

Top Level Gov. Officials Visit US

Primate Welcomes Deputy Prime Minister Avinyan to St. Vartan Cathedral

NEW YORK — On Thursday, July 18, Bishop Daniel Findikyan opened the doors of New York's St. Vartan Cathedral to a visiting dignitary from Armenia: Deputy Prime Minister Tigran Avinyan.

The Primate led Avinyan and his entourage on a tour of the cathedral, explaining its history and artwork, and highlighting the role it has played in community life for the past half century.

During a private reception in the tahlj of the Diocesan Complex, joined by Diocesan Vicar Fr. Simeon Odabashian and others, the Primate and Deputy Prime Minister discussed developments in Armenia, and the role of the church in keeping Armenians connected. Bishop Daniel asked Avinyan to convey his blessings and good wishes to Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, who visited the cathedral last September.



Deputy Prime Minister Tigran Avinyan with Primate Bishop Daniel Findikyan at St. Vartan Cathedral

Avinyan was visiting New York this week to take part in an international forum on sustainable development at the United Nations, where he gave an address on environmental issues and opportunities in the Republic of Armenia. He also met with Armenian leaders in the fields of technology, business, finance, and philanthropy.

The 30-year-old has been serving in his current role since May 2018.

(A more detailed story covering Avinyan's visit to Boston will appear in the issue of August 3.)

Rep. Clark Meets with Parliament Speaker Mirzoyan, Armenian Leaders in US

WASHINGTON — On July 18, Vice Chair of the House Democratic Caucus Katherine Clark (MA-5) met with President of the National Assembly of Armenia Ararat Mirzoyan, head of the My Step Alliance faction in the National Assembly.

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Clark with President of the National Assembly Ararat Mirzoyan



From left, Ardavast Melkisetian, Edmond Azadian, Catholicos Aram I, Dr. Hratch Kouyoumjian, Hagop Vartivarian

ADL Supreme Council Delegation Meets With Catholicos Aram I

BIKFAYA, Lebanon — On Friday, July 5, Catholicos Aram I of the Holy See of Cilicia received a delegation of members of the Armenian Democratic Liberal Party (ADL) Supreme Council at St. Mary Monastery in Bikfaya. The delegation was composed of Dr. Hratch Kouyoumjian, chairman, Hagop Vartivarian, vice-chairman, Ardavast Melkisetian and Edmond Y. Azadian.

During a two-hour session, several topics which concern Armenia and its diaspora were discussed. The delegation expressed its appreciation to the Catholicos for his initiative to hold a pan-Armenian conference of journalists, which brought together representatives of the news media from Armenia and the diaspora. Press representatives of different political parties were also invited. The conference was held in Antelias on July 2-4.

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Veteran Diplomat, Scholar Dr. Arman Kirakossian Dies

YEREVAN (Combined Sources) — Ambassador Dr. Arman Kirakossian, Armenia's representative to the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland, died in London on July 6 after a lengthy illness. He was 63.



Dr. Arman Kirakossian

His funeral took place in Yerevan on July 12 at St. Sargis Church, followed by a farewell ceremony at the Pantheon on July 13.

President Armen Sarkissian signed a decree on posthumously awarding Kirakossian the Order of Honor for his ded-

icated diplomatic service. The president handed over the Order to Kirakossian's family on July 23.

"It seems Arman should have received this Order years ago, but I think it is never too late because Arman Kirakossian's life will continue, and our appreciation of his activity as a scientist and diplomat, as a person, will continue. And not only today, in the future as well we will gather to appreciate the bright life of our friend and colleague," Sarkissian said. The ceremony of handing the Order was also attended by Armenian Foreign Minister Zohrab Mnatsakanyan, representatives of diplomatic service, historians and the friends of the late ambassador.

Sarkissian participated at the farewell ceremony for his old friend, as did Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan. Mnatsakanyan, Defense Minister Davit Tonoyan, Minister of Finance Atom Janjughazyan and a number of incumbent and former officials also came to honor the memory of the diplomat. Mnatsakanyan told the reporters that he personally knew Kirakossian and his loss is also a great one for the diplomatic field of Armenia.

In addition, Sir Alan Duncan, Minister of State of UK for Europe and the Americas at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, offered his condolences over the death of Kirakossian.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Armenia Honors Dole For Efforts on Behalf of Armenia

YEREVAN — President Armen Sarkissian signed a decree earlier in July awarding former US Senator Robert Dole with an Order of Honor for his contribution to the development and reinforcement of Armenian-American friendly ties.

Dole is a retired American politician, statesman and attorney who represented Kansas in the US House of Representatives from 1961 to 1969 and in the U.S. Senate from 1969 to 1996, serving as the Republican Leader of the United States Senate from 1985 until 1996.

Dole became a friend of Armenian-Americans at a young age, when he returned from World War II with injuries that had left his right arm frozen and about to be amputated. Dr. Hampar Kelikian, a pioneer in the restoration of damaged limbs fixed the Senator's shattered shoulder and allowed him to regain some use of his arm. Dr Kelikian refused to accept any fees from the young soldier.

Nine Convicted in Dink Murder Case

ISTANBUL (Armenpress) — A Turkish court on July 17 sentenced 9 people to prison terms over the murder of late editor-in-chief of the Turkish-Armenian newspaper *Agos*, Hrant Dink, ethnic Armenian lawmaker of the Turkish Parliament Garo Paylan said on Twitter.

"Those convicted over Hrant Dink's case are the leaders of the murder. As friends of Hrant, for 12 years we have said 'Let those, who said kill, be punished.' But they are being defended for 12 years. Dink's murder case will not close unless we want it," Paylan said.

The main organizers of Dink's murder were Erhan Tuncel (sentenced to 99 years and 6 months), Yasin Hayal (7 years and 6 months), Ogyun Samast suspected in murdering Dink (previously sentenced to 22 years and 10 months, sentenced to 2 more years and 6 months for joining an armed group), and 6 other suspects.

Mirror-Spectator Back To Work after Vacation, Building Work Delays

WATERTOWN — The *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* is back in business with an expanded issue after the annual two-week summer break, which was followed by an unanticipated one-week delay due to ongoing work in the newspaper's headquarters.

While the newspaper is back, not everything is back to normal. The phones are not operating well and work on the building is ongoing.

Thank you for supporting us and bearing with us.

INSIDE

Robert Morgenthau Dies

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ARMENIA

News From Armenia

EU Envoy Praises ‘Excellent’ Ties With Armenia

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – The outgoing head of the European Union (EU) delegation in Yerevan, Piotr Switalski, described the EU’s relationship with Armenia as “excellent” on Monday, July 22.

“Cooperation between the European Union and Armenia is on the right track,” he said at a farewell news conference.

Switalski pointed to their “very intensive and friendly political dialogue” involving mutual visits by Armenian and EU leaders and the EU’s “technical missions” to Yerevan focusing on wide-ranging reforms planned by the Armenian government.

European Council President Donald Tusk praised the government’s reform agenda during a visit to Armenia earlier this month. He specifically hailed “the focus on creating an independent, efficient and accountable judicial system” after holding talks with Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan.

Switalski reaffirmed the EU’s readiness to support judicial reforms planned by Pashinyan’s government with “political, technical and financial” assistance. The financial aid should be made available already this autumn, he said.

Switalski also stressed the importance of 25 million euros (\$28 million) in additional EU aid to Armenia that will be provided this year. He portrayed the sum as a reward for reforms already implemented in the country. The diplomat singled out the holding in December 2018 of parliamentary elections widely recognized as democratic.

Number of Tourists Increases

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – The number of foreigners who visited Armenia during the first six months of 2019 was 14.4 percent higher than the number of the same period in 2018, Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan wrote on his Facebook page early in July.

“By the way, touristic season has just started. I hope our entrepreneurs, starting from taxi drivers to small shop assistants, will politely meet the tourists. Each tourist returning from our country with good impressions raises Armenia’s international reputation and increases the economic and touristic attractiveness of our country,” he wrote.

Senior Prosecutor Accused Of Bribery

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – A senior Armenia prosecutor has been charged with large-scale bribery and suspended as a result, it was announced on Monday, July 22.

Armenia’s Office of the Prosecutor-General said the official, identified by his L. K. initials, demanded last month and subsequently received a “large bribe” for pledging to ensure that a man serving a 10-year prison sentence is released from jail on parole. The bribe was paid by a person close to the convict in several installments, it said in a statement.

The statement added that investigators have asked to remand the prosecutor in custody on charges carrying between four and ten years’ imprisonment. It did not say whether he will plead guilty to the accusations.

The statement also said the alleged bribery was exposed by the National Security Service (NSS).

Corruption among Armenian law-enforcement officials and prosecutors in particular has long been a serious problem. According to the statement, Prosecutor-General Artur Davtyan has repeatedly warned his subordinates against engaging in corrupt practices, saying that they would receive tougher punishment than other citizens accused of such crimes.

The NSS has been behind most of the high-profile corruption investigations conducted in Armenia after last year’s “Velvet Revolution.” It announced on Monday that since May 2018 it has recovered 22.6 billion drams (\$47 million) worth of financial “damage” inflicted on the state as a result corruption and other crimes.

Constitutional Court Head Hits Back at Pashinyan

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – The chairman of Armenia’s Constitutional Court, Hrayr Tovmasyan, on Friday, July 19, rejected as offensive and baseless harsh criticism of him voiced by Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan.

In an interview with Tert.am, Tovmasyan also warned the Armenian government against trying to force him and other members of the court to resign, saying that such pressure would be a criminal offense.

Pashinyan launched a scathing attack on the Constitutional Court and Tovmasyan in particular, in an interview with RFE/RL’s Armenian service on Wednesday, July 17. He accused Tovmasyan of cutting political deals with former President Serzh Sargsyan to “privatize” the country’s highest court through constitutional amendments that took effect in April 2018. Pashinyan said one of those amendments was designed to let Tovmasyan remain court chairman until 2035.

“The Constitutional Court must get out of this status of a privatized booth,” the premier said, implicitly demanding changes in the court’s composition.

Tovmasyan dismissed these comments as a “textbook example of how one must not speak of one of the four country’s four constitutional bodies.”

“In administering justice, the chairman of the Constitutional Court has exactly as much authority as every other member of the court and such a statement [by Pashinyan] is, first and foremost, an insult to the court’s other members,” he said.

“Let me ask a rhetorical question,” Tovmasyan went on. “Have you, the country’s prime minister, president, parliament speaker or other countries’ judges appealed to that ‘privatized booth’ on dozens of occasions? Have the Venice Commission or the chairpersons of several countries’ constitutional

courts built relations with that ‘booth?’”

Tovmasyan was also asked to comment on pro-opposition media claims that the government is keen to force him and other court members appointed under Armenia’s previous governments into resignation through pressure that will be exerted on them by law-enforcement bod-

naled support for Vahe Grigoryan, the Constitutional Court’s newest judge elected by the current parliament. Grigoryan has challenged the legitimacy of Tovmasyan and six other members of the tribunal appointed before the “Velvet Revolution” of April-May 2018.

Grigoryan claimed last month that



Hrayr Tovmasyan

ies. He described those allegations as “rumors hanging in the air.”

“If these rumors are ever confirmed ... that is very dangerous and everyone who has acted for that purpose will be held accountable regardless of the position held by them,” Tovmasyan warned.

Tovmasyan served as a senior lawmaker representing Sarkisian’s Republican Party (HHK) before Armenia’s HHK-controlled former parliament installed him as court chairman in March 2018. Sarkisian resigned in April 2018 after his controversial attempt to extend his decade-long rule sparked mass protests led by Pashinyan.

Pashinyan on Wednesday also sig-

only he and another judge of the nine-member court, Arman Dilanyan, can make valid decisions because they were elected after the constitutional changes came into force last year. He argued that the under the amended constitution the Constitutional Court now consists of “judges,” rather than “members,” as was the case until April 2018. He said that the seven other members therefore cannot be considered “judges.”

The eight other members of the Constitutional Courts, including Dilanyan, dismissed the claims in a joint statement. Tovmasyan reiterated on Friday that “there is no constitutional crisis” in Armenia.

Veteran Diplomat, Scholar Dr. Arman Kirakossian Dies

KIRAKOSSIAN, from page 1

“I was saddened to learn of the death of H.E. Dr. Arman Kirakossian, the serving ambassador of Armenia and a great friend to the UK. I have spoken to the Foreign Minister of Armenia H.E. Zohrab Mnatsakanyan to pass on condolences on behalf of Her Majesty’s Government and have offered our assistance at this difficult time. Our thoughts are with the late ambassador’s family and friends,” Duncan said.

In his remarks, Sarkissian said, “This is a difficult day. We are bidding farewell to Arman Kirakossian. His life here, in the fatherland has come to an end. But the new Arman Kirakossian legend has begun. Just as on June 20, 1985 the life of his father, John Kirakossian ended but the John Kirakossian legend began, Arman Kirakossian’s legend begins today. Each of us should continue to walk with Arman Kirakossian’s legend. His friends and colleagues should continue to walk with Arman Kirakossian’s legend, our Armenian diplomats, the state, and ordinary people who new Arman,” Sarkissian said. He characterized him as a wonderful, fantastic friend, one of our best ambassadors, honest, crystal clear, patriotic and serious person, with multiple merits, a great professional, and a brilliant scholar.

“Not only as a friend but also as the President of Armenia, thinking of Arman Kirakossian, I have one word on my mind which is essential – Arman Kirakossian, like his father, was a statesman, dedicated to our people, nation, and statehood.”

A requiem service was held in Washington led by Ambassador of Armenia in the US Varuzhan Nersesyan, Armenian Embassy Staff, Knights and

Daughters of Vartan, Tekeyan Cultural Association Central Committee of US and Canada, St. Mary’s Parish Council and Rev. Hovsep Karapetyan.

After the Divine Liturgy Karapetyan and Nersesyan spoke about the ambassador and his legacy.

Kirakossian was appointed Armenian

Deputy Foreign Minister, and, from October 1992 to February 1993, he held the post of Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Before embarking on a diplomatic career at the Foreign Ministry of Armenia, Kirakossian held several high-level academic positions at the Armenian National Academy of Sciences. He was



Ambassador Dr. Arman Kirakossian this spring with members of the London Armenian community

Ambassador to the United States on October 22, 1999 and presented his credentials to President Bill Clinton on February 3, 2000. Prior to assuming this position, Kirakossian served as Armenia’s Ambassador to Greece from July 1994 to October 1999. In March 1999, he also assumed the duties of the Dean of Diplomatic Corps in Athens, Greece.

Kirakossian was also accredited to Cyprus, Slovenia, Croatia, Albania and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

From 1991 to 1994, he served as First

associate director of the Armenian Diaspora Studies Department from 1990 to 1991 and served on Advisory Panel on Science and International Relations at the Armenian government from 1986 to 1990. He was a senior fellow, then project director at the Center of Scientific Information for Social Sciences at the Armenian National Academy of Sciences from 1980 to 1986.

Kirakossian was the author of many books and more than 100 scientific publications.



ARMENIA

13 Charged Over Violent Unrest in Ijevan

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) — An Armenian law-enforcement agency has pressed criminal charges against 13 men arrested after last week's violent clashes between riot police and people protesting against a government ban on unauthorized logging in the northern Tavush province.

The clashes broke out in the provincial capital Ijevan late on July 17 as several hundred protesters defied police orders to unblock a major highway passing through the town. A dozen police officers and at least two civilians were hospitalized as a result.

The Investigative Committee announced on Monday that the arrested men have been formally charged with hooliganism and violent assault on law-enforcement officers. They will risk between four and seven years in prison if convicted.

A statement by the Investigative Committee said 10 of the suspects were remanded in pre-trial custody while the three others were set free pending investigation. It said investigators have also arrested another man as part of the ongoing inquiry.

A spokeswoman for the committee, Naira Harutiunian, said that law-enforcement authorities are also continuing to hunt for 11 other individuals suspected of involvement in the unrest.

Relatives of at least some of the indicted men have said that the latter did not commit violent acts and are unjustly prosecuted.

The mother of Vahram Simonyan, an arrested Ijevan resident, insisted on Monday, July 22, that he did not participate in the demonstration. She claimed that Simonyan and his father and brother found themselves at the site of protest only because they got stuck in a traffic jam in their car.

His lawyer, Ara Gharagyozyan, said, for his part, that the case against his client is based only on incriminating testimony given by another person.

The Armenian police deployed hundreds of officers in Ijevan during and after the unrest. The national police chief, Valeri Osipyan, defended the use of force against the protesters when he visited the town on July 18.

The protests erupted after authorities moved to stop illegal logging in Tavush forests, which has been widespread for over two decades. The angry protesters accused the Armenian government of depriving them of their sole source of income.

Government officials counter that the country's deforestation has reached dangerous levels. They also say that commercial logging has primarily benefited a small number of timber traders.

Former French Premier Joins Armenian Fund Group

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — The Armenian National Interests Fund (ANIF) announced on July 23 that former French Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin has been appointed a member of the Board of Directors of ANIF.

"We are pleased to announce that Dominique de Villepin has been appointed Member of the Board of Directors of the Armenian National Interests Fund (ANIF), effective immediately.

Chief Executive Officer of ANIF David Papazian said: "As ANIF, Chaired by His Excellency Deputy Prime Minister Tigran Avinyan, begins to assemble what will be a world class Board of Directors, the appointment of Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin sets the bar very high. Forever enshrined in political studies books for his momentous speech at the United Nations in 2003, in which he pleaded with world leaders to show restraint and diplomacy in the face of an impending geopolitical upheaval, Mr. De Villepin has held France's Prime Ministerial office, internal and foreign ministerial portfolios, amongst his past and

ongoing accomplishments".

"We are honored to count Mr. De Villepin amongst our colleagues at ANIF and as an ally of the Republic of Armenia. ANIF is especially thankful to His Excellency President Armen Sarkissian for introducing us to Mr. De Villepin," added Papazian.

De Villepin said: "Joining ANIF's Board of Directors begins an exciting new journey. Like France, Armenia has recently lived through a significant rejuvenation of its political landscape and the fact that ANIF's Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Papazian, is 37 years old and its Chairman, Deputy Prime Minister Avinyan, is 30 years old are indicative of this rejuvenation."

"Armenia has registered the fastest GDP growth rate, 7.1 percent, in Europe for the first quarter of 2019 and ANIF has both a bright future ahead of it and a responsibility in accelerating this growth even further. I'm grateful for the opportunity to participate in making ANIF's success felt across the Republic of Armenia," De Villepin concluded.

Six Injured Veterans Receive Blessings From Catholicos ahead of India Trip

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, blessed six servicemen who had become disabled during the military operations while defending the homeland. The six headed to India to get the necessary treatment, the Mother See of Holy Echmiadzin announced.

The six have received support from the Mother

See of Holy Echmiadzin and the Board of the Holy Church of Nazareth of Kolkata.

Delivering his blessings to the servicemen, Karekin II said it's a pride for every Armenian to see the readiness of the sons of their people to defend their homeland by endangering their lives.

In their turn the servicemen expressed gratitude to Catholicos Karekin II for the caring attitude.



Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, blesses the soldiers.



New South Wales Premier Gladys Berejiklian meets with Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan.

New South Wales PM Visits Armenia, Meets Pashinyan

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — Prime Minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan received Gladys Berejiklian, the Prime Minister of the Australian State of New South Wales, who is in Armenia on a private visit, on July 18.

"We are happy and proud of your activities in Australia. Today you are one of the most influential Armenian women in the world and it's a pleasure to have opportunity to meet you," Nikol Pashinyan said. The Armenian premier said that he hoped as a result of the activities of Gladys Berejiklian the relations between Armenia and Australia will further develop and mutual interests will expand.

Berejiklian congratulated Pashinyan for the positive developments in Armenia and noted that the members of the Armenian community in Australia attentively follow the developments in the Motherland. She emphasized that unlike the previous years, this time she can notice great enthusiasm and belief towards future among the public.

Gladys Berejiklian presented her activities in New South Wales and told about the Armenian community in Australia.

The two exchanged views on developing cooperation between Armenia and Australia, strengthening Armenia-Diaspora links and the priorities of the Government of Armenia.

Berejiklian was re-elected on March 23, 2019. Her ancestors were orphans who survived the Armenian Genocide.

New South Wales is one of the 8 states of Australia, with population of 8 million, 5 million of which live in Sydney.

During her visit to Armenia she also met with President Armen Sarkissian and Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II.

Tekeyan and *Mirror-Spectator* Meet with Deputy Prime Minister Avinyan

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. — Deputy Prime Minister of Armenia Tigran Avinyan met with a Tekeyan Cultural Association of the United States and Canada (TCA) and *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* delegation on July 20. The Tekeyan representatives spoke about TCA activities in North America and relations with Armenia. An interview for the *Mirror-Spectator* was later conducted, which will appear in the August 3 issue. The same issue will also have coverage of several Boston area community events featuring Avinyan and Speaker of the Parliament Ararat Mirzoyan, including a press conference with the latter.

The delegation included TCA Executive Director and *Mirror-Spectator* Assistant Editor Aram Arkun, TCA Greater Boston Chapter Chair Dr. Aida Yavshayan, and *Mirror-Spectator* Editor Alin Gregorian.



From left, Alin K. Gregorian, Tigran Avinyan, Dr. Aida Yavshayan, Aram Arkun



INTERNATIONAL

International News

Georgian Economy to Lose \$700 Million Due To Loss of Russian Tourists

TBILISI (Panorama.am) — The number of Russians visiting Georgia will drop by 1 million amid Russia's temporary flight suspension, resulting in losses for the domestic economy to the tune of 2 billion lari (nearly \$710 million), Head of Georgia's National Tourism Administration Mariam Kvrivishvili said early in July, according to TASS agency report.

