

The Armenian Issue in Nine Questions and Answers

Turkish Foreign Policy Institute

FOREWORD

Armenian sources in foreign countries are now involved against Turkey in an intensive defamation campaign, which has reached great dimensions. This malicious propaganda based on certain repeated allegations by Armenian extremists has now acquired a racist character and it is being bolstered also by certain foreign sources for different purposes. The Armenian propaganda is no more satisfied with unjust vilification of Turkey but it is now putting forward some baseless demands from Turkey and the Turkish people.

Inevitably this propaganda gave way to the creation of Armenian terrorism in the years following 1973. Thus Armenian propaganda fuelled terrorism, which in return increased the propaganda. Finally, Armenian propaganda identified itself with the terrorist movements against Turkey.

Armenian terrorism has claimed a total of 133 assaults against Turkish and other targets in 41 cities in 22 different countries. In these terrorist attacks 33 Turkish diplomats and citizens and 8 foreigners have been killed and 99 Turkish diplomats and citizens as well as 89 people from other nationalities injured. With very few exceptions, almost all the Armenian terrorist attacks took place in western countries and those foreigners who were killed or injured were their citizens. Despite some differences in style, Armenian propaganda and terrorist claims can be summarized in the following nine categories:

It is being alleged,

- 1. That Eastern Anatolia is the original homeland of the Armenians.*
- 2. That beginning with Seljuk's and Ottomans, Turks have seized from Armenians their territories and occupied them by force.*
- 3. That Turks have misruled and suppressed the Armenians throughout history.*
- 4. That Turks have begun to massacre the Armenians as of 1890's.*
- 5. That Turks have submitted the Armenians to genocide in 1915 in a planned and systematic way.*
- 6. That Talad Palma issued telegrammes ordering genocide.*

7. That the number of Armenians who lost their lives through genocide is one and a half million.

8. That the Treaty of Sevres is still in force.

9. That today Turks are still keeping Armenians under oppression.

This booklet has been edited with the aim to examine within the framework of historical facts and give the correct answers to the Armenian charges and accusations, which lie at the root of Armenian terrorism.

An unbiased and careful study of history will always reveal the truth about Armenian allegations and definitely prove that such allegations are not based on facts but on their distortion and misrepresentation as well as on myths and legends.

QUESTION I

WAS EASTERN ANATOLIA THE ORIGINAL HOMELAND OF THE: ARMENIANS?

Even Armenian historians disagree on this question. Let us examine some of their contradictory theories while looking into Anatolian history.

1. The Biblical Noah Theory. According to this idea, the Armenians descended from Hayk, great-great grandson of the Biblical patriarch Noah. Since Noah's Arc is supposed to have come to rest on Mount Ararat, the advocates of this idea conclude that Eastern Anatolia must have been the original Armenian homeland, adding that Hayk lived some four hundred years and expanded his dominion as far as Babylon. This claim is based entirely on fables, not on any scientific evidence, and is not worthy of further consideration. The historian Auguste Carriere summarily dismisses it stating that "it depends entirely on information provided by some Armenian historians, most of which was made up." ¹

2. The Urartu Theory. Some Armenians claim that they were the people of Urartu, which existed in Eastern Anatolia starting about 3000 B.C. until it was defeated and destroyed by the Medes, with its territory being contested for some time by Lydia and the Medes until it finally fell under the influence of the latter. This claim has no basis in fact. No form of the name Armenian is found in any inscription in Anatolia dating from that period, nor was there any similarity at all between the Armenian language and that of Urartu, the former being a member of the Satem group of Indo European languages, while the latter was similar to the Ural-Altai languages. Nor were there any similarities between their cultures. The most recent archeological finds in the area of Erzurum support these conclusions very clearly. There is therefore, absolutely no evidence at all to support the claim that the people of Urartu were Armenian.

3. The Thracian-Phrygian Theory. The theory most favored by Armenian historians claims that they descended from a Thracian-Phrygian group, that originated in the Balkan Peninsula and by the pressure of Illyrians migrated to eastern Anatolia in the sixth century B.C. This theory is based on the fact that the name Armenian was mentioned for the first time in the Behistan inscription of the Mede (Persian) Emperor Darius from the year 521 B.C., "I defeated the Armenians." If accepted, of course, this view effectively contradicts and disproves the Noah and Urartu theories.

4. The Southern Caucasus Theory. This idea claims that the Armenians are related racially and culturally to the peoples of the Southern Caucasus and that, therefore, they originated there. It is, however, supported only by the fact that Darius defeated the Armenians in the Caucasus. The Armenians are in no way related to any of the Caucasian races.

5. The Turanian Theory. Some Armenians have adduced similarities of certain elements of the Armenian language and culture with those of some Turkish and Azeri tribes of the Caucasus to document a relationship, but this remains to be proved.

¹ CARRIERE, Auguste, Moise de Khoren et la Genealogie Patriarcale, Paris, 1896

Whichever, if any, of these theories is correct, it is very certain that the Armenians did not originate in Anatolia, nor did they live there for three to four thousand years, as claimed. They have put forward these ideas merely to support their claims that the Turks drive them out of a homeland in which they had lived for thousands of years, but they cannot stand up to the facts.

QUESTION 2

DID THE TURKS TAKE THE LANDS OF THE ARMENIANS BY FORCE?

The territory in which the Armenians lived together for a time never was ruled by them as an independent, sovereign state. Located in today's Soviet Armenian **S.S.R.** along with a narrow strip of neighboring territory within the borders of Turkey, this territory was ruled by others from the earliest times from which there is evidence that Armenians lived there. From 521 to 344 B.C. it was a province of Persia. From 334 to 215 B.C. it was part of the Macedonian Empire. From 215 to 190 B.C. it was controlled by the Selephkites. From 190 until 220 A.D. it frequently changed hands between the Roman Empire and the Parthians. From 220 until the start of the fifth century it was a Sassanian province, and from then until the seventh century it belonged to Byzantium. From the seventh to the tenth centuries it was controlled by the Arabs. It returned again to Byzantine rule in the tenth century and, finally, it came under the domination' of the Turks starting in the eleventh century.

The Armenians living in this territory who remained under the rule of these various empires, could not continuously maintain any, sort of independent or unified Armenian state. At the most, a few Armenian noble families dominated certain districts as feudal vassals of the neighboring imperial suzerains, serving as buffers between the powerful empires that surrounded them. Most of these Armenian "principalities" were, thus, simply set 'up by local Armenian nobles within their own feudal dominions, or by the neighboring empires, who in this way secured their military services against their enemies. The best example of this was the Baghratid family, long brought forward by Armenian nationalist historians as an example of their historic independent existence, which was in fact put in charge of its territory by the Arab Caliphs. Some of the "Armenian" families which assumed the title of principality at this time were, moreover, really Persian rather than Armenian in origin. That they did not constitute any sort of independent nation is shown in the statement of the Armenian historian Kevork Aslan:

*"The Armenians lived as local notables. They had no feeling of national unity. There were no political bonds or ties among them. Their only attachments were to the neighboring notables. Thus whatever national feelings they had were local."*²

These Armenian principalities existed for centuries under the control of various great empires and states, often changing sides to secure maximum advantage, and thus earning for Armenians often caustic and critical remarks from contemporary historians, as for example the Roman historian Tacitus, who in his; *Annalium Liber* wrote;

"The Armenians change their position relating to Rome and the Persian Empire, sometimes supporting one and sometimes the other, "

concluding that they are "a strange people."

² ASLAN, Kevork, L' Armenie et les Armeniens, Istanbul, 1914.

It was as a result of these conditions, and then, the Armenians' lack of unity and strength, their very failure to create a real state, their weakness in relation to their neighbors, the fact that the territory in which they lived was as a result the scene of constant conflict among their more powerful suzerains from all sides, that they often were deported, or moved voluntarily, from the lands where they first lived when they appeared in history. Thus when they fled from the Persians they settled in the area of Kayseri, in Central Anatolia. They were deported by the Sassanians into Central Iran, by the Arabs into Syria and the Arabian Peninsula, by the Byzantines into Central Anatolia and to Istanbul, Thrace, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Rumania, Hungary, Transylvania and the Crimea. During the Crusades, they went to Cyprus, Crete and Italy. In flight from the Mongols they settled in Kazan and Astrakhan in Central Asia, and, finally, they were subsequently, deported by the Russians from the Crimea and the Caucasus into the interior of Russia. As a result of these centuries-long deportations and migrations, then, the Armenians were widely scattered from Sicily to India and from the Crimea to Arabia, thus forming what they call "the Armenian Diaspora" centuries before they were deported by the Ottomans in 1915.

The Armenians broke away from the Byzantine church in 451, 150 years after they accepted Christianity, leading to long centuries of Armenian-Byzantine clashes which went on until the Turks settled in Anatolia starting in the late 11th century, with the Byzantines working to wipe out the Armenians and eliminate the Armenian principalities in order to maintain Greek Orthodoxy throughout their dominions. Contemporary Armenian historians report in great detail how the Byzantines reported Armenians as well as using them against enemy forces in the vanguard of the Byzantine armies. As a result of this, when the Seljuk Turks started flooding into Anatolia starting in the late 11th century, they did not encounter any Armenian principalities; the only force remaining to resist them was that of Byzantium. The seljuk ruler Alparslan captured the lands of the Armenian Principality of Ani in 1064, but it had previously been brought to an end by the Byzantine in 1045, nineteen years earlier, with Greeks being brought into replace the Armenians who had been deported. It is therefore false to claim that the Seljuk Turks destroyed any Armenian principality, let alone a state. This already had been done by the Byzantines, and it was in fact the social and economic ferment that resulted which greatly facilitated the subsequent Turkish settlement. Contemporary Armenian historians interpret this Turkish conquest of Anatolia to have constituted their liberation from the long centuries of Byzantine misrule and oppression. The Armenian historian, Asoghik thus reports, "Because of the Armenians enmity toward Byzantium they welcomed the Turkish entry into Anatolia and even helped them." The Armenian historian Mathias of Edessa likewise relates that the Armenians rejoiced and celebrated publicly when the Turks conquered his city, Edessa (today's Urfa).

