

“The Truth Will Out: Boyajian on Armenia and Calley on My Lai”
Raising Sand Radio (www.RaisingSandRadio.org)

Host: Susan Galleymore

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Forty years after the massacre at My Lai, Lt. Calley apologies for his role there. This reiterates Shakespeare's view that, "the truth will out."

Armenian American David Boyajian continues this theme as he discusses the significance of whistleblower Sibel Edmonds recent deposition. While Edmonds is still under a gag order, Boyajian puts her claims into perspective as he reviews US interests in the strategic region around Armenia, Turkey, Georgia, Russia and the various political allies in play.

Transcript:

[MUSIC plays for 40 seconds]

GALLEYMORE: Welcome to another edition of Raising Sand Radio. I'm your host, Susan Galleymore with DC Talks' music, "The Truth," from the album "Supernatural." The theme of this week's show is The Truth. What goes around comes around. Or to take a more classical version, the truth will out. Let me put that phrase in context. It comes, of course, from Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice. Lancelot says, "Well, old man, I will tell you the news of your son. Give me your blessings. Truth will come to light. Murder cannot be hid long. A man's son may, but at the length truth will out."

Today we'll spend most of our hour with Armenian American activist and writer David Boyajian commenting on the August 8th deposition of whistleblower Sibel Edmonds, The truth will out. First though, this Sunday's premier mainstream newspaper, the New York Times, presented a headline that asked, "Could Afghanistan Become Obama's Vietnam?" This is not something new. The theme has been floating around for some time now. But this article went on to suggest that Obama's presidency ought perhaps to be compared with that of Lyndon B. Johnson. To be sure, the LBJ model, a president who aspired to reshape America at home while fighting a losing war abroad, is one that haunts Mr. Obama's White House as it seeks to salvage Afghanistan while enacting an expensive domestic program. Afghanistan, of course, is not exactly Vietnam. At its peak, the United States had about 500,000 troops in Vietnam compared with about 68,000 now set for Afghanistan. Most of those fighting in the '60s were draftees as opposed to today's volunteer soldiers. Vietnam, therefore, reached deeper into American society,

touching more homes and involving more unwilling participants. But the politics of the two seems to evoke comparisons. Just as Mr. Johnson believed he had no choice but to fight in Vietnam to contain Communism, Mr. Obama last week portrayed Afghanistan as a bulwark against international terrorism. And I quote, "This is not a war of choice," Obama told the Veterans of Foreign Wars at their convention in Phoenix. "This is a war of necessity. Those who attacked America on 9/11 are plotting to do so again. If left unchecked the Taliban insurgency will mean an even larger safe haven from which Al Qaeda could plot to kill more Americans."

Then just last week on August 22 in Columbus, Georgia, former lieutenant William Calley of the infamous My Lai massacre stood in front of a gathering at the Kiwanis Club and spoke publicly for the first time about that massacre in Vietnam on March 16 in 1968. Forty years later Mr. Calley said, "There is not a day that goes by that I do not feel remorse for what happened that day in My Lai. I feel remorse for the Vietnamese who were killed, for their families, for the American soldiers involved and their families. I am very sorry."

The massacre began when men of Charlie Company, under the command of Calley, opened fire on civilians during a search and destroy mission in My Lai and neighboring villages. The targets of the killings were mainly old men, women and children, all unarmed, as most younger members of the community were working in the fields. The exact toll of the massacre still remains in dispute, but U.S. estimates suggest that between 347 and 504 unarmed civilians were massacred that day. Mr. Calley, now 66, was a young Army lieutenant when a court martial at nearby Fort Benning convicted him of murder in 1971 for killing 22 civilians during the massacre of 500 men, women, and children in Vietnam. Although a commission of inquiry recommended charges should be brought against 28 officers and two noncommissioned officers, Calley was the only U.S. soldier convicted over the killings at My Lai. He was sentenced to life in prison, and this was later reduced to house arrest by President Nixon. After his release, Mr. Calley stayed in Columbus and worked at a jewelry store before he moved to Atlanta a few years ago. He has shied away from publicity and routinely turned down journalists' requests for interviews about My Lai. A survivor of the killings said he welcomed Calley's public apology for his role in the atrocity. Speaking from Vietnam, Van Tran Cong, director of a small museum at My Lai told AFP by telephone, "It's a question of the past, and we accept his apologies, although they come too late. However, I prefer that he send his apologies to me in writing or by email." Mr. Cong, who saw his mother and brothers killed in the massacre, said, "I want him to come back and see things here. Maybe he has now repented for his crimes and his mistakes committed more than 40 years ago."

In the past Raising Sand radio show, we interviewed Deborah Nelson, author of "The War Behind Me," and we learned that, in fact, My Lai was only the most publicized of the atrocities that occurred in Vietnam. In my own research, presented in my book "Long Time Passing: Mothers Speak About War and Terror," I found that there is a historic pattern that occurs in war and combat when fear, anger, and power easily coalesce into atrocities. The way to avoid these sorts of events, I believe, is to find

other non-violent ways to resolve the drive for resources that quite often are behind war. You can find my book, “Long Time Passing: Mothers Speak About War and Terror,” on the Raising Sand Radio website. That’s RaisingSandRadio.org. It’s also available on Amazon and other online bookstores.

