

## **Money spent by the Armenian Lobby in America (USA/ Armenia)**

In 1994 alone, the Armenian Assembly of America has spent \$7,000,000, most of it on lobbying the congress.

<http://www.info-turc.org/article2225.html>

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While the Americans were waging their war of independence in 1780, figs from Izmir and other Anatolian produce were advertised in American papers. The first American ship touching waters was named Grand Turk, and set to sail off Salem port in 1782. This ship carried produce to the New England harbors in the 1790’s. American trade ships visited Istanbul in 1786, Izmir in 1797, and Iskenderiye (Alexandria) in 1800. First trade agreement between America and Turkey was signed on May 7, 1830 (most favored nation status).

The American traders used the Armenian merchants to reach the goods of Eastern Anatolia, because Greeks were effective only in Western Anatolia. Armenians greatly profited from this activity and got rich for organizing the network of tradesmen all around Turkey. Turks at this time were the only ones doing mandatory military duty for 5 years and longer in time of war.

America targeted Anatolia as a trade heaven from 1797-1811. After 1819 they saw its potential for religious missionary activity. America’s missionary organization targeting foreign countries, “American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mission (ABCFM)” was founded in Boston in 1810, and targeted Turkey in 1819. Armenians of Turkey started to immigrate to America as early as 1810.

According to Armenian author Mark Malhasian the ABCFM representatives arrived in Anatolia in 1820. First they tried to convert the Muslims into Christians, later gave up on them, and targeted the Christian population of Eastern Anatolia (the Nasturians, Greeks, Assyrians, and especially Armenians). Malkasian further states that the ABCFM Boston secretary Judson Smith quoted in 1893 ‘Thanks God, we were able to reach all villages and towns all over Anatolia, from Chanakkale to the Mediterranean Coast, the Russian border, and from the Black Sea to Syria.’ American missionaries bragged about their activities surpassing all other forms of activity in Anatolia.

The ABCFM was so successful in Turkey that by 1893, they had founded 624 schools and 436 prayer homes. There were 1317 missionaries working in Turkey, and they had distributed 3 million Bibles, and 4 million other books in Anatolia. They had spent more than 10 million dollars by 1893. This was a huge sum with 1893 standards.

Missionaries started to send Armenian students to America in 1840 ; mostly to study theology. Later they started to send some of the students to study in other universities like Yale and Princeton. The number of Armenian students who left Turkey for America and stayed there in the year 1890 was 70. The first group thus settled in America is the most educated ; however they were also raised with hate for the Turks. Though small in number this elite group of Armenians was very effective in creating anti-Turkish sentiments in America.

The second group of Armenians to reach America from Turkey engaged in small businesses. They were not educated like the first group. Some were educated by the missionaries for one or two years, but most were used by the missionaries for jobs like mail delivery, or as servants. This group used Turkish antagonism to advertise their trade. Their hatred for the Turk was passed from father to son and became like a second nature to Armenian personality.

The third group came in the 1890's. Peasants and farmers started to arrive in large numbers. This upset both the American and the Ottoman governments. America did not want to accept people without thorough health examination ; Ottomans did not want certain areas of their land left unpopulated. So, they put restrictions to stop the immigration of Armenians in large numbers. This created a new group of Armenians who traded in human trafficking. In spite of all restrictions 12,000 Armenians immigrated to America from Anatolia between 1890 and 1900. According to R. Mirak, between 1869-1890 1,401 and from 1890-1895 5,500 Armenians immigrated to America. Armenians were enchanted by the land of opportunities that the Protestant Missionaries spoke of. The first immigrants intended to come back and improve living standards for their relatives at home, but they never came back. Their exodus continued after 1901 and especially after declaration of 2nd Tazminat. Their numbers reached 3,300 in 1908, 5,500 in 1910 and 9,355 in 1913.

Before the start of World War I, the Armenian colony in America reached 50,000. After 1915 25,000 Armenians came to America. In 1916 there were 16,000 Armenians in New York - most of them settled in Manhattan writes the daily newspaper Agos printed in Istanbul. In 1924 100,000 Armenians headed to America from Soviet Russia and Turkey.

Manuel Sarkissian mentions in his book called "A Modern History of Transcaucasian Armenia" printed in Germany in 1975, on page 310 ; that in 1939 around 100,000 Armenians lived in Iran, 175,000 in Syria and Lebanon, 75,000 in France, and 200,000 in America. In 1975 their numbers in America reached 350,000-400,000.

Roots of Armenian lobby is one century old. The Hinchak Commity founded in Cenevre in 1887 targeted Turkish land. Their aim was to entice the Armenians living on Ottoman soil for rebellion to form a socialist Armenian State there. The Ramgavar Party founded in Istanbul in 1908 showed similar tendencies. The Tashnak Party and the Hinchak Committee's branch in America were founded in the 1890's. They formed many sub-sections in short time and bombarded the public with anti-Turkish propaganda sometimes secretly and sometimes in the open. These committees have collected money from the Armenian immigrants in America and organized open rallies. In America 36 Tashnak Committes were founded in 1903, 48 in 1907, and 77 in 1914. The Hinchaks gathered 1,500 trained martyrs to their ranks. Thus the first Armenian lobby was formed.