An Armenian principality did arise in Cilicia starting in 1080 but it was the result, not of the Turkish settlement in Anatolia, as has been claimed, but, rather of the Byzantine destruction of the last Armenian principalities in eastern Anatolia which caused a flood of Armenians fleeing into Cilicia. This principality maintained good relations with the Turks even as it provided assistance to the Crusaders who passed through its territory on their way to the Holy Land, while accepting the suzerainty first of Byzantium, and then after it declined, of the Crusader Kingdoms, the Mongols, and, finally, the Catholic Lusignan family which gained control of Cyprus. This sort of relationship with "unbelievers", however, displeased the Gregorian Armenian church, with the resulting internal divisions playing a significant role in the Principality's conquest by the Mamluks of Syria and Egypt in 1375. In the end, the most

significant consequence of this last Armenian principality was the establishment of a separate Armenian church from the one centered at Echmiadzin, which added to the internal divisions within Armenian Orthodoxy, which remain important to the present day.

Thus when eastern Anatolia was conquered by Fatih Mehmet II and Yavuz Sultan Selim I, it was taken from the White Sheep Turkomans and from the Safavids of Iran, who had occupied it after the Byzantines had retired; while Yavuz Selim took Cilicia from the Mamluks. In no case, therefore, did the Ottoman Turks conquer or occupy an existing Armenian state or principality. In every case, these Armenians had previously been conquered by peoples other than the Turks.

QUESTION 3

HAVE THE TURKS ALWAYS ATTACKED AND MISRULED ARMENIANS THROUGHOUT HISTORY?

Armenian propagandists in recent times have claimed that the Turks mistreated non-Muslims, and in particular Armenians, throughout history in order to provide support for their claims of "Genocide" against the Ottoman Empire, since it would otherwise be difficult for them to explain how the Turks, who had lived side by side with the Armenians in peace for some 600 years, suddenly rose up to massacre them all. The Armenians moreover, have tried to interpret Turkish rule in terms of a constant struggle between Christianity and Islam, thus to assure belief in whatever they say about the Turks on the part of the modern Christian world.

The evidence of history overwhelmingly denies these claims. We already have seen that the contemporary Armenian historians themselves related how the Armenians of Byzantium welcomed the Seljuk conquest with celebrations and thanks giving to God for having rescued them from Byzantine oppression. The Seljuks gave protection to an Armenian church, which the Byzantines had been trying to destroy. They abolished the oppressive taxes which the Byzantines had imposed on the Armenian churches, monasteries and priests, and in fact exempted such religious institutions from all taxes. The Armenian community was left free to conduct its internal affairs in its own way, including religious activities and education, and there never was any time at which Armenians or other non-Muslims were compelled to convert to Islam. The Armenian spiritual leaders in fact went to Seljuk Sultan Melikshah to thank him for this protection. The Armenian historian Mathias of Edessa relates that,

*"Melikshah's heart is full of affection and good will for Christians; he has treated the sons of Jesus Christ very well, and he has given the Armenian people affluence, peace, and happiness."*³

After the death of the Seljuk Sultan Kilich Arslan, the same historian wrote,

"Kilich Arslan's death has driven Christians into mourning since he was a charitable person of high character."

How well the Seljuk Turks treated the Armenians is shown by the fact that some Armenian noble families like the Tashirk family accepted Islam of their own free will and joined the Turks in fighting Byzantium.

Turkish tradition and Muslim law dictated that non-Muslims should be well treated in Turkish and Muslim empires. The conquering Turks therefore made agreements with their non-Muslim subjects by which the latter accepted the status of *zhimmi*, agreeing to keep order and pay taxes in return for protection of their rights and traditions. People from different religions were treated with an unprecedented tolerance which was reflected into the philosophies based on good will and human values cherished by great philosophers in this era such as Yunus Emre and

³ MATHIAS of EDESSA, Chronicles, Nr.129.

Mevlana Celaleddin Rumi who are well-known in the Islamic world with their benevolent mottoes such as "having the same view for all 72 different nations" and "you will be welcome whoever you are, and whatever you believe in". This was in stark contrast to the terrible treatment which Christian rulers and conquerors often have meted out to Christians of other sects, let alone non-Christians such as Muslims and Jews, as for example the Byzantine persecution of the Armenian Gregorians, Venetian persecution of the Greek Orthodox inhabitants of the Morea and the Aegean islands, and Hungarian persecution of the Bogomils.

The establishment and expansion of the Ottoman Empire, and in particular the destruction of Byzantium following Fatih Mehmed's conquest of Istanbul in 1453 opened a new era of religious, political, social, economic and cultural prosperity for the Armenians as well as the other non-Muslim and Muslim peoples of the new state. The very first Ottoman ruler, Osman Bey (1300 - 1326), permitted the Armenians to establish their first religious center in western Anatolia, at Kutahya, to protect them from Byzantine oppression. This center subsequently was moved, along with the Ottoman capital, first to Bursa in 1326 and then to Istanbul in 1461, with Fatih Mehmed issuing a ferman definitively establishing the Armenian Patriarchate there under Patriarch Hovakim and his successors.⁴ As a result, thousands of Armenians emigrated to Istanbul from Iran, the Caucasus, eastern and central Anatolia the Balkans and the Crimea, not because of force or persecution, but because the great Ottoman conqueror had made his empire into a true center of Armenian life. The Armenian community and church thus expanded and prospered as parts of the expansion and prosperity of the Ottoman Empire.

The Gregorian Armenians of the Ottoman Empire, like the other major religious groups, were organized into millet communities under their own religious leaders. Thus the ferman issued by Fatih Mehmed establishing the Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul specified that the Patriarch was not only the religious leader of the Armenians, but also their secular leader. The Armenians had the same rights as Muslims, but they also had certain special privileges, most important among which was exemption from military service. Armenians and other non-Muslims generally paid the same taxes as Muslims, with the exception of the Poll Tax (Harach or Jizye), which was imposed on them in place of the state taxes based particularly on Muslim religious law, the Alms Tax (Zakat) and the Tithe (Öşür), from which non-Muslims were exempted. The Armenian millet religious leaders themselves assessed and collected the Poll Taxes from their followers and turned the collections over to the Treasury officials of the state.

The Armenians were allowed to establish religious foundations (vakif) to provide financial support for their religious, cultural, educational and charity activities, and when needed the Ottoman state treasury gave additional financial assistance to the Armenian institutions which carried out these activities as well as to the Armenian Patriarchate itself. These Armenian foundations remain in operation to the present day in the Turkish Republic, providing substantial financial support to the operations of the Armenian Church.

By Ottoman law all Christian subjects who were not Greek Orthodox were included in the Armenian Gregorian millet. Thus the Paulicians and Yakubites in Anatolia as well as the Bogomils and Gypsies in the Balkans were counted as Armenians, leading to substantial disputes in later times as to the total number of Armenians actually living in the Empire.

⁴ URAS, Esat, *Tarihle Ermeniler ve Ermeni Meselesi*, 2nd Edition, Istanbul, 1976, p. 149.

The Armenian community expanded and prospered as a result of the freedom granted by the sultans. At the same time Armenians shared, and contributed to, the Turkish-Ottoman culture and ways of life and government to such an extent that they earned the particular trust and confidence of the sultans over the centuries, gaining the attribute "the loyal millet". Ottoman Armenians became extremely wealthy bankers, merchants, and industrialists, while many at the same time rose to high positions in governmental service. In the 19th century, for example, twenty- nine Armenians achieved the highest governmental rank of Pasha. There were twenty-two Armenian ministers, including the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Finance, Trade and Post, with other Armenians making major contributions to the departments concerned with agriculture, economic development, and the census. There also were thirty-three Armenian representatives appointed and elected to the Parliaments formed after 1876, seven ambassadors, eleven consul-generals and consuls, eleven-university professor, and forty-one other officials of high rank. ⁵

Over the centuries Armenians also made major contributions to Ottoman - Turkish art, culture and music, producing many artists of first rank who are objects of praise and sources of pride for Turks as well as Armenians in Turkey. The first Armenian printing press was established in the Ottoman Empire in the 16th century.

Thus the Armenians and Turks, and all the various races of the Empire lived in peace and mutual trust over the centuries, with no serious complaints being made against the Ottoman system or administration, which made such a situation possible. It is true that, from time to time, internal difficulties did arise within some of the individual millets. Within the Armenian millet disputes arose over the election of the patriarch between the "native" Armenians, who had come to Istanbul from Anatolia and the Crimea, and those called "eastern" or "foreign" Armenians, who came from Iran and the Caucasus. These groups often complained against each other to the Ottomans, trying to gain governmental support for their own candidates and interests, and at the same time complaining about the Ottomans whenever the decisions went against them, despite the long-standing Ottoman insistence on maintaining strict neutrality between the groups. The gradual triumph of the "easterners" led to the appointment of non-religious individuals as Patriarchs, to corruption and misrule within the Armenian millet, and to bloody clashes among conflicting political groups, against which the Ottomans were forced to intervene to prevent the Armenians from annihilating each other.

