# MASS. IS NO PLACE FOR SWASTIKAS & ADL HYPOCRISY

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**Category:** Opinions

By David Boyajian, The Belmont Citizen Herald, 10 December 2008

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Last year Belmont and Newton severed ties with the No Place for Hate (NPFH) program of the ADL due to the latter's actions against Armenians.

Many Massachusetts cities, including Belmont, have occasionally experienced swastika spray-painting defacements. But the ADL is taking blatant advantage of the Newton incident. Summoning up the ghost of NPFH, the ADL has declared that Newton is "not a place for hate" and used other rhetoric to try to recoup its lost standing.

Though the Newton incident was atrocious, the ADL lacks the credibility to lecture anyone about hate. The ADL maintains that denial, diminishment, or any questioning of the Holocaust constitutes anti-Semitism and "hate." By its own standards, therefore, the ADL is guilty of hate regarding the Armenian genocide. It's also clearly guilty of major hypocrisy.

Arlington, Bedford, Lexington, Medford, Needham, Newburyport, Northampton, Peabody, Somerville, Watertown, Westwood have, like Belmont and Newton, castigated the national ADL and dropped NPFH. So did the Massachusetts Municipal Association, which represents every city and town. Human rights advocates, many of them Jewish, have also condemned the ADL's stance against Armenians.

And Watertown has now demanded that Blue Cross Blue Shield stop sponsoring NPFH. Top ADL officers inside the company had persuaded it several years ago to fund the program. And, no, the national ADL and director Abraham Foxman have not unambiguously acknowledged the Armenian genocide. Quite the opposite.

Pressed by human rights advocates and Armenians, the national ADL issued a statement on August 21, 2007 that, while it mentioned the word genocide, implied that the Armenian murders were simply a "consequence" of war and, therefore, not intentional. The ADL knows that "consequential" deaths are not genocide. The official definition of genocide in Article 2 of the U.N. Genocide Treaty specifically requires "intent" by the perpetrator. Imagine the ferocious ADL reaction if an Armenian group implied that the Holocaust was simply a "consequence" of WWII.

The ADL's slickly worded genocide denial was a blatant demonstration of bad faith. And it didn't fool the MMA and the dozen cities that subsequently cut ties to NPFH. The ADL statement has never – never – been retracted.

Foxman has recently started another word game, saying that he has "referred" to the Armenian genocide. The ADL condemns

word games with the Holocaust but then plays the same games with the Armenian Holocaust.

The powerful ADL has long lobbied against Armenian genocide resolutions in Congress. Imagine how the ADL would have screamed bloody murder if an Armenian organization had lobbied against any of the innumerable pieces of Holocaust legislation.

The ADL's seemingly inexplicable opposition to Armenians is part of a widely acknowledged deal between Turkey and Israel.

"The Jewish lobby has quite actively supported Turkey," notes Yola Habif Johnston of the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs, "to prevent the so-called Armenian genocide resolution from passing."

The American Jewish Committee is one of the groups she cited. Grilled earlier this year about the Armenian issue, AJC's Strategic Studies Director, Barry Jacobs, blurted out, "We are not historians, which is a polite way of saying we're not going to take responsibility make a decision on 1915." Added Jacobs, "The position of all the Jewish organizations, including the ADL, was not to have a position on the facts … we do not think that the Congress is the place to settle this … that's the real world and that's the position of the U.S. and Israel."

Jacobs once appeared in a nasty, Turkish-sponsored genocide denial film and has pledged to "champion to the best of our ability Turkish interests in the U.S. Congress."

However, the American Jewish World Service, American Jewish League for Israel, Jewish War Veterans of the USA, and a dozen other principled Jewish groups support the Armenian resolution. So do the NAACP, Sons of Italy, Nat'l Council of La Raza, NOW, American Values, Arab American Institute, Cambodian Assoc. of America, Int'l Campaign for Tibet, Christian Solidarity Int'l, National Council of Churches, and some 70 more organizations.

But not the ADL. Foxman is loath to back out of his deal with Turkey. It's clear that the main ADL agenda is political wheeling and dealing and not, as claimed, universal human rights. The public and ADL's principled grassroots members have been misled.

The national ADL's stance against Armenians lends credence to those who accuse it and groups like AJC of exploiting the Holocaust for political purposes and of being insincere about others' human rights. That is a far greater disservice to Jews and humanity than any spray-painted swastika.