

WITHDRAWAL SHEET

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DOCUMENT NO. & TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
1. memo (4456)	Robert McFarlane to James Baker re Armenian-American concerns, 1p <i>R 3/2/06 NLSF97-06678 #1</i>	6/30/84	BT
2. draft letter	McFarlane to George Deukmejian, 1p <i>R v n #2</i>	n.d.	B1 →
3. memo	Lee Verstandig to Baker re Armenian-American concern, 2p [Item is still under review under the provisions of EO 13233]	5/31/84	
4. note	Vice President to Baker, McFarlane, and Ed Dewhirst re attached letter from Gov. Deukmejian, 1p [Item is still under review under the provisions of EO 13233]	8/13/84	

RESTRICTIONS

- B-1 National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA].
- B-2 Release could disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA].
- B-3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA].
- B-4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA].
- B-6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA].
- B-7 Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA].
- B-7a Release could reasonably be expected to interfere with enforcement proceedings [(b)(7)(A) of the FOIA].
- B-7b Release would deprive an individual of the right to a fair trial or impartial adjudication [(b)(7)(B) of the FOIA].
- B-7c Release could reasonably be expected to cause unwarranted invasion or privacy [(b)(7)(C) of the FOIA].
- B-7d Release could reasonably be expected to disclose the identity of a confidential source [(b)(7)(D) of the FOIA].
- B-7e Release would disclose techniques or procedures for law enforcement investigations or prosecutions or would disclose guidelines which could reasonably be expected to risk circumvention of the law [(b)(7)(E) of the FOIA].
- B-7f Release could reasonably be expected to endanger the life or physical safety of any individual [(b)(7)(F) of the FOIA].
- B-8 Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA].
- B-9 Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA].


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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

August 20, 1984

MEMORANDUM FOR JAMES A. BAKER, III

FROM: JAMES W. CICCONI 

SUBJECT: Presidential Letter on the Armenian Genocide

As you know, there continues to be a great deal of confusion and dissatisfaction among Armenian-Americans about the President's position on the Armenian massacres of 1915.

As you know, the President issued a "Statement on the Armenian Genocide" during the 1980 campaign. He again referenced the Armenian genocide in a 1981 proclamation on the Jewish Holocaust. The latest furor has been caused by several events:

- A State Department Bulletin in 1982, which noted that "the Department of State does not endorse allegations that the Turkish Government committed a genocide against the Armenian people." (This was later modified by a Department statement that our policy had not changed.)
- State Department opposition to a congressional resolution noting the Armenian genocide (as a result, the resolution did not pass); and
- White House refusal to issue a proclamation this year on the genocide.

In discussions with NSC, it has been agreed that a letter would be sent to Governor Deukmejian in an attempt to clarify our position. This is a more low-key approach than a resolution or proclamation, but might still cure the problem. NSC and State are, of course, concerned that such a letter not harm U.S. relations with Turkey, and that it not implicitly condone Armenian terrorism.

Attached is a draft letter which Lee Verstandig and I feel accomplishes our purposes. It reiterates the basic position taken by the President in 1980 and 1981, using the crucial word "genocide," and is, I feel, consistent with his personal views. The letter does not mention Turkey, and contains an implicit condemnation of modern day Armenian terrorism.

Lee and I recommend that you discuss the draft with Bud McFarlane, and that an agreed-upon letter be signed by the President as soon as possible.

Attachments

- Tab A - Draft letter to Deukmejian
- Tab B - McFarlane Memo of June 30
Verstandig Memo of May 31
- Tab C - Note from Vice President, August 13
- Tab D - Presidential Statements on Armenian Genocide
- Tab E - Letter sent by Walter Mondale

Dear George:

I appreciate the concerns you have expressed recently regarding the need for a continued sense of commitment to the remembrance of the genocide against the Armenian people nearly 70 years ago. I want to assure you of my own personal commitment, and that of this Administration, to such a goal.

The Armenian genocide was one of the greatest tragedies of history, a time when 1½ million innocent men, women, and children were massacred in their ancient and noble homeland.

