

MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 16, 2017

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Dean Cain, Community Organizations and Leaders to Join Armenian National Committee of America – Glendale Announcement of Americana At Brand Boycott

What: The Armenian National Committee of America - Glendale Chapter will hold a press conference to announce official boycott of the Americana at Brand and Caruso Affiliated. The scheduled press conference and the boycott is based on Caruso Affiliated's utter lack of sensitivity toward the Armenian-American community, its decision to reject billboard space to an Armenian Genocide documentary, "Architects of Denial" calling it "too political.", claiming that the advertisement would violate their "guideline principle," which is to "ensure that everyone in the community feels welcome." and Mr. Caruso's unwillingness to immediately meet with ANCA Glendale to rectify the situation.

When: Thursday, August 17, 2017, 11:00AM

Where: Americana at Brand, On the Green
889 Americana Way #330, Glendale, CA 91210

Who: Armenian National Committee of America – Glendale
Executive Producer of *Architects of Denial*, Mr. Dean Cain
Armenian Youth Federation – Glendale Chapter
Armenian Bar Association
Elected officials, community leaders, and members

Background: The Americana at Brand rejected billboard space to an Armenian Genocide film calling it "too political." The documentary, "Architects of Denial" aims to raise awareness of the Armenian Genocide and human rights violations happening today.

On August 4 and August 8, 2017, ANCA Glendale submitted [letters](#) to The Americana at Brand and Caruso Affiliated requesting an immediate meeting and action to rectify this situation.

On August 9, 2017, ANCA Glendale launched a letter and call in campaign to Americana at Brand and Caruso Affiliated available at www.ancaglendale.org/endthegag. The action alert resulted in over 10,000 emails and phone calls to the management from residents, business owners and customers of the establishment, calling for immediate action.

On August 14, 2017, The Americana at Brand responded to the August 8 ANCA Glendale with an attachment of a [letter](#) sent to Cesares officially rejecting the advertisement space, claiming that the advertisement would violate their "guideline principle," which is to "ensure that everyone in the community feels welcome." The letter blatantly states that they have received comments from "the Turkish Consulate" in regards to the billboard, confirming that a business organization in the city of Glendale has now joined Turkey's genocide denial

campaign and is basing its advertising policy on the desires of a foreign, fascist, dictatorial state with one of the world's worst records of human rights violations.

Yesterday, August 15, 2017, Executive Producers of "Architects of Denial", Montel Williams and Dean Cain released a statement noting "The seriousness of this issue cannot and should not be understated. This is no longer about our movie or an advertisement. This is about vindicating the dignity of the victims and the survivors of a genocide." Complete statement is available at www.ancaglendale.org/montel-cain/

The same evening, dozens of community leaders and members, including ANCA Glendale Chair Artin Manoukian and State Senator Anthony Portantino took to the Glendale City Council to provide powerful testimonies and ask the city to take immediate action in resolving the matter. The Councilmembers ended the oral communication section by condemning Caruso Affiliated's decision and agendaizing the matter for the next city council meeting. The video from the city council meeting is available at www.facebook.com/ANCAGlendale/videos/10155628162177090/

The Armenian National Committee of America - Glendale advocates for the social, economic, cultural, and political rights of the city's Armenian American community and promotes increased civic participation at the grassroots and public policy levels.

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Armenian National Committee of America – Glendale Chapter

PRESS CONFERENCE

THURSDAY AUGUST 17, 2017 | 11:00 AM | THE AMERICANA AT BRAND

AGENDA

MR. ARTIN MANOUKIAN, ANCA GLENDALE CHAIR

MR. DEAN CAIN, EXECUTIVE PRODUCER OF *ARCHITECTS OF DENIAL*

HONORABLE ANTHONY PORTANTINO, CA STATE SENATOR

HONORABLE VARTAN GHARPETIAN, MAYOR OF CITY OF GLENDALE

GARO B. GHAZARIAN, ESQ.

MODERATED BY: ELEN ASATRYAN



Armenian National Committee of America – Glendale Chapter

ANCA GLENDALE CHAIRMAN, ARTIN MANOUKIAN'S STATEMENT AT PRESS CONFERENCE ON AUGUST 17, 2017

As an organization that stands up for the issues that matter for Armenian-Americans and other groups that experience injustice, the Armenian National Committee of America - Glendale has been tracking the growing issue with the Americana and Caruso Affiliated and its treatment of the community and the city of Glendale in general.

