PRESIDENT ERDOGAN'S TRADEMARK PARANOIA

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Category: Opinions

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It looks like Mr. Erdogan is suffering from amnesia or has disjointed from reality or doesn't know what has transpired in the last 100 years vis-à-vis his society, academia, and the international community regarding the Armenian Genocide.

It seems everyone other than Mr. Erdogan knows the truth. Over 400 historians, Holocaust scholars, and genocide experts have given the authoritative answer to this issue and concluded that what happened to the Armenians was genocide.

The International Association of Genocide Scholars, the leading group tasked with researching and studying genocides, in a June 12, 2006 letter to Mr. Erdogan, then the Prime Minister of Turkey, stated: "Scholars who advise your government and who are affiliated in other ways with your state-controlled institutions are not impartial. Such so-called 'scholars' work to serve the agenda of historical and moral obfuscation when they advise you and the Turkish Parliament on how to deny the Armenian Genocide."

Mr. Erdogan's suggestion to create "historians commission" to study the Armenian Genocide is redundant. It's akin to Holocaust deniers' demand to create "historians commission" to prove whether the Holocaust took place.

The Turkish President stated: "The truth should be sought in the archives." Many witnesses during the Istanbul Military Tribunal (1919 – 1921) of the perpetrators of the Armenian Genocide, testified

that the documents of CUP, the government in power at the time, had been removed and Interior Ministry archives had been burned by Talaat Pasha, Minister of Interior, prior to fleeing the country.

Whatever is left of these archives are granted limited viewing to a small group of selected historians who *a priori* have demonstrated their support of Turkish government's genocide denialist narrative. So the Turkish archives openness argument is a clever way to mislead and to divert attention from the real issue, the crime of genocide.

How about third country archives such as that of Britain, France, the United States, Canada, Vatican, and even then-Turkish allies Germany and Austria, among others? How about the hundreds of photographs by war correspondents, massive eyewitness accounts and coverage by Western journalists, missionaries and NGOs?

'Hurriyet' reported that Mr. Erdogan said: "The greatest massacres targeting Muslims in the Balkans and in Caucasia happened in the same period. In Anatolia,...as many as Armenians were harmed." For him to equate Armenian and Muslim losses is deceitful. The two losses are not interrelated. The Armenian losses were due to Ottoman government premeditated and centrally-planned race extermination. The Muslim losses were due to Turkey taking side in a global war. It is an Orwellian charade for Mr. Erdogan to compare the two losses.

Finally, the sultan of the new Ottomans stated: "The Armenian diaspora is trying to instill hatred against Turkey everywhere in the world through campaigns on genocide claims." It is not only the Armenians who are calling on the Turkish government to recognize the Armenian Genocide. In addition to the international community, thousands of righteous Turks are calling on Mr. Erdogan and the Turkish government to end the 100-year-old callous policy of denial.

Mr. Vatche Demirdjian, the President of the Armenian Canadian Conservative Association (ACCA), commented on Mr. Erdogan's paranoid statements and conspiracy theories by stating: "Mr. Erdogan's comments are sign of desperation and bankrupt policy." He added: "Armenians hold no grudge against Turks. On the contrary, we acknowledge that many righteous Turks during the Genocide risked their lives to save their Armenians. We also value the 40,000 Turkish intellectuals, historians, journalists, and civil society members who have signed an online "I apologize" proclamation asking the Turkish government to atone for its predecessors' crimes against the Armenians and humanity."