.*

Finally, the admittance of such a member would be quite simply scandalous to the credibility of the E.U. This act would only serve to fashion a cover of camouflage that would add to the denial of a century of horrors, when ethnic minorities (Muslim or non-Muslim) lived through unspeakable atrocities. This would mean freely offering the status of respected partner in exchange for a century of unpunished acts, which would be considered as stimulation for other bloodthirsty predators to chose their victims. People like the Rwandans or the Sudanese would be only able to wait for their turn to oblivion.

Ignoring Genocide

BY HILLEL HALKIN

There are those who have expressed surprise and dismay at America's disinclination to do anything to stop the Rwanda genocide of 1994 or to intervene in the recent and not-so-recent events in Sudan in which predominantly light-skinned government forces have slaughtered, pillaged and starved millions of Sudanese blacks. Yet one only has to follow the little-noticed debate, trivial by comparison, that has been going on this summer over official American recognition of the Turkish genocide against the Armenians in World War I in order to realize that, when even symbolic action on genocide clashes with perceived political interest, it is not perceived political interest that backs off.

This debate has involved two resolutions, House Resolution 193 and Senate Resolution 164, that do nothing more than express official American acknowledgment of the premeditated murder, mostly in 1915, of an estimated 1 to 1.5 million Armenians by the armies of the Ottoman Empire. Since this murder is a well-documented episode that only the rare pro-Turkish historian bothers to challenge these days, one would think that such acknowledgment, 89 years in arrears, would be unexceptionable.

In fact, it has been anything but. Both the Republican congressional leadership and the Department of State have come out strongly against the House and Senate resolutions, just as both opposed an amendment to a House appropriations bill, passed by a large majority on July 17, to bar Turkey from using American foreign aid funds to lobby against these resolutions. "Turkey," declared House Speaker Dennis Hastert, Majority Leader Tom DeLay, and Majority Whip Roy Blunt in a joint press release, "has been a reliable ally of the U.S. for decades...our mutual economic and security relationship should not be disrupted by this amendment." To which State Department spokesman Richard Boucher added with dead pan humor that recognition of the Armenian genocide would be detrimental to "reconciliation between Turkey and Armenia."

These reactions, needless to say, were not spontaneous. They came in response to pressure from the government of Turkey, which for decades has conducted a concerted campaign to deny that the Armenian genocide took place. To this day what happened to the Armenians in World War I is a banned subject in Turkey: It is not mentioned (except to claim that it never happened) by the press, no books are published about it, academic courses are not taught about it, and serious scholarship is not undertaken in the field.

Moreover, in an effort to make other countries fall into line, the Turks have threatened them with dire consequences should they acknowledge the Armenian genocide. Although some governments have stood

up to such intimidation (most notably France, which officially recognized the Armenian genocide in 2001), others have caved in. One of the saddest cases in this respect, apart from America, has been that of Israel, where programs on what happened to the Armenians have even been barred from state television.

There is, of course, something utterly absurd about Turkey, a member of NATO that has been trying hard to gain admission to the European Union by claiming to be a western-style democracy, systematically seeking to censor its own history as if it were an article in a Stalinist encyclopedia. Far from bringing shame on them, a frank admission of what their armies did to a helpless population nearly a century ago would only rebound to the Turks' credit. Just think of the esteem that the German Federal Republic, in the years after World War II, earned in the world by its honest confronting of the Holocaust.

Even more pathetic is the behavior of those countries that have yielded to Turkish pressure on this issue. What exactly is the Bush administration afraid of? That if the House and Senate pass Armenian genocide resolutions, the Turks will break off diplomatic relations with America? That they will drop out of NATO and form an anti-Western alliance with Iran and Al Qaeda? That they will invade Iraqi Kurdistan? It should be obvious even to the fearful bureaucrats at the State Department that the Turks would have exactly one option if 193 and 164 were adopted: To splutter and get over it, which is exactly what they did three years ago vis-a-vis France.

