

TANER AKCAM: I CAN SHOW VERY EASILY GENOCIDAL INTENT OF OTTOMAN TURKEY

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/PanARMENIAN.Net/ Turkey's Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan was in Washington to meet with President Bush to discuss mounting tensions between the Turks and Kurdish rebel factions in Northern Iraq.

Also on the agenda was the Armenian Genocide resolution which passed in the House Foreign Affairs Committee last month. The Medill News Service spoke with two experts who have challenged Turkey's position on the Armenian question and asked them to respond to Erdogan's comments.

Turkish scholar Taner Akcam, author of "A Shameful Act: The Armenian Genocide and the Question of Turkish Responsibility," is one of the first Turkish academics to acknowledge and discuss openly the killings of Armenians by the Ottoman Turkish government in 1915.

Edward Alexander is a retired U.S. Foreign Service officer and author, born in New York to Armenian parents who fled Turkey.

"The evidence is overwhelming and to many Armenians, it is utterly preposterous for anyone, especially the Turkish government, to deny what is historical truth.

For my research, one of my sources was the German press. My other source was the cables that were sent to Ambassador Henry Morgenthau, the U.S. ambassador in Turkey at the time of the genocide. These are documents that cannot be refuted. In addition, I did research eye-witness reports in Merseburg, Germany," Alexander said.

For his part, Mr Akcam said, "Our Prime Minister is wrong because we can prove the genocidal intent without any problems. One set of documentation are the trials in Istanbul between 1919 and 1921. These are the indictments, verdicts, hand-written testimonies and eye-witness accounts which were recorded during that time. There is a lot of evidence here showing the killing of the Armenians. The originals of these documents are not known. We assume that they have been destroyed after Turkish nationalists took over Istanbul. [Turkish officials] only trust the documents in prime ministerial archive today in Istanbul. I can show very easily, based on prime ministerial archives, the genocidal intent of Ottoman Turkey. I will publish a book in the Turkish language in 2008 where I am presenting more than 500 documents from prime ministerial archives in Istanbul."