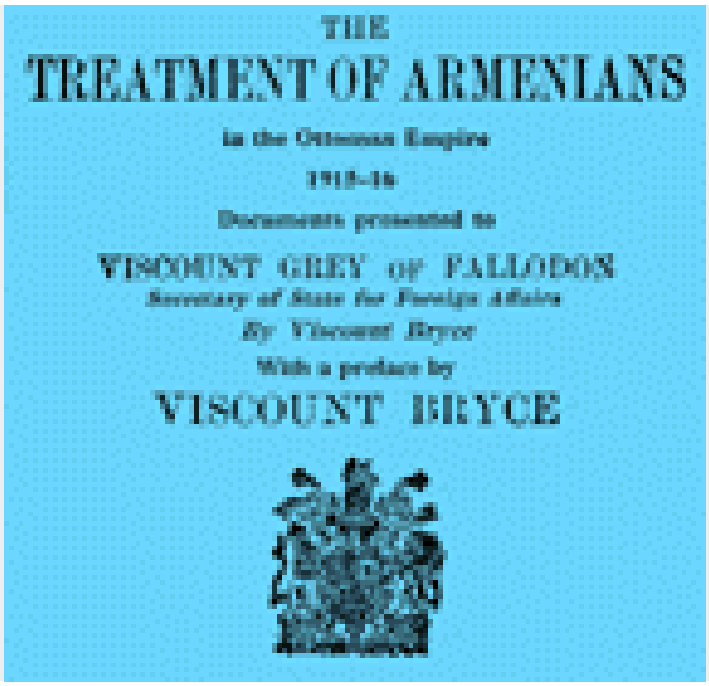
IMPUNITY: THY NAME IS TURKEY

Posted on October 17, 2009 by Keghart


THE
TREATMENT OF ARMENIANS
in the Ottoman Empire
1915-16
Documents presented to
VISCOUNT GREY OF FALLODON
Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs
By Viscount Bryce
With a preface by
VISCOUNT BRYCE

Category: Opinions

Avedis Kevorkian,Philadelphia, PA USA, 16 October 2009

It must be a wonderful feeling to be a Turk.

You can kill with impunity. You can invade another country with impunity. You can renege on agreements, promises, treaties with impunity.

You can defy the United Nations with impunity (and also be elected to its Security Council). You can defy the Council of Europe with impunity.

You can defy the European Union (which you want to join) with impunity. You can defy the European Court of Human Rights with impunity.

And, the list goes on.

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Now, not only can you lie with impunity, but also your courts will support you and find guilty of lying the person who proves you are a liar.

Some background, for those just tuning in.

During World War I and immediately after, Turkey committed the first state-conceived, state-planned, state-executed genocides of the 20th century when it killed upwards of two-million of its Christians--the Armenians, the Assyrians, the Pontic Greeks. In 1916, Lord Bryce (with the bulk of the work done by a young Arnold Toynbee), presented a Blue Book to Parliament describing in detail the treatment of the Armenians and calling the attention of not only Britain but also the world to the massacres then going on. (These annual reports to Parliament, analyzing the previous year's history, are in blue-covers, hence the name.)

In its denial campaign, Turkey has attacked the Blue Book and its contents, calling it, among other names, "war-time propaganda" against Germany and its war-time ally, Turkey--as if truth cannot be

used as propaganda! In this campaign, Turkey's Parliament sent a letter to the British Parliament asking that the book be officially discredited, and that Britain apologize to Turkey. Britain, though not accepting the events of 1915 as Genocide against the Armenians, politely refused.

Turkey then said that Britain, on December 2, 1925, had already apologized to Turkey's wartime ally, Germany. This statement was made by Sukru Elekdag, former Turkish Ambassador to Washington. In his statement, Elekdag stated that Foreign Secretary Austen Chamberlain, speaking in Parliament following a debate on the matter, had acknowledged that the Blue Book was entirely a work of propaganda and was completely fabricated, and he, therefore, apologized--but to Germany. Hence the campaign to gain an apology to Turkey, as well. This campaign was also picked up by the so-called "scholars" that Turkey uses to justify its denial efforts, whose names will not sully this august site.

At this point, Taner Akçam, a Turk who has investigated the events of 1915 (and, now, it would appear, as well as of 1925) and who has written often about what he without qualms calls a Genocide of the Armenians, took off his jacket and jumped into the fray, and said that what Elekdag claimed was totally untrue.

Akçam was sued by Elekdag in three separate suits--one for each publication in which Akçam's statement had appeared. Naturally, the Turkish courts found for Elekdag. At this writing, I don't know what Akçam is going to do about the fines he has been instructed to pay.

Not wanting to take a stand based on one or the other's claims, I asked a British historian if he would check the facts for me. He has responded by saying that he has read through "Hansard" (the official record of the activities of the British Parliament--akin to the "Congressional Record," for America's Congress) and found no discussion in Parliament in 1925 about the Blue Book, no discussion about an apology, no speech by Austen Chamberlain on the subject, and no apology. Thinking the date might be in error, he went to the trouble of checking the years 1924 and 1926, also. Result: "no statement at all on Turkey or Armenia, and definitely nothing on the Bryce-Toynbee Blue Book."

His conclusion? "I am driven to conclude that Sukru Elekadag made up the whole thing."

Will a little thing like the truth bother the Turk? Not likely. However, he now has impunity to lie.

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