So today we’ll continue with this theme, and we’ll talk with David Boyajian, who spoke with me on the phone from Boston.

David, it’s great to have you back with us.

BOYAJIAN: Thank you, Susan.

GALLEYMORE: You’re a Boston resident - Boston, Massachusetts - and you’re a writer and longtime activist in the Armenian American community. We most recently had you on with us talking about the Anti-Defamation League denying the Armenian holocaust. Today we’re going to go back to the region of Armenia and the region around there. We’re going to be using Sibel Edmonds as a focus point and talk about all sorts of interesting things that are going on in the region. So let me first remind our listeners that Sibel Edmonds was born in Azerbaijani Iran and moved to Turkey and then to the U.S. where she worked as a translator for the FBI, where she was able to listen in on a lot of really sensational information. In 2001, she was offered another position, and she declined based on what she was hearing and later ended up becoming a whistleblower. At that point, she was fired by the FBI, who she in turn sued. But at the time George Bush’s administration smothered her lawsuit under the State Secrets Privilege act. So let’s talk a little bit about Sibel Edmonds and what she learned and launch our discussion from there.

BOYAJIAN: She was deposed, that is, questioned by a lawyer in front of the Ohio Elections Commission. The reason this happened is a Congressional candidate by the name of David Krikorian, an Armenian American, ran against the incumbent Cincinnati Congressman Jean Schmidt, and she is a major recipient of Turkish campaign funds. And David Krikorian, during the last Congressional campaign against her, which he lost, charged that she had taken what he called “blood money” from Turkish individuals in return for being against the Armenian genocide resolution in Congress. So after the election she won, and after David Krikorian announced he was going to run against her again in the upcoming Congressional election, she brought him before the Ohio Elections Commission and said that he had made false charges against her in regard to the Turkish money she took. So, since this involves Turks and Turkish money, David Krikorian’s lawyer, Mark Geragos, the well-known L.A. attorney, decided to bring in Sibel Edmonds, because as you mentioned earlier when she listened to secret FBI recordings when she was a translator in 2001, she came upon what she says was a Turkish network of spying inside the United States in which also public officials would be bribed to come along and take the Turkish side against the Armenian genocide resolution and so forth. So in order to buttress his contention that Jean Schmidt had taken blood money, as I say, David Krikorian and his lawyer brought in Sibel Edmonds. Now, she is under a gag order by the Federal courts and the Department of Justice. So her deposition has not been made public.

She was videotaped and audiotaped. But that has not been made public. But it seems that she did make some pretty amazing revelations there. And as a result Jean Schmidt, the Congresswoman from Cincinnati, has dropped four of the charges against David Krikorian. We sort of have to wait and see now what's going to take place.

GALLEYMORE: Do you think that we'll learn anything more about this, we the public?

BOYAJIAN: Well, the answer is yes. I think we've already learned a few details that have leaked out. Sibel Edmonds claims that there is a Congresswoman, I believe she might be from Illinois, but don't know her name. Sibel Edmonds says that she is married and has children and that she was approached by a female agent for the ATC, the American Turkish Council, a trade group, and that the Congresswoman had an affair with this Turkish woman, and it was videotaped, and the Congresswoman has been blackmailed as a result and opposes the Armenian genocide resolution. Now whether that's true or not we don't know, because Sibel Edmonds is still under a gag order. She can't reveal all this information. So that's one of the things that has been leaked so far.

GALLEYMORE: Then the Vanity Fair article about a year ago actually draws a picture of a triangle including other cases like the Valerie Plame case and the Larry Franklin case and says that these are all somehow connected.

BOYAJIAN: Yes. That Vanity Fair article by David Rose was in 2005, and it's a pretty far-ranging article. If you drew this as a flow chart it would be quite complicated, but in a nutshell what seems to be taking place, what Sibel Edmonds claims, is that the neoconservatives, people like Doug Feith, Larry Franklin, members of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, along with Turks, are involved in some sort of illegal venture to bribe Congressmen [and] to steal nuclear secrets from the United States. It's also curious you mention the Valerie Plame case. Of course, Valerie Plame was a CIA agent, and she was outed probably by - he was convicted - Lewis Libby, who was another neocon. He was an assistant to Vice President Cheney. Valerie Plame herself was a CIA agent who worked for a CIA front called Brewster and Jennings. The purpose of that front was to investigate illegal nuclear proliferation taking place. And it was investigating Turkey as being one of the parties that might be conducting illegal activities in the United States, spying and so forth. What we have is this kind of huge confluence of neocons, Turkey, bribery, nuclear espionage. And it's quite complicated, but they all seem to intersect.

GALLEYMORE: And so denying the Armenian holocaust is just another one of the many things that are falling into this grab bag.