Unfortunately, Caruso Affiliated and Americana management have a long-standing track record of ignoring the community in which they operate, behaving like an arrogant corporate giant that only cares about making money. In 2004, when the citizens of Glendale granted great concessions to Caruso Affiliated so that they may build the Americana at this site, it was with the understanding that the Americana would become an important part of the fabric of Glendale. Let us be abundantly clear, the Americana serves at the pleasure of the City of Glendale and its citizens, not the other way around.

Earlier this month, when the executive producers of the documentary Architects of Denial, Dean Cain and Montel Williams, set out to plan the publicity of the film, they naturally sought to purchase advertising in Glendale, given the film's topic. They attempted to purchase advertising on the billboards Americana hosts. They and we would have never imagined that of all places they would experience denial of the ads and by extension the Armenian Genocide in our city. The irony of the Americana's original position couldn't be more surreal. Their position couldn't have been more outrageous, disrespectful and cowardly. Caruso was bowing to the pressures of the dictatorial Turkish government, which has one of the world's worst records of human rights violations, and their genocide denial campaign. In this process they were also stepping all over the American values of freedom of speech.

While corporate CEOs across the country distance themselves from President Trump and his outrageous remarks about Charlottesville, the Americana instead was basing its decisions on Turkish government interests that oppose the values of tolerance, respect for all cultures and in this case the facts of history. Exposing genocide is never something that should be silenced.

We initially attempted to reason with Caruso management and instead got a deaf ear, until this morning with the threat of this issue rapidly escalating into a boycott. This morning we received a letter from the Americana stating that they will allow the ads for the documentary free of charge and will also screen the documentary here in this public park free of charge for the public to see.

We appreciate these initial positive steps the Americana and Caruso Affiliated are taking. However, this is not how a company like Caruso Affiliated should be demonstrating its corporate citizenship. Caruso Affiliated must seek a relationship with the community that demonstrates, in concrete terms, its understanding and care for the surrounding community and our city. In the coming weeks we look forward to meeting with Mr. Rick Caruso and his management team to discuss, in concrete terms, how we can forge a better relationship and bond between the community and the Americana and Caruso Affiliated that results in a genuine, constructive and meaningful long-term relationship.



Armenian National Committee of America – Glendale Chapter

The following organizations stand in solidarity with the ANCA Glendale.

American Hellenic Council
ANCA – La Crescenta Chapter
ANCA – Burbank Chapter
ANCA – Hollywood Chapter
Armenian American Chamber of Commerce
Armenian American Council on Aging
Armenian Bar Association
Armenian Cultural Foundation
Armenian Educational Foundation
Armenian Society of Los Angeles
Armenian Youth Association of California
Armenian Relief Society - Glendale Chapter
Assyrian American Association of Southern CA
Committee for Armenian Students in Public Schools
Davidian/Mariamian Educational Foundation
Homenetmen Glendale Ararat Chapter
Glendale Teachers Association
Hamazkayin Armenian Cultural & Educational Society - Glendale Chapter
Korean American Forum of California
New Joulfa Zartonk Association
Richard Tufenkian Pre-School
SEYFO Center – Assyrian Genocide Research Center
SWANA-LA (Southwest Asian And North Afrikan - Los Angeles)
Urmia Armenian Society
Vahan and Anoush Chamilian School



Armenian National Committee of America – Glendale Chapter

ANCA GLENDALE CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT AT THE GLENDALE CITY COUNCIL MEETING ON AUGUST 15, 2017

Honorable Councilmembers,

My name is Artin Manoukian, I have lived over 30 years in this Jewel city, and am a proud business owner in the city of Glendale. Today, I stand before you, not just as a citizen, but also representing the Armenian National Committee of America's Glendale Chapter, a grassroots organization that has been active in the city of Glendale in over 40 years.

Never, ever, did I anticipate to make a presence in front of the Glendale City council, for being insulted in my own backyard, by the same people that are where they are today, because of my YES vote on measure ABC in 2004, & my tax money that gave away the land that they built their empire on.

Today, my outrage is not just as an individual, but on behalf of tens of thousands of residents of a city, who spent decades turning around cultural differences, into a beautiful mosaic of diversity. Residents of a city, who has been officially commemorating the same Genocide, that Americana's management is even withholding itself from using the word. I am talking on behalf of the tens of thousands of residents of a city, whose public schools are closed, on April 24th, the day of Remembrance, the Day of the Commemoration of the Armenian Genocide.

