US NEXT IN LINE

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Murat Yetkin, hurriyetdailynews.com, 24 January 2012It is not hard to tell what is going to happen next; I mean after the Armenian debate in the French capital. It is the Armenian debate in the U.S. capital.
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April 24 is the anniversary of a telegram by the Ottoman Interior Minister, Talat Pasa who ordered the provincial governors and commanders - especially in the Eastern region to which the Tsarist Russian army was advancing - to forcibly deport the Armenian population, because an Armenian faction was collaborating with the Russians; that was in 1915, in the middle of the World War I.
Before and during that deportation campaign hundreds and thousands of citizens of Turkey under the Ottoman Sultanate were killed or died from neglect; not only Armenian Christians, Muslim Turks and Kurds as well. But it is that unfortunate telegram which caused the Armenian community deported from the Ottoman Turkey to ask from the Republican Turkey (who overthrew the Sultanate) to recognize that grand human disaster as a genocide and pay the dues.

Turkish governments' attitude up until the ruling Justice and Development Party (AK Parti) could be summarized as: "Turks didn't do it, Armenians did;" naive and could not convince most of the governments and parliaments who recognized the disaster as genocide.

Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan followed a different line, to acknowledge the human sufferings and trying to bridge political ties with Armenia as a goodwill gesture, but could not go all the way up; if you ask to advisers in Ankara it is mainly because of seeking to find a compromise from the opposite end.

So almost every February or March for decades, the Armenian lobby, which is among the most active in U.S. Congress when it comes to affairs with Turkey, finds a way to submit a bill to the House of Representatives in order to mark April 24 as "Armenian genocide day." As of itself, it may only be a credibility blow to Turkish politics. But it is more than that; it has political and legal consequences. It is a fact that the Supreme Court has turned down a federal court's ruling which said Turkey should compensate the losses of an insurance company's clients due to the acclaimed genocide; the Supreme Court cannot make decisions contradictory to the state policies of the U.S., said the

Supreme Court judges.

This is because it was President Barack Obama, like his predecessors who stopped the process at the Senate level with the justification of protecting U.S. interests in the whole region where Turkey lies. This important ally has been supporting many U.S.-led international operations from Afghanistan to Iraq, from Kosovo to Somalia after all, has been a “Plural democracy and free economy in a Muslim society” example for the Arab Spring and recently agreed to host a U.S.-operated NATO radar site as a vital part of a global Missile Shield system to which Iran and Russia react.

This is election year in the U.S., the Israeli lobby is not likely to support Turkey against the Armenian and Greek ones and Obama might have a more difficult time this year than before, despite declaring Erdogan among his best political friends.