BOYAJIAN: That's correct. Turkey is very much against the U.S. Congress passing a resolution against the Armenian genocide. And we know that it has enlisted some - not all - some of the top Jewish American lobbying groups, such as the Anti-

Defamation League and the American Jewish Committee, in this venture. And this has been really common knowledge for years. It's been written about. It hasn't appeared in the mainstream press all that much. So here again you have this confluence of Turkey enlisting the pro-Israel lobby and the neocons like Doug Feith and so forth are very close to the Jewish lobby and they're very close to Turkey. For example, let's take Marc Grossman. Marc Grossman was formerly U.S. Ambassador to Turkey. Well, Sibel Edmonds has implicated him in nuclear espionage. Supposedly he's been funneling secrets out of the country to Turkey, at least he was at one time. This is her contention. Whether it's true or not, I don't know. But this is what she has been saying.

GALLEYMORE: Well, she also implicated the former Speaker of the House, Dennis Hastert. How does he fit into this?

BOYAJIAN: The claim is that Dennis Hastert opposed the Armenian genocide resolution because he was bribed by Turkish campaign contributors. That hasn't been proved. We don't know that. But we do know that after he left office he went to work for a lobbying firm in Washington that now has Turkey as a client. In fact, this is a very common happenstance. Former Speaker of the House [Robert] Livingston did the same thing. He was very much against the Armenian genocide resolution. After he was forced out as Speaker of the House, he joined a firm that lobbies for Turkey.

GALLEYMORE: And then we have Richard Perle and Douglas Feith also involved, neocons involved with the George Bush Administration, involved in a group called the International Advisors, Inc. that's signed up as a foreign agent for Turkey. What does that mean?

BOYAJIAN: Foreign agent means that you are acting on behalf of a foreign government, and you have to register with the Federal government because you're not so much acting as an American anymore in American interests. You're being hired to work for a foreign government. So, in effect, you're an agent.

GALLEYMORE: So it's a lobbying effort also.

BOYAJIAN: That's right.

GALLEYMORE: Now we saw a little while back the conflict in Georgia that John McCain was very bellicose about. Does that fit into this overall picture in this area and the zone of Armenia also?

BOYAJIAN: It does. Georgia is important to the United States because it's sort of a middleman between Turkey on the West and the Republic of Azerbaijan on the East. Azerbaijan has a lot of gas and oil the United States would like to get at and is already getting at. Two pipelines - two major pipelines - in the last several years have been laid from Azerbaijan through Georgia to Turkey. So Turkey is very, very interested in

this because not only does it get oil and gas, but it gets transit fees for these pipelines, too.

GALLEYMORE: And is Turkey the end - the terminal - for this product moving through the pipeline, or are they then shipping it out further say to the United States and so on?

BOYAJIAN: They are shipping it further West to Europe.

GALLEYMORE: Where does Turkey get its oil from?

BOYAJIAN: Well, let's see. Now from Azerbaijan. Iraq does send oil north through Turkey. How much of that is actually used by Turkey and how much is exported, I'm not sure. But Turkey gets the majority of its natural gas from Russia now. The United States does not like that very much, and probably Turkey doesn't like it very much either, because it gives Russia a certain hold over Turkey, because it is able theoretically to shut down that pipeline - that gas pipeline - if it wants. So Turkey is a bit hostage to Russia in that sense.

GALLEYMORE: And with the United States getting bogged down as we say in Afghanistan, what does this mean to the region?

BOYAJIAN: Well, in terms of Afghanistan, you know, that's known as the "good war." And Obama is winding down the war in Iraq, supposedly, and ramping up the war in Afghanistan. But the question is, and this question has been around even in the Bush Administration, is the Afghanistan war about more than the Taliban and catching Osama Bin Laden? And a lot of people think it is, and I think it is. It's about oil, and it's about natural gas, too, in Afghanistan and in the country just north of Afghanistan: Turkmenistan. You see, during the Clinton and Bush administrations, the U.S. was actually negotiating with the Taliban to get gas - natural gas - huge amounts, out of Turkmenistan south through Afghanistan. But Afghanistan's been unstable for a number of years, and, of course, it's currently unstable because of the war. But the Turkmen gas is in the Caspian region. The Azerbaijani gas is in the Caspian region. So the United States is working not just to get Caspian gas and oil out through the West, through Georgia and Turkey, but it's also trying to get it out through the Eastern route. That would be in this case from Turkmenistan down through Afghanistan and probably through Pakistan. Possibly to India. And that's what the U.S. is working on now.

So I don't think it's true that this is just about - the Afghan war is just about - terrorism. That gave the United States an immediate excuse to attack - the 9/11 terrorist attacks, of course. But now that the U.S. is in there, Afghanistan is very central to that region. It's right in the center of an area the United States very much wants to get into.

GALLEYMORE: David, it's true that - well, I don't know - see if you do think this is true, that the United States often uses a pretext to go to war based on what we think of as spreading our value system, our love of freedom, our love of democracy and so forth. And yet underlying that there's quite frequently a resource war, isn't there?

