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PROVOKING THOUGHTS OF ARMENIANS IN THE JEWISH HOLOCAUST PLATFORM

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Abstract:

The Armenian campaign to include the Armenian claims into the Holocaust Memorial Day has been one of the most important targets of Armenian lobbying in recent years. This strategy aims to draw a parallel between the experiences of the European Jewry in the course of World War II and that of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire during World War I. It is focused on a broad look at the subject in this article.

Keywords:

Holocaust Memorial Day, Diaspora, Jewish-Armenian-Turkish Relations, Hitler, Anti-Semitism.

INTRODUCTION

We met intentionally the new point of view of Armenian activists at the beginning of the new millennium. The first Holocaust Memorial Day in the United Kingdom provided a very valuable opportunity for Armenians' strategy. At the second anniversary, on the occasion of Holocaust Memorial Day, Armenian-Jewish solidarity was staged by overwhelming efforts of American and European Armenians at the same place. All of the partial Armenian historiographers and writers, (in fact, briefly Armenian activists), on the Turkish-Armenian relations who participated in these occasions got replete from the audience with contradictions, exaggerations and falsifications. Some historical and current events, misconceptions and misrepresentations relating to Turco-Armenian relations and the inadvertently, or deliberately, perpetuated hatred and enmity, inherited from the past and currently promoted by those who seem to have a vested interest in their repetition, are adversely affecting those relations. As though Holocaust Memorial Day only concerns Armenians, they attempted to use this platform, which completely belongs to Jewish people. But Jewish people allowed them to use their

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platform. This situation took place by their permission. The Institute of Contemporary History and Wiener Library in London held a conference in the name of the 'Generations of Genocide' at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), on January 26-27, 2002.

First of all, one of the characteristic specialties of this conference was to try to display Armenian-Jewish solidarity. Dr. Vahank Dadrian, an Armenian-American -one of the most enthusiastic defenders of the Armenian myths, former lecturer at the University of Buenos Aires, Zoryan Institute, Cambridge MA and Toronto- even gave the inauguration speech. He, along with Jewish Professor Yair Aeron, lecturer at the Open University of Tel Aviv, Israel, spoke about 'Zionism and Armenian Genocide' in the House of Commons on January 24 and gave the lecture, named 'Two Perspectives on the Armenian Genocide' at the London School of Economics (LSE) on January 25. It is mentioned by a historian as, 'It was a terrible shame of an academic gathering.' Unfortunately, the Turkish scholars who participated were not able to offer impartial papers. The occasion was portrayed, as if it was the Turkish side, which couldn't obtain the right to speak. And all of them accused those who not only spoke against them during break time but also asked the explicit questions of being 'deniers' and 'perpetrators,' In addition to all these, Armenian activists emphasized that Turkish participants were ordered to speak by the Turkish government. Two of the participants were lecturers of Turkish private universities; the other was a columnist.

JEWISH HOLOCAUST UNIQUENESS AND THE ARMENIAN QUESTION

Uniqueness of the Jewish Term - Holocaust

As you may easily see, the Armenians have commemorated the Remembrance of Armenian Martyr's Day on April 24 for 87 years. As a matter of fact, April 24, 1915, which has been put forward as the day of the 'Armenian Holocaust' by Armenians themselves, is actually the date when Armenian separatist leaders were confined and their organizations were shut down. There occurred no bloody events on that day. After this event, the ongoing incidents, which were inter-communal conflicts between the Muslims and the Armenians in the eastern part of Turkey, brought bloody incidents in the course of World War I. It is inevitable that violence breeds

I believe many Jewish scholars reserve the term 'Holocaust' to the unique experiences of the Jewish people in Nazi Germany.

violence. From 1798 to 1914, Russia and the European powers attacked the Ottoman Empire; those who began a war were Russian, the European expansionist powers, and betrayed and manipulated non-Muslim Ottoman subjects. Only in 1914 did the Ottomans (in fact Germans in Ottoman uniforms, led by Admiral Schouson on Goeben and Breslau, German destroyers) caused a wage of war of Ottomans against the enemy forces, Russia and the European expansionists. Briefly, great British historian Arnold J. Toynbee's 'Challenge and Response' thesis in A Study of History (London, 1949) was found to be a main principle of history against the Ottoman Empire. Every time they challenged the Ottoman Empire. The Turks defended themselves and were the victims of the unjust situation because of what was done to them in those wars and rebellions. We may recognize the inter-communal incidents that took place during 1915 – 1916 as bilateral victimized occasions.

