BETRAYED (AGAIN) BY PELOSI AND THE DEMOCRATS

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Ara Khachatourian, Asbarez.com, 22 December 2010
Outgoing Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi showed her true colors on Wednesday by refusing to schedule a vote on the Armenian Genocide Resolution. For four years, as Speaker, she patronized the Armenian-American community and failed to honor her promise and articulated pledge to recognize the Genocide, becoming a pawn of the Turkish denialist movement.

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Outgoing Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi showed her true colors on Wednesday by refusing to schedule a vote on the Armenian Genocide Resolution. For four years, as Speaker, she patronized the Armenian-American community and failed to honor her promise and articulated pledge to recognize the Genocide, becoming a pawn of the Turkish denialist movement.

By blocking the bill from a vote, the Democratic leadership of the House also demonstrated its inability to lead and take action on an issue, which is not merely a campaign pledge, but a matter of justice and human rights.
Effectively, they have become accomplices in the ongoing Turkish campaign of lies and historical revisionism.

The patience of the Armenian-American community has run out. Wednesday's events will have dire consequences, the ramifications of which will be seen at local district offices of members of Congress and eventually at the polling booth.

By placating the Armenian community, these so-called leaders have garnered votes and enjoyed a long tenure as legislators. They have amassed power in a veiled attempt to act as true representatives of the people and their constituents. And, time and again, the community has applauded and thanked their efforts to advocate on behalf of our community.

That is why, their actions on Wednesday amount to a belligerent betrayal of their constituents for which they will have to answer.

Perhaps praise is due to those individuals who marshaled this effort to ensure that the 111th Congress will go down in history as the one that set the record straight on the Armenian Genocide.

This recent attempt at advancing the resolution mobilized an entire community to stand up and demand justice. One thing is certain: the community will remain standing and raise its voice louder and will send a clear message to those who underestimated the power of the community.

The vast majority of the Armenian-American community—led by the Armenian National Committee of America—was engaged in articulating its aspirations to Congressional members and leaders. Their unwavering commitment and will to advance the Armenian Cause must be recognized, praised and

applauded.

The entity that does not deserve applause or praise is—once again—the Armenian Assembly of America, whose leaders were quoted in an RFE/RL news report Wednesday as opposing the Genocide Resolution.

Their cowardice was framed as such: "nobody wants to take a loss in a floor vote in these circumstances. The genocide denial industry would like nothing better than defeating the resolution, even in an unfair vote." Furthermore, when Pelosi refused to schedule a vote, the Assembly responded by saying: "we also particularly commend the steadfast leadership of Speaker Nancy Pelosi…who… provided guidance and invaluable assistance throughout this process."

As always, the Assembly spent the majority of the last two years kowtowing to the State Department and its interests and, in the last minute, is jockeying to become the representative of the Armenian community. It is time for the community to see the Assembly for the duplicitous organization that it is and call them out on their hypocrisy.
No one needs a reminder of the Assembly's stance last year on the ill-fated protocols, which endangered the very security of the Armenian nation.

The grassroots effort that gathered momentum in the last few weeks in favor of an Armenian Genocide Resolution must shift its focus toward clearly articulating to law makers the community's utter disappointment in their inability to deliver on their promises and their blatant refusal to advance justice.

The Genocide recognition campaign has now entered a new phase. We must ask ourselves whether there are other ways to leverage the US Congress to advance the just demands of the Armenian people for recognition, reparations and retribution from the Turkish government.

For now, however, the Armenian-American community can proudly declare that it fought the good fight as Pelosi and the rest of the Democratic leadership return to their districts in shame to face the music.