"In 2018, some 1.4 million tourists from Russia visited Georgia. This year, revenues into Georgia's tourism sector from Russia's tourism have come to 2 billion lari. In 2019, we expected to see some 1.7 million tourists and earn 2.5 billion lari (over \$886 million). So, according to our forecasts, by the year's end we will get about 1 million fewer tourists [from Russia] and will lose up to 2 billion lari," Kvrivishvili said in an interview with First Channel that is run by the Georgian Public Broadcasting company.

The Georgian National Tourism Administration estimates that in May, more than 172,000 Russians visited the republic, and that month the largest number of tourists in Georgia came from Russia.

On June 21, Russian President Vladimir Putin issued a decree imposing a temporary suspension on flights, including commercial ones, from Russia to Georgia starting July 8. On June 22, Russia's Transport Ministry announced that starting from July 8, flights by Georgian airlines to Russia would be halted.

Armenian Youth Win Five Bronze Medals at Physics Olympiad

TEL AVIV, Israel (Armenpress) — Armenia's team won five bronze medals at the International Physics Olympiad, held here July 7 to 15, Minister of education, science, culture and sports Arayik Harutyunyan said on Facebook.

"This means that all members of our team return with medals. Last year our team won one silver, one bronze medals and one certificate. Next year we should develop our success and work on raising the quality of the medal", the minister said.

The contest is for secondary school students.

Turkish Denialism Is Security Threat for Armenia: Mnatsakanyan

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — Turkey refuses to establish diplomatic relations with Armenia and continues the policy of isolating Armenia accompanied by denying the justice and this is a security threat for Armenia, Foreign Minister of Armenia Zohrab Mnatsakanyan announced during Batumi international conference in Georgia on July 11, dedicated to the 10th anniversary of Eastern Partnership.

Speaking about the Eastern Partnership, Mnatsakanyan said that it's not just a region neighboring Europe, but is part of Europe based on common values. "Those are our shared values that we chose as the basis of our state building since the 1st day of declaration of independence in 1991. When we develop a bill, we send it to the Venice Commission but not to some other institutions, since we want to observe the compliance of the bill with the European standards," Mnatsakanyan said.

Mnatsakanyan emphasized that 2018 was a year of progress for Armenia. "What happened in Armenia was not a geopolitical development. There is no need to search any external pretext in the domestic political processes of Armenia, since they just don't exist", he said.

Speaking about the security challenges facing the Eastern Partnership participant countries, the Armenian Foreign Minister said, "Turkey is a security threat for Armenia. It's already 27 years that Turkey refuses to establish diplomatic relations with Armenia and continues the policy of isolating Armenia, accompanied by the denialism of justice. For us it's a security threat."

Özdemir Receives Wallenberg Medal

By Muriel Mirak-Weissbach

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

BERLIN — Raoul Wallenberg was a Swedish diplomat who saved the lives of Jews and others during World War II in Nazi-occupied Hungary. A foundation named after the humanitarian, who was detained and disappeared in January 1945, promotes educational programs and organizes public awareness campaigns focused on the values of solidarity and civic courage embodied in the activities of Wallenberg and other Saviors of the Holocaust.

This year the Raoul Wallenberg award went to Cem Özdemir, a national leader of the Bündnis 90/Die Grünen party and member of the Bundestag (Parliament). He received the medal for his role in "building bridges between Armenians and Turks and his pivotal contribution" leading the campaign to have the Armenian genocide recognized by the Bundestag in June 2016. The award ceremony took place in Berlin on June 16 at the Gedächtniskirche, a church that was bombed during the war and stands as a symbol of remembrance in the capital. The International Raoul Wallenberg Foundation representative Pastor Annemarie Werner, head of the Vaterunser Church, and Martin Gremer, pastor of the host chapel, presided over the ceremony, which included remarks by Turkish-Armenian musician Marc Sinan. Dr. Amill Gorgis of the Society for the Promotion of an Ecumenical Monument for Genocide Victims in the Ottoman Empire (FÖGG) presented the award.

In rendering thanks for having been so honored, Özdemir referred to the historic chapel as "an impressive monument to the horror of the Second World War." Though one might understand the desire of some to erase "the wounds of conflict from the cityscape," he was glad it had been preserved; he pointed also to the fact that the square where the church is located was also the scene of a terrorist attack two and a half years ago, which killed 12 persons. "We cannot forget the victims of war and terror," he said. "An open society needs remembrance as much as every individual needs air to breathe."

"I am often asked what success I am most proud of," he continued. "There have been several highpoints and I am grateful for all of them. But there is one event that stands out and concerns me particularly: as you all know, three years ago the Bundestag passed a resolution recognizing the genocide against the Aramaeans, Armenians, Assyrians, Chaldaens and Pontis Greeks. It filled me with pride to have contributed to this recognition." He expressed his thanks to all those who helped in the effort, saying the award was also going to them.

"The resolution will remain," he said.

"There is nothing that can shake it. The statement that Germany was 'complicit' in the deaths of 1.5 million persons in the Ottoman Empire is written for all time in the protocols of the Bundestag." This, he said, defined a task for everyone, to continue to develop the culture of remembrance in Germany, by adding a chapter to include the history of genocides in the twentieth century.

"In 1948," he recalled, "the United Nations passed the Convention on Genocide," and the term "genocide" was coined by the Jewish jurist Raphael Lemkin on the basis of his study of the Armenian tragedy in the Ottoman Empire. "That tragedy was, however, neither the first nor the last genocide in the 20th century." In the killings of tens of thousands of Hereros and Namas, Germany "was not 'complicit' or 'mainly responsible,' but was 'solely responsible.' And the means adopted, like killing orders, expulsions, starvation and concentration camps, are a terrible reminder of the Armenian genocide and the Shoa. It is high time for the Bundestag to finally recognize also the genocide against the Hereros and Namas through a comparable resolution." Özdemir added that this chapter has unfortunately not been closed, as



Cem Özdemir

documented by Rwanda (1994), Srebrenica (1995) and the "ethnic cleansing" in the Bosnian war (1992-1995)—atrocities which should have provoked a greater outcry.

Özdemir noted that genocides "do not occur in a vacuum" but have "models," and cited Eli Wiesel's characterization of the Armenian genocide as the "genocide before the genocide." Thus the need to talk about the Armenian genocide, as well as those before and after it, including the Yazidi and Rohingya people today. "We have to talk about how we will prevent future Rwandas and Srebrenicas," and do so early. "For this reason, the 20th century genocides must be featured appropriately in our textbooks in German schools."

In the second part of his address, Özdemir turned to the current situation in the German Bundestag. He recalled the words uttered by then-President Joachim Gauck in 2015 on the centenary of the genocide. Gauck stressed the "responsibility of those alive today to be duty bound to a policy that respects and protects the right to life and human rights of every individual." That responsibility, Özdemir said, no longer enjoys a consensus in the current German parliament. "There is a party that refuses to remember the darkest chapter of German history," he

said; "whose parliamentarians refuse to applaud when a Holocaust survivor speaks in the Bundestag; and whose party and faction leader describes Nazism as 'bird shit' (Vogelschiss) of history. They reject truth." The party in question is the AfD, Alternative for Germany, the right-extremist group that now has elected officials at the national and federal state levels.

It is absurd, Özdemir stated, that the AfD should now speak up in favor of the resolution and demand implementation. "What is clear is that the AfD never supported it!" Özdemir recapitulated the three basic ideas behind the Armenian genocide resolution: "First, to recognize the complicity of Germany; secondly, to promote the study and working through of this terrible chapter in German and European history; and, thirdly, to support the dialogue between people in Armenia and Turkey. The AfD," he noted, "does not endorse any of these aims."

The reason the AfD refers to the resolution, Özdemir explained, is to put pressure on Turkey and the Turkish people, whether at home or in Germany, and to block possible EU membership for Turkey, "even if, hopefully in the not too distant future, it were to find its way back to democracy and the rule of law." Özdemir commented that the AfD simply did not understand the meaning of the resolution, and added that, with its presence in the Bundestag today, that same bill would not be passed unanimously as it was 3 years ago.

The central point Özdemir made is that "the greatest honor we can render the victims of the Armenian genocide and all other genocides: to fight to ensure that extremism, hatred and violence find no anchor in our society." In contrast to Hitler's cynical remark that no one talked about the fate of the Armenians, Özdemir stressed the importance of living up to the slogan, "Never Again." In closing the Green Party parliamentarian gave voice to his great respect for two role models: Raoul Wallenberg, for his courage and humanity, and Hrant Dink, "my friend, the Armenian Turkish journalist who was killed in 2017."

Regretting that Dink could not be present for the event, Özdemir said perhaps he was there in spirit; "and encourages us not to allow our hearts to be poisoned by the hatred of fanatics, and to believe more strongly in the power of truth, love and forgiveness, such that a new generation of Turks, Kurds and Armenians may extend their hands for reconciliation as good neighbors."

Tallinn Concert Dedicated to Komitas 150th Anniversary

TALLINN, Estonia (Panorama.am) — A concert dedicated to the 150th anniversary of Komitas Vardapet was held in the Niguliste Church of Tallinn, Estonia, on July 8, the Embassy of Armenia in Estonia reported.

The Foreign Minister Zohrab Mnatsakanyan and the Chief Secretary of the Estonian Culture Ministry Tarvi Sits made a speech during the event, initiated by the Armenian Embassy in Estonia.



INTERNATIONAL

Yazidi Woman from Iraq Told Trump ISIS Killed Her Family. ‘Where Are They Now?’ He Asked

By Colby I tkowitz

WASHINGTON (*Washington Post*) – When President Trump this week met human rights activist Nadia Murad, an Iraqi who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2018 for speaking out about her agonizing torture and rape while in Islamic State captivity, he seemed unaware of her story and the plight of her Yazidi ethnic minority.

For several minutes in the Oval Office on Wednesday, July 17, Murad stood beside a seated Trump, who mostly avoided eye contact with Murad, and implored the president to help her community return to Iraq. She explained that the Islamic State, or ISIS, may be gone but that Iraqis and Kurds are fighting for control over Yazidi lands.

“If I cannot go to my home and live in a safe place and get my dignity back, this is not about ISIS,” she said, her voice breaking. “It’s about I’m in danger. My people cannot go back.”

Murad, who lives in Germany, told Trump that she never wanted to be a refugee but that ISIS murdered her mother and six brothers.

“Where are they now?” Trump asked.

“They killed them,” she repeated. “They are in the mass grave in Sinjar, and I’m still fighting just to live in safety.”

“I know the area very well that you’re talking about,” Trump responded.

Trump’s meeting – which drew widespread criticism because of its awkward moments –



Nadia Murad, left, and other people persecuted for their ethnic or religious identities meet with President Trump in the Oval Office on July 17.

included nearly two dozen foreigners who, like Murad, had suffered religious persecution in their home countries. They included a Jewish Holocaust survivor, a Tibetan from China and a Rohingya Muslim from Myanmar.

Trump told Murad he would look into it “very strongly.” As she started to back away, Trump said: “And you had the Nobel Prize. That’s

incredible. They gave it to you for what reason?”

“For what reason?” Murad replied. “For, after all this happened to me, I didn’t give up. I made it clear to everyone that ISIS raped thousands of Yazidi women.” She told him she was the first woman to get out and speak publicly about what was happening.

“Oh, really, is that right?” Trump said, his voice notably more upbeat. “So you escaped.”

“I escaped, but I don’t have my freedom yet,” she said.

Trump has said that he deserves the Nobel Peace Prize for his work on Syria and North Korea and has lamented that President Barack Obama received the honor during his first year in office.

In the same meeting, the president also seemed not to know that Rohingya refugees had fled violence in Myanmar, also known as Burma. In a confusing exchange, a Rohingya man, Mohib Ullah, told Trump that his people wanted to “go back home as quickly as possible” – an apparent reference to western Myanmar – and asked the president what the plan was to help them.

“And where is that, exactly?” the president asked.

“Bangladesh refugee camp,” Mohib Ullah answered, referring to where thousands of Rohingya have fled to escape persecution by security forces in Myanmar.

Sam Brownback, a former Republican governor of Kansas who is now U.S. ambassador at large for international religious freedom, interjected, “That is right next to Burma.”

“I see,” Trump said.

Before a military crackdown that began in 2015 and intensified two years later, an estimated 1 million Rohingya people lived in Rakhine state, on Myanmar’s western coast. Hundreds of thousands have since fled to neighboring Bangladesh, where they have been living in squalid camps in the southeastern part of that country.

New Ambassador to Canada Anahit Harutyunyan Submits Her Credentials to Quebec Governor

QUEBEC, Canada – On Tuesday, July 9, Governor General of Canada Julie Payette received the newly appointed ambassadors of six countries, who submitted their letters of credence. Among these ambassadors was Anahit Harutyunyan of Armenia, who in her turn invited a delegation of ten members from the Canadian-Armenian community to accompany her.

Payette in her words of welcome alluded to the Canadian-Armenian community, and in particular stressed its exceptional vitality through its numerous ecclesiastical, educational, cultural and social structures and organizational life. This was a moment of special pride for the Armenian delegation.

The Armenian ambassador was also accompanied by Consul of the Republic of Armenia in

Ottawa Ara Mkrtchian and Honorary Consul of the Republic of Armenia in Toronto Varoujan Lapoyan. In the customary photographs with the governor general that are taken on such occasions, Bishop Abgar Hovakimyan, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of Canada, was present along with the new ambassador, consul and honorary consul, Archbishop Papken Charian, and representatives of the Armenian Democratic Liberal Party, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, the Social Democratic Hunchakian Party, the Tekeyan Cultural Association and the Armenian General Benevolent Union.

As Payette is a graduate of the Electrical Engineering Department of Montreal’s McGill University, she insisted that Dr. Arshavir Gundjian, a retired professor from the same



Ambassador Anahit Harutyunyan becomes acquainted with the Citadelle of Quebec in the company of Consul Ara Mkrtchian and the members of the Armenian delegation. Shatin Tashdjian, who conducted the tour, is standing at the center of the photograph. From left, Ara Balian of the Armenian Liberal Democratic Party (ADL), Noubar Babikian of the Tekeyan Cultural Association (TCA), Dr. Arshavir Gundjian of the Canadian Diocesan Council, ADL, TCA, and AGBU, Bishop Abgar Hovakimyan, Primate of Canada, Honorary Consul Varoujan Lapoyan, Ambassador Anahit Harutyunyan, Shatin Tashdjian, Shahe Tanashian of the AGBU, Hagop Der Khatchadourian of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF), Raffi Donabedian of the ARF, Krikor Tatouljian of the Social Democratic Hunchakian Party, Consul Ara Mkrtchian



Governor General of Canada Julie Payette and Ambassador of Armenia Anahit Harutyunyan, surrounded by a group of representatives of the Armenian community of Canada, invited to the ceremony by the ambassador.

department of this university, stand next to her in the photograph.

In the evening, Harutyunyan, accompanied by Mkrtchian, hosted the members of the delegation who had come to Quebec in a local restaurant. In this more intimate atmosphere, numerous speeches and toasts were made offering all possible assistance to the new ambassador and the best possible wishes for her success in her new post.



At the main entrance, from left, Dr. Arshavir Gundjian, Bishop Abgar Hovakimyan, Primate of Canada, Ambassador Anahit Harutyunyan, Varoujan Lapoyan, Raffi Donabedian



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Community News

Armenian Assembly Applauds Chu and Sherman Amendments, Artsakh Welcomes US Support

WASHINGTON – The Republic of Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh) Ministry of Foreign Affairs joined the Armenian Assembly of America (Assembly) in applauding US Representatives Brad Sherman (D-CA) and Judy Chu (D-CA) for the House adoption of amendments supporting stronger cease-fire and security measures for Artsakh in H.R. 2500, the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2020.

“The Armenian Assembly congratulates Reps. Chu and Sherman for their successful initiatives to ensure the security of the citizens of Artsakh, and to ensure accountability with respect to Azerbaijan’s ongoing cease-fire violations,” stated Assembly Congressional Relations Director Mariam Khaloyan.

Sherman’s amendment – supported by Congressional Armenian Caucus Co-Chairs Rep. Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ) and Rep. Jackie Speier (D-CA), and Vice Chair Rep. Adam Schiff (D-CA) – was approved today on the House Floor by a vote of 234 to 195.

“I thank my House colleagues for advancing and voting in favor of my amendment to the NDAA to require that the President must certify to Congress that any defense articles provided to Azerbaijan pose no threat to civilian aviation. However you feel about the political status of Artsakh, threats to shoot down civilian aircraft are unacceptable. I thank my colleagues again for ensuring that we do not abet the Azeris in this menacing behavior,” Sherman told the Armenian Assembly of America.

“After 23 years of studying these issues on the Foreign Affairs Committee, I’m not convinced that we should transfer any weapons under any circumstances to the government of Azerbaijan until it comes to the table and resolves the



Rep. Brad Sherman, Rep. Judy Chu

Artsakh dispute,” Sherman remarked on the House Floor.

“We are grateful to Congressman Sherman for raising this important issue in Congress. The people of Artsakh should enjoy all rights and liberties laid out in universal human rights documents. Freedom of movement is among the inalienable human rights, and we hope that this amendment will bring further attention and action to this crucial matter,” stated Artsakh Permanent Representative to the United States, Robert Avetisyan.

Chu’s measure – also supported by Representatives Pallone and Schiff – was adopted last night by voice vote as part of an en bloc package of amendments.

“The campaign of terror against the people of Artsakh must end. That’s why I introduced my amendment to support the cease-fire strengthening proposals originally put forward by House Foreign Affairs Chairman Eliot Engel and his predecessor, Ed Royce. The Royce-Engel proposals include gunfire locators, new observers, and a ban on snipers, heavy arms, and new weaponry along the line-of-contact. Adopting them is necessary for ensuring those who violate the peace are caught and stopped, and that is what my amendment encourages. I am pleased it was adopted in the NDAA and hope to see these proposals implemented,” Chu said.

“We welcome the adoption of the amendment see AMENDMENT, page 9



Prof. Daron Acemoglu

Daron Acemoglu Named Institute Professor, MIT’s Highest Faculty Honor

CAMBRIDGE, MA (MIT news) – Economist Daron Acemoglu, whose far-ranging research agenda has produced influential studies about government, innovation, labor, and globalization, was named Institute Professor, MIT’s highest faculty honor, in June.

Acemoglu is one of two MIT professors earning that distinction in 2019. The other, political scientist Suzanne Berger, has been named the inaugural John M. Deutch Institute Professor.

Acemoglu and Berger join a select group of people holding the Institute Professor title at MIT. There are now 12 Institute Professors, along with 11 Institute Professors Emeriti. The new appointees are the first faculty members to be named Institute Professors since 2015.

“As an Institute Professor, Daron Acemoglu embodies the essence of MIT: boldness, rigor and real-world impact,” says MIT President L. Rafael Reif. “From the John Bates Clark Medal to his decades of pioneering contributions to the literature, Daron has built an exceptional record of academic accomplishment. And because he has focused his creativity on broad, deep questions around the practical fate of nations, communities and workers, his work will be essential to making a better world in our time.”

In a letter sent to the MIT faculty in June, MIT Provost Martin A. Schmidt and MIT Chair of the Faculty Susan Silbey noted that the honor recognizes “exceptional distinction by a combination of leadership, accomplishment, and service in the scholarly, educational, and general intellectual life of the Institute and wider community.” Schmidt and Silbey also cited Acemoglu’s “significant impacts in diverse fields of economics” and praised him as “one of the most dedicated teachers and mentors in his department.”

A highly productive scholar with broad portfolio of research interests, Acemoglu has spent more than 25 years at MIT examining complicated, large-scale economic questions – and producing important answers.

“I’m greatly honored,” he says. “I’ve spent all my career at MIT, and this is a recognition that makes me humbled and happy.”

Acemoglu has authored or co-authored over 120 (and still rapidly counting) peer-reviewed papers. His fifth book, *The Narrow Corridor*, co-authored with Robinson, will be published in September. It takes a global look at the development of, and pressures on, individual rights and liberties. He has advised more than 60 PhD students at MIT and is known for investing considerable time reading the work of his colleagues.

As a student, Acemoglu received his BA from the University of York, and his MSc and PhD from the London School of Economics, the latter in 1992. His first faculty appointment was at MIT in 1993, and he has been at the Institute ever since. He was promoted to full professor in 2000, and since 2010 has been the Elizabeth and James Killian Professor of Economics.

Daron Acemoglu was born in Istanbul to an Armenian family.

“DARON ACEMOGLU EMBODIES THE ESSENCE OF MIT: BOLDNESS, RIGOR AND REAL-WORLD IMPACT,”

–MIT PRESIDENT L. RAFAEL REIF

Armenian Assembly to Honor Rep. Jackie Speier At National Advocacy Conference and Gala

WASHINGTON – The Armenian Assembly of America will honor Congresswoman Jackie Speier (D-CA) for her exemplary work as a United States Representative, as well as her dedication, commitment, and passionate support of United States-Armenia relations. She will be recognized at the Assembly’s Gala on Monday, September 16th in Washington, DC as part of the Assembly’s National Advocacy Conference.

