

Pashinyan Again Criticizes Russian-Led Military Bloc

By Aza Babayan

MOSCOW (RFE/RL) — Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan again criticized the Russian-led Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) on Monday, May 16, for not openly siding with Armenia in its border dispute with Azerbaijan.

“As you know, one year ago Azerbaijani troops invaded Armenia’s sovereign territory,” Pashinyan told a CSTO summit in Moscow. “Armenia appealed to the CSTO to activate its mechanisms for



Russian President Vladimir Putin and the leaders of other CSTO member states arrive for a summit in Moscow, May 16, 2022.

crisis situations. Unfortunately, we cannot say that the organization reacted in a way that was expected by Armenia. “

Armenia appealed to the CSTO for help shortly after Azerbaijani troops reportedly crossed several sections of the Armenian-Azerbaijani border and advanced a few kilometers into Armenian territory in May 2021. It asked the alliance of six ex-Soviet states to invoke Article 2 of its founding treaty which requires them to discuss a collective response to grave security threats facing one of them. *see CSTO, page 2*

Six Armenians Win Parliamentary Seats As Lebanese Elections Weaken Hezbollah

WATERTOWN (CNBC, Zartok, Al Jazeera) — The first Lebanese parliamentary elections since 2018 took place on Sunday, May 15, with 718 candidates vying for 128 seats in 15 electoral districts. The Maronite Christian Lebanese Forces group, allied with Saudi Arabia but opposed to Iran-backed Hezbollah, won 20 seats, becoming the largest Christian parliamentary group in place of the Maronite Free Patriotic Movement. The pro-Hezbollah bloc grew weaker than in the last parliament by securing around 61 seats, less than the 65 needed to secure a majority, while the largest Sunni Muslim party, the Future Movement, did not participate at all in the election for the first time in decades. There were more than 20 candidates for the six seats reserved for Armenians. *see LEBANON, page 4*



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Hundreds Arrested As Armenian Opposition Keeps Up Protests

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Pediatric Cancer Center Aims to Heal with ‘Contagious’ Love Plus Cutting-Edge Medicine

By Sona Mirzoyan

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

YEREVAN — According to the World Health Organization, annually about 400,000 children up to 19 years old develop cancer. In Armenia each year approximately 8,500 people are diagnosed with cancer, and 80-100 of them are children.

Recently we had a chance to speak with Ester Demirtshyan, Executive Director of City of Smile Charitable Foundation and Dr. Gevorg Tamayan, Head of the Pediatric Cancer and Blood Disorders Center of Armenia, at the Professor Yeolyan Hematology Center.

Back in 2014, a group of oncologists-hematologists kicked off the City of Smile Foundation with an initial goal of raising awareness about cancer, translating scientific articles and publishing materials for doctors.

Two years later, in 2016, jointly with the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston, the foundation kicked off the



Children receiving palliative treatment



Ester Demirtshyan

families under the mentorship of their colleagues from Dana-Farber similar service.

program of social-psychological support that allowed local psychologists to work with children and

In 2018, City of Smile started to sponsor the treatment of children with pediatric cancer. “We inherited the best guidelines from similar large funds and put them into practice. But most importantly, we undertook the full funding of cancer treatment, which was a game changer in the field of charity in Armenia,” says Ester Demirtshyan, *see MEDICINE, page 3*

Şekeryan Lecture Focuses on Post-Genocide Armistice Period’s Shaping of Armenian Community

By Harry Kezelian

Mirror-Spectator Staff

SOUTHFIELD, Mich. — Most people who learn about the Armenian Genocide are familiar with the some of the reasons that it took place and the general way in which it unfolded. The narrative that most are aware of involve various devious policies of the Ottoman government, destruction of villages and deportations to the Syrian desert, and then a miraculous end to the war and the rescue of survivors and their resettlement in various countries of the world as well as the fledgling Soviet Armenia.

But what happened between the end of the First World War in 1918 and the beginning of the Armenian 20th century reality as we know it, in the early 1920s? Aside from the history of the First Republic, this transitional period is much less well



Dr. Ari Şekeryan

known. Dr. Ari Şekeryan shed some light on this time period at a lecture held at the AGBU Alex and Marie

Manoogian School in Southfield, on Saturday, May 14.

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ARMENIA

NEWS from ARMENIA

Ex-President: War Would End Differently if Armenia Asked Russia for Help

YEREVAN (Panorama) — Former President Serzh Sargsyan believes that the Second Karabakh war would have different results if Armenia officially asked Russia for help.

Sargsyan made the remarks during an opposition rally demanding the resignation of Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, while speaking to French media on May 14.

When asked what role Moscow should play for the Armenian people, the third president said Russia was and remains Armenia's ally.

"I believe that Russia is ready to fulfill its allied obligations. There is a need for the leadership of Armenia to move in the right direction — not to make any oral statements during the conflict, but to apply in the forms stipulated by the agreement, asking for help from Russia so that the latter fulfills its contractual obligations," Sargsyan said.

"I am sure that if during the 44-day war Armenia asked Russia for help in the form prescribed by procedures, we would have a completely different situation today.

"Regarding Artsakh and Armenia, I must say what I have always said. I have been saying for 30 years now: Karabakh will never be part of Azerbaijan," Sargsyan said.

Central Bank Reports Increase in Russia Transfers

YEREVAN (PanARMENIAN.Net) — Remittances of Armenian seasonal workers from the Russian Federation have decreased, but transfers to Armenia from Russians have increased, Deputy Chairman of the Central Bank of Armenia Hovhannes Khachatryan said Monday, May 16.

Khachatryan made the remarks when presenting a report on the activity of the Central Bank for 2021 in the parliamentary commission on financial, credit and budgetary issues.

By the end of 2022, the Central Bank expects a reduction in transfers of Armenian seasonal workers from Russia by about 20 percent. At the same time, the official stressed, it is difficult to make specific forecasts, since international financial organizations don't know yet how much the Russian economy will shrink and in what sectors. Some predict a decline of 6 percent, others of 8-10 percent, or more, he added, according to Sputnik Armenia.

On the other hand, he said, there has been an increase in remittances from Russians who have been arriving in Armenia en masse since the beginning of March. This group of people transfers and spends more money here than Armenian seasonal workers transfer from the Russian Federation, especially in the current conditions, he noted.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine and the sanctions against Russia have made many businesses flee their home country and settle in Armenia. The Ministry of Economy earlier published a guide for businesses seeking to relocate to Armenia, also setting up a working group to answer queries.

New Amnesty International Report Documents Azeri Crimes against Older Armenians in Karabakh Conflict

LONDON — A new report by Amnesty International, *Last to Flee: Older People's Experience of War Crimes and Displacement in the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict*, documents how older ethnic Armenians were disproportionately subjected to violence in the recent conflict, including war crimes such as extrajudicial executions, as well as torture and other ill-treatment while in Azerbaijani detention.

When active fighting broke out in Nagorno-Karabakh (Artsakh) in September 2020, older people in ethnic Armenian communities were almost invariably last to flee their homes, and were disproportionately impacted by violence as a result, Amnesty International says.

During the early stages of the conflict, men aged between 18 and 55 were typically mobilized to fight or to serve the war effort as volunteers. By the time Azerbaijani forces advanced on ethnic Armenian villages and towns, the only people remaining were often older people, and particularly older men.

Many older people encountered obstacles while trying to leave. Physical disabilities and health problems made it difficult for some to flee. In other cases, some older people with psychosocial disabilities or dementia found it difficult to comprehend the necessity or urgency of leaving. Others chose not to leave because they had strong attachments to their homes, or were reluctant to abandon land or livestock.

Older people who fled their homes have languished in displacement in the years since. They reported a lack of access to adequate housing and a loss of livelihoods, which further entrenched feelings of helplessness and isolation. They also suffer due to an extreme lack of mental health or psychosocial support services.

On the ethnic Armenian side, more than half of civilian deaths were among older people. Many interviewees told Amnesty International of extrajudicial executions by Azerbaijani forces. They described killings where victims were beheaded or shot at point-blank range, constituting the war crime of willful killing. Some appeared to have been tortured prior to their deaths, and some corpses were mutilated afterwards.

Amnesty International was able to verify many of these cases through testimony from witnesses and relatives, as well as by reviewing and verifying death certificates, official forensic examinations undertaken by the Armenian authorities, and videos posted to social media.

Slavik Galstyan, 68, who lived with his family in the village of Mets Tagher and had a psychosocial disability, did not want to leave his home in October 2020. His body was found more than two months later.

A death certificate issued by the Armenian authorities concluded that his death was caused by traumatic blood loss from gunshot wounds to his chest, stomach, and other internal organs.

His son, Ashot, identified the corpse at the morgue and said his father's body appeared to have been mutilated. Ashot told Amnesty International: "His head was crushed. It was as if all the bones in his body had been broken. He was like a [slab of] meat."

Sedrak Petrosyan, 90, was brutally kicked and beaten while in captivity, and his 56-year-old son went missing after being taken into Azerbaijani custody. He said: "I want to die. I wanted to die in prison but somehow I survived."

Other interviewees reported beatings and other forms of physical violence — and in one case, a mock execution — and

ill-treatment. Older men appear to have been targeted because Azerbaijani soldiers believed they had participated in Armenia's war effort during the 1990s.

"The Azerbaijani government must ensure that any members of its armed forces responsible for the war crimes committed — including willful killings, torture or inhuman treatment, or enforced disappearances — are prosecuted in fair trials," said Laura Mills.

"While displacement can be devastating to all people, it poses particular challenges for older people. The Armenian government and de facto authorities in Nagorno-Karabakh must do more to ensure that older people are able to rebuild their lives on an equal basis with others. They must also reform their approach to humanitarian response, to ensure that older people are provided with much-needed support."

Hundreds Arrested As Armenian Opposition Keeps Up Protests

By Artak Khulian

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) — Armenian police arrested more than 400 people on Tuesday, May 17, as opposition supporters again blocked roads across Yerevan in continuing protests aimed at forcing Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan to resign.

Groups of protesters began the blockages at 8 a.m. local time in an attempt to disrupt traffic and step up pressure on Pashinyan's government. Opposition leaders claimed to have blocked more than 50 streets in various parts of the capital.

Riot police stepped in to unblock the streets, clashing with protesters and detaining many of them. The police reported a total of 414 arrests in the afternoon, a daily record high since the start of the Armenian opposition's "civil disobedience" campaign on May 1.

The protesters included members of the Armenian parliament affiliated with its two opposition groups leading the campaign. Security forces tried to detain one of them, Tadevos Avetisyan, but let him go after finding out that he is a parliament deputy.

"This is not policing. This is hooliganism," charged Lilit Galstyan, another opposition lawmaker taking part in the protests.

Some citizens also condemned the police actions as they watched the dra-

matic scenes in the city center. They argued that the protests are peaceful.

"Nothing [wrong] was happening," one woman told RFE / RL's Armenian Service. "But they just rounded up [protesters] and took them away."

The authorities insisted that the police restored public order and did not use disproportionate forces.

Mobile phone videos posted on social media showed dozens of defiant opposition supporters chanting anti-Pashinyan slogans inside a police bus and a police station in Yerevan. They and all other detainees were expected to be released a few hours later.

Ishkhan Saghatlyan, an opposition leader, urged supporters to leave the streets at 11:30 a.m. and gather in the country France Square, the site of an opposition tent camp, in the evening.

"We have fully accomplished the task set by us," Saghatlyan said in a video message broadcast on Facebook. "We have demonstrated that people are in control of the situation."

Saghatlyan said earlier that the opposition objective is to create "diarchy" that would make Pashinyan's resignation inevitable.

The prime minister and his political allies have rejected the opposition demands for his resignation fueled by his recent statements on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

Pashinyan Again Criticizes Russian-Led Military Bloc

CSTO, from page 1

Russia and other CSTO member states expressed concern over the border tensions but did not issue joint statements in support of Armenia. The bloc's secretary general, Stanislav Zas, said last July that the Armenian-Azerbaijani dispute is not serious enough to warrant a CSTO military intervention.

In an apparent jibe at Russia, Pashinyan also criticized his country unnamed ex-Soviet allies for selling weapons to Azerbaijan, which he said were used against "Armenia and the Armenian people" during the 2020 war in Nagorno-Karabakh.

At the same time, Pashinyan again acknowledged Russian President Vladimir Putin's "special role" in stopping the six-war through a ceasefire brokered by Moscow in November 2020. He further declared that Yerevan remains committed to the CSTO because it regards the bloc as a "key factor of stability and security "for Armenia and the entire" Eurasian region. "

In his opening remarks at the summit, timed to coincide with the 30th anniversary of the CSTO's creation, Putin focused on the continuing war in Ukraine. He briefed the leaders of Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan on Russia

"special military operation" there during an ensuing discussion held behind closed doors.

Belarus is the only non-Russian CSTO country to have publicly backed the Russian invasion. Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko chided the other member states for adopting a more cautious stance and not acting in a united front against NATO's eastward expansion.

"If there is no unity in our ranks we may not exist tomorrow," Lukashenko warned.

A joint statement issued by the CSTO leaders after the summit makes no explicit mention of the conflict in Ukraine.



ARMENIA

Pediatric Cancer Center Aims to Heal with ‘Contagious’ Love

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claiming that the diagnosis of a child should never cause a financial collapse to the family.

Another important accomplishment of the foundation is related to the age limit of beneficiaries. Despite the fact that pediatric cancer’s age limit is 18, young people up to 25 years old can apply to City of Smile for financial help, and the foundation tries to raise that threshold every five years. The goal is to take away at least the financial burden for parents who are already facing such difficulties.

The slogan of City of Smile reads: “Cancer is not contagious, love is.” Yet outside Yerevan there are regions where the disease is regarded as something contagious, demeaning and shameful. In this, City of Smile plays a big role in removing such destructive and superstitious beliefs. Demirtshyan is sure that casting a positive light in the process has changed the way parents regard this disease. There are many difficult processes beyond the curtain, yet cancer is not a verdict.

“We show the bright side of the picture, not because the opposite does not exist, but to focus on positive results and provide optimism. Today 7 out of 10 children recover from cancer, and our goal is to raise that bar one day. Stories about recoveries give us strength and pledge for further development and achievements.”

City of Smile encourages the support of volunteers as well as financial donations. Demirtshyan says that volunteers from various fields and backgrounds apply and this helps cover all possible areas, such as teaching children school subjects, organizing concerts for them or engaging them in handcrafting activities.

“We have a senior woman as a volunteer who knits hats for our children. This is a great example that even if you cannot donate money, your help can be transmitted in a different way. The one important thing one needs is the desire to help.”

Important Milestones of 2019

“Provide world-class conditions for early diagnosis and ensure the availability of all necessary treatment procedures even for rare cancer types: this is our ultimate goal,” says Tamamyán, when asked about his ultimate aspiration. He explains that he believes in a small country such as Armenia, the medical efforts should coalesce rather



A paper tree

than be replicated. And for that reason, in 2019 the Pediatric Cancer and Blood Diseases Center was launched to consolidate under one umbrella both oncological and hematological treatments.

“A major breakthrough we witnessed in 2019 was the establishment of the Department of Pediatric Oncology and Hematology at Yerevan State Medical University after M. Heratsi. For the first time we hired residents for the specialty of the subspecialty of the pediatric oncologist-hematologist,” noted Tamamyán, highlighting that hiring 12 residents within three years is an impressive number given the fact that the specialty is not popular because of its high-stress level.

In 2019, Armenia became the first country to join St. Jude Global Alliance – a global movement in pediatric cancer that brings together individuals and institutions dedicated to the shared vision of improving the quality of health care delivery and increasing the survival rates for children with cancer and blood disorders worldwide.

“With the help and guidelines of the alliance we have scanned patients’ medical histories and collected data for 25 years. Now we can proudly claim that the national registry for pediatric cancer is a fait accompli. Next goal is the creation of a

population-based cancer registry,” notes Tamamyán.

Covid-19 and War in Artsakh

The pandemic resulted in a drastic crisis for City of Smile, both in Armenia and abroad, the number for donors plummeted. However a group of volunteers and entertainers expressed their willingness to support children, and the foundation organized a virtual concert. It resulted in acquisition of new recurring donors and brought fresh air in times of uncertainty.

City of Smile was just recovering from one crisis when the second occurred – the war in Artsakh. “During that time we were really drowning because we had no idea what we were going to do tomorrow.

mane, dignified conditions.

“By creating this center we try to make everything around children beautiful. The center does not resemble a hospital in any way, and children can communicate with their families and close friends as much as they want. We cannot fight against nature in some cases, but we can give people that palliative and soothing support” says Demirtshyan, adding that she wishes no one needed these rooms.