The conflict has arisen from the different interpretations of an historical event. Armenian activists claim that the displacement of Armenians in 1915-1916 constitutes the crime of genocide. The displacement did not intend to destroy the Armenians, on the contrary, it intended to protect them and remove them from war zones for their own security, and also for the security of the Ottoman forces. It has been stated that there is enough evidence to display that the Ottoman government did not intend to destroy Armenian civilians. Unfortunately, these incidents were at first described by Armenian activists as 'massacres.' The first to use the term 'massacre' in connection with the Turkish-Armenian incidents of 1915-16 was used by the Catholicos of Echmiadzin in April 1915. When Raphael Lemkin coined the term in 1944, it was elevated to 'genocide,' and after the Jewish Holocaust in Nazi Germany, Armenian writers began to talk about the 'Armenian proto-holocaust, which in recent times became the 'Armenian Holocaust.' Nearly all of them have called these inter-communal incidents in the eastern part of Turkey in 1915-16 as the 'Armenian Holocaust,' and participants in the 'Generations of Genocide' conference, which took place in England, repeated this expression. I believe many Jewish scholars reserve the term 'Holocaust' to the unique experiences of the Jewish people in Nazi

Germany. It is so difficult to understand why Jewish people have allowed the term to be used by the Armenians.

In the meantime, Armenian militants and rebels committed mass treason and took up arms against their government they also massacred local Muslim and Jewish people in Hakkari region. Here is a document, obtained from the Turkish Foreign Ministry archives, which is aimed at Jewish people living in the eastern part of Turkey in the province of Hakkari:

'From: Foreign Affairs Ministry

To: Foreign Missions in Constantinople

Subject: Atrocities to be made by Russian Army and Armenian in Van

Date: 16 September 1916

Van province was a place where the cruelest massacres were staged. Before Russians invaded Van, 1,200 women and children wanted to flee by means of 14 rowboats. Armenians sank some of the rowboats and also fired at other rowboats. When Russians invaded Van, they distributed poisonous loaves of bread in order to Turks who couldn't flee from the city. They died. (...) Jewish people who fled from Hakkari Province were murdered on the way.'

If this document, which was obtained from primary sources, is examined carefully, one can easily see that the mentioned forces also massacred the local Muslim and Jewish population. Likewise, the Armenians and the Greeks showed a similar negative attitude towards Jews in the Balkan War of 1912:

'TELEGRAM

The White House
Washington

NOV 21 1912

THE PRESIDENT

Received cable report from Constantinople from reliable source that the Greeks are plundering Jewish quarter* in Salonika, destroying the synagogues, raping women, that the German and French ambassadors have protested to the government at Athens and that similar action by our Government is prayed for.

Adolf Kraus'¹

* There were 16 Jewish quarters at that time in Salonica. (E.A.)

¹ National Archives of USA, Washington, RG 59, Box 4515, 367.11/59

Offering this telegram to the President in the same day by Secretary, president directed him to send to P. C. Knox, Secretary of State for his consideration:

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

November 21, 1922

Dear Mr.-Secretary,

The president directs me to send you for the enclosed telegram from Adolf Kraus. President of the B'Mal B'Rith.

Sincerely yours
Charles D. Hughes
Secretary to the President

Hon. P. C. Knox,
Secretary of State

Enclosure²

As it is clearly seen, Greeks also plundered 16 Jewish quarters in Salonika, destroyed synagogues and raping women in 1912. Why did they do so? Because they saw the Turkish and the Jewish brotherhood in the course of history.

Likewise, as it is mentioned above, some Armenians displayed the same attitude towards Jewish people not only in the World War I, but also during the World War II. In the course of World War II, they collaborated with the Nazis, forming the 812th Battalion of the (Nazi) Wehrmacht. Its successor, members of the Armenian legion published anti-Jewish, pro-Nazi propaganda in the Armenian daily Heirenik and the Armenian weekly journal. Whereas, Turkish diplomats, throwing their lives into jeopardy, saved Jewish people from the Nazi Administration, such as the hero in Schindler's List. For instance, Faruk Sayar, a real Turkish hero, with Turkish counterfeit passports, removed 170 Jews from a concentration camp, Draney, in the middle of Paris and sent them to Turkey by ship, raised anchor from Romania. This was not documented anywhere. Sayar's Jewish friend, Mordo Dinar, told his daughter before his death:

