

ADL Supreme Council President Vartan Nazerian Receives Gratitude Medal

YEREVAN — Armenian Democratic Liberal Party (Ramgavar) Supreme Council Chairman Vartan Nazerian received the Gratitude Medal of the Republic of Armenia from President Serzh Sargsyan on Sunday, January 28.

The Gratitude Medal is given out traditionally on Army Day, in gratitude for support shown toward the Armed Forces of the Republic of Armenia.

Nazerian is a resident of Los Angeles.



Vartan Nazerian receives the Medal of Gratitude from President Serzh Sargsyan.



Vartan Nazerian toasts President Serzh Sargsyan.

Congressmen Call on US Secretary of Treasury to Renegotiate Double-Tax Treaty with Armenia

WASHINGTON — US Representatives David Valadao (R-CA) and Brad Sherman (D-CA) are collecting signatures on a bipartisan letter urging their Congressional colleagues to request that Secretary of the Treasury Steven Mnuchin renegotiate the existing, outdated Double Tax Treaty with Armenia, an obsolete Cold War-era accord, recognized today by the US but not Armenia, that was negotiated with the now defunct USSR more than four decades ago, the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA) announced.

The Valadao-Sherman letter notes that “The existing Soviet-era treaty does not reflect the increasing complexity of a globalized world and the friendship between the American and Armenian peoples,” then calls upon Secretary Mnuchin to, “prioritize the renegotiation of the double tax treaty with Armenia.”

The letter also underscores that “the complexities of the international tax structure should not discourage American and Armenian companies from conducting business with each other due to double taxation. The need for updated guidelines that reflect the current state of US-Armenian relations and recently passed tax reform legislation cannot be understated.”

“We want to thank Representatives Valadao and Sherman for spearheading Congressional outreach to Secretary Mnuchin in support of an updated, working US-Armenia Tax Treaty that will — by ending the threat of double taxation — break down a key barrier to the growth of bilateral trade and investment,” said ANCA Government Affairs Director Raffi Karakashian. “We join with them in encouraging their House colleagues to support the timely negotiation of this mutually-beneficial and long overdue accord.”

The full text of the letter follows:

“Dear Secretary Mnuchin, We are writing you with regards to the current US tax treaty with the Republic of Armenia. The current tax treaty between the United States and Armenia is insufficient for the needs of the two countries, as it was last negotiated with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) during the Cold War in 1973. We believe the unrealized benefits of an updated double tax treaty between Washington and Yerevan necessitate immediate negotiations, which could be based upon the frameworks of treaties recently ratified with other nations. In fact, the Armenian Embassy has said it would be

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Former TCA Central Committee Member Antoine Bazarbashian Dies

WYNNEWOOD, Penn. — Antoine S. Bazarbashian passed away peacefully in his sleep on January 23.

Born in Beirut, Lebanon, to Hester and Sarkis Bazarbashian, Bazarbashian came to the United States in 1960. His career as a lithographer began shortly after he immigrated.

He was a devoted father and husband. His family was his pride and joy in life.

He was well known for his quick wit and comedic timing.

see BAZARBASHIAN, page 8



Germany Appoints Honorary Consul in Gyumri

By Muriel Mirak-Weissbach
Special to the Mirror-Spectator

tions between the two countries, on the political, economic and cultural level to new levels.

The official ceremony took place on January 26, when the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany Matthias Kiesler introduced the newly appointed honorary consul, Alexan Ter-Minasyan, to a large group of well-wishers. Handing him the Consular License of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he announced the launch of the consulate in Gyumri.

In his remarks, the ambassador said, “In Gyumri, there is already an Honorary Consul from Italy and for a long time there was a necessity that we had our permanent representative in

see CONSUL, page 5

BERLIN — Gyumri has good reason to celebrate. One of its most prominent sons has been chosen as the honorary consul of Germany and this will bring rela-



Alexan Ter-Minasyan

NEWS IN BRIEF

Turkish Authorities Launch Probe against HDP MP Baydemir

ISTANBUL (Armenpress) — Authorities in Ankara launched an investigation against Osman Baydemir, a politician known for recognizing the Armenian Genocide. Baydemir is a member of the Kurdish-majority HDP party in the National Assembly.

The reason for the probe was an online post made by Baydemir regarding military operations of Turkey in Afrin, Diken reports.

Baydemir said on social media: “Afrin is being bombarded in order not to allow the Kurdish people to have a status.”

During a parliamentary session, he displayed photos of Kurdish children who were killed as result of the operations, and asked: “What’s their fault? Only being Kurds?”

The prosecution said in a statement that Baydemir has called the Turkish forces “occupiers,” “insulted the supporters of the operations,” “called on NATO to intervene in Turkey’s operations,” “urged the people to take the streets.” The investigation was launched on articles including inciting hatred and animosity and insulting the Turkish nation, state system and the Republic of Turkey.

In 2014, Baydemir visited the Genocide memorial in Armenia.

BBC Presents Report On Werfel’s Forty Days of Musa Dagh

LONDON (Armenpress) — BBC Radio 3 has prepared a nearly 50-minute report on Franz Werfel’s *The Forty Days of Musa Dagh*, published in 1933.

The story is about a guerilla army of Armenian villagers holding out against overwhelming Turkish forces on the mountain of Musa Dagh in 1915, before evacuation by French forces.

BBC Reporter Maria Margaronis notes that Germany, a former ally of the Ottoman Empire, rejected any guilt by association for the Armenian Genocide, but the assassination of Talaat Bey, former Ottoman Minister of the Interior and the key architect of the Armenian extermination, who was gunned down in Berlin in 1921, caused a furor.

The subsequent trial became a major media event.

Werfel, already a noted poet and author, toured the Middle East in 1929 with his new wife, Alma Mahler, where he encountered Armenian refugee children. Their plight was the spark for his work. For both Werfel and its many readers *The Forty Days of Musa Dagh* was not just an epic tribute to Armenian resistance but a warning. Werfel’s works were burned and banned after Anschluss and in 1938 he and Alma Mahler fled to America. The program can be heard on <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p05wgvsy>

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ARMENIA

News From Armenia

Speaker Meets With Slovak Counterpart

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Speaker of Parliament Ara Babloyan and his delegation met with Andrej Danko, Speaker of the Slovakian Parliament on January 29 in Bratislava.

The delegation included Vice Speaker Eduard Sharmazanov, MP Marina Margaryan, MP Aram Sargsyan and MP Armenuhi Kyureghyan, the Parliament's press service said.

During the meeting Babloyan spoke on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of establishing diplomatic ties between Armenia and Slovakia, and mentioned that during these years the countries formed warm partnership, based on cooperation and political dialogue in different areas.

"In 2018 Slovakia marks the 100th anniversary of the first Czechoslovak Republic. I congratulate you on this significant anniversary and wish you welfare and happiness. It is symbolic that this year also marks the 100th anniversary of the first Republic of Armenia. Our people, 1.5 million of whom fell victim to genocide in 1915, only three years later in 1918, found the strength to restore its statehood which was destroyed for centuries," Babloyan said.

The sides also discussed issues related to further cooperation between the two countries.

PM Meets with Heads of Canadian and UAE Companies in Davos

DAVOS, Switzerland – In the framework of the World Economic Forum in Davos, on January 25, Prime Minister Karen Karapetyan met with Bodur al-Qasimi, head of the Sharjah Investment and Development Authority (United Arab Emirates).

Karapetyan presented the process of reforms in Armenia, aimed at improving the investment climate, and creating a more favorable business environment. He thanked Qasimi for the renovation program her family had implemented several years ago at Haghtsin monastic complex.

In turn, Bodur al-Qasimi noted that Armenia is viewed as an interesting market and a good platform for entering other major markets. Bodur al-Qasimi said she was impressed with Armenia's cultural heritage and was glad that her company had contributed to the rehabilitation of one of the most beautiful monasteries in Armenia.

Karapetyan's next meeting was with John M. Beck, founder, president and chief executive officer of Aeon Group Inc., Canada.

The premier presented the reforms implemented and the business opportunities available in Armenia, as well as a number of public-private partnership-based projects.

Armenia-US Parliamentary Group Meets with Ambassador

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Members of the Armenia-US parliamentary friendship group led by Vice Speaker of the Parliament, Head of the friendship group Arpine Hovhannisyan on January 30 met with US Ambassador to Armenia Richard Mills, the Parliament told Armenpress. The Parliament's Vice Speaker attached importance to the continuous development of relations with the US and further deepening of the cooperation in different spheres, in this context highlighting the role of interparliamentary ties and parliamentary diplomacy.

Arpine Hovhannisyan praised US assistance in democracy development, strengthening of civil society and implementation of reforms in different spheres in Armenia.

Mills presented the new US national security strategy to the friendship group members. The goals defined by the US national security strategy directly touch upon Armenia the ambassador said, adding that the guarantor for continuous friendship between Armenia and the US. During the meeting the members of the friendship group also highlighted the stable development of the Armenia-US relations and the deepening of cooperation.

Production Halted at Armenian Copper Mine

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – Amid continuing criticism from environmentalists, a leading Armenian mining company has suspended production operations at a massive copper deposit in Lori province, citing the need to repair its waste disposal facilities.

The company, Vallex Group, confirmed on Tuesday, January 30, that some of its 1,215 employees working at the Teghut deposit were sent on an indefinite leave on January 12. A Vallex spokeswoman said more of them will be told on Wednesday not to report for work until further notice. She gave no numbers.

In a separate written statement to RFE/RL's Armenian service (Azatutyun.am), Vallex attributed the measure to the need to conduct "planned prophylactic repairs." It said it will specifically bring "technological parameters" of industrial waste flowing into a dump near the mine into conformity with "new standards" for environment protection.

In recent months, environment protection groups have repeatedly reported toxic leaks from the dump contaminating a nearby river. They have accused Vallex of operating with disregard for environmental standards.

The Vallex statement dismissed those reports as "lies," denying any problems at the waste dump. It also said that the suspension of mining and ore enrichment at Teghut will last for "two months or longer."

Some of the workers sent home said the company management gave them no dates for the resumption of production operations. They were worried that they will not be properly compensated for the hiatus. Some also feared that the mine would close and they

would lose their jobs.

The Teghut operator sought to allay those fears, saying that it is actually planning to significantly increase copper ore extraction.

These plans met with strong resistance from some residents of two villages close to the mining site during a

will lead to the destruction of hundreds of hectares of rich forest.

The Liechtenstein-registered company pledged to plant a new and bigger forest in adjacent areas before launching mining operations there in 2014. It also promised to create 1,300 new jobs, build new schools and upgrade other



Open-pit mining at Teghut copper deposit.

mandatory public discussion organized by Vallex in August. The villagers said that higher pollution levels have already had negative effects on their fruit orchards.

One local farmer, Levon Alikhanian, has been locked in a court battle with Vallex for nearly 10 years. "We are going to collect signatures and send them to the prime minister so that they revoke [the company's mining] license," he said. "That company got the license by fooling the government."

Vallex has also faced strong opposition from the Yerevan-based environmentalists. They argue, among other things, that open-pit mining at Teghut

infrastructure in the villages.

Vallex, which also owns a copper smelter in the nearby town of Alaverdi and metal mines in Nagorno-Karabakh, defended its track record in a 5-page report released last week. It said its combined operating revenue rose by about 32 percent to \$358 million last year thanks to increased international prices of copper and other non-ferrous metals. The Teghut mine generated over 42 percent of that revenue.

The company employing about 3,500 people in Armenia and Karabakh also claimed to have paid \$52 million in various taxes, up from \$41 million in 2016.

Presidential Palace to Be Turned Into PM's Office

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – Armenia's next prime minister, who will take office in April, will be based in a building in Yerevan that has housed President Serzh Sargsyan and his staff for the past decade, under a newly publicized government bill.

The draft amendments to an Armenian law on "social guarantees" for the country's top state officials will be construed by some observers as a further indication that Sargsyan is planning to become prime minister after serving out his final presidential term on April 9. The outgoing president has still not clarified his political plans.

In line with controversial constitutional changes enacted by Sargsyan in 2015, Armenia will become a parliamentary republic after the end of his presidency. This means that it is the prime minister who will be the country's most powerful official.

By contrast, the next president of the republic will have very few executive powers. Under the amendments drafted by the Justice Ministry, he and his staff will move into a new presidential palace in downtown Yerevan that has until now served as a venue for government receptions and intergovernmental meetings. According to Armenian newspaper reports, the Soviet-era building is currently undergoing hasty repairs.

The existing presidential palace was also occupied by former Presidents Robert Kocharian and Levon Ter-Petrosian. The bill stipulates that it will become the prime minister's headquarters. The latter will be allowed to have up to 600 staffers.

Armenian prime ministers have until

now been based in another building located in Yerevan's central Republic Square. That building has also been the venue for weekly cabinet meetings. It is far more accessible for street protesters than the current presidential palace.

Under another bill awaiting government approval, Armenia will have one first deputy prime minister and two deputy prime ministers starting from April. The current premier, Karen Karapetyan, has only one deputy.

There is mounting media speculation that Karapetyan will be appointed first deputy prime minister. He has not commented on those rumors so far.

A senior representative of the ruling Republican Party of Armenia (HHK) expressed confidence that Armen Sarkissian, a former Armenian prime minister currently serving as ambassador to Britain, will agree to become the country's next president.

Sarkissian met with parliament deputies representing the HHK late on Monday at the start of political consultations which he has said will help him decide whether to accept the HHK nomination for the presidency.

"I gathered from yesterday's meeting that it reinforced his [inclination to make a] positive decision," said Vahram Baghdasarian, the parliamentary leader

of the party headed by the outgoing President Serzh Sargsyan.

"I am convinced that Armen Sarkissian will opt for that decision," Baghdasarian told reporters.

Later on Monday the 64-year-old



Armen Sarkissian in Armenia

ambassador also met with the leaders of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Dashnaktsutyun), the HHK's junior coalition partner. One of them, Armen Rustamian, said afterwards that Dashnaktsutyun will endorse Sarkissian "in all likelihood" if he decides to run for president.

Sarkissian again declined to shed light on his plans when he briefly spoke to journalists before meeting with senior members of Armenia's National Academy of Sciences on Tuesday, January 30. "Yesterday's meetings were very productive and interesting," the Armenpress news agency quoted him as saying. He did not elaborate.



ARMENIA

Teach for Armenia Gives a Boost to Armenia's Educational System

By Aram Arkun

Mirror-Spectator Staff

YEREVAN — In the last few decades, many new non-profit programs have been started in Armenia attempting to use as models similar programs in the United States or the West. Teach For Armenia is one such program which is strengthening Armenia's educational system.

It is an educational foundation based in Armenia but part of the global network Teach For All. Teach For All was started in the US as a method to use teaching for leadership, and now is used in 46 countries.

Teachers recruited from young professionals both in Armenia and in the Armenian diaspora are placed for a minimum of two years in schools in rural communities. After a five-week summer training program, they experience teaching and living in a very underserved school, and afterwards are expected as alumni to contribute to Armenia's systemic development. Essentially, this model emphasizes developing long-term leadership capability in the realm of education.

Every such program has a story, and the story of Teach For Armenia begins with Larisa Hovannisian. Hovannisian was born in Yerevan of an Armenian mother and Irish-American father who met and fell in love in Moscow. She grew up largely in Moscow, speaking Russian, but her English is practically devoid of an accent, as she always spoke it with her father and after graduating high school went to Wisconsin for college. She studied international business with an emphasis on marketing and graphic design and, she said, fell in love with social entrepreneurship.

After graduating she moved to Phoenix through Teach for America (TFA) and spent two years there before packing up to go to Armenia with a new idea in her head. She wanted to combine her love for socially driven business with her business background. Hovannisian declared, "I love seeing social innovation and social good come together in one place. The main goal of the organization [she wanted to establish] will be to serve people and make our lives better." She started Teach For Armenia in 2013 and its first cohort of teachers began training in 2015.

An interesting and not irrelevant side story is that she married Armenian opposition leader Raffi Hovannisian's son Garin in June 2016. She says that she feels inspired that they both in their own fields are working for their country, just as her maternal grandparents did a lot for the Artsakh Movement in their own time. However, she said, "I have never been involved in Armenian politics. I keep myself apolitical. That is difficult because I have a direct connection with the opposition. Meanwhile, I am working with the government because of my work right now. I think that is what I am supposed to do based on the position I currently have with Teach For Armenia."