Not the least outrageous part of the Turks' behavior is the moralizing tone they have allowed themselves to take with others, as when the Turkish prime minister, Recep Erdogan publicly accused Israel not long ago of practicing "state terrorism" toward the Palestinians. Were the Israeli foreign ministry itself not chock-full of fearful bureaucrats needlessly anxious about jeopardizing their country's good ties with Turkey, it would have replied loud and clear to Mr. Erdogan: "You, the leader of a country that not only has conducted a brutal policy of repression toward its own Kurdish population but has systematically practiced the equivalent of Holocaust denial on a grandiose scale, you have the gall to accuse us?" Of course, it did no such thing, and the Israeli government, together with some Jewish lobbies in America, has collaborated shamefully with the Turks on the Armenian issue.

How can we possibly expect the world powers to budget large sums and risk the lives of their soldiers in order to prevent or end genocidal barbarities when the most powerful of them will not even do something so paltry as acknowledge a genocide that took place at the start of the last century? How can we dare hope that

'The dark world of the Armenians'

BY RABBI MATTHEW BERKOWITZ

Bearing vigilant and constant witness and fighting Holocaust denial are part of the Jewish responsibility to history. Yet today, we are accomplices in the denial of an earlier genocidal chapter — the Armenian Genocide.

Between 1915 and 1916, some 1 million Armenians were systematically massacred by Ottoman Turkey; between 200,000 and 500,000 more would be exterminated between 1917 and 1922 by the revolutionary Young Turks. Dehumanization, death marches, and massacres targeted this Christian population. Vivid testimony was recorded by an American Jew — Henry Morgenthau, who was U.S. ambassador to Turkey: "When the Turkish authorities gave the orders for these deportations they were merely giving the death warrant to a whole race; they understood this well and in their conversations with me, they made no particular attempt to conceal the fact." Morgenthau writes of a death march to Aleppo. Of some 18,000 who set out, 150 women and children arrived. "All the rest," he writes, "were dead."

Deborah Lipstadt argues that "denial of genocide is the final stage of genocide; it is what Elie Wiesel has called 'a double killing.'" Yet the government of Turkey has been waging a campaign of denial involving threats, political bullying, coercion, and an unabashed assault on truth. The campaign has been effective. Successive administrations of the United States have succumbed to pressure preventing the passage of legislation referring explicitly to the Armenian Genocide and calling on Turkey to take responsibility for this blemish on humanity.

Tragically, the organized Jewish community continues to remain silent, and even to appease the Turkish government. The Turkish Daily News has reported with evident satisfaction that "the American Jewish Committee, member of the influential Jewish lobby in the U.S., has sent a letter to the Senate calling on the senators to exclude references to the alleged genocide out of the [2004] budget bill." The reference is to the State Department Authorization Bill, to which a rider referring ex-

the lesson of the Holocaust has been learned by anyone if, 50 years afterward, a Jewish state does not recognize, for reasons of realpolitik, the attempted destruction of another small people like the Jews? Did not the governments of the world that stood by while the Nazis and their henchmen slaughtered the Jews have realpolitik to think about, too? Perhaps it's time we stopped blaming them.

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plicity to the Armenian Genocide has been attached by some 33 senators, reaffirming support of the Genocide Convention. They will seek a vote in September.

Adolf Hitler relied on the silence of history to wage a genocidal campaign. On August 22, 1939, only days after the Nazi conquest of Poland, he asked, "Who after all speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?" Today, we are commanded by history just as we are by words of Torah, *v'dibarta bam* — that you shall speak of them — not only of the destruction that befell us, but the annihilation that befell them. Fortunately, some have refused to be silent. On June 9, 2000, 126 Holocaust scholars published a petition in *The New York Times* affirming "the incontestable fact of the Armenian Genocide" and urging "Western democracies to officially recognize it." In March this year, Dr Yair Auron, an Israeli scholar of genocide, wrote in a newspaper article, "Israel has systematically avoided the Armenian issue." The Israeli and larger Jewish response "desecrates the memory of the Holocaust and its significance," Auron comments, and concludes poignantly: "As an Israeli Jew, I can only ask the forgiveness of every member of the Armenian people and assure them that there are people in Israel who will not give up until their state changes its immoral and anti-historical attitude toward the genocide suffered by another people." Some 15 Jewish organizations, including the American Jewish World Service, the JCRCs of Greater Boston and Palm Beach, the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, and the Union of Orthodox Rabbis have also breached the wall of silence. The rest of us must also begin to commemorate the Armenian Genocide and give whole-hearted support toward the passage of the Genocide Resolution.

