

Armenagan-ADL Party Reconstituted in Armenia

By Hasmik Harutunyan

YEREVAN – The Armenian Democratic Liberal Party (Ramgavar) has undergone several phases in its history, beginning with the Armenagan Party, which was founded in Van in 1885, as the first Armenian political party. It later became the main tributary with which several existing parties merged in 1921 in Istanbul to give birth to the Armenian Democratic Liberal (ADL) party.

The last decade was becoming a trying period for the party in splintering it into several factions.

The original idea of creating an Armenia-based party was realized when the Armenagan ADL Party held its founding assembly in Yerevan on June 19. The reconstituted party will become a focal point to attract worldwide chapters, under a new constitution embodying its traditional political credo of democracy and liberalism.

Chairman Armen Manvelian, opening the convention, said: “The Armenian Democratic Liberal Party (Ramgavar) went through several stages in its development. But recent years proved to be the most turbulent era, because the party was split not only into two factions, but almost into eight factions. This convention has one specific goal: to create an Armenia-based center to attract all the factions, which adhere to the same political philosophy and which operate in the different diaspora countries.”

Next, Manouk Topouzyan, President Serge Sargisian's advisor, read his message, which said in part, “All endeavors for national resurgence and generating goodwill have always been valued in our country. You will be assuming an awesome responsibility by naming the party Armenagan. In fact, you will be assuming the values and the philosophy of the first political party by naming the new party Armenagan. You will be adopting the political credo of the first tra-

President Serge Sargisian Congratulates Armenagan ADL Party on its Founding

The following message from President Serge Sargisian was read by his advisor, Manouk Topouzyan, on June 19, at the founding convention of the Armenagan-ADL party in Yerevan:



I hereby extend my greetings to all the participants of the Armenagan-ADL (Ramgavar) party.

Endeavors to elevate our nation and to contribute to the general good have always met in our country with appreciation and commendation. The political forces upholding those values have been successful in adding new color to the political spectrum.

Today, you assume an awesome responsibility. By adopting the “Armenagan” name, the newly-formed party has chosen to take up the values and national goals of the first political party in Armenian life. I am hopeful that you will be able to prove your commitments with concrete actions and you will be supporting the ideals of national unity, our values and our statehood.

Most often we face discord in the political arena, when people of the same principles fail to communicate and enter into a productive dialogue. I am hopeful that you will be guided by the principles of unity and will be able to mobilize your forces to become a political force composed of like-minded people.

We, together, face a daunting task to benefit our homeland and our people in a spirit of unity.

I wish productive results to the convention program and I wish the best to its participants.

Serge Sargisian
President

Yerevan, May 18, 2009

ditional party in Armenian history. I do hope that you will be practicing those values in life, always upholding the spirit of unity very high.”

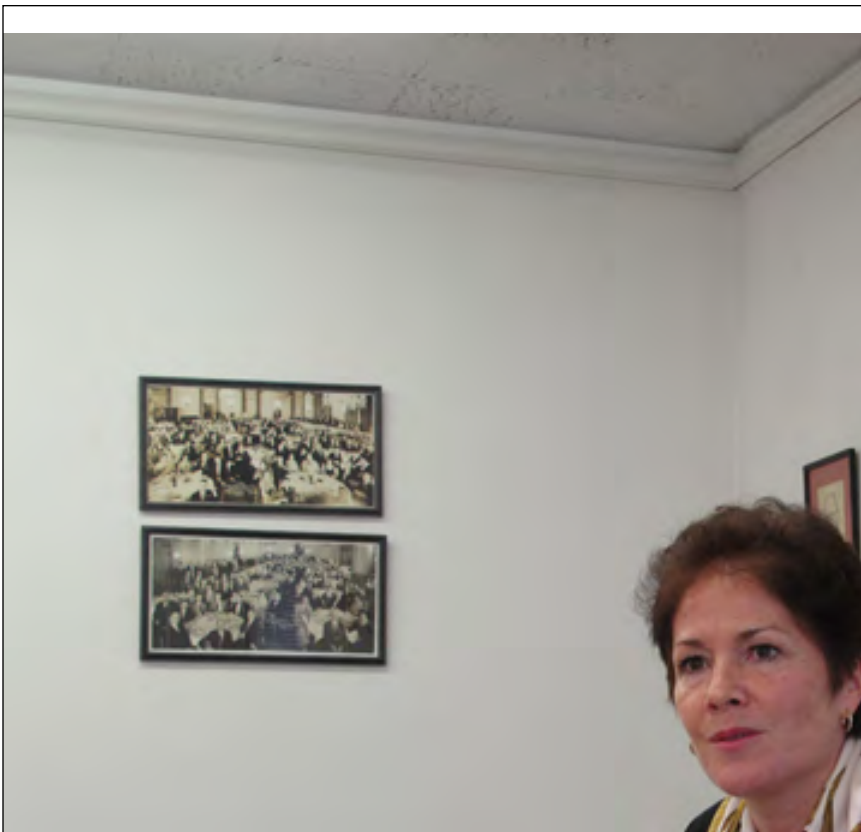
Taking the podium, the editor of Azg daily Hagop Avedikian characterized the group gathered in the hall as the “old contingent” see ARMENAGAN, page 2

Ambassador To Armenia Defends US Policies

By Thomas C. Nash
Mirror-Spectator Staff

BOSTON – US Ambassador to Armenia Marie Yovanovitch made several appearances in the Boston area last week, answering pointed questions from journalists and the community on Armenian Genocide recognition and aid reduction to Armenia.