Hovannisian said that the scope of the problem in Armenian public schools is vast, with about 35 to 40 percent of the schools experiencing teacher shortages, according to informal observations. The initial goal is to demonstrate that "if great people get together as teachers or principals then all kids can truly unlock their potential."

Furthermore, she said, "the sole purpose of our fellows, through their teaching and their presence, their role modeling, afterschool activities, community development projects, and their entire existence in the school, is to set each and every child on an alternative educational trajectory. ... We recruit and place not just smart people, but people who have what it takes to defy the odds these kids are set up against."

Some schools now have seen that this program works, and are hiring many TFA fellows, and TFA uses the data it is statistically obtaining from these schools to show the benefits of its approach. She said, "I hope that when we have that in place, and I hope it is not that far off, that we can work with the govt to see how we can scale that and nationalize it and superimpose it in other regions and schools."

Providing teachers for the many unfilled positions in a short-term solution. According to Larisa, the long-term approach is simultaneously being pursued by TFA. "We want to develop a generation of people to enter government and change the root of the problem so that we don't have teacher shortages," she explained. TFA cannot solve all the problems, but it can identify them and help to contribute to solving them, she said, "through

recruiting, training and developing great teachers." The alumni of the program in turn will launch their own initiatives and become the principals of the future. Larisa said, "I think that they are what I am really betting on."

Hovannisian noted that one thing different about TFA than most diasporan programs is that it engages within the present Armenian system and works with the Ministry of Education and other relevant government bodies. She said, "In the beginning it was very difficult...The Ministry of Education did not really understand why we were doing what we were doing... I think what really helped was that though we did not have a precedent



Scene from schools in Armenia where Teach for Armenia fellows are working

in Armenia, there were precedents in 46 countries around the world and we were looking at their track records, showing the Ministry of Education why countries that are quickly developing in the right way are prioritizing this model...so with time, it went from a hard no to let us figure this out."

When asked about the causes of the problems today in Armenia's educational system, she responded, "The system is what it is because of a lot of things. Armenia is a post-Soviet state. We are very under-resourced. There is an aging teaching population. It is not a prestigious profession. So many factors affect education today, including apathy. The stakeholders are the stakeholders and we just have to work with them and find the goodness in their heart. It is a very long game. It will not happen overnight." Concerning corruption, she said, "Maybe this is just the idealism in me, but even the most corrupt people ultimately want what is best for kids. If you lay it out and say when you do this this is what happens to a child..."

TFA Director of Public Affairs Narek Ghazaryan (born in San Francisco) said that the schools are important not only because of their educational roles but because they are the most important centers of communities outside of individual homes. He said that the system is decentralized, so that students in Yerevan get a different education from those in other provinces.

TFA started with 14 fellows selected out of 200 applicants and contacted school principals to see if they would participate in the program. Today it has 52 participating principals and partner schools in 6 regions in Armenia (not including Artsakh) with 5,700 students, and no longer has to solicit open positions. The requests from the schools, according to Larisa, are backorders, which is an indication of TFA's success. This

year's annual budget is just under one million dollars, and will increase next year to over one million, as almost 100 fellows will be placed. The application process remains selective. Last year, according to Ghazaryan, of 550 people who applied only 41, less than ten percent, were accepted as teachers.

One of the biggest drivers of the budget is supporting the fellows financially. The schools at which they teach guarantee at least one-half a work week pay from their own school budgets, but TFA chips in with a stipend since the fellows have to move to new homes. In all, the fellows make 400 dollars a month, which covers all their expenses. TFA also pays for the online master's degree in education the fellows work on while teaching in their schools if they do not already have a pedagogical degree.

There are about 18 program and operational staff members working for TFA, and a second office has been opened in Artsakh. Each "Leadership Development Manager" coaches the 15-20 fellows during the duration of their two-year fellowships. A few are from outside of Armenia, and many are from different

regions of Armenia.

TFA partners with many organizations who, Hovannisian said, "like to work with us because our fellows serve as a transparent liaison through which things can get done in an effective way. We bring an army of organizations with us when we send a fellow to a school. Some may want to renovate a school, and can know that someone is there to help. Some send food and clothes. This is of course a short-term solution, partnering with relief and aid organizations while hopefully developing the mindset and skills that our students need to take things into their own hands for their own communities and lives."

Though all the regions TFA has targeted are socioeconomically deprived, there are regions additionally with geographical barriers, poor roads and infrastructure, and issues from being located at the Armenian border. For such regions, including Tavush, Lori, Gegharkunik, Armavir, Aragatsotn, Shirak and Artsakh, a pilot program was launched last September which officially will be started this coming September. Larisa pointed out that when people ask why TFA does not place 500 people now, they do not realize that it takes a lot of time-consuming work and decisions to ensure the quality of the result.

Larisa is optimistic about relations with the

government. TFA's chief program officer now part of the main educational council, and, Larisa said, "a main speaker in the conversations that shape Armenia's educational policy. Furthermore, she said, "I think there is a real desire in the prime minister's office to make things happen, and the team he has surrounded himself with are young progressive entrepreneurial people, thinking of ways to make public education better in Armenia."

The TFA teaching fellows are carefully chosen, based on data. Fifty percent are from urban cities in Armenia and 30-40 percent from regions where they share similar socioeconomic backgrounds with the students they are to teach. The latter group, according to data, is more effective in the classroom and able to build a better rapport with the children.

While the intent is to build leadership in Armenian society, there is also a small number of diasporan Armenian teaching fellows at present, perhaps ten percent of the total. Larisa said, "There is a growing desire for our young diasporans to engage in Armenia's development. We just want to create the platform for people to come and have a real way for contributing. If they desire to have a real way to stay and work in Armenia [afterwards], then why not? Or if they return, and go back to the US, there is a lot to do there too."

TFA has been doing more outreach in the diaspora recently. Its recruitment team annually visits Lebanon, where there is a big recruitment pool, Moscow, and the US (to California and the East Coast). There is online recruiting and campaigning and social media work. TFA partners with organizations like Birthright Armenia to get more recruits, since many of its volunteers want to stay in Armenia longer.

Financially, TFA has benefited from diasporan support, starting with Sam and Sylva Simonian, who provided seed funding. Ruben Vardanian and his wife Veronika Zonabend are important supporters, and Zonabend is the chair of Teach for Armenia's board. The Armenian General Benevolent Union has provided support in the past few years, and the Armenian Educational Foundation of Los Angeles supports the cost of the online educational program of the fellows.

Wendy Kopp, the founder of Teach for America, had founded Teach For All, its international version, and she and her team helped TFA get through a financial crisis by arranging a grant from an anonymous donor to scale the organization and grow at the proper level. Hovannisian expressed great thanks for this support, and stressed that this is the spirit of the international network. TFA is not a franchise but part of the network, and different parts of that network work together toward their common goals on this globalized issue.

Armenia can contribute as a laboratory to this world movement, Larisa surmised. She said, "There are only 1,400 schools. We can fail and succeed and fail and succeed again very quickly, and see the impact. We can teach the rest of the world how things function."

For more information, see teachforarmenia.org.



Larisa Hovannisian, founder of Teach for Armenia



INTERNATIONAL

International News

Azerbaijan Deploys Combat Drone in NKR

YEREVAN (PanARMENIAN.Net) —

Azerbaijan employed a combat drone against the Armenian soldiers of the Nagorno Karabakh Defense Army units on Saturday, January 20, releasing a hand grenade in an ordinary mug.

“Ironically, Azerbaijan which brags about its \$4 billion military budget is using a home-made ‘military equipment’ in the 21st century, which were used by the Afghan mujahideens back in the 20th century and were later taken up by the Islamic State fighters,” the Artsakh (Karabakh) Defense Army said in a statement.

Karabakh armed forces have sustained no injuries or losses as a result of Azerbaijan’s actions.

Erdogan Sues Opposition Figure Who Called for Commemoration of Armenian Genocide

ISTANBUL (Panorama.am) — Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan sues Canan Kaftancıoğlu, the newly elected Istanbul chair of the opposition Republican People’s Party (CHP) over an alleged “propaganda terrorism and insulting the president.” Local sources report that Erdogan demanded 700,000 (\$184,500) Turkish Liras in compensation from Kaftancıoğlu over the claim that she “propagandized for the PKK (Kurdistan Workers’ Party) and DHKP-C (Revolutionary People’s Liberation Party-Front)” in her tweets.

Speaking at the Justice and Development Party’s (AK Party) parliamentary group meeting on Tuesday, President Recep Tayyip, Erdogan said Kaftancıoğlu disrespected the Turkish nation and carried out propaganda in previous posts on her official Twitter account, which he said speak for themselves. Erdogan, in particular, referred to the 2012 tweet by Kaftancıoğlu for commemorating those who lost their lives in the Armenian Genocide.

Commenting on the Twitter posts, Erdogan said, “She disgraced our nation and history by saying Armenian Genocide. She says that the state is not a murderer but a serial killer.”

OSCE Chair Vows to Attend to Conflicts

MOSCOW (Panorama.am) — Italy will pay greater attention to protracted conflicts, including the Ukraine crisis, Transnistrian and Nagorno Karabakh settlements during the country’s Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Chairmanship, Angelino Alfano, OSCE Chairperson-in-Office and Italy’s Minister of Foreign Affairs told in an interview with Ria Novosti Agency, outlining the priorities of the Italian 2018 OSCE Chairmanship.

Alfano is paying a working visit to Ukraine and Russia on January 30-31.

Alfano addressed the OSCE Permanent Council, noting that Italy would continue to support the work of the Minsk Group Co-Chairs.

Erdogan Cancels Visit to South America

MONTEVIDEO, Uruguay (Agencia Prensa Armenia) — Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan canceled his official visit to Brazil, Uruguay and Venezuela scheduled for early February.

The government of Turkey had planned a tour of South America after meeting with Pope Francis at the Vatican on February 5. In recent days, many newspapers reported the dissatisfaction of the Armenian community in Uruguay and possible demonstrations against the visit.

The Armenian National Committee of Uruguay explained that “the negotiations prior to this eventual visit showed that Uruguay continues to be a key objective of the denialist apparatus of the Republic of Turkey due to the Uruguayan state policy of recognition and condemnation of the Armenian Genocide.”



Prime Minister Karen Karapetyan and his staff speak with Ambassador of the People’s Republic of China to the Republic of Armenia Tian Erlong and his aides

Armenia-China Hold Talks on Deepening Economic Relationship

YEREVAN — Prime Minister Karen Karapetyan received Ambassador of the People’s Republic of China to the Republic of Armenia Tian Erlong on January 30.

Mindful of the need to develop economic interaction between the two countries, stressing that the Armenian side is keen to boost and expand cooperation with Chinese investors, Karapetyan noted that the trade regimes and the business environment available in Armenia might be conducive to new investment programs. “I am convinced that through joint efforts we can give fresh impetus to Chinese capital’s involvement in Armenia’s economy,” Karapetyan said.

In turn, Erlong pointed out that Armenia’s economic performance in 2017 provides favorable conditions for further success and closer economic ties.

“We have good opportunities for the development of bilateral cooperation. The



Prime Minister Karen Karapetyan and his staff

trade turnover between our two countries rose by 34.5 percent in January-November 2017 as compared to the same period in 2016, which has added extra momentum to our joint efforts,” Erlong said, adding that the Chinese government is ready to deepen and expand cooperation with Armenia in the direction of

specific programs.

He advised that \$15 million had been allocated for the construction of a Chinese school in Yerevan. Besides, the Chinese government’s program to replenish the stock of ambulance vehicles in Armenia will be continued this year.

Armenian Boy Killed in Afrin after Turkish Attack

ISTANBUL (Public Radio of Armenia) — An Armenian family that had fled the Armenian Genocide 100 years ago and found security and stability in Afrin, Syria, were among the victims of the bombing of the Turkish warplanes in the center of the Rajo district, Hawar News Agency reported.

On January 24, Turkish warplanes bombed the Rajo area, killing ethnic Armenian Rosher Konis, and injuring his mother Shamsa Konis, 57, while his sister Hanifa Konis, 25, lost her leg.

The agency quoted Hartyon Kivork, a relative of the family, as saying: “Their ancestors fled the oppression of the Turkish authorities nearly 100 years ago as a result of the massacres committed by the Turks against the Armenians so that they headed towards Afrin to

live in peace among their Kurdish brothers and all other peoples and sects living in the area.”

Hartyon Kivork added, “But the Turkish occupation army has resumed its massacres which do not differentiate between people and stones to commit new massacres against all peoples in Afrin to leave our Armenian family as a victim of the Turkish crimes again while we used to live in harmony in our homes to be attacked again by the Turkish state.”

Turkey launched an air and ground campaign into Afrin, a Kurdish-controlled enclave in northwestern Syria on January 20.

The Turkish operation aims to oust from Afrin a militia made up of an estimated 8,000 to 10,000 fighters affiliated with the People’s Protection Units or YPG, a Syrian

Kurdish group that has controlled territory in northern Syria and proven effective in fighting the Islamic State group.

Turkey considers the YPG to be a terrorist organization and an extension of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers’ Party or PKK, which has fought for Kurdish autonomy in Turkey.

The Syrian government and a war monitor said on Sunday that Turkish shelling of the Kurdish-held Afrin region of Syria had seriously damaged an ancient temple.

Ain Dara is an iron age temple with remains of large carved basalt blocks and wall reliefs. Pictures circulating online, which Reuters could not independently verify, showed an apparent shell crater in the site.



INTERNATIONAL

Turkish Doctors Arrested After Criticism of Syria Attack

ISTANBUL (*Financial Times*) – Police arrested senior members of the Turkish Medical Association on January 30, days after President Recep Tayyip Erdogan branded the group “terrorist lovers” for calling for a halt to Ankara’s military offensive in Syria. The detentions are part of a widening crackdown against criticism of Turkey’s incursion into the Kurdish-controlled Afrin region of north-west Syria.

More than 300 people have been detained for spreading “terror propaganda” on social media since the military operation began this month. Eleven arrest warrants were issued for members of the doctors’ union, according to the state-run Anadolu news agency, with police searches

launched across eight provinces.

The group’s chairman, Rasit Tukul, and other members of the board were among those detained, the opposition MP Ali Seker said on Twitter.

The association’s lawyer, Ziynet Ozcelik, said that those arrested faced charges of “propaganda in support of a terrorist organization, and provoking the public.” The medical association, which represents 80,000 doctors, is one of a small number of organizations that have publicly voiced opposition to the offensive against a Syrian Kurdish militia. It warned that conflict always causes damage to public health. “Every clash, every war, causes physical, psychological,

social and environmental health problems and causes human tragedy,” it said in a statement published last week. It concluded: “No to war. Peace right now.”

After publishing its statement, the association said it been inundated with threats of violence via telephone, email and social media.

The New York-based Physicians for Human Rights group last week condemned the campaign of intimidation. “It is a bleak commentary on the state of affairs in Turkey that a group of doctors can’t make a peaceful statement without being targeted with physical threats and condemned by the head of state,” said Dr. Homer Venters, director of programs at Physicians for Human Rights. “Medical professionals must have the freedom to call out threats to public health without fear of retribution.”

The arrests will fuel concerns in European capitals about freedom of expression in Turkey.

Erdogan has been accused by European officials of becoming increasingly autocratic, particularly after more than 160,000 people were arrested, dismissed or suspended in the wake of a July 2016 coup attempt. Ankara launched the offensive in Afrin on January 20, with the aim of clearing the enclave of members of a Kurdish militia that it views as a terrorist organization. Five Turkish soldiers have been killed in the campaign, which is being spearheaded by Syrian rebels trained and equipped by Turkey.