Please understand that we respect Americana's right as a business to refuse or decline the placement of any advertising, but to do so, while labeling the Armenian Genocide as "too political", that is unacceptable. Americana's response is a clear demonstration of the fact that Americana itself has become a despicable architect of denial itself.

We cannot allow this to go on. We do not want to see our Jewel city turn into another Charlottesville. Hate, injustice, & denial have no room in our jewel city. The abominable stand of Americana's management has to be condemned by this City Council, and furthermore, Caruso Affiliated and Mr. Caruso himself has to apologize for the insensitivity and complete disregard of the community by some its employees.

It is about time that Americana & Caruso Affiliated educated themselves about the people that patronize their businesses, who rent or buy their properties, who spend their hard earned dollars year around.

On behalf of the ANCA-Glendale Chapter, as well as tens of thousands of our members & friends, I demand that the Glendale City Council adopts a resolution condemning Americana's management's conduct and any and all statements that question the Armenian Genocide.

We also demand that the Council creates a forum to bring together the community non-profits to sit with the corporate sector & the developers to discuss the community's needs, as well as various projects that all can work together for the empowerment & betterment of our community. It is about time that the corporate sectors stops enjoying the free rides and start taking social responsibility that go above and beyond trolley rides, movies on the lawn, or beautiful snowfalls, which technically are mere marketing tools.

And I would like to remind the management of Americana, that it takes years to build a reputation, but just minutes to ruin it, and remind our respectable Council members that as Moliere said it: It is not only for what we do that we are held responsible, but also for what we do not do.



Armenian National Committee of America – Glendale Chapter

August 8, 2017

Mr. Rick Caruso
Founder and CEO
Caruso Affiliated
101 The Grove Drive
Los Angeles, CA 90036

Mr. Caruso:

I am following up on a correspondence sent to Caruso Affiliated's management team on August 4, 2017 regarding the decision to deny advertisement space for "Architects of Denial", a film that attempts to raise awareness of the Armenian Genocide and other human rights violations. To date, we have not received a response to our letter on your proposed course of action to resolve this matter.

As noted in our earlier letter, the Armenian Genocide is a historical fact, which the City of Glendale, the Los Angeles County and the State of California recognize and commemorate every year.

Moreover, The Americana at Brand sits in the heart of Glendale, CA where half the population are descendants of Armenian Genocide survivors.

To call the advertisement, the film, and the subject of the Armenian Genocide "too political" is to show utter lack of sensitivity and understanding toward a large segment of the Glendale community. Unfortunately, this is not the first time The Americana at Brand and its management have displayed insensitivity to the issue of the Armenian Genocide. This pattern of behavior is deeply concerning to us and we expect appropriate measures to be taken to rectify this situation.

It is with the vote of confidence and approval from the Glendale community that Yes on Measure ABC passed with 51% in 2004, granting you \$77.1 million of our public funds and free land to construct the project and supplement your investment in our city. To that end, we don't view The Americana at Brand as just another shopping mall, but as a good faith partnership between the city's diverse constituency and Caruso Affiliated. Currently, The Americana at Brand is not operating under this premise, which shows a lack of corporate citizenship.

The ANCA-Glendale requests an immediate meeting with your leadership team to further discuss this issue. Please contact us by email at margarita@ancaglendale.org or by phone at 818.243.3444. I look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Manoukian Artin".

Artin Manoukian
Chair

cc: Senior Vice President David J. Antisdale, Senior Vice President Community Relations Rick Lemmo, Public Relations and Communications Emily Davis, Senior General Manager Julie Jauregui

MONTEL WILLIAMS AND DEAN CAIN REACT TO THE REJECTION OF AD FOR DOCUMENTARY EXPOSING ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

Last year, we decided to make a full-length documentary on the horror of the Armenian Genocide and we travelled to Armenia in hopes of telling a story that for far too long far too many have tried to sweep under the proverbial rug of history. Like any producers, we sought to advertise our film, and much to our surprise, our advertisement was rejected.

One of the places we sought to purchase a billboard was the Americana at Brand shopping mall, owned by Caruso Holdings, in Glendale, California, home to the largest population of people of Armenian origin outside of Armenia. We were stunned to be told verbally, and then officially in writing yesterday, that our ad was rejected for being “too political.”

Architects of Denial tells the story of a horror too often denied for the sake of political expediency. It’s the story of the 20th century’s first genocide, the Armenian genocide of 1915. Since the end of World War II, every civilized nation on earth has adhered to the principle of “never again” and that’s why we made this film – because we know if we allow this genocide to be forgotten, we run the risk of repeating the evils of humanity’s collective past.

