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That French Bill--Another Look

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It is time to take a step back, take a deep breath, and appraise the situation.

Having taken that step back, having taken that deep breath, and having appraised the situation, I am not sure that I like what I see.

I am referring to that recent action of the French government, and that much discussed ?genocide bill.? What I don?t like is the way the Armenians cheapened the measure that the French Senate recently voted upon. Of course, I am pleased with what the French did, but listening to the Armenians, one would get the impression that it was strictly an Armenian-oriented measure.

I confess that I was fooled??once again??by the universal (it seemed) Armenian bombast and Turkish-style outbursts. When will I ever learn that when the Armenians sing and dance in the streets, I should take a step back, take a deep breath, and appraise the situation?

What the French have done is to criminalize the denial of the fact of ALL genocides??not (as the Armenian hazzahs had it) solely the Armenian Genocide. In short, what the French did was a far more noble, a far more humanitarian act. True, as of now, France has acknowledged only two genocides??that of the Jews and that of the Armenians??but it is saying to the world, that it will probably get around to recognizing other genocides and, thus, their denial will be punished, as well.

The unpunished denial of one genocide leads, easily, to the denial of another. Many worthy people have stated what to many of us is logical, that had Turkey been punished for its genocide of the Armenians, the genocide of the Jews might not have taken place, as Adolph Hitler more-or-less suggested when he asked the rhetorical question, ?Who, after all, remembers. . . ??

There is an intelligent exchange going on among a few Armenians (and I have been privileged to be included) about the French measure, which is why I have visited this subject in a more serious manner than my earlier essay. However, the views expressed here are my own.

What the French have done is not directed against any country (as the blatherings of the Armenians seem to suggest, and as Turkey seems to assume). It is a country taking a very high moral stance on a very high mountain top, and we Armenians have cheapened it almost to the extent of making it a political point-scoring gesture. In fact the Armenian blusterings almost jeopardized the passage of the measure!

True, the Turks helped. And how they helped! Though there is nothing in the French measure that named the Turks (or the genocide-perpetrators, the Ottomans), Turkey saw fit to get its collective bowels in a twist. Whether it was in reaction to the Armenian glee or whether it saw something else in the measure it is hard

to tell from the Turkish agitation. Obviously, Turkey knows it committed the 20th century?s first state-conceived, state-planned, state-executed genocide, and it sees and hears the unexpressed words, ?. . .by the Turks,? after every reference to ?Armenian genocide.? And that is a paranoia that only they can resolve.

But, back to my unease. I am tempted to write to President Sarkozy and suggest that he not sign the measure into law. That is how strongly I feel about the stupidity (I can?t think of another word, although ?imbecility? seems to be at the end of my finger-tips) of the Armenians in usurping for themselves what was intended to be more universal act.

I suppose I am writing these words, also, because I am ashamed to have been swayed by the Armenian clamor without checking the language of the French measure which says nothing about the Armenians (or the Jews but, bless them, the Jews have more sense than the Armenians and they wouldn?t be carried away like the Armenians??who substitute passion for thought).

What is amusing??Yes, I can find something humorous??is that apparently someone asked the American State Department its reaction to the French action, and the Turkish-dictated answer was something to the effect that ?America has not changed its position.? No one has asked, ?What position?? Is it on matters-Armenian or is it on matters-genocide? But, aware that Turkey was outraged about France, he took the safe position. Instead of saying, ?We have read the French measure, and we think it isn?t a bad idea criminalizing the denial of genocides. But it isn?t for us, since some of our best friends commit genocides??often with our arms and help.?

What I hope I have learned from recent events is that I should never again pay any attention to what Armenians say??until I have checked their statements carefully. The Armenian diaspora seems to have learned the wrong kind of lesson from the Turks: Use a megaphone, not the brain.

When the Armenian megaphones come out, it is time to take a step back, take a deep breath, and appraise the situation.

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