Public criticism has been muted during the first 10 days of the operation. There is widespread public hostility in Turkey to Kurdish militants in Syria, who are closely linked to a group that has waged a violent insurgency inside Turkey for more than 30 years. Ankara fears that Syrian Kurdish militants will seek to create an autonomous region south of Turkey’s border. Aside from the leftist, Kurdish-dominated Democratic People’s party (HDP), Turkey’s main opposition parties have lent their support to the incursion. So too have most mainstream media outlets, including newspapers that are often critical of the government. On Sunday, Erdogan slammed a group of academics, artists and journalists who signed a letter criticizing the operation, accusing them of being “servants of imperialism.”

“If you are lovers of peace, why did you traitors turn a blind eye while a separatist terror organization killed our police officers?” he said.

Russian-Armenian Businessmen Included in US Treasury ‘Kremlin Report’

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Russian-Armenian businessmen Samvel Karapetyan, Danil Khachaturov and Sergey Galitskiy (Harutyunyan) are included in the “Kremlin Report” released by the US Treasury Department.

The US Treasury Department released the list of names facing possible sanctions by the US which includes the 96 richest people in the country and the top 104 officials of Russia. The Department, however, stated that inclusion of these people in the list doesn’t suppose applying sanctions or any restrictions on them. However, their involvement in the list can hinder US and European banks and other institutional to make deals with them.

According to Bloomberg, this list includes businessmen against whom sanctions have already been applied for having close ties with Russian President Vladimir Putin. The list also includes Russian President’s spokesperson Dmitry Peskov.

The list includes a number of high-ranking Russian officials, including Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev, who served as president from 2008 until 2012.

First Deputy Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov, Deputy Prime Ministers Vitaly Mutko, Dmitry Rogozin, Arkady Dvorkovich, as well as Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu, Economic Development Minister Maxim Oreshkin, Energy Minister Aleksander Novak, Finance Minister Anton Siluanov, Internal Affairs Minister Vladimir Kolokoltsev, Transport Minister, Transport Minister Maxim Sokolov and 17 more senior cabinet members are included in the document.

Armenian Premier Meets with Lebanese Counterpart in Davos

DAVOS, Switzerland (Public Radio of Armenia) – Prime Minister Karen Karapetyan met with Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri on the margins of the ongoing World Economic Forum in Davos on January 25, Government’s Press Service reports.

Karapetyan noted that Armenia and Lebanon have traditionally enjoyed strong and friendly bilateral relations, and the government of Armenia is keen to further strengthen and deepen them. The Prime Ministers also highlighted the role of the Lebanese-Armenian community in terms of promoting cooperation and strong ties between the two countries.

Karen Karapetyan briefed his counterpart on Armenia’s economic developments and the ongoing reforms, noting that quite good economic indicators were recorded last year, and his government is determined to advance the process of reforms.

Touching upon the prospects for cooperation,

the Premier advised that, being an EAEU-member country, Armenia benefits from GSP+ trade regime and has signed the Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement with the



Armenian Prime Minister Karen Karapetyan with Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri

European Union. In addition, our country has very good relations with neighboring Iran and may be interesting for Lebanese businesses and investors.

In turn, Hariri said they intend to work closely with Armenia and the Armenian business circles, and his government is ready to take specific steps in that direction. Hariri invited Karapetyan to visit Lebanon, which was accepted with pleasure.

Germany Appoints Honorary Consul in Gyumri

CONSUL, from page 1

the second largest city of Armenia for the further development of Armenian-German relations.” He also pointed out that the German Foreign Ministry places strong demands on those who are granted a Consulate position, demands that Ter-Minasyan will fulfill with pleasure. Ter-Minasyan, he said, has contributed to the development of the Armenian-German relations for more than 20 years, has supported the “Berlin” polyclinic in Gyumri, and manages the Berlin Art Hotel, promoting and deepening the contacts between Armenian and German artists.

As the position of honorary consul will include the regions of Shirak and Lori, it was most appropriate that the governor of Shirak, Artur Khachatryan, was on hand. In offering his congratulations to the new consul, he said, “We are hopeful that Alexan Ter-Minasyan’s efforts will be directed to strengthening relations, especially with the establishment of new cooperation between Armenian and German businessmen. I assure you that the Shirak regional administration is ready to lend its support and we welcome all the initiatives that will contribute to the development of our country, particularly our region.”

In point of fact, the functions of the newly-appointed consul will include economic ties, development and cultural programs, as well as advisory services.

Creative Diplomacy

The German Foreign Ministry could not have made a better choice. Alexan Ter-Minasyan is a

most creative diplomat, a man who excels in the art of contacts. Already in 2014, then-President Joachim Gauck had decided to honor him with the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany for his extraordinary efforts in developing German-Armenian relations. As was noted on the occasion of his receiving the award, on May 15, 2014, these efforts began fol-

lowing the tragic earthquake that destroyed large parts of the region in 1988. It was in that situation that the German Red Cross as well as Caritas arrived in Gyumri, and Ter-Minasyan



Honorary Consul Alexan Ter-Minasyan, left, and Ambassador Matthias Kiesler

up with the idea of converting part of the building into a hotel, and thus generated income to support the center. The hotel continues its support to the “Berlin” polyclinic to the present

day. Under his management, the Berlin Art Hotel has become a favorite residence for tourists, who can take advantage of the Shirak Tour agency there, to visit and learn the history, not only of Gyumri, the cultural capital of Armenia, but of the entire region.

day.

The Berlin Art Hotel owes its name to the fact that it functions also as a gallery (Gallery 25), and a meeting place for artists, from all countries.

Ter-Minasyan is well-known as a networker, and has developed his contacts at home and abroad, especially in Germany, to organize art exhibitions, festivals and other cultural activities. Among them is the ARTbogen Center of German-speaking Cultures. A Gold Autumn festival organized at the Berlin Art Hotel features German films. In winter 2015, Gallery25 organized an art exhibition to commemorate the 25th anniversary of German reunification. As was mentioned during the award ceremony in 2014, “with his enormous knowledge of Germany, his excellent command of German and his social, charitable engagement, he has contributed greatly to projecting a positive, modern image of Germany.” On that occasion, he was hailed as Germany’s “secret Consul” in Gyumri; now it is no longer a secret.

(Material for this article has been taken in part from the website of the German Embassy in Yerevan: <http://www.eriwan.diplo.de/contentblob/4228940/Daten/4257114/Laudatio.pdf> and photos have been provided by the Berlin Art Hotel. The black-and-white photos are by Sona Andreasyan.)

Community News

California Sen. Portantino Warns about Increased Azeri Lobbying

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — On January 24, state Sen. Anthony J. Portantino (D - La Cañada Flintridge) sent out a letter to his Senate and Assembly colleagues in the Capitol urging them to resist increased lobby efforts put forth by the Government of Azerbaijan.

Portantino became alarmed by the increasing presence of the Azeri Government in Sacramento and in Los Angeles.

Recently the California Azerbaijan Friendship Association (CAFA) has begun outreach to political and academic leaders in a significant public relations and lobbying effort. And, last year Azerbaijan opposed Portantino's initiative to create a formal State Senate Select Committee on California, Armenia and Artsakh cooperation.

Portantino has been at the forefront of promoting efforts in Sacramento to advance economic relations between California and Nagorno-Karabakh which is also known as Artsakh. Given Azeri aggression toward the people of Artsakh, Portantino felt it necessary to share his strong views and give Senators and Assemblymembers a complete picture of events in the region. Portantino represents the 25th State Senate District which is home to many Armenians who trace their heritage back to Artsakh.

"As the proud representative of the largest Armenian community in the country, I have become quite alarmed by Azeri lobbying efforts in Sacramento. I feel it is important to proactively guard against its influence. As a legislative body, we must unite and fight against attacks on human rights and unprovoked aggression against a

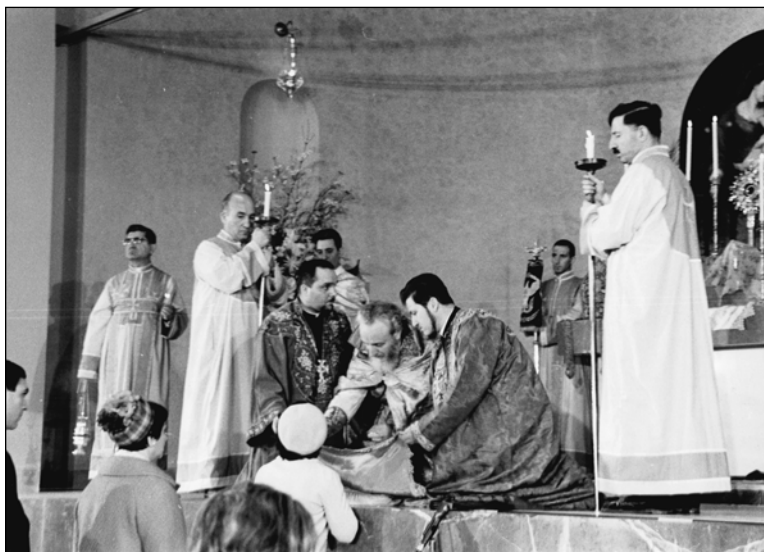


State Sen. Anthony J. Portantino

peaceful and sovereign country," commented Portantino.

The 25th Senate District has the largest Armenian American community in any legislative district in the country. Portantino is the chair of the Select Committee on California Armenia and Artsakh Trade Art and Culture Exchange. He has a long history fighting for the civil rights of the Armenian Community.

"The Legislature must strongly condemn civil rights abuses and attacks by foreign governments on innocent people. Accordingly, it must refuse to cooperate with such governments until there is a demonstrated effort toward reconciliation. Joining the California Azerbaijan Friendship Association would in effect condone the Azeri government's acts of violence against the Armenian people of Artsakh," concluded Senator Portantino.



Catholicos of All Armenians Vasken I in 1968 at St. Vartan Cathedral

St. Vartan Armenian Cathedral Celebrates 50th Anniversary

By Rev. Zaven Arzoumanian, PhD

NEW YORK — Catholicos of All Armenians Vasken I arrived in New York on April 26, 1968 to consecrate the first Armenian Cathedral in North America. Accompanying him were Bishop Gomidas Der Stepanian, and the Very Rev. Nersess Bozabalian, staff-bearer. At the International Airport in New York the Armenian Pontiff was welcomed by Bishop Torkom Manoogian, Diocesan Primate, former Primate Archbishop Sion Manoogian, Bishop Yeghishe Simonian, Primate of the Western Diocese, Bishop Papken Varjabedian of Washington, DC, Bishop Vatche Hovsepian, Vicar of the Canadian Diocese, clergy from both dioceses, among them the Very Rev. Zaven Arzoumanian of Philadelphia, dignitaries and the faithful.

The pontifical entourage arrived in the Diocese where the elegant cathedral was already built and ready for consecration. With the singing of the Hrashapar hymn, the catholicos knocked on the doors of the cathedral ceremoniously and entered the edifice, followed by clergy and hundreds of faithful. The leading processional cross holding high was the first graduate of the St. Nersess Armenian Seminary Deacon Raymond Arakelian, now Archpriest Kevork Arakelian of the Western Diocese.

On Sunday of the World Chapel, April 28, 1968, the Armenian Cathedral of New York was ready for consecration by Vasken I, Catholicos of All Armenians, who had arrived in New York two days earlier. The Godfather of the consecration was Haik Kavoukjian, the senior member and illustrious benefactor of the Eastern Diocese. While the catholicos anointed the main altar, the Primate, Bishop Torkom Manoogian, consecrated the 16 pillars of the church, following which, the catholicos established the new church and dedicated its name to St. Vartan, the Armenian general who defended Christianity in Armenia as early as 451 AD and fell on the battlefield. The performance of the first Divine Liturgy by Vasken I followed. Present were the former Primate Archbishop Sion Manoogian, and the Armenian clergy named above. Other dignitaries included the Roman Catholic Archbishop Cardinal Terence Cooke, Archbishop Lauriston Scaife, and Mayor and Mrs. John Lindsey of New York City.

Assisting the catholicos on the altar were Manoogian and Der Stepanian from Holy Echmiadzin, Bozabalian and Arzoumanian. Serving as deacons and acolytes were Reverend Fathers Arnak Kasparian, Shahe Altounian and Garen Gdanian. In his sermon the catholicos chose a significant verse from the prophecy of Isaiah: "Almighty God of hosts look back and watch, see and visit this vineyard that you planted by your right hand and take care of it." While addressing close to the 1,000 faithful, the catholicos bestowed upon Manoogian the rank of archbishop for his efforts in concluding the most significant project in the life of the American Diocese of the Armenian Church, initiated and promoted successfully by his predecessors.

Banquet Honoring Catholicos

The same evening an elegant banquet was given at the main hall of Waldorf Astoria Hotel where the Pontiff was staying. In attendance were 1,500 guests with church and civic dignitaries, Cardinal Cooke, Archbishop Scaife, and Mayor Lindsey, along with bishops and priests from both Armenian Dioceses of North America. Acting as Master of Ceremonies, Alex Manoogian, president of the Armenian General Benevolent Union, invited Kavoukjian, Godfather of St. Vartan Cathedral, to offer the first and the only toast "in honor of the most worthy Catholicos Vasken I of All Armenians."

see ANNIVERSARY, page 9

Dr. Yektan Türkyılmaz To Give Lecture on Van Vaspurakan Armenians at Fresno State

FRESNO — "Van Vaspurakan Armenians: From Renaissance to Resistance and Genocide" will be the topic of Dr. Yektan Türkyılmaz's presentation at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, February 6, in the University Business Center, Alice Peters Auditorium, Room 191 on the Fresno State campus.

The presentation is part of the Spring Lecture Series of the Armenian Studies Program. A welcoming hors d'oeuvres reception will be held from 6:30-7:30 p.m. immediately preceding the lecture in the University Business Center Gallery.

Türkyılmaz was appointed the 14th Henry S. Khanzadian Kazan Visiting Professor in Armenian Studies for the Spring 2018 semester.

Through a brief overview of the turbulent 19th and early 20th centuries of Van/Vaspurakan Armenians, this lecture will underscore the ways in which studying this particular location challenges the conventional



Dr. Yektan Türkyılmaz

understandings regarding Armenian modernization, inter and intra-communal relations in the late Ottoman period and, particularly the Genocide. It will also try to suggest potential ways of opening up new horizons in rewriting the story of Van in various contexts.

The 19th and early 20th centuries indisputably marked the most crucial span of time for Van/Vaspurakan Armenians. The period witnessed rapid economic growth, increased social diversification and mobilization, and cultural burgeoning. Yet, it was also a time when the most brutal massacres, systematic persecution and finally the catastrophic total destruction of social life in the area took place.

Van/Vaspurakan is particularly salient for the study of the Genocide. Between August 1914 and April 1915 the political barometer in the province measured the growing tensions along the fault line that stretched from the Russian Southern Caucasus and Northern Iran to Istanbul through Van.

Drawing on Armenian, Ottoman and Russian archival documents, periodicals, memoirs, photographic and cartographic materials and secondary sources this lecture will explore the rise and the tragic death of Van in century up to the Genocide.

Türkyılmaz received his PhD from the Department of Cultural Anthropology at Duke University. He taught courses at the University of Cyprus, Sabancı, Bilgi and Duke Universities addressing the debates around the notions of collective violence, memory making, and reconciliation. Türkyılmaz is currently a research fellow at the Forum Transregionale Studien in Berlin, Germany. Meanwhile, he is working on his book manuscript based on his dissertation, "Rethinking Genocide: Violence and Victimhood in Eastern Anatolia, 1913-1915," concerns the conflict in Eastern Anatolia in the early 20th century and the memory politics around it.

The lecture is free and open to the public.

John Nalbandian Nominated to Serve on Ohio Court of Appeals

CINCINNATI, Ohio (*Kentucky Today*) – A Northern Kentucky attorney has been nominated by President Donald J. Trump to serve on the US Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals, based in Cincinnati.

The White House announced Tuesday the naming of John B. Nalbandian, of Union, to the federal appeals court bench.

Nalbandian is a partner in the litigation practice group of Taft Stettinius & Hollister LLP, of Cincinnati, where he has practiced since 2000.



John B. Nalbandian

He is the firm’s lead appellate lawyer and practices complex litigation in State and Federal courts. He is board certified as a specialist in appellate law.

US Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell issued a statement on the nomination.