In 1992, on a tour of the Armenian Quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem, I noticed shards of glass jutting out of the upper walls on either side of us. Our guide reminded us that Palestine had been under the rule of the Ottoman Turks and the Armenians lived in constant fear here too. The glass was to prevent the Turks from scaling the walls. "Notice too the size of the windows," continued the guide, "almost miniature, to prevent outsiders from breaking in. Imagine how dark their world must have been." Those words have become a part of my Jewish soul. Let us imagine how dark the world must still be for the Armenians when people refuse to acknowledge their past.

To remain silent or indifferent is to display, in Abraham Joshua Heschel's moving words, a tragic lack of "moral grandeur." Worse yet, to remain silent is to admit that genocide can and will happen again.

The Jerusalem Report
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The Armenian genocide: Face history's heartbreaking truth

BY JAY BUSHINSKY

JERUSALEM —When the writer Franz Werfl, visiting this majestic city in the early 1930s, sought a shoemaker, he was told that there was a very competent one on Jaffa Road. His wife, the former Alma Mahler, had lost one of her shoes aboard ship en route to Palestine and was desperate to have the missing one replaced.

The shoemaker's name was Garabidian — an Armenian name. Werfl was surprised to discover Armenians in Jerusalem. When he found out that the Old City had an Armenian Quarter and that most of its inhabitants were survivors of the 20th century's first genocide, he was overwhelmed with emotion. That conversation inspired his internationally acclaimed novel, "The Forty Days of Musa Dagh."

The carnage perpetrated by the Ottoman Turks 89 years ago, in which 1.5 million ethnic Armenians were killed or deported, was a tragic prelude to the Nazi Holocaust of 1939-1945 in which six million Jews were annihilated.

Hitler's determination to destroy European Jewry was encouraged by the world's lack of interest in the Armenian tragedy. In a speech delivered to his troops on Aug. 22, 1939 - nine days before he invaded Poland - he was quoted as having said: "Who, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?"

The fact that these words were not included in the official text has prompted skeptics to contend that they never were uttered. They may have been said off the cuff, since it is hard to believe that they could have been invented by others.

Ironically, Hitler's rhetorical question is inscribed on one of the walls of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial in Washington, and rightly so. But there is a vast chasm between moral sentiment and political expediency. The latest attempt by Armenian-American activists to win

Congressional recognition of the Armenian genocide was a failure. Other interest groups, including Jewish ones, misguided or opportunistic, convinced a vast majority of the American lawmakers that a resolution along those lines would offend the Turks at a time when the United States needs them as allies.

Israeli diplomacy also puts contemporary priorities ahead of moral obligations. When a major documentary about the Armenian genocide was due to be screened here, the foreign ministry intervened out of consideration for Turkish sensibilities. It is hypocritical to expect compassion and sympathy from the peoples of the world for the lives lost in the Holocaust when 'raison d'état' prevents Israel and most Israelis from commiserating with the Armenians.

Israel's government winced when Turkey's prime minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, assailed its policy and behavior in the West Bank and Gaza Strip as well as toward the Palestinians in general. But neither Israel nor the overseas

Jewish organizations dared remind Erdogan that leaders of nations that had committed crimes against humanity had best refrain from preaching to others - a lesson learned and followed by Germany.

Historical truth must be faced regardless of how heartbreaking it may be. It cannot be subordinated to the ebb and flow of modern international relations. Anyone who visited the Armenians' grim memorial to their martyred brothers and sisters south of Yerevan, Armenia's capital, in the shadow of biblical Mount Ararat, cannot but grieve with them.

Israelis, Jews, Zionists and their supporters should comfort the Armenians in their national sorrow and the Turks should accept the photographs, documents and above all testimony, which commemorate the Armenian genocide, instead of insisting that it never happened.

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German think-tank says arguments in favour of Turkish EU membership not convincing

YEREVAN (Armenpress)—The strategic reasoning for arguing in favour of Turkish membership of the European Union is "not convincing," according to a new study published by a German think-tank.

Reported in *Die Welt*, the study by the East-European Studies Institute says that the focus of Turkey's membership has shifted to its strategic benefits, because its membership will introduce few economic benefits.

According to the report, however, the "political-strategic arguments are not convincing." The study moves on to note that Turkey's accession "is not a way of preventing the 'clash of civilizations.'"