Speier has been a Member of the House of Representatives for over a decade. She is a tireless advocate for women’s rights, the public good, and the security of Americans. Among the many congressional caucuses that she supports, Speier is a co-chair of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues, the Unexploded Ordnance (UXO)/Demining Caucus, and the Democratic Women’s Caucus. Newsweek listed her as one of its 150 “Fearless Women” in the world.

As chairwoman of the House Armed Services Committee Military Personnel Subcommittee and a member of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, she has worked to ensure that legislators care for and support our servicemembers and their families, keep the United States secure from terrorists and hostile nations, to honor and support our veterans, and save taxpayers millions by fighting for improved cyber defenses and sound management practices at the Pentagon. On these committees and in her previous assignments, she has led numerous investigations to protect the



Congresswoman Jackie Speier and Armenian Assembly Board Member Annie Simonian Totah at the 2019 Congressional Armenian Genocide Commemoration

public by exposing corruption and dysfunction.

Speier was the first member of Congress to advocate for fundamental reforms to end the epidemic of sexual assault in the military and on college campuses, and she is leading the fight against sexism in the fields of science and technology. During the last Congress, she led an effort to overhaul sexual harassment protections for members of the congressional workforce, and she is also at the forefront of efforts to end discrimination and close the gender pay gap through ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment and passage of the Paycheck Fairness Act.

“Congresswoman Jackie Speier’s work in Congress is impressive. She is highly respected by her colleagues and is a tireless advocate for her constituents, state, and country. As one of the Co-Chairs of the Armenian Caucus, and as an Armenian American in the House, Congresswoman Speier is also making a difference for Armenia and successfully secured an additional \$40 million in democracy assistance to Armenia in a House Appropriations Bill. She is more than deserving of this award, and we look forward to celebrating her achievements,” stated Assembly Co-Chairs Anthony Barsamian and Van Krikorian.

Last month, the US House of Representatives adopted an amendment offered by Speier to H.R. 2740 – the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, Legislative Branch, Defense, State, Foreign Operations, and Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act of 2020 – to provide \$40 million to Armenia for see SPEIER, page 9



COMMUNITY NEWS

St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School Holds Graduation Ceremonies

WATERTOWN — In June, St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School (SSAES) completed its 35th academic year. The graduation ceremonies were held on June 13 (K) and June 14 (Elementary), in the presence of parents and the clergy of the local Armenian churches.

On June 14, Dr. Vartan Matiossian, executive director of the Armenian National Education Committee (ANEC), came from New York to attend the elementary graduation.

The kindergarten and elementary programs were dedicated both to honor the 35th anniversary of the school. Students celebrated this anniversary through song, poem and dance. The elementary program was also dedicated to the 150th Anniversaries of Komitas Vartabed and poet Hovhanness Tumanyan, as well as the Armenian Press.

In her address, Principal Houry Boyamian thanked the faculty, the administrative staff, the PTO, the parent volunteers, the school board and committees, the St. Stephen's Church Board of Trustees, Rev. Antranig Baljian, as well as all the organizations and individuals that contribute to the advancement of the school. The School Board Chair, Levon Barsoumian, also thanked the school committees and parent volunteers. At the Kindergarten graduation night, on June 13, the Preschool Director Maral Orchanian spoke about the work they do to accomplish the Preschool goals and objectives.

On June 13, Boyamian honored with great gratitude three preschool teachers, Laura Terzian and Vicky Ashjian for their 10 years of service with the silver logo of the school and Anna Kupelian for her 20 years of service with a special gift from the school.

On this day, she also honored the preschool director, Maral Orchanian for her 20 years of service (10 years as a preschool teacher and 10 years as the preschool director). After highlighting the distinct attributes of Orchanian and her deep commitment to the well-being of her students and teachers, the principal presented her with awards joined by Rev. Archpriest Antranig Baljian, pastor of the St. Stephen's Church and the co-chair of the edu-

cation committee, Heather Krafian. Orchanian Received a Certificate of Appreciation from the Ministry of Diaspora of the Republic of Armenia, a Certificate of Appreciation from His Eminence Archbishop Anoushavan Tanielian, Prelate of the Eastern Prelacy, and a special

teaches the Armenian language and history, but she also instills in her students the Armenian spirit and immense love for Armenia. She mentioned that in addition to teaching, Megerdichian prepares the program of the Graduation Night, the program of the

Bechirian, Armen Gebeyan, Roman Ghazaryan, Avo Hacobian, Alique Iskenderian, Evelyn Mancilikli, Naira Minassian, Patrick Mulvey, Leon Nergaryan, Catalina Salibian, Tsolaire Seraderian, and Hrag Tokadjian.

On June 14, 20 students graduated from the Elementary School bringing the number of graduates to 328. They are: Vartan Arakelian, Andre Bashirians, Julia Chapian, Lara Chekijian, Sonya Haleblan, Gacia Haserjian, Saro Iskenderian, Anais Kahvejian, Lea Karapetian, Sarine Markarian, Narineh Mardiros, Zula Mardinian, Gassia Minassian, Nareg Minassian, Nicholas Nalbandyan, Vicken Panian, Alla Petrosyan, Arinne Stepanian, Sophia Tinkjian and Nshaun Yacoubian.

2019 SSAES Awards

Special and Unprecedented Award in Mathematics awarded by the school to Vartan Arakelian, Gr.5

- 3rd Nationwide and 2nd Statewide in Math Kangaroo International Competition, in 2017
- 1st Nationwide and 1st Statewide in Math Kangaroo International Competition, in 2018
- Recipient of George Lenchner Award for a Perfect Score at the International Mathematical Olympiad (with over 100,000 participants), receiving the Gold Pin for the 5th grade level and the Silver Pin for the 7th and 8th grade level, in 2019

Awards for Armenian Studies-Gr. 5

Prelacy Award for Excellence in Armenian Studies: Vartan Arakelian, Saro Iskenderian, Alla Petrosyan, Arinne Stepanian, Andre Bashirians, Lara Chekijian, Gassia Minassian, Narineh Mardiros, Lea Karapetian and Nareg Minassian

Armenian Relief Society Award for Excellence in Armenian Studies: Vartan Arakelian

SSAES Education Committee Award: Anais Kahvejian, Sophia Tinkjian for Fluency in Oral Expression

Certificate of Recognition for their Special Strength in Armenian Studies

Fluency in Reading: Julia Chapian, Gacia Haserjian

For Interest in Armenian History: Nshaun Yacubian, Zula Mardinian, Sarine Markarian

For Interest in Armenian Traditions and Customs: Sonya Haleblan

For Positive Attitude Toward Armenian:



The Graduating Class with Rev. Archpriest Antranig Baljian, Principal Houry Boyamian and Teachers Ardemis Megerdichian, Elaine Joyce and Mireille O'Connor

gift from the school, brought from Armenia. In addition to these, Mrs. Orchanian was presented with two surprises: Isabella Balian (Class of 2014) spoke eloquently about her experience being a student of Orchanian, followed by a song performed by the preschool students dedicated to her.

On June 14, Boyamian recognized the 20 years of dedicated service of Ardemis Megerdichian (Grades 1-5 Armenian Teacher). She stressed on the fact that she not only

Graduating Class Trip to Armenia and encourages her fifth graders to write and illustrate books, that they later present to the younger grades.

Baljian, Krista Aftandilian (co-chair of the education committee) and Matiossian joined Boyamian in presenting the awards to Mrs. Megerdichian who received a Certificate of Appreciation from the Ministry of Diaspora of the Republic of Armenia, a Certificate of Appreciation from Archbishop Anoushavan Tanielian, Prelate of the Eastern Prelacy, and a special gift from the school, brought from Armenia. In addition to these, Megerdichian was presented with two surprises. One of our alumni students, Meghri DerVartanian (Class of 2008) spoke about her experience being a



K Graduates with L-R Alik Arzoumanian, Principal Boyamian, Reverend Boynerian, Fr. A. Baljian, Fr. A. Aljalian and Diane Chiappinelli.JPG

student of Megerdichian, followed by a song performed by Grades 2 and 3 students dedicated to her.

Baljian and Boyamian presented the diplomas. Matiossian joined them on June 14 during the presentation of the awards. This year, the Prelacy Award for Excellence in Armenian Studies was the silver coin of Levon the 1st. Coincidentally this year is the 800th Anniversary of the passing of Levon I.

On June 13, 15 students graduated from Kindergarten. They are: Mary Aljalian, Kami Arzoumanian, Arianna Badrikian, Adriana

Vicken Panian, Nicholas Nalbandyan

President's Education Award - Gr. 5

Presidential Award for Academic Excellence: Vartan Arakelian, Lara Chekijian, Lea Karapetian, Sarine Markarian

Presidential Award for Outstanding Academic Achievement: Anais Kahvejian, Julia Chapian,

American Citizenship Award - Gr. 5: Narineh Mardiros, Nicholas Nalbandyan, Sophia Tinkjian

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Armenian Assembly to Honor Rep. Jackie Speier at National Advocacy Conference and Gala

SPEIER, from page 7

democracy assistance. The following week, she joined Armenian Caucus Co-Chair Rep. Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ) as an original co-sponsor for H. Res. 296 praising Armenia's democracy and reaffirming the critical importance of the partnership between the US and Armenia.

"I appreciate the important work of the Armenian Assembly of America in helping advance US-Armenia relations and urging support for Armenia's democracy. The United States and Armenia have very strong shared democratic values, which is what inspired my amendment," stated Speier. "I believe that the best days of our relationship are still ahead as we work together to build Armenia's blossoming democracy."

Throughout her time in office, Speier has worked tirelessly to keep Armenia and Artsakh at the top of the congressional agenda. During her tenure in Congress, she has co-sponsored multiple resolutions reaffirming America's storied history of recognizing the Armenian Genocide, supported humanitarian assistance to Armenia and Artsakh, encouraged visits and communication between the US and Artsakh at all levels of civil society and government, urged Turkey to safeguard its Christian heritage and to return confiscated church properties, condemned Azerbaijan for its ceasefire violations against Armenia and Artsakh, as well as its anti-Armenian pogroms in Sumgait, Baku and Kirovabad, and strongly supported life-saving programs to remove ordnance, mines, and other



Congresswoman Jackie Speier alongside Congresswoman Anna Eshoo at the Armenian Genocide Memorial during a 2017 Congressional Delegation to Armenia

explosive remnants of war left on battlefields around the world, including in Artsakh.

She had faced a long, difficult road before becoming a member of Congress. Early in her career, she was a legislative aid for the late Congressman Leo J. Ryan, Jr. Speier traveled with Ryan on a trip to Jonestown in 1978 at the compound of the People's Temple, a cult in Guyana that had previously been based in his San Francisco district, in an attempt to rescue

some of the cult's 900 members. Ryan was tragically shot to death, and Speier was left nearly lifeless herself on the airport tarmac after being shot five times at point blank range. Following her near-death experience, she fought hard and made a name for herself in the political sphere.

Speier won her first election in 1980 when she ran for the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors and defeated a 20-year incumbent. At the time, she was the youngest person ever

elected to the board. She was reelected in 1984, and was later selected as chairwoman. Speier also served in the California State Assembly and State Senate until winning her congressional seat in 2008.

During her 18 years in both chambers of the California Legislature, she had more than 300 bills signed into law by Republican and Democratic governors. Some of her highest-profile efforts secured justice for women and children, including a series of bills that led to the collection of more than \$2 billion in delinquent court-ordered child support payments. She also authored a measure that gave the state the nation's strongest financial privacy law.

"The Armenian Assembly of America is proud to honor Congresswoman Jackie Speier as a role model for all Americans. Her support for a democratic Armenia aligns perfectly with America's fundamental values, as well as the Assembly's mission in support of democracy, rule of law, and good governance," stated Assembly Executive Director Bryan Ardouny. "We strongly urge our nationwide activists to participate in this year's National Advocacy Conference as we highlight Armenia's democratic reforms and honor Congresswoman Speier."

Armenian American leaders and activists from across the country are invited to the Armenian Assembly's National Advocacy Conference and Gala in Washington, D.C. on September 16 and 17, 2019. The two-day event includes an all-day conference featuring invited speakers and advocacy training, an evening gala honoring Congresswoman Jackie Speier, meetings with elected officials and staff on Capitol Hill, and a special congressional reception celebrating US-Armenia relations.

Participants will learn advocacy techniques and be briefed on the current status of US-Armenia and US-Artsakh relations, as well as on a range of other priority issues, in preparation for their meetings with Members of Congress organized by the Armenian American Action Committee (ARAMAC), the Assembly's grassroots arm.

For more information on the National Advocacy Conference and Gala, visit www.aimhye.com or contact Congressional Relations Director Mariam Khaloyan at mariam@aaa-inc.org.

Armenian Assembly Applauds Chu and Sherman Amendments, Artsakh Welcomes US Support

AMENDMENT, from page 7

to the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) of the US House of Representatives submitted by Congresswoman Judy Chu," the Artsakh Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued in a statement. "We hope that this amendment introduced by the Congresswoman Judy Chu will create a new momentum for the implementation of the Royce-Engel proposals."

Earlier this year, Assembly Co-Chair Van Krikorian testified before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs and called for increased security measures given Azerbaijan's ongoing and deadly cease-fire violations.

"The governments of Armenia and Artsakh have consistently indicated their desire to peacefully resolve the conflict and have offered confidence-building measures to help reduce tensions and build trust. Azerbaijan, however, has chosen a different path — one of blockade, bellicose rhetoric, deadly cease-fire violations, and attempts to isolate Armenia," Assembly Co-Chair Krikorian said in his testimony. "In view of the escalation of the deadly cease-fire violations by Azerbaijan, including Azerbaijan's April 2016 military offensive, the Assembly supports efforts to prioritize the placement of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe-monitored, advanced gunfire locator systems and sound-ranging equipment to determine the source of attacks along the line of contact. The Assembly also supports funding for confidence-building measures to help facilitate a peaceful resolution of the Artsakh conflict," he added.



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COMMUNITY NEWS

Robert Morgenthau, Longtime Manhattan Prosecutor, Dies at 99

By Robert D. McFadden

NEW YORK (*New York Times*) — Robert M. Morgenthau, a courtly Knickerbocker patrician who waged war on crime for more than four decades as the chief federal prosecutor for Southern New York State and as Manhattan's longest-serving district attorney, died on Sunday, July 21 in Manhattan. He was 99.

Morgenthau's wife, Lucinda Franks, said he died at Lenox Hill Hospital after a short illness.

In an era of notorious Wall Street chicanery and often dangerous streets, Mr. Morgenthau was the bane of mobsters, crooked politicians and corporate greed; a public avenger to killers, rapists and drug dealers; and a confidant of mayors and governors, who came and went while he stayed on — for nearly nine years in the 1960s as the United States attorney for the Southern District of New York and for 35 more as Gotham's aristocratic Mr. District Attorney.

For a Morgenthau — the scion of a family steeped in wealth, privilege and public service — he was strangely awkward, a wooden speaker who seemed painfully shy on the stump. His grandfather had been an ambassador in President Woodrow Wilson's day, and his father was President Franklin D. Roosevelt's treasury secretary. His own early political forays, two runs for governor of New York, ended disastrously.

But from January 1, 1975, when he took over from an interim successor to the legendary district attorney Frank S. Hogan, to December 31, 2009, when he finally gave up his office in the old Criminal Courts Building on the edge of Chinatown, Morgenthau was the face of justice in Manhattan, a liberal Democrat elected nine times in succession, usually by landslides and with the endorsement of virtually all the political parties.

He presided over a battalion of 500 lawyers, a \$75 million budget and a torrent of cases every year that fixed the fates of accused stock manipulators, extortionists, murderers, muggers, wife-beaters and sexual predators, and in turn helped to shape the quality of life for millions in a city of vast riches and untold hardships.

While he rarely went to court himself, Morgenthau, by his own count, supervised a total of 3.5 million cases over the years. Many of them were run-of-the-mill drug busts, but there were also highly publicized trials, like those of the subway vigilante Bernard Goetz; the Central Park “preppy” killer, Robert Chambers; and John Lennon's assassin, Mark David Chapman.

His victories included the 2005 conviction of L. Dennis Kozlowski, chief executive of Tyco International, whose \$6,000 shower curtains and a \$2 million birthday party for his wife on the Mediterranean island of Sardinia came to symbolize corporate greed. Found guilty of misappropriating more than \$100 million from his company, Kozlowski was sentenced to eight to 25 years, although he won parole in 2014.

In a bizarre case, Morgenthau may have been the only prosecutor in history to convict a mother and son for murder without a body or a witness. The defendants, Sante and Kenneth Kimes, were accused of a scheme in 1998 to assume the identity of their landlady, the 82-year-old socialite Irene Silverman, and take over her \$7.7 million Manhattan mansion.

Her body was never found, but they were convicted of her murder and scores of other charges in 2000, partly on the basis of Sante Kimes's notebooks detailing the plot and notes by the victim expressing fear of her lodgers. Sante Kimes denied everything, but Kenneth confessed later that his mother had used a stun gun on the victim and that he had then strangled her, stuffed the body in a bag and left it in a dumpster in Hoboken, N.J.

He also indicted Clark M. Clifford, an adviser to Democratic presidents, and his law partner Robert A. Altman on charges of taking \$40 million in bribes for helping the bank gain control of a large bank holding company. Mr. Clifford's failing health led to the dismissal of charges against him, and Altman was acquitted.

Morgenthau's pursuit of crime sometimes took him beyond Manhattan. In 2004, he won a

bribery-conspiracy case against State Senator Guy J. Velella, a Republican whose district lay entirely outside Manhattan, in the Bronx and Westchester County. Prosecutors using surveying equipment showed that one crime scene was within 500 yards of Manhattan, and argued successfully that it fell within their jurisdiction.

Federal prosecutors said Morgenthau also did not respect jurisdictional lines when he followed the money trails in white-collar crimes to

dren — riveted the city and the nation for decades, as theories and suspects came and went without sufficient evidence for a prosecution during Mr. Morgenthau's tenure.

But the case was reopened by District Attorney Cyrus R. Vance Jr. in 2012, and Pedro Hernandez, a former bodega stock clerk who confessed to luring Etan into a basement and attacking him, was found guilty in 2017 of kidnapping and murdering the boy. Mr.



Paraguay, Iran, the Cayman Islands and Belgium. Two weeks before he retired, Morgenthau reached a \$536 million settlement with Credit Suisse, Switzerland's second-largest bank, which had helped Iranian, Libyan and Sudanese clients hide shady business in America.

But Morgenthau spent years working with federal prosecutors investigating the Bank of Credit and Commerce International, a global enterprise founded by Middle Eastern investors as a nexus for money that flowed in and out of drug cartels, terrorist groups and dictatorships. In 1991, the bank pleaded guilty to federal and state charges in what Mr. Morgenthau called the largest bank fraud in financial history, with losses estimated at \$15 billion. It was forced to close, pay fines and forfeit all its assets.

Although he cultivated an image of imperviousness to public pressure, Morgenthau was often barraged with criticism, particularly in cases involving racial bias or police brutality. Critics said he was slow to respond to an epidemic of police corruption in the 1980s, including cases in which transit officers falsely arrested eight black men, who sued and collectively won \$1 million in damages.

After the 1983 death in custody of Michael Stewart, a 25-year-old black graffiti artist arrested for spray-painting on a subway station wall, six white transit officers who had handcuffed him and were seen forcing a nightstick down on his neck were acquitted of criminal charges in 1985. The verdicts touched off protests by people who contended that Morgenthau had mishandled the prosecution.

And in a case that seemed to confirm national impressions of New York City as a cesspool of crime and race hatred, Morgenthau was vilified for what many called a waffling prosecution of Goetz, a white loner who shot four young black men on a subway train in 1984 after they surrounded him and demanded money. One victim was left paralyzed and partly brain-damaged.

“You don't look so bad, here's another,” the gunman told one prone victim as he fired again and fled.

Variouly hailed as a hero who acted in self-defense and denounced as a racist self-appointed vigilante, Mr. Goetz was first indicted only for illegal possession of a gun. After a public outcry, another grand jury indicted him for attempted murder. But the more serious charges were dismissed on a technicality, and he was finally convicted in 1987 on a weapons charge and served six months in jail.

The disappearance of a 6-year-old boy, Etan Patz, from a Manhattan street in 1979 — a case that generated a movement to raise public awareness, increase law-enforcement resources and pass new legislation to find missing chil-

Hernandez, 56, who had lived in New Jersey for years, was traced through a tip from his brother-in-law. He was sentenced to 25 years to life in prison.

Morgenthau lost about a quarter of his cases, and some that he won proved to be miscarriages of justice. The most glaring example was the conviction of five young black and Latino men from Harlem, four of whom falsely confessed on videotape to the 1989 beating and rape of the 28-year-old investment banker who became known as the Central Park Jogger.

After serving terms of 7½ to 13 years, the five were exonerated in 2002 after an imprisoned serial rapist and murderer, Matias Reyes, confessed to the crime. Morgenthau ordered a new investigation, including DNA tests that confirmed the Reyes account, and moved to clear the men in court.

“If only we had DNA 13 years ago,” Morgenthau lamented.

“I think it was his finest hour,” said Barry Scheck, a founding director of the Innocence Project of the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law, which promotes the use of DNA to reverse wrongful convictions. “Very few D.A.s would have done that, but he could with his stature, self-confidence, guts and commitment to principle. In that and other cases I've seen, I believe he has asked, ‘Is this the right thing to do?’ ”

Morgenthau was probably the most innovative prosecutor in the city's history. To pursue financial crimes, he hired scores of accountants and detectives with financial expertise. He promoted DNA testing and other modern investigating techniques. Enlarging the homicide bureau and other units, he hired Spanish-speaking interpreters and hundreds of black, Hispanic and female prosecutors, and he created the office's first sex-crimes and consumer affairs units.

