SHAME ON YOU, HILLARY!

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By Dr. Henry Astarjian,The Armenian Weekly,12 April 2010

Dr. Henry Astarjian was born in Kirkuk, Iraq, and attended the Khrimian Azgayin Varzharan. In 1958, he graduated from the Royal College of Medicine and went on to serve as an army medical officer in Iraqi Kurdistan. He continued his medical education in Scotland and England. In 1966, he emigrated to the U.S. In 1992, he served as a New Hampshire delegate to the Republication National Convention in Houston, Texas.

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His weekly column "Loud and Clear" appeared in the Armenian Weekly for several years. He was the editor of the short lived "Armeno-Kurdish Chronicle" and has written articles in the Kurdistan Times. For three years Astarjian addressed the Kurdish Parliament in Exile in Brussels, defending Armenian rights to Western Armenia, which is now inhabited by Kurds and a million-or-so converted Armenians. For three consecutive years, he addressed the American Kurds in California and Maryland. Astarjian has also been a keynote speaker during April 24 commemorations and May 28 celebrations in California, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. He delivered a speech at the American University of Armenia on "The Kurdish Revolution and the Armenian Cause."

He is the author of The Struggle for Kirkuk, published by Preager and Preager International Securities. - The Armenian Weekly

Shame on you, Hillary. Shame on you! If this is too harsh or impolite, it is not unprecedented in politically correct situations. You used it to highlight a lie or distortion of facts by the Obama camp during the recent Democratic primaries. In doing so, you set an example for us ordinary human beings who revolt against lies, distorted facts, cover-ups, or obstructions of justice. That much to justify my outburst, to which my late mother would have objected; she would have told me, "Shame on you for being impolite and for daring people in government."

But thank the almighty God we live in these United States, not in Turkey where, until this moment, a comment like that would have subjected one to the tenets of Article 301, justifying criminal trial for "insulting Turkishness."

Shame on you Hillary for reneging on your promise to acknowledge the Armenian Genocide as genocide and not some "tragic events of World War I".

Shame on you for exploiting the memory of one and a half million martyrs. You knew that signing the pledge to recognize the genocide was essential in winning the Armenian vote, so you signed it.

Shame on you for cheating a million Armenian Americans, your fellow citizens, with false promises you made during your campaign. When you made that iron clad promise to recognize the genocide, you knew, or you should have known, the situation with your NATO ally Turkey. You knew or you should have known from your husband's tenure that it is a sensitive subject to deal with. You knew from your husband's tenure how he blocked a scheduled Congressional vote one minute before Speaker Dennis Hastert was to put the issue to vote.

If you knew then what you know now, then you have a credibility problem. If you did not know, then you were ignorant. You should have known as a potential world leader, and you should not have made the false promise.

I believe that you knew then, what you know now. I believe that in your heart and mind, there was no doubt that your election stance was the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. You know that Ottoman Turkey, the precursor of present-day Turkey, systematically executed a plan to ethnically cleanse Turkey of all Armenians, not sparing the Assyrians and other Christian populations, either.

I believe that you know but rationalize based on advice you have received from your State Department, that if you accept the truth you believe in, it would offend Turkey. And Turkey would then react with unforeseeable retaliation with untold consequences. Your decision to fight vigorously to block the vote in Congress is motivated by fear, not interests of the United States. If you feel that by siding with Turkey on the genocide you will win them over, then think again; you will be huddling a porcupine!

If you have not seen or read reports about it, I can send you excerpts of Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan's speech, where he proudly announces that present-day Turkey is the inheritor of Ottoman Turkey (except, of course, when it pertains to the genocide). Turkey is not only a Muslim country, but a fanatical Islamic country (Middle East Quarterly, Winter 2009) that is making inroads in solidifying its position in the Islamic world.

Turkish Radio and Television (TRT) just launched a complete TV station in Arabic to spread the Caliphate Islamic doctrine. Turkey also just struck a $5 billion energy deal with Iran, and Erdogan recently stated Turkey's refusal to participate in blocking Iran, should the United States and its allies impose sanctions.

In this week's visit to Germany, Erdogan demanded the establishment of a Turkish high school in Germany. In a YouTube video, Erdogan is seen in a religious rally in Munich accompanied by his mentor, Necmettin Erbakan, and Turkish President Abdullah Gul supporting the Naqshbandi Sheikh Qubrusi, who after exciting the hot audience with religious fervor and promising a struggle for Islamic victories "everywhere," exclaimed "Who needs America"? Kemal Ataturk's doctrine of

democratic secular Turkey is on its last breath. Kemalism is almost dead, and is being replaced by fanatical Islam.

Erdogan's government has arrested both the retired and active-duty top brass of the military for plotting to overthrow his government. And his anger against Israel is public now, and reflects a deeper feeling of being humiliated by Israeli border authorities that made him wait for 20 minutes. Had that happened in Turkey, they would have been tried for "insulting Turkishness." Of course Erdogan's opposition to Israel is also to side with the Arabs.

So what is Washington afraid of? How did Turkey retaliate against France, when France, 1 of 30 some countries, accepted the genocide? Turkey withdrew its ambassador for a few weeks, and then returned him. Is that a dear price to pay for holding a high moral ground?

President Obama, our 4/24 is your and our 9/11. You have sent our loved ones thousands of miles away in harms way to seek justice and punish the criminals of al-Qaeda; is our peaceful, disciplined, political request from our own government to recognize the genocide more stringent than that? Why not let a democratic process take its course
in Congress? Why block an up and down vote in Congress to resolve this matter once and for all?

Mr. President, I am not Elie Wiesel. I do not have his noble mission, nor do I intend to elicit sympathy. Like him and you, the intent is to implement justice. Your and Hillary's blocking of the genocide recognition vote in Congress does not serve justice. I reject the notion that in politics there are only interests, not justice. It is easy when both meet, but it is difficult when they are separated. But we have to do what is right.

I believed in you, Mr. President, and I still do. Even during the hotly contested primaries when Dr. Rice debated Hillary's representative in Manchester's Saint Anselm College, I autographed my book for you, addressing you as "Mr. President." My request of you, Mr. President, is to be true to your intellect, true to your conscience, true to your promise, which you made during the campaign in a concrete statement, and with true belief. I believe you have not changed your conviction as you have reaffirmed it unofficially several times.

You may rationalize by saying, "What can I do? It is not in the United States' interest to alienate Turkey. Turkey is a NATO ally. We need Turkey's cooperation in implementing our policies in the region. We can't offend them. The genocide happened almost a century ago." Mr. President, that is a stark deviation from the moral high ground you believe in. Turkey is a weak, untrustworthy ally if it does not face its criminal past.

In pursuit of your agenda, Mr. President, you argued that depriving some 46 million people of basic healthcare "is not right." Letting al-Qaeda commit its crimes and remain unpunished is not right.

Now I say, Mr. President, that blocking a vote in Congress to recognize the Armenian Genocide is not right. Please let it come to the floor.