BOYAJIAN: Absolutely. You know, the United States, of course, talks about how backward the Taliban are, that they do not treat their female citizens well and so forth. But the United States was very willing to negotiate with the Taliban, both the Bush and Clinton Administrations, to have a gas line again put from Turkmenistan south through Afghanistan. So when it serves U.S. interests it will work with just about anybody, yes.

GALLEYMORE: Do you think at this point that the administration - the Obama administration, for example - is concerned at all with recognizing the Armenian genocide or is it purely politics - when it's time we'll recognize it, and at this point it's inconvenient to do so?

BOYAJIAN: Well, you know, candidate Obama promised that he would absolutely recognize the Armenian genocide. When he was senator, he said he was in favor of it and would vote for it in the Senate if it came to the floor. He wrote to Armenian American groups during the campaign. He repeatedly said that he would recognize the Armenian genocide, using the word genocide. Also, his advisor, the famous genocide expert, Samantha Power - she also in a YouTube video that people can access very easily - she also promised that a President Obama would absolutely recognize the Armenian genocide. And she had been a friend to Armenians very much. But now that he's President he's gone back on his word. He has not used the so-called "G word," genocide. Partially, he doesn't want to offend Turkey because Turkey is seen as an important country. However, I think it's more than that. I think a lot of this is just plain momentum. Because Turkey really can't do anything against the United States. It can't. The U.S. is a superpower. And, in fact, there have been two Congressional resolutions, in the 1970s and '80s, in the U.S. House, recognizing the Armenian genocide. And President Reagan officially recognized the Armenian genocide in a proclamation, and Turkey did not and could not do anything. So I think Turkey's ability to strike back is really - it's just a bluff on Turkey's part.

GALLEYMORE: Why is it not something that can be recognized and talked about? Why can we not move on from that?

BOYAJIAN: I think Turkey doesn't want to recognize it for a number of reasons. First, nobody wants to admit that they committed a genocide. Second, the founding of the new Turkey in 1923 after the fall of Ottoman Turkey was only possible because Ottoman Turkey committed genocide against Armenians, Assyrians, and Greeks during the First World War. So they basically cleansed Asia Minor - Anatolia - of all the Christians. And that is the only way that an ethnically homogenous Turkish state could be established. Now, to admit the Armenian genocide is to admit that the basis of the Turkish Republic founded in 1923 was founded on genocide. In fact, many of

Ataturk's advisors, cabinet members, and so forth, were members of the Young Turk government a few years before that had committed genocide. So Turkey does not want to open up this Pandora's box. It just wants to keep it shut, tightly shut.

GALLEYMORE: As you mentioned earlier, it's possible for the United States to recognize it. It would be possible for Obama to now reverse the recent actions and go back and recognize it as he has in the past. I wonder why he doesn't do that though.

BOYAJIAN: Well, there's another game going on, Susan. And this goes back to what I said about the United States is trying to penetrate the Caucasus, that is, Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan, in order to get at the oil and gas there, send it out to the West, push Russia out of the region and bring those countries of the region into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, NATO. You see, Georgia and Armenia form a kind of wall between East and West. On the West you have Turkey. On the East you have Azerbaijan. The United States wants to establish these Western-bound pipelines, and it has, but it doesn't want those pipelines to go through Iran or Russia. It regards those countries as adversaries. There are only two countries, therefore, that can serve as hosts for those pipelines. Georgia, which is currently serving as a host, and Armenia, that cannot presently serve as a host. It's a Russian ally and its East/West borders are closed with Turkey and Azerbaijan because Armenians and Azerbaijan fought a war 15 years ago that has still not been resolved, a war over an Armenian region that was inside Azerbaijan called Karabagh. So the United States right now is trying to open those borders. It's been trying for a long time. But there's much more concentration now by the U.S. on opening the Armenian border with Turkey and the Armenian border with Azerbaijan. Armenians did not close those borders, by the way. Those were closed by Turkey and Azerbaijan.

Now, a year ago, the Georgian/Russian war was fought. That cast doubt upon Georgia as a present and future host of Western pipelines. What country is left? Armenia. So the United States is trying to play up more to Armenia now and it's possible that genocide recognition by the U.S. could be part of the formula, although frankly it doesn't look like it right now. It looks like the genocide denial by the Obama Administration, like the Bush Administration, is going to continue.

GALLEYMORE: And then, of course, as you mentioned, there's a lot of pressure by the Israelis to maintain the Holocaust as the only significant genocide.