² National Archives of USA, Washington, RG 59, Box 4515, 367.11/59

'Faruk had never told us this incident. Before dying, said such as: the most difficult phase of the mission was to find 170 Turkish names for them.'³

Looking at another example, in 1943, Jewish Professor Avram Galanty was a Parliament deputy. It was a Turkish tradition to elect Jews, Armenian and Greek deputies to the Turkish Parliament. This tradition didn't change in the time of the 1960 coup. General Cemal Gürsel, the leader of the 1960 coup, had three representatives of the state presidency, Jew Erol Dilek, counselor of the Grand Rabbi, Armenian Hermine Agavni Kalutsyan, and Greek Kaludi Laskari.⁴ In the meantime, Turks not only did accept Jewish scientists who fled from Nazi Germany, but also sent them to Turkish universities, in 1932.

In addition, Turks assisted Jews to escape from Spain in 1492, embraced them and gave them the most beautiful land throughout the history. Turkish and Jewish people showed mutual solidarism and established brotherhood between them in the course of joint history. Where lies the fault? It is suggested that the fault lie with some of us for trying to learn Turkish-Jewish joint history, written intentionally by them. Consequently, 'Holocaust Uniqueness' cannot be discussed, and this term only belongs to Jewish people. A significant portion of Armenian propaganda efforts in the recent years has been devoted to establish a link between their own historical experiences and those of European Jewry in the course of World War II. Just by taking a material form, you may see the Armenian link in Jewish and Holocaust websites.

**ANOTHER DEFINED WORD, 'DIASPORA', WHY IS IT USED?
ARE WE BECOMING DEPENDENT UPON THE ARMENIANS BY
USING THIS WORD?**

While encyclopedias define Diaspora as 'the scattering of Jews all around the world after the exile', besides the bible defines it by saying 'Christian Jews'. The underlying factor for the relentless Armenian efforts in using the term Diaspora, which is related totally to Jewish history, is their ambition to identify the 1915 events with the Holocaust conducted by Nazis.

³ Nilgün Cerrahoğlu, 'Soykırım Günü', *Cumhuriyet*, 28.01.2002.

⁴ History of Turkish Parliamentary

Also migration of Armenians to other countries occurred before the Ottomans. They traveled to the Balkan Peninsula and to Poland, were exiled from Iran. Then, it must also be regarded as an act of deportation when Fatih Sultan Mehmet allowed them to reside in İstanbul, which was turned down by Byzantine. Protestantization of Armenians and providing transport to the United States by American missionaries in the 19th century should also be regarded as a practice of Diaspora. A Diaspora based upon the events of 1915 and their stress on the genocide is a reflection of the identity crisis that the Armenians are suffering. To stress on the 1915 events, which has no similarity with the Jewish Holocaust, and avoiding remembering Armenian terrorism having its roots back from 1882, is actually an indication that they do not accept to face the historical facts. Why are we legitimizing the Diaspora claims of the separatist Armenians outside of Armenia by using the word? Can't we use 'Armenian-American, Armenian-European, Armenian abroad remaining outside of Armenia' instead?

One more thing, never forget that it may be a head trouble for the countries which support these unjust claims. Hatred turns to terminate itself.

**AN ARMENIAN DECEPTION:
'WHO REMEMBERS THE ARMENIANS - ADOLPH HITLER'**

A commonly used quotation of an alleged statement by Adolph Hitler concerning the Armenian incidents in 1915-16 is a forgery and should not be used. Prof. Dr. Heath Lowry proved it in his article, which he wrote,⁵ and Dr. Robert John, a historian and political analyst of Armenian descent from New York City, demonstrated how he had traced the original document in The Military Branch of the National Archives of the USA. Dr. John showed slides of this document, undated and unsigned, with some words cut out of the last page. The statement was supposed to have been made at a meeting of the top German staff of Obersalzberg on August 22, 1939, a few days prior to his invasion of Poland. Everything written to date has attributed the purported Hitler quote, not to primary sources, but a book that was first