He stressed the prosecution of career criminals, drug pushers, child pornographers, landlords who harassed tenants and perpetrators of attacks on gay men and lesbians. And throughout his tenure he opposed the death penalty, arguing that it was inhumane and was ineffective as a deterrent.

In later years, many New Yorkers wondered if he was too old for the job. As he ran for a ninth term in 2005, he faced rigorous opposition in a Democratic primary for the first time in decades. The challenger, Leslie Crocker Snyder, a former state court judge, was endorsed by a number of longtime Morgenthau supporters. But Morgenthau won the primary, 59 to 41 percent, and the general election, with 99 percent of the vote. He had run unopposed in general elections for 20 years, and did so again in this, his last race.

In a grandfatherly cardigan, his lanky legs propped on a desk and his wispy white hair

afloat, Morgenthau looked like an aging prep-school master, not America's best-known D.A., a model for the prosecutor played by Steven Hill on the long-running TV drama “Law & Order.” Some took his occasionally mismatched socks for absent-mindedness and his guttural voice for gruffness. He was typically mild-mannered.

Despite his highbrow upbringing, his inflections were New York: “had to” came out “hadda.” He loved Dunhill Montecruz cigars, allowing himself two a day until he quit years ago. His health seemed good even in his later years. But decades of strain in one of the city's most demanding jobs were apparent in the stooped shoulders and the gaunt face lined with legal decisions.

By 2009, when he decided not to run for another term, Morgenthau was a virtual institution, despised by the enemies a prosecutor inevitably acquires but widely admired by New Yorkers and revered by generations of assistants he had hired and mentored, many of whom had gone on to judgeships and careers in politics and the law — extensions of his influence who regarded him as an embodiment of integrity.

From War to Law

Robert Morris Morgenthau was born in Manhattan on July 31, 1919. His grandfather, the real estate tycoon Henry Morgenthau Sr., was President Wilson's ambassador to the Ottoman Empire in World War I and a prominent voice against the Armenian Genocide. Robert's father, Henry Jr., was Roosevelt's treasury secretary from 1934 to 1945, and his mother, Elinor (Fatman) Morgenthau, was a niece of Herbert H. Lehman, the New York Democratic governor and United States senator.

Robert grew up with his brother, Henry III, and his sister, Joan, in New York City, on the family's farm in upstate East Fishkill, N.Y., and in a privileged world of estates, private schools and social connections, notably with the Kennedys of Boston and Hyannis Port, Mass., and the Roosevelts of Hyde Park, N.Y. He attended the Lincoln School in Manhattan and graduated from the Deerfield Academy in Massachusetts in 1937 and from Amherst College in 1941 with high honors and a political science degree.

As a young man, he raced sailboats with Jack Kennedy off Cape Cod, spent memorable New Year's Eves at the White House with his father, and in 1939 roasted hot dogs for King George VI and Queen Elizabeth of Britain at the home of his Hudson Valley friends Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt. (On leave from the Navy during World War II, he served mint juleps to Winston Churchill and F.D.R. on the lawn of his family's apple farm.)

While studying at Amherst, Morgenthau met Martha Patridge, a Smith College student. They were married in 1943 and had five children. His first wife died in 1972. In 1977 he married Ms. Franks, a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist. They had two children.

Besides his wife, he is survived by the children of his first marriage, Jenny Morgenthau, Anne Morgenthau Grand, Elinor Morgenthau, Robert P. Morgenthau and Barbara Morgenthau Lee; the children of his second marriage, Joshua Franks Morgenthau and Amy Elinor Morgenthau; and by six grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

In 2014, Franks published a memoir, *Timeless: Love, Morgenthau, and Me*, that focused on her long and passionate union with a man almost 30 years her senior.

Morgenthau had been in the Naval Reserve in college, and after graduation he went on active duty as an ensign. He passed his physical exam by concealing the near-deafness in his right ear from a boyhood mastoid infection. An officer aboard three destroyers and a minesweeper during World War II, he survived enemy attacks and won decorations for bravery under fire.

His destroyer, the U.S.S. Lansdale, was attacked by Nazi torpedo bombers in the Mediterranean off Algiers on April 20, 1944. Cut by explosions, the ship went down with a heavy loss of life. Lieutenant Morgenthau, the executive officer, saved several shipmates, leapt into the water and swam for three hours in the



COMMUNITY NEWS

darkness until he and others were picked up by an American warship. In 1945 his ship, the U.S.S. Harry F. Bauer, was hit by a Japanese kamikaze plane off Iwo Jima, but its 550-pound bomb did not explode.

Mustering out after the war as a lieutenant commander, he enrolled in Yale Law School, finished a three-year course in two years and graduated in 1948. He soon joined the New York law firm Patterson, Belknap & Webb and became the personal assistant to the senior partner, Robert P. Patterson, who had been President Harry S. Truman's secretary of war.

Besides practicing corporate law, Mr. Patterson defended people swept up in the anti-Communist witch hunts of the 1950s, including the actor Edward G. Robinson, who testified before the House Un-American Activities Committee and resisted blacklisting. "Unlike most Wall Street lawyers of that day, he would take loyalty cases," Mr. Morgenthau said of Mr. Patterson, one of his early heroes. "He didn't care what anybody else thought. He did what he thought was right."

Patterson died in a plane crash in 1952. Morgenthau was supposed to have been on the flight — he had accompanied his boss on every other trip — but stayed behind to write a brief. Mr. Morgenthau was a partner in the firm from 1954 to 1961.

On the Kennedy Bandwagon

After practicing law for 12 years, Morgenthau, who had dabbled in Democratic politics in the Riverdale section of the Bronx, where he lived, jumped on the Kennedy bandwagon in 1960 and became chairman of Bronx Citizens for Kennedy. His reward was appointment in 1961 as the United States attorney for the Southern District of New York, embracing Manhattan, the Bronx and six upstate counties.

His most notable early case was the 1962 conviction of State Supreme Court Justice J. Vincent Keogh and Anthony (Tony Ducks) Corallo, a mobster who got his nickname ducking subpoenas and convictions, on charges of attempted bribery to influence a federal bankruptcy fraud case.

But after 17 months in office, Morgenthau left at the urging of the president's brother, Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, for a quixotic 1962 run to unseat Gov. Nelson A. Rockefeller, a rising star in the Republican Party's moderate wing. It was a fiasco. Distant and seemingly distracted at campaign stops, from which he sometimes wandered away, Morgenthau lost by 500,000 votes.



The IRWF Chairman Eduardo Eurnekian, Robert Morgenthau, Armenian Assembly Co-Chair Anthony Barsamian, Bryan Ardouny

After the election, President Kennedy reappointed him to the federal prosecutor's job, and he waded in zealously. He created the office's first special unit to investigate Wall Street and over the next seven years brought charges against stock manipulators, money launderers, tax lawyers and Internal Revenue Service accountants. He also indicted 150 organized crime figures.

Always close to the Kennedys, Morgenthau was with Robert Kennedy at his home in McLean, Va., on November 22, 1963, when the F.B.I. director J. Edgar Hoover called to report that the president had been shot in Dallas. Years later, facing criticism for hiring John F. Kennedy Jr. as an assistant district attorney, he snapped, "If having a famous father were a disqualification, I wouldn't have gotten my job."

He had overwhelming conviction rates but lost two cases against Roy M. Cohn, the aggressive former counsel to the anti-Communist crusader Senator Joseph R. McCarthy. Acquitted in 1964 of perjury in a stock swindle and in 1967 of mail fraud in a bus-line takeover, Cohn accused the prosecutor of waging a vendetta against him.

"A man is not immune from prosecution just because a United States attorney happens not to like him," Morgenthau remarked.

In 1968 he again convicted Corallo, this time for bribing James L. Marcus, a former city water

commissioner, to win contracts for renovating the Jerome Park Reservoir in the Bronx. In 1969 Carmine De Sapio, the last Tammany Hall power broker, whose prescription dark glasses gave him a sinister air, was also convicted of conspiring to bribe Marcus, who went to prison for taking kickbacks.

A City in Disarray

After resisting pressure from the Nixon administration for a year, Mr. Morgenthau resigned as federal prosecutor in January 1970. He was briefly a deputy to Mayor John V. Lindsay, but quit to again run for governor. Short of funds and support, he soon withdrew from the Democratic primary. Governor Rockefeller defeated the Democratic candidate, Arthur J. Goldberg, in the general election.

Morgenthau practiced law privately until 1974. He then jumped into a special election necessitated by the resignation (and impending death) of Hogan, Manhattan's district attorney for 32 years, and easily defeated the interim appointee, Richard H. Kuh.

When he took office in 1975, the city was in trouble, threatened by bankruptcy, public

employee strikes and a fraying social fabric. Buildings were abandoned and burned. Garbage piled up in the streets. Graffiti covered subways and buses. Crime was rampant, with 648 murders in Manhattan alone that year. (There were 58 the year he left office.)

The prosecutor's office was in disarray, too. Many of its 195 lawyers had no phones. Its \$8 million budget ran out halfway through the fiscal year. There was little expertise for combating sophisticated criminality. Case processing was inefficient, with different lawyers handling arraignments, indictments and trials.

Morgenthau streamlined the system, achieving greater speed and higher conviction rates by having one lawyer see each case through to completion. His growing influence helped win new laws mandating forfeiture of gains from criminal activity and limiting jury trials for misdemeanors.

His victories included the 1981 convictions of Chapman in the killing of John Lennon, and of a Metropolitan Opera stagehand, Craig Crimmins, in the murder of a violinist at Lincoln Center; the 1988 manslaughter guilty plea of Chambers in the strangulation of Jennifer Levin in Central Park; the 1989 manslaughter conviction of Joel Steinberg in the beating death of his adopted daughter, Lisa; and the convictions in 1991 and 1992 of seven men in the subway murder of a Utah tourist, Brian Watkins.

At the end of his last term, Morgenthau was 90 and had served three years longer than Hogan. He joined the Manhattan law firm Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz. Besides pro bono work, he wrote numerous op-ed articles in the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Daily News* and the *New York Times* calling for immigration reform, crackdowns on illegal guns, and improved care for veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars suffering from post-traumatic stress disorders.

In an interview with the *New York Times* in 2009, Morgenthau ruminated on the night in 1944 when his ship was torpedoed by Nazi warplanes and went down with 47 of his shipmates.

"I was swimming around without a life jacket," he recalled. "I made a number of promises to the Almighty, at a time when I didn't have much bargaining power."

His deal?

"That I would try to do something useful with my life."

Charlotte (Deranian) Eordekian

WATERTOWN — Charlotte (Deranian) Eordekian of Watertown died on July 7, 2019. She was the wife of 54 years of Harry Eordekian, and daughter of the late Krekor and Verjine (Sohigian) Deranian.

She was the sister of the late Haig Deranian and his late wife Donna (Pino) Deranian; sister-in-law of Sophie Eordekian and her late husband Jim Eordekian, and Hovey Eordekian and his late wife Rachel Eordekian; cousin of Diane Kouyoumjian; aunt of Gregory Deranian and his wife Adrienne, Jason Deranian and his wife Jennifer and Jennifer Granfield and her husband Mossey, Jae Erdekian and his wife Valerie, Charles Eordekian and his wife Cristina and Stefanie Jessiman and her husband Norman, Hovey Eordekian Jr., Jeanne Bonavita and her husband Richard, and Christopher Eordekian and his wife Wendy. Loving great-aunt of many nieces and nephews.

She was the co-owner of Lamp and Shade Gallery, Inc. of Watertown for 43 years.



Funeral services were held at Saint James Armenian Church, 465 Mount Auburn Street, Watertown on Saturday, July 13.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Children’s Hospital L.A. to Join Armenian EyeCare Project for Summer Mission to Armenia

NEWPORT BEACH, Calif. — The Armenian EyeCare Project (AECP) is gearing up for its Medical Mission to Armenia and has recruited pediatric staff from Children’s Hospital Los Angeles (CHLA) to join them on the journey. The Mission trip, which is taking place July 15-27, will focus heavily on training local physicians and medical staff in Armenia.

A longtime partner of the Armenian EyeCare Project, Children’s Hospital L.A. has been instrumental in the success of the AECP’s pediatric program in Armenia — dedicated to advancing eye care for infants and children in the country and eliminating preventable blindness caused by childhood eye disease. Developed in 2010, the program has screened over 20,000 infants in Armenia and has saved the sight of more than 200 babies through surgery. This includes the delicate treatment for retinopathy of prematurity (ROP), a devastating eye disease that affects babies born prematurely and leads to blindness if left untreated.

Due to the continued cooperation between AECP and CHLA, a cutting-edge Neonatal Simulation Center has opened in



AECP-CHLA International Conference on Ophthalmology, Neonatology and Endocrinology in Yerevan



AECP Founder and President Dr. Roger Ohanesian and CHLA Vision Center Director Dr. Thomas Lee have been working together in Armenia since 2010

Armenia and is located inside the AECP’s Center of Excellence for the Prevention of Childhood Blindness in Yerevan.

With innovative new equipment, like neonatal simulators, brought to Armenia, the Simulation Center is being used to train medical staff in advanced pediatric care for premature infants in Armenia. This staff includes neonatologists, nurses, gynecologists, maternity hospital midwives and others. More than 70 specialists have been trained at the Center so far with more training scheduled by AECP and CHLA physicians during the Medical Mission this month.

The Armenian EyeCare Project has also been visiting schools across Armenia to screen students for eye disease since 2004 and in this time the organization has screened nearly 175,000 children and conducted public education lessons for over 15,000 students in the country.

Working with Children’s Hospital L.A., the EyeCare Project has recently launched a larger-scale School Screening Program, which uses innovative technology including specialized cameras to detect common eye diseases found among children. Screenings in schools are essential for the early detection and prevention of eye disorders among these children in Armenia. For many eye diseases, time is critical and detecting a condition early can be crucial in saving a child from severe vision impairment and possible blindness.

As children get screened in schools across the country, the EyeCare Project will collect and provide information on the primary eye disorders found among these children to detect and

Iveta is one child who was diagnosed with strabismus only after noticing a change in her appearance and being made fun of for the way her eyes looked by other children at her school.

Detecting these conditions in advance means that children can not only avoid vision loss and potential blindness but they could also avoid the emotional pain and heartache often associated with these diseases.

During the Mission trip, the Armenian EyeCare Project will also hold its 17th medical conference in Armenia alongside Children’s Hospital L.A. and the Armenian Ministry of Health.

“We’re happy to report that we have gone beyond the time of repairing eyes to improve sight to now preventing diseases that will result in vision loss and possible blindness, thereby standing behind our mission and pledge to eliminate preventable blindness in Armenia,” Dr. Roger Ohanesian said. “The doctors of CHLA and AECP are pleased with our mutual respect

for vision and the charitable basis of our efforts. It has been a partnership that has benefited Armenia the most.”



A simulated baby at the AECP’s newly opened Neonatal Simulation Center in Yerevan

possibly prevent these diseases in the future. Because of this program, children who would otherwise go without regular eye check-ups are being screened and treated for eye conditions some do not even realize they have. The most common conditions have been nearsightedness, farsightedness and astigmatism though some children also show signs of amblyopia or “lazy eye,” strabismus or “cross eye,” and even cataracts.



Dr. Thomas Lee, Director of the Vision Center at Children’s Hospital L.A., screens a child in Armenia during a past Mission Trip with AECP



A little girl gets screened through AECP’s School Screening Program in Armenia



A boy receives the prescription eyeglasses



COMMUNITY NEWS

Tavitian Scholars at Tufts' Fletcher School Celebrate 20 Years

WASHINGTON — Armenian Assembly of America Co-Chair Anthony Barsamian joined the 20th anniversary celebration of the Tavitian Scholars Program at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in Tufts University at its graduation ceremony on Monday, June 17.

“These bright graduates are the future of Armenia. They will lead Armenia into the future and continue this path of transparency and prosperity in a more democratic Armenia,” Barsamian said.

The Tavitian Fellows Program, with endowments from Aso Tavitian and the Tavitian Foundation, is overseen by former Ambassador of Armenia to the United States, Rouben Shugarian and Dr. Joyce Barsam, a crucial supporter of the 20-year program who is the vice president of The Tavitian Foundation, a Member of the Board of Advisers of The Fletcher School, and a longtime Armenian Assembly Trustee.

In collaboration with the Tavitian Foundation, the Fletcher School administers the Tavitian Scholars Program, a six-month training program in public policy and administration for Armenian government officials.

This program has the largest number of alumni from any country in the world, per capita. More than 300 alumni are employed in mid-to-senior level positions in Armenia’s Central Bank, President’s Office, Parliament, Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Justice, and Economy, and other government institutions. The program’s graduates include the Chief of Staff to the President, Minister of Defense, and two former Foreign Ministers. Program participants receive a certificate in Public Policy and Administration from the Fletcher School.

Earlier this year, the Assembly hosted students from the Fletcher School at Tufts University at its headquarters in Washington, DC. Assembly Congressional Relations Director Mariam Khaloyan discussed the United States-Armenia relations. She explained the Assembly’s priorities to strengthen these relations on Capitol Hill and called for increased democracy assistance and other foreign aid to Armenia and Artsakh, as well as the importance



Tavitian Scholars Class of 2019 at Tufts University's Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy Graduation Ceremony on June 17

of security in the region. She also spoke about the Assembly’s efforts to encourage Members to join the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues and promote US affirmation of the Armenian Genocide.

Joining Khaloyan, Armenian National Institute (ANI) Director Dr. Rouben Adalian introduced the new ANI exhibit to the Fletcher University students, titled “The United States Military in the First Republic of Armenia 1919-1920,” which is available online at https://www.armenian-genocide.org/digital_exhibits.html. The 27-panel exhibit documents the extent of US humanitarian intervention during the most difficult years in the life of the newly-formed Armenian state. Based upon the photographic collection of an American medical officer, Dr. Walter P. Davenport, the exhibit reveals the depth and breadth of measures taken by US military personnel to stabilize the humanitarian crisis in Armenia, and especially the caretaking of the most vulnerable part of the population through hospitals, orphanages, food distribution points, and other facilities. The exhibit reveals how in 1919, US military personnel and civilian aid workers cared for thousands upon thousands of children in Armenia.



Tavitian Scholars at the Armenian Assembly of America headquarters in Washington, D.C. with Congressional Relations Director Mariam Khaloyan and Armenian National Institute Director Dr. Rouben Adalian on April 26

Couple Says Their Embryo Was Implanted into Wrong Woman, Had to Fight to Get Their Son

GLENDAL (Los Angeles Times) — The Glendale couple thought that their in vitro fertilization treatment had failed. But Anni and Ashot Manukyan were seized with anguish and horror when they learned that, on the other side of the country, a stranger had been implanted with their embryo then given birth to their baby boy.

On Wednesday, July 10, the Manukyans filed a lawsuit against Los Angeles’ CHA Fertility Center alleging negligent infliction of emotional distress and medical malpractice, among other infractions. The couple are seeking punitive and compensatory damages.

The lawsuit came only a few days after the other couple in New York, identified only as A.P. and Y.Z. in court filings, filed a separate lawsuit against CHA, alleging that their own embryos also were mishandled during the mix-up.

CHA did not immediately respond to a request for comment Wednesday.

The Manukyans laid out the details of their case with their lawyer, Adam Wolf, at a Wednesday morning news conference in downtown Los Angeles and a subsequent interview with the *Times*.

“CHA robbed me of my ability to carry my own child, my baby boy,” Anni Manukyan said at the news conference, holding back tears.

In August 2018, the Manukyans said, an embryo was inserted into Anni Manukyan’s uterus. They thought it was their own; now, they say, they know it was someone else’s. This did not result in a pregnancy, so they tried again, going through another IVF cycle — meaning more hormonal injections, more medications and more “physical pain and mental distress,” the filing says.

The couple said they did not know at the time that their sperm and egg had been implanted into the New York woman, who gave birth to the Manukyans’ baby boy March 31, along with another baby whose sperm and egg came from a third, unrelated couple.

The New York couple are Korean American and the

By Giulia McDonnell Nieto Del Rio

Manukyans are Armenian, and neither of the two baby boys that the New York woman gave birth to were of her own ethnicity.

“This case is among the most egregious I have ever seen,” Wolf said.

In addition to implanting the Manukyans’ embryo into another woman, the court filing says, the clinic transferred at least one embryo to Anni Manukyan that was not hers. “In other words, Anni was injected — against her will — with the sperm and egg of a man and woman who are complete strangers to her,” the document states.

The Manukyans also said that CHA destroyed a supposedly “abnormal” embryo without their consent. Anni Manukyan still does not know where at least one of her embryos went.

“What embryos did it transfer to Anni, and where did Anni and Ashot’s embryos go? They wake up every day thinking of that,” Wolf said in an interview with the *Times*. “So far, CHA has had no answers.”

“It [CHA] has never explained to us what happened to all of our embryos, leaving the possibility that my child, another child of mine, is somewhere out there,” Anni Manukyan said.