“John’s range of experience litigating complex appellate cases in both state and federal courts has set him apart and has made him an ideal choice for this role. An accomplished

lawyer, John has earned the confidence of the legal community and has been recognized for his professional work. He will serve our Commonwealth and our nation well on the Sixth Circuit, and I look forward to the Senate confirming him.”

He has represented clients in a wide range of legal areas, including antitrust, products liability, intellectual property, environmental, employment, white collar crimes and class actions. He also has extensive experience in administrative and international law.

Prior to joining Taft Stettinius, he practiced for five years in the appellate section of a law firm in Washington, D.C.

In 2010, after being nominated by President Barack Obama, the US Senate confirmed him to serve as a board member of the State Justice Institute, a nonprofit organization established by the federal government to improve the administration of justice in state courts.

Then-Kentucky Gov. Ernie Fletcher appointed him as a special justice to the Kentucky Supreme Court, in 2007.

He has also served on the Magistrate Judge Merit Selection Panel for the US District Court for the Eastern District of Kentucky, as a Board Member of the Northern Kentucky Tri-County Economic Development Board of Directors, and as a Board Member of the Telecommunications Board of Northern Kentucky.

Nalbandian is involved with issues of importance to minority communities as a board member of the Greater Cincinnati Minority Counsel Program, and as a board member of the Asian-Pacific Bar Association of Southwest Ohio.

He earned his BS, magna cum laude, from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania and his JD from the University of Virginia School of Law, where he was inducted into the Order of the Coif and served as managing editor of the *Virginia Law Review*.

Nalbandian’s nomination must be confirmed by the US Senate.

Sheriff Koutoujian Participates in Panel on Substance Abuse

ROCKVILLE, Md. – Middlesex Sheriff Peter J. Koutoujian and Arlington Police Chief Fred Ryan were among the national experts to participate in a discussion on implementation of Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) programs on Monday, January 29.

Koutoujian and Ryan were invited to participate in the dialogue convened by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) due to their leadership in implementing programs to assist individuals with substance use disorders (SUDs). The goal of the convening was to develop guidance for implementing MAT programs across the criminal justice system to assist individuals with SUDs.

Koutoujian and Ryan are nationally recognized leaders for their efforts to address the opioid crisis in Massachusetts. In addition to participating in the convening, Koutoujian has previously presented on the MSO’s Medication Assisted Treatment and Opioid Recovery (MATADOR) program at the White House, while Chief Ryan has testified before the United States Senate regarding the Arlington Opiate Outreach Initiative.

“I want to thank SAMHSA and the BJA for the invitation to participate today,” said Koutoujian. “As we all seek to stem the tide of the opioid epidemic, nothing could be more important than learning from one another and sharing best practices. This convening provided an opportunity to do both.”

“Those with Substance Use Disorders are our neighbors, friends, and loved ones, and law enforcement stands on the front lines of the battle against this epidemic,” Ryan said. “I am grateful to participate in a dialog with other leaders on this subject, including my friend and colleague Sheriff Koutoujian.”



Sheriff Peter Koutoujian and Arlington (Mass.) Police Chief Fred Ryan



Dr. Jonathan Varjabedian H. Şükrü Ilıcak

My Dear Son Garabed I Read Your Letter I Cried, I Laughed

Kojaian Family Letters from Efkere/Kayseri to America (1912-1919)

When Garabed and his father, Haroutiun Kojaian, left their beloved village of Efkere/Kayseri to immigrate to America in 1912 and 1913, they had no idea that it would be the last time that they would see their family, or their village.

By the end of 1915, they were left with nothing but their memories, and a stack of letters that had been written to them from their loved ones in Efkere between 1912 and 1915.

For the first time, 86 of these letters have been compiled, painstakingly translated, and presented here, both in their original Armeno-Turkish, and with an English translation.

Two additional letters, from 1919, allow the reader to understand what befell the family during the Genocide.

428 pages

The book may be purchased from the publisher at: historpress@gmail.com, and through the Facebook Page for Histor Press.



OBITUARIES

Former TCA Central Committee Member Antoine Bazarbashian Dies

BAZARBASHIAN, from page 1

Bazarbashian was a dedicated advocate for the Armenian community in Philadelphia, as well as across the United States and Canada. He organized and directed hundreds of Armenian cultural events for the Philadelphia community. He was the former chairman of the Philadelphia chapter of the Tekeyan Cultural Association, member of the Central Board of Directors of the Tekeyan Cultural Association of the United States and Canada, member of TCA Board of Administrators, Executive Committee, member of the Philadelphia chapter of the Armenian General Benevolent Union, and a member of the District Committee of the Armenian



Antoine and Rose Bazarbashian



Antoine with the then Vicar General of the Armenian Diocese Very Rev. Haigazoun Najarian,

Democratic Liberal Party of the Eastern United States and Canada.

He was an active parishioner of St. Sahag and St. Mesrob Armenian Apostolic Church for many years as well as a member of the Knights of Vartan.

During his tenure as Chairman of TCA Philadelphia Chapter, Bazarbashian and Papken Megerian, who also passed away last month, along with a dedicated group of members elevated the cultural life of the Philadelphia community by



Antoine Bazarbashian receiving award for service to the Tekeyan Cultural Association from Dr. Arshavir Gundjian in Montreal, Canada during 2015 Annual Convention.

Fazlian and Krikor Satamian, singers like Hovhannes Badalian and Rouben Matevosian, Ministry of Diaspora Directors like Garlen Dallakian and Hranoush Hagopian, Turkish writer from Germany Kemal Yalchin, and others, visited and met with Philadelphia Armenian community thanks to Antoine Bazarbashian and his helpers.

In 2015, Bazarbashian was honored with a lifetime achievement award from the Central Board of the Tekeyan Cultural Association.

He will be greatly missed by his family, friends, and the Armenian community in Philadelphia



From Left Vicki, Armen, Bridget and Rose Bazarbashian

Armenian Apostolic Church in Wynnewood, with the presence of family members and friends from Philadelphia community. Very Rev. Oshagan Gulgolian (a graduate of the Vahan Tekeyan School of Beirut) gave a very powerful eulogy concentrating on Bazarbashian's dedication to the community through Tekeyan Cultural Association, Ramgavar Party, the Armenian Mirror-Spectator weekly and Abaka weekly of Montreal, Canada. The interment was in Arlington Cemetery. During the Hokejash, the TCA Central Board of Director's condolence letter was read by Board member Kevork Marashlian.

He is survived by his wife Rose (Yessayan), sons Armen (Bridget) and Vicki.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Tekeyan Cultural Association, 755 Mt. Auburn Street, Watertown, MA 02472.



Pictures from Antoine Bazarbashian



During the ADL Annual Convention in Montreal 2015. Antoine is second from left.

organizing weekly educational and cultural activities. Every Friday the cultural hall of St. Sahag and St. Mesrob church hall saw guests arriving from Armenia and diaspora presenting new books, giving lectures, reciting, singing and dancing. Writers like Sylva Gaboudikian and Vartkes Bedrosian, artists like Berdj

and throughout the world. With the passing of Bazarbashian and Megerian 28 days apart, the community has suffered a great loss.

The funeral service took place on Friday, January 26 at St. Sahag and St. Mesrob

Donation

The Tekeyan Cultural Association, Detroit Chapter, and the Detroit Chapter of the Armenian Democratic Liberal Party each donated \$100 to the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* in memory of Antoine Bazarbashian.

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OBITUARIES

Star Sports Columnist Vahe Gregorian Named Top Missouri Sportswriter for Fifth Time

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (*Kansas City Star*) — *Kansas City Star* sports columnist Vahe Gregorian has been named the National Sports Media Association's Missouri Sportswriter of the Year for the fifth time.

Gregorian has been with the *Star* since 2013. He holds a master's degree from Missouri, has co-authored several books and was nominated for a Pulitzer in 2000 while with the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*.

He and *Star* colleague Sam Mellinger were also each named Top 10 columnists in the country in the large-category classification of the most recent APSE contest.

Also honored by the National Sports Media Association (NSMA) this week were KC native Kevin Harlan as National Sportscaster of the Year, and ESPN's Adrian Wojnarowski as National Sportswriter of the Year.

Harlan was recognized for his work on NFL, NBA and college basketball broadcasts. He began his career as the radio and TV play-by-play man for the Kansas City Kings and later worked on KU, Mizzou and

Chiefs broadcasts.

Mike Kelly, radio voice of the Missouri Tiger Radio Network, earned his fifth Missouri Sportscaster of the Year award. Kansas' Sportswriter of the Year is Bob



Vahe Gregorian

Davidson of the Salina Journal; K-State Radio's Wyatt Thompson was named the Kansas Sportscaster of the Year for the third time.

Sportscasters Woody Durham and

Bryant Gumbel and Thomas Boswell of the Washington Post were named to the NSMA Hall of Fame.

Vahe Gregorian was born in Beirut, Lebanon, and his love of football began when he was a child playing in Swarthmore, Pennsylvania's Pop Warner league. He was class president of Swarthmore High School during his senior year. He then made the varsity football team at the University of Pennsylvania. He graduated in 1983 with a BA in English and continued his studies at the University of Missouri's Graduate School of Journalism, the country's oldest school of journalism, where he earned an MA in 1988. In 2004, he was chosen as a Knight-Wallace Fellow at the University of Michigan, where he focused on history and the demise of sportsmanship.

He is the son of Dr. Vartan and Clare Gregorian.

Babachanian Elected Glendale Bar Association President for 2018

GLENDALE — Glendale attorney Sarkis Babachanian has assumed as the 70th president of the Glendale Bar Association, succeeding Arbella Azizian.

Babachanian was sworn in by Burbank Superior Court Judge William D. Stewart at the association's January 10 installation dinner at the Oakmont Country Club.

Also installed were attorneys Arpa Stepanian as vice president, Michael J. Zuckerman as treasurer and Armine Bazikyan as secretary.

Founded in 1949, the Glendale Bar Association serves Glendale, the third largest city in Los Angeles County, as well as La Crescenta, La Canada-Flintridge, Burbank, Pasadena and neighboring communities.

The association is dedicated to enhancing respect for the rule of law and the professional practices of its members. It offers networking and career development opportunities, insightful continuing legal education sessions, an arbitration service to settle attorney-client fee disputes and community service, including the association's Law Day program in which local judges and attorneys lecture hundreds of local high school students on law-related topics.



Sarkis Babachanian

St. Vartan Armenian Cathedral Celebrates 50th Anniversary

ANNIVERSARY, from page 6

Two days before the consecration, the catholicos had invited 13 leading benefactors to meet with him at a suite at Waldorf Astoria Hotel. The purpose of the gathering was to raise \$1 million to secure the immediate expenses of the new cathedral. Those benefactors were: Alex Manoogian, Haik Kavoukjian, Dadour Dadourian, Artin Aslanian, Puzant Piranian, Edward Mardigian, Harry Tatosian, Harry Bert Movsesian, Hagop Kambourian, Steve Mugar, Dikran Meserlian, Khoren Kholigian and George Bashian. While addressing during the Banquet on Sunday evening Vasken I extended his appreciation to the benefactors honoring them with Pontifical Medals and Encyclicals. An impressive and memorable book of the consecration was soon published with colorful pictures, along with an LP record of the Pontifical Mass.

The idea for the building a Diocesan Cathedral in America was first initiated in 1942 by the then Primate (1938-1943) and later Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia Karekin I Hovsepien (1943-1952). Archbishop Hovsepien had proposed the Diocesan Assembly in 1942 to embark on this most worthy project. Follow-up was deemed necessary at the 1945 Diocesan Assembly by his successor Primate Bishop Tiran Nersoyan for a decision to be made regarding the location of the future Cathedral. It was unanimously agreed New York City as the location for the Diocesan headquarters and the cathedral. Major and on-going

campaign during the following two decades culminated in the purchase of the location and completion of the Diocesan Administrative Center first, and then the Cathedral. They chose and purchased the property at the corner of the Second Avenue and 34th Street with adjacent buildings, totaling in 25,500 sq. feet at the cost of \$616,600.

The old buildings soon were demolished to allow the building of the new center in January, 1959, when the Primate Archbishop Sion Manoogian blessed the cornerstone. Following the drawings by architect Zareh Sourian, the Diocesan Center was completed the same year in November. Soon, architect Walker Caine presented the drawings for the cathedral in 1963 and the ground breaking took place in May, 1965. This writer attended both events. To his credit Primate Archbishop Sion Manoogian (1958-1966) was the pioneer of the constructions, as he was the founder in 1961 of St. Nersess Shnorhali Armenian Seminary in America.

Construction of the Cathedral

Within the following two years, 1966-1968, the cathedral was completed and was ready for consecration. The architecture of the edifice followed the excellent model of the historic 7th century St. Hripsimeh Church in Vagharshapat, one of the most authentic and exemplary Armenian churches in Armenia. The large cupola of the new Cathedral rests on four huge metal arches crossing each other on an eleva-

tion of 120 feet. The cupola itself is 27 feet high with a diameter of 45 feet. In the interior authentic frescoes shine on the four corners of the Cathedral, featuring Biblical episodes with sculptures, while the stained glass windows depict the eventful life of Our Lord Jesus, his Nativity, Baptism, Crucifixion, and Resurrection. Other windows are graced with national figures, such as, Noah's Ark rested on Mt. Ararat, Saints Thaddeus and Bartholomew Apostles of Armenia, St. Sandoukht the Virgin, and the 1915 Armenian Genocide. Special windows are dedicated to the 451 AD Battle of

Avarair and St. Vartan the General, as well as to the Holy Translators of the Bible into Armenian, St. Sahag, St. Mesrob and St. Nersess the Graceful.

The following year the Gullabi Gulbenkian Cultural Center was added to the Diocesan complex, as well as the Haik and Alice Kavoukjian Auditorium, to serve the large Armenian community of Greater New York. Here we have a most precious legacy for the last 50 years promoting the religious and national identity of the American Armenian community on an international and lasting level.



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COMMUNITY NEWS

Armenian Tech Start-ups and Venture Capital – Reaching for the Brass Ring

By Berge Ayvazian

BOSTON and NEW YORK – Armenia has emerged as a rising star of tech entrepreneurship, targeting to be one of the top next generation technology hubs. This was the theme of the two #Furture Is Tech networking evening meetings in Boston and New York City, devoted to the potential for Tech Start-ups and Venture Capital in Armenia.

More than 80 young professionals attended these two inspiring meetups with friends and enthusiasts at the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) Center in Watertown on January 19, and later at the Microsoft Technology Center, in New York, on January 24.

The programs in the two cities featured a pre-

sentation by Ashot Arzumanyan, co-founder of SmartGateVC, an Armenian pre-seed venture capital firm.

Arzumanyan presented the history and potential of the Armenian tech community as an opportunity to invest in a promising startup. He emphasized the progress made in the Armenian tech economy and venture capital (VC) investments in Armenia over the past three years. A total of \$87 million in cumulative disclosed venture capital funding has been raised between 2015-2017, by Armenian start-ups including PicsArt, Codefights, SoloLearn and Teamable, led by major VCs including Sequoia, Sutter Hill Ventures, DCM Ventures, Learn Capital, e.ventures and True Ventures. There have also been several notable acquisitions of Armenian high tech companies since 2010, including:



Ashot Arzumanyan at the New York event



Ashot Arzumanyan at the Boston event

- * Virage Logic being acquired by Synopsys in 2010
- * Itegrien acquired by vmware in 2010
- * Monitis acquired by GFI in 2011
- * LiveLook acquired by Oracle in 2014
- * Icon apps acquired by Science in 2014
- * Memori acquired by Cisco in 2014
- * Sorcio acquired by Helpsystems in 2016
- * 6cdm acquired by Moody's in 2017

“Armenian tech has great team, reliable track record and clear focus on succeeding globally,” he said.

SmartGateVC is newly launched venture capital firm backed by top-tier investors from Silicon Valley targeting seed stage investments in Armenian tech companies in Artificial Intelligence, Cyber-Security, Block Chain/Quantum Physics and the Internet of Things. This new fund is designed to comple-

ment larger VCs such as Granatus Ventures and Hive Fund both founded in 2014.