Besides the treatment itself, there are various needs children with cancer have, and the foundation tries to ensure they are all fulfilled. Children receiving chemotherapy need quality nutrition so that their bodies can cope with the consequences. City of Smile addressed the nutrition issue and now all beneficiaries are provided with fresh meals four times a day. The menu is approved by doctors to ensure all the necessary vitamins for children and protect their body from debilitating effects of chemotherapy.

Besides proper nutrition, children with such a severe diagnosis constantly need a positive environment. Although the contribution of such emotions to healing is not scientifically proven, City of Smile does everything to distract children from the ordeal and bring some joy. The foundation hosts celebrities and creative teams to deliver interesting talks to entertain the young patients.

American Chapter

City of Smile also has a registered chapter in the US and board members from Boston including James Kalustian, Yelena Bisharyan and Cynthia Kazanjian. Founded in 2019, the American chapter had a huge contribution, and a prominent example of this is the banquet organized by the greater Boston area Armenian community on April 5, 2019. Close to thirty organizations and



Doctors from the Muratsan Center, Liana Safaryan and Gevorg Tamamyán, with Cynthia Kazanjian in Boston in 2018

Throughout the war, until December, we received almost no donations other than recurring ones,” Demirtshyan recalls. But a call from Moscow turned into a lifeline for the foundation. Someone suggested providing medicines, and soon the fund received them. And as of early 2021 City of Smile, gradually has started to return to its previous pace, and fortunately no one was put on a waiting list and not a single parent was told to cover even a small amount of treatment expenses.

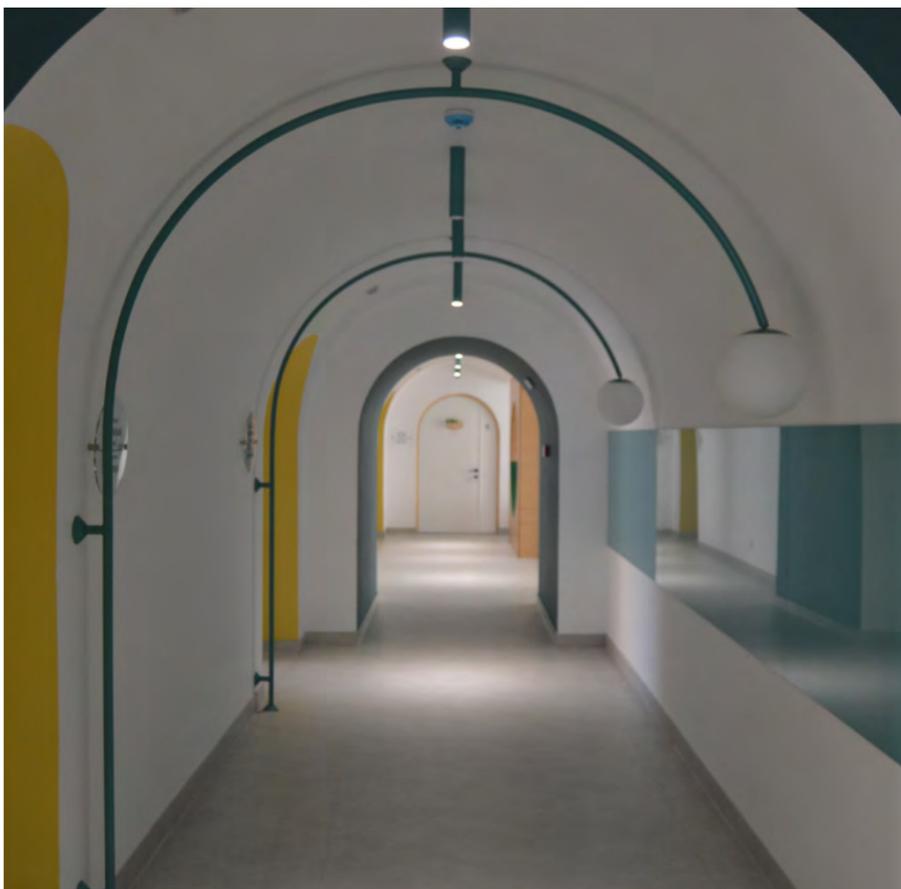
Palliative Care

In September 2021, thanks to the technical support of St. Jude’s Hospital, the first clinic of pediatric palliative help in the country was launched. The foundation believes that in terms of severe cases when treatment does not give results palliative care is essential to ensure children with hu-

man churches came together along with many donors to make the April 5 banquet at the Westin Hotel in Waltham a successful effort at raising awareness of the problems of childhood cancer patients in Armenia and fundraising for the City of Smile Charitable Foundation.

The roots of impressive efforts of the Boston Armenians towards helping children with pediatric cancer go back to 2016, when Cynthia Kazanjian and a group of Holy Trinity Armenian Church parishioners visited Muratsan Chemotherapy Clinic in Armenia. Seeing kids suffering from cancer led Cynthia to take action and put all efforts and organize help for those children. And that desire to help continues with the US chapter.

To find out more, to donate or to volunteer, visit <https://cityofsmile.org/>



The palliative center aims for a more upbeat look.



INTERNATIONAL

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Blinken Raises Armenian POWs in Call with Aliyev

WASHINGTON (PanARMENIAN.Net) — US Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken raised the return of all Armenian prisoners of war from Baku in a phone call with Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev on May 12.

According to a press release from the Department of State, Blinken and Aliyev discussed “recent positive momentum” and future concrete steps on the path to peace in the South Caucasus, including border delimitation and demarcation, opening transport and communication links, and the release of the remaining Armenian detainees.

“Blinken reiterated the United States stands ready to help by engaging bilaterally and with like-minded partners, including through our role as an OSCE [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe] Minsk Group Co-Chair, to help the countries find a long-term comprehensive peace,” the Department of State said.

Pashinyan, Putin meet in Moscow to talk Karabakh, Relations

MOSCOW (PanARMENIAN.Net) — Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan held a private conversation with President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin in the Kremlin on Monday, May 16.

Putin said the two are in constant touch, discussing issues of bilateral agenda and regional issues.

“However, there are always numerous questions, which obviously indicates the intensity of our dialogue. At the beginning of our bilateral talks, I would like to note that over the past year we have seen a significant increase in trade turnover, investments continue, and we continue to work actively on the settlement of the Karabakh conflict in the trilateral format, together with our Azerbaijani partners. There are many issues, I am glad to have the opportunity to meet you and talk about all topics,” Putin said.

Pashinyan noted that the bilateral agenda between the two countries is so packed that the two could meet “more often”.

“We are in constant touch, we often have telephone conversations. In terms of the economy, I would like to note that after a certain decline in March, intensification of bilateral economic ties is noticeable. We see investment interest from Russian businesses. And I know that in this issue you are also encouraging Russian businessmen to invest in Armenia,” Pashinyan said.

“Of course, I hope that today we will discuss issues related to regional security, stability, the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, as well as the important role of the OSCE Minsk Group, as we mentioned in our joint statement. I would like to share some information with you.”

Pashinyan and Putin earlier participated in the 30th anniversary summit of the Collective Security Treaty Organization in Moscow.

Turkey Is Threatening to Block NATO Membership for Sweden and Finland

By Natasha Turak

ISTANBUL (CNBC) — Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has doubled down on his opposition to Sweden and Finland joining the NATO alliance, a move that would be historic for the two Nordic countries.

“We will not say ‘yes’ to those [countries] who apply sanctions to Turkey to join security organization NATO,” Erdogan said at a news conference late on May 16. He was referring to Sweden’s suspension of weapons sales to Turkey in 2019 over its military activities in Syria.

Sweden’s Foreign Ministry said on May 16 that it planned to send senior officials joining with officials from Finland to Ankara to address Erdogan’s objections. But the Turkish leader essentially said they’d be wasting their time.

“Will they come to persuade us? Excuse us, but they shouldn’t bother,” Erdogan said. He added that the two countries joining would make NATO “a place where representatives of terrorist organizations are concentrated.”

Finland’s Foreign Ministry responded to a CNBC request for comment, saying that it “implements the UN as well as the EU terrorism sanctions against any person or entity ... in accordance with EU legislation” and that “the EU and Turkey have regular dialogues on counterterrorism issues.” CNBC has also reached out to the Swedish government for comment.

Sweden and Finland have provided refuge to members of Kurdish militant separatist organization the PKK, which Turkey classifies as a terrorist organization and which has carried out attacks in Turkey. The two countries have also provided support for and held high-level meetings with members of the YPG, which is the PKK’s branch in Syria credited with helping defeat ISIS as well as fighting against Turkish forces.

Sweden and Finland are on the brink of applying for membership in NATO, after the governments of both countries expressed their support for the move to

abandon their traditional positions of non-alignment between the alliance and Russia.

This would expand the Western defense organization’s clout and territory and make a dramatic statement in pushing back against Russia, and has already spurred anger and threats from Moscow. Sweden and Finland are members of the EU, but not NATO, and the latter shares an 830-mile border with Russia.

The two countries joining NATO would give Moscow “more officially registered opponents,” its former president and high-ranking security official Dmitry Medvedev warned.

But NATO ascension for a new member state requires consensus approval from all existing members.

While NATO’s leadership has welcomed the news, suggesting the applicants could be accepted into the group quickly, one of its most militarily powerful members stands in the way: Turkey.

Turkey, which joined the alliance in 1952, is a crucial player in NATO, boasting the second-largest military in the 30-member group after the United States.

For both Sweden and Finland, the decision to apply for NATO membership is monumental and was triggered by Russia’s brutal invasion of its neighbor Ukraine, which itself had aspirations to join NATO.

“The stakes here are now massive,” Timothy Ash, emerging markets strategist at Bluebay Asset Management, said in a note on May 17. “It feels like a major crisis is looming in Turkey-Western relations over Finland and Sweden’s NATO bid.”

“Other NATO members will be furious with Turkey given the now clear and present danger to Europe presented by Putin in Ukraine,” Ash added. “Turkey will be seen as an unreliable partner. This will leave even more bad blood/faith between the two sides — gone will be any remnants of a Turkish EU accession bid.”

Turkey’s highly strategic Incirlik air base is home to 50 of the US tactical nuclear weapons, which some U.S. officials have suggested removing due to increasing tensions with Washington and Ankara

in recent years. Those tensions were centered partly on Erdogan’s warming ties with Russian President Vladimir Putin and its controversial decision to purchase Russia’s S-400 air defense system, which saw it kicked out of NATO’s F-35 program.

While Turkey has supported Ukraine by sending it weapons, in particular its lethal Bayraktar drones, and has tried to mediate between Moscow and Kyiv, it has so far refused to join its NATO allies in sanctioning Russia.

Some analysts are skeptical of Erdogan’s tough talk, convinced he won’t actually block the NATO membership bids — rather, they predict he will simply use his country’s leverage to extract concessions.

“Despite its objections, Ankara will not block the countries’ entry into NATO,” analysts at political risk consultancy Eurasia Group wrote in a research note late Monday.

“Erdogan is likely looking for concessions for green-lighting NATO’s expansion, mainly from Sweden. These might include the easing of Stockholm’s bilateral arms embargo on Turkey and some recognition of PKK as a terrorist organization,” the note said.

Erdogan’s foreign policy advisor, Ibrahim Kalin, over the weekend reassured allies by saying: “We are not closing the door. But we are basically raising this issue as a matter of national security for Turkey.”

Weapons deals will likely play an important role in whatever negotiations take place. The Biden administration is currently seeking approval from Congress to finalize a sale of F-16 fighter jets to Turkey.

But a more pressing reason behind Erdogan’s brinkmanship may be the need to boost his weakening popularity domestically, amid an inflation and cost-of-living crisis. Turkish inflation hit an eye-watering 70 percent in April, due in large part to years of refusal by Erdogan to raise interest rates while burning through currency reserves. The country of 84 million has been hit hard by the global rise in the cost of energy and basic goods, with fuel and agricultural commodity prices skyrocketing thanks in part to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

Six Armenians Win Parliamentary Seats in Lebanese Elections

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The winners include three Armenian Revolutionary Federation members (Hagop Pakradouni, Hagop Terzian and George Bouchikian), Jihad Pakradouni of the Lebanese Forces party, former officer Jean Talouzi, an independent candidate who won the seat reserved for Armenian Catholics, and civil society activist Paula Yacoubian, who was supported by the Armenian Democratic Liberal Party (ADL) District Committee of Lebanon.

Yacoubian, a former television host, had first won a seat in the 2018 elections but resigned after the August 2020 Beirut port explosion. She founded the Dafa (“Warmth”) campaign in 2013 to raise money to help needy families in Lebanon, which continues to support the poor.

All of these Armenians had previously been members of parliament except for Pakradouni, whose father was a minister of state and a leader of the Kataeb party.

During this election sixteen anti-establishment independent candidates for the first time were elected, compared to only one in the previous parliament. They emerged primarily from new political parties or civil society groups, many of which sprung from a 2019 protest movement. Lebanese-Armenian political figure Laury

Haytayan, leader of the opposition Taqadom NGO, told CNBC’s Hadley Gamble on May 16: “People have spoken, and they said: ‘We are against Hezbollah, against the establishment, and this is what we want’.”

Turnout from the over 3.5 million eligible voters, according to Lebanese Interior Ministry figures, was low, at 41 percent, and many Sunni Muslim voters boycotted the elections. There were reports of voter intimidation and violence. Armenians were not an exception. The ADL District Committee of Lebanon condemned on May 14 the physical beating by Armenian Revolutionary Federation supporters in Bourdj Hammoud of a representative of an electoral bloc opposed to their own. The beating was partially recorded in a video. Several other minor incidents of violence also occurred to Armenians at the hands of the aforementioned.

According to Sevag Hagopian, ADL District Committee of Lebanon chairman and editor of *Zartok* newspaper, voting irregularities affected Armenians as well. For example, when an Armenian woman named Maria Aznikian went to vote at Bourdj Hammoud, she was told that half an hour ago another person came and voted under the same name. A second example is that the names of the school guardian of the

Vahan Tekeyan School and his wife were missing from the list of registered voters. Another potential problematic issue he raised is bringing Armenians from abroad by giving them free tickets in order to influence the elections.

Hagopian noted that most of the Armenian candidates for parliament during this election were not connected with traditional Armenian organizations and were in the opposition to the previous government. He said that the relevant question to ask would be why the traditional structures of the community did not allow them to be connected. Hagopian said that the lesson should be drawn is that the winds of change are blowing in a very clear direction. If the traditional Armenian organizations do not understand this in time and try to engage these people, they will instead become more estranged. Most did not win seats this time, yet in future elections, their numbers will increase and they will eventually be the representatives of the Armenians.

In general, the new Lebanese parliament faces a daunting situation, with an ongoing economic crisis, hyperinflation, growing poverty and food shortages exacerbated by the Russian-Ukraine war. The new parliament will consult with the president to appoint a premier, and later choose a



- While under Soviet rule, and soon after the massacres of Sumgait in 1988, the citizens of Artsakh passed a referendum to join Armenia. In 1991, another referendum was passed to establish the Nagorno Karabakh (Artsakh) Autonomous Republic. At no point has Artsakh been a part of the Republic of Azerbaijan, which declared its own independence later in 1991.
- With those referenda, the people of Artsakh unequivocally expressed their intention to live freely and with the right to self-determination on their lands - just as the American revolutionaries did 220 years before.
- Massacres and killing of civilians, systemic destruction of centuries-old churches, desecration of cemeteries, and attempts to erase traces of the millennia-old presence of Armenians in the region clearly establish Azerbaijan's continued intent of ethnic cleansing and genocide.
- The atrocities committed by the Republic of Azerbaijan, fueled by systemic and deep hatred towards Armenians, make it impossible for any arrangement which renders Artsakh under the control of Azerbaijan.
- Therefore, we declare our unbreakable solidarity with our brothers and sisters in Artsakh and call on the Armenian government and the international community to resist and block any effort to cede control of Artsakh to Azerbaijan, lest they be remembered as co-perpetrators of yet another ethnic cleansing event in recent history.
- The brave people of Artsakh deserve the right to self-determination and to live peacefully and with dignity in their homeland.

We stand in solidarity with the People of Artsakh.

Eastern Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church
The Armenian Revolutionary Federation Eastern Region (ARF) Central Committee
Armenian Youth Federation Youth Organization of the Armenian Revolutionary
Federation Eastern Region (AYF-YOARF) Central Executive
Armenian Relief Society of Eastern USA Board of Regional Directors
Homenetmen Armenian General Athletic Union Eastern Region Executive
Hamazkayin Armenian Educational & Cultural Association Eastern Region
Saint Stephen's Armenian Elementary School



Community News

NJ Senate Minority Leader Thomas Kean, Jr., Continues Support for Genocide Recognition

By Stephan S. Nigohosian

NEW YORK — Times Square was once again the site of the commemoration of the Armenian Genocide on April 24th. Sponsored by the Knights and Daughters of Vartan, the event marked the 107th anniversary of this dark and heinous event in history. Among the dignitaries and elected officials standing in solidarity for global recognition of the Armenian Genocide at this year's event was former New Jersey Senate Minority Leader Thomas H. Kean, Jr. Kean addressed the audience of upwards of 1,000 attendees, acknowledging the importance of remembering the Genocide and pledging his continued support to the Armenian-American community. "We gather here today in unity to



Thomas Kean, Jr.

assure that the atrocities committed upon the Armenian people are never forgotten," he said. "In our efforts together to ensure a world in which human rights are universally recognized, we must never forget what happens when those rights are denied."