As the Executive Producers, we are confused and saddened by Caruso’s decision (that our film was “too political”) but more than anything, we regret that a business happy to take the hard-earned money of Glendale’s large Armenian population is unwilling to stand up for their own customers.

Our ad is effectively a movie poster, and we fail to see how it is political and this is bigger than our film. This is about whether we’re willing to be participants in whitewashing history – that’s what Caruso’s decision is – make no mistake about it – it’s about enabling revisionist history related to the massacre of 1.5 million people.

The seriousness of this issue cannot and should not be understated. This is no longer about our movie or an advertisement. This is about vindicating the dignity of the victims and the survivors of a genocide.

This is about who we are as human beings and whether we accept the adage that history forgotten (or silenced) is doomed to repeat itself. Accordingly, today we’re calling on the residents of Glendale as well as the greater Angelino community to boycott the Americana at Brand shopping mall until it and its corporate owners apologize to the Armenian community.

CONTACT FOR MONTEL WILLIAMS & DEAN CAIN

Jonathan Franks
LUCID Public Relations
jonathan@lucidpublicrelations.com

PERMANENT SELECT
COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE
RANKING MEMBER

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
EX-OFFICIO MEMBER

E-MAIL VIA WEB ADDRESS AT:
www.house.gov/schiff

FACEBOOK:
www.facebook.com/repadamschiff



ADAM B. SCHIFF
28TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
☐ 2372 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-4176
FAX: (202) 225-5828

DISTRICT OFFICE:
☐ 245 EAST OLIVE AVENUE
SUITE 200
BURBANK, CA 91502
(818) 450-2900
FAX: (818) 450-2928

DISTRICT OFFICE:
☐ 5500 HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD
SUITE 416
LOS ANGELES, CA 90028
(323) 315-5555
(BY APPOINTMENT ONLY)

Contact: Patrick Boland, Communications Director
(202) 225-4176
boland@mail.house.gov

CONGRESSMAN ADAM B. SCHIFF STATEMENT

August 17, 2017

I want to extend my support for the use of the billboard space at the Americana at Brand to advertise "Architects of Denial," a documentary film which aims to raise awareness of the Armenian Genocide as well as present-day human rights violations.

This documentary film, which depicts the horrors of the Armenian Genocide and tells the story of the first genocide of the 20th century, illustrates facts of this very dark and incontestable chapter in human history. The Armenian Genocide is not a political position, but an undeniable part of our collective past.

Earlier this year, many people, Armenian and non-Armenian alike, visited theatres including the Pacific 18 at The Americana at Brand to see, "The Promise," a love story set in the time of mass killings of Armenians in the Armenian Genocide during World War I. The making of the film was very difficult, as the Republic of Turkey did what it could to thwart its production and exhibition. Indeed, even prior to the film's broad release, an organized effort was underway to fabricate negative reviews to discourage people from seeing the film. Similar efforts are now underway to diminish the viewership of "Architects of Denial" by discouraging advertising for the film in places like the Americana. Such efforts to censor speech, discussion and art have no place in our community.

Efforts from the government of Turkey to deny the Armenian Genocide have been ever-present-- from the millions of dollars they have spent to defeat genocide resolutions in Congress to blocking the truth from being displayed for people to see. We have to stand together as a community and reject any effort to suppress information of past atrocities, or allow the censorship which is permitted in other countries to gain a foothold in ours.

I strongly urge the management of The Americana at Brand and Caruso Affiliated to reverse its decision and allow advertising for this important film just as it would any other historical work.

California State Senate

SENATOR
ANTHONY J. PORTANTINO
TWENTY-FIFTH SENATE DISTRICT



August 10, 2017

Mr. Jackie Levy
Caruso Corporate Headquarters
101 The Grove Drive
Loa Angeles, CA 90036

Dear Mr. Levy,

I write to encourage Caruso Affiliated Holdings to reconsider its decision regarding the denial of outdoor advertising for the documentary film *Architects of Denial* at the Americana. This film contains powerful accounts of the Armenian Genocide, the first Genocide of the 20th Century. It also serves as a history lesson for Californians, allowing them to recognize, understand and ultimately commemorate with their communities, neighbors, and friends.