In addition to Arzumanyan, formerly of Granatus Ventures, the co-founders of SmartGateVC include Vazgen Hakobjyan, CTO of Teamable, and Hambardzum Kaghketsyan of Draper University, leading the Silicon Valley executive entrepreneurship program founded by Venture Capitalist Tim Draper.

SmartGateVC has raised \$500,000 to date and plans to provide pre-seed investments to promising Armenian entrepreneurs and support their start-ups through the early stage of their development. Having attracted a large group of advisors and mentors, the new firm has plans to raise another \$1-2 million this spring to support its first 4-6 portfolio companies.

(Berge Ayvazian is co-founder of the Armenian High Tech Council [Armtech].)



Dr. Jonathan Varjabedian
H. Şükrü Ilıcak

My Dear Son Garabed I Read Your Letter I Cried, I Laughed

Kojaian Family Letters from Efker/Kayseri to America (1912-1919)

When Garabed and his father, Haroutiun Kojaian, left their beloved village of Efker/Kayseri to immigrate to America in 1912 and 1913, they had no idea that it would be the last time that they would see their family, or their village.

By the end of 1915, they were left with nothing but their memories, and a stack of letters that had been written to them from their loved ones in Efker between 1912 and 1915.

For the first time, 86 of these letters have been compiled, painstakingly translated, and presented here, both in their original Armeno-Turkish, and with an English translation.

Two additional letters, from 1919, allow the reader to understand what befell the family during the Genocide.

428 pages

The book may be purchased from the publisher at:
historpress@gmail.com, and through the Facebook Page for Histor Press.



COMMUNITY NEWS

Celebrating the Life of Hrant Dink in Toronto

TORONTO – On the 11th anniversary of Hrant Dink's assassination, the Armenian community of Toronto gathered at St. Gregory Armenian Catholic Church to honor his legacy and remember his message for humanity and love.

Journalist, Filmmaker, and Professor at Carleton University, Kumru Bilici, described Hrant Dink as follows: "He fought for everyone...there were no Turks, Kurds or Armenians when it comes to injustices. He deeply cared about freedom of expression and believed that there is nothing that we cannot solve through dialogue, freely expressing our views and listening to one another. I thank you all for honoring this incredible human being, our Martin Luther King."

Dr. Payam Akhavan, a noted human rights lawyer and professor at the McGill School of Law, served as the keynote speaker of the event. Akhavan eloquently explained the complexity of Turkish civil society, where ethnic nationalism has been defining "identity" by excluding and demeaning others.



Dr. Payam Akhavan



Rakel Dink on video

"When we stoke the fans of hatred, the consequence is ethnic cleansing and genocide. ... All great evils begin with words that demean and dehumanize others," he said.

This is exactly what Hrant Dink fought against. His mission was to find the shared humanity amongst all citizens of Turkey. For Hrant, there were no Turks, Kurds, Alevis, Jews, Greeks, Yezidis or Armenians when it came to injustices. His mission was to destroy the "us vs. them" notion and help Turkey to become a true democracy.

Father Elias Kirijian, founding pastor of St. Gregory the Illuminator Armenian Catholic Church and the host of the event, opened the event by asking the audience to take a moment and get to know the person sitting next to them. This was a kickstart of the celebration and a wonderful way to put Hrant's message into practice.

Megan Reid, Outreach Coordinator of the Zoryan Institute, then painted a picture of

today's political environment in the United States, Turkey and Europe of rising populism of religious, ethnic and racial exceptionalism in contrast to upholding universal human rights violations.

Raffi Bedrosyan, Special Advisor for Turkish Affairs to the Zoryan Institute and Representative of the Bolsahay Cultural Association, took the audience through a journey of Hrant's life and showcased how intellectuals, novelists, journalists, filmmakers and friends were profoundly impacted by Hrant's mission. He concluded his presentation by sharing Hrant's core question:

"Will we act like those responsible for the great atrocities of the past, or will we learn from those mistakes and write new pages worthy of civilized humanity and the elimination of us vs. them?"

As part of the local observance, this event was organized by the Zoryan Institute and the Bolsahay Cultural Association with the partnership of the Armenian Association of



Prof. Payam Akhavan

Toronto, The Armenian General Benevolent Union of Toronto, the Canadian-Armenian Business Council, Hamazkayin Armenian Educational and Cultural Society Klatzor Chapter, the Mekhitarian Alumni Association of Toronto, the Nor Serount Cultural Association and the Tekeyan Cultural Association.



Fr. Elias Kirijian

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Raffi Bedrosyan speaks.



Greg Sarkissian of the Zoryan Institute



Thank you for your support. We had a great 85th anniversary symposium and gala, and, as long as you continue to support us, we will work to further improve the *Mirror* both in its print and digital version.

We want to let our readers know that we have been working hard over the past year to bring you more news and services.

Feel free to visit us in our Watertown Baikar Building headquarters, or call, write or email us with your comments and suggestions.

- We increased the print edition of the paper from 16 to 20 pages weekly.
- We improved the paper quality used in printing the paper.
- We have begun to increase our coverage of events in various parts of the world through special correspondents.
- We redesigned our website (www.mirrorspectator.com), which now offers more functionalities: you can see videos, comment, and contact us directly. You can directly input *free* calendar notices for your events. You will also shortly be able to pay with credit cards for your subscriptions or make gifts online.
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Arts & Living

Constantine Orbelian Congratulates Grammy Award Winners

LOS ANGELES — Constantine Orbelian, who was nominated for a Grammy Award for Best Conductor on a Solo Vocal Album, extended his congratulations to Barbara Hannigan for winning the Grammy in the category. Hannigan won the Grammy for her recording of *Crazy Girl Crazy: Music by Gershwin, Berg and Berio*.

The Grammy Awards were presented at the 60th Annual Grammy Awards ceremony, which was held on January 28 at Madison Square Garden in New York City and televised live for a global audience.

Orbelian had received a Grammy nomination for his recording of Georgy Sviridov's *Russia Cast Adrift*. The landmark recording features the late baritone Dmitri Hvorostovsky and the State Symphony Orchestra of St. Petersburg.

This year's Grammy nominees also included composer Tigran Mansurian, whose *Requiem* was nominated for the Grammy Award in two categories: Best Choral Performance and Best Contemporary Classical Composition. The Grammy for Best Choral Performance was won by conductor Donald Nally for the work *Bryars: The Fifth Century*, and the Grammy for Best Contemporary Classical Composition was won by Jennifer Higdon for her *Viola Concerto*.

Orbelian, who was in attendance at the Grammy Awards ceremony, afterwards stated, "I congratulate Barbara Hannigan for winning the Grammy Award in the category of Best Conductor on a Solo Vocal Album. I had felt profoundly humbled by the honor of being nominated for this category, and today I share Barbara Hannigan's joy for being announced the winner. I also convey my warmest congratulations to Tigran Mansurian for his prestigious Grammy nominations. Although he did not win a Grammy this year, his nomina-



Constantine Orbelian with the late Dmitri Hvorostovsky

tion is an extraordinary milestone for Armenian music, the Armenian people, and all of us at the Yerevan Opera House.

"Making great music is our lives' passion," Orbelian continued. "And when one's work is recognized with a Grammy nomination or win, that work becomes all the more gratifying and worthwhile. I would like to take this opportunity to convey my heartfelt gratitude to the Recording Academy for nominating Tigran Mansurian and myself for Grammy Awards; my wonderful family and family of friends for their unconditional love and support; the outstanding musicians of the State Symphony Orchestra of St. Petersburg; and the producers, technical personnel, and the Delos label for making the recording of 'Russia Cast Adrift' possible. Last, but certainly not least, I would like to express my fondest appreciation for Dmitri Hvorostovsky, whose golden voice and extraordinary artistry will live on forever in our hearts and souls."

Mansurian, recognized as a People's Artist of the Republic of Armenia, is a leading composer of classical music and film scores.

Orbelian is an internationally acclaimed pianist and conductor, and an Honored Artist of the Russian Federation. Since June 2016, he has helmed the National Opera and Ballet Theater of Armenia (the Yerevan Opera House) as its General Director and Artistic Director.



One of the works from "Turmoil" by Jack Avetisyan

Armenian Arts of Glendale Presents 'Turmoil' by Jack Avetisyan

GLENDALÉ — The Armenian Arts of Glendale is presenting a solo show from first-generation American-Armenian artist Jack Avetisyan. An emerging talent in the Los Angeles area, Avetisyan's work explores the inner conflict resulting from the challenge of honoring cultural mores while forging a personal identity apart from traditional values. The two-day only show opens with a reception from 7-10 p.m. on Friday, February 2, and will be on view 4-8 p.m. on Saturday, February 3, and by appointment till February 17.

"Turmoil" is Avetisyan's first solo show, encompassing an evolving body of work that began in 2016, and markedly different from his work as a commercial graphic designer and illustrator of a previously published children's book, *Heart of a Lion*. Professionally, he alternates between the clean structured designs that corporate clients demand, and the loose, expressive style of his personal work. Initially focused on the female figure, his paintings have gradually become enigmatic, more reflective self-portraits — a foray into self-deconstruction and the reassembly of a new, individualized identity.

His evolving focus has become an observation on the duality of life and the continuous challenge to better oneself, striving to find the balance between individuality and preserving his Armenian culture. Using a visceral, assertive style, Avetisyan delves deeply into the conflict between cultural conformity and individualism. In this personal journey, as he explores realism in his figurative pieces, and the theoretical in his abstract work, one senses the inner turmoil he is trying to dispel.

While always drawn to art, Avetisyan was captivated by the experimental story forms and themes in 20th-Century American literature at a young age. While attending the Otis College of Art and Design, he realized the same ideas were prevalent in Postmodern art, and began incorporating those concepts into his work using figurative distortion and other expressionist techniques. Today, his fine art pieces can be found in private, corporate, and institutional collections.

Armenian Arts is a cultural center devoted to educating the public about Armenian contributions to humanity. Armenian Arts is a division of Knowledge Truck, Inc., a nonprofit California organization that celebrates the Armenian identity by showcasing American-Armenian contributions to American civilization and humanity as a whole.



A work by Jack Avetisyan

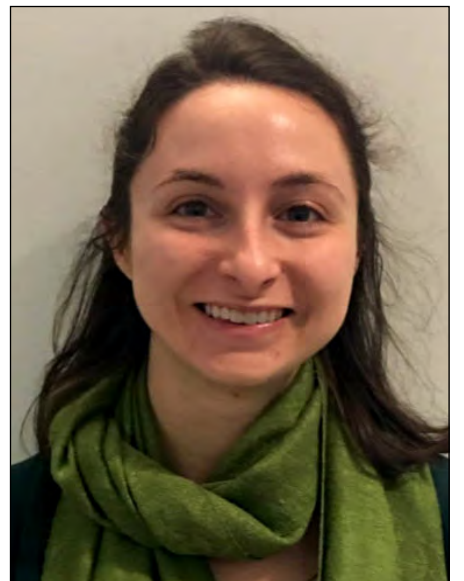
SAS Recognizes 'Best Conference Paper Award' Recipients for 2016

LOS ANGELES — The Society for Armenian Studies announced recently the recipients of its 2016 "Best Conference Paper Award." Recognized are co-winners Jennifer Manoukian for her paper "Translating the Colloquial Armenian of Late-Nineteenth Century Constantinople in Zabel Yessayan's *The Gardens of Silihdar*," and Piruza Hayrapetyan for her paper "The Armenian Ganj-Hymn — An 'Originally Armenian' or a 'Borrowed' Genre: Reshaping the Debate."

The SAS Executive Council will award each of the winning recipients a \$500 prize. Each year SAS awards \$500 for the best paper presented by a graduate student at a conference in a calendar year. A committee appointed by the Executive Council judges the papers.

Manoukian's paper was a critique of her translation of Yessayan's *The Gardens of Silihdar*, which was written in Western Armenian and set in the 19th century Constantinople. The memoir is "interspersed with dialogue written in the sociolects of Yessayan's family and neighbors, defined by code-switching between non-standard forms of Armenian and Turkish." Manoukian's critique explores the possible uses of *The Gardens of Silihdar* for sociolinguists, while also interrogating the position of translation for non-territorial, diasporan languages like Western Armenian.

Manoukian is a PhD student in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures at the University of California, Los Angeles and a literary translator from Western Armenian. She received her master's degree from the Department of Middle Eastern, South Asian and African Studies at Columbia University and her bachelor's



Jennifer Manoukian

degree from the Department of French at Rutgers University. Her book-length translations include *The Gardens of Silihdar* (2014) and *The Candidate* by Zareh Vorpouni (2016).

Hayrapetyan delivered her paper at the 14th Graduate Student Colloquium in Armenian Studies (February 12, 2016, University of California, Los Angeles). Her paper dealt with *Ganjs* which are Armenian hymns dedicated to church feasts and saints. These were recited and sung in the Armenian Divine Office. In her paper Hayrapetyan poses the question of the "original and literary connection of the *ganj* into a wider literary context." Her paper concentrated on two literary see AWARDS, page 15



ARTS & LIVING

A Plea to Save ‘Great News,’ One of the Funniest Shows on TV

By Jen Chaney

LOS ANGELES (Vulture) — On January 25’s season-two finale of “Great News,” anchorman Chuck Pierce (John Michael Higgins) fought to keep his job and stay on the airwaves. Which is what “Great News” may need to do, too.

NBC has not announced whether it plans to renew or cancel this half-hour comedy, created by 30 Rock alum Tracey Wigfield, who also plays weather weirdo Beth, and executive produced by three more people known for their work on the “Liz Lemon Show:” Tina Fey, Robert Carlock, and David Miner. But it’s no secret that the ratings for “Great News” have been unimpressive, especially compared to its NBC Thursday night counterparts, including lead-in “Will & Grace.”

I don’t understand why people aren’t watching, but I sincerely hope NBC gives “Great News” at least one more season. It’s not necessarily a groundbreaking show — its comedy is steeped in the hyperspeed tradition previously established by shows like “Arrested Development” and (duh) “30 Rock.” It’s also not a mindforker like “The Good Place” or a reboot like “Will & Grace” and 80 percent of the shows currently being developed for television, nor is it a limited series stacked with Oscar-winning actresses or affiliated in any way with Ryan Murphy. But “Great News” is a consistently funny, occasionally topical, terrific comedy that had a sense of its own identity from the first second of its pilot and has never wavered from it.

It was excellent from the jump and, like its protagonist, the frazzled but determined Katie Wendelson (Briga Heelan), has continued to do reliably strong work even when that work wasn’t necessarily being acknowledged for its brilliance. We need shows that are as confident in their gleeful absurdity as Great News is, especially right now, when the actual news is an hourly attempt to persuade Americans to increase the dosage on their anti-anxiety meds. (Is it possible that people aren’t watching this show because they are they turned off by the word “news”? Is that what we’ve come to?)

“Great News” moves according the same rhythms as a daily newsroom: Everything happens very fast, to the point where it’s tough to absorb it all. As is true of other Fey-Carlock works, “30 Rock” and “Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt,” some of the sharpest lines on the show are tossed off like casual asides, but are usually funnier than the high jinks lesser sitcoms spend entire episodes building toward. I laughed for at least two straight minutes during last week’s episode when Carol (Andrea Martin) noted that she was wearing a blazer from “Chico’s Urban Menopause collection.”

In the finale — called “Early Retirement,” which has a real cancellation-conscious ring to it — as Katie pointed to a series of TV news shows reporting the same story, she landed on one outlier: Fox, where Sean Hannity was tackling the important story “Hillary Clinton Makes Weird Face at Waiter.” This was hilarious on its own, but doubly so considering that the visual gag landed on the same night that real-life Hannity tried to distract viewers from breaking news about President Trump’s attempt to fire Special Counsel Robert Mueller. As the October episode about workplace sexual harassment established, “Great News” has a way of being accidentally current simply by displaying its intelligence and willingness to jam a thumb in various American cultural eyes.

Of course, the show wouldn’t be nearly as smart without a cast as aces as this one. One of the pleasures of “Great News” is seeing veteran pros like Martin and Higgins, who usually play supporting roles, getting the opportunity to be the leads, while watching actors like Heelan and Nicole Richie, who plays vacuous “Breakdown” co-anchor Portia Scott-Griffith, fully demonstrate their comedy chops on a more high-profile stage.

