

If Armenians lived “peacefully” with Turkish neighbors – the same neighbors who did not waste the opportunity to rob and kill in 1894–1896, in 1909, in 1915–1918 – they had to.

If Armenians adopted Turkish cultural traits and even forgot their mother tongue and spoke Turkish, they had to. Under the repressive yoke of Ottoman rule, they were simply forced to.

The sufferings of Armenians during the First World War cannot be compared with the sufferings of Turks during the same period. Capitalizing on the “presupposition” that Armenians and Turks lived peacefully side by side for centuries, and that it was because of Armenian revolutionary activities that the government was obliged to step in with forceful measures, does nothing but lead the process toward deceit.

The truth is that the Turkish government stepped in with violent measures, not to quell the “unrest,” but to stifle Armenian aspirations for safer and better living conditions and basic human rights. And let us not forget that the Turkish government, the government of the Young Turks, was in pursuit of a goal epitomized by the simple statement, “Turkey for the Turks only,” and was driven by a simple ideology, Pan-Turkism, the establishment of a Pan-Turkic empire with a homogeneous Turkic population in a vast territory under Great Turan, the envisioned Turkic super-state encompassing the Turkic-speaking peoples of Central Asia. Ethnic minorities such as Kurds, Jews, and others within the Ottoman Empire were not a threat at the time. The only obstacle to the realization of the Pan-Turanist, Pan-Islamist dream was the