

PETITION, NO; BOYCOTT, YES

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 **Avedis Kevorkian**, Philadelphia, PA USA, 28 November 2008

Elsewhere on this web-site, there is a Petition--"[We Demand Justice!](#)"--which readers are being asked to sign and forward. It is addressed to Yerevan and concerns the threat to freedom of the press in Armenia. I, for one, will not be signing it.

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Perhaps the good doctor who manages this web-site will allow me to explain why.

I don't want to bring joy and laughter to the crooks and thieves and thugs who are running (why do my fingers keep typing "ruining" instead of "running"?) Armenia. How will this (or any other) petition do that?

It is simple. They know that as long as the Diaspora is stupid enough to send money, to engage in joint ventures, to invest in Armenia for themselves and also encourage their host countries to trade with, invest in, and support Armenia, they don't have to give a damn what the Diaspora thinks, and they will laugh at yet another Petition.

Yes, it is a simple as that.

What is the answer, if not appealing to their minds? Threaten their pocket-books--or rather, their overseas bank accounts. In a word: Boycott.

What the Diaspora should do is boycott Yerevan.

It should say, "If you chose to be crooks and thieves and thugs, if you chose to steal from the Armenian people, if you choose to beat and kill those who criticize you, if you choose to destroy Armenia we will fight you by not only boycotting you but also will prevail upon others to do so."

In addition to not visiting Armenia, not investing in Armenia, not engaging in joint ventures with Armenians, the Diaspora should prevail on its host countries to refrain from any commerce and trade with Armenia, should discourage tourism and investment, and the countries should tell Yerevan that its poor record regarding human rights and democracy is such that "we" choose to treat you as a pariah.

Note that Armenia has slipped down the scale of countries regarding freedom of the press, and has matched that by moving up the scale of countries that are corrupt. The list of those critics who are beaten and whose culprits are never discovered and arrested--much less brought to justice--gets longer by the week. It would appear that the competition in Yerevan is to see which institution is the more corrupt--the government, the police, the courts.

~~Corruption has now become the major domestic product in Armenia. And the financial reward for this corruption comes from the Diaspora.~~

Is that sort of record that should be encouraged and supported by the Diaspora? Yet, the Diaspora seems intent to not only keep up its support for Armenia but also to increase it. It's as if you were to invite thieves to enter your home and take your possessions on condition that after they do so they will repent.

However, if there are innocents out there who think that Yerevan really cares what the Diaspora thinks, by all means sign and forward the Petition.

As for me, I have said it before, and I will repeat it yet again: In the rest of the world people leave government service to make their fortunes; in Armenia they enter government service to make their fortunes. And, from whence cometh the money? From the foolish Diaspora which thinks that its money is going to serve the poor, put-upon people of Armenia.

When it comes to appealing to the honesty and integrity of those who are ruining (I have decided to let my fingers get away with it, after all), permit me to use the deathless words of Sam Goldwyn, "include me out."