BOYAJIAN: This is true. Although I have to say that scores and hundreds of Jewish and Israeli scholars have really been quite supportive in this respect. They've acknowledged the genocide, they've published books about it, they've talked about it, they lecture about it. They've been actually quite good. There is a certain jealousy by some Jewish groups and individuals because the Armenian genocide happened before the Jewish genocide, and there is evidence that Hitler used the Armenian genocide as a kind of model for the Jewish genocide. But the other thing that enters into this is that Turkey and Israel are very close. They're almost allies in a sense. They're both friendly with the United States, they both view Arab states and Iran with a great deal

of suspicion. That's kind of brought them together. So Israel itself does not want to recognize the Armenian genocide because it has an alliance with Turkey. And what happened in the 1990's and even before that is that Turkey asked Israel to get certain Jewish American lobbying groups to lobby on behalf of Turkey in the United States, because Turkey felt it didn't have enough lobbying muscle here. So what happened is that groups like the Anti-Defamation League and the American Jewish Committee signed on to oppose Armenian genocide recognition in the United States. So this is kind of a triangle: Turkey, Israel, and some Jewish American lobbying groups all being against Armenians.

GALLEYMORE: And yet at the same time when Gaza was being bombarded so ferociously at the beginning of this year, Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan stood up and was overtly and publicly hostile to the Israelis around that.

BOYAJIAN: Yes, and I believe he even accused Israel of committing genocide. It's very interesting because what Israel did, not matter what you think of the Gaza situation, it threw it back, through leaks. I'm not sure it stated this publicly, but it said people in glass houses shouldn't throw stones. Because Israel knows that Turkey committed genocide against Armenians. Therefore when Turkey hurls the genocide charge against Israel that's when Israel brings out the truth about the Armenian genocide. But it really was a bluff. Israel kind of backed off after a while.

The same thing actually happened, there were riots and a great deal of mayhem and killings, in the Xinjiang province of China against the Uighur Turks some months ago. China cracked down on them. Turkey called that genocide, and the Chinese got angry just as Israel got angry because it said: Look, you, Turkey, have committed genocide. Don't go accusing other people of committing genocide when you yourself have not admitted the Armenian genocide.

GALLEYMORE: At the same time, apparently, there was a lot of unrest going on in Turkey during the Gaza bombardment. The Turks were very upset about that and there was even, as I hear, I don't know how accurate it is, but the news was saying that there was some retaliation against Jews still in Turkey. So some of that may have been political posturing on the part of Erdogan.

BOYAJIAN: Exactly. Appealing to the Muslim street, as they say, in the world in general. But I don't think much of the Muslim world actually buys it, because they know that Turkey and Israel are actually allies. They buy military equipment from each other, their militaries train together, they swap intelligence information. So they know that Turkey is really not a champion of the Muslim people. It's kind of playing this public relations game.

GALLEYMORE: It's almost like a squabble between dysfunctional families, isn't it? Blood is thicker than water. You're still family even though we're going to squabble with you in these certain issues now and again.

BOYAJIAN: That's right. These issues between Turkey and Israel involving Gaza and Palestinians really have not significantly changed the Israeli - Turkish relationship because that relationship is not based on love. The Turkish and Israeli people don't have to love each other or even like each other. These relationships take place at the military level, the economic level, the business level, and the intelligence level. And that has not really been touched. Those are a lot deeper. I'm not even sure to what extent the Islamic government in power in Turkey can affect that right now.

GALLEYMORE: Let me remind our listeners that we're talking with David Boyajian of Boston, Massachusetts. David's a writer and activist and an Armenian American. What does it mean in terms of American politics that our representatives are potentially corrupted in this way, that we've been hearing about through Sibel Edmonds?

BOYAJIAN: Well, it certainly doesn't speak well of Congress. You know, when the Sibel Edmonds story first broke in 2002 it was carried on the 60 Minutes TV program. Since that time, since the Vanity Fair article in 2005, there really hasn't been a lot in the mainstream press. The mainstream press has really let down on this in this respect. In fact, going back to this deposition that Sibel Edmonds gave a few days ago, the mainstream press really has not reported that. Just a few of the non-mainstream web sites have. To answer your question about Congress, Congress did hold hearings in which Sibel Edmonds testified. That was, oh, 2003 or so. They were useful hearings but what happened is the Justice Department came in and basically told Sibel Edmonds she couldn't talk about these things anymore. And Congress just took it lying down. I have not seen anybody in Congress since then really speak up on her behalf. They're certainly able to. I don't think that Federal courts can muzzle the U.S. Congress. They can muzzle Sibel Edmonds, but they can't muzzle the Congress. I just think it's very neglectful of Congress not to do further investigations into this. Actually, the Department of Justice, the Inspector General's office, looked into the Sibel Edmonds case and basically agreed with her charges. Now that report is classified, the full report is. But there's an unclassified version out there also. This whole area bears more looking into by Congress. But I wouldn't hold my breath. You see, the pro-Israel lobby is pretty strong. And the United States is very tied in with the pro-Israel lobby, and it's very tied in with Turkey. Now, if Sibel Edmonds is going to spill the beans on the Israel lobby and the Turkish lobby, then Congress is going to be a bit wary about getting too deeply into that. And it has been, unfortunately.