These internal disputes, as well as the general decline of religious standards within the Gregorian millet led many Armenians to accept the teachings of foreign Catholic and Protestant missionaries sent into the Empire during the 19th century, causing the creation of separate millets for them later in the century. The Armenian Gregorian leaders asked the Ottoman government to intervene and prevent such conversions, but the Ottomans refrained from doing so on the grounds that it was an internal problem which had to be dealt with by the millet and not the state. Bloody clashes followed, with the Gregorian patriarchs Chuhajian and Tahtajian going so far to excommunicate and banish all Armenian Protestants.⁶ Later on, serious clashes also emerged among the Armenian Catholics as to the nature of their relationship with the Pope, with the latter excommunicating all those who did not accept his supremacy, forcing the Ottomans finally to

⁵ Facts from the Turkish Armenians, Jamanak, Istanbul, 1980, p. 4 and KOÇAŞ, Sadi, Tarih Boyunca Ermeniler ve Türk - Ermeni İlişkileri, pp. 92 - 115, Ankara, 1967.

⁶ SCHEMSI, Kara, *Turcs et Armeniens devant l'Histoire*, Geneve, Imprimerie Nationale, 1919, p. 19.

intervene and reconcile the two Catholic groups in 1888.

The freedom granted and the great tolerance shown by the Ottomans to non-Muslims was so well known throughout Europe that the empire of the sultans became a major place of refuge for those fleeing from religious and political persecution. Starting with the thousands of Jews who fled from persecution in Spain following its re-conquest in 1492, Jews fled to the Ottoman Empire from the regular pogroms to which they were subjected in Central and East Europe and Russia. Catholics and Protestants likewise fled to the Ottoman Empire, often entering the service of the sultans and making major contributions to Ottoman military and governmental life. Many of the political refugees from the reaction that followed the 1848 revolutions in Europe also fled for protection to the Ottoman Empire.

The claims that the Ottomans misruled non-Muslims in general and the Armenians in particular thus are disproved by history, as attested by major western historians, from the Armenians Asoghik and Mathias to Voltaire, Lamartine, Claude Farrere, Pierre Loti, Nogueres Ilone Caetani, Philip Marshall Brown, Michelet, Sir Charles Wilson, Politis, Arnold, Bronsart, Roux, Grousset, Edgar Granville, Garnier, Toynbee, Bernard Lewis, Shaw, Price, Lewis Thomas, Bombaci and others, some of whom could certainly not be labeled as pro-Turkish. To cite but a few of them:

Voltaire:

"The great Turk is governing in peace twenty nations from different religions. Turks have taught to Christians how to be moderate in peace and gentle in victory."

Philip Marshall Brown:

"Despite the great victory they won, Turks have generously granted to the people in the conquered regions the right to administer themselves according to their own rules and traditions."

Politis who was the Foreign Minister in the Greece; Government led by Prime Minister Venizelos:

"The rights and interests of the Greeks in Turkey could not be better protected by any other power but the Turks."

J. W. Arnold:

"It is an undeniable historic fact that the Turkish armies have never interfered in the religious and cultural affairs in the areas they conquered. "

German General Bronsart:

"Unless they are forced, Turks are the world's most tolerant people towards those of other religions."

Even when Napoleon Bonaparte sought to stir a revolt among the Armenian Catholics of Palestine and Syria to support his invasion in 1798 - 1799, his Ambassador in Istanbul General Sebastiani replied "The Armenians are so content with their lives here that this is impossible."

QUESTION 4

DID THE TURKS REALLY TRY TO MASSACRE THE ARMENIANS STARTING IN THE 1890's?

The so-called "Armenian Question" is generally thought of as having begun in the second half of the nineteenth century. One can easily point to the Russo-Turkish war (1877 - 78) and the Congress of Berlin (1878), which concluded the war as marking the emergence of this question as a problem in Europe. In fact, however, one must really go back to Russian activities in the East starting in the 1820's to uncover its origins. Czarist Russia at the time was beginning a major new imperial expansion across Central Asia, in the process overrunning major Turkish Khanates in its push toward the borders of China and the Pacific Ocean. At the same time, Russian imperial ambitions turned southward as the Czars sought to gain control of Ottoman territory to extend their landlocked empire to the Mediterranean and the open seas. As an essential element of this ambition, Russia sought to undermine Ottoman strength from within by stirring the national ambitions of the Sultan's subject Christian peoples, in particular those with whom it shared a common Orthodox religious heritage, the Greeks and the Slavs in the Balkans and the Armenians. At the same time that Russian agents fanned the fires of the Greek Revolution and stirred the beginnings of Pan-Slavism in Serbia and Bulgaria, others moved into the Caucasus and worked to secure Russian influence over the Catholics of the Armenian Gregorian church of Echmiadzin, to which most Ottoman Gregorians had strong emotional attachments. The Russians used the Catholics' jealousy of the Istanbul Patriarch to gain his support, to such an extent that Catholic Nerses Aratarakes himself led a force of 60,000 Armenians in support of the Russian army that fought Iran in the Caucasus in 1827 - 1828, in the process capturing most of Iran's Caucasus possessions, including those areas where the Armenians lived. This new Russian presence along the borders of eastern Anatolia, combined with the support of the Catholics, enabled them to extend their influence among Armenians in the Ottoman Empire. Russian pressure in Istanbul finally got the Patriarch to add the Catholics' name to his daily prayers starting in 1844, furthering the latter's ability to influence Ottoman Armenians in Russia's favor in the years that followed. Most Ottoman Armenians were still too content with their lot in the Sultan's dominions to be seriously influenced by, this Russian propaganda, but those who emigrated to Russian Armenia to join the Russian effort against Ottoman stability and power. The lands that they abandoned were turned over to Muslim refugees flooding into the Empire from persecution in Russia and Eastern Europe. This led to serious land disputes when many of the Armenian emigrants, or their descendants, unhappy with life in Russia, sought to return to the Ottoman Empire in the 1880's and 1890's.

The Russians were not the only foreign power seeking to protect the Ottoman Christians. England and France sponsored missionary activities that converted many Armenians to Protestantism and Catholicism respectively, leading to the creation of the Armenian Catholic Church in Istanbul in 1830 and the Protestant Church in 1847. However these developments were not directly related to the development of the "Armenian Question", except perhaps as indications of the rising discontent within the Gregorian church, which the Russians were seeking to take advantage of in their own way.

On the other hand, the Reform Proclamation of 1856 was of major importance. While not abolishing the separate millets and churches and the institutions that they supported, the Ottoman government now provided equal rights for all subjects regardless of their religion, in the process seeking to eliminate all special privileges and distinctions based on religion, and requiring the millets to reconstitute their internal regulations in order to achieve these goals. Insofar as the Armenians were concerned, the result was the Armenian Millet Regulation, drawn up by the Patriarchate and put into force by the Ottoman government on 29 March 1862. Of particular importance the new regulation placed the Armenian millet under the government of a council of 140 members, including only 20 churchmen from the Istanbul Patriarchate, while 80 secular representatives were to be chosen from the Istanbul community and 40 members from the provinces. The Reform Proclamation of 1856 led England and France to be more interested in Armenians, which in return intensified the interests of Russia in the same ethnic group. Their concern was based on their own imperialist interests rather than their affection for Armenians. Russia now sought to gain Armenian support for undermining and destroying the Ottoman state by promising to create a "Greater Armenia" in eastern Anatolia which would include substantially more territory between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean than the Armenians ever had ruled or even occupied at any time in their history.

It was against this background that the Ottoman-Russian war (1877 - 78) awakened Armenian dreams for independence with Russian help and under Russian guidance. Toward the end of the war, the Armenian Patriarch of Istanbul, Nerses Varjabedian, got in touch with the Russian Czar with the help of the Catholicos of Echmiadzin, asking Russia not to return to the Ottomans the east Anatolian lands occupied by Russian forces. Immediately after the war, the Patriarch went to the Russian camp, which by then was at San Stephano, immediately outside Istanbul, and in an interview with the Russian Commander, Grand Duke Nicholas, asked that all of Eastern Anatolia be annexed to Russia and established as an autonomous Armenian state, very much like the regime then being established for Bulgaria, but that if this was not possible, and the lands in question had to be returned to the Ottomans, at least Russian forces should not be withdrawn until changes favoring the Armenians were introduced into the governmental and administrative organization and regulations of these provinces⁷. The Russians agreed to the latter proposal, which was incorporated as Article 16 of the Treaty of San Stephano. Even as the negotiations were going on at San Stephano, moreover, the Armenian officers in the Russian army worked frantically to stir discontent among the Ottoman Armenians, urging them to work to gain "the same sort of independence for themselves as that secured by the Christians of the Balkans". This appeal gained considerable influence among the Armenians of Eastern Anatolia long after the Russian forces were withdrawn.

The Treaty of San Stephano did not, however, constitute the final settlement of the Russo-Turkish war. Britain rightly feared that its provisions for a Greater Armenia in the East would inevitably not only establish Russian hegemony in those areas but also, and even more dangerous, in the Ottoman Empire, and through "Greater Armenia" to the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean, where they could easily threaten the British possessions in India. In return for an Ottoman agreement for British occupation of Cyprus, therefore, to enable it to counter any Russian threats in Eastern Anatolia, Britain agreed to use its influence in Europe to upset the provisions of San Stephano, arranging the Congress of Berlin to this end. As a result of its

⁷ URAS, Esat, op. cit., pp. 212 - 215.

deliberations, Russia was compelled to evacuate all of Eastern Anatolia with the exception of the districts of Kars, Ardahan and Batum, with the Ottomans agreeing to institute "reforms" in the eastern provinces where Armenians lived under the guarantee of the five signatory European powers. From this time onward, England in particular came to consider the "Armenian Question" as its own particular problem, and to regularly intervene to secure its solution according to its own ideas.

