

SUBJECT: MARGINALIZATION OF THE TURKMEN IN IRAQ

<http://abbaskadhim.blogspot.com/>

Dear Abbas,

All my attempts to add my comments on your blog today have failed. I wanted to draw your attention and that of your readers to the fate of the Iraqi Turkmen (re: Odisho's article on the Assyrians and Turkmen).

Thursday, February 24, 2005

"To Tony Blair - and to his special envoy to Iraq, Ann Clwyd, who has a great deal of influence over the Kurdish leaders, we say: honour your promises. In the early part of the last century, British politicians made many promises to the Assyrian people that were never kept <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/comment/story/0,,1423209,00.html>>. This time we hope it will be different." (thanks, Merry)

Keep dreaming, Odisho! In order to count as an oppressed Christian, you must be oppressed by a government not supported by your fellow Christians. Palestinian Christians learned this long time ago. <http://abbaskadhim.blogspot.com/2005_02_01_abbaskadhim_archive.html> posted by Abbas : 9:20 PM

The Iraqi Turkmen are seldom given the opportunity to voice their concerns and sufferings in the Western media and many Westerners still ignore that the Turkmen represent the third most important ethnic group in Iraq. This is due to an historical manipulation of the facts and reality in Iraq by the British at the end of WWI, when they deliberately underestimated the number of Turkmen in order to detach Mosul province (Wilayat Mosul) from the Ottoman Empire and gain control over its oil fields.

The marginalization of the Turkmen continued under successive Iraqi governments and reached its peak under the last regime which even denied the existence of the Turkmen in Iraq in its constitution which stated that Iraqis are Arabs and Kurds only !

Unfortunately for the Turkmen the regime change in Iraq in 2003 did not put an end to their long sufferings from their under representation and their marginalization, on the contrary it accentuated these sufferings by allowing the Kurds, this time, to systemize the process of their marginalization in the north of Iraq with the help and blessings of the US and UK occupying powers for their own 'hidden' agenda.

In September 2003 the city of Telafer which is 99% Turkmen was attacked by Kurdish militias and bombarded heavily by American forces under the pretext of eliminating 'foreign terrorists'.

The objective of the US and UK in allowing and encouraging the Kurds to

perpetrate the marginalization of the Turkmen in Iraq is to facilitate their task in pretending that the entire north of Iraq is 'Kurdistan' and belongs to them, including the provinces of Kerkuk and Mosul with their natural resources and oil fields, despite the fact that the Kurds have never constituted the majority in these two provinces.

The 'hidden' agenda is to reach a situation in the north of Iraq where the Kurds, after taking control of Kerkuk and its huge oil reserves, declare the independence of Kurdistan and call on the US-UK companies and corporations namely: Exxon Mobil, Chevron Texaco, BP and Shell to come back to Kerkuk and take their revenge on ALL the Iraqi people who supported their government in the nationalization of oil in June 1972.

The Turkmen - being positioned in the front line and designated to be the first victims of this new imperialist plot which targets the territorial integrity of Iraq - have perceived this danger, they have called and continue calling on all their Iraqi compatriots and especially on the intellectuals and enlightened politicians to put an end to their prolonged marginalization and to support them in their struggle to obtain their full rights in Iraq, similar to those of Iraqi Arabs and Kurds. It is only when all ethnic communities obtain equal rights that peace and stability will prevail in Iraq.

Those who will be involved in the writing of Iraq's new constitution would greatly benefit from taking a close look at the Belgian example, where the German speaking citizens (the third ethnical component after the Flemish and the Walloons) enjoy full constitutional rights although their number is less than 70.000 ! (0.7% of the Belgian population) and where the German language is recognized as one of Belgium's three official languages together with Dutch and French.

In the 30th January 2005 elections over 400.000 Turkmen in the Turkmen region of Telafer and tens of thousands of Chaldo-Assyrians of the Ninewa plains were denied vote, while more than 100.000 Kurds were transported, despite a transportation ban, from Erbil and Sulaimaniya into Kerkuk. Thousands of Kurds voted up to five times, some youngsters under the age of 18 were allowed to vote and there were voting even in lieu of dead people!

Some of the reports can be found on the following websites :

<http://www.turkmen.nl/SOITM.html>

<http://www.turkmen.nl/>

All the irregularities and violations were reported in due time by the Turkmen to the Independent Iraqi Election Commission, the Secretary General of the United Nations, the Members of the European Parliament, Human Rights Watch offices worldwide, the Press, etc. but to no avail.

Unfortunately, the marginalization of the Turkmen continues...

Regards,

Merry

Committee for the Defence of the Iraqi Turkmen Rights
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