It also criticizes claims by the German government that a democratic Turkey could be a shining example to Islamic states in the Middle East as "difficult to understand." The study has been welcomed by opposition Christian Democrat politicians, who call for the introduction of Turkey's 'privileged partnership' status with the EU rather than full membership.

According to Bavarian minister Eberhard Sinner, the study should be "required reading for every head of state and government in Europe."

solved by Armenian and Turkish governments and experts.

The Turkish government has already made it clear how it believes the issue should be "resolved." Countries that acknowledge the genocide are frozen out of economic deals, as was France in 2001.

Turks who discuss the genocide are likewise punished. Four years ago, Father Yusuf Akbulut, an Assyrian priest in Diyarbakir, told a newspaper that Assyrian Christians were also slaughtered during the Armenian genocide—a historical fact—and was promptly arrested and labeled a national traitor in the Turkish press. As for academic experts, Turkey regularly funds professorships at universities abroad. And try getting permission to access Ottoman archives in Turkey if you don't toe the correct line.

Turkey is not interested in resolving the issue, only distorting it or pretending it never happened. Mr. Graham must know this. And yet he appears more concerned with potential contracts for Canadian companies in Turkey than with acknowledging a monstrous crime for what it is.

Genocide denial is not resolution. Indeed in some countries it is a crime - but not, it would seem, in Canada, at least when the genocide

in question involves the Armenians.

Some well-meaning people object to the use of the term genocide to describe the massacre of Armenians in Anatolia because they fear using the term too loosely will rob the word of its meaning and will dilute the impact of other genocides in history - most notably Nazi Germany's attempted destruction of European Jewry.

But the definition of genocide is the mass extermination of a people, and this is exactly what happened to the Armenians of Asia Minor.

It is no coincidence that Adolph Hitler, the very architect of the world's most terrible genocide, recalled the Armenians' fate prior to his own assault on Poland, while urging his military commanders to be merciless toward all men, women and children of the "Polish race or language."

"Who; after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?" he asked, rhetorically of course, because nobody did. And while too many Israeli politicians have avoided calling the Armenian genocide a genocide, in part to avoid offending Israel's stalwart ally Turkey, in 2000 the then-Israeli education minister, Yoabs Saris, stood with the Armenians of Jerusalem on their day of remembrance. He affirmed that they too

had suffered genocide.

For many years, too many years, you were alone on your memorial day, he said.

I am aware of the special significance of my presence here today along with other Israelis. Today, perhaps for the first time, you are less alone.

The Armenians are less alone today in their efforts to have a national tragedy acknowledged and remembered.

New scholars have persevered against Turkish obstructionism, and the steady accumulation of historical evidence is undeniable and overwhelming.

While visiting Diyarbakir last year, I met Turks and Kurds who spoke openly about the massacres of 1915. They know more than even their own government will publicly admit.

Wednesday night, a majority of our parliamentarians chose to acknowledge and condemn the 20th century's first genocide for what it was. Our government, however, preferred to abandon the genocide victims.

The slaughter of the Anatolian Armenians was genocide. Denying this is tragic.

*The Ottawa Citizen
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Publishers call for an end to Turkish Penal Code criminalizing recognition of Armenian Genocide

GENEVA (IFEX)—In a letter to the Dutch Presidency of the European Union (EU) and to the President of the EU Commission, Romano Prodi, as well as incoming President José-Manuel Barroso, the International Publishers' Association (IPA) seeks their assistance in calling on the Turkish authorities to abandon the criminalization of the recognition of the Armenian genocide, a measure jeopardizing freedom of expression and freedom to publish.

According to Article 306 of the new Turkish Penal Code adopted on September 27, a citizen who demands the withdrawal of Turkish soldiers from Cyprus or declares that the Armenian genocide actually took place during the First World War can be pursued by virtue of Article 306. Prison sentences range from "three to ten years."

IPA President Ana Maria Cabanellas said: "The many reform packages adopted in Turkey thus far are in part designed to improve Turkey's freedom of expression record by amending various provisions of Turkey's major legislation. IPA welcomes these changes. However, it is fundamental that these legislative measures are implemented effectively. This effort must now include amending Article 306 of the new Penal Code."