⁵ Heath W. Lowry, 'The U.S Congress and Adolf Hitler on the Armenians', *Political Communication and Persuasion*, Vol. 3 No. 2, pp. 111-140

published in 1942, entitled 'What About Germany' and authored by Louis Lochner and an article that appeared in the Times of London on Saturday, November 24, 1945.⁶ The document was released to the international press covering the Nuremberg War Crimes trials on Friday, November 23, 1945. The trials had commenced that Monday. The document was one of several made available to the press that day. Two hundred fifty copies were given to press correspondents, but only five copies were given to the 17 defense counsels -24 hours before the Court convened on Monday. Much later in the trial, the German defense lawyers were able to introduce the most complete account of the address, taken down by German Admiral Hermann Boehm, which runs to 12 pages in translation. There is no mention of the Armenians, the last clause or the rest of the 'quotation' Dr. Robert John said he believed that the document was introduced to create a climate of hate which was needed to stifle the protests of eminent American jurists such as Sen. R. Taft and Chief Justice Harland Stone.⁷ Afterwards, this quotation was formed in different clauses. For instance, 'who still talks/remembers nowadays of the extermination/annihilation of the Armenians' or 'who after all speaks today of the extermination of the Armenian'. At last it changed this version 'who remembers the Armenians' frequently used Hitler's quote is nothing but a forgery.

This Thematic Definition At the Holocaust Museum in Washington D.C.

Nevertheless, this thematic definition, attributed to Hitler, as I mentioned above, proves there was nothing but a make up, has been at the Holocaust Museum in Washington D.C. Those who have visited should know that this museum has brought a completely new and extraordinary concept of museumology. While the atrocities, beyond human imagination, applied on mankind and on the Jewish race were clearly displayed with documents; observing that similar atrocities are still being applied at different geographic terrain throughout the world, with mankind's unlearning attitude deepened one's anguish. On the other hand, the fact that the important, unjust and unjustified point disconcerting all of us insistently remain non-rectified at this

⁶ Lowry, The U. S... , pp. 113-114

⁷ Armenian Reporter, Vol. 27, No. 40, 1984

exceptional Museum that has been made monumental in order to 'prevent similar events from happening' and claims to be the voice of moral values; continues to hurt us in the name of humanity, in the name of history and casts a big shadow over this monument claiming to sound moral values. It is been stated in the page 164 of a publication, published in 1995, by the mentioned Museum as follows:

'Eventually it was accepted that considering the thematic definition of the exhibition, it should not include a chapter on the Armenians. But in view of the promise that has given to Armenian community'⁸

It will be observed that this quote by Hitler, somewhat looked upon as the source of 'consent for Holocaust', still is being displayed at the very esteemed museum, without clarifying the logic, and any verification; as though it is a forgery, just for the sake of fulfilling a promise made to Armenians previously.

As far as I find out, it has been thought that it has not been removed this so-called thematic definition from this Museum. We shouldn't forget Mustafa Kemal's quote, founder of Turkish Republic State, said in 1925:

'Chronicling history is just as important as making it; if the chronicler does not remain faithful to the achiever, reality takes on a form that confuses mankind.'

Do we believe in myths desired to be heard or actual history, come to light? Do we continue to allow those to distort truths?

Hate Hurts, Hater and Hated

As it is known, it was offered the affirmation of the USA record on the Armenian genocide in the name of the Resolution 596, on October 4th, 2000. Later, it was withdrawn without affirmation thanks to the right-minded administrators. If examined the 2nd section findings, the 18th paragraph of this draft resolution, it will be observed as follows:

'(18) Raphael Lemkin described the crime as 'the systematic destruction of whole national, racial or religious group.' The sort of thing Hitler did to the Jews and the Turks did to the Armenians.'⁹

⁸ The Holocaust Museum in Washington, Rizzoli, New York, 1995, p. 164.

⁹ House of Representatives, 106th Congress, 2nd Session, Report 106-933, H. Res. 596, Oct. 4th, 2000, p. 2.

You can compare equate things let's look at this paragraph, the first party is Hitler the second party is all of the Turkish People. Simply, the whole of the Turkish people has intentionally equated Adolph Hitler as guilty of the crime of Genocide. Would you mind I would like to ask all of you? How many Hitlers are there in Turkey? Respond to answer is 67 million Hitler. It seems to me, it is observed their point of view, how to distort truths on purpose. The time has come to stop psychologically damaging our nation and our children. We should begin to have a campaign 'Do not allow those to distort historical events and truths.'

