

Turkey Has No Place in the European Union

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By Michael Huffington

Last night on 60 Minutes there was a 14 minute segment about Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople (modern-day Istanbul).

It was an honest look at religious freedom (or lack thereof) inside one of America's military allies. It is a story that should be seen by the leaders of the free world as well as people of faith. The Ecumenical Patriarch of 300,000,000 Orthodox Christians (of which I am one) is similar to the Pope of the Catholic Church. And yet he is treated as a second-class citizen in his own country where he was born. The Orthodox "Vatican" is called the Phanar and it is located on less than an acre of land in the city of Istanbul. There have been so many threats of violence that they have had to use barbed wire and cameras to protect the priest inside the property. The last century has seen the Orthodox Christian population diminish from 2,000,000 in 1900 to less than 4,000 in all of Turkey today. Most were forced out. Yet this geographical area of the world was mostly Christian a thousand years ago.

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