

ERDOGAN DESERVES MEDAL AS FAKE FRIEND OF PALESTINIANS

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By Harut Sassounian Publisher, The California Courier, 10 June 2010

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-- How could Turkey blockade Armenia for 17 years and credibly call on Israel to lift its blockade of Gaza?

-- How could Erdogan condemn Israeli attacks on Palestinians, when Turkish jets regularly bomb Northern Iraq (Kurdistan), killing and maiming innocent men, women and children?

-- How could the Prime Minister of Turkey condemn Israel's mistreatment of Palestinians, when his own country deprives Alevis, Armenians, Assyrians, Greeks, Jews and Kurds of their most basic rights?

-- How could Turkey oppose the occupation of Palestine and Karabagh (Artsakh), while occupying Northern Cyprus and Western Armenia?

-- How could Turkish leaders accuse Israel and China of committing "genocide," when they deny the reality of Turkey's own genocide of 1.5 million Armenians?

-- How could Turkey claim to be champion of the Palestinian cause and leader of the Islamic world, while being Israel's closest military ally in the Middle East for over a half century, and allowing Israeli jets to carry out practice bombing runs in Turkish airspace against Arab countries and Iran?

-- How could Syria, Iraq and Iran trust Turkey, when it jeopardizes their national security by permitting Israeli listening posts along the border to collect intelligence on their countries.

-- How could Erdogan be a guardian of human rights while journalists, attorneys, clergymen and human rights activists are persecuted and even assassinated in his own country?

-- How could Turkish leaders claim that Israel is a "terrorist state," while continuing to maintain a military alliance and multi-billion dollar trade with the Jewish state? Turkey pretended to side with Arab states, all the while conspiring with Israel to damage their national security!

Israel and the United States share responsibility for Turkey's hypocritical behavior -- they joined in supporting, defending and covering up numerous Turkish violations of human rights, denial of the Armenian Genocide, and suppression and ethnic cleansing of the Kurdish minority. In the past 60 years, the United States and other NATO members gave billions of dollars in foreign aid and military assistance to Turkey, vainly expecting to win its loyalty. This was a massive waste of U.S. resources, as Turkey did not even allow American troops to go across its border at the start of the Iraq war!

Turkey cleverly exploited Israel's ill-advised attack on the Gaza aid flotilla, and sought to fill the vacuum created by the irresponsible inaction of Arab states. Erdogan is just as guilty as Israel's leaders for causing the killing and wounding of the aid activists. He tacitly encouraged them to set sail to Gaza, knowing full well that there would be a bloody confrontation which would boost his own standing at home and abroad. Turkey's junior brother, Azerbaijan, also gets a medal for hypocrisy as it issued a timid condemnation of Israel, so it could continue to buy arms and sell oil to that country. So much for Turkish-Azeri solidarity!

Of course, over the years, the Israeli government has acted just as hypocritically as Turkey's leaders. While countering any and all manifestations of Holocaust revisionism, Israeli officials have shown no reluctance in supporting Turkey's denials of the Armenian Genocide. But now that Erdogan has raised his voice against Israel to a fever pitch, Israelis have jumped at the opportunity of using the possibility of recognizing the Armenian Genocide as a weapon against Turkey. Armenians must reject such dishonesty. The Israeli government was not sincere when it denied the Armenian Genocide, and it is not sincere now in supporting its recognition! It is shameful to play cheap political games with an issue as horrendous and devastating as genocide. Israel and others should recognize the Armenian Genocide for only one reason: It is the absolute truth!

So far, Turkey has been all talk and no action on the Palestinian issue. Erdogan has not gone beyond giving fiery speeches against Israel. If he is honest about defending the Palestinians, he might consider:

1. Canceling all military contacts and contracts with Israel;
2. Abrogating all public and secret military and strategic agreements with Israel, including intelligence-sharing; and
3. Closing down the Turkish Embassy in Tel Aviv and Israel's Embassy in Ankara.

In the aftermath of last week's bloody confrontation, a major domestic controversy erupted in Turkey, when Erdogan accused Israel of breaking one of the Ten Commandments. After saying "You Shall not Kill" in Turkish, he repeated it in English and Hebrew, to make sure that Jews "could understand" his words! In response, Kemal Kilicdaroglu, leader of CHP opposition Party, told the

Turkish public that Erdogan himself had broken two other Commandments: "You Shall not Steal" and "You Shall not Lie!"