Kean is no stranger to supporting the Armenian cause, having helped pass a Resolution in the New Jersey Senate commemorating the Armenian Genocide. From 2001 until 2003, he was a New Jersey General Assemblyman representing the 21st Legislative District. In 2003, Kean was elected a New Jersey state senator representing the same district, and in January 2008 became Minority Leader of the New Jersey Senate, a position he served until retiring from earlier this year. He currently serves on the Senate higher education, Senate commerce and legislative oversight committees.

Kean is dedicated to continuing the legacy of a long line of family members dedicated to public service and supporting human rights issues. His great-grandfather, Hamilton Fish Kean, and great-great-uncle, John Kean, were both United States Senators. His grandfather, Robert Winthrop Kean, served ten terms in the United States House of Representatives representing New Jersey and was the first U.S. senator to recognize the Holocaust. Kean's father, Thomas H. Kean, Sr., served two terms as governor of New Jersey from January 1982 to January 1990.

Following the commemoration, Kean further commented, "Today, the Armenian-American community is strong in New Jersey and across the country. I am proud to continue the work and legacy of my father, Governor Tom Kean, ensuring that these atrocities are remembered, and that the incredible contributions of the Armenian-American community are recognized."



AECF Founder Dr. Roger Ohanesian accepts his award from Dr. David Chang

EyeCare Founder Ohanesian Receives Humanitarian Award During 30th Anniversary Year

LOS ANGELES — Thirty years ago, in 1992, Armenian-American ophthalmologist Dr. Roger Ohanesian took a trip to Armenia for the first time and subsequently founded the Armenian EyeCare Project (AECF), a non-profit organization dedicated to eliminating preventable blindness in Armenia and making quality eye care accessible to every resident in the country.

Three decades later, Ohanesian is being honored for his decades of humanitarian service through the AECF by the American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery (ASCRS). On April 24, 2022, Dr. Ohanesian accepted the coveted ASCRS Foundation's Chang-Crandall Humanitarian Award during the ASCRS Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C.

In his acceptance speech, Ohanesian expressed his awe at how much the AECF has accomplished in Armenia during the organization's 30-year history and service to the country.

"You have no idea when you start something what it's going to turn out to be," he said. "It has truly, though, for me, been the honor of a lifetime."

The AECF's list of accomplishments in its 30 years of service to Armenia is vast. More than 100 volunteer physicians have visited during Medical Missions to Armenia to train local physicians and work on complicated cases; local ophthalmologists in Armenia have received advanced medical education and training both by participating in U.S. fellowships and being trained in-country; and numerous patient care programs and facilities have been developed in Armenia including the AECF's Mobile Eye Hospital, Center of Excellence for the Prevention of Childhood Blindness, Regional Eye Centers and more.

"Very few of us will leave a mark on this world as important as that of Roger Ohanesian," Dr. John Hovanesian, a fellow ophthalmologist and volunteer physician with AECF, said. "For 30 years Roger has dedicated his life to helping people rise above blindness half a world away. He's been passionate, he's been persistent, and he's been extremely efficient in gathering resources and recruiting like-minded volunteers through his contagious enthusiasm and folksy charm."

Ohanesian said he was honored to be recognized by his colleagues within ASCRS for his 30 years of service in Armenia but that this work would be impossible without the team of doctors who've volunteered with the AECF through the years.

"I, alone, should not be the sole recipient of this award," Ohanesian said. "It should be shared by each of those who have repeatedly joined our trips, brought instruments and expertise which is then left with our Armenian colleagues who have accomplished so much."

The ASCRS Foundation's Chang-Crandall Humanitarian Award is also endowed by a generous gift from Dr. and Mrs. David and Victoria Chang, which Ohanesian has earmarked for the Armenian EyeCare Project.



AECF Founder Dr. Ohanesian sees patient in Armenia while local physicians observe

Transitions Honored, New Paths Opened, At 120th Diocesan Assembly

By Chris Zakian and Florence Avakian

NEW YORK — The 120th Diocesan Assembly of the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church of America saw significant transitions in the life of the Diocese. The gathering was the first time in more than two years — since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic — that delegates and clergy had an opportunity to meet and deliberate in person.

In a result of greater long-term significance, the Assembly also saw the election of a new Primate for the Diocese, in the person of the Very Rev. Mesrop Parsamyan.

The 2022 Assembly convened on Friday, May 6, in a "hybrid" format incorporating both in-person and online participation. Current Diocesan Primate Bishop Daniel Findikyan presided.

Some 56 voting delegates and a number of observers gathered in person at the St. Vartan Cathedral Complex in New York City. An additional 125 voting delegates attended the assembly online.

The election of officers was a major focus of the event. For all participants voting was conducted using a secure online balloting platform. In all, 181 delegates and clergy, representing the parishes of the Eastern Diocese, took part on the proceedings. A second general session went forward under the same format on Saturday, May 7.

Assembly chair Gregory Saraydarian (Holy Martyrs Church, Bayside, NY) called the inaugural session to order on May 6. A formal message from Karekin II, the Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, was read to the delegates, after which Bishop Daniel gave some warm welcoming remarks.

"Finally, after a long interval, we are together here — at least in part — face to face," he said. The spirit of our Diocese is back in a way it hasn't been lately. And it's significant we meet here at St. Vartan Cathedral: a location that brings us together as no other place."

A Special Recognition

Business moved forward at a brisk pace, with Nominating Committee Chair Lynn Beylerian (St. Leon, Fair Lawn, NJ) taking to the podium to explain the very organized and secure method of online voting that would be employed throughout the proceedings.

The roll call of delegates was an occasion to honor a stalwart, beloved figure at Diocesan Assemblies over the past decades: Nubar Kupelian, the distinguished longtime staff member at the Diocesan Center. In introducing "Baron Nubar," Findikyan announced that the summer of 2020 had marked his 50th anniversary of service to the Eastern Diocese — and the delegates stood and burst into loud applause as Kupelian and his wife Anahid approached the dais.

There, Diocesan Vicar Fr. Simeon Odabashian read a congratulatory see DIOCESE, page 10



COMMUNITY NEWS

Şekeryan Focuses on Post-Genocide Armistice Period's Shaping of Armenian Community

LECTURE, from page 1

The lecture, entitled “the Aftermath of the Armenian Genocide: Survival and Resilience During Armistice (1918-1923)” was co-sponsored by the respective Detroit chapters of the Tekeyan Cultural Association, Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU), Cultural Society of Armenians from Istanbul (CSAI), and AGBU Young Professionals.

The Transition of Armenian Constantinople

Prior to 1915, Constantinople (Istanbul) was the political, economic, and cultural center of the Armenians of the Ottoman Empire. The renaissance of Western Armenian society and culture took place in this city, which was the metropolis of the entire Middle East, starting in the mid-19th century.

After the Genocide, that all changed. Today, the Istanbul community, though still proud of its roots and holding on to what's left, is vastly weakened. The continued maintenance of the Armenian identity and culture through the churches and schools is something to be proud of, but no one can imagine that it is anything like it was before.

Yet, it is a well-known fact that aside from the 300-odd Armenian intellectuals rounded up on April 24, 1915, the vast majority of the Armenian community of Istanbul was left relatively unharmed during the Genocide. Furthermore, when the Ottoman Empire surrendered to the Allies in October 1918, the city underwent a five-year occupation by the British and French military, during which time Armenian Genocide survivors congregated in Istanbul as a safe haven, and political and cultural activity resurrected to a degree, until it was again suppressed with the handover of the city to the Kemalist forces in October 1923.

During that five-year period, not only did the Istanbul Armenian community transition into what it is now, but numerous events took place which set the stage for the Armenian diaspora and to an extent, Armenia, going forward. These events have been little studied and are even less known to the general public, especially in comparison to the period's importance in Armenian history. Şekeryan's work aims to change that.

Şekeryan received his PhD from Oxford in 2018 and his book, *Armenians and the Fall of the Ottoman Empire, After Genocide (1918-1923)* will be published in December 2022 by Cambridge University Press. He currently lives in Michigan, where he was a Manoogian Postdoctoral Fellow with the Center for Armenian Studies at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, during the 2020-2021 academic year.

Şekeryan began his talk by giving a brief history of an Armenian survivor, who turned out to be his great-grandfather. His story highlighted many of the issues that

survivors faced, including massacre, loss of loved ones, separation, forced conversion, rape, resettlement and having to start a new life.

Next, Şekeryan discussed the history and background of the political events that took place at the end of the First World War in Turkey, including the flight of Talaat Pasha from the country at the time when Bulgar-

litical organizations, including the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF-Tashnag) (and the First Republic of Armenia which they controlled), the Armenian Democratic Liberal Party (ADL-Ramgavar) and the Hunchag Party, unified around the concept of “United Armenia.” Their projected Armenia would stretch from the Caucasus through Eastern Turkey all the way to Cili-

literary figure, who were both considered partisans of Nubar, along with ARF representative Avedis Aharonian of the Republic of Armenia rounded out the leadership.

Nubar and Aharonian applied to the Allies at the Paris Peace Conference for their dreamed-of Armenian state, and claimed that it could be populated if the orphans and refugees were collected in one place. This made the fate of the orphans a political and not just a humanitarian issue.

The orphans were not just passive participants in this process however. In many cases, the Armenian orphans of Istanbul showed more patriotism than their caretakers. Şekeryan noted multiple occasions where orphans banded together to demand that the orphanage give rations from the food which they were allotted, to the Armenian Army in Yerevan. When the orphanage leaders told them they needed to eat to be healthy, the orphans tried to save cheese and sell it in the marketplace! Finally, the orphans were satisfied in their selfless revolution when the orphanage leaders donated a sufficient amount of money to the Armenian army.

The well-to-do Armenians of Istanbul were united for a time in fundraising efforts to save these orphans, but the euphoria would not last for long.

The End of the Armistice Period

The current non-political stance of the Istanbul Armenian community can be traced back to the rise of the Turkish nationalist movement. When Mustafa Kemal and his forces approached the city after taking Smyrna in 1922, about half of the Armenians fled. Those who stayed had small businesses or were not politically involved. Much of intelligentsia, and almost everyone who was a member of the Hunchag, Tashnag, or Ramgavar parties fled the city. Even Patriarch Zaven Der-Yeghiayan, due to his involvement in the orphanage movement and his leadership of the Armenian community, was viewed as “nationalist” by the Kemalists and was forced to resign by the Armenian Civic Council (a body of laymen who ran the Armenian Church and community) and a more nondescript clergyman was put in his place. The Kemalists were welcomed by official proclamations by the Civic Council declaring their loyalty to the new Turkish State.

Although Şekeryan did not dwell on the subject, it is clear that the events of the end of the Allied Occupation turned Armenian Istanbul into what it is today, a community that focuses on the church and the Armenian culture, language in particular, through its venerable school system.

The lecture was well received and was followed by a question-and-answer session and refreshments. Representatives from the school as well as the Tekeyan Cultural Association, AGBU, and CSAI thanked the lecturer, who was presented a plaque of a William Saroyan quote.



Dr. Ari Şekeryan with Edmond Azadian, right, and Torossian



Dr. Ari Şekeryan with Hagop “Jack” Alexanian

ia capitulated to the Allies. Subsequently, the Ottoman Empire under Izzet Pasha also surrendered in the Armistice of Mudros.

As Allied troops filled the city, Armenians and Greeks were filled with enthusiasm and hope. Armenian refugees returned from Syria and other locations to Istanbul where they were housed in orphanages. Greek and Armenian flags (the tricolor of the First Republic) hung from the windows of homes throughout the city.

Şekeryan explains that all Armenian po-

cia and include a Mediterranean seacoast as well coastline on the Black Sea. The Allied powers told the Armenian groups that this was impossible, because there were not enough Armenians left after the Genocide to populate the territory. Yet, Armenian political organizations tried to plan for such a future outcome. Their theory was to repopulate the region with the many orphans that were being saved from the Syrian desert, or from Muslim families.

Armenian Orphans of Istanbul

Şekeryan's research focused on relief efforts for orphans, especially in Istanbul. However, rather than viewing the efforts from a humanitarian perspective, he focused on the political ramifications of the caretaking of these orphans. He argues that Armenian political organizations viewed these orphans as the seed of a population for the future “United Armenian state” that they wished to create.

To uncover the materials for his thesis, Şekeryan had access to archival issues of the Armenian press in Istanbul and other parts of the Ottoman Empire (Izmir, Adana), immediately after WWI from 1918-1923. Much of this has not been researched before.

The political coalition of the various Armenian parties was led by Boghos Nubar Pasha, head of the AGBU, who was considered the leader of the Western Armenians. Kapriel Noradounghian, a former Ottoman civil servant, Arshag Chobanian, the

California Armenian Genocide Martyrs Monument Added to IWalk App

LOS ANGELES — The University of Southern California (USC) Shoah Foundation has added a tour of the Armenian Genocide Martyrs Monument in Montebello, California to its IWalk mobile application, making it the first Armenian Genocide site of memory to be featured on the innovative educational platform.

Launched in 2014 and available for IOS and Android devices, the IWalk mobile app provides visitors to locations like the Armenian Genocide Martyrs Monument with personalized multimedia tours — or

IWalks — that feature photographs, maps and testimony from USC Shoah Foundation's Visual History Archive.

The hour-long IWalk in Montebello details the monument's key role in preserving the memory of the estimated 1.5 million victims of the 1915 Armenian Genocide. Visitors to the landmark can now watch clips of Armenian American scholar Dr. Richard G. Hovannisian describing its founding and Armenian Genocide survivor Hagop Asadourian speaking about the importance of geno-

cide memory.

USC Shoah Foundation Interim Finco-Viterbi Executive Director Kori Street said the new Armenian IWalk provides visitors with a rich, meaningful learning experience.

“IWalks make history come alive by connecting users with places, images, and testimonies,” Dr. Street said. “We are thrilled to be able to deepen learning about a significant historic site of memory for the Armenian community for everyone who visits this monument.”

In addition to the new IWalk, USC Shoah Foundation has launched several other resources for educators to teach their students about the Armenian Genocide. These include the first Eastern- and Western- Armenian-language content to be featured on IWitness, the Institute's no-cost educational website that reaches millions of students annually. The inclusion of Western Armenian-language content is significant as it is the main dialect spoken by the Armenian diaspora in the wake of the Genocide.



OBITUARY

Charles Garabed Der Kasbarian

Columnist Known as C.K. Garabed, Dedicated to Armenian Culture

TEANECK, N.J. — Charles Garabed Der Kasbarian, raconteur, newspaper columnist and devotee of all things Armenian, 95, died peacefully in his home in the company of his daughter, Lucine Kasbarian.

Born in Jersey City, NJ on May 5, 1927 to Armenian Genocide survivors from Dikranagerd, Western Armenia, “Uncle Garabed,” as he was known to many, spent a great portion of his life to preserving and perpetuating this regional culture’s essence through its distinct dialect, cuisine, music and humor.

While his given name was Charles Garabed Der Kasbarian, he was known to far more people as Uncle Garabed or his pen name, C.K. Garabed.

Kasbarian was raised in Union City, NJ — also known as “Little Dikranagerd” — where many Armenian refugees settled following the Armenian Genocide. He was the second son born to Hagop Der Kasbarian of Alipounar, Dikranagerd — a silk weaver, and Lusya Kazanjian of Dikranagerd.

Kasbarian’s grandfather, Kasbar Der Kasbarian, was the parish priest of Sourp Asvazadzin Church of Alipounar in the province of Dikranagerd. Kasbarian’s uncle, Hovhannes Der Kasbarian, was the Secretary of the Progressive Armenian School of Dikranagerd. These and his other ancestors were slaughtered either during the Hamidian Turkish Massacres of 1894-96 or the Armenian Genocide of 1915.

Kasbarian’s eldest half-brother, Antranig Kasbarian, was known as the marble champion of Union City. (After winning

all the marbles in town, this big-hearted elder brother summoned all the neighborhood kids and dumped the marbles out the window so that the boys could resume their rivalries.) Kasbarian’s brother John Hovhannes was a US Marine in WWII and in the USAF during the Korean War.

Kasbarian graduated from Emerson High School in Union City, NJ. He served in the U.S. Navy during WWII and later went to college on the G.I. Bill. He received his bachelor’s degree from New York University and his master’s degree in management from Adelphi University.