A committee sent by the Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul attended the Congress of Berlin, but it was so unhappy, at the final treaty and the Powers' failure to accept its demands that it returned to Istanbul with the feeling that "nothing will be achieved except by means of struggle and revolution."⁸ Russia also emerged from the Congress without having achieved its major objectives, and with both Greece, and Bulgaria being left under British influence. It therefore renewed with increased vigor its effort to secure control of Eastern Anatolia, again seeking to use the Armenians as a major instrument of its policy. Now, however, it was resisted in this effort by the British, who also sought the influence and use the Armenians by stirring their national ambitions, though in this respect, in the words of the French writer Rene Pinon, who is in fact known with his pro-Armenian views, "Armenia in British hands would become a police station against Russian expansion." Whether under Russian or British influence, however, the Armenians became pawns to advance imperial ambitions at Ottoman expense.

It had been British Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli and the Tories who had defended Ottoman integrity against Russian expansion at the Congress of Berlin. 13th with the assumption of power by William E. Gladstone and the liberals in British policy toward the Ottomans changed drastically to one which sought to protect British interests by breaking up the Ottoman Empire and creating friendly small states under British influence in its place, one of which was to be Armenia. In pursuit of this policy, the British press now was encouraged to refer to eastern Anatolia as "Armenia"; British consulates were opened in every corner of the area to provide opportunities for contact with the local Christian population; the numbers of Protestant missionaries sent to the East was substantially increased; and in London an Anglo-Armenian Friendship Committee was created to influence public opinion in support of this new endeavour. The way how Russia and Great Britain used Armenians as a tool for their own ambitions has been adequately documented by numerous Armenian and other foreign sources. Thus, the French Ambassador in Istanbul Paul Cambon reported to the Quai d'Orsay in 1894 that "Gladstone is organizing the dissatisfied Armenians, putting them under discipline and promising them assistance, settling many of them in London with the inspiration of the propaganda committee." Edgar Granville commended that "There was no Armenian movement in Ottoman territory before the Russians stirred them up. Innocent people are going to be hurt because of this dream of a Greater Armenia under the protection of the Czar," and "the Armenian movements intend to attach Eastern Anatolia to Russia." The Armenian writer Kaprielian declared proudly in his book *The Armenian Crisis and Rebirth* that "the revolutionary promises and inspirations were owed to Russia." The Dashnak newspaper Hairenik in its issue of 28 June 1918 stated, "The awakening of a revolutionary spirit among the Armenians in Turkey was the result of Russian stimulation." The Armenian Patriarch Horen Ashikian wrote in his *History of Armenia* "The protestant missionaries distributed in large numbers to various places in Turkey made propaganda in favor of England and stirred the Armenians to desire autonomy under British protection. The schools

⁸ URAS, Esat, op. cit., pp. 250 - 251.

that they established were the nurseries of their secret plans." And the Armenian religious leader Hrant Vartabed wrote that "The establishment of protestant communities in Ottoman territory and their protection by England and the United States shows that they did not shrink from exploiting even the most sacred feelings of the West, religious feelings, in seeking civilization", going on to state that the Catholicos of Echmiadzin Kevork V was a tool of Czarist Russia and that he betrayed the Armenians of Anatolia.⁹

In pursuit of these policies, starting in 1880 a number of Armenian revolutionary societies were established in Eastern Anatolia, the Black Cross and Armenakan societies in Van and the National Guards in Erzurum. However these societies had little influence, since the Armenians in-the Ottoman Empire still lived in peace and prosperity and had no real complaints against Ottoman administration. With the passage of time, therefore, these and other such Armenian societies within the Empire fell into inactivity and largely ceased operations. The Armenian nationalists therefore moved to center their organizations outside Ottoman territory, establishing the Hunchak committee at Geneva in 1887 and Dashnak Committee at Tblisi in 1890, both of which declared to be their basic goal the "liberation" from Ottoman rule of the territories of Eastern Anatolia and the Ottoman Armenians.

According to Louise Nalbadian, a leading Armenian researcher into Armenian propaganda, the Hunchak program stated that:

"Agitation and terror we needed to "elevate the spirit " of the people. The people were also to be incited against their enemies and were to "profit " from retaliatory actions of these same enemies. Terror was to be used as a method of protecting the people and winning their confidence in the Hunchak program. The party aimed at terrorizing the Ottoman government, thus contributing toward lowering the prestige of that regime and working toward its complete disintegration. The government itself was not to be the only focus of terroristic tactics. The Hunchaks wanted to annihilate the most dangerous of the Armenian and Turkish individuals who were then working for the government as well as to destroy all spies and informers. To assist them in carrying out all of these terroristic acts, the party was to organize an exclusive branch specifically devoted to performing acts of terrorism. The most opportune time to institute the general rebellion for carrying out immediate objectives was when Turkey was engaged in war." ¹⁰

K.S Papazian wrote of the Dashnak society:

"The purpose of the A.R Federation (Dashnak) is to achieve political and economic freedom in Turkish Armenia, by means of rebellion ... terrorism has, from the first, been adopted by the Dashnak committee of the Caucasus, as a policy or a method for achieving its ends. Under the heading "means", in their program adopted in 1892, we read as follows: The Armenian revolutionary Federation (Dashnak) in order to achieve its purpose through

⁹ SCHEMSI , Kara , op.cit.,p.20-21

¹⁰ NALBANDIAN ,Louise , Armenian Revolutionary Movement , University of California Press , 1963 , pp. 110-111

*rebellion, organizes revolutionary groups. Method no 8 is as follows: To wage fight and to subject to terrorism the Government officials, the traitors... Method no. 11 is: To subject the government institutions to destruction and pillage.”*¹¹

One of the Dashnak founders and ideologies, Dr. Jean Loris Melikoff wrote that:

*“The truth is that the party (Dashnak Committee) was ruled by an oligarchy for whom the particular interests of the party came before the interests of the people and nation.. They (the Dashnaks) made collections among the bourgeois and the great merchants. At the end, when these means were exhausted they resorted to terrorism, after the teachings of the Russian revolutionaries that the end justifies the means.”*¹²

The same policy was described by the Dashnak ideologue Varandian, in *History of the Dashnakzoutune* (Paris, 1932).

Thus as Armenian writers themselves have freely admitted, the goal of their revolutionary societies was to stir revolution, and their method was terror. They lost no time in putting their programs into operation, stirring a number of revolt efforts within a short time, with the Hunchaks taking the lead at first, and then the Dashnaks following, planning and organizing their efforts outside the Ottoman Empire before carrying them out within the boundaries of the Sultan's dominions.

The first revolt came at Erzurum in 1890. It was followed by the Kumkapı riots in Istanbul the same year, and then risings in Kayseri, Yozgat, Çorum and Merzifon in 1892 - 1893, in Sasun in 1894, the Zeytun revolt and the Armenian raid on the Sublime Porte in 1895, the Van revolt and occupation of the Ottoman Bank in Istanbul in 1896, the Second Sasun revolt in 1903, the attempted assassination of Sultan Abdulhamid II in 1905, and the Adana revolt in 1909. All these revolts and riots were presented by the Armenian revolutionary societies in Europe and America as the killing of Armenians by Turks, and with this sort of propaganda message they stirred considerable emotion among Christian peoples. The missionaries and consular representatives sent by the Powers to Anatolia played major roles in spreading this propaganda in the western press, thus carrying out the aims of the western powers to turn public opinion against Muslims and Turks to gain the necessary support to break up the Ottoman Empire.

There were many honest western diplomatic and consular representatives who reported what actually was happening, that it was the Armenian revolutionary societies that were doing the revolting and slaughtering and massacring to secure European intervention in their behalf.

In 1876, the British Ambassador in Istanbul reported that the Armenian Patriarch had said to him:

“If revolution is necessary to attract the attention and intervention of

¹¹ PAPA ZIAN, K.S, Patriotism Perverted, Boston, Baikar Press, 1934, pp.14-15

¹² LORIS – MELIKOFF. Dr. Jean, La Revolution Russe et les Nouvelles Republiques Transcaucasiennes, Paris, 1920, p81

*Europe, it would not be hard to do so.”*¹³

On 28 March 1894 the British Ambassador in Istanbul, Currie reported to the Foreign Office:

*“The aim of the Armenian revolutionaries is no stir disturbances, to get the Ottomans to react to violence, and thus get the foreign Powers to intervene.”*¹⁴

On 28 January 1895 the British Consul in Erzurum, Graves reported to the British Ambassador in Istanbul:

*“The aims of the revolutionary committees are to stir up general discontent and to get the Turkish government and people to react with violence, thus attracting the attention of the foreign powers to the imagined sufferings of the Armenian people, and getting them to act to correct the situation”*¹⁵

Graves also told New York Herald reporter Sydney Whitman that:

*“If no Armenian revolutionary had come to this country, if they had not stirred Armenian revolution, would these clashes have occurred”, answering “Of course not. I doubt if a single Armenian is would have been killed.”*¹⁶

The British Vice-Consul Williams wrote from Van on 4 March 1896:

*“The Dashnaks and Nunchaks have terrorized their own countrymen, they have stirred up the Muslim people with their thefts and insanities, and have paralyzed all efforts made to carry out reforms; all the events that: have taken place in Anatolia are the responsibility of the crimes committed by the Armenian revolutionary committees.”*¹⁷

British Consul General in Adana Doughty Wily wrote in 1909 "The Armenians are working to secure foreign intervention."¹⁸ Russian Consul General in Bitlis and Van, General Mayewski, reported in 1912:

“In 1895 and 1896 the Armenian revolutionary committees created such suspicion between the Armenians and the native population that it became impossible to implement any sort of reform in these districts. The Armenian priests paid no attention to religious education, but instead concentrated on spreading nationalist ideas, which were affixed to the walls of monasteries, and in place performing their religious duties they concentrated on stirring

¹³ URAS, Esat, op. cit., p. IR8.