In October 2018, not knowing that their embryo had been implanted into another woman, Anni Manukyan started a second round of IVF treatments — which she and her husband now know were unnecessary. She developed precancerous cells in her uterus because of this second IVF treatment, the court filing says. She had a uterine biopsy several times and endured procedures to scrape these cells, causing her immense physical and emotional agony, she told the *Times*.

The Manukyans said they did not suspect anything was wrong with the IVF treatments until early April, when the chief operations officer of the clinic, Yumie Lee, asked the couple to come in for a cheek swab to get their

DNA. Lee called it a “routine quality check procedure,” the suit says. At this meeting, Lee refused to thoroughly explain what the reason for the cheek swab test was, Anni Manukyan said. When she asked whether anything was wrong with the embryos, Lee laughed and told her, “Don’t worry; your embryos are completely fine,” Anni Manukyan said.

The next day, Lee asked the couple to come into the office. Lee had come prepared with a psychiatrist at hand to deliver the news: Their baby had been born almost two weeks earlier, more than 2,000 miles away from his parents. “Once she said that, I felt my heart beat outside of my body,” Anni Manukyan said.

Immediately, the couple started the process of getting their son back under the guidance of their legal team, which filed a habeas corpus petition in family court, the complaint says.

For the first six weeks of the Manukyans’ son’s life, the New York couple took care of him. Anni Manukyan says she is extremely grateful that the New York woman took her son under her wing and carried him for almost eight months (he was born prematurely).

“She’s a wonderful woman; I pray for her every day,” Anni Manukyan said.

The Manukyans are still in contact with the New York couple, they said at the news conference. The Manukyans say they have spent more than \$125,000 on the various IVF treatments, in addition to undisclosed legal fees they had to pay in order to gain custody of their son.

The woman who birthed the Manukyans’ son in New York and her partner wanted to keep custody, the Glendale couple said. But the judge granted custody to the Manukyans, and 11 days after their arrival in New York, on May 13, they flew home to Los Angeles holding their son, Alec, the court filing says.

The first time Anni Manukyan held her son was in the lobby of a New York City hotel, almost six weeks after his birth. “I couldn’t wait to go and just hug him,” she said. “He was so delicate; he was so tiny.”



COMMUNITY NEWS

Armenian Assembly of America Intensifies Advocacy and Outreach

GLENDALÉ — The Armenian Assembly of America continued its outreach on the West Coast —including Arizona, California, Nevada, and Utah — energizing Assembly members and supporters, and securing results.

Assembly district meetings yielded results with Representatives Ted Lieu (D-CA) and Debbie Lesko (R-AZ) cosponsoring H.Res.296 (the bipartisan Armenian Genocide resolution), and Rep. Tom O'Halleran (D-AZ) agreeing to join the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues.

Rep. Katie Porter (D-CA) also joined the Armenian Caucus after meeting with constituents Drs. Alice and Ara Apkarian. In another meeting with Porter, Assembly Board of Trustees member Lisa Kalustian, along with the Armenian Assembly delegation, including the Pastor of St. Mary Armenian Apostolic Church of Costa Mesa, Archpriest Moushegh Tashjian; Assembly Southern California Regional Council (SCRC) member Helen Haig; Assembly Orange County Regional Committee Co-Chair Sosy Hachigian; 2019 Terjenian-Thomas Assembly Internship Program participant Mihran Markarian; constituent Alec Wansikehian; Mher and Sasoun Tcholakian, and Assembly Western Region Director Mihran Toumajan, thanked her for joining the Armenian Caucus and co-sponsoring H.Res.296.

The Assembly's outreach continued with district meetings with Representatives Andy Biggs (R-AZ) and Ann Kirkpatrick (D-AZ), as well as the offices of Representatives Chris Stewart (R-UT) and John Curtis (R-UT). These meetings provided an opportunity to educate Members of Congress on policy priorities for Armenian



Armenian Assembly of America Delegation with Rep. Debbie Lesko (R-AZ)

AGBU Arizona Chapter Chairman Kirk Kaprelian and his daughter Shoushana Kaprelian; Gigi Laurent-Wywill; Cara Matigian; Ann Andonyan, M.D.; Tammy Krikorian Gabel and David Kouyoumjian.

In conjunction with the congressional meetings and for the second consecutive year, the Assembly served as a co-sponsor of Scottsdale

took place on April 24 and included a memorial prayer service at the Armenian Genocide Monument located on the SCC campus. The service was led by St. Apkar Pastor, Rev. Fr. Zacharia Saribekyan, and included heartfelt remarks about the undeniable veracity of the Armenian Genocide by Rep. David Schweikert (R-AZ), a co-sponsor of H.Res.296.

As part of the Assembly's outreach efforts in Arizona, Kirk and Zhanet Kaprelian hosted a dinner in Scottsdale, during which Assembly Executive Director Bryan Ardouny and Western Region Director Mihran Toumajan briefed attendees on the organization's advocacy priorities and the Assembly's 2019 National Advocacy Conference set for September 16-17 in Washington, DC. During the Assembly's 2018 National Advocacy Conference, seven Arizona-based Armenian Americans took part in conference sessions and a full day of advocacy on the Hill.

The Utah congressional meetings were led by the Assembly's Utah State Chair Narine Sarkissian, and included the participation of local activists Miriam McFadden, Hovig Megerdichian, Eleonor Balasarian, Garine Bekearian, Terjenian-Thomas Assembly Internship Program alumna (2017) and intern coordinator (2018) Milena Davtyan, and attended an interactive town hall briefing on advocacy priorities held at the Arbat Banquet Hall in Salt Lake City, which was delivered jointly by Ardouny and Toumajan. Assembly leaders thanked Armen Galstyan, the owner of the banquet hall, for his hospitality during the community briefing.

Ardouny and Toumajan also provided a briefing at St. Geragos Armenian Apostolic Church in Las Vegas where they were welcomed by the Parish Council and Pastor, Very Rev. Sasoon Zumrookhian. Additional briefing attendees included Archpriest Nareg and Yeretzgeen Paitsar Matarian; Assembly Nevada State Committee members Ara Tcholakian and scholar Rafael Oganessian; Assistant Professor-in-Residence of Political Science at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas Dr. Nerses Kopalyan; and high school students who are members of the St. Geragos Armenian Church Youth Organization (ACYO).

Meanwhile in Sacramento, Toumajan testified before the California State Assembly's Standing Committee on Public Employment and Retirement, while Assembly SCRC member Helen Haig testified before the California State Senate's Standing Committee on Judiciary about the moral and economic merits of the "Prohibited Investments: Turkey" bill (AB 1320). Introduced and principally authored by California State Assemblymember Adrin

Nazarian, the bill would prohibit California's public employment retirement agencies — CalPERS and CalSTRS — from making new investments or renewing existing investments in Turkish government-issued and controlled debt securities and bonds.

On July 2, AB 1320 was approved with eight Senate Judiciary Committee Members voting in favor, one abstention, and no opposition. Having been approved the previous week in a hearing conducted by the CA State Senate Labor, Public Employment and Retirement Committee, AB 1320 now moves to the CA State Senate Appropriations Committee.

The Assembly Western Region Office also put together two Armenian-American community meet and greets with elected officials from the greater Los Angeles area. Along with the Southern California Armenian Democrats, the Assembly co-organized a meeting with the recently-elected Los Angeles County Sheriff Alex Villanueva in Glendale. Organized jointly by the Assembly and the Tekeyan Cultural Association (TCA) Metro Los Angeles chapter, representatives of more than 13 different Armenian American organizations sat down at a roundtable discussion with Rep. Judy Chu (D-CA), a staunch supporter of Armenia and



Rep. Judy Chu (D-CA) gave certificates of recognition to the representatives of the Armenian Assembly, Assembly Western Region Director Mihran Toumajan, and SCRC members Helen Haig and Margaret Mgrublian

Americans, including US reaffirmation of the Armenian Genocide.

Tucson-area meetings included the participation of the Assembly's Arizona State Co-Chair Peter Akmajian, Esq., along with Assembly members and activists John Achoukian; Artie and Margaret Ehamjian; World War II veteran Arthur Ehamjian; Ed George; and Dr. Ara Arabyan, an associate professor of aerospace and mechanical engineering and the director of the Engineering Design Program at the University of Arizona.

Phoenix-area meetings included longtime trustee of St. Apkar Armenian Apostolic Church Deacon Stephen Ovanessoff, M.D.;

Community College's (SCC) Genocide Awareness Week and St. Apkar Armenian Church's 2019 Genocide Awareness Program. During this year's SCC Genocide Awareness Week, academic presentations on the Armenian Genocide were delivered by Dr. Taner Akcam (Professor of History and the Robert Aram, Marianne Kaloosdian, and Stephen and Marian Mugar Chair in Armenian Genocide Studies at Clark University) and by Barlow Der Mugrdchian (the Berberian coordinator of the Armenian Studies Program and director of the Center for Armenian Studies at Fresno State University).

St. Apkar's Genocide Awareness Program



Armenian Assembly of America Town Hall Briefing in Las Vegas



Armenian Assembly Internship Program alumna Milena Davtyan, Weber State University's Dumke College of Health Professions Dean and Brady Presidential Distinguished Professor Yasmen Simonian, PhD, Armenian Assembly Utah State Chair Narine Sarkissian, and Armenian Assembly Executive Director Bryan Ardouny at the Town Hall Briefing in Salt Lake City

Artsakh. At the meeting, Rep. Chu awarded the Armenian Assembly with a certificate of congressional recognition for its work.

"I would like to thank the Armenian Assembly's members and supporters for their hard work and dedication. Together, we continue to make important strides. We will continue our advocacy work to further strengthen US-Armenia relations and Armenia's burgeoning democracy. I look forward to seeing grassroots activists participate in this year's National Advocacy Conference in Washington, DC," stated Toumajan.



COMMUNITY NEWS

Yettem Community Celebrates 108th Consecration Anniversary of Original Sanctuary

By Deacon Allan Yeghia Jendian

YETTEM, Calif. — On Sunday, July 8, a celebratory Badarak was conducted at the Diocesan parish named for St. Mary, in Yettem, commemorating the 108th Anniversary of Consecration of its original Sanctuary.

The badarak was celebrated by Fr. Zaven Markosyan, parish priest of St. Mary, with assistance at the altar by Deacon Allan Jendian, Deacon Randy Tellalian, Sub-Deacon Alan Farsakian, and Stolebearer David Sarfazan. The choir was led by Mary Louise Menendian, accompanied by Yn. Adrine Markosyan at the organ.

Markosyan, now in his seventh year of pastorate, expressed his happiness during his homily and offered his congratulations to the parishioners on this special occasion.

American Diocese Established

In 1898, the Diocese of the Armenian Church of North America was officially established, with headquarters in Worcester, Massachusetts. The immigrant community's first Armenian Church in America to be consecrated was on January 18, 1891 in the name of Soorp Prghitch (Armenian for "Holy Savior") by the Very Rev. Hovsep Sarajian. Sarajian, the first Armenian clergyman to set foot on American soil in July 1889 and first Primate of the American Diocese, celebrated the badarak of the Armenian Church in rented facilities and traveled to various cities to perform sacraments where we had established communities.

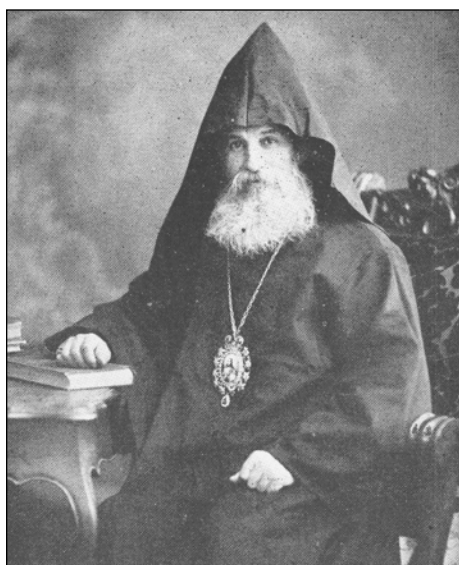
Yettem's original church was consecrated on July 4, 1911 by Bishop Moushegh Seropian and became the fifth Armenian community in America to have its church consecrated. The four other communities to have consecrated their churches earlier by Sarajian were: 1st - Our Savior, Worcester, MA, as noted above; 2nd - Holy Trinity, Fresno, CA, its original, on October 14, 1900; 3rd - Holy Cross, West



Bishop Moushegh Seropian



Old Yettem Church Annie - Mitchell Library Archive



Bishop Hovsep Sarajian

Hoboken (Union City), NJ, on January 27, 1907; 4th - St. Gregory the Illuminator, Fowler, CA, on April 17, 1910.

Historical Highlights of Yettem

The St. Mary Armenian Church of Yettem has a rich history dating back to the arrival of a group of Armenians in 1901 from the old country and settling in the rural area of present day Yettem. On Pentecost Sunday, May 31, 1903 the first worship service was held with subsequent services held in the Yettem School. The governmental agencies gave the Armenians permission to select a name for their settlement. A committee submitted three names. Yettem was officially adopted in 1903. On New Sunday (the Sunday after Easter), April 11, 1909, the first badarak was cel-

ebrated by Bishop Sarajian. He named the first Parish Council, Choir and Building Committee, with Krikor Arslanian as chairman. Sarajian encouraged the faithful to build their own church and anointed the corner stones of the church in May of 1909. Following the consecration of the church in 1911, the Armenian and Sunday School and the Ladies Society were organized in 1912 and 1914, respectively. In 1927 the California Diocese (Western) was established with five original parishes, the Yettem parish of St. Mary; Holy Trinity, Fresno; St. Gregory, Fowler; Sts. Sahag Mesrob, Reedley; and Holy Cross, Los Angeles.

On June 12, 1942, the original wooden church in Yettem was destroyed by fire. The

Archbishop Mampre Calfayan. The first ordination to the priesthood at St. Mary Church was Deacon John Kasparian on September 8-9, 1973 by Primate Bishop Vatche Hovsepian and renamed Rev. Vartan. During the latter's pastoral tenure, he directed the enhancement of the interior of the sanctuary with stained glass, icons, and a vestry. The grounds have been beautified with a Martyrs Memorial Monument, an Armenian Khachkar, and an Armenian Monumental Cross.

Years of pastoral tenure: Fr. Zaven Markosyan 2012-present; Archpriest Fr. Vartan Kasparian 2003-12 & 1973-90; Fr. Sahak Kaishian 1998-02; Fr. Stepanos Dingilian 1994-96; Fr. Artoon Sempadian 1990-93; Fr. Khachadour Vrt.



108th Consecration Anniversary Badarak - standing left to right: Hartune Neffian, Joann Sheklian, John Kalfayan, Sub-Deacon Alan Farsakian, Deacon Allan Jendian, Fr. Zaven Markosyan, Stolebearer David Sarfazan, Hasmig, Enfiedjian, Yn. Adrine Markosyan, Gohar Sheklian, Mari Louise Menendian. (Photo Credit Myron Sheklian)



Front view of the Yettem Church

parish membership cast votes in favor of building on the same site and to preserve its name of St. Mary - Soorp Astvadzdzin. Architect Lawrence K. Cone (Condrazian) - with the guidance of Archpriest Garabed Kalfayan - created a true gem of traditional Armenian architectural style. The main builders were Garabed Simonian, Sarkis Simonian, and Simon Simonian. The new St. Mary Church was consecrated on November 16, 1947 by Locum Tenens Bishop Vartan Kasparian and

Sarajian 1972-73; Fr. Kourken Koudoulian 1962-69; Archpriest Garabed Kalfayan 1939-62; Fr. Vartan Davidian 1931-34; and Archpriest Vahan Guldalian 1922-24.

Markosyan, a graduate of the Kevorkian Seminary of the Holy See, was ordained to the priesthood by Archbishop Karekin Nercesian (now Catholicos of All Armenians) on August 30, 1998 in Holy Echmiadzin. He has been serving in the Western Diocese since 2006, and the Yettem Parish since 2012.

Arts & Living

Levon Taberyan

Using Modern Dance
Based on Armenian
Culture

By Artsvi Bakhchinyan

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

YEREVAN/ISTANBUL – Since his debut in choreography in 1988, Levon Taberyan has been considered an excellent dancer as well as a creative and unique choreographer. One of the largest national newspapers in Turkey testified to his unparalleled choreographic approach with the words: “The unity of music and dance coursed through our veins and each musical note appeared before our eyes in the choreography. The narrative language and color of the project were thoroughly impressive. This was an artistic festival the likes of which we have rarely ever witnessed.”

Taberyan went on to work as a choreographer for “Anush” in 1988, “Arshin Mal Alan” in 1990, “Gaia” in 1991, “Vagvan Arvesdakedner” and “Bokomedi” in 1992, “Hin Asdvazner” in 1994, “7 Kocalı Hürmüz” in 1997, “Kaç Kışot Don Nazar” and “Leblebici Horhor” in 2000, “Kınlı Ah Kınalı” in 2003, “Paralı Artin” in 2004, “Ah Kınalı Vah Kınalı-2” in 2005, and “Hisseli Harikalar Kumpanyası” in 2006.

Alongside these endeavors, Taberyan did studio work with the world-renowned modern dance creator Christie Broadback for four years. Taberyan founded the Hay Dance Modern Dance Ensemble in 1992 with 14 other young, dynamic and creative dancers, and staged his first modern dance performance in 1993. Performances received critical acclaim in Turkey, and Taberyan’s success became known outside his community. The ensemble performed for many culture and arts events as well as social support, solidarity and responsibility projects.

Sosi Ayvaz wrote the following in *Kulis*, a bi-monthly Armenian magazine published in Istanbul: “Levon Taberyan is a talented young man who is able to combine feelings, emotions and dance. He is very good in choosing his stuff. He chooses such emotional excerpts that along with a dance and perfect choreography emerge beautiful combinations, creating with each movement and episode a separate emotion, feeling, gift and pleasure.”

In 2010, Taberyan produced “Gomidast-NÇU” which was a 30-minute dance narrative that peeked into the life of the renowned Armenian composer.

One of Taberyan’s most acclaimed projects was the dance theater “Anush Olmak,” which he staged in 2013 with nearly 35 dancers. The project reached out to 7500 Armenian and Turkish viewers. It was extensively covered by the Turkish-Armenian press and remained in the headlines for months.

Levon Taberyan now prepares to stage a new dance theater project. An ensemble consisting of some 30 dancers began working in November 2018. The project will make its debut in February or March of 2020...

Levon, the Istanbul Armenian community is unique with its choreography scene. While all the Armenian communities deal mainly – if not only – with traditional folk dances, the Bolsahay choreographers present the national culture through contemporary art, such as your Hai Dance (Armenian Dance) and also Arachnort (Leader) modern dance companies of Istanbul. How would you explain this phenomenon?

see DANCE, page 17



Album cover from Udi Hrant Kenkulian

Kef Music

The Jazz of Armenian People

Imagine a world where jazz music in America remained to this day the most popular dance music for parties, just as it was in the Big Band Swing Era.

Where the jazz world didn’t turn away from the mainstream and become overly artsy after World War II, becoming a style of music for bohemians, beatniks, and intellectuals.

By Harry Kezelian

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

and the kids danced updated versions of the jitterbug and modernized versions of the foxtrot.

Where instead of being superseded by rock and roll, disco, hip-hop, and techno, jazz continued to be America’s favorite music, and regarded by everyone as the great American native art form.

This is not an exact analogy, but it’s not too different from the situation that exists in the Armenian-American community with kef music, aside from Southern California and except for the last part, being regarded as a great art form.

One interesting similarity is that Armenians (and some other Mediterranean ethnic groups) still hold “dances.” If you say to your non-Armenian friends that you are going to a “dance,” they will often look at you funny. Because who goes to “dances,” aside from high schoolers or college fraternity and sorority members? When does one “hire a band,” except for at a wedding? Of course, throwing dances as the primary form of a social event and having live bands play at these dances was common among all Americans in the 1940s. Armenians did the same thing, only they had their own ethnic music and their own ethnic dancing at their events.

But the similarities don’t end there. Although some would argue that it’s impossible to define jazz, many would agree that there are at least a few salient characteristics that are needed for music to be jazz. The three most important characteristics are swing or syncopation, blue notes, and improvisation. If we take a look at these, we see definite similarities with what we know today as Armenian “kef music.”

Although kef music is not played in swing rhythm, rhythm is very important. The plethora of different rhythms such as 10/8, 9/8, 5/4, 7/8, and so on give kef music

see MUSIC, page 19



Hachig Kazarian

Governor Newsom Signs State Budget With \$5 Million for Armenian American Museum

GLENDALÉ – California Governor Gavin Newsom on July 3 signed the 2019-2020 state budget with \$5 million included for the Armenian American Museum. The 2019-2020 budget provides \$4 million in new funding for the museum and \$1 million in reallocated funding. The approval brings the State of California’s total investment in the museum to \$8 million.

Newsom proposed the new funding for the developing cultural and educational center in the May revise of his 2019-2020 budget proposal following a successful meeting between the Governor’s office and museum leadership.

“My staff was enlivened by the progress and vision of the Armenian American Museum,” stated Governor Newsom when expressing his support for the historic project during a recent interview. “We have to continue supporting the museum to raise more awareness of the extraordinary contributions of the Armenian community and to reflect on their history.”

In early May, the museum’s Board of Trustees, Construction Committee, and Alajajian Marcoosi Architects met with Governor Newsom’s Legislative Secretary



Gov. Gavin Newsom

Anthony Williams. Initiated by State Sen. Anthony Portantino, the meeting was an important opportunity for museum leadership to present its vision for the cultural and educational center, provide a guided tour of the museum site at Central Park, and have a productive discussion directly with the Governor’s team.