GALLEYMORE: In this moment in our history here in the United States we're seeing a tremendous distrust of government. Obama is heading in the direction of also people feeling like - even the people that were so excited to vote for him - feeling like he's no longer representing them. We're watching this health care debate, quote/unquote, go on that really is not, in my opinion, going to result in people like me, ordinary Americans, having health care that I can afford anytime soon. There's a tremendous sense of distrust, I think, verging on cynicism around the entire process and that our elected officials are really there for us.

BOYAJIAN: Yes. You know, we Americans are kind of a strange people. Every four years this happens. We have great hopes for our President, and yet when he gets in office for one reason or another he either can't or won't affect the change that people seem to want. I detect more of a desire for change by Obama on the domestic scene, such as health care. But on the foreign policy scene, I don't see a lot of change. He has been more critical of Israel, it is true. But how far he will get in that respect is not clear. He really hasn't changed U.S. policy in the Caucasus, going head to head with Russia over Georgia and trying to penetrate what was formerly Russia's sphere of influence. Not that Russia has a right to that sphere of influence. It doesn't. Those countries are independent and should be able to make their own policies. But the Bush and Obama policies really aren't that much different in the Caucasus, really no different in Afghanistan. There is this overarching quest for gas and oil by the United States, what you referred to as resource wars. And that's bound to continue.

GALLEYMORE: What is it that you think Americans should know most of all, if nothing else? What is essential about the region that Americans should understand?

BOYAJIAN: I think Americans are not really being told the truth about the quest for oil and gas by the United States and how it is leading us into these clashes around the world, such as in the Caucasus, where actually a war between the United States and Russia is possible. I'm not saying I see it on the horizon. I can see American troops that are in Georgia someday clashing with Russian troops there. There's also the war in Afghanistan. As I say, people are being told: oh, this is just about Osama Bin Laden and the Taliban. Well, no, it isn't. It clearly is not. Two Administrations were negotiating with the Taliban over gas and oil. And plus, Afghanistan has a lot of oil and gas. So I think the American people are really being told a lie, and the mainstream media is going along with this. They're going along with this also in the Sibel Edmonds case. Why are they not covering this more? It's a huge story. It's inexplicable.

GALLEYMORE: Yeah. I actually went online recently to do research for this discussion that we're having, and I was not able to find anything that was more recent than 2000 and, there was something in 2005, something in 2006. I had to do very specific searches to come up with just the briefest mention of the deposition that she [Sibel Edmonds] was involved in on August 8th, this month.

BOYAJIAN: Yes. A few websites have news about it. Armenian American media have some good news about it. And if people want to read that, just go to Google. Go to Google News and type in Sibel Edmonds. And up should come a few of the latest articles in the Armenian American press. And if you do that over time if the mainstream media does not cover it, you should see it there. There are some other websites that are covering it a bit: Luke Ryland and Brad's Blog. I think what people can do though, too, people should take responsibility for this, specifically with regard to Sibel Edmonds. What I would advocate is write your local paper. Ask them why they're not covering the Sibel Edmonds case. Write your Congressman. Write your U.S. Senators. Write the President. Just a brief note, and say: Take the gag order off

Sibel Edmonds. Let her speak. Let Congress investigate this, and let's have an independent prosecutor look into these charges.

GALLEYMORE: And also another discussion that I think we could be encouraged to have is why is it such a no-no to talk about these wars as resource wars? Why do they have to be framed in a kind of ideological sense so that Americans will get on board? I mean, Americans are the resource users par excellence. We use more resources than any other country. We surely know that. It doesn't really make a lot of sense for me, at least I don't really understand why we have to be protected from knowing that these wars are resource wars. I mean, it's sort of common sense.

BOYAJIAN: Well, it is, and I think a lot of people know it, but the military industrial complex is quite strong - the oil companies and gas companies are quite strong. You know, I think that Presidents have a hard time admitting that they're going to war because of oil. It just doesn't sound right to say we are going to sacrifice our young people's blood for oil. Probably no matter how you put it, whether you called it a resource war, or you said that it was absolutely necessary for the U.S. to gain these energy supplies in the future otherwise we'd freeze, and so forth - that is admittedly a hard thing for a President to say. So he says to himself: If I can't admit it openly, but I think it's a necessary policy then I'm not going to tell people the truth about this.

GALLEYMORE: And it continues to lead us down a slippery slope though because then when we conduct these wars we can't apologize for using depleted uranium weaponry, or we can't even apologize to the Vietnamese for the contamination of their land. I mean, it really begins to be a very slippery slope that finally results in Americans' really not having a sophisticated understanding of how the world actually functions.

BOYAJIAN: That's right. And I also think, if I may say so, that the U.S. war on terrorism is not just about terrorism. In fact, I think it's a somewhat minor component. The U.S. is using this as an excuse to get into regions like Afghanistan. Admittedly, Al Qaeda is there. But, as I say, it's the oil and gas question. The United States establishes bases in places like Kyrgystan, a former Soviet republic. It says it needs that to fight terrorism, to supply the U.S. military in Afghanistan. It says it needs to establish a small naval force in the Caspian Sea in Baku in order to interdict terrorists who may be coming across the Caspian Sea. This was a program instituted by Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld. A lot of people don't know this. The U.S. comes up with this excuse of terrorism, terrorism. And it's right to fight - it's correct to fight - terrorism, but that's being used as an excuse to establish bases elsewhere.

