NEW WRINKLE TO TURKISH PROPAGANDA

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Mesrob, Toronto, 14 December 2010

Originally sent by reader Mesrob to Keghart.com as a comment to our Turkbaijan Propaganda in Bloom editorial, we've decided to run this timely note as self-standing article. It's informative and thought provoking. It calls for action.

To underline the issues raised by "Turkbaijan Propaganda in Bloom," I would like to point out another Turkish government-sponsored ploy intended to put Diaspora Armenians on the defensive. I am referring to the "by invitation-only" Jan. 12 "Dialogue & Friendship" dinner, presented by the Canadian Intercultural Dialogue Center--a member of Intercultural Dialogue Institute. The theme of the "dialogue" is 'Raising the Generation of Peace in the Toronto School of Diversity.' The gathering will take place at the toney Royal York Hotel's exclusive Imperial Room.

It all sounds so innocent. What's more commendable than teaching diversity in the schools of the world's "most multicultural" city? But there's snake in the garden. The event is sponsored by the Anatolian Heritage Federation, SAVGI Turkish Canadian Academics Association, and the Turkish Canadian Chamber of Commerce.The not-so-secret agenda of the Turkish sponsors is to combat the recent success of Toronto educational specialists, to include Genocide of Armenians educational materials in the history curriculum of Grade XI students of a public school district in Toronto. The Turkish lobby fought tooth and nail to prevent any mention of the Genocide of Armenians, but failed to sway the Toronto educational leaders. Now the Turkish government and its local lobbyists want to see the material removed from the curriculum, as they fear other school boards might adopt the program.

Thus the keynote speakers and the hosting committee have been carefully selected to support the campaign to undermine the inclusion of Genocide of Armenians in Toronto public school curiculums. The keynote speakers are Dr. Sheldon Levy president of Ryerson University, and Dr. Brian Desbiens, chair of Education Quality & Accountability Office. The latter is a mandarin. The hosting committee includes two MPs, including Yasmin Ratansi, whose constituency includes a large number of Armenians and Rob Oliphant, who was in Armenia recently. Other hosting committee members included provincial member of parliament Tony Ruprecht (a long-time supporter of Turkish causes), educational specialists and Rev. Damian MacPherson, director, Ecumenical and Interfaith Att. Archdiocese of Toronto.Finally, among the hosting committee are the chief and deputy chief of Toronto Police. This is also a stroke of genius in light of Toronto Turkish community propaganda that the teaching of controversial subjects such as the "genocide" of Armenians encourages racism, discrimination, and violence among students.

I have two questions for Armenian activists in Toronto. How was a member of parliament, who has numerous Armenian voters in her constituency, saw it fit to be part of a Turkish propaganda front? Have our activists established contacts with a politician who, to a certain degree, depends on Armenian votes. How was she wooed by our antagonists to participate in this sham dialogue? And what about MPP Oliphant, who having been in Armenia, surely knows the game the Turkish lobby is

playing in Toronto. Will our organizations approach Ms. Ratansi and Mr. Oliphant and let them know about what game is afoot?

An event like the above requires a great deal of money, effort, organization. Would anyone be surprised to learn that the Turkish Embassy in Ottawa is funding and organizing the event behind front men and front organizations?

The Toronto sham conference is part of a concerted Turkish government effort to diffuse the bad PR Ankara would suffer on the 100 Anniversary of the Genocide of Armenians. Expect to see similar campaigns elsewhere around the globe. But more important, organize to combat the Turkish strategy.