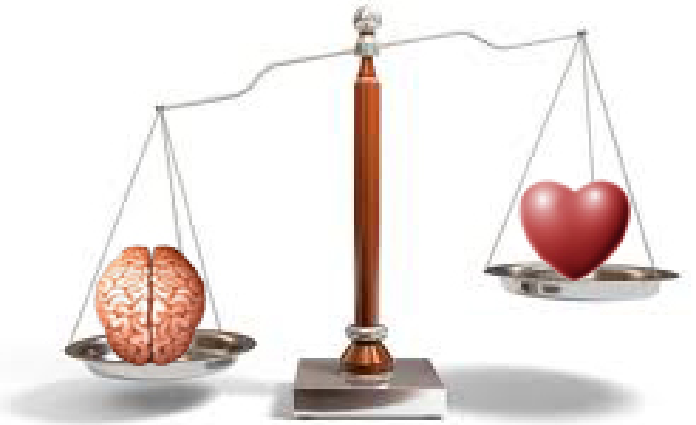
PASSION AND THOUGHT

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Category: Opinions

Avedis Kevorkian, Philadelphia, PA USA, 3 December 2011Passion is the enemy of thought.

I don't know about you, but I have slips of paper everywhere so that if a thought occurs to me, I can jot it down. Eventually all the slips arrive at my computer, where I have a longer slip of paper onto which I add each thought. Then, one by one, I attack each thought.

When I get to the bottom of the page and have no room for more ideas, I start a new sheet with the untouched thoughts at the top. And, so it goes.

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For quite some time, "Passion is the Enemy of Thought" has been transferred from old page to new page––always, invariably at the top, but never attended to and, therefore, never checked off.
I don't recall when the thought occurred to me. I have checked books of "Quotations," and no one is credited with the statement. Since the only man who was original was Adam, I find it hard to believe that the thought is original with me.

I do know WHY the thought occurred, however. It was while I was ruminating about an Armenian discussion about demands on the Turks. You know the ones: "We demand our lands back." "We demand reparations." "We demand. . . ." Whether or not these are legitimate, logical, realizable is questionable in my mind––I don't demand or want any of these––tying them to the legitimate demand that Turkey finally accept the historical fact of the Armenian Genocide is just plain, downright, foolish.

These demands are made with passion, and passion is the enemy of thought. Because if the demanders had really thought about the matter, they would not be making the demands.

Let me say at the outset, all I want from the Turkish government is the statement: "Now that we have Turkish scholars who have mastered the old Ottoman script and have been able to read the archives, they have discovered, Mr Kevorkian, that the Ottoman government did indeed, kill your father's entire family. Although we had nothing to do with it, we sincerely and solemnly apologize." For me, that settles the matter. (In fact I have said as much to Turkish Ambassadors, Turkish officials, Turkish journalists, hoping they would see the "easy out" I have given them.) I have no desire to go to my father's village, no desire to seek out his home, no desire to live in the home if I could find it. But, I know that I am alone on this, and so I continue.

The reason that I say that passion has ruled out all thought is that by tacking on these additional demands, those who want first and primarily the admission and recognition by the present-day Turks will never get it. Under no circumstances will the Turks accept and recognize knowing that the Armenians will be agitating for the other demands.

If thought had overcome the passion, the Armenians would have––cunningly, if you want to put it that way––waited for the Turks to accept and recognize before saying, "Thanks, and now there are a couple of other matters we have to bring to the table."

Does anyone think that the Armenians would have docilely "relocated" if the Turks had added ". . .and you will be robbed, raped, tortured en route and if you get to Syria alive, you will be murdered"? No. The Turks put thought before their passionate hatred of the Armenians and said, simply, that the Armenians were being relocated.

The same thing applies with the Jews and the Nazis. If the Nazis had said to the Jews who were being "relocated" that when they reached the camps they would be put to death," the Jews would not have gone as innocently as the Armenians a generation earlier.

But those self-appointed spokesmen loudly––and, Yes, with passion––tack on the "we want" demands which no sensible Turkish Government would ever consider. And, of course, nor would those who take their instructions from Ankara: London and Washington.

Thus, Ankara will continue to deny, and London and Washington will continue to support.

Can anything be done at this late date? The only solution I can think of is that if a new louder voice were to be raised and said: "It is foolish to expect more than acceptance and recognition, so let us abandoned further claims." (Some of those "further claims," by the way seem to be based on the dead, dead, dead Treaty of Sèvres––which only shows how far has passion killed thought.)

There is talk about the formation of new groups who propose to "speak for the Armenians." Let them adopt a policy of "acceptance and recognition" only––in defiance of those who speak from their heart and not their brain––and perhaps, just perhaps, they might find a receptive audience not only among the Armenians but also Turkey (and its playthings in matters-Armenian, London and Washington).

The present tactics, including shouting down people like me, have failed. Perhaps trying something new and novel for Armenians––"thinking"––might achieve success.

But, that means intelligence and learning something new. It has been said that one definition of an idiot is someone who does the same thing over and over again expecting a different result. Am I suggesting that Armenians are idiots? Well. . .ur. . .you see. . . .