GALLEYMORE: Yeah, and then that discussion seems to get subverted into something else also, the discussion about the bases. You know, a lot of us on the left like to talk about the empire, for example. It is a form of empire-building. It's just not the form that the British and the French used. But, nevertheless, it is a system of colonies in a way, they're just militarized.

BOYAJIAN: I agree.

GALLEYMORE: And so we end up being a people that needs to be protected from our own, the work that our tax dollars do.

BOYAJIAN: I agree, Susan. I agree completely. I think this war on terrorism, as I say, is really just mainly a cover for geopolitical goals. And what's happening is that the truth is being lost in the process. Americans are being sent to fight and die, and they're being told it's for patriotic reasons. And there are such reasons, but mainly it's about establishing American influence in other parts of the world.

GALLEYMORE: Well, let's talk a little bit about what we are losing in not talking more openly about the Armenian genocide. And Armenians in general, I know there's a large population of Armenians and their descendants in this country that came here due to the conflict and the genocide going on in the region. What don't we know about the Armenian culture that people would be really much richer in knowing?

BOYAJIAN: I think there's been a lot of focus on the genocide, of course. I think that people, like many smaller groups, people don't know them very well. All they hear about is Armenian genocide. But Armenians have a very rich culture going back several thousand years. The first nation to officially convert as a state to Christianity. It's too bad we can't get beyond this genocide issue. But it just looks like it's going to continue for the foreseeable future. I think that actually an acknowledgement of the genocide would be very good for the United States in a foreign policy sense. I think it would help Turkey to come to terms with its past. I think in the end it would help to stabilize the Caucasus, where the U.S. says it has oil and gas interests. Because after all, one of the reasons that Armenia is allied with Russia is that it fears another genocide by Turkey. Now if Turkey hasn't admitted the genocide in the past, of course Armenia is going to be afraid of this, and this is going to have repercussions for the Caucasus. And it has. What the United States is trying to do is sort of bring Turkey and Armenia together. But that's not going to work unless the genocide is acknowledged. Unfortunately, Armenia agreed to some sort of historical commission with Turkey to examine the genocide. This was done under U.S. pressure, and one of the effects of this is that it gave Obama an excuse not to use the word genocide last April during Armenian Genocide Month because he could say: Oh, Armenia and Turkey are negotiating about this, let's just leave them alone to work it out for themselves.

But this issue has been hanging around for a long time. It has to be dealt with. It's not going away.

GALLEYMORE: Armenia at this point is economically strapped. It's difficult to have businesses there. What is the general situation of the people?

BOYAJIAN: Well, Armenia has actually done fairly well considering as a post-Soviet country that it's landlocked, it's been blockaded by Turkey and Azerbaijan. It has taken a hit during this recession, that's true. But actually Armenia has a very large

Diaspora. Armenian Americans, French Armenians, and so forth, and a lot of Armenians in Russia. And what they do is they send money back to their families there, or they give to charitable organizations in Armenia. So this helps the country a lot. Turkey and Azerbaijan thought they were going to bring Armenia to its knees by blockading it and that Armenia would have to give up this fight for the region inside Azerbaijan called Karabagh. That hasn't happened yet. But yes, there is corruption in the country. The election process is highly flawed over there, as in most Soviet countries.

GALLEYMORE: So people from the Diaspora go back as well, go back and visit, go to and fro? Or are people still leaving Armenia? What is the situation with the day to day living?

BOYAJIAN: A lot of Diasporans such as myself have gone over to visit. There is a lot of cultural interchange between the Diaspora and Armenia itself. Some Armenian Americans own businesses over there. But actually much of the business and the industry has been bought up by Russia because Russia wants to control Armenia. It wants to control all of the Caucasus actually. Armenia and Russia are allies. You see, Russia being somewhat authoritarian it still has these imperialist tendencies and so its close relationship with Armenia is not necessarily based on friendship. Sometimes it's just based on force, where Russia goes in, buys up Armenian vital industry because Armenia can't afford to keep running it itself, and that gives Russia a hold over it. Also Russia right now provides most of Armenia's natural gas and controls its nuclear power plant. That may be changing a bit because Armenia's going to get gas from Iran. So Armenia's trying to kind of break out of its straitjacket over there.

GALLEYMORE: And as an Armenian American activist, where is your focus?