¹⁴ British Blue Book, Nr. 6 (1894), p. 57

¹⁵ British Blue Book, Nr 6 (1894), pp. 222-223

¹⁶ URAS, Esat, c.p. cit., p. 426.

¹⁷ British Blue Book, Nr. 8 (1896), p. 108.

¹⁸ SCHEMSI, Kara, op. cit., p. II.

Christian enmity against Muslims. The revolts that took place in many provinces of Turkey during 1895 and 1896 were caused neither by any great poverty among the Armenian villages nor because of Muslim attacks against them. In fact these villagers were considerably richer and more prosperous than their neighbors. Rather, the Armenian revolts came from three causes:

- 1. Their increasing maturity in political subjects;*
- 2. The spread of ideas of nationality, liberation, and independence within the Armenian community;*
- 3. Support of these ideas by the western governments, and their encouragement through the efforts of the Armenian priests.”¹⁹*

In another report in December 1912, Mayewski wrote that:

“The Dashnak revolutionary society is working to stir up a situation in which Muslims and Armenians will attack each other, and to thus pave the way for Russian intervention.”²⁰

Finally, the Dashnak ideologue Varandian admits that the society "wanted to assure European intervention,"²¹ while Papazian stated, "the aims of their revolts was to assure that the European powers would mix into Ottoman internal affairs."²² At each of their armed revolts the Armenian terrorist committees have always propagated that European intervention would immediately follow. Even some of the committee members believed in this propaganda. In fact, during the occupation of the Ottoman Bank in Istanbul the Armenian terrorist Armen Aknomi committed suicide after having waited in desperation the arrival of the British fleet. It can be seen thus that the basis for the Armenian revolts was not poverty, nor was it oppression or the desire for reform; rather, it was simply the result of a joint effort on the part of the Armenian revolutionary committees and the Armenian church, in conjunction with the Western Powers and Russia, to provide the basis to break up the Ottoman Empire.

In reaction to these revolts, the Ottomans did what other states did in such circumstances, sending armed forces against the rebels to restore order, and for the most part succeeding quickly since very few of the Armenian populace supported or helped the rebels or the revolutionary societies. However for the press and public of Europe, stirred by tales spread by the missionaries and the revolutionary societies themselves, every Ottoman restoration of order was automatically considered a "massacre" of Christians, with the thousands of slaughtered Muslims being ignored and Christian claims against Muslims automatically accepted. In many cases, the European states not only intervened to prevent the Ottomans from restoring order, but also secured the release of many captured terrorists, including those involved in the Zeytun revolt, the occupation of the Ottoman Bank, and the attempted assassination of Sultan Abdulhamid. While most of these were expelled from the Ottoman Empire, with the cooperation of their European

¹⁹ General MAYEIVSKI, *Statistique des Provinces de Van et de Bitlis*, pp. 11 - 13, Petersburg, 1916.

²⁰ SCHEMSI, Kara, op. cit., p. 11.

²¹ VARANDIAN, Mikayel, *History of the Dashnaqtzoutune*, Paris, 1932. p. 302.

²² PAPA ZIAN, K. S., op. cit. p. 19.

sponsors, it did not take long for them to secure forged passports and other documents and to return to Ottoman territory to resume their terroristic activities. Whatever were the claims of the Armenian revolutionary societies and whatever the ambitions of the imperial powers of Europe, there was one major fact, which they simply could not ignore. The Armenians comprised a very small minority of the population in the territories being claimed in their name, namely the six eastern districts claimed as "historic Armenia" (Erzurum, Bitlis, Van, Elazığ, Diyarbakır and Sivas), the two provinces claimed to comprise "Armenian Cilicia" (Aleppo and Adana) and finally Trabzon which was later claimed to have an outlet to the Black Sea coast. Even the French Yellow Book, which among western sources made the largest Armenian population claims, still showed them in a sizeable minority:

	Total Population	Gregorian Armenian Population	Armenian Percent of Total Population
Erzurum	645,702	134,967	20.90
Bitlis	398,625	131,390	32.96
Van	430,000	80,798	18.79
Elaziz	578,814	69,718	12.04
Diyarbakır	471,462	79,129	16.78
Sivas	1,086,015	170,433	15.68
Adana	403,539	97,450	24.14
Aleppo	995,758	37,999	3.81
Trabzon	1,047,700	47,200	4.50

Thus even by these extreme claims, the Armenians still constituted no more than one third of the province' population. According to the Encyclopedia Britannica of 1910, the Armenians were only 15 percent of the area's population as a whole, making it very unlikely that they could in fact achieve independence in any part of the Ottoman Empire without the massive foreign assistance that would have been required to push out the Turkish majorities and replace them with Armenian emigrants.

Russia in fact was only using the Armenians for its own ends. It had no real intention of establishing Armenian independence, either within its own dominions or in Ottoman territory. Almost as soon as the Russians took over the Caucasus, they adopted a policy of Russifying the Armenians as well as establishing their own control over the Armenian Gregorian church in their territory. By virtue of the Polijenia Law of 1836, the powers and duties of the Catholicos of

Etchmiadzin were restricted, while his appointment was to be made by the Czar. In 1882 all Armenian newspapers and schools in the Russian Empire were closed, and in 1903 the state took direct control of all the financial resources of the Armenian Church as well as Armenian establishments and schools. At the same time Russian Foreign Minister Lobanov-Rostowsky adopted his famous goal of "An Armenia without Armenians", a slogan which has been deliberately attributed to the Ottoman administration by some Armenian propagandists and writers in recent years. Whatever the reason, Russian oppression of the Armenians was severe. The Armenian historian Vartanian relates in his *History of the Armenian Movement* that "Ottoman Armenia was completely free in its traditions, religion, culture and language in comparison to Russian Armenia under the Czars." Edgar Granville writes, "The Ottoman Empire was the Armenians' only shelter against Russian oppression."

That Russian intentions were to use the Armenians to annex Eastern Anatolia and not to create an independent Armenia is shown by what happened during World War I. In the secret agreements made among the Entente powers to divide the Ottoman Empire, the territory which the Russians had promised to the Armenians as an autonomous or independent territory was summarily divided between Russia and France without any mention of the Armenians, while the Czar replied to the protests of the Catholicos of Etchmiadzin only that "Russia has no Armenian problem." The Armenian writer Borian thus concludes:

"Czarist Russia at no time wanted to assure Armenian autonomy. For this reason one must consider the Armenians who were working for Armenian autonomy as no more than agents of the Czar to attach Eastern Anatolia to Russia."

The Russians thus have deceived the Armenians for years, and as a result the Armenians have been left with nothing more than an empty dream.

QUESTION 5

DID THE TURKS UNDERTAKE A PLANNED AND SYSTEMATIC MASSACRE OF THE ARMENIANS IN 1915?

The beginning of World War I and the Ottoman entry into the war on November 1, 1914 on the side of Germany and Austria - Hungary against the Entente powers was considered as a great opportunity by the Armenian nationalists. Louise Nalbandian relates that "The Armenian revolutionary committees considered that the most opportune time to begin a general uprising to achieve their goals was when the Ottoman Empire was in a state of war",²³ and thus less able to resist an internal attack.

Even before the war began, in August 1914, the Ottoman leaders met with the Dashnaks at Erzurum in the hope of getting them to support the Ottoman war effort when it came. The Dashnaks promised that if the Ottomans entered the war, they, would do their duty as loyal countrymen in the Ottoman armies. However they failed to live up to this promise, since even before this meeting took place, a secret Dashnak Congress held at Erzurum in June 1914 had already decided to use the oncoming war to undertake a general attack against the Ottoman state.²⁴ The Russian Armenians joined the Russian army in preparing an attack on the Ottomans as soon as war was declared. The Catholicos of Echmiadzin assured the Russian General Governor of the Caucasus, Vranzof Dashkof, that "in return for Russia's forcing the Ottomans to make reforms for the Armenians, all the Russian Armenians would support the Russian war effort without conditions."²⁵ The Catholicos subsequently was received at Tiflis by the Czar, whom he told that "The liberation of the Armenians in Anatolia would lead to the establishment of an autonomous Armenia separated from Turkish suzerainty and that this Armenia could be made possible with the protection of Russia."²⁶ Of course the Russians really intended to use the Armenians to annex Eastern Anatolia, but the Catholicos was told nothing about that.

As soon as Russia declared war on the Ottoman Empire, the Dashnak Society's official organ *Norizon* declared:

*"The Armenians have taken their place on the side of the Entente states is without showing any hesitation whatsoever; they have placed all their forces at the disposition of Russia; and they also are forming volunteer battalions."*²⁷

The Dashnak Committee also ordered its cells that had been preparing to revolt within the Ottoman Empire:

"As soon as the Russians have crossed the borders and the Ottoman

²³ NALBANDIAN, Louise, op. cit., p. 111.

²⁴ *Aspirations et Agissements Revolutionnaires des Comites Armeniens avant et apres la Proclamation de la Constitution Ottomane*, Istanbul, 1917, pp. 144 - 146.

²⁵ TCHALKOUCHIAN, Gr., *Le Livre Rouge*, Paris, 1919, p. 12.

²⁶ TCHALKOUCHIAN, Gr., op. cit.

²⁷ URAS. Esat, op. cit., p. 594.