Kasbarian was a financial management officer for the U.S. Department of Defense but in his private life he would describe himself as “a jack of all arts and master of none.” Referred to as a walking encyclopedia, Kasbarian possessed a wry, dry and often absurd sense of humor which found an outlet among family, friends, strangers and via a weekly newspaper column called “Uncle Garabed’s Notebook”. He produced this column for the pages of *The Armenian Weekly* for 33 years and right up until the end.

Kasbarian was active in the Armenian Church and community organizations all his life. He was a member of the Armenian National Chorus, conducted by Mihran Toumajan, one of the famous “five” pupils of Gomidas. He was also a member of New York City’s St. Illuminator’s Armenian Apostolic Cathedral Choir under the baton of Toumajan’s pupil, Armen Babamian. There he met and married the late NYC-born lyric soprano, administrator and educator Alice

Aghavni Hamparian. They settled in NJ, participating in parish life at Sts. Vartanantz Church and, with their children, sang in the choir, also by then led by Babamian.

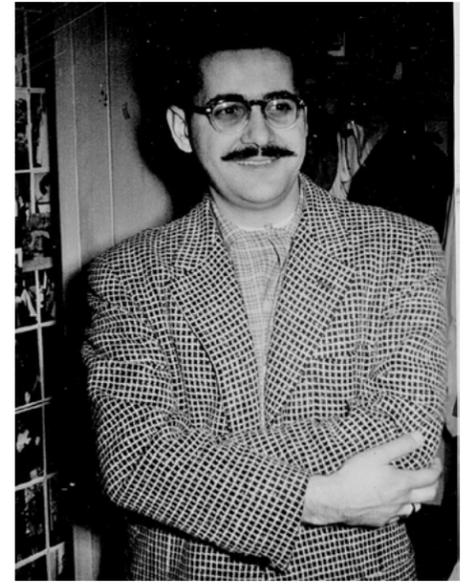
Kasbarian was a founding member of Sts. Vartanantz Church (1957), serving on the first auditing committee of the Church building project. He served many terms on the Church Board of Trustees and was a mainstay in the Church Men’s Club, whose primary purpose was to fund-raise for the Church. The Men’s Club also sponsored the Church’s boys’ and girls’ basketball teams that participated in the Armenian Churches Sports Association (ACSA) League. Kasbarian represented Sts. Vartanantz for many years at the ACSA and also attended National Representative Assemblies (NRA) as a delegate from Sts. Vartanantz. He supported the local Armenian National Committee (ANC) chapter and was souvenir yearbook chairman for the NJ AYF Olympics. For some years, Kasbarian and his wife served as board members of the Nareg Armenian Saturday School and both sang in the Hamazkayin Chorus under the baton of Raffi Sevadjian.

A devotee of classical and Armenian folk music, Kasbarian liked to compose and belonged to many choirs and chorales. He, along with family members and friends, performed with the Western Armenian folk song and dance troupe -- The Nayiri Dance Ensemble of New York — not to be confused with the eponymous Hamazkayin group later formed in the same community.

Kasbarian was a proud American and a good citizen. Alongside his Armenian activities, he enjoyed and appreciated civic involvements. He participated in local township life, frequently wrote to the local papers about community-wide issues, and participated in many activities organized by local organizations such as the Teaneck Public Library, the Teaneck Community Chorus, the American Red Cross and Little League Baseball.

Kasbarian and his wife raised their children in an Armenian-speaking home, never losing sight of the national aim to preserve their endangered culture and recover their Armenian homeland. Their son, John Antranig, is the Director of Development for the Tufenkian Foundation, and their daughter, Lucine, is a writer, cartoonist and publicist.

Kasbarian was an avid reader, researcher and collector of books. Of the many organizations to which he belonged, he was particularly fond of his membership on the



Charles Garabed Der Kasbarian in 1955.

board of the Armenian Literary Society of New York.

In his twilight years and with the help of his daughter, Kasbarian produced several Armenian literary projects begun more than half a century ago, among them, *The Dikranagerdtsi Vernacular Handbook*; *The Dictionary of Armenian Surnames*; and *An Unusual Look at Biblical Subjects*, most which can be accessed in his Armeniapedia archive. A few months before his passing, he completed the final draft of “Oyin Mi Tavli,” a one-act play written exclusively in the dialect of Dikranagerd.

He is predeceased by his wife Alice Aghavni, and brothers Antranig, John Hovhannes, and Haroutiun Sarkis, as well as his cousins Zohrab, Vahan, Hratch and Kevork Dadoyan, and his brothers and sisters-in-law Nishan & Nevarte and Ardashes & Mary Hamparian.

Kasbarian is survived by his daughter Lucine Kasbarian (David Boyajian); and his son, John Antranig Kasbarian (Maro Matosian). He is also survived by his cousins Sossie Dadoyan-Arlia, Houris Dadoyan-Darakjian, Papken Dadoyan, Dzovig Dadoyan-Ekmekji, Salpi Dadoyan-Nakanishi and Mary Dadoyan, as well as his nieces Anahid and Lorig Hamparian, and Susan Kasbarian-Record; his nephews Andy Kasbarian, Greg, John, Charlie and Richard Kasbarian; Aram N, Vartan, Aram S, and Raffi Hamparian, and many beloved cousins and great nieces and nephews from the Kasbarian, Dadoyan, Hamparian, Kazanjian, and Alipounarian families.

Funeral arrangements will be private. Sometime in the future, in Kasbarian’s memory, a “Salon Garabed” will be organized for his friends to gather and perform song, dance, storytelling and visual art, as he would have wished.

Joseph Kalemkerian

Son of Genocide Survivors, Dedicated to Family and Church

TRUMBULL, Conn. — Devoted husband, proud father and uncle, loyal brother and friend, and doting grandfather, of Trumbull, CT, passed away surrounded by his wife, Louise, and daughters, at the age of 90 on April 30, 2022.

Joseph’s family and community knew him to be a kind person with a warm smile, dedicated to his family and to service to his

community, with an odd sense of humor.

Born to Armenian Genocide survivors and immigrants, Joseph grew up in the Inwood neighborhood of Manhattan.

He was a devout Christian and an ordained deacon in the Armenian church and mentored youth, while later in life he attended both Armenian and Episcopal services as a member of St. Gregory’s in White Plains, NY and St. Paul’s in Norwalk.

With his training in graphic arts, Joseph worked in advertising and printing production until 1997; in his retirement he took painting classes and presented in several art shows and volunteered faithfully at St. Vincent’s Medical Center in Bridgeport and the Trumbull library.

Joseph is survived by his wife of 50 years, Louise; daughters, Sarah Kalemkerian (Jason Munive) and Mary Kalemkerian; granddaughter, Isabella Jane; and seven nieces and nephews.

Funeral Service was at St. Gregory the Enlightener, White Plains, on May 6.

Arrangements were by the Ballard-Durand Funeral & Cremation Services of White Plains, NY.



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COMMUNITY NEWS

Dr. Hovannisian Lectures at Altadena Tekeyan Center on Ramgavar Party Airplanes Purchase for First Republic

By Kevork Keushkerian

ALTADENA, Calif. — The Tekeyan Cultural Association Metro Los Angeles Chapter on May 1 hosted a very informative lecture titled “Arms for Armenia: The Matter of Airplanes – The Attempted Purchase of Surplus British Royal Air Force Fighter Planes for the First Republic of Armenia by the Constitutional Ramgavar Party of Egypt,” at the Tekeyan Center’s Beshgeturian Hall. The keynote speaker was Dr. Richard G. Hovannisian, past holder of the Armenian Educational Foundation Chair in Modern Armenian History at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) and Presidential Fellow at Chapman University.

Mistress of Ceremonies Sevan Der Bedrossian welcomed the guests on behalf of the chapter and invited Dr. Raffi Balian and Mayor Ardashes “Ardy” Kassakhian to address the audience.



Mistress of ceremonies Sevan Der Bedrossian



ADL Western District Committee chairman Dr. Raffi Balian offering his remarks

Balian, chairman of the Armenian Democratic Liberal Party’s Western Regional Committee, congratulated the Tekeyan Cultural Association (TCA) on its 75th anniversary and noted that the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Armenian Democratic Liberal Party (ADL or “Ramgavar”) will be celebrated this June in Yerevan.

Kassakhian, the newly elected mayor of Glendale, mentioned that Hovannisian was his teacher at UCLA. He then praised Hovannisian for writing books on the Armenian Genocide. He further noted that during the years



Mihran Toumajan presenting *A Legacy of Armenian Treasures* to Professor Hovannisian on behalf of the TCA Metro Los Angeles chapter



Keynote speaker Professor Richard Hovannisian

of the first Republic of Armenia, there was a pandemic in Armenia similar to the one now.

Der Bedrossian then took to the podium and gave a brief introduction about Hovannisian, who graduated from the University of California at Berkeley with both bachelor’s and master’s degrees, before receiving his doctorate from UCLA.

Hovannisian has authored or edited more than 30 books on the first Republic of Armenia, the Armenian Genocide and Western Armenia. His latest book, about the Armenian communities of Iran, is dedicated to his late wife, Dr. Vartiter Hovannisian.

Hovannisian augmented his lecture with a slide show. He first presented the First Republic of Armenia, where political parties were bitterly divided, animosity prevailed and trust was at a premium.

The rift was apparent in the European Congress in Paris where Armenia had two representatives who did not agree with one another. Boghos Nubar Pasha was appointed by Catholicos of All Armenians Kevork V, whereas poet Avedis Aharonian was appointed by Hovhannes Katchaznoui, the prime minister of Armenia.

In 1919, the Armenian National Congress beseeched the Allied Powers to fulfill their commitment to help them, but unfortunately the Western Powers did not often back their promises. In 1920, the Allied Powers finally

agreed to send arms to Armenia with the stipulation that Armenia would not only pay the cost, but interest as well. This is where the Constitutional Democrat [Ramgavar] Party of Egypt comes into the picture.

Vahan Malezian, on behalf of this party, negotiated with the British commander in charge, General Edmund Allenby, to buy surplus British Air Forces fighter planes for the Republic of Armenia. Unfortunately, the Defense and the Treasury Departments of the British government did not agree with the British Foreign Office and thus the



Mayor of Glendale Ardashes Kassakhian offering his remarks

sale of the fighter planes was delayed, without final approval, until November of 1920, when Armenia reluctantly joined the Soviet Union.

Upon the conclusion of the presentation, Mihran Toumajan presented Hovannisian with the book, *A Legacy of Armenian Treasures*, published by the Alex and Marie Manoogian Museum in Detroit.

Later, the question-and-answer session was followed by the traditional reception.

This was an eye-opening experience for this writer because I did not know of the role of the Ramgavar Party in trying to help the First Republic of Armenia. It is very refreshing to know indeed that even then, there was some kind of unity between rival parties for the greater purpose of assisting the homeland.



COMMUNITY NEWS

Transitions Honored, New Paths Opened, at 120th Diocesan Assembly

DIOCESE, from page 6

letter from Findikyan in honor of the occasion. "Throughout his time here," he read, "Nubar has been the heart and soul of this organization: an inspiration to all who devote their time and creativity to God and His church; a mentor to his co-workers; and an example of the fine, humane, patriotic qualities that have been the most noble expression of Armenian civilization."

The letter continued: "Nubar's 50-year presence at the Diocesan headquarters has been an enduring grace upon the entire Armenian Church. He is a devout Christian, an Armenian patriot, a man of quality to whom all of his colleagues look up. We have become better Christians, and better Armenians, for having shared our days with him."

After remarks of thanks, Nubar Kupelian read the roll of delegates in the familiar voice that has endeared him to the community. The occasion was recorded for posterity on the online Zoom platform.

Face to Face, Heart to Heart

Findikyan presented his annual address as Primate to the gathering, blessing the delegates and thanking the local parishes for keeping the church alive in spite of the pandemic. "Technology has let us meet face to face. But the church needs to meet heart to heart," he said. "We've moved ahead, finding ways to do the things we needed to do."

The personal highlight of the past year, he disclosed, was the opportunity he had to ordain three priests, 10 deacons, 12 subdeacons, and 41 *thirs* into the service of the church. As recently as a month ago, he presided over the consecration of a new church in Dallas.

With animated enthusiasm, he proceed-

ed to describe some of the initiatives undertaken by the Diocese and its staff in the prior months. These included the ongoing development and expansion of the VEM-KAR digital ministries platform, which has played such a prominent role in the church's outreach during the pandemic crisis; the establishment of a Deacons' Fellowship and "Faith-Building Women" group; a "Good Samaritan Ministry" group, dealing with social and racial justice and healing; a commitment to "continuing education" retreats and resources for Diocesan clergy; and the launching of an innovative collaborative fellowship program between the Diocese's Krikor and Clara Zohrab Information Center and Fordham University.

Bishop Daniel singled out the efforts of the Diocesan Youth Ministry staff, thanking them for pioneering online activities for young people, and looking forward to in-person summer camps in the coming season. He thanked Diocesan Vicar Fr. Simeon Odabashian, Director of Ministries Fr. Mesrop Parsamyan, Cathedral vicar Fr. Davit Karamyan, and Administrator of the Diocesan Center Michele Berjerac for their support and friendship.

He also referenced the ground-up review of renovation and development plans for the Diocesan Center, and promised that in all discussions on the matter, "this complex will always be considered sacred ground."

Reports and Results

As balloting went forward on a secure online platform, the assembly agenda went forward. Fr. Andreas Garabedian (St. Gregory the Illuminator, Chicago, IL) presented the report of this year's Clergy Conference, which had met online in the days prior to

the main assembly.

Diocesan Council members Lisa Kouzoujian and Roseann Manoogian Attar gave a compact Diocesan Council report, in the understanding that discussion of financial matters would take place at a later session.

When election results were finalized (following a second ballot only for one office: an open seat on the Board of Directors), the Nominating Committee announced that Fr. Mesrop Parsamyan had been elected to the office of Primate on the first ballot, having received the needed majority of votes.

There followed the traditional procession of all the attending clergy, singing the Hrashapar hymn of welcome, leading the newly-elected Fr. Parsamyan through Haik and Alice Kavookjian Auditorium to the dais. Clergy and others approached him to kiss his hand and offer congratulations.

A formal message announcing the result was sent to Holy Echmiadzin, in accordance with the diocesan Bylaws, for the confirmation of His Holiness Karekin II, the Catholicos of All Armenians. Upon confirmation by the Catholicos, Parsamyan will become the 13th Primate of the Eastern Diocese.

Final Thoughts and Blessings

The session of Saturday, May 7, began with a requiem service for departed delegates, clergy, and Diocesan leaders who had passed away in the previous year.

It continued with a special presentation on plans to renovate and develop the St. Vartan Cathedral Complex. Diocesan Board of Trustees members Sandra Shahinian Leitner and Lisa Esayian delivered an enlightening and clear discussion on the physical and structural needs of the Dioc-

esan Center, the projected costs involved in each phase of a proposed renovation, and on the pathways under discussion for the past several years restore the cathedral complex and bring its facilities up to date.

A productive question and answer session with the delegates followed. The presenters stressed that decisions on have not yet been made on how to proceed with the project, but they pledged that the process would go forward as a transparent community undertaking, in cooperation and in consultation with the elected body of the Diocesan Assembly.

Before the session adjourned, Parsamyan offered his closing remarks, calling on the faithful to seek guidance in "the good captain of the ship of our church, Christ the Lord, who has navigated us through the waters of community life and word events, and has always brought us to safe harbor."

Findikyan in turn congratulated Parsamyan on his election, saying that "I am confident, hopeful, and prayerful *Hayr Sourp* will give his many gifts to the church, solidifying the faith of the people, and making this Diocese a beacon to the world."

"As for me," he went on, "I am committed to helping you however I can. This is my church, and I am here for you and for our people. The last four years have been the greatest blessing in my life. I thank you all, and I thank God."

Aykazian offered words of expectation of bright futures ahead for both Findikyan and Parsamyan, before assembly chair Gregory Saraydarian formally adjourned the session, slightly ahead of schedule.

The assembly will hold its final General Session on May 31, as an online gathering.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

‘A Church For All Our People’

Fr. Mesrop Parsamyan’s Address to the Diocesan Assembly

NEW YORK — As part of the proceedings of the 120th Assembly of the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church of America, Fr. Mesrop Parsamyan presented an address to the clergy and lay delegates, as one of the three candidates for the office of Primate. In his remarks, Fr. Parsamyan sketched out his background and upbringing, and revealed his early experience of God’s call, and some of his thoughts about the future.

As a personal essay, the address provides a wonderful window onto the spirit and vision of Parsamyan — both for those who have yet to meet the newly-elected Diocesan Primate in person, and for those who have already gotten to know his admirable qualities.

What follows is the text of his address to the delegates and clergy. It has been edited slightly for space.

I WOULD LIKE TO THANK the Diocesan Council for nominating me to the office of Primate of the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church of America. I am honored and humbled.