Those Armenians who survived were dispersed throughout the Middle East and elsewhere in the world. Some went to the Soviet Union where they continued to suffer from religious persecution and other forms of official harrassment. Many also came to this country, where we have seen Armenian-Americans excell in virtually every field of endeavor. They have been vibrant and vital members of our community, respected public servants, and have generally enriched our national heritage by remembering and preserving their own.

The memory of that terrible genocide suffered by the Armenian people still burns in our hearts, for unless we remember such tragedies, we risk their repetition. Indeed, the world's attitude toward the occurrences in Armenia may well have encouraged the Holocaust that began only decades later. We are thus resolved that the lessons of 1915, and subsequent horrors, will be remembered and observed.

Perhaps most importantly, though, we must recognize that the key lesson to be learned is that violence against innocent people, regardless of cause or grievance, is unacceptable to the civilized world today just as it was in 1915, and must be condemned. Only by doing so can we truly honor the memory of those Armenians who died so long ago.

Sincerely,

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

MEMORANDUM

4456

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 30, 1984

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
ACTION

MEMORANDUM FOR JAMES A. BAKER, III

FROM: ROBERT C. MCFARLANE *Bob*
SUBJECT: Armenian-American Concerns

As promised in my June 9 memo, working with State we have prepared a draft Presidential letter aimed at alleviating Armenian-American concerns over the Administration's position on the tragic historical events of 1915. The draft letter also denounces by implication any actions (e.g., Congressional resolutions) which appear to condone or offer excuses for Armenian terrorist activities.

Neither the President's letter nor my covering letter, which addresses the controversy surrounding the footnote to the article in the August 1982 State Department's Bulletin, will fully satisfy Governor Deukmejian. They hopefully, however, clarify the President's position and clearly state our foreign policy concerns. In draft form the letters are confidential, but once we agree on the text they no longer need to be classified.

Once you concur with the President's letter and my covering letter, I will send them to the President for his approval and signature. Please let me know your reaction. Thank you.

Attachment

- Tab A - Covering Letter
- Tab B - Presidential Letter

cc: Lee Verstandig

DECLASSIFIED
NLS F97-0006/9 #1

BY CU NARA DATE 3/24/06

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
Declassify on: OADR

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

TAB
A

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

D R A F T

Dear Governor,

In forwarding the President's letter on the tragic historical events of 1915, I wish to reiterate our position on the controversy -- of which you are well aware -- which arose two year's ago over the incorrect insertion in a footnote to an article on terrorism in the State Department's Bulletin.

The footnote stated that the State Department "does not endorse allegations that the Turkish Government committed a genocide against the Armenian people." The Department, as you probably know, issued a clarification in a subsequent issue of the Bulletin stating that the earlier article and its accompanying notes and footnotes:..." were not intended as statement of policy of the United States. Nor did they represent any change in U.S. policy."

I wish to repeat our position:

The Department of State has confirmed that neither the article on Armenian terrorism in the August 1982 Bulletin, its accompanying note, nor footnotes were intended as statements of policy of the United States. Nor did they represent any change in U.S. policy. An Editor's Note to this effect was included in the April 1983 issue of the Bulletin.

We hope this reaffirmation addresses your questions.

Sincerely,

Robert C. McFarlane

The Honorable
George Deukmejian
Governor of California
Sacramento, California

DECLASSIFIED
NLS F97-066/9 #2
BY: CU, NARA, DATE 3/26/06

TAB
B

Dear George,

I understand that you and others in the Armenian-American community are concerned over our position on a Congressional resolution designating April 24 as a national day of remembrance of man's inhumanity to man.

I deeply sympathize with all those who suffered during the terrible days of 1915. My heart goes out to them and to their families, who continue to live in the shadow of the intense feelings aroused by these tragic historical events.

At the same time, we must remain sensitive to the modern phenomenon of international terrorism, which has taken on an increasingly ugly role in world affairs and is a major concern of our Administration. Mindful of the climate in which terrorism thrives, the Department of State is concerned, as am I, that Congressional action highlighting the events of 1915 could unintentionally encourage extremist groups which have carried out terrorist attacks against the Turkish government and its people. We are also concerned over the potential broader foreign policy implications of such a resolution.