*armies have started to retreat, you should revolt everywhere. The Ottoman armies thus will be placed between two fires. If the Ottoman armies advance against the Russians, on the other hand, their Armenian soldiers should leave their units with their weapons, form bandit forces, and unite with the Russians.”*²⁸

The Hunchak Committee instructions to its organizations in the Ottoman territory were:

*“The Hunchak Committee will use all means to assist the Entente states, devoting all its forces to the struggle to assure victory in Armenia, Cilicia, the Caucasus and Azerbaijan as the ally of the Entente states, and in particular of Russia.”*²⁹

And even the Armenian representative in the Ottoman Parliament for Van, Papazyan, soon turned out to be a leading guerilla fighter against the Ottomans, publishing a proclamation that:

*“The volunteer Armenian regiments in the Caucasus should prepare themselves for battle, serve as advance units for the Russian armies to help them capture the key positions in the districts where the Armenians live, and advance into Anatolia, joining the Armenian units already there.”*³⁰

As the Russian forces advanced into Ottoman territory in eastern Anatolia, they were led by advanced units composed of volunteer Ottoman and Russian Armenians, who were joined by the Armenians who deserted the Ottoman armies and went over to the Russians. Many of these also formed bandit forces with weapons and ammunition which they had for years been stocking in Armenian and missionary churches and schools, going on to raid Ottoman supply depots both to increase their own arms and to deny them to the Ottoman army as it moved to meet this massive Russian invasion. Within a few months after the war began, these Armenian guerilla forces, operating in close coordination with the Russians, were savagely attacking Turkish cities, towns and villages in the East, massacring their inhabitants without mercy, while at the same time working to sabotage the Ottoman army's war effort by destroying roads and bridges, raiding caravans, and doing whatever else they could to ease the Russian occupation. The atrocities committed by the Armenian volunteer forces accompanying the Russian army were so severe that the Russian commanders themselves were compelled to withdraw them from the fighting fronts and send them to rear guard duties. The memoirs of all too many Russian officers who served in the East at this time are filled with accounts of the revolting atrocities committed by these Armenian guerillas, which were savage even by the relatively primitive standards of war then observed in such areas.³¹

Nor did these Armenian atrocities affect only Turks and other Muslims. The Armenian guerillas had never been happy with the failure of the Greeks and Jews to fully support their revolutionary programs. As a result in Trabzon and vicinity they massacred thousands of Greeks,

²⁸ HOCAOĞLU, Mehmed, *Tarihte Ermeni Mezalimi ve Ermeniter*, Istanbul, 1976, pp. 570-571.

²⁹ *Aspirations et Agissements revolutionnaires des Comites Armeniens*, pp. 151 - 13.

³⁰ URAS, Esat, op. cit., pp. 596-600.

³¹ *Journal de Cuerre du Deuxieme Regiment d'Artillerie de Forteresse Russe d'Erzeoroum*, 1919.

while in the area of Hakkari it was the Jews who were rounded up and massacred by the Armenian guerillas.³² Basically the aim of these atrocities was to leave only Armenians in the territories being claimed for the new Armenian state; all others therefore were massacred or forced to flee for their lives so as to secure the desired Armenian majority of the population in preparation for the peace settlement.

Leading the first Armenian units who crossed the Ottoman border in the company of the Russian invaders was the former Ottoman Parliamentary representative for Erzurum, Karekin Pastirmaciyan, who now assumed the revolutionary name Armen Garo. Another former Ottoman parliamentarian, Hamparsum Boyaciyan, led the Armenian guerilla forces who ravaged Turkish villages behind the lines under the nickname "Murad", specifically ordering that "Turkish children also should be killed as they form a danger to the Armenian nation." Another former Member of Parliament, Papazyan, led the Armenian guerilla forces that ravaged the areas of Van, Bitlis and Mush.

In March 1915 the Russian forces began to move toward Van. Immediately, on April 11, 1915 the Armenians of Van began a general revolt, massacring all the Turks in the vicinity so as to make possible its quick and easy conquest by the Russians. Little wonder that Czar Nicholas II sent a telegram of thanks to the Armenian Revolutionary Committee of Van on April 21, 1915, "thanking it for its services to Russia." The Armenian newspaper Gochnak, published in the United States, also proudly reported on May 24, 1915 that "only, 1,500 Turks remain in Van", the rest having been slaughtered.

The Dashnak representative told the Armenian National Congress assembled at Tiflis in February 1915 that "Russia provided 242,000 rubles before the war even began to arm and prepare the Ottoman Armenians to undertake revolts", giving some idea of how the Russian-Armenian alliance had long prepared to undermine the Ottoman war effort.³³ Under these circumstances, with the Russians advancing along a wide front in the East, with the Armenian guerillas spreading death and destruction while at the same time attacking the Ottoman armies from the rear, with the Allie's also invading the Empire along a wide front from Galicia to Iraq, the Ottoman decision to deport Armenians from the war areas was a moderate and entirely legitimate measure of self-defense.

Even after the revolt and massacres at Van, the Ottoman government made one final effort to secure general Armenian support for the war effort, summoning the Patriarch, some Armenian members of Parliament, and other delegates to a meeting where they were warned that drastic measures would be taken unless Armenians stopped slaughtering Muslims and working to undermine the war effort. When there was no evident lessening of 'the Armenian attacks, the government finally acted. On April 24, 1915 the Armenian revolutionary committees were closed and 235 of their leaders were arrested for activities against the state. It is the date of these arrests that in recent years has been annually commemorated by Armenian nationalist groups throughout the world in commemoration of the "massacre" that they claim took place at this time. No such massacre, however, took place, at this or any other time during the war. In the face of the great danger~ which the Empire faced at that time, great care was taken to make

³² SCHEMSI, Kara, op. cit., p. 41 and p. 49.

³³ URAS, Esat, op. cit., p. 604.

certain that the Armenians were treated carefully and compassionately as they were deported, generally to Syria and Palestine when they came from southern Anatolia, and to Iraq if they, came from the north. The Ottoman Council of Ministers thus ordered:

*“When those of the Armenians resident in the aforementioned towns and villages who have to be moved are transferred to their places of settlement and are on the road, their comfort must be assured and their lives and property protected; after their arrivals their food should be paid for out of Refugees Appropriations until they are definitely settled in their new homes. Property and land should be distributed to them in accordance with their previous financial situation as well as their current needs; and for those among them needing further help, the government should build houses, provide cultivators and artisans with seed, tools, and equipment.”*³⁴

And it went on to specify:

“This order is entirely intended against the extension of the Armenian Revolutionary Committees; therefore do not execute it in such a manner that might cause the mutual massacre of Muslims and Armenians.”

*“Make arrangements for special officials to accompany the groups of Armenians who are being relocated, and make sure they are provided with, food and other needed things, paying the cost out of the allotments set aside for emigrants.”*³⁵

*“The food needed by the emigrants while traveling until they reach their destinations must be provided ... for poor emigrants by credit for the installation of the emigrants. The camps provided for transported persons should be kept under regular supervision; necessary steps for their well-being should be taken, and order and security assured. Make certain that indigent emigrants are given enough food and that their health is assured by daily visits by a doctor... Sick people, poor people, women and children should be sent by rail, and others on mules, in carts or on foot according to their power of endurance. Each convoy should be accompanied by a detachment of guards, and the food supply for each convoy should be guarded until the destination is reached... In cases where the emigrants are attacked, either in the camps or during the journeys, all efforts should be taken to repel the attacks immediately...”*³⁶

Out of the some 700,000 Armenians who were transported in this way until early 1917, certainly some lives were lost, as the result both of large scale military and bandit activities then going on in the areas through which they passed, as well as the general insecurity and blood feuds which some tribal forces sought to carry out as the caravans passed through their territories. In addition, the deportations and settlement of the deported Armenians took place at a

³⁴ Council of Ministers Decrees, Prime Ministry's Archives, Istanbul, Volume 198, Decree 1331/163, May 1915.

³⁵ British Foreign Office Archives, Public Record Office, 371/9158/E 5523.

³⁶ British Foreign Office Archives, 371 /9158/E 5523.

time when the Empire was suffering from severe shortages of fuel, food, medicine and other supplies as well as large-scale plague and famine. It should not be forgotten that, at the same time, an entire Ottoman army of 90,000 men was lost in the East as a result of severe shortages, or that through the remainder of the war as many as three or four million Ottoman subjects of all religions died as a result of the same conditions that afflicted the deportees. How tragic and unfeeling it is, therefore, for Armenian nationalists to blame the undoubted suffering of the Armenians during the war to something more than the same anarchical conditions, which afflicted all the Sultan's subjects. This is the truth behind the false claims distorting historical facts by ill devised mottoes such as the "first genocide of the twentieth century," which Armenian propagandists and terror groups try to revive to justify the same tactics of terror today which brought such horrors to the Ottoman Empire during the last century.

QUESTION 6

DID TALAT PASHA SEND SECRET TELEGRAMS ORDERING MASSACRES?

Armenian propaganda claiming that massacres were an Ottoman government policy requires proof that such a decision was in fact made. For this purpose the Armenians produced a number of telegrams attributed to Talat Pasha, supposed found by British forces commanded by General Allenby when they captured Aleppo in 1918. It was claimed that they were found in the office of an Ottoman official named Naim Bey, and that they were not destroyed only because the British occupation came with unexpected speed. Samples of these telegrams were published in Paris in 1920 by an Armenian author named Aram Andonian;³⁷ and they also were presented at the Berlin trial of the Armenian terrorist Tehlirian, who killed Talat Pasha. Nevertheless, the court neither considered these documents as "evidence" nor was involved in any decision claiming the authenticity of them.

These documents were, however, entirely fabricated, and the claims deriving from them therefore cannot be sustained. They were in fact published by the Daily Telegraph of London in 1922,³⁸ which also attributed them to a discovery made by Allenby's army. But when the British Foreign Office enquired about them at the War Office, and with Allenby himself, it was discovered that they had not been discovered by the British army but, rather, had been produced by an Armenian group in Paris. In addition, examination of the photographs provided in the Andonian volume shows clearly that neither in form, script or phraseology did they resemble normal Ottoman administrative documents, and that they were, therefore, rather crude forgeries.