I was born in Soviet Armenia, a difficult period in our history for the nurture of our Christian faith and values. My spiritual journey started when, as a teenager, I walked the 30-mile distance from Yerevan to Khor Virab, the cradle of our faith. I spent the night at the monastery and at dawn, when the rays of the rising sun began to slowly emanate, illuminating Mt. Ararat, the sounds of church bells caused a stir in my soul. I could hear the deacons singing “Արավոտ Լուսոյ [Aravod Loo-so] / O morning of light, O thou righteous sun, shed thy light on me.”

Following this first encounter with the Lord, I made a pledge in my heart that all the days of my life hereafter, I should try and live in the presence of the Lord, in His life-giving light.

I do not want to take your time with details of my ministry in the church, in administrative, academic and pastoral assignments at Holy Echmiadzin, in Europe — France, Germany, Belgium, Switzerland — and here in America. Details of my biography have already been sent to you.

But I’d like to share my first experience of life in our Diocese. I came here, back in 2015, as a servant: as a pastor to a small parish in the Midwest — the heartland of America. I was nervous, wondering, “Would I be accepted?”

But the people there proved to be so alive with faith and joy and hospitality. We all came together immediately, because we all had the same Armenian spirit — that overcame the issue of where we were born in years past, and united us as a church family, moving forward together.

That wonderful church community — Holy Virgin Mary and Shoghagat, in Belleville, Illinois — was my first home here. And my experience of being with the faithful, being close to their lives, serving them and serving among them — that has shaped my understanding of this Diocese, my admiration for it, and my love for its people and for this blessed land of America.

Friends, my service in multiple administrative, academic and pastoral assignments have given me the unique opportunity to walk in the faith journey of our people in many settings and in multiple countries and cultures. I have experienced firsthand the struggles and uplifting triumphs of our people.

There have been times when I shed tears in sharing the pain of rebuilding lives in Armenia after the destruction of wars, or as refugees and immigrants in a new country in an unfamiliar culture. I have rejoiced in witnessing the inspiring and uplifting stories of success. And everywhere I have strived to be the shepherd of my flock by reflecting the presence of the Good Shepherd.

A Church For All Our People

I feel I should address a question about this election, because some people have expressed a little uneasiness about this process. To me, elections are not just a formality. Elections are the way a community expresses its voice — in fact, it is the only way the community overall can make its voice heard. And for that reason, an election must present the people with a real, credible choice.

This is the way I have always understood things in the abstract: in theory. But it became a very practical question for me this year — as you can see. I thought and prayed, deeply, when the Diocesan Council asked me to be a candidate. I sought counsel from people of wisdom — and received some unsolicited advice, too. But

this question of giving a choice to the people is what stood out most forcefully in my mind.

Some people think because I was born in Armenia, I would not be truly committed to the Eastern Diocese, not truly independent.

So today, let me be just as clear. I am devoted to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I am devoted to the Armenian Church, and I am a member of the Brotherhood of Holy Echmiadzin — as are *Hayr Mamigon* [Kiledjian] and *Daniel Srpazan* [Bishop Findikyan]. All three of us are committed to upholding the pre-eminence of the Mother See and the Catholicos of All Armenians.

But, let me say it clearly: I am not the nominee of Echmiadzin to the office of Primate. Like my brothers here, I am the nominee of the Diocesan Council of the Eastern Diocese of America. I am now, and always will be, an advocate of the needs and well-being of the flock entrusted to my care. To that end, I ask for your support, and — most importantly — for your prayers.

My friends, we divide ourselves in so many ways — by age; by land of origin; by native versus immigrant. We slice up our community into every demographic, as if we’re trying to discover some secret truth. But the most important truth is standing in plain sight. There is only one demographic that matters, above everything else: We are the Armenian children of our Heavenly Father. This is our church — for all our people.

It’s not a gigantic population: we are few. And for that very reason, we cannot afford to be exclusionary with one another. We must see ourselves as one, united family — working together with love for a common goal and for the prosperity of the Armenian Church and for our beloved Diocese.

And in reaching those goals — we have so much on which to build! Look around you at this incredible achievement of your parents and grandparents. What a legacy they left to all of us!

Keenly Aware of Challenges

Since its establishment in 1898, the historical path of our Diocese runs parallel to the history of other faith communities and ethnic cultures in America. We have had periods of conflict and uncertainty, resolve and cooperation, regress and progress. And through the years we had dedicated and visionary leaders, both lay and clergy.

They have left their mark on the development and progress of the Eastern Diocese and its parish communities. We are the beneficiaries of their strong leadership, selfless service and bright vision. May they rest in eternal light.

The first churches in the United States were erected by Armenian immigrants from the Ottoman Empire and refugees who had escaped persecution. That generation rose from the ashes of the Genocide and built St. Vartan Cathedral in the heart of New York City as well as many of our parishes around the Diocese.

As their children and grandchildren, our generation can and will step up to safeguard the legacy of the past, to build new pathways to the future. If, by the grace of God, our parents’ and grandparents’ generation could build, then we, their children and grandchildren can and will rebuild by the same grace.

Friends, during my service in our Diocese in the last few years, I have had the opportunity to serve

as parish priest; vicar of this beautiful cathedral and director of ministries. And I had the blessing to visit many parishes and parishioners.

I am keenly aware of the many challenges we face, old and new, in our Diocese. As we continue our mission among the faithful, we must face the new challenges and the inevitable adjustments united as a community, with trust in the providence of God, with courage and resolve.

Our outreach to all levels and segments of the community must grow and embrace new members. Mindful of our unique circumstances and the needs of our people, we must cultivate new ways to convey our Orthodox faith that our Armenian Apostolic Church has preserved intact for over twenty centuries.

By our own example we must teach our youth the importance and relevance of the Armenian Church and her rich spiritual, liturgical and cultural heritage in their lives.

And of course, we must redouble our efforts to recruit candidates to the priesthood and for lay ministry, and concentrate our attention on their education and training to meet the current and the future needs of our Diocese.

What you have done in your own lives and careers, we can do for our church. We will do it together, hand in hand, united in spirit and in devotion to our church, our people our children — and most of all, to our Risen Lord, Jesus Christ. Thank you.



The Very Reverend Fr. Mesrop Parsamyan delivers his address to the clergy and delegates of the Eastern Diocese, convened in New York and online for 120th Diocesan Assembly on May 6, 2022. During the assembly proceedings, Fr. Parsamyan was elected to the office of Primate, and upon the confirmation of the Catholicos of All Armenians he will become the 13th Primate of the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church of America.



Arts & Culture

On the Importance Of Curating

By Christopher Atamian

Special to the *Mirror-Spectator*

NEW YORK — To many people, the word curate evokes images of priests in religious garb since curate is also a synonym for a man of the cloth, or else it's easily confused with the verb "to cater." So what does it actually mean to curate something or to say that something is "curated"? The *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* defines curated as "carefully chosen and thoughtfully organized or presented." Thus, anything from a baseball card collection to one's group of friends or even one's life can theoretically be curated. One can curate art, film, fashion, music, food — and in an age of social media, every other person is in fact curating daily his or her life online.

In the art world, to curate means something slightly different. From the smallest art show to the world's most prestigious museums, curators today seem omnipresent, yet few people really understand what a curator does. Simply put, curators perform studio visits, conduct research and curate exhibitions. They write essays for catalogues and then typically hold a series of talks or panels to discuss the exhibition and the artwork displayed. Depending on the size and budget of the organization or institution with which they work, they may also be responsible for hundreds of other administrative and logistical aspects to an exhibition, including, but not limited to, securing funding, insurance, and shipping of the artworks.

Earlier this year, my colleague Tamar Hovsepian and I decided to establish a curatorial practice with a focus on contemporary, experimental, and conceptual art. Both of us have extensive experience in curating and writing about contemporary art and regarded the establishment of a curatorial practice as a logical next step, so we discussed what we should look for when curating. For Tamar, a focus on women, especially those of Armenian origin, and an element of originality were important. "Curating is seeing and showing things in a way that is different and intriguing," she explained. I also liked this emphasis on women and suggested that we add underrepresented artists such as those in the LGBTQ and people of color (POC) communities.

And what can one say then about the difference between a curator and gallery dealer? To a certain extent, the two functions overlap since both are charged with finding and exhibiting art, and sometimes writing about it. However, important differences remain. Dealers typically own a physical gallery with their name on it. And while curators usually charge a fee for their work, art dealers focus almost exclusively on selling art at the highest profit possible. A curatorial practice on the other hand, see CURATING, page 14



"Stellungnahmen zu allem Unmöglichem" by Archi Galentz

Celebration of Artist Archi Galentz as a Cross-Cultural Multihyphenate

By Muriel Mirak-Weissbach
Special to the *Mirror-Spectator*

BERLIN — On May 8 artists, art lovers and friends of the artist gathered at the Galerie Wolf & Galentz in Berlin to celebrate the publication of Archi Galentz's book, *Stellungnahmen zu allem Unmöglichem*, translated, roughly, as *Statements on Everything Impossible*.

Galentz, who comes from a family of Armenian artists, was born and brought up in Moscow, then studied under Klaus Fussman at the Academy of Arts in Berlin, where he now resides. Influenced by artistic traditions of both east and west, he has stressed the social and political relevance of art and has become known informally as a cultural ambassador of Armenia in Germany.

In her welcoming remarks, the editor of the volume, Anne E. Wilkins, said that she had racked her mind for the right expression to describe Galentz, and what she came up with was "a phenomenon." After listing the many things he has done, his vast network of acquaintances and activities, his achievements as a versatile artist, she felt she still had not hit the nail on the head. "Resistance" then came to mind as an apt term; unimpressed by art canons, he considers prevailing viewpoints, whether in the arts or in politics and society, with healthy skepticism and he resists pressures of the art market as well as political ideologies. Galentz's book, she concludes, provides the only means to adequately grasp the essence of his work.

Mapping a Mind

In point of fact, the book which is far more than a catalogue, offers unique insight into who Archi Galentz is, and how he has come to be who he is. Reading this rich 320-page volume is like rotating one of the huge cubes that he has created — what he has entitled "Globus" (Globe) — cubic constructions with maps on each of the six surfaces. But the book is a larger, more complex polygon, actually a dodecahedron with twice as many sides. We move from one facet to the next, thematically tracing the journey of the artist in his first 50 years. With each rotation, we meet a new facet of his personality, as painter, designer, engraver, collector, curator, gallerist, photographer, Arrièregardist — each identity presented now by his professor or a fellow artist, now in a late-night dialogue with a gallerist, but mostly in his own words, in autobiographical reflections. The process unfolds in twelve chapters, each richly illustrated with single works, photographs of (solo and group) exhibitions, documenting the seemingly endless variety of artistic media Galentz has explored, in an incessant experimentation with ideas and forms. As encapsulated in his engagement with cartography, it is a matter of investigating identity through transformation — historical, national and very personal. The catalogue itself is an artistic product bearing the signature Galentz.

continued on next page

Pierre Koulak

Acting with Great French Film Stars

By Artsvi Bakhchinyan

Special to the *Mirror-Spectator*

YEREVAN/PARIS — Pierre Koulak (Koulaksezian) is a French TV and cinema actor, director and author. He was born in 1942 in Saint-Chamond, Loire. Very early on, his talent was noticed. He studied at the Saint-Étienne Dramatic Center (Jean Dasté), where he first acted. Later Koulak performed in sketches with Fernand Raynaud at the Théâtre de l'Étoile and Alhambra. Thus a friendship started and Raynaud considered Pierre Koulak his best friend, so in this capacity, the latter was the author of a biography of the actor, published in 2011. His gestures and especially his ability to improvise brought him to the attention of French film and TV producers, where he starred in "Horace 62," "Action Man," "Pasha," "Thibaud," "Borsalino," "Borsalino and Co.," "Adventures of Rabbi Jacob," "The Marseille Contract," "Arsène Lupin," "Jean-Christophe," and many others.

This interview was conducted through Pierre Koulak's nephew, Ruben Koulaksezian, whom I thank immensely for his willingness and cooperation. By the way, Ruben is the author of an English book - *Little Armenians: The Travel Guide of the Armenian Diaspora*, that *Mirror-Spectator* has written about on September 17, 2020 (Alin K. Gregorian, *Little Armenians: It's a Small World After All*, <https://mirrorspectator.com/2020/09/17/little-armenias-its-a-small-world-after-all/>).



Dear Mr. Koulak, many thanks for your agreement to give an interview to the Armenian press. What do you consider your most remarkable work?

There are many, but I would say that my role as Marcel the "Korean" in Georges Lautner's "Pasha" with Jean Gabin, released in 1968, is probably the most striking one. Indeed, I had my name on the poster of the film, splashed all over France, alongside the great actors of the time. "Action Man" released in 1967, with Jean Gabin and Robert Stack, as well as "Borsalino" with Alain Delon and see KOULAK, page 15



ARTS & CULTURE

from previous page

Creations of Chance

Galentz has created new art forms often almost by accident. It was, for example, (p. 45) after his first solo exhibition, when he went to Moscow to help his mother renovate a three-room apartment, that he drew inspiration from ripping out walls.

This led to the creation of Wall Cut Outs, literally pieces cut out of walls on which art objects were mounted, as frames, and often displayed as self-supporting structures.

Or, (p. 58) in the course of exploring lithographs, he happened upon an old 1877 map of a place called Wusterwitz, located near Brandenburg, Germany. Eager to work with it artistically, he discovered that the place no longer existed in reality, but only on the lithographic stone and printed map. He “saw in this a metaphor for my own Armenian national identity;” he reflected on the fact that few travelers have visited historical Armenia, which no longer exists as a physical-political reality, and is only accessible through maps, photos and cultural objects. He thought of research done by the artist, writer and teacher Mika



Archi Galentz, left, at his studio

(p. 232) he was out on an excursion in the desert among wild incense bushes, and happened upon a piece of red cloth. Examining the chance discovery led him to experiment with the color red as a visual mixture of orange and purple. He explored the

although Armenian artists living in different parts of the world had little contact with one another, they yet developed a “common aesthetic of concentrated and subtle abstraction” and belong to the “same cultural landscape;” they have developed an abstraction as a “gesture of liberation and manifestation of freedom” (p. 86).

In late 2008, Galentz and Thorsten Bilib, whose brother was a master student of Klaus Fussman, opened a project space, InteriorDasein, which includes an exhibition hall and a workshop for framing. For over a decade the center, which has a permanent collection of works by 40 mainly Russian and Armenian contemporary artists, has hosted 25 curated exhibitions and has become a “unique Armenian cultural center in Europe” (Vazgen Pahlavuni-Tadevosyan, p. 145.)

Queen of the Arts

Though Galentz has experimented in literally every imaginable art form, including those he has invented, his first love is painting, and among works in this medium, portraiture occupies a special place. “It is certainly something pertaining as much to the painter as to the person portrayed, and yet something very different even beyond that, something words cannot express, that for me makes painting the undisputed Queen of the Arts” (p. 190). And the book is full of paintings, a large number of them magnificent portraits, including self-portraits and family members.

For these portraits, as for works in other genres, Galentz has provided photographs that show the various stages of their cre-

ation, from sketches, to pencil renditions, to oil on canvas, wood, etc. The reader also can visit the exhibitions themselves, again thanks to a myriad of illustrations of the galleries; again Galentz provides preparatory sketches of the exhibitions, the rooms, the works on walls or on display surfaces, then photographs of the same, at the vernissage or prior to the opening. The overall effect is one of temporal participation, allowing the reader to retrace the steps in the process of coming-into-being, be it of the art object or the exhibition itself. Combined with the contributions of other artists and writers, Anna E. Wilkins, Andreas Wolf, Klaus Fussman, Lev Evsovitch, Mika Hannula, Vladimir Salnikov, Vazgen Pahlavuni-Tadevosyan and Peter Michel — some as essays, others in dialogue with the artist — the visual depictions throughout the catalogue make it a unique, illustrated biography of Archi Galentz, itself a new work of art.

A special, limited edition of 50 copies is available with a polychromatic original etching of “Die verspätete Gerechtigkeit” (Belated Justice) for €190, each signed and numbered. It shows a scene from the Marsyas myth, known also as the competition between Apollo and Marsyas (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marsyas>) An English translation of the book, at least in part, would be most welcome.

Archi Galentz, Stellungnahmen zu allem Unmöglichen, Anna E. Wilkins (Ed.), Andreas Wolf (Layout & Graphics), Berlin Artbear Books, 2022.