But my favorite thing about “Great News” is its interest in generational differences and its capacity to milk them for humor without taking overly lazy potshots at the young or the old. Other sitcoms have wandered into this arena



Katie (Briga Heelan) and Carol (Andrea Martin), standing for truth, justice, and journalism on Great News. Photo: Jordin Althaus/NBC

before — CBS’s “The Great Indoors” is a recent example. But few have done it with as much inventive, equal-opportunity precision as “Great News” does.

Throughout both seasons, Chuck has blasted the generation coming up behind him, clearly

out of fear. “One false move and they’ll replace you with some hotshot young newsman who eats sriracha and drinks Lululemon,” he complained in the season-one episode “Chuck Pierce is Blind.” In the finale, though, he punched above his age, too. “[Tom Brokaw]

never got a chance to say how he really felt: that the Greatest Generation was actually kinda stupid and racist.”

As often as “Great News” mocked Carol for being completely unsavvy about technology and office life, or busted on Portia for having her head too far up her Snapchat (“I did a journalism,” she cheerily announced in the episode), it also routinely demonstrated that both junior and senior members of a newsroom — or for that matter, any staff — bring something valuable to the table and are better when they learn from each other. The idea that Carol is working at “The Breakdown” as an intern at first seems like a gimmicky jumping-off point for a sitcom elevator pitch. But subtly, without ever succumbing to sentimentality — because, blech, “Great News” would never do that — this show has been sending the message that you’re never too old to reinvent yourself, even if your Chico’s Urban Menopause blazer might suggest otherwise.

The final moment of the season-two finale had a happy, loose-ends-all-tied vibe that smacked of a series finale. Carol even finally got a paying job, at long last, on The Breakdown, an outcome that implies that people should never give up on what they want, regardless of the obstacles that seem to stand in their way. Here’s hoping NBC has that same attitude about “Great News” and doesn’t send it into retirement just yet.

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ARTS & LIVING

CUTV News Radio Interviews Mary Terzian, Author of *Politically Homeless*

HACIENDA HEIGHTS, Calif. — The immigrant's story is always a fascinating one. What could make someone uproot their life and leave their homeland for a strange new place? For Mary Terzian, book author and freelance writer, it was for the chance to have the full life she hoped for as a woman; a meaningful career and a college education.

Born into an immigrant family (migrated from Turkey) in Egypt, Terzian has written two award winning memoirs in English about her life. Both have been well received by the press and led her to become an in-demand speaker. As one Amazon.com reviewer of her latest memoir *Politically Homeless*, states: "Terzian's book reflects the universal struggles of immigrants who have lost their homeland and have to re-start life elsewhere." Her story is an inspiration to girls and women everywhere.

The book will also be featured in *Marquis Who's Who*, yet she remains soft and humble. "I never advertise myself but still get recognition," she says.

Terzian's books are genuine, her personal story as a woman born at a time when "a girl did not leave home till she had a ring on her finger." Women were not expected to go to college or want more out of life. Higher education was considered superfluous for a woman destined to be a housewife. Although Terzian was the top of her class in school, and could have easily acquired a scholarship, her parents forbade her to attend college. It was the prevalent attitude then, in the 1950s. She dared to move on.

Terzian began her career as a secretary but didn't want to settle for that. Sister Visitation at her High School taught the students "Don't ever say never when you encounter a roadblock Face it with I can, and I will." It's a motto she continues

to live by.

Terzian eventually secured a position with the United Nations in Alexandria which enabled her to quit home honorably. After a few years, thanks to her knowledge of French, she was assigned to the UN Operations in the Congo. This latter assignment enabled her to travel extensively in three continents, and gain the experiences that she relates, like the story of eating crocodile meat for dinner or flying with chickens.

Terzian's biography mentions how she grew up surrounded by rich languages like Arabic, Turkish and Greek, in addition to her own Armenian tongue, and the French and English of her primary education. These languages cultivated her love of words. Her first memoir, *The Immigrant's Daughter*, focuses on early life, cultural roots, and aspirations. *Politically Homeless* takes the story forward to her arrival in the US (with the support of the American Embassy in Beirut). That was back in 1967. She since achieved her dream of a college education (at California State University in Los Angeles, with a BS in business administration.) Writing remained a sideline until retirement, when she found time for her true calling.

Politically Homeless was published by Author House. The front cover says a lot about her five-year odyssey across three continents. The exceptional experiences, related in Terzian's unique voice, make for an exciting read.

CUTV News Radio spotlight Mary Terzian in an interview with Doug Llewelyn on January 22nd at 3pm EST. The interview is now posted at <http://www.blogtalkradio.com/cutvnewsradio/2018/01/22/cutv-news-radio-spotlights-mary-terzian-author-of-politically-homeless>. Listen to the show on BlogTalkRadio.

For more information visit www.maryterzian.com



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SAS Recognizes 'Best Conference Paper Award' Recipients for 2016

AWARDS, from page 13

connections *ganj* - *k'aroz* and *ganj* - Syriac hymns, *madrash* and *memr*. Based on a structural analysis of these genres, her paper "demonstrates the extent of the *ganj*'s literary dependence on these genres as a poetic form revealing both common and distinct structural features."

Hayrapetyan received her BA (2005) and first MA (2007) degrees from the Yerevan State University Department of Armenian Philology. She is also a graduate of the Central European University (CEU) in Budapest where she received her second M.A. in Medieval Studies (2015). She is currently a doctoral candidate in the Department of Medieval Studies at CEU and an exchange fellow at the Department of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies at the University of Vienna. She worked as a manuscript cataloger and junior codicologist at the Matenadaran (Research Institute of Armenian Manuscripts) in Yerevan (2008-2014).

SAS President Bedross Der Matossian congratulated both recipients. "This year we have received many highly-qualified papers in the competition which demonstrates the sophisticated level of a new generation of graduate students in their respective fields dealing with Armenian Studies. We hope

that this trend continues for the coming years," said Der Matossian.

The Society of Armenian Studies is an international body, composed of scholars and students, whose aims are to promote the study of Armenian culture and society, including history,



Piruz Hayrapetyan

language, literature, and social, political, and economic questions; to facilitate the exchange of scholarly information pertaining to Armenian studies around the world; and to sponsor panels and conferences on Armenian studies.



ARTS & LIVING

‘Inheriting Genocide: Lessons from Intergenerational Transmission of Trauma’ To Be Held at Museum of Tolerance

LOS ANGELES – A full-day symposium featuring academics and service providers focusing on trauma transmission among Holocaust and Armenian Genocide survivors and their descendants will take place at the Museum of Tolerance on February 7.

The program, titled “Inheriting Genocide: Lessons from Intergenerational Transmission of Trauma in Holocaust and Armenian Genocide Survivor Populations,” is organized by the University of Southern California (USC) Edward R. Roybal Institute on Aging, the Jewish Family Service of Los Angeles, the Jewish Federation of North America and the Museum of Tolerance.

Salpi Ghazarian, director of the USC Institute of Armenian Studies, and Holocaust survivor Lya Frank, will share their personal stories of inheriting genocide and trauma in the day-long program.

Opening remarks will be made by Charles Kaplan, research professor and associate dean of research at the USC Hamovitch Center for Science in the Human Services. He will be followed by Swedish-born Israeli psychologist Dr. Natan Kellermann and psychiatrist Dr. Andrei Novac.

During the second part of the symposium, marriage and family therapist Christie



One of the permanent exhibits at the Museum of Tolerance

Tcharkhoutian will give a talk on clinical interventions for descendants of the Armenian Genocide.

The program will continue with a panel titled “Voices from the Trenches.” The panel will feature service providers Cally Clein of the Jewish Federation & Family Services, Dr. Selina

Mangassarian from Harbor UCLA Medical Center, Sheila Moore of the Jewish Family Service, and clinical psychologist Dr. Charles Pilavian.

Registration is required for symposium attendees at <http://inherited-experience.eventbrite.com>. Admission is free. The program will take place from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on

February 7 at the Museum of Tolerance, 9786 West Pico Blvd., Los Angeles. Free underground parking is available at the museum.

Light breakfast and lunch will be provided. Three Continuing Education Units available for therapists and social workers.

For inquiries, write to Armenian@usc.edu.

Maranci’s *Vigilant Powers* Receives Karen Gould Prize of the Medieval Academy of America

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. – Dr. Christina Maranci’s 2015 book *Vigilant Powers: Three Churches of Early Medieval Armenia* (Brepols) became the first recipient of the Karen Gould Prize of the Medieval Academy of America (MAA) in January. According to the announcement, the book “is a closely-observed, beauti-

“The personal and professional recognition by the Medieval Academy of America makes me very happy; I am even happier that they have recognized an Armenian subject as worthy of the award.” Both Sirarpie Der Nersessian and Nina Garsoian were elected fellows of the MAA, but this appears to be the first time that a book

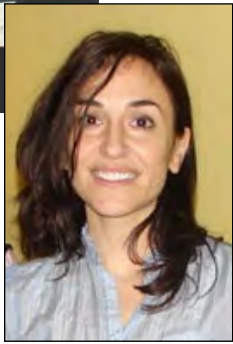
primarily on an Armenian topic has been recognized by the MAA.

The Karen Gould Prize, established by an endowed gift from Lewis Gould in 2016, is awarded annually for a book or monograph (conference proceedings and collected essays are not eligible) in medieval art history judged by the selection committee to be of outstanding quality. To be eligible, the author must reside in North America and be a member in good standing of the Medieval Academy of America.

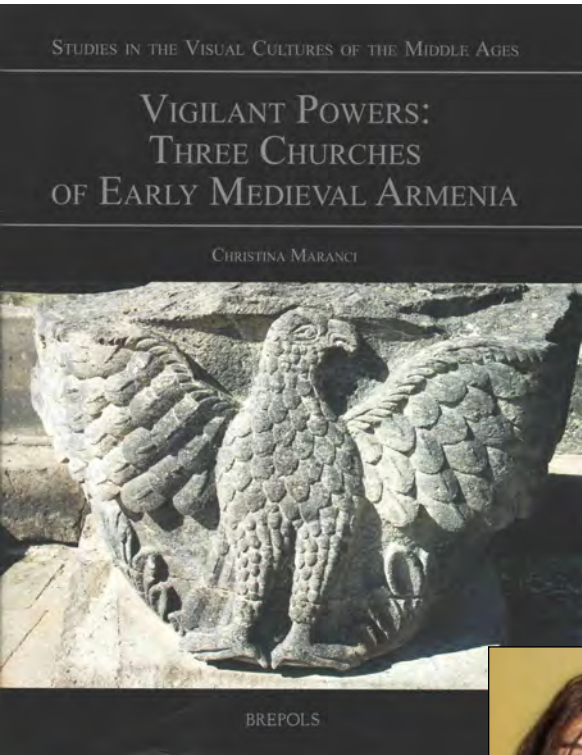
Karen Gould (1946–2012) was an art historian specializing in manuscript illumination and was the author of *The Psalter and Hours of Yolande of Soissons* (Speculum Anniversary Monographs) (Medieval Academy of America, 1978).

The prize established in her name consists of a certificate and a monetary award of \$1,000 to be announced at the annual meeting of the academy each spring.

Maranci’s *Vigilant Powers* previously won the 2016



Dr. Christina Maranci National Association of Armenian Studies and Research Dr. Sonar Aronian Book Prize for Excellence in Armenian Studies. Maranci is Arthur H. Dadian and Ara Oztemel Professor of Armenian Art and Architecture at Tufts University. Her 1998 doctoral dissertation at Princeton University is titled “Medieval Armenian Architecture in Historiography: Josef Strzygowski and his Legacy.”



fully written, and deeply evocative architectural analysis of a culture at a global crossroads. With meticulous scholarship, Maranci explores Armenia’s creative engagement with the Byzantine, Sassanian, and Umayyad empires, underscoring the fluidity of cultural frontiers between them.”

The volume analyzes the medieval Armenian cathedrals of Zvartnots (Zuart’noc’) and Mren, and the princely church at Ptghini. As the award announcement notes, “Sadly, each of the three Armenian churches is imperiled in the twenty-first century by political and military tensions, as well as by seismic activity and natural erosion. Her book is also shaped, therefore, by a pressing sense of urgency about the survival of this unique Armenian patrimony.”

In response to the award, Maranci declared,



Recipe Corner

by Christine Vartanian Datian

Grilled Chicken, Spinach, and Mushroom Salad with Lemon Dressing

INGREDIENTS

2 large grilled, boneless, skinless chicken breasts, diced (or store-bought rotisserie chicken, about 2 cups, diced or shredded)
4-6 cups fresh spinach, washed, torn into pieces, or choice of assorted greens
1 large cucumber, peeled and diced
2 cups sliced mushrooms
1 pint cherry tomatoes, cut in half, or 2 medium tomatoes, cut into chunks
1 each large red and green bell pepper, cut into chunks or sliced and grilled
1 large red onion, cut into chunks and grilled
1/2 cup Kalamata or black olives, chopped
Fresh mint, parsley, and oregano, chopped 6-8 oz. Feta cheese, crumbled
2 medium avocados, sliced or diced
Croutons or pita chips (crushed)
Toasted pine nuts, almonds or walnuts

LEMON DRESSING:

1/2 cup olive oil
Juice of two large lemons
1/4 cup fresh mint, chopped
2 cloves garlic, crushed
2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
1 tablespoon Dijon-style mustard
1 teaspoon lemon zest
Dash of sugar
Kosher or sea salt and black pepper

PREPARATION:

Combine dressing ingredients in a glass container or bowl and mix; check seasonings, cover, and chill before serving.

Combine the chicken and spinach together in a large bowl; add the cucumbers, mushrooms, tomatoes, grilled bell pepper and red onions, and toss. Add the mint, parsley, and oregano to taste, and toss again. Add some dressing, the cheese and diced avocado, and toss again.

Garnish salad with croutons, pita chips, and choice of toasted nuts, if desired, and serve extra salad dressing on the side.

Serves 2-4.

*Christine's recipes have been published in the *Fresno Bee* newspaper, *Sunset* magazine, *Cooking Light* magazine, and at <http://www.thearmeniankitchen.com/>



ARTS & LIVING

CALENDAR

CONNECTICUT

FEBRUARY 10 — Hye Hearts Dance. Second big annual event. Back By Popular Demand! 8pm - ??? LIVE MUSIC featuring Harry Bedrossian (oud, vocals), Mal Barsamian (clarinet), Bruce Gigarjian (guitar), Charlie Dermenjian (dumbeg). Continuous dancing with DJ Chris Habibian. Hosted by the Tri-Church Cultural Committee. Holiday Inn, 1 Bright Meadow Blvd., Enfield, CT (just off Interstate 91). Hotel \$89 room rate. 860-741-2211, mention "Hye Hearts" Adults \$45 advance, \$50 at the door. Students & Adults 80+ \$30 advance, \$35 at the door. Children 12 & under free. Mezzeh included. Cash Bar. Reservations for up to tables of 10. To purchase tickets: <https://hyeheartsdance2018.eventbrite.com> or mail checks (made payable to TCCC) to: Gary Hovhanessian, 81 Cope Farms Rd., Farmington, CT 06032. RSVP & Questions/Info: David Jermakian 413-727-2586, davidjermakian@gmail.com and Gary 860-690-5959 or gary-hov@aol.com. Tri-Church Cultural Committee includes members of the Armenian Church of Holy Resurrection, New Britain, CT and St. George Armenian Church, Hartford, CT and St. Mark's Armenian Church, Springfield, MA.

MASSACHUSETTS

FEBRUARY 1 — Thursday, 7:30 p.m.: William C. Rempel, The Gambler: How Penniless Dropout Kirk Kerkorian Became the Greatest Dealmaker in Capitalist History, NAASR Center, 395 Concord Ave., Belmont, MA 02478. Contact NAASR at 617-489-1610 or hq@naasr.org.