Following the Entente occupation of Istanbul, the British and the French arrested a number of Ottoman political and military figures and some intellectuals on charges of war crimes. In this they were given substantial assistance by the Ottoman Liberal Union Party, which had been placed in power by the Sultan after the war, and which was anxious to do anything it could to definitively destroy the Union and Progress Party and its leaders, who had long been political enemies. Most of the prisoners were sent off to imprisonment in Malta, but the four Union and Progress leaders who had fled the country just before the occupation were tried and sentenced to death in absentia in Istanbul. Three other Government officials were sentenced to death and executed, but it was discovered later that the evidence on which the convictions had been based was false.

In the meantime, the British looked everywhere to find evidence against those who had been sent to Malta. Despite the complete cooperation of the Ottoman Liberal Union government, nothing incriminating could be found among the Ottoman government documents. Similar searches in the British archives were fruitless. Finally, in desperation, the British Foreign Office turned to the American archives in Washington, but in reply, one of their representatives, R. C. Craigie, wrote to Lord Curzon:

³⁷ ANDONIAN, Aram, *Documents Officiels concernant les Massacres Armeniens*, Paris, Armenian National Delegation, 1920.

³⁸ Daily Telegraph, 29 May 1922.

*“I regret to inform your Lordship that there was nothing therein which could be used as evidence against the Turks who are at present being detained at Malta ... no concrete facts being given which could constitute satisfactory incriminating evidence.... The reports in question do not appear in any case to contain evidence against these Turks which would be useful even for the purpose of corroborating information already in the possession of His Majesty's Government..”*³⁹

Uncertain as to what should be done with prisoners, who already had been held for two years, without trial, and without even any charges being filed or evidence produced, the Foreign Office applied for advice to the Law Officers of the Crown in London, who concluded on 29 July, 1921:

*“Up to the present no statements have been taken from witnesses who can depose to the truth of the charges made against the prisoners. It is indeed uncertain whether any witnesses can be found...”*⁴⁰

At this time the "documents" produced by Andonian were available, but despite their desperate search for evidence which could be presented in a court of law, the British never used them because it was evident that they were forgeries. As a result, the prisoners were quietly released in 1921, without charges ever having been filed or evidence produced.

Moreover the Ottoman archives contain a number of orders, whose authenticity can definitely be substantiated, issued on the same dates, in which Talat Pasha ordered investigations to be made to find and punish those responsible for the attacks, which were being made on the deportation caravans. It is hardly likely that he would have been ordering massacres on one hand and investigations and punishments for such crimes on the other.

An American aid organization called "the Near East Relief Society" was allowed by the Ottoman Government to stay and fulfill its functions in Anatolia during the deportations. Even following the entry of U.S.A. into war on the side of Entente powers against Ottoman Empire, the same organization was permitted to remain in Anatolia. This was dealt in the reports of the American Ambassador Elkus in Istanbul. In this case, if an order for "massacring Armenians" had been given, would the Ottoman Government have allowed to an American organization to be witness to the "massacres". In other words, it is ridiculous to suppose that the Ottomans said to America: "We are massacring Armenians. Why don't you have a look at it?" Such an allegation could never be a logical explanation of historic facts.

Finally, and in the end most important, when the war came to an end, the Armenian population still was substantially in place in Western Anatolia, Thrace and Istanbul. Had the Ottoman government ordered massacres, evidently they too would have been killed. And for that matter, had the Ottoman government wanted to eliminate all the Armenians in the Empire, it could have done so, far more easily by killing and disposing of them where they lived, rather than undertaking a large scale deportation of those in the Eastern war zones under the eyes of foreign observers.

³⁹ 13 July 1921; British Foreign Office Archives, 371 /6504/8519.

⁴⁰ British Foreign Office Archives, 371/6504/E 8745.

The claim, thus, that the Ottoman government ordered and carried out a general massacre of Armenians in the Empire cannot be sustained and is disproved by the facts.

QUESTION 7

DID 1,5 MILLION ARMENIANS DIE DURING WORLD WAR I?

Armenian propagandists claim that as many as 1,5 to 2 million Armenians died as the result of "massacres". Like the rest of their claims, this also is highly exaggerated, with the number claimed being increased over time. At first, immediately following the war the Armenians claimed that as many as 600,000 had been killed. Later they raised it to 800.000 and now they talk about two million and tomorrow they may talk even three million. The 1918 edition of Encyclopedia Britannica said that 600,000 Armenians had been killed; in its 1968 edition this was raised to 1,5 million.

How many Armenians did die? It is impossible to determine the number exactly, since no complete death records or statistics were kept during those years. The only basis on which even an estimate can be made is the actual Armenian population in the Ottoman Empire at the time. Even here figures vary widely, with the Armenians claiming far more than other sources:

	<u>Claimed Armenian Population</u>
1. The Armenian author Leart, based on figures provided by the Patriarchate of Istanbul	2,560,000
2. The Armenian historian Basmajian	2,380,000
3. The Armenian National Committee at the Paris Peace Conference	2,250,000
4. The Armenian historian Kevork Aslan	1,800,000
5. The French Yellow Book	1,555,000
6. Encyclopedia Britannica	1,500,000
7. Constenson	1,400,000
8. Lynch	1,345,000
9. Official Ottoman census statistics for 1914	1,295,000
10. Annual Register (London)	1,056,000

Leaving aside the Armenian figures, which are evidently exaggerated, the western estimates vary between 1,056,000 and 1,555,000, which more or less correspond with the official Ottoman census report of 1,295,000. How, then, could 1,5 million Armenians have been

massacred even had every Armenian in the Empire been killed, which of course did not happen?

Recent investigation by Turkish scholars show that, not only the loss of Armenian lives were much less than the figures that the propagandists endeavour to get accepted, but also deaths caused by famine, sickness, contagious diseases, severe climatic conditions and actual combat are high and do probably constitute an overwhelming majority. To assert that deaths were also caused by reasons enumerated above is not propaganda, but mere realism in view of the fact that the Turks have lost several millions due to the same. The Armenians were living under similar war conditions and suffered accordingly. A Turkish Army of 90,000 soldiers froze to death in the Eastern Front and perished before the chance to fight the enemy. According to Ahmed Emin's doctoral dissertation, submitted to Columbia University just after the First World War, the Turks had lost 467,000 soldiers due to sickness and epidemics. It is expressing the actual to state that climate and epidemics caused by cholera, typhus, typhoid fever, small pox and the like have hit the Armenian population just as severely as they affected the Turks. It should also be born in mind, while assessing the ratio of the Armenians living in the Ottoman Empire before and after the First World War, that this people within the short period of eight years between 1914 and 1922 participated in eleven conventional and civil wars, in which they inflicted damages on their adversaries and suffered in return. To account the Turks also for the Armenian losses incurred fighting the Turks or others is neither impartial, nor accurate. Bogos Nubar Pasha, the head of the Armenian Delegation to the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, accepts in an official memorandum addressed to the French Foreign that between six to seven hundred thousand Armenians were deplaced and 390,000 had reached their destinations in Aleppo, Baghdad, Palestine or elsewhere. The great majority of the remainder, the exact figure of which cannot be ascertained, has lost their lives on account of sickness, epidemics, lack of proper nourishment and climatic conditions that touched all. It is another neglected but important fact that many thousands of Turks were also killed by regular Armenian troops or irregular bands.

A minor but still meaningful detail is that the Armenians were fed and clothed by American missionaries, with the permission and approval of the came Talât Pasha, during a time of famine which took many Turkish lives. Likewise, thousands of Armenians were saved thanks to American relief work, the money for which was paradoxically raised in the United States as a result of anti-Turkish campaigns. But is not this the only example in history where a belligerent country allows the citizens of another belligerent in the opposing camp to feed, cloth and even help educate the people (the Armenians) of which the first mentioned state (the Ottomans) is accused of exterminating?

QUESTION 8

IS THE SEVRES AGREEMENT STILL IN FORCE?

The Armenian propagandists claim that the Sevres Agreement, which provided for the establishment of an Armenian State in eastern Anatolia, is still legally in force, and use it to base their claims for the "return" of "Armenian lands". In fact, this agreement was never put into force. It was superseded and replaced by the Treaty of Lausanne, and thus no longer has the force of law. In addition, after the Dashnaks established an Armenian Republic in Erivan on 28 May 1918, it signed the Batum Treaty of 4 June 1918 with the Ottoman Government. This treaty was described by Foreign Minister Hadisian of the Armenian Republic as involving the full disavowal on the part of the latter of all claims on the territory or people of the Ottoman Empire including its Armenians and the lands claimed by the Armenian nationalists:

“The Armenians of Turkey no longer think of separating from the Ottoman Empire. Their problems no longer are even: the concern of relations between the Armenian Republic and the Ottomans. Relations between the Ottoman Empire and the Armenian Republic are excellent, and they must remain that way in the future. All Armenian political parties feel the same way. Continuation of the good neighborly spirit is one of the principal points of the program recently announced by the Armenian Government, of which I am Foreign Minister.”⁴¹

Even the Dashnak organ Hairenik stated on 28 June 1918:

“Russia's policy of hostility toward Turkey emboldened the Armenians of the Caucasus; that is why the Caucasus Armenians were involved in clashes between two friendly races. Thank goodness that this situation did not last too long. Following the Russian Revolution, the Armenians of the Caucasus understood that their security could be achieved only by having good relations with Turkey, and they stretched out their hands to Turkey. Turkey also wanted to forget the events of the past, and grasped the out-stretched hand in friendship. We agree that the Armenian Question has been resolved and left to history. The mutual feelings of suspicion and enmity created by foreign agents have been eliminated.”⁴²

These declarations make it clear that the Armenian Question was closed by the agreements concluded following World War I; that the events that had taken place were the responsibility of the Russians and Armenians, not of the Turk, and that if anyone had been mistreated it was the Turks, no-one else.