“Armenian Requiem,” Archi Galentz, 1994

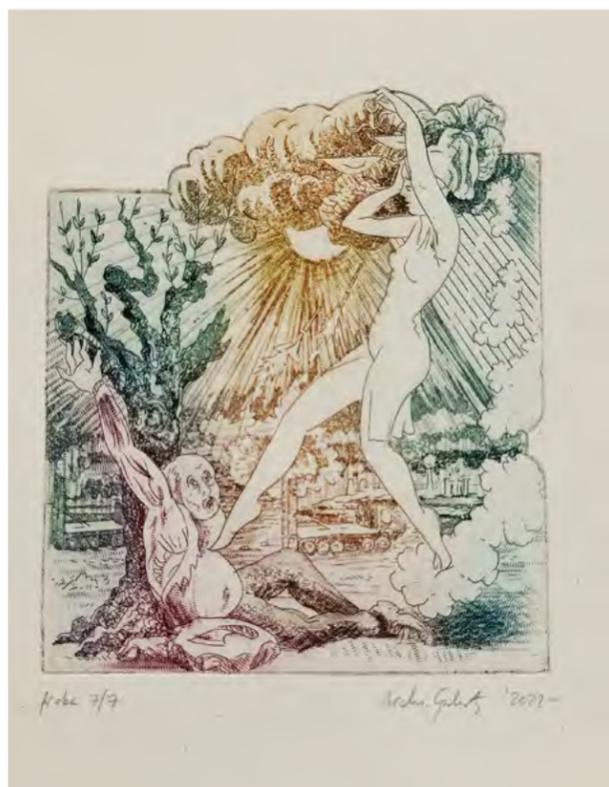
Hannula, on associations one makes with national identities, and this stimulated reflection on how Armenians conceptualize the homeland, for example. This led to Galentz’s work with cartography, the Globe with its changing maps, West Armenia as “a lost paradise,” “Byzantium,” the changing map of Europe through the Thirty Years War, and so on.

In 2003, while in the Sultanate of Oman,

changing nuances of color through movement of fabrics, seeking to depict on an artistic surface the image of flags waving in the wind. In 2009 at the Venice Biennale, an installation of flag objects on a specifically designed wall bore the title, “voulu/oblige – outskirts of a small contradiction.” Other works created from this process depict anticipation of the French revolution, the Armenian tricolor flag and so on.

Homeland and Diaspora

The question of identity is a central theme in his work. As a Moscow-born Armenian living in Germany, he is at home in all three languages and cultures, as evidenced also in his work as collector, gallerist and curator (p. 85). He purchased his first painting in 1995, and since then has assembled a vast collection. His Armenian works, especially from the post-Soviet period, include many from the diaspora, whose significance, he believes, has still not been adequately appreciated. Specifically, he writes that art history over 30 years has not grasped the fact that,



“Belated Justice,” by Archi Galentz 2022



“Armenia’s Globe,” 2003, Archi Galentz



ARTS & CULTURE

On the Importance of Curating

CURATING, from page 12

falls somewhere between a gallery and a museum. A curatorship combines business, scholarly research, writing, and advocating for artists by placing their work in important private collections and museums. By doing so, the curator tries to increase an artist's visibility and share their importance and message with the world at large. Contrary to art dealers, whose main goal is to sell the art, curators may exhibit works that are not necessarily for sale. Free of this "sell or die" mentality, the curators can more easily show important art which communicates a social and ethical message. Aesthetics and ethics are, of course, famously difficult to disentangle, and curators will also occasionally exhibit art that they simply find beautiful or visually inspiring. At heart then, the biggest difference between art dealers and curators lies in the simple fact that art dealers are essentially businesspeople while curators are creators themselves. Tamar succinctly notes, "We take our inspiration from the works that artists have created and build on the narrative and even shape new narratives with our exhibitions." In other words, to come up with an idea, then choose fascinating, relevant artwork to bring this idea to life - what could be more fun or fulfilling?

For our first exhibition at Atamian Hovsepian, slated for May 15-29 in New York City's Chelsea area, we selected four women artists who take found objects, textiles, elements, or ideas from the past and repurpose/reappropriate them in their art. They turn the artwork into vehicles that carry the past into the future and present it in a new light, thus also infusing it with new meaning. Their work is both aesthetically new and intellectually challenging.



Melissa Dadourian, Soft Geometry #17, 2020

With our vast network of artists from around the world, we selected the following people: LA Urban Public Art pioneer Judith Simonian paints large, breathtaking canvases; Melissa Dadourian fashions inventive textile collages and cubist oils; Linda Ganjian creates intricate sculptural reappropriations of her ethnic past; and last



Judith Simonian, Sperlonga in Norway, 2016, Acrylic on canvas, 46_x 54_

but not least, Greek-born Eozen Agopian melds found and new objects into fascinating multimedia creations. While the four artists' works look and feel different, they are unified by the common theme that we identified, hence the exhibition's title: "The Future of Things Passed."

Finally, within an Armenian context, curators are especially important because Armenians are all but absent from the international art scene. While there are many talented artists in Armenia and throughout the diaspora, few have representation at major American, Asian or European galleries. The art world represents both financial and political clout, things that, along with cultural politics in general, Armenians lag. And while it's true, for example, that art-world powerhouse Larry Gagosian is Armenian and partly sponsored the Armenian Pavilion at the 2015 Venice Biennale, he has no Armenian artists on his

roster and his engagement in the Armenian world is limited at best. Tony Shafrazi and Sonia Balassanian occasionally curate, but they are artists first and foremost. Adelina Curburyan von Furstenberg, who curated the 2015 Golden Lion-winning pavilion, is one of the few Armenian curators of note. Yet absent other Armenian curators

or collectors, only one artist from her brilliantly conceived Armenty pavilion was reportedly signed by a gallery. Add to the mix Hrag Vartanian and Veken Gueyikian, who both founded the wildly successful art blog Hyperallergic, and you have just about the entire sum total of influential Armenians on the American/European art scene. This means that Armenian artists are often left to fend for themselves. By way of an example, the Armenian Museum of America in Watertown (AMA) does not typically show contemporary Armenian artists. While one doesn't necessarily need such institutions to boost an artist's career, they certainly help.

Part of our mission at Atamian Hovse-

pian is to showcase marginalized and underrepresented groups such as women and people of color. Another yet equally important goal is to cultivate the new generation of savvy Armenian collectors through our exhibitions and writings. So the next time Armenia wins a Golden Lion, every last artist in the pavilion will have the name recognition to move his or her career to the next level. It's a lofty goal, but one that, with the community's help and a bit of hard work, Tamar and I confidently believe can be achieved.

Learn more about curating: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/blogs/curators-blog

Visit Atamian Hovsepian Curatorial Practice: www.atamianhovsepian.art



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*The Diamond
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Saturday, October 15, 2022

Details to follow



ARTS & CULTURE

Recipe Corner



by Christine
Vartanian



Barbara Adishian's Chorag With Golden Raisins

FRESNO — Chorag, sometimes spelled choroeg, cheoreg, or chorek in English is a traditional Armenian sweet bread made around Easter and often at Christmas. This is the late Barbara Theresa Adishian's prized Chorag with Golden Raisins recipe that is featured in *A Taste of Fresno Armenian and American Cuisine Cookbook*, published by the Ladies of St. Paul Armenian Church, Ladies Society, Fresno, California, First Printing 1995, Second Printing Revised Edition 2003.

Barbara was born on December 4, 1926 in Worcester, MA. Her parents were Joseph and Valerie Novakoski. She attended nursing school after she left high school. Barbara moved from Worcester to Fresno with her husband John and their eldest son, Jack, in 1953. Her other two sons, Kevin and Greg, were born in Fresno. She worked for years as a registered nurse at various places, including Valley Children's Hospital and Hypana in Fresno. She was a member of the Daughters of Vartan and served as the Fresno Chapter's Dirouhie (leader). She volunteered at St. Paul Armenian Church, and loved baking and preparing many memorable family meals, especially with the fresh vegetables from their amazing garden.

Barbara passed away on June 29, 2020 in Fresno at 93 years old. Her beloved husband of 70 years, John Paul Adishian, Sr., passed away in 2019. Her recipe is reprinted here in her memory and honor. As her family says, "She was a fantastic baker. There were always delicious oatmeal cookies, chorags and desserts in her freezer. She was the consummate and loving wife, mother, and grandmother."

As Liana Aghajanian writes in *Dining in Diaspora*:

"Perhaps the most enduring and symbolic of food traditions centers around a sweet bread called "choreg" made during Easter, which emits a fragrance while baking that is so potent, so intoxicating, it is permanently embedded in the olfactory memories of the adults who once grew up with it. For many families, choreg

has been the link that has connected them to their Armenian-ness to who they feel they are. When circumstances beyond their control have caused the disintegration of families, lineage and identity, food has remained the last cultural remnant of historically oppressed people who have lost so much. They may have forgotten everything else, but choreg never dies. For many, choreg is an all-out obsession, inhaled in copious amounts at the first opportunity. No matter how much you eat, it never seems to be enough. No matter how much time has passed since you've eaten it, you will never forget the taste."

Childhood memories connect us to the past and to our families, customs, traditions, and heritage. We know this special choreg recipe that Barbara Adishian made for her family and friends will continue to be enjoyed (and remembered) for many years to come.

INGREDIENTS:

1 (12 oz.) can evaporated milk
12 oz. water
3 cups sugar
1 tablespoon salt
2 pounds butter
4 packages dry yeast (regular or quick rise)
1 cup warm water
1 teaspoon sugar
5 pounds plus 4 cups all-purpose flour
6 extra-large eggs, beaten
2 extra-large eggs, beaten
1 tablespoon plain yogurt
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
1 pound golden raisins, to taste
Sesame seeds, if desired

PREPARATION:

Combine the milk, 12 oz. water, sugar and salt in a medium pan; heat and then cool to lukewarm. Melt butter; cool to lukewarm. Soften yeast in warm water and sprinkle with 1 teaspoon sugar; cover for 15 minutes. Add milk mixture and yeast to the butter.

Place 5 pounds flour in a large pan and make a well; add butter mixture and 6 beaten eggs. Mix with a large wooden spoon, and add remaining 4 cups flour; mix with hands. Knead dough for 10-15 minutes until spongy and dough no longer sticks to hands.

Rub vegetable oil on top of dough and cover with tea towels; let rise in warm place until double the size. When dough has risen, punch down and add raisins; mix well.

Shape dough and place on ungreased cookie sheets. Cover and let rise for 1 hour. Brush chorags with mixture of 2 beaten eggs and 1 tablespoon yogurt. Sprinkle with sesame seeds, if desired. Bake at 375F for about 15 minutes or until lightly browned.

Makes approximately 100 chorags.



ORDER TODAY

To purchase *A Taste of Fresno Armenian and American Cuisine Cookbook* for holiday gifts for family or friends, contact: St. Paul Armenian Church, 3767 N. First St, Fresno, California 93726, (559) 226-6343. Cookbook cost is \$20.00 plus shipping and handling. Checks should be made payable to: St. Paul Armenian Church Ladies Society.

Acting with Great French Film Stars

KOULAK, from page 12

Jean-Paul Belmondo from 1970, are also just unforgettable.

You have worked with many legendary actors. Is there anyone whom you can single out?

I played with the greatest, Jean Gabin, Jean-Paul Belmondo, Robert Stack, Louis de Funès, Anthony Quinn, Johnny Halliday, but I would say that it was Alain Delon who stood out the most. He had an absolutely grand talent, and as he said himself, he did not "play" his characters, he "lived" them.

Comic legend Louis de Funès remains very popular for Armenian audiences. What particular memories do you have from him?

It was very pleasant to shoot with Louis de Funès, and the film "The Adventures of Rabbi Jacob" contributed a lot to my fame in France. He was very professional and efficient, but not particularly talkative. He came to the set and left once when the job

was done.

In the Armenian magazine *Kulis* in 1962 there was an article suggesting you intend to film one of Marcel Achard's works with Jean-Jacques Varoujean. I assume it never happened?

Hmm, I don't remember such.

In the same article your surname was mentioned also as Bebekian.

At the very beginning of my career, I happened to use this name, because in my family everyone calls me, even today, "Bebek" (child).

In Armenia many have seen your films, without knowing your Armenian origins. Could you please tell us about your roots?

Unlike other French Armenians in artistic circles, I have always put forward my Armenian heritage. Hiding your Armenian origin was easy, it made it easier to succeed, especially in cinema or music. I have always been proud of my origins, and

my friend Fernand Reynaud, a famous humorist at the time, loved coming to eat at my house and tasting my mother's Armenian cuisine. My family is originally from Marash, in Cilicia. Those who survived the genocide were deported to Aleppo, where they remained for a few years before leaving for France in 1930. In my family we were four brothers and three sisters.

What Armenian traditions does your family keep?

I think we have preserved most of the Armenian traditions — in parties, celebrations, family meals, relations between generations, respect, education, the importance of religion. We have been little influenced by French traditions. When I was a child, we lived in a hovel on the banks of the Gier, in Saint-Chamond, and since only Armenian families, the poorest ones, lived there, the French called the building "the Armenians' house." There was also a dam in the mountains around Saint-Chamond, and the elders said that the mountain air reminded them of the mountains around Marash. Every summer, Armenians went there with their fam-

ilies to picnic and enjoy nature. This tradition was such that the French also called it "the dam of the Armenians."

Have you ever been in Armenia?

Yes, I visited Armenia, and I really felt a connection with this land, even though my ancestors came from Cilicia, hundreds of kilometers from Yerevan. But this is the Armenia of today, it is our homeland to all, all the Armenians of the world.

In Armenia many know "Fort Boyard," but they have no idea that the composer of the original credits of it was your brother, Paul Koulak (1943-2021).

My brother Paul was very creative. He started to be interested in music very early, when the whole family was working in the markets. By dint of work and patience, he managed to be selected to do the credits for this young program which was created in 1990, called "Fort Boyard," and which has become the oldest French television program still broadcast today.

Many thanks for the interview, dear Mr. Koulak, I wish you strong health and positive energy!



ARTS & CULTURE

CALENDAR

OF EVENTS & PROGRAMS

CALIFORNIA

JUNE 5 — Save the date. The Armenian Assembly of America will mark its 50th anniversary with a program on Sunday, at 5.30 p.m., at the Jonathan Club. This special event will highlight five decades of the Assembly's influential achievements in advocacy, education, and awareness on Armenian issues. For more information visit <https://www.armenian-assembly.org/assemblyevents>

MASSACHUSETTS

MAY 20, 21 — Armenian Memorial Church Annual Fair (rain or shine). On Friday, May 20, from 5 to 8 p.m., the church will be serving kebab dinners and selling desserts. The entire fair will be open on Saturday, May 21 from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Fabulous Armenian beef, chicken and losh (ground meat) kebab dinners complete with sauce, rice pilaf, salad and pita bread. The selection will also include Armenian meatless meals. Eat in or purchase takeout. Gourmet specialties including paklava, kadayif, cheoreg, koufte, eetch, cheese beureg and many others. The Church sets aside 10 percent the proceeds to benefit a worthy charity. This year's funds will be donated to Miaseen, a charity that supports family and community stability in Armenia. 32 Bigelow Avenue in Watertown. The Church is wheelchair accessible. For more information, call 617-923-0498.

MAY 21 — The Armenian American Medical Association, the City of Watertown and Mount Auburn Hospital present "Stay Healthy Together, A Collaboration to Give Back to Our Community." Saturday, 1-4 p.m., Armenian Cultural and Educational Center, 47 Nichols Ave., Watertown. Basic health screenings, interactions with health professionals, access to community resources, mini yoga and qigong sessions, raffles and more. Free and for all ages; all are welcome. Aamaboston.org for more info.

JUNE 4 — The Daughters Of Vartan Santoukht Otyag No.5 is presenting **HYELIGHTS 2022**, an Armenian Cultural Show Highlighting the Performing Arts on Saturday, First Baptist Church Gordon Hall, 111 Park Avenue, Worcester. An Armenian Buffet following the show is included. Call 978-537-2752 for Reservations: \$15 per Adult, \$8 per Child ages 5-12, Children under are Free. The event is open to the public.

JUNE 8 — Armenian Night at the Pops will feature violinist Diana Adamyan as the featured soloist with the Boston Pops Orchestra, Keith Lockhart conducting. Wednesday, 8 p.m. Symphony Hall, Boston. Presented by the Friends of Armenian Culture Society. Details to follow.

JUNE 24 — Sayat Nova Dance Company will celebrate its 35th anniversary with a Wine Soiree. Experience a summer's night under the stars in the company of friends, indulging in an array of Armenian wines. Friday, Gore Place, Waltham. Donation \$100. Purchase deadline June 25. Purchase tickets at Sayatnova.com/35th-anniversary.