“I’m very pleased that Governor Newsom has proudly embraced the Armenian American Museum and put his support behind this amazing project,” stated Portantino. “The Governor clearly recognized the significance of the project to the State of California for all of California to embrace and Mr. Williams left the board briefing quite impressed with this historic effort.”

The museum has reached a historic milestone for the project with the Governor’s signing of the 2019-2020 state budget as the cultural and educational center approaches its historic groundbreaking year in 2020.

“We are grateful to Governor Newsom as well as to Senator Portantino and the State of California for supporting the Armenian American Museum,” stated Executive Chairman Berdj Karapetian. “We have reached a historic milestone for the project and look forward to the historic groundbreaking of the landmark center.”

Glendale, home to one of the largest Armenian diaspora communities, has dedicated a premier location for the museum in downtown Central Park.

The major funding announcement comes on the heels of the Board of Trustees’ selection of the museum’s project design team as well as the exhibition design and master planning firm.



ARTS & LIVING

Using Modern Dance Based On Armenian Culture

DANCE, from page 16

Using modern dance as a narrative based on our national culture is a matter of choice. I have always been impressed by music finding life in a body, whether in ballet, folk dance, modern dance, or a street performance. I began dancing



Levon Taberyan

with folk dances. I learned and experienced all aspects of folk dance, and slowly moved on to modern dance. I am fortunate to have begun this way.

I like to develop projects and interpret dance with full knowledge of all rules while avoiding clichés. To me, a story is told by music and figures. And my choice of figure was modern dance.

As far as I know Hai Dance was the first Armenian initiative in Istanbul in the scene of contemporary dance. What kind of difficulties did you have in composing your company?

Yes, Hai Dance was the first Armenian modern

dance ensemble in Istanbul. We developed widely-appreciated projects with 14 dancers who stayed true to their amateur spirit while drawing on their extensive dance background. The most difficult part was this not being a source of income in Turkey. It was nearly impossible to find a sponsor or society to back the project in the beginning. Prospective sponsors wanted to see the end-product and then dedicate a budget to it, which meant that we would need to develop the entire project using our own means for two years, and then apply for support.

My colleagues put their faith in me and got involved with an amateur spirit. We felt rhythm of the music in our veins and that was our key takeaway. We made sure to work with an Armenian nongovernmental organization and ascribe social responsibility to everything we did.

Moving beyond traditional folk dances and using modern dance to narrate a subject, feeling or music was a fresh breath for viewers. It is always difficult to step outside the conventional. We had initiated a new era not just with modern dance, but with the music we used as well. We danced to works by Vangelis, the prodigy of New Age music, as well as Jean-Michel Jarre and Kitaro. Armenian and Turkish viewers were always appreciative and supportive, which is the best payoff we could have ever had.

Who are your dancers?

Dance was my greatest passion since I was a child. I used to watch ballet on TV all day long as early as five or six. I paid attention to music, the



The ensemble of Levon Taberyan

bodies, and the narrative language. I tried to grasp the feeling. It was Levon in Wonderland back then. Being part of a magical world was utterly unbelievable. As a teenager, I realized that I was more capable of expressing my feelings through bodily movements. And music was the source of all this.

My dancers are people who share these feelings and are just as passionate as myself. They love dancing to the rhythm of music and expressing their feelings through their bodies.

Our ensemble consists of people who practice

folk dancing or are trained ballet performers. Most are married with children; all have day jobs. We meet after work three times a week to practice. We have great fun while we work. I guess that is the secret: having fun while you work. It is the capability to dream, to remain a child. But of course, hard work must always be there.

How you provide the so-called national character in your movements? Are they some taboos that you put in front of you consciously?

The ethnic nature of the subjects I deal with guide me. I design dance according to the subject and music. For example, in "Gomidas NÇU" and "Anush Olmak," I blended the music of Armenian composers with the emotions inherent in folk dances to bring a modern take on the subject, while in "Hai Dance" I opted for a more universal dance and narrative that used New Age music.

My new project is an amalgamation of the two. I use the duduk pieces of the world's best Armenian composers together with modern and universal pieces. The dance keeps up with this and sways from the traditional and folkloric to the modern and contemporary.

When I design a project, the story I pick immediately brings the music as well. The story and the music guide my movements, and choreography takes shape.

I enjoy being free, unique, and getting carried away on my dreams.

How would you appreciate the role of your wife, dancer Karin Karaoglan's role in your art?

Karin is in an altogether different dimension. She is full of challenging, extreme and ethereal ideas. It is difficult to work with her. I prefer to stay true to our conventions and essence, but she is always after the extremes. Conflicting thoughts and opinions, and brainstorming open up the doors to being the best.

Karin also worked with Christie Broadback for many years; she both danced and trained in depicting the project narrative onstage. Her training and her worldview in dance guide us. She converts the feeling of the choreography I develop into visuals on the stage. Out of the blue, she can call for doubling or even trebling our dance movements, or freezing everything all of a sudden. She may come up with something like, add some wind into this scene, and it suddenly becomes our nightmare! Joking aside, Karin is a great dancer and is excellent at depicting emotions.

I have other guardian angels that remain anonymous. They are very special people who have utmost confidence in what I do. I have a great team. And all of it is teamwork; without that, there is no success.

Did you have any opportunity to perform for other Armenian communities and Armenia?

We were not able to perform in Armenia because we are a large group and most of us have families and jobs. But we did perform in many venues across Turkey. We took part in culture and art festivals. We also made numerous performances on invitation.

This year all Armenians celebrate the 150th anniversary of two its geniuses, Hovhannes Tumanyan and Komitas Vartabed. You staged both Anush ballet based on Tumanyan's poem in 1988 and Gomidas. Are you going to remember them this year again?

Since we are developing a new project, we have rehearsals three days a week, and work on costume, lighting, sound and setting in the rest of the week. We would stretch ourselves too thin if we were to start another project now.



Tekeyan Cultural Association, Inc.

Dr. Nubar Berberian Annual Awards

Dr. Nubar Berberian, intellectual, journalist, activist and editor of many ADL daily newspapers for more than 50 years passed away at the age of 94 in November 23, 2016. In his Will, Dr. Berberian directed his Trust Fund managers to appropriate awards every year to college students of Armenian descent worldwide who major in either International Law or Political Science.

ELIGIBILITY AND REQUIREMENTS

- 1) Eligible recipients are college students of Armenian descent who major in either International Law or Political Science.
- 2) Applicant must be enrolled in a full-time graduate program in a fully accredited college or university in the world.
- 3) Applicant must provide all of the information requested on the application form.
- 4) Applicant must submit a copy of his or her most recent college transcript.
- 5) Applicant is to include a small head and shoulders self-portrait.
- 6) Application could be received by requesting from Tcadirector@Aol.com.
- 7) Applicants should submit applications electronically (via email) to: Tcadirector@Aol.com, The Paper submissions will be accepted by the deadline at:

Tekeyan Cultural Association, Inc.

Dr. Nubar Berberian Trust Fund

755 Mt. Auburn Street

Watertown, MA 02472

USA

but electronic application is preferred.

- 8) The deadline of receiving the applications is **September 15, 2019**.
- 9) The administrators and managers of the fund will vote the qualified winners in **October, 2019** based on the merits of each applicant.
- 10) The winner or winners will receive their awards in **November, 2019**
- 11) Winning applicants are not eligible to apply again.
- 12) This announcement is published in Armenian, English, French and Spanish.

Watertown, MA, July 15, 2019

Book Program at Tekeyan Center in Pasadena

PASADENA, Calif. — Tekeyan Cultural Association's Pasadena-Glendale Chapter organized a book presentation that took place on Sunday, July 14, at Tekeyan's Beshgeturian Center Hall in Altadena. Asdghig Khanjian was the master of ceremonies. There were about 80 people in attendance.



Kevork Keushkerian

The book, titled *The Armenian and Armenia in the Holy Bible* was authored by Dr. Hovhannes Ahmaranian and presented by Kevork Keushkerian. There was also a cultural program composed of poetic recitations by Norayr Dadourian and renditions of Armenian patriotic songs by Khatchig Nahabedian.

Dr. Hovhannes Ahmaranian was born in Beirut, Lebanon. He has earned a B.A. in Theology and an M.A. in Philosophy from the



Dr. Hovhannes Ahmaranian at the program

Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. He also has earned a Ph.D. in Middle Eastern History from the National Academy of Armenia. He is fluent in Armenian, Arabic, French, Italian, and English. He has published 29 books: 15 in Armenian, 6 in English, 6 in Arabic, and 2 in French.

Ahmaranian has extensive experience in education and teaching. He taught Combat Arabic and History of Iraq at the US Marines Corps at Camp Pendleton in California from 2004-05. He

taught at the Kevorkian Academy in Echmiadzin from 2006-07. He was the Provost/Dean of the Armenian Evangelical Academy in Yerevan, Armenia from 2010-11.

His book, *The Armenian and Armenia in the Holy Bible*, is a picturesque publication composed of 180 pages and divided into 19 chapters. In his preface to the book, Rev. Serop Mgrtichian, Pastor of the Armenian Evangelical Cilicia Church in Pasadena, wrote: "In his meticulous research, Dr. Ahmaranian shows the exis-

tence of the Armenian in the Bible, starting from the Creation to the presence of the horses in Armenia. Armenians have been biblical people."

In his introduction to the book, Ahmaranian reveals that neither Armenian nor Armenia are mentioned in the Holy Bible, rather Urartu and Ararat, which are synonymous to Armenia.

The first chapter, Creation, dwells upon the pre-Christian myths that were prevalent all over the world, including Armenia where Vahagn was a well-known epic hero.

Following that assertion, Ahmaranian leads a discussion about the name of God. In the pre-Christian era, says the author, there were many gods worshipped by different people, so names were necessary to distinguish them from each other. For example, Egyptians had Ra and Armenians had Anahid, among other nations.

However, continues Ahmaranian, following the pagan era, when the existence of one God was established and accepted by Christians, Jews and Muslims, there was no need for a name to identify the only God worshipped by the three religions.

Another chapter deals with the geographic location of the Garden of Eden. The book of Genesis, chapter 2, verses 10-14 says: "And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted and became into four heads. The name of the first is Pison, the name of the second is Gihon, the name of the third is Hiddekel and the name of the fourth is Euphrates."

Ahmaranian claims that all four rivers mentioned above; Pison (Armenian Dorokh), Gihon (Armenian Araxes), Hiddekel (Armenian Tigris) and Euphrates are in Historic Armenia. Therefore, he concludes, The Garden of Eden must have been in Armenia.



The blessing by wine of the book

Here is a quotation from Lord Byron that reiterates the above claim. "If the Scriptures are rightly understood, it was in Armenia that Paradise was placed. Armenia, which has paid as clearly as the descendants of Adam for that fleeting participation of its soil in the happiness of him who was created from its dust. It was in Armenia that the flood first abated, and the dove slighted."

Next, a whole chapter is devoted to Mount Ararat. We read in Genesis, chapter 8, verse 4: "On the seventh day of the seventh month, the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat." In Genesis, chapter 9, verse 1, God said to Noah: "Be fruitful, increase in number and fill the earth."

Furthermore, according to the *Book of Genesis*, Noah came out of the ark with his sons and their wives and all the animals. He planted a vineyard and when he drank some of the wine, he became drunk.

Ahmaranian goes on saying that Ararat has been also mentioned in the Holy Bible in three other books; Isaiah, Second Kings, and Jeremiah.

It's worth mentioning that, at the end of each chapter, the author has listed the sources that he has used. Also, at the end of the book, there is a synopsis in English.

In conclusion, I would like to say that the presentation of Ahmaranian's book has been an eye opening experience for me, as there is a wealth of information that is new to me, and I am sure, new to many people in our community. I hope the reader would feel enriched and thankful to the author for bringing to light Armenia and the Armenians mentioned in the Bible.

After the presentation, a question and answer session was held, which was followed by a reception.

— Kevork Keushkerian

Recipe Corner



by Christine Vartanian Datian

Yogurt Lemon Cake

Yogurt is an ancient food, used by peoples in Asia, Europe, and the Middle East across the millennia. Yogurt first appeared during the Neolithic period, around 5,000–10,000 years ago, probably as a result of milk naturally souring in warm temperatures (thank you warm temperatures and souring milk). Evidence from ancient pottery shows that Neolithic people were using the pots to store milk.

As a fermented food, yogurt was a great way to preserve milk, since the acidity slows the growth of harmful bacteria. Yogurt was a well-known food in the Greek and Roman empire and has played a major role in Mediterranean cuisine since 800 BC.

Yogurt making began in the United States in 1929 when Rose and Sarkis Colombosian, Armenian immigrants who lived in Andover, Massachusetts, started Colombo and Sons Creamery. General Mills purchased the company in 1993 and incorporated the yogurt division as Yoplait Colombo, based in Methuen. Based on traditional Armenian cooking methods, it was the first commercially produced yogurt in the U.S. The business grew in the 1960s due to the increased awareness of the many health benefits of yogurt. In 1993, Colombo Yogurt was purchased by General Mills. On January 29, 2010, General Mills announced that it was dropping the Colombo brand to focus more on its Yoplait yogurt. It ended shipments on February 12, 2010. General Mills still produces soft-serve frozen yogurt under the Colombo name.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 1/2 cup all-purpose flour, sifted
- 1 1/2 cups white or brown sugar
- 1 stick (1/2 cup) butter, at room temperature
- 1 cup plain yogurt
- 2-3 large eggs, beaten
- 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon grated lemon zest
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon each cinnamon, allspice and nutmeg
- 1 cup blanched and chopped almonds or chopped walnuts, optional
- Pinch of salt, optional



PREPARATION

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Cream sugar and butter together in a large bowl. Combine remaining ingredients and pour in a greased and floured 9X13-inch baking pan. Bake until top is light chestnut color and a pick inserted in the center comes out smooth, or about 30-35 minutes.

Remove from oven and top with lemon glaze while cake is still warm. Serve with fresh whipped cream, assorted berries, and fresh sliced fruit.

LEMON GLAZE

Combine all ingredients together in a bowl:

- 1 1/2 cups powdered sugar
- 2-3 tablespoons lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons water
- 1 tablespoon lemon zest

Serves 12.

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

ARTS & LIVING

Kef Music: The Jazz of Armenian People

MUSIC, from page 16

its driving force, along with using the simple 4/4 rhythm as used in Greek and Arabic music, and 6/8 rhythm as used in Persian and Eastern Armenian music. Of course, rhythm is an important part of all music but it becomes extremely important in kef music because certain dances were created to be danced to certain rhythms.

Next on the list of attributes of jazz are blue notes. These are those bending, swaying, low-down notes that we associate especially with the female African-American blues singers. Of course, any jazz soloist on trumpet or saxophone also uses those slightly “off” notes to give the music a “soulful” flavor. In Middle Eastern music, there is a concept called quartertones or microtones. Many people in books or on the internet describe these as “notes between the notes.” Perhaps that’s true in Classical Turkish or Arabic music. But in kef music as played by Armenians, playing those notes is better described as “bending notes,” which is just another way to say “playing blue notes.” The Armenian musicians aren’t as technical, they play what sounds good to them. This is easiest to do on the oud or violin because they have a fretless fingerboard. With the clarinet, certain notes are easy to bend by changing one’s embouchure, and the same is true for the duduk. In fact, duduk players bend notes and play quartertones just as much if not more than the clarinet players in kef music, although this isn’t true of some of the other instrumentalists from Armenia who frown on quartertones. The bent notes are often heard in the singing of the Armenian clergy, especially older men born in the Middle East, but to say that this is the result



Ara Dinkjian

of Turkish or Arabic influence would be quite wrong. While there are people out there who do show Turkish influence, the majority of the clergy of the old school sing with bent notes merely to inject some feeling into the sharagan, as the late Fr. Diran Papazian said “of course when I say I am singing from these notes, I don’t mean note for note! *Hoki bedkeh das!*”



Arto Tuncboyacian

(You have to give it soul.)

Noted Armenian music expert Krikor Pidedjian described Papazian’s singing as “the way Armenian liturgical music was meant to be sung.” Some types of Armenian music which are either classical and rely on the piano and Western instruments or certain folk instruments whose playing has been “straightened out” during the Soviet Era, or pop music using the synthesizer keyboard, are unable to inject this type of soul, except when it comes to the vocalist. But kef music, and also duduk music, retain the “hoki notes” as we might refer to them. The only difference here between kef music and jazz is that kef music accentuates different “in-between” notes than American jazz does, in keeping with the melodic patterns of the Armenian people.

The last attribute that distinguishes jazz from other forms of music is improvisation. And oh, has kef music got improvisation! This is another aspect that distinguishes it from most other forms of Armenian music (again, duduk music also frequently uses improvisation, as does Eastern Armenian clarinet playing). Those who are the true devoted fans of kef music will wait and listen for an oud solo or a clarinet “ride,” and everyone remembers how the crowd would gather around the stage to watch the late Roger Krikorian take a dumbeg solo. Completely free-standing solos are considered an art form by the oud players, known by the Arabic term “taksim,” and the greatest master of taksim playing, Udi Hrnt Kenkulian (1901-1978) is considered the greatest Armenian oud player who ever lived. Otherwise solos are played in the middle of the song, as a part of it, after the singer has completed the lyrics, just as in the classic, pre-WWII forms of jazz. The plucking of the oud strings in a soulful and rhythmic solo immediately incites the feet and arms to dance in the tak bar, and the high soaring improvisation of

the clarinet fills the shourch bar dancers with euphoria as they move along their line. This type of soloing is generally something we don’t hear any more in American music. Guitar solos in rock are usually not improvised, but are the same every time, unless the band is named the Grateful Dead, and solos don’t even exist in electronic music. (Interestingly, the improvisatory desire of musicians today is now reflected in freestyle rapping, but contrary to freestyle lyrics being a new idea, in historic Armenia singers freestyled lyrics to common folk melodies. This is something that has been captured on a few very early recordings in the US, and is still practiced by a few traditionalists in Armenia.) But unlike in the American rock or electronic music scene, we still have this amazing skill of improvisation being practiced in the Armenian community, yet very few people seem to take any notice of it or consider it an art form, even when it comes to the often-praised music of the duduk.

Jazz improvisation, on the other hand, was and is considered the central feature of jazz as a great American art form, and the idea was glorified in the jazz biopics of the otherwise conformist 1950s, like “Young Man With a Horn”

starring Kirk Douglas and Doris Day, where Kirk Douglas’ character, based on jazz trumpeter Bix Beiderbecke, describes his kind of music as “playing from the heart” and asks a bandleader “do you really want us to play it the same way every time?” This playing from the heart was what excited people in the era when jazz was the most popular music in the country, and just as in the Big Band era, the jitterbug dancers were egged on by Benny Goodman’s improvised clarinet solos, Armenian dancers to this day are egged on by the heartfelt improvised solos of Hachig Kazarian and other clarinetists. When it comes to oudists, Johnny Berberian puts so much soul into his oud playing that you feel like you are on top of a mountain in Armenia, and Richard Hagopian’s insistent rhythmic and intricate-yet-driving playing makes it impossible not to dance. Their solos are just as much a work of improvisatory art as any jazz musician’s.

Most jazz fans today prefer the post-WWII sound, which was originally called “modern jazz,” but they wouldn’t deny the artistry of Louis Armstrong and his contemporaries whose heyday was before the war. There are some artists in Armenia who attempt to mix the post-war jazz with Armenian classical music, and refer to their creations as “Armenian Jazz.” We even have Ara Dinkjian and Arto Tuncboyacian, who having sprung out of kef music, have created their own wonderful forms of Armenian Jazz with a more Western Armenian slant. But these styles are actually “modern” Armenian jazz, and just as modern jazz, are not really intended as dance party music. What isn’t recognized is that kef music itself is a living Armenian equivalent to the classic jazz of Louis Armstrong and Benny Goodman, which in our community (see my previous article on ACYOA Sports Weekend) still has the ability to both move people on the dance floor and at the same time to be a highly cultivated, expressive, and soulful, art form. So, let’s celebrate our master musicians, such as those named above, and especially, especially, encourage our young up-and-coming musicians, keep them playing, hire them for dances, get them involved and recognized for their artistry, and finally recognize kef music for what it is, the Great Armenian-American Art Form.

Bridge of Health Gala to Raise Funds to Battle Childhood Cancers

LOS ANGELES – Bridge of Health, a non-profit organization helping children conquer cancer in Armenia, announces its upcoming fundraiser event, Roots Gala, to be held on Sunday, September 8, at Aurora Banquet Hall.

Roots Gala, hosted by PanArmenia TV Host, Mher Baghdasaryan, marks Bridge of Health’s fifth annual gala hosted in honor of the children who defeated cancer, in remembrance of the children who lost their battle, and in recognition of the members and supporters of Bridge of Health. Members of the organization will also present the progress on their establishment of Armenia’s first ever pediatric cancer registry.

This black-tie event will embrace the roots of the Armenian heritage and celebrate the passionate Armenian spirit. Bridge of Health is a not-for-profit organization whose goal is to bring strong medical advancement to Armenia and give their all to children fighting every day for a healthy future.

Guests can expect an art gallery, dinner ceremony, live entertainment, dancing, and amazing raffle prizes donated by local businesses. An open bar and tunes provided by DJ Armond will keep the crowd lively well into the night.