As long as the Jewish community all over the world allows Armenian activists to use their platform, Muslims' hate will continue. Why? After Armenia gained its independence, it became an expansionist state. As you know, Armenia occupied Nagorno Karabakh, which was Azerbaijani territory through the 20th century, with imperialist methods. This incident is against the U.N. Security Council resolutions. Armenians caused an influx of about more than one million Azerbaijani refugees, who are still living in camps in very poor conditions. What I say in these circumstances is that it is obvious that Armenia invaded Azerbaijan. In a way, Armenia's occupying a neighbour's land by the use of terrorism and forcing more than 1 million poor Muslim from their homes, is a very good reason for the Muslim world to hate Jews. Because it depends on Armenian and Jewish solidarity. It shouldn't be forgotten that 'Hate hurts, hater and hated.'

Anti Semitism Which was Established as a Base to Holocaust - There Hasn't Been Any Anti-Armenian Policy in Turkey

Anti Semitism, applied towards the Jewish people, lies in the root of the Holocaust and has been around for about 1,000 years. There has been non anti-Armenian policy in our country and there is no chance of such a policy.

Not only did Armenians want to speak Turkish in their daily lives, they also wanted to write their poems in Turkish in their own alphabet. There were many Armenian Turkish poets and troubadours. The best builders of minarets, the tall thin towers, which form one or more part of a mosque, from which Muslims are called to prayer, were Armenians. Armenians even took part in mosque building organizations and foundations. In other words,

there were many Armenians among those who contributed to the joint Turkish culture. In the beginning of the World War I, the Armenian Ottoman subjects joined the Ottoman military. Some of them also died in the Ottoman uniform in order to save our country from the enemy. The number of dead reached to hundreds when even the officers serving in the health teams alone are taken into account. For instance, in August 1916, the health squadron leader Captain Agop Ekmekçiyen, Captain Dilbekçiyen and Captain Ferhatyan died in 1915 at the front, yet it is strange to see that these Armenian patriots died at the time of the so-called Armenian genocide. Captain Aristidi Tereyannis, who was Greek in origin, Captain Bahor, Captain Corci who was Jewish, Captain Elmasyan and others died for the sake of our fatherland. Gülhane Military Medical Academy paid a tribute by inscribing the names of those people at the entrance to its museum on a granite plate, forever immortalizing them. If you find yourself in the area, please pray for their souls of those brave men.

During World War I, war and violence were common in the eastern Turkey. The war went on between the Ottoman Empire and Russia, and the other was inter-communal violence between Muslims and some Ottoman Armenians. The ethnic conflicts in the Eastern Anatolia began when Armenian rebels attacked the Muslims in Van, then spread to other cities and to the every corner of the country. The Russians and Armenians forced the Muslims of the Eastern Anatolia from their homes with great loss of life, just as they had done to earlier generations of Muslims in other regions. In Van province, nearly two-thirds of the Muslims were dead by the end of the war.¹⁰

The Ottoman Armenians Betrayed and Manipulated

Unfortunately, the Ottoman Armenians were manipulated for the sake of the schemes of the European expansionist powers. As well as the Russians, who tried to settle our hard working Armenian patriots onto lands that they gained, the French manipulated the Armenians after World War I because they could not send their military forces to that region. Just as the United Kingdom manipulated Greece, the first nation-state formed in the 19th century, and used it as a British sword in the Eastern Anatolia during the Turkish War of Independence.

¹⁰ Justin McCarthy, *Victims and Charitable Men*, (Isparta, 2001), p. 40.

CONCLUSION

First of all, as the Turkish historians, researchers and scholars, as the grand children of 3 million victimized Turkish people in the World War I, we also look forward to using this platform in order to respond the lies, the exaggerated claims and the calumnies of Armenian activists. We anticipate participating in the Holocaust Memorial Day in the United Kingdom in as a workshop at least as a

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respond cell at the School of Oriental and African Studies. As Ben Barkow, the president of the Wiener Library promised us, we hope to meet the Armenian Activists in the round table in order to tell about ourselves.

Turks have been brothers to the Jews for over 500 years, and have embraced and given them a homeland. That will continue for sure up to eternity. As for the Turkish-Armenian relationship, both Armenians and Turks need to realize that they cannot improve their relationship by relying on prejudice, hatred and a sense of vengeance, so skillfully incited and manipulated in the past by the selfish expansionist powers.

Armenians and Turks, who, before the expansionist powers embarked upon policies aiming to exploit them for their own interests, had lived in amity, and even fraternity with each other, deserve to reconcile their differences and solve their current problems for a better future for their peoples.

If Armenia and Turkey, excluding the Armenians abroad, really desire to reconcile their differences, no matter how entrenched these may seem, then common ground may be found to do so.