SEPTEMBER 9 — Tekeyan Cultural Association Boston Chapter invites everyone to a cultural event honoring author, editor, philologist, educator and public figure, Jirair Tanielian from Beirut, Lebanon, for his 60 years of service and dedication to Armenian culture and the community. Friday, 7 p.m., Baikar Building, 755 Mt. Auburn, Watertown. Details to follow. For more information, please contact us at bostontca@gmail.com

SEPTEMBER 21 — Gala Benefit Celebrating Contributions of Our Nation's Immigrants. InterContinental Hotel, Boston. 6pm Honoring Stephen Kurkjian, Distinguished Citizen, Leader, Pulitzer Prize Journalist and Author, and Recognizing Organizations Serving Immigrants and Refugees. Funds raised support the Legacy Fund, endowed fund to care for and maintain the Park year-round. Advance Reservations only. To receive the invitation, please send name and address to hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

NEW JERSEY

JUNE 17 — Tekeyan Cultural Association Mher Megerdchian Theatrical Group in association with Huyser Music Ensemble presents "Huyser and Friends Project: Harmony," an open-air concert dedicated to the 75th Anniversary of Tekeyan Cultural Association. Featuring Gohar Hovhannisyan & Band from Armenia. Friday, 7:30 p.m. at St. Thomas Armenian Church, 174 Essex Dr. Tenafly, NJ. Donation \$60, includes Aran Wines from Artsakh. Seating is on a first-come, first-served basis. For tickets call Marie: 201-745-8850 or Talar: 201-240-8541 or visit: www.itsmyseat.com/harmony

OCTOBER 15 — Save the date! The Tekeyan Cultural Association of Greater New York Chapter is celebrating the diamond anniversary of the Tekeyan Cultural Association with a gala. Details to follow.

WISCONSIN

JUNE 26 — St. Hagop Armenian Church Annual Madagh 2022 Picnic, Racine, Sunday. On the Johnson Park grounds. Open to the community/public with free admission, offering traditional Armenian food for purchase. For information, contact Zohrab Khaligian @ (262) 818-6437 or khaligian@netzero.net or https://www.facebook.com/Armenian-Madagh-Picnic-St-Hagop-Church-Racine-Wisconsin-250610052493495/?tn-str=k*F

Prof. Hovannisian to Speak About Latest Book at Ararat-Eskijian Museum

MISSION HILLS, Ca. — On Saturday May 21, 5 p.m. Pacific Time, the Ararat-Eskijian Museum, in collaboration with the Armenian Film Foundation, National Association for Armenian Studies and Research, and The Promise Armenian Institute at UCLA will host a special presentation of Prof. Richard Hovannisian's new volume, *Armenian Communities of Persia/Iran: History, Trade, Culture*. The event will be held in-person at the Ararat Home of LA, at the Sheen Chapel, 15105 Mission Hills Road.

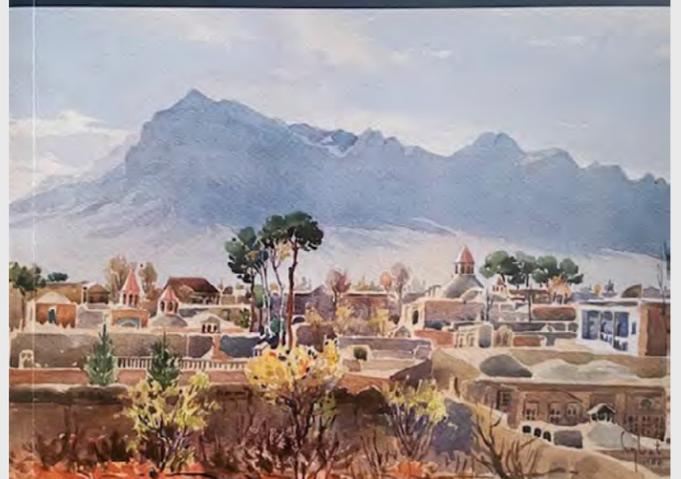
This is the 15th and final volume in the series that concentrates on Armenian communities outside the Ottoman Empire. The volume covers the Armenian presence in Iran from antiquity to contemporary times. It includes the history of Armenian-Iranian relations from the pre-Christian era to the Middle Ages, the Maku and Tabriz districts, with the monasteries of St. Thaddeus, St. Stepanos, and Tsortsor, and highlights the importance of Persian Azarbayjan/Atrpatakan in the Armenian and Iranian revolutionary movements, and the displacements and massacres of the Christian inhabitants of the Urmia, Salmast, and Khoy districts during the Turkish offensives in World War I, as well as the leadership in relief efforts of Archbishop Nerses Melik-Tangian of Atrpatakan (Tabriz).

Hovannisian is the past holder of Armenian Education Foundation Chair in Modern Armenian History at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), and a presidential fellow at Chapman University. He is the founder and six-time president of the Society of Armenian Studies and has published thirty books, and numerous scholarly articles including 5 volumes on the Armenian Genocide and 15 volumes by Mazda Publishers on historic Armenia.

The event is open to the public and will be livestreamed. It is recommended to wear masks at the event for everyone's safety.

For additional information please contact the Ararat-Eskijian Museum: eskijian@ararat-eskijian-museum.com

Armenian Communities of Persia/Iran History, Trade, Culture



Edited by
Richard G. Hovannisian



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EDITOR

Alin K. Gregorian

MANAGING EDITOR

Aram Arkun

ART DIRECTOR

Mark (Mgrditchian) McKertich

SENIOR EDITORIAL COLUMNIST

Edmond Y. Azadian

STAFF WRITER

Harry Kezelian III

CONTRIBUTORS

Christopher Atamian, Florence Avakian,
Taleen Babayan, Artsvi Bakhchinyan,
Raffi Bedrosyan, Christine Vartanian
Datian, Dr. Arshavir Gundjian, Philippe
Raffi Kalfayan, Ken Martin, Gerald
Papasian, Harut Sassounian, Hagop
Vartivarian

REGIONAL

CORRESPONDENTS

LOS ANGELES: Ani Duzdabanyan-
Manoukian, Kevork Keushkerian,
Michelle Mkhlian
YEREVAN: Raffi Elliott
BERLIN: Muriel Mirak-Weissbach
PARIS: Jean Eckian
SAN FRANCISCO: Kim Bardakian
CAIRO: Maydaa Nadar

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Jirair Hovsepian, Ken Martin

VIDEO CORRESPONDENT

Haykaram Nahapetyan

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755 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown, MA
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Telephone: 617-924-4420

FAX: 617-924-2887

www.mirrorspectator.com

E-Mail: editor@mirrorspectator.com
For advertising: mirrorads@aol.com

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EDITORIAL

Armenia's Opposition is Running Out of Steam



By Edmond Y. Azadian

The devastating effects of the 44-Day War and the turmoil in the Caucasus region dictate some necessary measures for Armenia: internal unity and independent and objective evaluations of the country's problems and actions derived from those evaluations. The first objectives which come to mind are national unity, mutual tolerance and a consensus on an agenda of national recovery.

We have advocated time and again that for a country like Armenia, so divided and polarized, the road to recovery would be the creation of a truth and reconciliation commission, along the lines of the South African model, to be able to come out of the quagmire and address the basic problems of the country.

It is true that after the war, in the 2021 elections, 54 percent of the voting public supported Nikol Pashinyan's My Step coalition. Pashinyan himself, like everybody else, knows full well that in that election, people voted *against* his opponent Robert Kocharyan and not necessarily *for* Pashinyan. That kind of victory does not amount to the mantle of legitimacy or mandate, which the current administration is claiming to justify its actions.

The pro-government media continues to repeat ad nauseum that "the people voted for us and they rejected the opposition." Another simplistic accusation against the opposition is that all the problems of the country stem from 20 years of misrule – even the war, which took place under Pashinyan's watch.

The opposition certainly must bear its share of the blame for the country's problems, because of unchecked corruption and abuse of power. At this point, perhaps it sounds politically incorrect to state that despite the corruption, no major war happened on a scale comparable to the last one, which brought about an existential threat to Armenia's doorstep.

Some pro-regime pundits, state, tongue in cheek, that as long as Robert Kocharyan is on the political scene, Pashinyan has a good chance to be reelected. That is an accurate statement, because Kocharyan's name is tainted by many scandals, including his accumulation of tremendous wealth in a poor country, the October 27, 1999 parliament massacre, which helped his political survival and his hubris in eliminating Karabakh from the negotiation table of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group.

No one could state with certainty if Pashinyan could run a more efficient government if it were not hampered by the pandemic and the war. But following the Velvet Revolution, people did not find a noticeable improvement in their economic situation, nor did the pace of emigration slow.

Since May 1, the opposition has been engaged in massive demonstrations and acts of civil disobedience. The movement is led by the Hayastan (Armenia) and Pativ Unem (I Have Honor) coalitions, respectively headed by Robert Kocharyan and Serzh Sargsyan. The former presidents are never seen together during the demonstrations. Those visible on the stage are the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Dashnak) leaders Ishkhan Saghatelyan, Gegham Manoukyan and Armen Rustamyan, and former head of the National Security Service Artur Vanetsyan.

One of the earlier statements by Vanetsyan has already determined the outcome of the movement. Indeed, at an impromptu press conference, he stated, "If the demonstrations do not yield the expected result, I have no intention to return to parliament." If one of the leaders of the movement casts doubt on the outcome, right at the onset, that movement is doomed.

The opposition has been mimicking the tactics that brought Pashinyan to power, but the crowds following those leaders have yet to reach a critical mass to be effective. The closing of streets and storming government buildings have been met with police brutality that has drawn criticism from Chatham House in the UK and the local human rights defender.

One of the main reasons the movement does not get traction

is the lack of catchy slogans as well as a clear agenda. To unseat Pashinyan when there is no viable candidate among the opposition leadership does not inspire confidence. Nor does the accusation that Pashinyan will give Karabakh to Azerbaijan make any sense, because Pashinyan does not any longer have control of that enclave, 75 percent of which is occupied by Azerbaijan and the rest by Russian peacekeepers. The latter are the ones that call the shots at this point.

The opposition had been agitating for a long time. What brought about the launch of the movement was Pashinyan's long defeatist speech in the parliament on April 13, when he stated that the international community was expecting Armenia to "lower the bar" on its expectations. This comment was interpreted as the surrender of Karabakh. Ever since, every statement by the government supplied further ammunition to the opposition.

The upcoming fateful negotiations with Azerbaijan are providing yet another opportunity to the opposition. Baku has come up with a five-point proposal, which the Armenian side has accepted while submitting its own six-point list, which has been kept secret so far. But a few days ago, Ambassador-at-Large Edmon Marukyan finally made it public during an interview with Petros Ghazaryan. Basically, those six points refer to the security and the rights of the Karabakh people, a



vague formulation which can be interpreted in any way. There is not even a mention of remedial secession, which can be the only viable option.

National Security Commission President Armen Grigoryan reassured the public that both Armenia and Azerbaijan are silent on the specifics of the enclave issue to protect the integrity of negotiations. However, right after that, Khalaf Khalafov, Azerbaijan's deputy prime minister, made public claims for some enclaves from Armenia, before even sitting at the negotiation table.

The opposition is asking outright for Pashinyan's resignation, without even holding early elections and proposes to form a unity government, comprising 250 technocrats. The names of those technocrats have yet to be released.

Basically, what the opposition is suggesting is "let Pashinyan resign, then we will come up with something." This is not a national agenda which will bring together the country. And that is why the movement is not going anywhere.

The first president, Levon Ter-Petrosian, warned that the opposition's actions will only hamper the upcoming negotiations with Turkey and Azerbaijan. However, the government and pro-government forces are comfortable as long as Kocharyan and Sargsyan are in the mix. The people are particularly scared of Kocharyan's intentions to see Armenia in a union state with Russia, thus losing its sovereignty.

What the current administration fears most is the emergence of a third party, which is not tainted by the former corrupt regime and has knowledge of statecraft, which Pashinyan and his cadre lack. And indeed, there are names being circulated, including Avedik Chalabyan and Arman Tatoyan, both of whom

see OPPOSITION, page 19



COMMENTARY

Armenia in Deadlock: Looking Behind the Labels

By Karolina Pawłowska

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

The catastrophic aftermath of the Second Nagorno-Karabakh War has brought tremendous sense of loss to all Armenians, and many things remain broken since then. I have never, in the past decade, seen Armenian society so polarized, as now I witness situations when family members or friends cannot sit at one table due to conflicting views on crucial aspects of Armenian politics. The political debate has transformed into mutual accusations of treachery, negative labelling, and personal insults. In a way, it is not any longer possible to speak about Armenia-related issues without being accused of taking sides. At the same time, we seem to be missing the bigger picture and multiple shades of the situation we are facing.

Labelling the protestors as simply Kocharyan supporters is an immature way of dismissing their claims. Simplifying in its nature, this argument ignores that it is in fact a relatively diverse group. Yes, Armenian Revolutionary Federation members are definitely engaged and some of the participants do wholeheartedly support the former president. At the same time, many participants are simply disappointed with certain aspects of Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan's internal and external policy and have not witnessed an expected change in their lives since the revolution. There are also war veterans who risked their lives and often suffered lifelong injuries for what now appears to be the lost cause. There are people who lost their significant others and now feel that their sacrifice went for absolutely nothing. I see social media posts openly mocking them or cheering for the arrests, which, by the way, were addressed by the Armenian Ombudswoman as often unconstitutional. These comments come from people who claim that their support for Pashinyan comes from his pro-democratic agenda. It seems that the right to protest only stands when the protesters represent the views one can agree with. At the same time, the decision of the opposition to support former president Robert Kocharyan was its biggest mistake and contributes to the situation where their legitimate claims can be easily labelled and dismissed. It possibly changed the course of the last elections and masked the real extent of discontent with Pashinyan.

The label of Kocharyan supporters misses the deeper reflection on why people who do so, support him. I do not see this as a nostalgia for authoritarian regime, as often presented, but rather as desperate turn towards a person who can be associated with perceived sense of international security. At this point it does not matter to which extend this perception can be supported, what matters is that obviously the need for such security is so strong, that it makes people consciously choose someone as controversial as Robert Kocharyan. And the fact that many Armenians still make that choice does not, in any way, prove Kocharyan's popularity but rather shows tremendous lack of trust towards the

current government to secure the Armenia's and Artsakh's interest. These two agendas, intertwined for the past two decades, seem to split just before our eyes.

Is Artsakh still Armenia? As a non-recognised entity, Artsakh cannot be a party to negotiations and obviously is forced to rely on Armenia to represent its interests, which requires both trust and transparency. Since the recent shift in the rhetoric of Armenian government regarding the future of Nagorno-Karabakh, due to obvious lack of transparency, that trust has been broken. I see the politicians making vague statements which are equally enigmatic and worrying. What does it mean "to respect the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan?" or "secure the right of the people of Nagorno-Karabakh"? Why do we have to follow and interpret each press release to understand what is the current government policy towards the most urgent issue? I have not, by now, seen a comprehensive explanation of what is being planned and in what possible way the rights of 150 thousand people in Nagorno-Karabakh, the most hated ethnic group in Azerbaijan, can be secured within the state which uses systematic oppression towards own citizens. How to do it without the engagement of a third party and proper confidence building measures in place? Most importantly, how can we speak about cultural rights to have own schools and newspapers when what should we worry about is their physical safety and the protection of basic human rights?

Even though the reality of such governmental plan might be less dramatic, the failure of communication results in hearsay, anxiety, and obvious panic on the side of Nagorno-Karabakh, which has the full right to doubt if its interests are indeed represented by the only party capable of doing so. It seems like Artsakh itself stopped being a party and its now Armenia's to give or keep, not being included in the decision-making process. What matters is that instead of calming down the concerned ones, the government chooses to tighten security measures, and attempts to break the movement before it manages to gain momentum, by successfully discouraging the ones still indecisive about joining. In reality, the support for Kocharyan is less intense than it seems and at the same time, the support for Pashinyan is much less obvious. Many Armenians choose not to participate in the protests not only for the fear of restrictions, but also because their hopes for a meaningful political change and improvement in daily life have been failed multiple times, including the two past elections. The atmosphere is filled with the sense of emotional fatigue, resignation, disillusionment, and hopelessness, and the failure of current government to bring a meaningful sense of civic engagement and agency has significantly contributed to that. The few Armenians who truly support the possibility of ceasing the control over Nagorno-Karabakh to Azerbaijan seem to do so mainly because they fear the further loss of lives, and do not see the government capable of preventing it in any other way. The concept of remedial sovereignty, a valid, reasonable, and achievable solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh struggle, has been somehow dropped and is not anymore mentioned.

Neither side seem to be capable of proposing a coherent strategy that can possibly ease the common feeling of existential threat faced by many Armenians in Artsakh, Armenia and Diaspora. Even though Armenians always remained quite politically divided, the conviction of Armenia-Artsakh unity has always been rather unquestionable. The unity is now broken.

Armenian Opposition: What Sincerity, What Credibility?

By Ara Toranian

Yes, of course, the protest movement initiated almost a month ago by the opposition alliance is mobilizing people. Probably around 15,000 people participated in the May 9 demonstration, the high point of this agitation. The organizers counted at least the double, of course.