FEBRUARY 10 — Saturday, 12 noon to 3 p.m., panel discussion on the "State of Turkey's Academia and Academics for Peace." MIT Room 3-270. Speakers, academics themselves who had to endure the consequences of government repression in various ways, will address the current threats to academic freedom and freedom of speech in Turkey from a historical perspective. Students, scholars, journalists, activists, politicians and all concerned individuals to join us in this conversation to collectively think about ways to defend academic freedom and strengthen solidarity with academics in Turkey. Speakers: Nazan Bedirhanoglu, Binghamton University; Ates Akyurtlu, Retired Professor, Hampton University; Zeynep Gönen, Framingham State University; Moderator: Kaan Agartan, Framingham State University. The event is free and open to public. Refreshments will be served. <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-state-of-turkeys-academia-and-academics-for-peace-tickets-4251599248https://www.facebook.com/events/287448558450467/>

FEBRUARY 10, 2018 — Poon Paregentan Dinner Dance - Family Kef Night, Sts. Vartanantz Armenian Church, 180 Old Westford Rd., Chelmsford. Featuring Jason Naroian Ensemble: Jason Naroian – Vocals and Dumbeg, Joe Kouyoumjian – Oud, Ara Jeknavorian – Clarinet, and Dave Anisbigian – Guitar, and. Children Activities - 5 pm and Dinner/Dancing at 6 p.m. Paid in advance tickets must be received by February 6: Adults \$25, Students (6-12 years old) \$10, and 5 & under, free. At the door: Adults \$35 and Students \$15. For reservations, contact Maria Kazanjian (617) 240-3686 or Ria.tk@verizon.net.



The Hye Hearts Dance will take place on February 10 in Connecticut, hosted by the Tri-Church Cultural Committee, at the Holiday Inn, 1 Bright Meadow Blvd, in Enfield. The dance will feature musicians Harry Bedrossian, pictured above, Mal Barsamian, Bruce Gigarjian and Charlie Dermenjian and DJ Chris Habibian. To purchase tickets: <https://hyeheartsdance2018.eventbrite.com>

Tables of 8 can be reserved in advance with full payment Checks made payable to: Sts Vartanantz Armenian Church.

FEBRUARY 13 — Tuesday, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Watertown Free Public Library. Budgeting and credit scores 101. Come learn about creating a budget worksheet, how to improve and maintain your credit score. Hosted by Armenian International Women's Association New England and CFA Society Boston. Free and open to the public. Registration recommended at aiwanewengland@gmail.com.

MARCH 4 — Women's History Month Celebration: Dr. Hasmik Khalapyan, of the American University of Armenia, will discuss "Women's Activism During the Western Armenian Renaissance, 1860-1914," presented by the Armenian International Women's Association (AIWA) and the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR), 2:30 p.m. at NAASR, 395 Concord Ave., Belmont. Open to the public free of charge. Info: 617-926-0171 or info@aiwainternational.org

MARCH 8-11 —The Global Cinema Film Festival of Boston (GCFF) announces its 2018 Official Selections. The 3rd annual global event will be held at the Studio Cinema, 376 Trapelo Road, Belmont, MA. Festival kicks off on March 8, at 6 p.m. with Red Carpet Event and film screenings until 10 p.m. Film screenings will continue from Friday, March 9, through Sunday, March 11, 2018

from 12 to 11 p.m. For more info visit @ www.worldwidecinemafestival.com . globalcinemafestival@gmail.com

MARCH 11, 2018 — "Jazz and Art for YerazArt" on Sunday, 5 p.m., at Anoush'ella Saj Kitchen, 35 W Newton St., Boston. More information will follow.

APRIL 11 — A recap on the status of the documentary project "Neighbors in Memory," accompanied by a panel of community members shedding light on the state of Armenian-Turkish relations as they live and witness it. Wednesday, 7 p.m., Capitol Theatre, 204 Mass. Ave., Arlington. Screenings, discussions and refreshments. For more information: gonca59@gmail.com

MAY 5 — Save the date! Annual Meeting, Armenian International Women's Association (AIWA). Details to follow. Contact: info@aiwainternational.org or 617-926-0171.

MAY 11 — Welcome His Holiness Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, to Celebrate with Rev. Father Mampre A. Kouzouian on the 60th Anniversary of his Ordination to the Priesthood. Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 145 Brattle Street, Cambridge. Hrashapar Service in the Sanctuary followed by a Celebration in the Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall. Details forthcoming.

APRIL 14 — Saturday, St. James Great Gatsby Gala! A Roarin' 20s Celebration! Live Jazz & Armenian Music, Passed Hors D'oeuvres, Mezza and Dessert Stations and more. St. James Armenian Church – 465 Mt. Auburn Street, Watertown, 8 p.m., Tickets \$100. Purchase online at www.stjameswatertown.org or contact info@stthagop.com.

WASHINGTON, DC

FEBRUARY 17 — Saturday, 7:30 p.m., presentation of the book *Goodbye, Antoura: A Memoir of the Armenian Genocide* by Houry Panian Boyamian, principal, St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School, Watertown, MA, organized by Hamazkayin of Washington DC and Knights and Daughters of Vartan. Soorp Khach Armenian Church Arabian Hall, 4906 Flint drive, Bethesda, Md. Free Admission, Reception to follow.

FEBRUARY 18 — Sunday, 1 p.m., presentation of the play "Vartanantz" written and directed by Naira Tashjian, St. Mary Armenian Church hall, 4125 Fessenden Street, NW, Washington, DC, organized by Knights and Daughters of Vartan. Free Admission and Reception.

MARCH 10 — Saturday, 6:30 p.m. Benefit theatrical presentation for the teachers of Knights of Vartan School in Armenia. Taleen Babayan's "Where Is Your Groom? II" At Northern Virginia Community College, Annandale Campus, Ernst Community Cultural center, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. Tickets \$30. By credit card go to paypal.me/DaughtersofVartanUS or call Takuhi at (301) 219-4041.

Calendar items are free. Entries should not be longer than 5 lines. Listings should include contact information. Items will be edited to fit the space, if need be. A photo may be sent with the listing no later than Mondays at noon.

'Search's Sev Ohanian Wins Sundance Institute/Amazon Studios Producers Award

PARK CITY, Utah (Deadline) — Sev Ohanian had a good Sundance Film Festival. In January, "Search," the thriller he co-wrote and produced, landed the biggest money of the festival so far with a \$5 million worldwide rights deal from Sony Pictures Worldwide Acquisitions. And at a Park City ceremony, Ohanian was awarded the Sundance Institute / Amazon Studios Producers Award for Narrative Feature Producer. The awards honor bold vision and a commitment to continuing work as a creative producer in the independent space.

Ohanian first came to Sundance with 2013's "Fruitvale Station," the acclaimed film which launched director Ryan Coogler and star Michael B. Jordan to the A list and collaborations "Creed" and the upcoming "Black Panther." He returned with Andrew Bujalski's "Results," on which he was executive producer, and Clea Duval's "The Intervention," as producer.

"Search" takes place entirely on computer screens and stars John Cho and Debra Messing. Ohanian co-wrote the film with

director Aneesh Chaganty and produced alongside Timur Bekmanbetov, Natalie Qasabian and Adam Sidman.

The film, which won the Alfred P. Sloan Film Prize, focuses on the relationship between a father and his high school freshman daughter. After parenting mainly through iMessages and quick FaceTime chats, David is initially more annoyed than concerned when a series of his texts go unreturned, but he soon realizes Margot has gone missing. As a detective searches for clues on the ground, a desperate David goes a different route, cracking open the laptop she left behind as he tries to locate clues to find her before it is too late.

Ohanian's two-minute short film, a Google Glass spot called "Seeds," got over 1 million YouTube views in 24 hours. Chaganty was asked to join the Google Creative Lab in New York City, where he spent two years developing, writing, and directing Google commercials. He quit his job to make this film.



Sev Ohanian



COMMENTARY

Mirror Spectator



Established 1932
An ADL Publication

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The Armenian Mirror-Spectator is published weekly, except two weeks in July and the first week of the year, by:

Baika Association, Inc.

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www.mirrorspectator.com

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

U.S.A.	\$80 a year
Canada	\$125 a year
Other Countries	\$190 a year

© 2014 The Armenian Mirror-Spectator
Periodical Class Postage Paid at Boston, MA and additional mailing offices.

ISSN 0004-234X

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Armenian Mirror-Spectator, 755 Mount Auburn St., Watertown, MA 02472

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COMMENTARY

The Hatsbanian Case and Others

By Edmond Y. Azadian

Sarkis Hatsbanian was a tragic hero. He was born in Turkey but he had a life full of adventure to avenge the Armenian Genocide. He combined his erudition with the spirit of a revolutionary and he sacrificed his life for the cause along the way.

He moved from Turkey to France for his education. As he developed his awareness of his Armenian identity, he decided to weaponize his knowledge to fight the injustices committed by the Turks against the Armenians. As he stated many times in his public comments, he arrived in Armenia from France with a one-way ticket. He joined the ragtag Karabakh army to fight the Azeris and he became one of the legendary heroes of the battle of Kelbajar. Then, like many Karabakh veterans, he engaged himself in Armenia's civic and political life after the war of liberation. He was articulate and outspoken and a vitriolic critic of the current regime in Armenia, where he ended up in jail as he had gone too far in his actions.

The part of his life which is not fully known to the public was the role that he played as Hrant Dink's counterpart in Armenia. As much as he hated Turkey's criminal past, he was very much in favor of cooperating with the progressive elements of Turkish and Kurdish societies.

He made his share of contributions to awakening the dormant Armenians in Turkey. He led a group of Turkish and Kurdish activists to Tzitzernakaberd on the Genocide Centennial to shed tears in memory of Armenian martyrs. He was also engaged in a monumental intellectual project which would even scare off a well-equipped academy. He found translators and scholars to translate into Turkish the compatriotic history books of many regions in historic Armenia, such as Van, Gesaria and Adana, among others. Many Turks who read those volumes were shocked that such a vibrant Armenian cultural life existed before the Genocide on the territory they inhabited currently.

That was an ongoing project for him when he was stricken by cancer and rushed back to France, where he passed away in January, impoverished and soliciting funds from the public for living and medical expenses.

The opposition in Armenia tried to make his funeral a cause celebre by forcing the authorities to allow his burial at Yerablur military cemetery, where fallen heroes are buried. The authorities, realizing the potential politicization and fallout of the case, authorized his burial there so that he could join his comrades in arms who had fallen during the Karabakh war.

By all accounts, Hatsbanian remains a controversial figure with all the rest of the well-meaning heroes languishing in jails in Armenia today.

Jirayr Sefilian and other militants who are members of Sasna

Tzerer group are on trial in Armenia because in their zeal to see the homeland prosper, they broke the law. These militants enjoy great popularity in Armenia, especially when viewed in the context of rampant popular discontent. These cases provide also ammunition to the political opposition to fight the regime. In the eyes of the majority of the people, they are patriots who have been unjustly punished and are honest in their intentions but as poet Gevok Emin said, honest people may also err honestly. The case of those militants is viewed in Armenia on two levels: black or white. No one dares to step into the gray area, where the truth often resides.

There is a misconception with all revolutionaries that after they overthrow a regime, they have a built-in entitlement to rule over the nation. But history has disproved that notion time and time again. The leaders of the French Revolution of 1789, such as Danton, Robespierre and others, ended up sending each other to the guillotine along with an estimated figure of 16,500 other victims who suffered the same fate. The leaders of the Russian Revolution, Lenin and Stalin, after executing their revolutionary comrades, plunged the entire empire into a blood-bath. The same thing happened with Mao Zedong's revolution in China, which caused millions of deaths during the so-called Cultural Revolution. Cambodia's Pol Pot was no different. Even after almost 60 years into Castro's revolution, Cuba is still starving.

Incidentally, there are some historians who maintain that Mustafa Kemal Ataturk might have been the one exception, the hero of the Galipoli campaign who ended up being a nation builder, founding the modern Republic of Turkey. The truth however, is that in actuality it was the German generals who won the battle, only allowing the phony hero to take the credit.

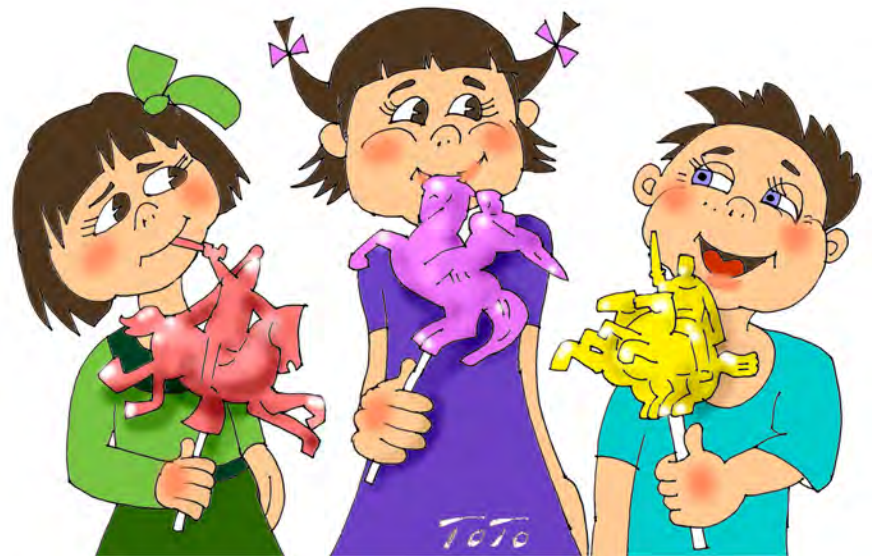
Ataturk then recruited Ittihadist murderers as a base for his "modern" republic.

I personally witnessed a tragic example of this historic blood-letting. Following the uprising of the Karabakh movement, when independence was in progress, former advisor to President Levon Ter-Petrosian, Prof. Gerard Libaridian introduced me to one of the brilliant intellectual leaders of the Karabakh Committee, Hampartsum Galstyan, who later became the mayor of Yerevan. At that time, Galstyan assured me that all the leaders of the movement were like brothers and he held his hand in a fist. I was exhilarated but worried. I said, "I hope this time around you disprove history, because all previous revolutions have ended up in terror or bloodshed, most of the time the leaders eliminating each other."

Lo and behold, Galstyan was the first victim, and no cause or culprit was discovered in his assassination, to this day. Of course, the Karabakh Committee eventually splintered, with each member going his own way.

Therefore, it has become a historic adage that revolutionaries never or seldom become efficient peacetime rulers. The misconception for our heroes in Armenia is there. Because they have honestly fought for liberation of Karabakh, they believe they have won the privilege of imposing their position and views on the civilian authorities. They certainly have won an honorable place in society, but they have to know that comes with a price. A case in point is Samvel Babayan, the former minister of defense of Karabakh who proved himself to be a hero in the war of liberation. But in peacetime, he turned into a villain, plotting to assassinate former president of Karabakh Arkadi Ghukassian. He was tried and jailed but under public pressure, he was released only to be caught in yet another assassination plot and currently is serving another jail term.

When the leaders of Sasna Tzerer were put on trial, there was a public outcry that they were being treated unfairly because Armenia lacked civil liberties as they do in Europe. The editor of the daily *Aravot*, Aram Abrahamyan, a keen observer of the scene in Armenia, and no apologist for the authorities, retorted



in one of his daily columns, "Try to storm a police station in a European or American city and murder a cop and see where you end up."

In any country subject to the rule of law, citizens are well aware of their rights and responsibilities and they know every infraction has a commensurate punishment. But in our society, especially in Armenia, emotions run high, sometimes stifling reason.

The misplaced hero worship is not new in our history. It was once taken up by one of our eminent satirists, Yervant Odian, in a book titled *The Parasites of Revolution*. Many persecuted Armenians who had fled the Ottoman Empire had found refuge in the affluent Egyptian-Armenian community. There were many former freedom fighters among the refugees who enjoyed the largess of the community. But there were also some phony ones who had never wielded a weapon but manufactured stories of heroic deeds to win the admiration and the generosity of the people, perhaps not too unlike another folk hero, Hovhannes Toomanyan's *Kaj Nazar*. And many times, they had their way with credulous Armenians. Odian, in his witty style, warned the public against those fake heroes. They try to share the honor of true heroes who are not always braggarts.