“As Bridge of Health grows, we continue to pursue a vision beyond the present. Through the creation of the pediatric cancer registry, we are aiming to bring real systemic change to Armenia that will be an incredible investment for future cancer patients. We want to not only help cure children with cancer, but to systematically improve medical treatments in Armenia for generations to come,” explained President of Bridge of Health Robert Agaverdian, MHA, RN, PHN.

Bridge of Health’s Guyn Gala last year raised more than \$30,000 in funds. This year, the goal is to double the donations. For sponsorship inquiries or more information, visit bridgeofhealth.org.

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ARTS & LIVING

From Westwood to Yerevan: UCLA's VEM Ensemble a Friend and Ambassador for Armenian Music

By Néstor Castiglione

LOS ANGELES and YEREVAN – Arriving at the airport, exhausted and cramped after a 21-hour flight with more turbulence than my admittedly timid sensibilities could handle, I quickly made my way to the nearest bathroom in order to take a breath for a moment, and maybe splash some water through my hair. As I leaned over the sink and gratefully rinsed my face under the cool running water, my ears suddenly took notice of the faint strains of a familiar tune wafting from outside. Drying myself off, I stood there silent for a moment trying to pick the musical thread out from the tapestry of bustling noise in which it was threaded. What was it? Picking up my bags I headed out to customs, hoping to get a better hearing of the music. As I stood in line, against a controlled din of public announcements blaring overhead and the constant stamping of passports by customs agents, the music finally revealed itself: It was the Waltz from Aram Khachaturian's *Masquerade*, soon followed by the Adagio from *Spartacus*.

It was nearly 2 a.m. when I finally made it through Zvartnots Airport. Welcome to Armenia.

Music is practically ubiquitous wherever one walks in Yerevan. Street performers with their duduk and k'anon interspersing folk melodies with arrangements of Khachaturian and Babadjanian, melismatic pop songs blaring out from passing Moskvitchs, simple nursery songs from playing children. In the world of classical music, nations like Germany, France, Austria, Russia, and Italy are for general audiences virtually synonymous with the genre. Armenia, despite its size and population, not only swings an oversized fist in the annals of classical music – bequeathing countless composers, instrumentalists, singers, and musicologists – but makes a convincing argument that it, too, ought to be recognized as one of those nations who have made a sizable and distinguished contribution to music.

"We are caught between Europe and Asia," today's young Armenian composers, told me



VEM Ensemble in performance

Jason Pegis. Together they formed the latest iteration of the VEM Ensemble, the brainchild of violinist Movses Pogossian, who serves as the director of UCLA's Armenian Music Program. Founded in 2013, the program and its flagship musical group is dedicated to performing and disseminating the Western classical music of Armenia. Over the past six years, VEM alumni have presented Armenian music in locales across North America and Europe. On this particular journey they will be taking a handful of days to prepare for and present a performance of music by Schubert, Webern, Komitas, Tigran Mansurian, Artashes Kartalyan, and Avanesov in Yerevan at the Aram Khachaturian Museum. The Kartalyan score, *Tekeyan Triptych*, was commissioned by the Tekeyan Armenian Cultural Association of the US and Canada, which was founded in 1947 to preserve the Armenian diaspora's link to the heritage of its homeland and to promote its culture.

"Being here in Armenia makes me [feel] this music a lot more," Pegis, the ensemble's cellist

of death, an experience often compartmentalized and sealed off from quotidian life in the United States, is never very far away in Armenia. Pogossian tells us over dinner one night his own harrowing legacy of loss, his grandfather being the sole survivor among his family who perished under the sword of the Ottoman Turks. The next morning, I pulled into Khor Virap in Ararat Province. At the foot of a hill, beneath the gaze of this ancient church whose chapel dates back to the seventh century, lay a small graveyard with an Armenian flag somberly flapping overhead. In this arid patch of land, fenced off from the road that leads to the monastery, were about two dozen tombstones, some of them etched with the portraits of the departed; they were soldiers who had died in the line of duty during the Nagorno-Karabakh War. An old woman in black, her mourning veil blowing over her face, fluttering in the air as if greeting a figure that was just out of sight, stood alone silently over one of those black markers, a clutch of fresh flowers resting next to it.

"I lived among all this history, these people, I knew the ones with names, without names," Mansurian said through his assistant, Chaghik Arzrouni-Chahinian, one windy afternoon inside his modest Soviet-era apartment, gesturing passionately as he spoke, surrounded by portraits of his wife and friends, now gone. "I loved all these people who are no more with us. Each one who contributed even one stone to [Armenian] culture. Unfortunately, it is a history that is vanishing more and more. One must always be attentive to the truth of our culture, our music, and to its memory."

The night of Thursday, June 13 was a warm one in Yerevan, crossed over as it was by a heat wave and the lingering humidity of a thunderstorm that had passed through earlier that week. It tends to be the case that people in Southern California stay home during such weather, preferring to sit before the blast of their home's air conditioners. The audience in the Hall of the Khachaturian Museum, however, were made of hardier stuff, packing the space in anticipation of that night's program, fanning themselves vigorously with flyers and program notes before the concert began. In the days of rehearsals leading up to that night, the VEM Ensemble had painstakingly worked to realize these

scores, bringing them into focus, cleaning their textures, until they finally emerged in the performance like a noble portrait swept free of centuries' encrustation of dust. Their playing was alert, pliant, and deeply expressive.

Segen, who was the soloist for Mansurian's Four Hayrens from 1967, drew impassioned applause from the audience. Though Armenian is a language which is still mostly unfamiliar to me, her diction seemed remarkably authentic.

"Beautiful voice and no foreign accent!," one older woman in the audience told me afterwards.

"I actually don't know the language either," Segen confided with a smile the day before. "But I learned to sing it phonetically." She expressed her gratitude to Vatsche Barsoumian, director of the Lark Musical Society in Glendale, for his patient and insightful coaching in singing the Armenian language.

The program was a wide-ranging one, bridging the tense Romanticism of Schubert and early Webern, to the knotty play of wit and gnarled lyricism of Avanesov, and concluding with the grave beauty of Mansurian. A roar of bravos and claps met the VEM at the program's conclusion, which resulted in a number of encores, including an arrangement of a song from a Babadjanian film score which drew such an approbative eruption from the audience that it could well have been heard all the way in Glendale.

At a well-earned post-concert dinner for the VEM at a Tumanyan Street restaurant called Mer Gyughe, Mansurian led an emotional toast



VEM at Garni, Armenia



The finale of the concert, with Tigran Mansurian

over dinner in Yerevan last month. Amidst the merrymaking and the glasses clinking from our fellow guests, he continued: "I think our love of music is both a survival tactic and coping mechanism. In this part of the world, Armenia sought protection, escape by aligning itself with European culture."

Yet its cultural achievements, while a well-known source of national pride to Armenians, remains underappreciated internationally. But a pioneering program at UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music is working on changing that.

Last month, I followed five young musicians, each of them UCLA students, and all of whom but one were embarking upon their first trip to Armenia: Danielle Segen, Ji Eun, Aiko Richter, Morgan O'Shaughnessey, and

related to me one morning while we all were heading to the Temple of Garni. "Seeing the country, visiting [Tsitsernakaberd], I feel this music, its duality of joy and sadness, in a way that I could not before."

"You realize when you're here that the suffering of the Armenians wasn't just a story," added mezzo-soprano Segen, who was seated just ahead of me. "You can face the sorrow of their past in a very personal way."

Driving a few days later along the winding roads of Vayots Dzor, our vehicle clutching tenuously to the reddish, rough-hewn cliffs which overlooked the verdant valley below, my eyes were drawn time and again to the grave markers that dotted the side of the road. The neophyte traveller soon realizes that the memory

to the young musicians from the United States.

"To hear somebody like Mansurian say that to us is kind of amazing," O'Shaughnessey would tell me later. "That's a blurb you can put on your resumé!," he laughed.

"Witnessing from the audience what you have done for Armenian music, your beautiful playing, your friendship for Armenia," Mansurian declared, "all I can say is that we love you and please come back."

Thanks to the efforts of UCLA, Pogossian, and the many friends of Armenian music in Southern California, and the diligent cultural ambassadors of the UCLA Armenian Music Program, the day may come sooner than later when listeners in the Americas and Europe may come to think of Yerevan the way they now do of Vienna or Berlin: As another crucial and indispensable nodal point in the continuing history of classical music.

To see Mansurian's closing remarks at the end of the concert, click <https://drive.google.com/open?id=1BXQ5uK5QyJvluhij9yY1BMG6xHkoMgut>

To see Segen perform Komitas' *Olor* (Lullaby) outside of Saghmosavank, visit <https://drive.google.com/open?id=1NYpY6BhORKApGXSKzHVvzXSNb-zxJWkl>

To see a performance of the Tekeyan *Triptych*, visit https://drive.google.com/file/d/1IxLyY8jM6MUZGXEBraKHCJUzdB_XuvKa/view?usp=sharing



ARTS & LIVING

C A L E N D A R

ARIZONA

NOVEMBER 2-3 — ARMENIAFest at St. Apkar Armenian Apostolic Church. Weekend food and cultural festival featuring traditional Armenian foods, beverages, exhibits, music and dance performances. 8849 E. Cholla St., Scottsdale.

NOVEMBER 16 — SOAR (Society for Orphaned Armenian Relief) Annual Golf Tournament. Saturday 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. Stonecreek Golf Club, 4435 E. Paradise Village Pkwy, Phoenix. This is a fundraising event for Armenian orphans. For more information, contact Dr. Alan Haroian, 603-540-1961.

MASSACHUSETTS

AUGUST 4 and 11 — Sunday classes, 2-4 p.m., Learn Traditional Marash Embroidery Technique! Armenian Museum of America, Adele & Haig Der Manuelian galleries, 3rd floor, 65 Main Street, Watertown. Join Textile Curator Susan Lind-Sinanian at the Armenian Museum for a hands-on workshop (2 classes) to learn the unique tradition of Marash Embroidery. Marash Kordz (handwork of Marash) was a form of embroidery popular among the Armenians of Marash. Created by weaving a surface pattern through a lattice framework of two rows, it was originally used for decorating various household textiles, usually furnishings. Don't miss out on this rare opportunity to learn this traditional technique and see beautiful examples in the Museum's collection! All materials will be provided. Limit 12 students per class. Cost: \$60. Become a member to receive a 20% discount! \$48 members. Register online or call Education Coordinator, Garin Habeshian at 617.926.2562 Ext. 103 today!

AUGUST 6 — Book presentation by Adrienne G. Alexanian editor of her father's memoir Forced into Genocide: Memoirs of an Armenian Soldier In the Ottoman Turkish Army, 7 p.m. Falmouth Public Library, Herman Foundation Meeting Room, 300 Main Street, Falmouth. Book sale/signing following the presentation. For information: Sue Henken (508) 457-2555 ext. 7 or www.falmouthpubliclibrary.org

AUGUST 11 — Annual Picnic, 12 — 5 p.m., Sts. Vartanantz Armenian Church, 180 Old Westford Rd., Chelmsford. Music and dancing to the Jason Naroian Ensemble. Shish, Chicken, and Losh Kebabs. Armenian Pastries. Children's Activities. In the event of rain, picnic will be in the Kazanjian Memorial Ballroom.

AUGUST 14 — Tea and Tranquility. Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston. Wednesday from 4:30-6 p.m. Meet & Greet. Walk the Labyrinth. Enjoy refreshing Ice Teas, hosted by MEM Tea Imports and dessert. Introduction to walking the labyrinth, mindful and meditative walking at 4:45pm. RSVP appreciated hello@armenianheritagepark.org

AUGUST 14-23 — Wednesday and Fridays Summer Studio Art Classes for kids, Session 2. Armenian Museum of America, Adele & Haig Der Manuelian galleries, 3rd floor, 65 Main Street, Watertown. Artists are explore the amazing objects in the galleries and create art from this inspiration. Ages 6-10: 11 am to 1 pm; Ages 11-14: 3 pm to 5 pm; Session 2 Dates: August 14-23, Wednesdays and Fridays. Cost per student: \$120. Members (family or higher) \$96! Individual drop-in classes can be purchased for \$35. Members \$28. A 10% discount will be offered for each additional sibling in the same course and/or class. For individual classes and siblings, please call Education Coordinator, Garin Habeshian at 617-926-2562, ext. 103.

AUGUST 22 — Under the August Moon. Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston. Thursday from 7:30— 9 p.m. Delightful evening for supporters, partners & friends featuring fabulous signature dishes, hosted by anoush'ella and the Berklee Jazz Trio. RSVP appreciated hello@armenianheritagepark.org

AUGUST 25 — Armenian Church at Hye Pointe Picnic. 12 to 5 p.m., Armenian Church at Hye Pointe Picnic to be held at our new Family Life & Cultural Center, 1280 Boston Road (RTE. 125) Haverhill MA Music by the fabulous Jason Naroian Ensemble. Menu includes Lamb Shish, Losh, & Chicken Kebab Dinners, Kheyma, Pastries, & Beverages. Air Conditioned Hall. Bring your lawn chairs for sitting outside. For more info visit www.hypointearmenianchurch.org or call (978) 372-9227. Take Rte. 495 N to exit 48, bear right at the end of the ramp and follow the signs. Additional parking at Osgood Landing with free shuttle bus to the picnic grounds.

SEPTEMBER 15 — Trinity Annual Picnic, 12 -5 p.m.,



The National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) will hold its grand opening and gala on November 1 and 2. The gala will be held at the Royal Sonesta Hotel, Cambridge, with reception starting at 6 pm and dinner and program at 7 p.m. Honoree Dr. Vartan Gregorian, president of the Carnegie Corporation of New York for whom the new building is named, will be present.

Church Grounds and Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall, Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 145 Brattle Street, Cambridge MA. Food, fun and fellowship for all. Join us for an afternoon of delicious Armenian food, Armenian music, children's activities, raffle drawing, and more. Blessing of the Madagh at 4 p.m. For further information, call the Church Office, 617.354.0632, or email office@htaac.org.

SEPTEMBER 16 — Registration is now open for the 2019-2020 sessions of the Abaka Dance Academy, 101 Bigelow Ave., Watertown, MA. Principal/director Apo Ashjian. Classes begin September 16 for grades Nursery II - Grade 10 students. Check the schedule and enroll today at www.abakadanceacademy.com. For more info, email abakadanceacademy@gmail.com or call 617-283-2010.

SEPTEMBER 18 — Celebrating Contributions of Our Nation's Immigrants – Gala Benefit for the Endowed Fund for Care of Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway Honoring Dr. Noubar Afeyan, Leader & Philanthropist Recognizing Organizations Serving Immigrants & Refugees InterContinental Hotel Boston. Advance Reservations only. For information, hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

SEPTEMBER 22 — Sunday Afternoon for Families and Friends. Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston. 2-4 pm. Wonderful afternoon with The Hye Guys Ensemble featuring Ron Sahatjian and Joe Kouyoumjian. Hoodies, Face Painting and more RSVP appreciated hello@armenianheritagepark.org

OCTOBER 19 — The Vosbikians are coming to the Merrimack Valley. The Armenian Friends of America proudly present their Annual HYE KEF 5 Dance, featuring The Vosbikians. The DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel, Andover, MA. Tickets Purchased before 9/13/19 will include the Great Venue, Outstanding Buffet, The Vosbikian Band and 5 Free Raffle Tickets Adults \$75.00 & Students 21 & under \$65 Specially priced AFA Rooms available through 9/17/19. For Tickets and more information, Contact: Lu Sirmaian 978-683-9121 or Sharke' Der Apkarian at 978-808-0598 Visit www.Armenia-FriendsofAmerica.org

OCTOBER 20 — Annual Banquet of Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, Celebrating the 58th Anniversary of the Consecration of Holy Trinity and honoring Bruce Newell as the "Parishioner of the Year," 12:30 p.m., Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall, 145 Brattle Street, Cambridge. Save the date; details to follow.

NOVEMBER 1,2 — NAASR Grand Opening and Gala. Friday, November 1 — Grand Opening & Ribbon Cutting, NAASR Vartan Gregorian Building, at NAASR's new world headquarters, 395 Concord Avenue, Belmont,

MA. Saturday, November 2 — NAASR 65th Anniversary Gala, at the Royal Sonesta Hotel, Cambridge. 6 pm Reception, 7 pm Dinner and Program. Honoree Dr. Vartan Gregorian, president of the Carnegie Corporation of New York; Master of Ceremonies David Ignatius, columnist for the *Washington Post* and novelist; Featuring renowned soprano Isabel Bayrakdarian, accompanied by the Borromeo String Quartet, performing a program of songs by Komitas. Further details to follow.

NOVEMBER 16 — St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School 35th Anniversary Celebration. 6:30 PM Cocktail Reception, 7:30 PM Dinner and Program. The Westin Waltham - Boston, MA \$150 per person.

DECEMBER 6 and 7 — Friday and Saturday, Trinity Christmas Bazaar, Friday, 12 noon-9 p.m., Saturday, 10 a.m.-7 p.m.; Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 145 Brattle Street, Cambridge. For further information, contact the Church Office, 617.354.0632.

DECEMBER 15 — Christmas Holiday Concert — Erevan Choral Society and Orchestra, 3:00 p.m., Church Sanctuary, Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 145 Brattle Street, Cambridge, MA. Save the date; details to follow. For further information, call the Church Office, 617.354.0632, or email office@htaac.org.

MICHIGAN

NOVEMBER 16 — The Knights of Vartan, Nareg-Shavarshan Lodge #6 and the Daughters of Vartan, Zabelle Otyag #12 will celebrate their respective 100th and 70th organization anniversaries. Featuring: Kevork Artinian and his All Star Band at St. Mary's Cultural Hall, 18100 Merriman Rd, Livonia. This is a fundraiser Dinner/Kef Dance to celebrate Knights and Daughters as well as a chance for future members to observe how our community puts our heritage on display. All proceeds to fund renovation of school gymnasium, Knights of Vartan #106, Elementary School, Yerevan, Armenia. For Reservations Contact: Laura Lucassian, (248) 376-3794, Cost \$75 per person, \$40 after 9:30 pm

NEW JERSEY

OCTOBER 25 — Banquet Honoring Dr. Taner Akcam Abajian Hall St. Leon complex Fair Lawn, NJ Sponsored by Knights & Daughters of Vartan- Under the Auspices of His Grace Bishop Daniel Findikyan, Primate. For Reservations please call Sona Manuelian 551-427-8763. \$125 p.p. early reservations recommended.

RHODE ISLAND

OCTOBER 20 — The Cultural Committee of Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church, Providence Presents Meet With The Doctors - Questions & Answers. We invite everyone to avail themselves of this opportunity and "Meet with our Armenian Doctors" Dr. Herman Ayyavayan Internal Medicine. Topic: New Trends in Primary Care Medicine. Ara Boghigian, Moderator. Sunday, 12:30 p.m., Hanoian Hall, 70 Jefferson St., Providence.

SEPTEMBER 20 — The Cultural Committee of Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church, Providence will host a book presentation, "The World of Konstantin Petrossian" (English and Armenian), Published by Institute of Arts National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia, and Composers Union of Armenia. Friday at 7 p.m., Egavian Cultural Center, 70 Jefferson street, Providence. Details to follow.

SEPTEMBER 22 — The Cultural Committee of Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church, Providence Presents Meet With The Doctors - Questions & Answers. We invite everyone to avail themselves of this opportunity and "Meet with our Armenian Doctors" Dr. Martin Papazian, ear, nose and throat specialist. Steven Zarogian, Moderator. Sunday, 12:30 p.m., Hanoian Hall, 70 Jefferson St., Providence.

WASHINGTON, DC

SEPTEMBER 16-17 — Armenian Assembly of America's National Advocacy Conference and Gala will take place in Washington, D.C. for two days, which will include the Conference, Gala honoring Armenian American Congresswoman Jackie Speier, Advocacy Day on Capitol Hill, and a Congressional Reception celebrating U.S.-Armenia relations. Special room rates available at The Wharf InterContinental Hotel. Visit www.aimhye.com for tickets, sponsorships, special hotel room rates, and more information.



COMMENTARY

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Mirror Spectator

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Is Armenia’s Charm Offensive Yielding Dividends?

By Edmond Y. Azadian

A Ukraine-based political analyst called Oleg Sahakyan has made a significant statement about Armenia during an interview with an online news outlet in Ukraine. The analyst said that he believes that Armenia has been making major strides on the international political front, based on the deals Armenia has signed with Cyprus and Greece. Sahakyan sees Armenia emerging from its weak post-Soviet status to take a new role in the international tableau.

That belief is also being reinforced in the convictions of the Velvet Revolutionaries who believe that adhesion to democratic norms will yield its rewards in the country’s international relations, particularly after Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan’s successful trips to China and Singapore.

Now Armenia has set its eyes on the West. Still insisting that Armenian-Russian relations remain on solid ground, Yerevan has ruffled some feathers in the Kremlin hierarchy. The new administration in Armenia believes the new democratic credentials and subliminally perceived anti-Moscow actions deserve some rewards in the West.

There are also hired guns in Armenia’s news media constantly harping on anti-Russian rhetoric in tune with the country’s domestic and international policies

All those assumptions have convinced Pashinyan’s administration to embark on a charm offensive in the West, and particularly in the US, to test the political waters and to assess the diplomatic clout of the Armenian lobby.