Be that as it may, the alliance of the forces of the old regime, set to music by the ARF of Armenia, does not overturn the table. Its mobilization capacity is at the same level as that which preceded the June 2021 legislative elections, which peaked on June 18 with the meeting in Republic Square with former President Robert Kocharyan, with around 40,000 participants.

The day before Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan had hardly managed to do much better. This did not prevent him from largely winning the elections of June 21, 2021 and therefore from possessing the democratic legitimacy to govern. Demographically, the country is just the city center of Yerevan, haven of "Armenia which is doing well," the one that votes largely for Kocharyan, the one that adapted best to the oligarchy and corruption and whose terraces were always full during the 44-day war...

The "legitimacy" of Pashinyan, the forces of the old regime have constantly clashed since the ceasefire agreement of November 9, 2020, a defeat from which they hoped to come back in force. They are doing it again today by demanding the resignation of the Prime Minister. As if he had not already challenged his mandate, less than ten months ago, with the triggering of new elections which themselves took place a year and a half after the vote of December 9, 2018! Would our protesters want legislative elections every three months? Do they not understand or do they pretend to ignore that the political cards have been reshuffled, that the people have decided, democratically, as it was necessary to do after the defeat for which they are largely responsible?

How can the opposition fail to take the slightest critical look at its own experience of power, and not accept the verdict of the ballot box, and to renew itself? Taking care

not to appear too much at the head of the processions, Serge Sargsyan, and even worse Robert Kocharyan, had certainly never distinguished themselves by their democratic brilliance from the time when they exercised unchallenged power. But their current methods unfortunately do not show any paradigm shift.

What is indeed striking in this movement which intends to turn the revolution upside down, mimicking with less spontaneity and talent the modus operandi of those who overthrew its leaders in 2018, is its passionate aspect, its self-satisfaction and the dearth of its proposals. Playing on all the springs of nationalism, the protesters do not shrink from any verbal violence, accusing the Prime Minister again and again of "treachery." It is not a question for them of appealing to reason, but of playing on emotions, summoning the stereotypes of the patriotic register, with forceful revolutionary songs from the end of the 19th century and corresponding folk costumes, with the exception of the performances of singer Sirusho, Kocharyan's daughter-in-law who plays *Zartir Lao* with her fist raised at the rostrum of the "Resistance"... What can we say about the sufficiency of this movement which, a thousand leagues from a Pashinyan beating his chest, ignores any questions, any responsibility in the defeat, in Armenia's unpreparedness for war, in the frivolity shown by its leaders who stuffed themselves for thirty years during, while corruption gnawed from within the souls and minds of the country.

There would be so much to say about this deplorable mentality which left Armenia and the Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh without solution or defense against the enemy. Before criticizing those who rose up in 2018 against this moral decay, this political blindness, and who paid the price for his legacy at the time of the war, wouldn't these former leaders be well advised to sweep in front of their door? To lower their heads before their people, to recognize their errors, their fault, their incompetence? Or, at the very least, to be forgotten?

Finally, what about the political content of the speeches of these "opponents," who claim to want a government of national unity, while trampling on the honor of their

adversary, who issue hollow and demagogic slogans on "security" after having blithely sold it off when they were in business, who appeal to this "solidarity" of which they made so much fun by crushing shamelessly the people who ended up driving them out, who advocate "stability", after having tried to insist on firing on the crowd on March 1, 2008. These beautiful recipes of "strong Armenia" that they claim today, why did they not apply them when they had the opportunity, rather than digging the country's grave?

Democracy takes work. Armenia, which certainly still has a lot of progress to make in this area, deserves better than this opposition, whose only claim to glory is allegiance to Putin... The nation is saturated with demagoguery. Which Armenian rejoices in defeat? Who doesn't care about the return of the Pan-Turkism? Who is not worried about the isolation of the country, nor fears for its future? Politics is the art of the possible. The nation needs reflection, solution, dialogue. There are institutions for that, and in the first place Parliament. Instead of strengthening them and thereby participating in the consolidation of the state, some have again chosen destabilization by the street, on the grounds that they themselves have been thrown out by the street. A primary reflex that quickly ignores the fact that the despotism they exercised for 20 years offered no other alternative at the time than popular uprising. What was done. Fortunately. It's time to realize that things have changed. And that the only worthwhile revolution requires a change of model, the passage from a destructive and sterile opposition, from a front of permanent refusal, to a constructive opposition endowed with a real capacity for proposal.

(Ara Toranian, 67, has been an activist for the Armenian cause since the 1980s. He is the founder of the newspaper *Hay Baykar* (Armenian Combat) and editor of the French magazine *Les Nouvelles d'Arménie* since 1994. He is also co-president of the Council Coordination of Armenian Organizations of France (CCAF), with Mourad Papazian, since 2012.)



COMMENTARY

MY TURN



by Harut Sassounian

Biden Wants to Sell Arms To Turkey While Ankara is Undermining NATO

With each passing day, the Armenian-American community is getting increasingly disappointed with President Joe Biden's anti-Armenian actions. He has done more harm than good to Armenia's interests.

Last year, 24 hours before acknowledging the Armenian Genocide, President Biden waived Section 907 of the US Freedom Support Act, thus allowing the United States to provide various types of aid to Azerbaijan, including "security" assistance.

The US General Accounting Office (GAO) reported that from 2002 to 2020 the Departments of State, Defense, and Energy, and the US Agency for International Development provided to Azerbaijan \$808 million in US aid, of which \$164 million (20 percent) was for "security" assistance. On March 31, 2022, the American Ambassador to Baku proudly tweeted that the US Department of Defense just donated \$30 million of "equipment" to Azerbaijan. It makes no sense whatsoever, to provide assistance to oil-rich Azerbaijan which is flush with billions of petrodollars. This is a complete waste of US taxpayers' money.

During a recent hearing, when Senator Robert Menendez, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, questioned Secretary of State Antony Blinken why the State Department failed to report to Congress the impact of the assistance to Baku on the military balance between Azerbaijan and Armenia, Blinken gave an evasive answer by promising to look into it.

Even though previous presidents had also waived Section 907, thus providing assistance to filthy rich Azerbaijan, Joe Biden, during his 2020 presidential campaign, boldly criticized President Donald Trump for waiving Section 907. Yet, within three months of becoming President, he did the same thing as Trump.

What is the point of acknowledging the Armenian Genocide and then providing weapons to Azerbaijan to continue killing Armenians, as was the case in the 2020 war? What is needed is action, not empty words.

Another blunder of the Biden administration is not enforcing the ban on the transfer of US weapons to third countries. The prime example of this violation is the use of US F-16 military jets by Turkey in Azerbaijan during the 2020 Artsakh war. In addition, the US did not ban the sale of US parts in the Bayraktar Turkish drones which played a key role in the 2020 war.

The Biden administration reduced aid to Armenia to \$24 Million and allocated a pitiful amount of humanitarian assistance to thousands of displaced Armenians from Artsakh, while acknowledging that they are in an "acute humanitarian crisis."

Other shortcomings of the Biden administration are:

1) Did not pressure Azerbaijan to release immediately the Armenian prisoners from Baku jails, after the end of the 2020 war.

2) Did not condemn Turkey's recruitment and transfer of Islamist terrorists to participate in the 2020 Artsakh war on behalf of Azerbaijan.

3) Did not criticize the incursion of Azeri troops into Armenia's territory since May 12, 2021.

4) Failed to take action regarding the massive human rights violations by Azerbaijan and Turkey, while President Biden hypocritically talks about human rights being a core tenet of US foreign policy.

Instead, we hear repeated US calls in support of "Armenia-Turkey reconciliation" and "peace agreement with Azerbaijan," which are contrary to Armenia's national interests.

Amazingly, the Biden administration just informed Congress that it supports the sale to Turkey of missiles, radar, and electronics for its existing fleet of F-16 fighter jets. In addition, Turkey has asked for the purchase of 40 new F-16 jets.

The Biden administration is wrong that the proposed arms sale to Turkey "serves NATO's interests." In fact, this sale faces an uphill battle in Congress as 60 Members of Congress have expressed their vehement opposition.

Contrary to the Biden administration's assertion, the proposed arms sale to Turkey will undermine US and NATO interests for the following reasons:

1) The F-16 jets will be used by Turkey in Syria and Iraq to bomb Kurdish fighters who are US allies in the fight against ISIS terrorists, whom Turkey supports.

2) Turkey will use the F-16's to continue its illegal intrusions into the territorial waters of Greece, a NATO member.

3) Turkey will use the F-16 jets to threaten the territorial integrity of Armenia.

4) Turkey continues to occupy Northern Cyprus ever since 1974 and refuses to leave despite scores of U.N. Security Council resolutions.

5) The United States sanctioned Turkey and blocked the sale of F-35 US advanced fighter jets for purchasing S-400 Russian missiles, contrary to NATO's interests.

Finally, at a time when NATO countries, including the United States, are confronting Russia in Ukraine, the governments of Finland and Sweden have asked to join NATO. Except for Turkey, all other NATO members are in favor of the expedited memberships of Finland and Sweden. President Erdogan announced that his country will veto the membership applications of these two countries, using the ridiculous argument that Finland and Sweden are "home to many terrorist organizations," meaning Kurdish refugees. This is highly ironic coming from a country like Turkey which for years supported ISIS terrorists in Syria and Iraq.

By opposing Finland's and Sweden's NATO memberships, Turkey hopes to achieve the following aims:

1) To cater to Russia with which it has important military and commercial ties. Turkey is the only NATO member that has refused to sanction Russia and close its airspace to Russian planes. Turkey is Russia's mole inside NATO.

2) To extract concessions from the United States to purchase arms and gain political support in return for allowing the applications of Finland and Sweden to join NATO.

It is clear that Turkey, Russia's ally, does not belong in NATO. Before President Biden decides to sell F-16 jets to Turkey, I suggest that he read The Washington Post editorial published on April 29, 2022, titled: "Turkey reaches a new low of despotism."

Peter Balakian Delivers Remarks at Washington Genocide Commemoration

By Peter Balakian

Peter Balakian delivered the main address at the Armenian Genocide commemoration on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC on April 27. The following are excerpts from his speech:

We remember April 24 because it marks the night in 1915 when the Ottoman Turkish government arrested more than 250 Armenian cultural and intellectual leaders at the start of a plan of genocide that would take the lives of 1.5 million Armenians with the brutal deportation of another million. Behind the screen of the chaos of WWI, the Armenians were butchered, their property was confiscated, women and children abducted and raped, and many were forced to convert to Islam. Armenian cultural institutions — more than two thousand architecturally unique churches were destroyed. In the end, an ancient, 2,500 year old civilization and its people were eradicated on their own homeland.

What lessons can we take away from the Armenian Genocide today? Why does it matter?

The case of the Armenian Genocide remains a landmark event in modern history and helps us understand our contemporary world because it was the first genocide carried out in a modern modality. The Turkish extermination of the Armenians in 1915 marks the first time a modern government used its bureaucracy, parliament, advanced technology and communications, organized killing squads, an extreme nativist ideology called Pan Turkism to target and destroy an ethnic group in a concentrated pe-

riod of time. We can learn from the Armenian Genocide a good deal about what the Nazi regime did to the Jews and Roma of Europe, what Pol Pot did in Cambodia in 1975, the Hutu to the Tutsis in Rwanda in 1994 and the fates of Bosnian Muslims, Rohingya, and Uighur and other ethnic groups in our time.

For Over 100 years, successive Turkish governments have denied the facts and history of the Armenian Genocide by lying to its own people with state propaganda, and pressuring nations around the world to censor representation of this historical event. Ankara has succeeded in stopping movies in Hollywood, about the Armenian Genocide; has tried to censor the words "Armenian Genocide" in museum exhibits.

Why is denial so corrosive and corrupt? Psychiatrist Robert Jay Lifton notes that in denying genocide perpetrators seek to create a counterfeit universe for the survivors and their legacy, to rob them of their dignity and prevent them from restoring moral order. Elie Wiesel called denial a "double killing" as it kills the victims a second time in attempting to kill the memory of the event. Scholars have noted: Denial is the final stage of genocide because perpetrators quickly manufacture narratives to falsify their human crimes, defend their actions and blame the victims.

And for this reason more than 30 nations have passed Armenian Genocide resolutions (in Europe, the Middle East, South America and North America) as statements of moral redress to Turkey for its failure to face its genocidal crime. Think of Germany's restitutions and reparations for Israel and the Jewish people as the high moral ground.

Armenians world-wide are grateful that in the Fall of 2019 the House and the Senate passed Armenian Genocide Resolution for the same purpose of redressing Turkey's denial. And, in his landmark statement of April 24, 2021, President Biden became the first US President to affirm the facts of the Armenian Genocide and put an end to

Turkey's bullying and coercion. President Biden's words acknowledge that not only is genocide a scourge, but that any failure to reckon with past wrongs is intolerable. His moral leadership means a great deal on all fronts.

We can see what Putin is doing to Ukraine is fueled by a similar kind of denialist campaign. An authoritarian government's ability to carry out human rights crimes is inseparable from that government's disinformation campaign. Putin aggressively denies Ukraine's sovereignty, Ukraine's national history, Ukrainian identity; he lies daily to his citizens about his illegal war; imprisons citizens who dissent. What Putin is doing now bears resemblance to Turkey's denialism.

Armenia's Opposition is Running Out of Steam

OPPOSITION, from page 17

have high standing among the public. That is why Tatoyan is being harassed and Chalabyan is currently under arrest on trumped-up charges.

Chalabyan is the head of a small political party. He is also the co-founder of a private charity helping Armenian soldiers and residents of border villages in Armenia and Karabakh. He is very articulate and knowledgeable on political and military matters. He has supported the opposition, but his name has not been tarnished in any corruption schemes. This is the type of person who scares the government and provides an alternative to Pashinyan's inept group whose merits and education were gained in Pashinyan's long march from Gyumri to Yerevan.

Pashinyan has to watch the rise of people like Chalabyan with dread while the population hopes for the emergence of a third force.



107th Armenian Genocide Commemoration – ADLP – Times Square Speech – April 24, 2022



The following speech was delivered during the Times Square commemoration of the Armenian Genocide on April 24, 2022, by Dr. Shahé Navasart Sanentz, who represented the Armenian Democratic Liberal Party:

and we will always be ready when they do. They shifted in the 1980s and with Armenian will and blood, we saw to it that both Armenia and Artsakh won independence in 1991. They shifted again here, recently, and leveraging our decades-long political activism, we saw to it that both houses of Congress and then President Biden himself recognized the Armenian Genocide. In 2020, we suffered a major setback in Artsakh. But we shall overcome. We are Avarayr. We are Sardarabad. Our roots in the Armenian Highlands are five-millennia-deep. We concede nothing and we will win.

Today, to our Turkish sisters and brothers we say: We do remember how over 100,000 of you marched in the streets

of Istanbul chanting, “We are all Hrant Dink; we are all Armenian.” Therefore, we believe that just as many of your grandparents saved their Armenian neighbors’ lives during the Armenian Genocide, today, too, many of you are with us. For that, we salute you and we thank you. But brothers and sisters: When you acquire a house, you may not have built that house, but it is now your house and your responsibility. It is you who must fix anything that is wrong with it. And so, we say unto you: The Armenian Genocide is what is wrong with your house. Make it right and let the healing power of restorative justice carry us all to the day when we may live together as good neighbors in peace, once again.

We believe in the indispensability of justice. And, therefore, we know that our day must come. We pledge to our one-and-a-half million sainted martyrs, that we will see to it that it comes.

It is only a matter of time before the political winds shift

Since its founding one century and one year ago, the Rangavar Party has been in the vanguard of Armenian political life. We can taste the sweet, sunny day, when we will drink the *garmir kini*, eat the *harissa*, and dance the *kochari*, in Van! And the Armenian tricolor will wave on Mount Ararat. And we know that with our united, concerted, and unrelenting efforts, we will make our dream — our *Medz Yeraz* — come true.

And this dream transcends the Armenian Nation. History has enshrined a responsibility upon the Armenians, to lead humanity away from genocides. Armenia’s moral leadership is to become one of Armenia’s contributions to civilization. Humanity must collectively insist, as Martin Luther King did, that “Justice is indivisible. Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.”

And justice is not only indivisible, it is indispensable. The triumph of justice is prerequisite to the survival of the human race. Mighty technologies must impel mightier morals, lest the former’s pikes impale us all. Right must prevail over might.

Therefore, we of the land of the free and the home of the brave raise our proud voices and resolutely proclaim here today: Not if, but when the veracity of the Armenian Genocide is universally established; not if but when commensurate reparations are duly paid; not if but when our territorial rights are fully restored; when that glorious day dawns, we will invite all believers in justice to come and celebrate with us in the Valley of Ararat. We expect a very big crowd and a very big feast.

Getsé Hayasdan; getsé Hayasdan!
And I will see you there.

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