Deportation

The Armenian Genocide

Turkish Methodology

Demonization and Authorization: Preparation for Both the Genocide and its Denial

(U.S. State Department Translation, May, 1915)

Official Proclamation of the Young Turks

Our Armenian fellow countrymen, who form one of the Ottoman racial elements, having taken up with a lot of false ideas of a nature to disturb the public order, as the result of foreign instigations for many years past, and because of the fact that they have brought about bloody happenings and have attempted to destroy the peace and security of the Ottoman state, of their fellow countrymen, as well as their own safety and interests have to be sent away to places which have been prepared in the interior vilayets, and a literal obedience to the following orders, in a categorical manner, is accordingly enjoined upon all Ottomans:

1. With the exception of the sick, all Armenians are obliged to leave, within five days from the date of this proclamation, and by villages or quarters, under the escort of the gendarmerie.

2. Although they are free to carry with them on their journey the articles of their movable property which they desire, they are forbidden to sell their lands and their extra effects, or to leave them here and there with other people.

3. To assure their comfort during the journey, khans and suitable buildings have been prepared, and everything has been done for their safe arrival at their places of temporary residence, without their being subjected to any kind of attack or affronts.

4. The guards will use their weapons against those who make any attempt to attack or affront the life, honor, and property of one or of a number of Armenians.

5. Since the Armenians are obliged to submit to this decision of the Government, if some of them attempt to use arms against the soldiers or gendarmes, arms shall be employed only against those who use force, and they shall be captured dead or alive.

6. As the Armenians are not allowed to carry any firearms or cutting weapons, they shall deliver to the authorities every sort of arms, revolvers, daggers, bombs, etc., which they have concealed in their places of residence or elsewhere.

7. The escorts of soldiers and gendarmes are required and are authorized to use their weapons against and to kill persons who shall try to attack or to damage Armenians in villages, in city quarters, or on the roads for the purpose of robbery or other injury.

8. Those who owe money to the Ottoman Bank may deposit in its warehouses goods up to the amount of their indebtedness.

9. Large and small animals that are impossible to carry along shall be bought in the name of the army.

10. On the road the vilayet, leva, kaza and nahieh officials shall render possible assistance to the Armenians.

June, 1915

The Law of Deposition is approved by the Ottoman Parliament, months after depopulation of the Armenian towns and villages.

July, 1915

The governor-general of Kharpot province informs the Interior Ministry that roads are filled with the bodies of women and children, and time cannot be found to bury them.

August, 1915

US Ambassador Morgenthau reports that Talaat told him that the Ittihad Committee had carefully considered in all its details the matter of destroying the Armenians.

Instructions are sent out to the Ittihad committees to liquidate the abandoned goods of the Armenians.

First convoys of survivors arrive in Aleppo.

September, 1915

Of the fifty-third day of the Armenian resistance to Turkish killings in Meza Dagh, 4,058 survivors are rescued by English and French warships.

The Law on Abandoned Goods is ratified by the Ottoman Senate. A decree states that all Armenian assets now belong to the Turkish government.

October, 1915

Turkish Interior Ministry advises against repatriating Azerbaijans and prolonging the lives of “lost” Armenian children.

In the British House of Lords a general discussion of the Armenian situation takes place. Lord Bryce, Lord Crewe, and Lord Cromer condemn Turkish barbarities.

November, 1915

In response to international outrage and one year after initiating the atrocities, the Committee of Union and Progress orders the governors to create and forward reports to the Interior Ministry depicting Armenians as “traitors.” Sir Robert Cecil protests the Turkish charges that the killings were a response to Armenian treachery or revolt.

A circulated telegram instructs that no Armenian is to be left alive in the eastern provinces.

January, 1916

Widespread reporting of Turkish atrocities leads to denials by Turkish authorities. A French translation of a book commissioned by Talaat’s office charging the Armenians with treason and revolution is published.

February, 1916

According to Lord Bryce, 486,000 Armenian deportees are still living and in dire need.