The IPA was founded in 1896 and represents the publishing industry world-wide through 78 national, regional, and specialized publishers associations in 66 countries. It is a non-governmental organization with consultative relations with the United Nations. Its constituency is of book and journal publishers world-wide, assembled into 78 publishers associations at national, regional, and specialized levels.

National Ethnic Press and Media Council of Canada adopts resolution recognizing the Armenian Genocide

TORONTO—on January 12, 2004, the National Ethnic Press and Media Council of Canada adopted a resolution recognizing the Armenian Genocide and calling on the Provincial and Federal Government of Canada to implement the June 13, 2003, Senate of Canada resolution which calls on for the recognition of the Armenian Genocide. Below is the text of the adopted resolution:

WHEREAS, from 1915 to 1923, 1.5 million Armenians were murdered by the Ottoman Turkish government as part of a systematic program of genocide; and

WHEREAS, Armenians were deprived of their homes, their dignity, their lands and ultimately their lives; And

WHEREAS, the Turkish government has not only avoided its responsibility for officially recognizing the Armenian Genocide but has embarked on a campaign of denial; and

WHEREAS, The Armenian Genocide led to the emigration to Canada of tens of thousands of Armenians who then contributed to Canadian society as a whole and who also live and work across Canada; and

WHEREAS, the Armenian Genocide has been acknowledged by Countries and international bodies such as Argentina, Belgium, Canada, The Council of Europe, Cyprus, The European Parliament, France, Great Britain, Greece, Lebanon, Switzerland, Russia, The United Nations and Uruguay; and

WHEREAS, it is critically important for Canadians to acknowledge what happened and to teach present and future generations the history of Genocide in order to prevent future genocides;

Now, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT The National Ethnic Press and Media Council of Canada, in the name of Justice, cooperation, human rights, respect among the nations and the peoples,

RECOGNIZES THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE.

Calls on upon the Federal Government of Canada to implement the June 13, 2003, Senate of Canada resolution, which calls for the recognition of the Armenian Genocide, and request the Government of Canada affirms that and also condemns any attempt by the Turkish Government to deny or distort this historical truth as being anything less than genocide and a crime against humanity. Also calls on upon the Provincial and Federal Government of Canada to recognize this historical crime and to designate April 24th of every year hereafter throughout Canada as a day of remembrance of the 1.5 million Armenians and all others who fell victims to the first genocide and all other genocides of the twentieth century.

Passed unanimously, in Toronto this 12th day of January, 2004

For the National Ethnic Press and Media Council of Canada.

Conseil national de la presse et medias ethniques du Canada.

Thomas S. Saras, President/Président

The CEC recognizes the Armenian Genocide

TORONTO—The Board of Presidents of the Canadian Ethnocultural Council (CEC), in its November 28, 2003, semi-annual meeting held in Toronto, adopted a resolution recognizing the Armenian Genocide and called on the Federal Government to implement the June 13, 2003, Senate of Canada resolution which calls on the Government of Canada to recognize the Armenian Genocide. The resolution also called on the Government to condemn the Turkish Government's attempt to deny and distort the historical truth of the Armenian Genocide and declare April 24 of each year as Armenian Memorial Day in Canada.

The resolution was presented to the meeting by Aris Babikian, the president of the Armenian National Federation of Canada, and was seconded by Peter Ferreira, president of the Portuguese Canadian National Congress. The president of the Federation of Canadian Turkish Associations a CEC member, tried to derail the resolution by using procedural and other similar tactics without success. At the end, the presidents of CEC unanimously — except for the president of the Fed-

eration of Canadian Turkish Associations — approved the resolution.

The Board Of Presidents resolution reads as follows:

"On the 89th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide of 1915-23, the Canadian Ethnocultural Council supports the June 13, 2002 Resolution of the Senate of Canada calling upon the Government of Canada:

(a) to recognize the genocide of the Armenians and to condemn any attempt to deny or distort a historical truth as being anything less than genocide, a crime against humanity, and

(b) to designate April 24th of every year hereafter throughout Canada as a day of remembrance of the 1.5 million Armenians who fell victim to the first genocide of the twentieth century."

The CEC is a non-profit, non-partisan coalition of national ethnocultural umbrella organizations which, in turn, represent a cross-section of ethnocultural groups across Canada. The CEC was founded in 1980. Headquartered in Ottawa, it has 32 member organizations.

THE ARMENIAN CAUSE

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