I appreciate your personal interest and delicate position. Please let me assure you that our position is in no way intended to overlook or condone the tragic historical events which befell the Armenian people.

Sincerely,

Ronald Reagan

The Honorable
George Deukmejian
Governor of California
Sacramento, California

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

May 31, 1984

6/11
Bud:
See last PP.
Can we do?
JAB

MEMORANDUM FOR JAMES A. BAKER, III

FROM: LEE L. VERSTANDIG *lee*
SUBJECT: ARMENIAN-AMERICAN CONCERN

The relationship between the Administration and the Armenian-Americans has now become a significant political issue that appears to be extending beyond the Armenian community to Greek-American and Jewish communities as well.

Governor George Deukmejian (R-CA) met with me last week during the Western Governors' Association conference and again raised the Armenian issue which he believes is becoming a major political embarrassment for the Administration. His concern stems from the lack of follow-up promised by the President at last December's Oval Office meeting with the Governor and leaders of the Armenian-American community.

During that very congenial meeting the Governor, citing the Armenian Genocide of 1915-23, expressed grave concern about a footnote to an article printed in the August, 1982 State Department Bulletin, which said: "... the Department of State does not endorse allegations that the Turkish Government committed a genocide against the Armenian people."

The President indicated that he was unaware of the State Department disclaimer until that time but promised the Governor he would "follow-up."

I have repeatedly asked NSC to "follow-up" on that matter to enable me to get back to the Governor.

In early April the Governor personally called me inquiring about the "follow-up." My repeated urgings of NSC received no response.

Soon thereafter, the Governor wrote to the President requesting a resolution and/or proclamation commemorating April 24, 1984 as a National Day of Remembrance in recognition of the Armenian Genocide. The letter also expressed regret that a resolution was not passed in Congress due to State Department opposition. In order to solicit a response to the Governor's letter, it was forwarded to NSC and State for reply.

Finally, NSC suggested a response from me that I found to be untimely. Upon learning that the Governor was preparing to call the President directly about the request, I telexed the attached memo and materials to Mike Deaver at the Western White House. Note that I recommended Bud McFarlane call the Governor in response to his letter and provide an explanation of the situation.

Bud did talk with the Governor. However, the Governor continues to be concerned.

During my conversation at the Western Governors' Association meeting, Governor Deukmejian reemphasized his feelings that it is extremely important that the President reaffirm his "strong sense of commitment" on this matter. The President issued a statement during the 1980 campaign (April 15) and signed a proclamation on April 27, 1981. The Governor noted that both Walter Mondale and Gary Hart have released statements this year recognizing the Armenian Genocide of 1915-23.

Since my meeting with the Governor, the State Department has indicated in a draft letter prepared for Secretary Shultz, that State acknowledges that it retracted that footnote in a Bulletin issued after August 1982.

Given the sensitivity of the issue with Armenians and other significant ethnic groups, I recommend we review our statements with a view toward clarifying the President's position on this matter.



State of California

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE
SACRAMENTO 95814

AGE DEUKMEJIAN
GOVERNOR

April 13, 1984

The Honorable Ronald Reagan
President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Each year on April 24, Armenians throughout the world commemorate the Armenian Genocide of 1915-23. Your eloquent statement of April 15, 1980 and your reference to the Armenian tragedy in proclamation 4838 last year demonstrated to the community your strong sense of commitment to remembrance of such crimes against humanity in order to prevent the recurrence.

During the recent memorable meeting in your office, the delegation of Armenian-Americans were delighted and grateful with your continuing support for not only recognition of the Genocide but more importantly your genuine interest in resolving the crisis which has lingered for far too long between the Armenian and Turkish people.

It had been the fervent hope of the Armenian-American community that the House and Senate resolutions calling for designation of April 24, 1984 as a National Day of Remembrance of man's inhumanity to man would have been enacted and that you would then issue a proclamation in recognition of this most solemn day. I regret to relate that I have been advised that the resolutions did not pass in either branch and that the failure of these resolutions was due in large measure to a campaign of the State Department in opposition.