It is true that the World War I settlement was reopened for a time by the Armenian Republic. Despite the Dashnak declarations, Armenian bands began to raid into eastern Anatolia

⁴¹ SCHEMSI, Kara, op. cit., p. 31.

⁴² SCHEMSI, Kara, op. cit., pp. 31 - 32.

in the summer of 1918. On 28 May 1919, first anniversary of the foundation of the Armenian Republic by the Dashnaks, it declared that "Armenia has annexed Eastern Anatolia" thus laying claim to the territories of eastern Anatolia which had been returned to the Ottoman Empire following the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. To examine the Armenian claims and recommend a settlement, American President Wilson sent an American investigation committee to Anatolia in the fall of 1919 under the leadership of General James G. Harbord. It toured through Anatolia during September and October, and then reported to Congress that:

*"The Turks and Armenians lived in peace side by side for centuries; that the Turks suffered as much as the Armenians at the time of the deportations; that only 20% of the Turkish villagers who went to war should be able to return to their homes; That at the start of World War I and before the Armenians never had anything approaching a majority of the population in the territories called Armenia; they would not have a majority even if all the deported Armenians were returned; and the claims that returning Armenians would be in danger were not justified."*⁴³

As a result of this report, in April 1920 the American Congress rejected the proposal, which had been made to establish an American Mandate over Anatolia for the purpose of enabling the Armenians to establish their own state in the East.

On 10 August 1920 the Armenians joined in signing the long-hoped-for Treaty of Sevres, which provided that the Ottoman government would recognize the establishment of an independent Armenian state, with boundaries to be determined by President Wilson. This treaty was, however, signed only by the Ottoman Government in Istanbul, while most Turks, and most of the country accepted the leadership of the Ankara government, led by Mustapha Kemal, who actively opposed the treaty and its provisions.

In the meantime, following the Armistice of Mudros, which concluded the fighting of World War I in 1918, the province of Adana was occupied by the French. The British occupied Urfa, Maras and Antep but later left these also to the French. As French forces occupied these provinces, in south and southeast Anatolia, they were accompanied by Armenians wearing French uniforms, who immediately began to ravage Turkish villages and massacred large numbers of Turks. These atrocities stirred the Turks of the area to resist, once again leading to the spreading of propaganda in Europe that Turks were massacring Armenians. This time, however, since the French themselves were forced to send the Armenians to the rear to end the atrocities, the Armenian claims were evidently false, and no one really believed them.

After the American Congress rejected a Mandate over Anatolia, the Armenian Republic in the Caucasus, starting in June 1920, attacked Turkey, sending guerilla bands as well as organized army units into eastern Anatolia, and undertaking widespread massacres of the settled population. The Ankara government moved to the defense in September, and within a short time the Armenian forces were routed eastern Anatolia was regained, and order and security re-established. By the Treaty of Gumru (Alexandropol) signed by the Ankara Government and the Armenian Republic on 3 December 1920, both sides accepted the new boundaries and

⁴³ URAS, Esat, op. cit., pp. 682-683.

acknowledged that the provisions of the Treaty of Sevres were null and void. The Armenians also renounced all territorial claims against Turkey.

Shortly after this the Red Army entered Ervin and established the Soviet Armenian Government. However through a revolt in Ervin on 18 February 1921 the Dachas once again took over control of Armenia. The new Vatican Government sent a committee to Ankara on 18 March asking for Turkish assistance against the Bolsheviks, a strange event indeed considering that only two years previously the Dachas had organized an Armenian invasion of Turkey. The Daphne government did not last very long, however, and the Soviets soon regained control of Ervin.

On 16 March 1921 Turkey signed the Moscow Treaty with the Soviet Union, by which the boundaries between Turkey and the Soviet Union were definitively drawn. As arranged in this agreement, on 13 October 1921 Turkey signed the Cars Agreement with Soviet Armenia, confirming the new boundaries between the two as well as their agreement that the provisions of the Treaty of Sevres were null and void once and for all.

The situation on the southern front was settled by the Treaty of Ankara signed with France on 20 October 1921. France evacuated not only its own troops, but also the Armenian guerillas and volunteers who had cooperated with them, and most of the Armenians who had gathered at Adana in the hope of establishing an Armenian state there. Most of these Armenians were settled in Lebanon. This agreement made possible the subsequent return of Hate to Turkey, thus fulfilling the provisions of the Turkish national pact, which had been drawn up by Mustapha Kemal, and the leaders of the Turkish War for Independence.

All these settlements effectively nullified Armenian ambitions for a state in eastern Anatolia. The Treaty of Lausanne, signed on 24 July 1923 in place of the Treaty of Sevres, did not even mention the Armenians, which is why Armenian nationalists even today try to resurrect The Sevres treaty, which never really was put into force.

QUESTION 9

ARE THE ARMENIANS OF TURKEY BEING PERSECUTED TODAY?

Armenian nationalist propagandists from time to time claim that the Armenians of Turkey are being persecuted. This is done, not only to reinforce their claims that the Turks persecuted Armenians throughout history, but also to provide a unifying bond for Armenian action groups and to get foreign states to intervene in Turkish internal affairs. Like the other Armenian claims, this also is not based on fact.

The 40,000 - 50,000 Armenians living in Turkey today are in no way separated from the remainder of the population. They are full Turkish citizens, with the same rights and privileges as other Turkish citizens, with their lives, liberties and happiness guaranteed by law. The Armenians of Turkey continue to worship in their own churches and teach in their own language in their own schools. They publish newspapers, books and magazines in Armenian and have their own social and cultural institutions in addition to participating fully in those open to all Turks. The Armenian community in Istanbul has 30 schools, 17 cultural and social organizations, two daily newspapers called Jamanak and Marmara, two sports clubs, named Shishly (Şişli) and Taksim, and many health establishments as well as numerous religious foundations set up to support these activities.

Most of the Turkish Armenians continue to be Gregorian, and are led by Patriarch Shnork Kaloustian. In addition there are a number of Catholic and Protestant Armenians who have their own churches and other institutions.

The Armenians of Turkey are in no way persecuted. They are as free to live prosperous and happy lives, as are Turks of other religions. Many of them are prosperous merchants as well as leading members of the arts and professions. The Armenians of Turkey are proud to be Turkish citizens and, along with all other Turks, deeply resent the lies about their country spread in their name by outside Armenian nationalists and terror groups. In particular they abhor the terroristic attacks being made by these groups on Turkish diplomats, citizens, and interests throughout the world.

On November 1st 1981 Armenian Patriarch Kaloustian held a memorial service at the Patriarchate to commemorate the Turkish diplomats slaughtered by Armenian terrorists and to condemn these acts done in the name of the Armenian people. More recently, in February 1982 Patriarch Kaloustian vigorously denied the claims made by the Council of Europe that Turkey is oppressing its minorities, stating, "The Armenians of Turkey are Turkish citizens, they live in peace in Turkey, they practice their religion freely and benefit from the freedom of belief." Following the Armenian terrorist assassination of Turkish Consul-General Kemal Arıkan in Los Angeles on 28 January, 1982, he stated "The Turkish Armenians, like all other Turkish citizens, learned of this with great sorrow", and he appealed for "all Armenians living outside Turkey to rise up against these illegal activities and murders." Turkish Armenians themselves thus put the lie to this last claim of the Armenian propagandists.

EPILOGUE

After examining the basic allegations directed by the Armenian propaganda against Turkey following conclusions can be reached: First, it becomes clearly evident that Armenian allegations are false when compared with historical facts. Secondly, it becomes obvious how the Armenian propaganda created documents in order to support its accusations.

Let's take a look at their demands from Turkey which are intended to be constructed on the basis of such false accusations: They ask Turkey to recognize the Genocide and to pay for indemnification. Turks are further required to return the "Armenian lands."

It has been indicated above in detail that the Armenians were not submitted to Genocide. Since there was no Genocide, Turks cannot accept something, which did not happen as well as claims pertaining to indemnification for a purposely-created myth.

As to the territorial demands, neither are the lands in question "Armenian home-land", nor is the Treaty of Sevres in force. The Armenian minority lived before side by side with the Turks in Eastern Anatolia. No ethnic group could have the right to claim for territorial rights on the lands where it once lived during a period in history. It would be even difficult to imagine into what kind of anarchy the world should have been thrown if every nation or ethnic group had been tempted into and involved in capturing the territories where they lived before. On the other hand, the Armenian territorial demands appear to be even more senseless considering that currently there are no Armenians living in Eastern Anatolia, that Armenians would not be willing to leave their countries where they are today living prosperously. And finally there are more than twelve million Turkish people living today in Eastern Anatolia.

In the light of above-mentioned facts the Armenian allegations are bound to be baseless and their claims do not make any sense.

When further examined, the issues in question are perceived to be related with other problems, which have no relevance to Armenians.

In fact, a thorough study of history clearly reveals that for the last hundred years Armenians have served to alien interests in return of some promises of others but they could not achieve anything when those foreign interests were realized. Again, today the issues in question are related to alien interests. Therefore, it would be appropriate to ask how long the Armenians would continue to serve as a tool in the hands of other powers. Another question, which inevitably comes to mind, is whether the present bloodshed would continue. It is up to the Armenians to look for the answers to these questions for this so-called cause is being defended in their name.

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