Two of the brightest minds of Armenia’s new breed of leaders were dispatched to the US during July, heading their respective delegations. One delegation was headed by Deputy Prime Minister Tigran Avinyan and the other by National Assembly

Avinyan, in his turn, focused on climate change and its impact on Armenia. “Climate change poses a threat to Lake Sevan,” said the vice premier, speaking in New York at a conference focussed on making investments “into climate economy and energy efficiency.”

The meetings of the delegations with the local Armenian groups were less than stellar. The former administration never attempted to study the diaspora to benefit from its potentials and this new administration is still groping its way in the dark when it comes to the Armenian community in the diaspora’s who’s who.

Of course the sooner they learn the community dynamics, the more beneficial it will be to both sides.

It is yet too early to determine the impact of the delegations’ visit on the political circles of the US. One thing certain is that the US will value Armenia at its own worth in the political puzzle of the region.

Along with the two delegations in the US, Armenia’s Foreign Minister Zohrab Mnatsakanyan attended a conference in Washington on religious freedoms. On July 16, he met with Philip Ricker, Mike Pompeo’s deputy for European and Eurasian Affairs.

This last visit marked the third by Mnatsakanyan to the US this year and yet, he has never been able to meet with his American counterpart, Pompeo. Legislators and analysts believe that there must be a political reason behind this indifference and they have begun to speculate about the reasons.

The Member of Parliament from the Bright Armenia Party Arman Babajanyan said he believes that the reason behind this insulting approach its found right in Yerevan . “Armenia’s unbalanced political relationship with its third ally, which displeases Washington.”

Another pundit, Dr. Hayk A. Martirosyan, cites three different reasons: Pashinyan’s statement that the US has not embraced the Velvet Revolution with enthusiasm; Armenia’s multi-vector policy, which does not interest Washington and third, Armenia does not



Speaker Ararat Mirzoyan. The Armenian representatives managed to have substantial meetings with the leadership of the Democratic and Republican parties, Nancy Pelosi and Mitch McConnell, respectively, who in the past have supported Armenian issues. In addition, Mirzoyan attended the National Democratic Leadership Conference and Aviyan met with banking and business leaders.

The visiting statesmen also made public statements. For example, Mirzoyan, speaking at the Atlantic Council, urged the US not to exert pressure on Armenia because of the former’s sanctions on Iran, “since Armenia cannot pay the price.”

We are not sure of the impact of those declarations. One thing we know is several US diplomats have assured Armenia that Washington “understands” Armenia’s precarious situation in the light of blockades but no one is certain what can happen when push comes to shove and the US decides to move further in squeezing Iran. Armenia’s predicament will be the last worry for the US.

weigh too much on US regional policies.

Perhaps the last argument is the most plausible.

Yet, to add insult to injury, the US has increased military aid to Azerbaijan once again routinely bypassing Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act, which does not allow US military aid to Azerbaijan. Despite media bashing of Azeri President Ilham Aliyev’s autocratic rule and despite congressional calls to curb Azerbaijan’s bellicose behavior, realpolitik steamrolls over Armenia.

The total amount of help to Azerbaijan during 2018 and 2019 has hit the \$100-million mark. Additionally, the Defense Department has informed the Congress of an additional \$47.5 million allocation to Azerbaijan to secure that country’s southern border. This, of course, within the context of an eventual war with Iran, when Azerbaijan has been tapped to play an active role.

Similar treatment is denied Armenia.

Is it too early to conclude that these actions and non-actions constitute rebuffs to Armenia’s charm offense?



COMMENTARY



My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

EU, US Punish Turkey for Separate Violations

After months of uncertainty and controversy, both the European Union (EU) and the United States decided to punish Turkey in the same week for two different violations.

The Associated Press reported on July 16 that the EU foreign ministers “approved sanctions against Turkey over its drilling for gas in waters where EU member Cyprus has exclusive economic rights. They said they were suspending talks on an air transport agreement, as well as high-level Turkey-EU dialogues, and would call on the European Investment Bank to review its lending” to Turkey.

The EU Foreign Ministers deplored that “despite the European Union’s repeated calls to cease its illegal activities in the eastern Mediterranean, Turkey continued its drilling operations west of Cyprus and launched a second drilling operation northeast of Cyprus within Cypriot territorial waters.”

In typical Turkish arrogance, the Ankara government called the EU decision “worthless.” Furthermore, Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu announced: “We have three ships in the eastern Mediterranean, we will send a fourth.”

The EU Foreign Ministers warned that additional sanctions will be applied against Turkey if it does not back down from its illegal drilling operations around Cyprus.

Meanwhile, after months of indecisiveness, Pres. Trump finally decided to prohibit Turkey from purchasing U.S. advanced stealth F-35 fighter jets, even though Turkey had already paid a billion dollars for the 116 jets it

planned to buy and had participated in the program to manufacture parts of the aircraft which after cancellation would result in the loss of around \$10 billion for Turkey’s defense industry.

On several occasions, Pres. Trump made excuses for Turkey’s purchase of S-400 Russian missiles by wrongly blaming the Obama administration for refusing to sell U.S. Patriot missiles to Turkey. In reality, Turkey was the one that did not accept the terms of the U.S. proposed sale.

On the other hand, Pres. Trump was full of effusive praise for Turkey’s President Recep Tayyip Erdogan at a time when NATO leaders and the U.S. Congress and security officials were warning Trump that selling the F-35’s to Turkey would compromise the jets’ secrets and violate the inter-operability of the Russian missiles with NATO’s military systems.

Given the obvious dangers to US national security posed by Turkey’s purchase of the Russian missiles, Pres. Trump had no choice but to cancel the agreement to sell the F-35 jets to Turkey. Otherwise, Pres. Trump would have been caught in the ridiculous situation of putting “Turkey First” rather than his favorite slogan, “America First.”

The White House announced on July 17: “The F-35 cannot coexist with a Russian intelligence collection platform that will be used to learn about its advanced capabilities.” It said that Turkey’s decision to purchase the Russian S-400 air defense system renders its continued involvement in the F-35 joint strike fighter program impossible.

Ellen Lord, U.S. Undersecretary of defense for acquisition and sustainment, stated: “The U.S. and other F-35 partners are aligned in this decision to suspend Turkey from the program and initiate the process to formally remove Turkey from the program.”

In his usual arrogant fashion, Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu warned the U.S. that if it places sanctions on Turkey, his country would retaliate with its own set of sanctions against the U.S. Besides making big-mouth pronouncements, let us see if Turkey will actually carry out its threats. Clearly, US economic sanctions would cause the complete collapse of Turkey’s fragile economy.

Pres. Trump, who often ignores U.S. national interests at

the expense of profitable business arrangements, claimed that Turkey was willing to purchase billions of dollars’ worth of F-35 fighter jets. As usual, Pres. Trump exaggerated the figures. The reality is that Turkey was planning on spending one billion dollars on the purchase of F-35 jets, not billions. Furthermore, several countries, including The Netherlands, Israel, and an unnamed Gulf country, have already indicated that they will make up for the jets not purchased by Turkey, by buying additional jets.

However, banning the Turkish purchase of F-35 jets is not the only punishment that could be applied against Turkey. In 2017, Pres. Trump signed the Countering American Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA), making him obligated by law to implement sanctions on Turkey for purchasing missiles from Russia. Such a decision is not up to Pres. Trump. However, Wall Street Journal reported on July 21 that Pres. Trump is opposed to placing sanctions on Turkey. The President is scheduled to meet with a group of senators this week to discuss possible sanctions against Turkey as pressure mounts from lawmakers to punish Ankara. Pres. Trump has three options: 1) avoid placing any sanctions; 2) delay the sanctions; and 3) place a milder version of sanctions. Most probably, the U.S. Congress will impose sanctions against Turkey if the President fails to do so!

Even without sanctions, Turkey has already suffered millions of dollars’ worth of negative publicity. Several major US publications wrote editorials last week questioning Turkey’s membership in NATO.

The Wall Street Journal’s editorial board wrote: “The US and NATO don’t have much choice now other than to rethink whether Turkey still belongs in the alliance.”

Bloomberg published an editorial, headlined: “Turkey Has Abandoned the West. Good Riddance.”

Jed Babbin wrote an opinion column in the Washington Times, titled: “Throw Turkey out of NATO.”

With each passing day, Turkey is distancing itself more and more from NATO, in favor of Russia. The combination of EU and US sanctions would be the death knell for Turkey’s economy and its membership in NATO.

30th Anniversary of Death of Archbishop Tiran Nersoyan, Force Behind the Diocese

By Fr. Zaven Arzoumanian, PhD

Thirty years ago, Archbishop Tiran Nersoyan passed away in New York City after a long and most fruitful life in Jerusalem, Europe, and especially in the United States, as a great administrator, primate, theologian, and ecumenist. He was born Nersess Tavoukjian in Aintab in 1904, the son of a great patriot Archpriest Nersess Tavoukjian, who headed the self-defense of Armenians in Aintab during the genocide of the Armenians by the Ottoman Turks, saving many compatriots and leading them to Aleppo, Syria. Nersess was admitted to the Theological Seminary of the Armenian Patriarchate in Jerusalem, and as a brilliant graduate was ordained a priest by Patriarch Yeghishe Tourian of Jerusalem in 1928, receiving Tiran Nersoyan his new name and surname.

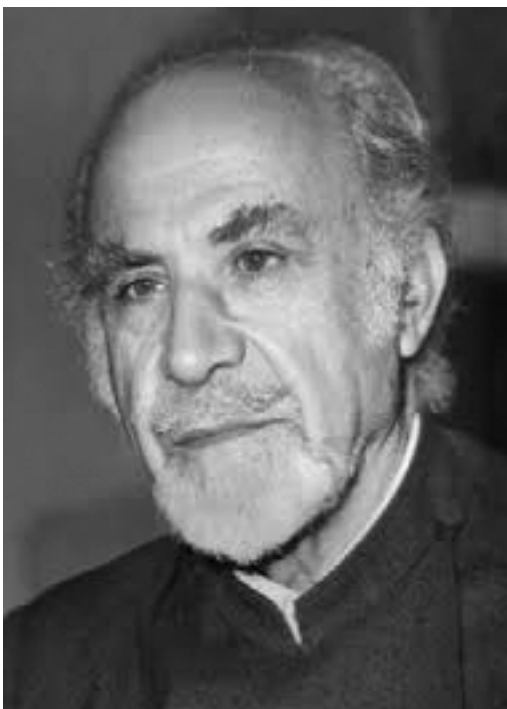
While still a deacon, Nersoyan helped the editing and the publication of Patriarch Malachia Ormanian’s “Azkabadoun” volume III, under the supervision of his teacher Bishop Papken Gulesserian. Following his ordination he was sent to England to study, and upon his return was entrusted both the position of the Dean of the Seminary and the editor of SION, the official organ of the Patriarchate, succeeding Patriarch Torkom Koushagian who had passed away in 1939.

Pastor and Primate

In 1938 the young priest Father Tiran Nersoyan was sent to Paris by his superior, Patriarch Torkom Koushagian, as the pastor of the Armenian Cathedral, and a year later for his eloquent English was invited by the church administration as pastor of St. Sarkis Church in London, where he served with distinction until 1943, introducing for the first time the Armenian Church and its legacy to the West. As recorded by a contemporary correspondent, “he advanced widespread work, including basic publications and lectures, both to the local Armenians and to the westerners.” He was invited to Geneva twice to take part in the conferences of the World Council of Churches to deliver speeches introducing the theology and the legacy of the Armenian Church, briefing also on the much-needed international status of the Armenian Patriarchate in Jerusalem.

Primate of the American Diocese

From 1938 to 1943 Archbishop Karekin Hovsepian of Holy Echmiadzin was the Primate of the American Diocese of the Armenian Church. In 1943 he was elected Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia. The same year the Diocesan Assembly elected the Very Reverend Tiran Nersoyan Primate of the Diocese, who arrived in New York prior to the departure of Archbishop Hovsepian, who bestowed on the newly elected Primate the ten degrees of Dzayrakoon Vartabed (Plenary Doctorate) before assuming the leadership of the Diocese. The



Diocesan Council asked the Mother See of Holy Echmiadzin to promote Primate Nersoyan to the episcopal rank. The Mother See was still vacant at the time, and in 1945 the National-Ecclesiastical Assembly convened in Echmiadzin for the election of the next Catholicos of All Armenians, who would ordain a set of direly needed bishops for the Armenian Church.

The Primate in Holy Echmiadzin

Soon the former Primate, now Karekin I Catholicos Hovsepian of the House of Cilicia, and his successor the Very Rev. Nersoyan met each other in Holy Echmiadzin in 1945 to take part in the National Assembly of the Armenian Church to elect the next Catholicos. Under the presidency of Catholicos Karekin I, the Assembly elected Kevork VI Chorekjian as Catholicos of All Armenians who received the ordination and the anointing by the hands of Catholicos Karekin, his classmate back at the Kevorkian Seminary in Echmiadzin. The new Pontiff soon ordained 10 bishops, including Bishop Tiran Nersoyan, Primate of the Eastern Diocese of America.

In 1944 the Diocesan Center was located on the 5th Avenue in New York under limited and primitive conditions with only 15 clergy in charge of the parishes. During Archbishop Nersoyan’s tenure the number and the quality of the clergy multiplied with his former students from the Seminary of Jerusalem who had migrated or were invited to the United States to join the Diocese. The Primate made sure that all had

enrolled in higher academic schools under his supervision, and only upon graduation to be ordained priests and assume pastoral duties. All graduated from Episcopal Seminaries and then were ordained to the priesthood by Archbishop Nersoyan. Among those invited from Jerusalem were two distinguished senior members of the Brotherhood, Reverend Fathers Shnork Kaloustian and Torkom Manougian, who later became Patriarchs of Constantinople and of Jerusalem respectively.

Infrastructure of the Diocese

The Primate’s first priority was to draft a set of by-laws as the Constitution of the Diocese to be presented to the Diocesan Assembly and ratified by the Catholics of All Armenians. Those by-laws in their essential parts remain the leading legal documents as of today. During his ten-year primacy, from 1944-1954, a total of 37 organized parishes flourished in the Eastern Diocese with 23 church buildings and 21 active parish priests. Through his initiative and pursuance, a most important achievement indeed, an active committee purchased the present location of the Diocese in 1949, and later followed up with the plans of new diocesan buildings, eventually culminating in the building of the impressive St. Vartan Cathedral.

Bishop Nersoyan was elevated to the rank of an Archbishop in 1953 by the Encyclical of Kevork VI of Holy Echmiadzin. The Primate through his penetrating vision felt the need and gave priority to gather the youth of all parishes, and soon organized for the first time the Armenian Church Youth Organization (ACYOA). The youth were enthused to realize a Primate who cares for them and to teach the many facets of the Armenian Church legacy. A standing committee among the youth turned into a full-fledged organization with chairman and officers, with their own by-laws drafted by the Primate, to convene monthly and annually in the name of the Diocese. The input of the youth eventually made the Diocese a healthy and promising institution, leading remotely to the establishment of St. Nersess Theological Seminary, the first and the only in America, even by the hands and the leadership of the same Archbishop Tiran Nersoyan.

On separate levels the Primate established the Ladies Auxiliary and parochial Armenian Schools on one-day-a-week basis, thus enriching the Diocese by various programs to benefit the Armenian Church and culture in America. In fact, Archbishop Nersoyan was the first Primate to establish the basic infrastructures of the Diocese with his inter-church experience and insight from Europe, keeping his continuous contact with the WWC and the NCC of America.

World War II

All those achievements were under the political umbrella of the Second War and the Soviet regime, and for that matter the Archbishop was aware not to jeopardize the relation between
see NERSOYAN, page 24



ADL Supreme Council Delegation Meets with Catholicos Aram I

ADL, from page 1

The historical background of the relations of Antelias and Echmiadzin was a topic on the agenda of the discussions. Catholicos Aram, fully cognizant of the ADL position on the issue, gave his interpretations in a frank and open atmosphere, at which he acknowledged the right of the media to constructive criticism.

Relations in Armenia between the church and the citizens as well as relations between the church and the state were of special concern. Measures were discussed to meet the recent challenges in Armenia about current developments in Armenia and the role of political parties and the media in guiding the public on uncharted courses.

Catholicos Aram expressed his appreciation for the initiative that the Council had taken to make the meeting possible. In their turn, the members of the delegation thanked him for including the editors of the ADL press on the invitee list.



Bikfaya conference group picture including Catholicos Aram I



At the offices of the **Aztag** newspaper, from left, Hagop Vartivarian, ARF historian Yervant Pamboukian, Edmond Azadian, ARF Bureau member Peniamin Bchakjian, Aztag editor Shahan Kandaharian, Anna Karapetyan and Hakob Asatryan of **Ozer** magazine in Prague



Edmond Azadian and Catholicos Aram I

30th Anniversary of Death of Archbishop Tiran Nersoyan, Force Behind the Diocese

NERSOYAN, from page 23

the Diocese and the Holy See which was most sensitive as the center of our national church was under harsh conditions of the Soviets. Through his contacts with the West, some overt activities by Archbishop Nersoyan could possibly touch the other side of the world during the cold war, which at some point were noticed by the Mother See. The point was brought to the Primate's attention by the Catholicos of All Armenians with a warning not to get involved in western modern interests under the guise of church relations and religious actions.

The courageous Primate, however, was able to manipulate the issue and advance his contacts by publications and lectures. Undoubtedly Archbishop Nersoyan's primacy laid the foundations of the American Diocese of the Armenian Church firmly, so that the future of the Diocese could meet all challenges with the change of the times. If today the Armenian Church in America and Canada is the pride of our nation, physically and spiritually, also being able to reach the outside world with significant philanthropic assistance, good part of the credit must go to the late Primate Archbishop Tiran.

Patriarch-Elect of Jerusalem

Completing his ten-year term of Primacy, Archbishop Tiran tendered his resignation for more important commitments in the Jerusalem Patriarchate where he belonged. Upon his resignation in 1954, the Archbishop went to Jerusalem to help the already much delayed election of the Patriarch. Patriarch Guregh II Israelian had passed away in 1949, and the locum tenens Archbishop Yeghishe Dederian was postponing the election neglectfully for no reason. The Brotherhood in Jerusalem demon-

strated the same negligence, as Archbishop Nersoyan and some members of the Brotherhood from the United States arrived in Jerusalem wishing to remedy the situation. The locum tenens was absent from the Patriarchate for a long time and for no reason, and the Brotherhood, headed by Archbishop Souren Kemhajian welcomed Archbishop Nersoyan for further actions. General Assembly of the Brotherhood convened under Kemhajian and elected Nersoyan locum tenens, and next elected him Patriarch of the Holy See of St. James Patriarchate in 1957.

Unfortunately the Jordanian authorities in Amman, where Archbishop Derderian was residing as the deposed and expelled locum tenens by the Brotherhood, also suspended by the Catholicos of All Armenians, instigating the secular authorities, accused Archbishop Nersoyan and the opponents as foreign citizens, and demanded his status as the legitimate locum tenens. Treacherously, the state authorities suddenly arrested the Patriarch-Elect Archbishop Tiran Nersoyan and expelled him from the country. Later in June 1960, Derderian was forcefully installed by the same authorities as the locum tenens, who immediately called an Assembly of the Brotherhood to elect him Patriarch. Patriarch Derderian's tenure was the longest and also productive in many ways, from 1960 to 1990 when he passed away.

St. Nersess Theological Seminary

Having tried to return to Jerusalem while Derderian was still in Amman, Patriarch-Elect Archbishop Tiran Nersoyan returned to the USA to continue his most appreciated mission, this time working on the establishment of an Armenian Theological Seminary in America,

exclusively for the American born young men, who would enroll after having their college degrees in various fields. Archbishop Tiran started from Evanston, IL where he found a benefactor Satenig Ouzounian, and in 1960 purchased a large residence to accommodate classrooms and dormitory for the first three years' academic work, himself designated Dean of the Seminary, named after St Nersess the Graceful, by the then Primate Archbishop Sion Manoogian.

The St. Nersess Seminary moved to New York where flourished academically and in terms of students. Presently in Armonk, NY,

under the Dean Reverend Father Mardiros Chevian, it warrants full accommodations with a large and impressive campus and a chapel yielding graduates ready for ordination. Four decades ago the first graduate was ordained priest by the Dean His Eminence Archbishop Tiran Nersoyan, and the most recent two ordinations into priesthood were taken place in July, 2019 by the Primate of the Eastern Diocese and the President of the Seminary Bishop Daniel Findikian. In his memory this and future accomplishment complete Archbishop Tiran Nersoyan's great legacy as a churchman with total vision and action.

Rep. Clark Meets with Parliament Speaker Mirzoyan, Armenian Leaders in US Capitol

CLARK, from page 1

Assembly, Lilit Makunts, and a member of the National Assembly, Edmon Marukyan at the House Democracy Partnership Leadership Forum in the US Capitol, which was hosted by Rep. Frank Pallone (NJ-6).

Clark represents one of the largest Armenian populations in the United States, and she spoke with these three prominent leaders about the priorities of the Armenian-American community.

"My district is home to one of the largest Armenian communities in America, and today, I had the privilege of meeting key leaders from the National Assembly of Armenia," she said. "I commend the Government of Armenia for their commitment to a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Artsakh, and I believe that respectful dialogue is the best way to bring about peace. I will continue to prioritize the issues of the Armenian-American community and work to address deforestation, recognize the Armenian genocide, and pursue economic expansion."

(Detailed coverage of Mirzoyan's visit to the Boston area will appear in the next issue of the *Mirror-Spectator*.)