

CORRUPTING MEDIA IS A DANGEROUS TENDENCY!

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William Weiner, [The Times of Israel](#), 26 March 2015

An obnoxious, even dangerous, tendency has been noticed in numerous media outlets recently,  regarding anti-Armenian propaganda on the eve of the Centennial of the Armenian Genocide in the Ottoman Empire. The authors of ordered anti-Armenian articles, spread by the Azerbaijani and Turkish propaganda machine in the Jewish circles, are the same persons, which looks like, excuse my language, journalistic prostitution. Publications, that come out following these articles, disprove their dubious facts, and shed light on the powers behind anti-Armenian propaganda as well as on the false essence of suggested arguments. Nevertheless the hired authors continue to resort to epistolary genre, which is already rather marasmic. I wonder, if they really believe that today's reader is that much naïve and illiterate.

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Nonetheless, on March 18 yet another anti-Armenian article was published in the New Algemeiner, one of the most prestigious Jewish editions in the USA, reprinted also in The Jerusalem Post and jns.org by Alexander Murinson, who entirely devoted his pen to the salvation of daily deteriorating reputation of the Azerbaijani-Turkish dictatorship in the eyes of the Western public. An attempt is made in the article to present the friendly relations between Armenia and Iran as "directed against Israel".

A rather silly strategy is being pursued to push the audience, which has overtly negative perception of Iran, against Armenia and the Armenian people. However, the reality is that Armenia's friendly relations with Iran are not directed against and even can not be aimed against any third country, about which reasonable people have been very well aware of long time ago.

Both the United States of America and the European countries, even when sharp tensions prevailed in their relations with Iran, never missed a chance to officially state that they fully understand the policies of Armenia to deepen mutually beneficial relations with Iran. And if good relations with Iran did not affect Armenia's ties with the United States and Europe, then what is the point in contrasting them to those with Israel!? Given the unilateral closure of the Armenian-Turkish border by Turkey

and Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, one can not underestimate the importance of interaction with Iran both in economic and political aspects.

On the other hand, significance of the development of relations with Israel is well understood in Yerevan, given Israel's important role in the Middle East and the factor of Jewish Diaspora. No one in Yerevan would contrast relations with Iran to Israel and vice versa, as well as to build relations with the Russian Federation to the detriment of other neighboring country, say, Georgia. This is an absurd! Given the complex geopolitical region, Armenia is obliged to maintain good relations both with Iran and the West, Russia and Georgia, regardless the existing disagreements between themselves. The Israeli society is quite aware of this hard situation, as Israel, being located in a region, abundant with problems, can not miss any chance to build friendly relations with neighbors. By the way, the successful policy of Yerevan in this direction was not left unnoticed by the international media (take, In Facing Its Adversaries, America's Got a Hidden Lever: Armenia.)

Even though Mr. Murinson learned lessons of past mistakes, and in this article he childishly tries to conceal his close ties with the Azerbaijani propaganda machine, in his article the bottom-line is attempting to contrast Azerbaijan with Armenia in the eyes of Israel. Thus, Murinson has made "epoch-making breakthrough", mentioning that unlike Azerbaijan, high-ranking delegations of Armenia do not deign to make frequent visits to Israel. Undoubtedly, Murinson clearly understands that political dialogue between states to a large extent is determined by the principle of reciprocity. And the same Israel does not maintain parity of visits to the countries of South Caucasus. For instance, the Prime-Minister, President as well as Foreign Minister of Israel have visited Azerbaijan, rather than Armenia. In case, when visits from Armenia on the level of President and Foreign Minister were paid to Israel over years.

On March 5 this year, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia Edward Nalbandian paid a visit to Israel and attended the concert performed by Jerusalem Symphonic Orchestra, dedicated to the Centenary of the Armenian Genocide, as well as met the President of Israel Reuven Rivlin. According to official press-releases, during the meeting confidence was expressed that the Minister's visit will contribute to the strengthening of the Armenia-Israel relations. The President of Israel and Foreign Minister of Armenia discussed issues relating joint responsibility of Armenian and Jewish people in prevention of crimes against humanity. It is worth mentioning that in his article, Murinson characterizes Nalbandian's visit having an anti-Turkish and anti-Azerbaijani context. It is hard to say, what made the author to make such an evaluation. Most probably, the paranoid essence of the Azerbaijani-Turkish propaganda and zeal to please, i.e. to perform well, does a disservice to the author, when any expression of "crime against humanity" is deliberately seen as a step directed against Turkey or Azerbaijan.

At the same time, it is unacceptable and ridiculous to present the Armenian quarter of Jerusalem having 1500 years-old history, an integral part of this Holy City of the world, along with the Armenian Apostolic Patriarchate of Jerusalem, that is of considerable political and cultural significance for the

mutual awareness of the Armenian and Jewish peoples, as an element working against Israel. This fact is a vivid example of naïve hope to spread hatred against Armenians and, particularly, Armenian community of Israel, which is a reminder of of publications well known before in the press of Nazi Germany in 1930s on "Jewish conspiracy" against Germany.

Concerning the Jerusalem Patriarchate of the Armenian Apostolic Church, it is worth mentioning, that according to the Memorandum signed between the sides in 1967, Israel recognizes its rights and the rights of Patriarch, as well as the activity of the Patriarchate, aimed at the preservation of the Armenian culture in the Middle East. In this context, presentation of Patriarchate as Iran's zone of influence is an endeavor tantamount to immorality, which has nothing to do with truth. Fortunately, this is clear to any reasonable human being. It is quite strange that Mr. Murinson, who considers himself as an "expert", hopes for the reverse...

It is obvious that those questionable theses suggested by Murinson and other journalists of his kind contain elements of extraneous hatred towards Armenians and are expressions of hired journalism. I consider the behavior of the so called representatives of epistolary genre, who try to set the world Jewry against the Armenian people through speculations on national sentiments and pursuit of some political goals, absolutely dishonorable.

Corrupting media is a dangerous tendency! Stop this, Messrs! I understand that today everything can be purchased, but no one has yet erased professional ethics. That is why, as a Jew, I once again call upon the journalists and experts to refrain from further attempts to speak on the behalf of the Jews and impose yet another non-existent conflict on the world Jewry, and I earnestly request the Jewish media not to give a floor for spreading biased pseudo-analytical articles of that kind.

William Weiner is President of the "Menora" Jewish Cultural Center in Armenia, an Honored Worker of Art of the Republic of Armenia and a Member of the Composers' League of Israel.