People who have put their daily lives in harm's way for a good cause deserve honor and respect. But they should not take for granted their license to act as they wish, without consideration given to rules. Fighting on the battlefield should not be confused with the right to rule a country. General Antranik was a true revolutionary and he graciously received the respect and admiration of people yet he never gave in to the temptation to assume the mantle of a political ruler.

True heroes know well their place in society and in history.



COMMENTARY



My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

New Biography Portrays Kirk Kerkorian, Not Trump, as 'the Greatest Deal Maker'

William Rempel, a veteran investigative reporter, just wrote a comprehensive biography of industrialist and philanthropist Kirk Kerkorian published by Harper Collins. The book is titled, *The Gambler: How Penniless Dropout Kirk Kerkorian Became the Greatest Deal Maker in Capitalist History*.

Rempel has meticulously pieced together the details of Kerkorian's phenomenal and extremely private life through war records, business archives, court documents, recollections and recorded memories of longtime friends and associates.

Although both are billionaires and casino owners, Kerkorian and Donald Trump had very little in common. Rempel wrote: "Fellow casino owner Donald Trump called Kirk 'the king' and told friends: 'I love that guy.' However, Kirk was Trump's polar opposite in style and temperament. Kirk was soft-spoken and understated with a paralyzing fear of public speaking. He wished, he said, that he 'could talk like Trump.' Kirk also wanted his name on nothing — not on buildings, not on street signs, not even on his personal parking spot at MGM Studios. And Kirk never defaulted on a loan and always regarded his handshake as a binding contract."

When Kerkorian's new multi-billion dollar CityCenter hotel-casino complex at the heart of Las Vegas ran into financial trouble in 2009, Rempel wrote that Trump initially expressed some sympathy: "I love Kirk and hope it works out for them." Trump then turned around and called the CityCenter project "an absolute catastrophe" during an interview on CNN's

"Larry King Show." Trump later stated: "It will be the biggest bust in the history of real estate...too bad." Of course, Trump was wrong in his prediction. Kerkorian, once again, bounced back on his feet and CityCenter became a great financial success!

While Kerkorian was on the *Forbes* magazine's billionaires' list in 1989, Trump was also initially on that list. However, soon after, *Forbes* dumped Trump from its list of billionaires explaining that "they had been misled by incomplete information provided by Trump.... The future US president's net worth was then, said the editors, 'within hailing distance of zero.'"

A press release issued by Harper Collins described Rempel's biography of Kerkorian as the "rags-to-riches story of one of America's wealthiest and least-known financial giants, self-made billionaire Kirk Kerkorian — the daring aviator, movie mogul, risk taker and business tycoon who transformed Las Vegas and Hollywood to become one of the leading financiers in American business."

One of the key advantages of this biography is the extensive coverage of Kerkorian's philanthropy for the Armenian-American community and the Republic of Armenia. In the past two years, I spent several hours with author William Rempel to brief him about Kerkorian's contributions to American-Armenian charitable organizations and major projects in Armenia. Rempel described me in the book as: "Publisher of the *California Courier*, an English-language Armenian weekly based in Glendale, was also president of the United Armenian Fund [now Armenia Artsakh Fund] and the driving force behind Kirk's Armenian charity efforts." In reality, Kerkorian himself was the driving force behind his charitable giving! He really cared about the Armenian community's well-being and Armenia's prosperity."

Although Kerkorian remains a very well-known and highly respected name among Armenians worldwide, many non-Armenians are unaware that he was an Armenian-American. Fortunately, Rempel's biography devotes three chapters to Kerkorian's Armenian heritage and philanthropy.

Chapter 12 of the book is titled: "The Armenian Connection." It describes Kerkorian's chance meeting in Las Vegas with Manny Agassi in 1963, a waiter at Tropicana hotel and a fellow Armenian originally from Tehran, Iran. Manny

became a close friend of Kerkorian and named his future son, Andre Kirk Agassi, who became a famous tennis player. Rempel also described Kerkorian's business dealings with George Mason (Elmassian), his longtime stockbroker, and the founder of the California Courier newspaper in 1958.

In Chapter 31, Rempel described the tragic earthquake of December 7, 1988, in Northern Armenia and how Kerkorian agreed to join the United Armenian Fund in sending over 150 airlifts for the next 25 years to transport \$700 million of humanitarian aid initially to the survivors of the earthquake, and subsequently to the entire population of Armenia and Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh). The biographer Rempel also described how the United Armenian Fund was founded, a coalition of the seven largest Armenian-American charitable and religious organizations, including Kerkorian's Lincy Foundation. Alex Yemenidjian was Chairman of the United Armenian Fund and Harut Sassounian was its president.

Chapter 36 is titled: "Genocide and Generosity." It described Kerkorian's first-ever visit to Armenia in 1998 on his private jet accompanied by Harut Sassounian. The chapter relates conversations about Turkey and the occupied Armenian lands during the flight to Armenia and discussions to fund new projects by Kerkorian's Lincy Foundation. I was subsequently appointed Vice Chairman of the Lincy Foundation to oversee \$242 million of infrastructure projects in Armenia and some in Artsakh. This revealing book also includes amusing anecdotes about Kerkorian's uncomfortable stay in an old Soviet-style mansion which forced him to switch to the Marriott Hotel, and his traumatic visit to the Armenian Genocide Museum in Yerevan!

Kirk Kerkorian's biography is the fascinating story of a unique human being. He was a brilliant businessman, an extremely modest philanthropist, a true American as well as a true Armenian. As a last indication of his kindness and generosity, he departed this world in 2005 at the age of 98, leaving his entire fortune of \$2 billion to charity, in addition to the \$1 billion he had already donated to American and Armenian charitable causes through the Lincy Foundation.

I recommend that every Armenian buy a copy of Kirk's biography and suggest it to their non-Armenian neighbors, friends and colleagues. Kerkorian's incredible accomplishments bestow a great honor upon Armenians worldwide.

Valley Prosecutor Misses Chance to Document Armenian Genocide

By David Minie

Twice each year, my thoughts turn to the Armenian Genocide. On April 24, the anniversary date of the 1915 massacres orchestrated by the Turkish government. And on January 27, when 45 years ago Gourgen Yanikian assassinated two Turkish diplomats in Santa Barbara to avenge the genocide.

Yanikian, age 78 and a former Fresno resident, was charged with murder, and I was his prosecutor.

The aging Armenian had lured the diplomats

to a cottage at Santa Barbara's exclusive Biltmore Hotel, promising gifts of art treasures for their government. Instead, he pulled a Luger pistol from a hollowed-out book and emptied it at them. He then called the reception desk, announced he had killed "two evils," and sat calmly on the patio awaiting arrest.

Yanikian's purpose was to create an "Armenian Nuremberg" — a show trial to call world attention to the Genocide, as the Nuremberg trial had done with Nazi war crimes. And perhaps to be acquitted. Yanikian's hope was not unreasonable.

In 1921, a German jury had acquitted Soghman Tehlirian of murdering Talaat

Pasha, the Turkish official most responsible for the Genocide. Tehlirian later settled in Fresno, and his tomb is the centerpiece of Fresno's Masis Ararat Cemetery.

Talaat had been sentenced in absentia to death for "crimes against humanity," and had fled to Germany. Tehlirian found Talaat and shot him to death on a Berlin street. As planned, Tehlirian pled not guilty, and his trial was reported worldwide.

Tehlirian testified about the rape and murder of his sisters, the beheading of his mother and the killings of his brothers. It took a jury less than two hours to find Tehlirian not guilty. The New York Times headline read, "They Simply Had to Let Him Go."

Fifty-two years later, in a Santa Barbara courtroom, Yanikian sought his "Armenian Nuremberg," and an acquittal. As prosecutor, it was my duty to convict him.

The trial proceeded without personal rancor. I have a photograph of Yanikian, his attorneys and me, standing together, smiling, during a court recess. And another, with the inscription "to our admired and respected District Attorney and friend."

Yanikian's attorneys told the judge they wanted to call as witnesses eminent historians and elderly Armenians who had survived the Genocide. And survivors were available. Bused daily from Southern California, they sat silently in the courtroom among family members, ready to recount unspeakable horrors.

One of Yanikian's attorneys, Vasken Minasian, asked me to allow the testimony. He gave me a copy of *The Cross and the Crescent*, about the Tehlirian trial. In it he wrote: "The tragedy in Santa Barbara has brought destiny and God to your doorstep," and he urged me to

"bring forth an indictment against genocide." He added, "You stand to become an immortal symbol of justice around the world."

This was heady stuff, and I faced a dilemma: to allow a parade of eye-witnesses to the Genocide, risking an acquittal, or to block the evidence to obtain a conviction. I knew such evidence would likely lead to "jury nullification," where a jury disregards the law and acquits for a perceived greater justice, as the Tehlirian jury had done.

I took the safer path, and the judge sustained my objection to the witnesses. But I could not



Attorney James Lindsay, defendant Gourgen Yanikian, District Attorney David Minier, attorney Vasken Minasian in 1972.

in good conscience block the testimony of Yanikian himself, no matter how it inflamed the jury. He commanded the witness stand for six days and described in detail, without objection, the Armenian genocide.

Yanikian told how, as a boy of 8, he watched marauding Turks slit his brother's throat, and of the slaughter of 26 other family members. He testified in Armenian, translated by Aram Saroyan, former Fresno grape shipper, San Francisco attorney, and uncle of author William Saroyan.

Jurors were moved to tears by Yanikian's testimony, but they were denied the corroborating testimony the defense hoped would sway their decision. The Yanikian jury, unlike the Tehlirian

see DOCUMENTATION, age 20

LETTERS

Praise for Woodrow Wilson Is Misplaced

To the Editor:

Why do we continue to praise Woodrow Wilson? It seems because of ignorance. ("Armenia Embassy Honors Woodrow Wilson for Genocide Relief Efforts," January 13, Page 8.)

It is true that in 1916, two days were set aside to have a fundraising drive for Armenian orphans in Armenia. Too little, too late.

Woodrow Wilson was delusional in that he thought himself as a "Jr. Jesus." (See, for example, William C. Bullitt and Sigmund Freud. Woodrow Wilson: A Psychological Study. New Brunswick & London: Transaction Publishers, 1999.)

He was one of the principal characters who prevented the US from declaring war on the Ottoman Empire, in 1917. Then, in 1920, he drew new boundaries for the republic of Armenia.

A mindless act, which resulted in the deaths of thousands Armenians who had survived the genocide. For his new map of

Armenia, it would require the need of thousands of American troops which the U.S. did not commit. After his new map, the Turks decided to destroy any Armenians who were left and, therefore, there would be no population to occupy the new territory. One can imagine if today, the U.S. government declared that New York and Connecticut be turned over to the Armenians what would happen. It could be that the Congregationalists were more concerned with their holdings in Asia Minor in terms of buildings, schools and hospitals with an estimated value of \$40 million, according to James Barton, of the Near East Relief. Did the Congregationalists recover any of this money? Those unemployed mendicants found a home in Asia Minor to preach their beliefs, someone should have told them that the Apostles Thaddaeus and Bartholomew had already evangelized Armenia 1500 years before the advent of Martin Luther.

—Walter C. Bandazian, Ph.D.



Military Women to Be Guaranteed Equal Rights And Opportunities, Defense Minister Says

YEREVAN (Panorama.am) – Women will be granted equal rights and opportunities if they decide to pursue the military as their profession, Armenian Defense Minister Vigen Sargsyan said in his speech at a solemn ceremony dedicated to the National Army Day.

“Although the military profession is con-

sidered a man’s realm, Armenian girls also see the opportunity to prove themselves in that sphere. Naira Arshakyan from Shirak region is one of the best cadets of the [Vazgen Sargsyan] Military University. She has pursued this profession following the example of his brother, Captain Vazgen

Arshakyan: she has decided to become her brother’s comrade in arms. [She] has chosen a very difficult profession, and I am convinced she will succeed in it,” Sargsyan said.

The minister stressed that Armenian men will never hesitate a moment to defend their homeland from adversary’s encroachments. “But I want you to be equally convinced that if you pursue the military profession, we will guarantee equal rights and opportunities for women serving in the military,” the top Armenian official stressed.

Sargsyan also added that all the possible steps are underway to strengthen the feedback with the army, to facilitate the communication between a soldier and his family and to ensure the protection of human rights in the army.

In the minister’s words, the reconstruction of the main campus of the Vazgen Sargsyan Military University will kick off this year thanks to the Izmirlian Foundation’s significant donation. “In the not-too-distant future, our ranks will be replenished by young officers, who are studying at civic universities and have chosen “I have the Honor” program, and our army will gain new impetus boosting its combat readiness,” the minister said.

Valley Prosecutor Misses Chance to Document Armenian genocide

DOCUMENTATION, from page 19 jury, followed the law and gave me what I asked: two first-degree murder verdicts. There would be no nullification. Yanikian was sentenced to life in prison. He was granted compassionate release to a care home in 1984, over objection of the Turkish government, and died of cancer two months later.

Yanikian failed to get his Armenian Nuremberg, and “The Forgotten Genocide,” denied to this day by the Turkish government, was never proved in a court of law by the testimony of eyewitness survivors.

Looking back, I regret I hadn’t the courage to allow such evidence, and trust the jury to follow the law. And attorney Minasian’s words still haunt me: “... bring forth an indictment against genocide.” History’s darkest chapters – its genocides – should be fully exposed, so their horrors are less likely to be repeated.

Notwithstanding Turkish denials, the historical evidence of the Armenian genocide is so abundant that 48 American states, and at least 25 nations, have memorialized and condemned it.

Valadao Pushes Resolution on Genocide

Not so the American government. For years, Congressional Resolutions condemning the Genocide have been defeated after intense pressure from Turkey, where American military bases exist at Turkish pleasure.

Passage of the current version, House Resolution 220, “would be a critical step towards ensuring an event like the Armenian genocide never takes place again,” says Hanford Congressman David Valadao, a co-sponsor.

But H.R. 220 has languished in the Foreign Affairs Committee for 10 months, and chances for passage are remote. The House will doubtless take the safer path, as I did in the Yanikian trial.

And once again, truth will fall victim to expedience.

(David Minier of Fresno is a former district attorney of both Madera and Santa Barbara counties, and a retired Superior Court judge who sits frequently by assignment in Valley courtrooms. This column originally appeared in the *Fresno Bee*.)

Congressmen Call on US Secretary of Treasury to Renegotiate Double-Tax Treaty with Armenia

TAXATION, from page 1 ‘willing to conclude such an accord on the basis of the latest US Model Income Tax Convention of 2016.’

“The complexities of the international tax structure should not discourage American and Armenian companies from conducting business with each other due to double taxation. The need for updated guidelines that reflect the current state of US-Armenian relations and recently passed tax reform legislation cannot be understated. As Members of Congress, we respectfully urge you to prioritize the renegotiation of the double tax treaty with Armenia. The existing Soviet-era treaty does not reflect the increasing complexity of a globalized world and the friendship between the American and Armenian peoples. Furthermore, it is vital we provide businesses from both countries the ability and incentive to invest in one another”

Putin Gifts Netanyahu Original Letter From Schindler

MOSCOW (Panorama.am) – Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu received a gift from Russian President Vladimir Putin, an original letter from Oskar Schindler, the German industrialist who saved more than 1,000 Jews during the Holocaust, Fort Russ News reported citing RIA.

Netanyahu, who paid a one-day visit to Moscow last week, is reported to be touched by the gift and is going to transfer it to the “Yad Vashem memorial complex in Jerusalem, the world’s largest center for studying the history of the Holocaust and preserving the memory of the victims.

“As a gift, President Putin handed Prime Minister Netanyahu an original letter from Oskar Schindler to his wife at the end of the meeting. The head of the government was very touched by this gift, timed to coincide with the International Holocaust Remembrance Day,” said the Israeli press service.



BENEFIT THEATRICAL PRESENTATION FOR THE TEACHERS OF
KNIGHTS & DAUGHTERS OF VARTAN SCHOOL IN YEREVAN, ARMENIA

A PLAY BY TALEEN BABAYAN

WHERE IS YOUR GROOM? II

Փեսաի Ռիփ է

SHE THOUGHT ALL HER PROBLEMS WOULD END
ONCE SHE FOUND HER "PESA"...

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