BOYAJIAN: One focus, of course, is trying to get the Armenian genocide resolution passed. Another focus is to try to encourage Armenia itself to democratize more, to respect human rights more. We're also asking the U.S. government to stop applying so much pressure on Armenia and start applying it on Turkey. The United States, you see, has been trying to force a solution between Azerbaijan and Armenian over this breakaway region of Karabagh. And the reason it wants to do that is because the United States wants open borders so it can penetrate the region with pipelines. It's not interested in Armenian human rights, or Azerbaijani human rights, for that matter. So what it's doing is really twisting the arms of the participants in these Karabagh negotiations, and I'm afraid it's going to wind up bad for everybody. So that's one of the things we've been concentrating on.

I personally am still involved with a couple of issues. The Anti-Defamation League still has not acknowledged the Armenian genocide forthrightly, and continues to work with Turkey in all sorts of ways to defeat Armenian genocide resolutions. I'm also asking Samantha Power, who is on President Obama's National Security Council but supposedly has just been appointed to be the chief U.S. person in charge of Iraqi refugees - I've asked her to resign - to resign in protest - because President Obama

has not acknowledged the genocide. She promised Armenians that he would. He promised he would. If she's a woman of principle, and I think she is, she will say, "I cannot serve under this Administration anymore. They went back on their word." She, after all, is a genocide scholar. She got a Pulitzer Prize for her book, "A Problem from Hell," in which the first chapter was about the Armenian genocide. So I'm asking - and some other Armenian people are asking - Samantha Power to resign, get out of the Administration so you can speak truthfully again.

GALLEYMORE: And what is your guess? Is this something that she would do?

BOYAJIAN: There's been no formal reply from her yet. It may be a bit more difficult for her to resign because now she married a man last year, Cass Sunstein, who's a very close friend - a longtime colleague - of Obama at the University of Chicago. He's being appointed as a regulatory czar. So it's kind of a family affair. You've got Samantha Power, and you've got her husband Cass Sunstein as part of the Administration. I'm hoping she resigns. She had a baby recently. But we'll just have to wait and see.

GALLEYMORE: David, I want to offer you the opportunity to share whatever it is you would like our listeners to know before we end.

BOYAJIAN: I'd just like to say don't rely on the mainstream media, of course. Go out, read non-mainstream newspapers and magazines, go on the Web, listen to people like Susan Galleymore. In regard to the Sibel Edmonds issue, go to her website, Justacitizen.com. Familiarize yourself with it, write to your Congressman and your local media and say "We want to see the Sibel Edmonds issue covered, and we want to see a Congressional investigation of it, and we want to see a special prosecutor appointed." In terms of Armenian issues, I would just ask that they become educated about this, that they write the President and their Congressmen if they could and ask that the Congress and the President recognize the Armenian genocide and support a fledgling Armenian state in its quest for independence.

GALLEYMORE: David, is there anything else that we should know?

BOYAJIAN: I would like to tell you, Susan, about something, a proclamation, a note to Congress that the White House made, President Bush made on January 22 [of 2008]. And people can find this on the Web. It's called "Message to the Congress Transmitting the Turkey - United States Agreement Concerning Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy." It was issued on January 22, as I say, and it came out just three weeks after an article in the Sunday Times of London. The article in the Sunday Times was titled "For Sale, The West's Deadly Nuclear Secrets," and it talked about something that Sibel Edmonds talked about: how the Turks apparently were conducting some sort of nuclear espionage for several years in the United States, perhaps with the help of Israeli and Pakistan intelligence agencies. What President Bush did in this note to Congress is he effectively pardoned any illegal nuclear

proliferation activities that Turks or Turkish private entities - that's what he called them, Turkish private entities - were conducting in the United States.

GALLEYMORE: Interesting.

BOYAJIAN: So I don't know what business it is of the President to pardon criminal activity, but apparently he did it. This is simply astounding.

GALLEYMORE: And that hasn't been covered very much either, it sounds like.

BOYAJIAN: It hasn't. Although I'm looking at the document. It is right on the Web. "Message to the Congress Transmitting the Turkey - United States Agreement Concerning Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy." What he says here, for example - he uses the terms "Turkish private entities in" ... "nuclear proliferation." He talks about the proliferation activities of Turkish entities. Basically it's a pardon for any criminal activities that have taken place. What Sibel has been claiming is that people like Marc Grossman and others have been involved in facilitating Turks coming to the United States, getting into nuclear facilities, and sending U.S. nuclear secrets out of the country. It's a big story. I guess the media has to cover it, and Congress has to make a big enough fuss about it, in order for people to become concerned.

GALLEYMORE: Well, David, stay in touch with us and keep us abreast of what's happening there because we're one of the few stations that airs issues about the Armenian genocide. I'm glad that we're able to do that. And we can only do it with the help of people like you and other Armenian Americans. So please stay in touch with us.

BOYAJIAN: We're grateful to you, Susan, very much, and we're also grateful to your listeners.

GALLEYMORE: Thanks for David Boyajian, whose writings you can find on the Internet. And that's our show for today. As usual, all views expressed are those of the host and guest and not KZSU or Stanford University. You can contact me directly at Susan@raisingsandradio.org. Join us again next week. We'll go out today with DC Talk doing their piece "The Truth" again from the album "Supernatural."
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