

# ALL HELL BREAKS LOOSE

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By Ahmet Altan, [Taraf](#), Istanbul, 6 March 2010

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Comments, discussions, spewing fury at the US , questions of "will the Incirlik base be closed down?" directed at the minister of foreign affairs. Amongst all this hoolabaloo, my favorite comment comes from a speaker who denounces this decision: " Turkey is no longer a country that can easily be humiliated."

When a commission of the US Congress votes for "genocide", we are "humiliated". Do you know what humiliation is?

Humiliation is millions of people holding their breaths for the outcome of a few votes in somebody else's parliament. That is humiliation.

Humiliation is to find the result of that commission's vote of vital importance, to feel defeated because of the vote of one man. Humiliation is the conviction that the whole of one's national identity depends on the decision of one commission; humiliation is to have to wait the outcome of a vote in some other country's parliament, biting one's fingernails.

Turkey is not humiliated because that commission approved that resolution with a difference of one vote. Turkey is humiliated because it itself cannot shed light on its own history, has to delegate this matter into other hands, is frightened like hell from its own past, has to squirm like mad in order to cover up truths.

The real issue is this:

Why is the "Armenian Genocide" a matter of discussion in American, French and Swiss parliaments and not in the parliament of the Turkish Republic ? Why can we, ourselves, not discuss a matter that we deem so vital that we perceive the difference of one vote as a source of humiliation?

If you cannot discuss your own problems, you deserve to be humiliated. If you keep silent in a matter that you find so important, you deserve to be humiliated. If you try to shut others up, you are humiliated even more. The whole world interprets the killing of so many Armenians, -a number we cannot even estimate properly- as "genocide".

Genocide is a legal term. The massacre carried out by the Unionist largely conforms to the description of that legal term. For Turks and Armenians, the word "genocide" has become an obsession. The Turks insist that "it never was genocide" and the Armenians call anyone who says it was not genocide "liars".

Both sides spend millions of dollars to convince the world that their viewpoint is the valid viewpoint. It is almost as if their mutual efforts have created a "genocide sector". Why then, can we not speak about this incident in detail?

How many hundreds of thousands of Armenians did the Unionists kill? Why? We claim "Armenians attacked us, that's why we killed them". Fine, but the "attacking" Armenian gangs were on the Eastern border, what crime did hundreds of thousands of Armenians living elsewhere in Anatolia commit, other than being Armenian?

Can someone be punished purely because of his ethnic origin?

What do you call punishing someone not because they "committed a crime" but because they "belong to the same ethnic group as someone who you say committed a crime"?

This is murder. And to tell the truth, hundreds of thousands of murders targeting the same ethnic group does fall into the category of "genocide". Unionists committed heinous murders; the cruelty they subjected Armenians to is beyond imagination. Why are we trying to cover up this horrible crime, why are we trying to defend the murderers, to disguise their crimes, why are we squirming to keep truth buried, even at the risk of being humiliated?

The history of every society is tainted with crime and blood. We cannot undo what has been done but we can show the courage to face the truths, to discuss the reality. We can give up trying to silence the world out of concern for incriminating the founders of the republic.

We can ask questions.

And the first question would be "how come we never read about an incident that involves the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people in our history lessons?" Even this reality makes the situation "suspicious". If you are not brave enough to face a truth that happened ninety-five years ago, you deserve to be humiliated. If you struggle to hide an incident that happened a century ago and base how seventy million people relate to the world at large on a "lie", you deserve to be humiliated.

No one dares humiliate brave people who are not afraid of the truth. If you feel humiliated, you should take a hard look at yourself and what you hide.