I would like every American, every American of Armenian descent to realize what I know to be the case: that opposition to this legislation did not reflect your views. Consequently, I respectfully request that you issue a proclamation on April 24 of this year recognizing this tragic historical event with the hope that the world will never experience another genocide.

Most cordially,

George
George Deukmejian

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Date 8/13/84

TO: JIM BAKER
BUD MCFARLANE
ED DERWINSKI

FROM: THE VICE PRESIDENT

I hope we can clear this matter up. The President, in my view, should not be positioned in retreat from where he was on this issue.

Attachment



GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

July 30, 1984

Dear George:

MSA

Attached is a copy of a recent editorial comment which appeared in the Armenian (english-language) newspaper, The California Courier.

The columnist, Mr. George Mason, a lawyer-stockbroker with Bear Stearns, is the owner and publisher of this weekly paper.

I am sending it along to you, because it describes, in a brief article, exactly what is happening among Armenian-Americans and especially those who are Republicans.

Most cordially,

George

Attachment

The Honorable George Bush
Vice President of the
United States
The White House
Washington D.C. 20500

From the desk of

GOVERNOR GEORGE DEUKMEJIAN

EDITORIAL

THIS & THAT



By George Mason

G.O.P. LOSING

The Republicans are losing the support of countless conservative Armenian Americans. I fear that they may never win such people back because of the depth of their feeling about this issue. It hurts Armenians even more that it is President Reagan who allows such a state of affairs. Reagan had been supported by Armenians way back when he ran for Governor of California and had always professed sympathy and understanding for the the Armenian plight.

Yes, I am a Republican and I continue to support President Reagan. I think he is an excellent leader of the free world and a good man. I feel terrible that he is losing the support of the Armenian Americans who are so closely allied with the policies he espouses — free enterprise, individualism and a commitment to national defense.

As strongly as I support the Republicans, however, I can't sit through another of these funerals — hear about the horrible sufferings perpetrated by the Turks, then overlook the fact that our government refuses to acknowledge such an outrageous event.

Certainly the Turks will be offended if the U.S. acknowledges the historical fact of the genocide. But how much more does America lose as a nation by refusing to do so. President Reagan must realize that the State Department is worried only about its relationship with Turkey. He must worry about the image the U.S. projects, the impact of his policies upon loyal Americans and political supporters, and being consistent with his former promises and declarations. Finally, he should realize that if the Turks are offended, they will quickly get over it. They want our aid and our support. But the Armenian Americans who are offended may never be able to forgive him. In the long run the loss of their political support may be more costly to the country than the temporary irritation of the Turks.

TO: LEE VERSTANDIG

FROM: KEN KHACHIGIAN AND GREG KAHWAJIAN
CALIFORNIA GOVERNOR'S OFFICE
(916) 324 - 3622

STATEMENT ON THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

April 15, 1980

*2 copies
sent*

65 years ago, one of the greatest tragedies in the annals of recorded history occurred when one and a half million innocent Armenian men, women and children were massacred in the shadow of Mt. Ararat.

Their only "crime" was their century old dedication to live their lives as free Armenians professing their Christian beliefs in a home land that had previously dazzled Asia minor with its prominence and power.

To this day, the Armenian diaspora is recovering from the blood bath of 1915. Armenians in Lebanon, Turkey and other parts of the Middle East are still suffering from ancestral hatreds and discrimination. Armenian freedom fighters in the Armenian SSR are still anguishing in prisons and asylums and in this country, the Armenian cause is still only dimly understood.

The 1980's must be that period when the voices of Americans of Armenian ancestry are heard in the councils of government. It must be that period when America and its allies throughout the free world resolve that the tragedy of 1915 never again be repeated. I join with the American-Armenian community in solemn remembrance of the martyrs of 1915.

