

WHAT LIES BENEATH: PRESIDENT BIDEN'S DECEPTIVE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

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By David Boyajian, Boston, 26 May 2021

President Biden's [April 24](#) statement acknowledging the Armenian Genocide (1915–1923+) [carried out](#) by Turkey was welcome but flawed. Indeed, "Turkey" appears nowhere in the document. Moreover, the State Department swiftly undermined Biden's virtuous-sounding words.

American acknowledgment of the Armenian Genocide [isn't](#) even new. The U.S. House has passed several resolutions on the Genocide. And a nearly unanimous Congress did so in 2019.

Presidents going back to Woodrow Wilson have [described](#) the Armenian ordeals with language such as: an effort to exterminate all Armenians; terrible massacres; mass killings; death marches; and an ancient homeland was erased. If these don't describe genocide, the word is meaningless.

In 1951, the State Department [cited](#) the Armenian "massacres crime of genocide" in a filing at the International Court of Justice. In 1981, President Ronald Reagan included "the genocide of Armenians" in a Holocaust proclamation.

Genocide acknowledgments should not — like car insurance — *lapse* if not renewed annually. Will the Holocaust become non-genocide next year if the White House happens to overlook it?

Still, the president's statement is [noteworthy](#). It could even [reinvigorate](#) several Armenian American lawsuits against Turkey. But the statement has problems.

It tries to take the heat off today's *Republic* of Turkey by blaming only "*Ottoman*-era ... authorities" for the Genocide.

After the Allies defeated Ottoman Turkey in WWI (1918), Ottoman General Mustafa Kemal's (Ataturk) forces continued to massacre Armenians, Assyrians, and Greeks. Kemal also [ordered](#) that Armenia be "politically and physically eliminated." When he established the Turkish *Republic* in 1923, Kemal appointed *Ottoman* genocidists and continued to persecute Christians.

Thus, as President Erdogan himself has [confirmed](#), his country is a "continuation" of Ottoman Turkey. Knowing this, the Turkish Republic has always tried to evade accountability for the Genocide.

Disgracefully, though, Biden tries to assist Turkey in that regard by writing, "We do this not to cast blame" . The president has no right to hand Turkey a "[Get Out of Jail Free card](#)."

Just two days later, American Ambassador to Armenia Lynne Tracy tried to help Turkey [duck accountability](#). "The Armenian Genocide took place in 1915, the Genocide Convention did not come into force until 1951 ... from the legal perspective the Convention is not being applied retroactively."

Tracy's reasoning — [disputed](#) by [experts](#) — suggests that Jews should have received no restitution or reparations because the Holocaust (1933–1945) also occurred before 1951.

Turkey's genocidal threats against Armenians continue to this day, something the president's declaration ignores.

In 1993, Turkey was going to [invade](#) Armenia were the coup against Russian President Boris Yeltsin to succeed.

President Erdogan has branded Armenians, Assyrians, and Greeks "Leftovers of the Sword." It's an obvious, existential threat against Christian populations who survived Turkey's 20th century genocides.

In 2020, Turkey, its Turkic ally Azerbaijan, and [jihadist mercenaries](#) successfully attacked Armenian-populated Artsakh/Nagorno-Karabagh and Armenia.

Erdogan [gleefully likened](#) these attacks to Ottoman Turkey's genocidal invasion (1918) of Armenia. "Today, may the souls of Nuri Pasha, Enver Pasha, and the brave soldiers of the Caucasus Islam Army, be happy."

An analogy would be Germany's denying the Holocaust, threatening Israel, arming its foes, calling Jews "leftovers of the concentration camps," and glorifying Nazi Germany.

Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev simultaneously claimed huge chunks of Armenia, including its capital Yerevan.

Turkey and Azerbaijan's military assaults and threats are all *reminiscent of the Genocide*.

Biden's vow that America must "ensure that what happened is never repeated," therefore, rings hollow.

Moreover, Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act conditionally prohibits U.S. aid to Azerbaijan if the latter supports terrorism or engages in aggression against Artsakh/Nagorno-Karabagh/Armenia.

However, the White House just waived Section 907 despite Azerbaijan's flagrant use of ISIS and other terrorists against Armenians.

Let's not be deceived by the president's April 24 statement and the State Department's unprincipled actions.

David Boyajian writes about Caucasus issues. His work can be found at http://www.armeniapedia.org/wiki/David_Boyajian.

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