Senator Newton Blanchard from Louisiana on December 3, 1894 carried the Armenian uprising in Bitlis to the Senate floor in America. This was followed by the Armenian resolution on December 3, 1894 and the external affairs committee decision on January 22, 1896. After the Adana uprising in 1909 the Armenian lobby activities in America hit the roof. Two priests named M. Bagdararian and S. S. Yenovkian on April 27, 1909 sent a telegram to the American President William Taft in the name of three Protestant Churches of Boston. A letter was also sent by a group of Episcopalian Church priests claiming to represent 12 million people on May 6th. On May 7th a protest meeting was held in Fresno California. Their decision was mailed to the White House with the signature of their Mayor Chester Howell. On May 10th 1909 a group called the American Friends of Armenians (founded in 1905 in Illinois) gathered a meeting and mailed their decision to the President. The New York Armenians held a meeting on May 8 and mailed it to President William Taft signed by the meeting chairman A. Agrazian. In New Jersey on May 14, 4 priests were selected to write down the feelings of the National Congregation of Churches to be mailed to the President. On May 17, Sacramento, Virginia and Richmond Armenians letter signed by 50 people was sent to the President. On June 18th a letter signed by M. G. Papazian, M. G. Benneyan, and H. M. Dadorian was mailed to the President in the name of the Armenian Evangelical Alliance of America. This kind of bombardment of letters to the Congress, the White House and Secretary of State continued non-stop all

year round. The 30,000 pages of documents the Armenians claim as evidence of their genocide compose of these letters.

The first anti-Turkish lobbying effort in America was crowned with the May 9, 1916 decision of the Senate, and the May 11, 1920 decision. A lull of 55 years was observed due to Turkey's importance as a NATO member. However, similar decisions found their way to the Senate Floor in 1975 (with Turkish interference in Cyprus). The Greek lobby has always sided with the Armenian members of the Congress. Now, the Kurdish Groups are following suit.

Hundreds of Armenian lobby groups were founded in America. The total number is staggering when considering they all have branches in all corners of the land. Excluding the religious groups the number of Armenian establishments is 1046. With the religious groups this number reaches 1228. The aim of all these establishments is making anti-Turkish propaganda besides protecting Armenian identity and culture.

The Armenian population in America is estimated between 800,000 and 1 million. However, their representation in the Congress is far beyond proportion. They have been living in America for over a century and that they share the same religion are important factors.

The Nixon letter, and the Mondale efforts to blame Turkey for the American Youth's drug addiction created disappointment among the Turks. When the Turkish Government interfered in 1974 to undo the coup efforts in Cyprus to unite the island with Greece, the American Congress slapped Turkey with an arms embargo. All of these negative developments since 1970 gave the Greek and the Armenian lobby a wrong signal like they could use America to fight their wars with Turkey. Greece and the Greek Cypriot Governments did not hold any effort or money to increase their lobbying efforts on the American Congress. They also sided with all enemies of Turkey, like the PKK and the Armenians of Lebanon.

If we take a look at some of the major Armenian Lobbying Group Activities :

Armenian Assembly of America(AAA) aims at educating Armenians about their unproven genocide, increasing aid sent to Armenia, and improving Congressional contact for Armenians. Since 1978 they have been funding 10 weeks of summer internship for at least 30 Armenian American students of high school level in Washington DC. They inform about their lobbying activities through publishing like Daily News Report from Armenia, Armenian This Week, Assembly This Week, and Monthly Digest of News from Armenia.

Armenian National Committee (ANC): Aims to provide political grassroots organization to form coordination between establishments. Besides improving Armenian social rights, they have devoted themselves to carry out antagonistic activities against Turkey. They recommend which political candidates to sponsor during election time at the federal, state, and county level. Besides their most important publishing Transcaucas they publish statements for the Armenian Community in general.

ANC Eastern Region has been active since 1918. They aim at teaching the non-Armenians about their culture including their unproven genocide. Their publication is the ANC Newsletter.

ANC Western Region was founded in 1890. This grassroots organization specializes in organizing quick action on matters pertinent to Armenians. Since they work with 14 branches that organize youth activities they have a strong base. They have a daily radio program and they participate in Horizon TV network. They provide travel opportunities to Washington DC for young Armenian Americans to teach them the ins and outs of lobbying. They also prepare report cards for the American Congressmen based on how much they sponsor the Armenian causes.

Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF) aims at reviving the Sevres Agreement which was nullified after the successful military operation of the Turks under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal. The Lozan agreement

replaced the Sev. Armenia to this day has not accepted the Lozan Kars or Gumri Treaties which established Turkey's eastern borders.

Hunchakian Social Democratic Party of Eastern USA aims only at creating Turkish animosity world wide.

National Armenian American Republic Council (NAARC) selects candidates for the Armenian caucus during the election campaigns. They also lobby with local and congressional politicians to improve awareness about Armenia's needs.

One thing in common with all the Armenian lobby groups is their animosity towards anything Turkish. They play the victim role to hide their aggression over Azeri and Turkish land.

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Their activities involve recognition of their so-called genocide in the American and other parliaments throughout the world. Without going to court, they want to force Turkey to accept their theory of genocide and extract a forced apology. Their ultimate aim is to establish a Western Armenia on Turkish soil.

They coach American congressmen to give speeches defending the Armenian claims prior to April of each year. Most congressmen mention this fact in their speeches. For instance Senator Levin on April 24, 1990 ". . . Last Saturday and Sunday I was honored with the company of prominent Armenians from the Greater Detroit Area . ." Senator Mc Govern on April 22, 1998 mentions that he met with 60 Armenian Holocaust survivors and spoke with 14 of them.

Another frequently used method is inviting congressmen to Armenia. On their return most representatives tell sob stories and beg for aid for Armenia. For example Senator Pell after his trip in 1990 to Soviet Armenia explained on the Senate Floor how pitiful condition the Armenian refugees were in. These representatives sometimes read a letter from their constituency as if it is evidence of some sort. Sometimes they refer to a news paper article assuming it is factually correct.

In spite of all these efforts the American congress has not accepted their claims, because Turkey was a necessary ally in the area. Now that the Kurdish Peshmerge pose an alternative to Turkey in the region we will see how long the American bias to Armenian lobbying will extend.

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