As a former filmmaker, I know that documentary films are created to educate people on historical moments, human rights abuses and Genocide. Regardless of how disturbing or thought provoking the subject matter may be we cannot ignore its facts. Public advertising helps give a film the widest audience breath, and in this instance it goes a step beyond and shows respect for the Armenian American community, a community that is part of the rich cultural tapestry of Glendale.

The idea that a movie is “too political” undercuts the proud legacy of countless filmmakers capturing historical events for public review and stimulating thoughtful conversation. Was the Academy Award winning film *Gandhi* too political to be advertised? Were antiwar films *Catch 22*, *All Quite on the Western Front* and *MASH* too political or were they excellent examples of Art highlighting history with a thought provoking perspective?

In the recently adopted State Budget signed by Governor Brown, money was allocated for the implementation of curriculum updates to appropriately teach our public-school students about this horrendous moment in world history. California has shown strong leadership for its recognition of the Armenian Genocide. It is my hope that the Americana will do the same and embrace this history by supporting the free expression behind *Architects of Denial*.

Given our strong and vibrant Armenian American Community it seems appropriate for the Americana to embrace a film that has captured, depicted and shared the Armenian Genocide story. Encouraging discussion of the Genocide history and the personal relationship to the Armenian American diaspora in Southern California non-Armenians like myself, show respect for their personal loss and family journey that we cannot fathom or even imagine.

I have reviewed significant excerpts of the movie and I look forward to seeing it in its entirety.

Please reconsider your decision for the advertising of this film at the Americana.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Anthony J. Portantino".

Anthony J. Portantino
SENATOR
District 25

ASBAREZ.COM

Portantino Calls on Caruso to Allow Ads for Genocide Documentary

August 10, 2017



GLENDALE—State Senator Anthony J. Portantino has submitted a letter to Caruso Affiliated Holdings urging the company to reconsider its decision and allow public advertising for the Armenian Genocide and human rights documentary, “Architects of Denial.” Reports have pegged politics as the explanation for the Caruso Affiliated decision not to feature the film in an outdoor billboard advertisement.

“I thought to myself that Hollywood has long-celebrated thought provoking and hard-edged filmmaking that stimulates conversations about historical events. It seems like labeling Art as ‘too political’ was an odd reason to deny the appropriate free expression of a historical documentary. As a former filmmaker and current State Senator it was important for me to share my concerns and urge reconsideration,” commented Portantino.

Portantino represents the 25th Senate District which is home to the largest Armenian American Community in any legislative district in the country. He is also a former filmmaker. Earlier in the year, he successfully included funding for Armenian Genocide curriculum implementation and the Armenian American Museum in the California State Budget signed by Governor Brown. He chairs the California State Senate Select Committee on California, Armenia and Artsakh Trade, Art and Cultural Exchange.

“I’m hopeful that my letter will have an impact by highlighting the strong legacy and celebration of our state’s artistic freedom, California’s legacy of leadership for Genocide recognition and the importance of proactively appreciating our Armenian American neighbors. The example set by the State of California should be an inspiration for our corporate partners to follow,” concluded Portantino.



August 14, 2017

Dear Mr. Casares,

I am writing in response to your letter of August 11 regarding your request to purchase a billboard for the film "Architects of Denial" at The Americana at Brand. I apologize for any confusion that resulted from our previous correspondence and am hopeful this letter will help clarify the reason for our decision to decline this advertisement.

Our Company is committed to the entire Glendale community and developing properties where people can come together to enjoy themselves, whether it's a trolley ride, a concert in the park or sharing a meal with friends and family. A guiding principle is to ensure that everyone in the community feels welcome.

One way we achieve this is by doing our best to keep our properties neutral and impartial. We know our properties must remain steadfastly focused on our guests' experience and that is why we have established policies prohibiting advertisements concerning political issues.

And, it is why we cannot weigh in on international political issues, even deeply felt issues like this one as evidenced by the comments we have received ranging from leaders in the Armenian community to the Turkish Consulate. This issue has become about much more than a billboard.

In keeping with these principles, the Company has decided to stand by its initial decision to decline the billboard. This decision is independent of the concern we discussed previously that the display of the billboard would violate the City of Glendale's municipal code.

In today's complicated world, our Company feels strongly that The Americana at Brand— and all of our properties — must continue to be places where people from all walks of life feel comfortable regardless of their views on any number of issues.

We appreciate your understanding with respect to this ad. We want to reaffirm our longstanding support for the Armenian community. Separately, we are reaching out to the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA) and look forward to meeting with them.

Sincerely,

Jackie Levy
Executive Vice President of Operations