Ronald Reagan

Proclamation 4838 of April 22, 1961

Days of Remembrance of Victims of the Holocaust

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

The Congress of the United States established the United States Holocaust Memorial Council to create a living memorial to the victims of the Nazi Holocaust. Its purpose: So mankind will never lose memory of that terrible moment in time when the awful spectre of death camps stained the history of our world.

When America and its allies liberated those haunting places of terror and sick destructiveness, the world came to a vivid and tragic understanding of the evil it faced in those years of the Second World War. Each of those names—Auschwitz, Buchenwald, Dachau, Treblinka and so many others—became synonymous with horror.

The millions of deaths, the gas chambers, the inhuman crematoria, and the thousands of people who somehow survived with lifetime scars are all now part of the conscience of history. Forever must we remember just how precious is civilization, how important is liberty, and how heroic is the human spirit.

Like the genocide of the Armenians before it, and the genocide of the Cambodians which followed it—and like too many other such persecutions of too many other peoples—the lessons of the Holocaust must never be forgotten.

As part of its mandate, the Holocaust Memorial Council has been directed to designate annual Days of Remembrance as a national, civic commemoration of the Holocaust, and to encourage and sponsor appropriate observances throughout the United States. This year, the national Days of Remembrance will be observed on April 26 through May 3.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby ask the people of the United States to observe this solemn anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi death camps, with appropriate study, prayers and commemoration, as a tribute to the spirit of freedom and justice which Americans fought so hard and well to preserve.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 22nd day of April, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-one, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and fifth.

RONALD REAGAN

★★ AMERICA
for MONDALE

May 31, 1984


Dear Friends:

On May 28th, Armenians all over the world celebrated Armenian Independence Day. The Armenian people have a long and varied history. Their greatest trial came during the "Era of Massacres", a 25-year period between 1895 and 1920. Before 1914, there were more than 2 million Armenians in Turkey. By 1920, scarcely 100,000 remained, with another half million scattered throughout the world.

This devastation of an entire people went largely ignored, and in time was almost totally forgotten. But we must not forget. The Armenian community, together with Congressman Tony Coelho, have successfully gathered 230 Congressional co-sponsors for House Joint Resolution 247, which would designate April 24, 1984 a National Day of Remembrance of Man's Inhumanity to Man, a commemoration to all victims of genocide.

In the past months, the Reagan Administration has attempted to block passage of the Coelho Bill, which even prompted a letter of protest from California Governor George Deukmejian. I call on the administration not to deny the Armenian community as well as other victims of genocide, a peaceful outlet for the emotional trauma their people have suffered. Man's Inhumanity to Man has been tragically demonstrated throughout history. Rather than burying the past and robbing it of its lessons, let us learn from it. Only then can we prevent such tragedy from ever occurring again.

Sincerely,


Walter F. Mondale

Dear George:

I appreciate the concerns you have expressed recently regarding the need for a continued sense of commitment to remembrance of the genocide against the Armenian people nearly 70 years ago. I can assure you of my own personal commitment, and that of this Administration, to such a goal.

The Armenian genocide was one of the greatest tragedies of history, a time when 1½ million innocent men, women, and children were massacred in their ancient and noble homeland.

Those Armenians who survived were dispersed throughout the Middle East and elsewhere in the world. Some went to the Soviet Union where they continued to suffer from religious persecution and other forms of official harrassment. Many also came to this country, where we have seen Armenian-Americans excel in virtually every field of endeavor. They have been vibrant and vital members of our community, respected public servants, and have generally enriched our national heritage by remembering and preserving their own.

The memory of that terrible genocide suffered by the Armenian people still burns in our hearts, for unless we remember such tragedies, we risk their repetition. Indeed, the world's attitude toward the Armenian genocide may well have encouraged the Holocaust that began only decades later. We are thus resolved that the lessons of 1915, and subsequent horrors, will be remembered and observed.

Perhaps most importantly, though, we must recognize that the key lesson to be learned is that violence against innocent people, regardless of cause or grievance, is unacceptable to the civilized world today just as it was in 1915, and must be condemned. Only by doing so can we truly honor the memory of those Armenians who died so long ago.

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