Yovanovitch's appearances, her first in the Boston area since being named ambassador, included a breakfast with the Armenian International Women's Association (AIWA) at the Armenian Library and Museum of America (ALMA) as well as a speech at the Armenian Cultural Foundation see AMBASSADOR, page 12



US Ambassador to Armenia Marie Yovanovitch at a press conference at the Baikar headquarters during her visit to Boston on June 19.



NEWS IN BRIEF

Mirror-Spectator to Close For Annual Vacation

WATERTOWN – The offices of the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* will be closed for two weeks, Monday, June 29 through Friday, July 10.

The current issue of the *Mirror-Spectator* is the last one before the annual two-week summer holiday. As a result, no newspapers will be published on July 4 or July 11.

The next issue of the *Mirror-Spectator* will be dated July 18.

Turkish Ambassador: No Changes in Turkish-Armenian Relations

BAKU (RFE/RL) – The Turkish ambassador in Azerbaijan says “there is no progress in the implementation of the road map signed between Turkey and Armenia.”

Hulusi Kilic said on June 16 that “Nothing is being done, nothing has changed.”

Last month Kilic said that Turkey will not reopen its border with Armenia until the Nagorno-Karabagh conflict is resolved, echoing repeated statements by Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, even after the Armenian and Turkish Foreign Ministries jointly announced the “road map” agreement in April.

Meanwhile, US Assistant Secretary of State for Europe and Eurasian Affairs Philip Gordon confirmed on June 16 before a US congressional subcommittee that the Turkish-Armenian road map envisages the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries and the reopening of their border.

Argentine Embassy to Open in Armenia

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Armenian Foreign Minister Eduard Nalbandian this week received the charge d'affaires of Argentina in Armenia, Marcello Sebastie, who is in Armenia on the occasion of the opening ceremony of the Argentinean Embassy.

The Foreign Ministry said Nalbandian had said Armenia's Foreign Ministry would provide support during the implementation of its mission both in the establishment of the embassy and its opening.

Sebastie brought a message from the Argentine Foreign Minister Jorge Tayana that his country sought to further expand relations with nations of the South Caucasus.

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ARMENIA

News From Armenia

Armenia Frees Opposition Officials Under Amnesty

YEREVAN (Reuters) — A former Armenian foreign minister and three other senior opposition figures were freed on Monday under an amnesty for those charged over deadly clashes in March 2008 after a disputed election.

Armenia passed an amnesty bill on Friday, after accusations by European rights bodies of politically motivated arrests. Eight opposition protesters and two police officers died in the clashes.

In separate trials, former foreign minister Alexander Arzumanyan and three others were found guilty on Friday of organizing mass disorder, arson and pogroms, and sentenced to five years in jail.

But they walked free under the terms of the amnesty. A fifth man did not qualify for the amnesty and was sentenced to eight years in jail.

Arzumanyan was campaign chief for opposition presidential challenger Levon Ter-Petrosian, whose supporters took to the streets in March last year to dispute the results of a presidential election won by current head of state Serge Sargsian.

"From tomorrow I renew my fight," said one of the freed men, Suren Sirunyan. "We are against the amnesty, in so much as we did not commit any crime for which they have forgiven us," local media quoted him as saying.

Some 100 people were arrested during a state of emergency after the violence, and more than 50 received jail terms.

Armenian President Visits UK Embassy

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — Armenian President Serge Sargsian this past week visited the UK Embassy on Queen Elizabeth's birthday.

The Presidential Press Office said on his visit Sargsian and the UK officials discussed the prospects of development of Armenia-UK relations.

Pan-Armenian Forum of Armenian Lawyers to Be Held in Yerevan

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — In collaboration with the Armenian Constitutional Court, the Diaspora Ministry will host a Pan-Armenian forum of Armenian lawyers September 19-20.

The draft agenda of the forum includes issues of education and training of legal personnel, ethnic minorities, the issue of international recognition of the Armenian Genocide and lobbying.

A pan-Armenian association of Armenian lawyers is expected to be established during the forum.

NKR President Encourages Economic Growth

STEPANAKERT (ARKA) — Karabagh President Bako Sahakyan, speaking at the "Bridge Karabagh" economic forum launched Saturday, said the country is working to create a favorable business and investment environment.

Sahakyan stressed the country's natural resources and singled out agriculture, the mining industry, energy and tourism as its most promising areas.

"But our country's greatest treasure is human resources — intellectual capacity, people's working ability, respect for the law and self-improvement efforts," he said.

Sahakyan said the economic forum gives an opportunity for comprehensive discussion of a wide range of issues, expressing hope that new ideas and proposals would be voiced.

Supply of Russian Gas to Armenia Via Georgia Resumes

YEREVAN (ArmInfo) — A Georgian supply line of Russian gas to Armenia was resumed this week following a week of suspended service.

During the suspension, a new 3.6 kilometer section was installed between Gazakh and Saguramo.

Armenagan-ADL Party Reconstituted in Armenia

ARMENAGAN, from page 1 of the Ramgavar Party, which had introduced the principles of democracy and the rule of law in Armenia some 20 years ago as it was being done today by reviving those principles. "That was the dream and the goal of our founding fathers," he said. He also mentioned that as a diasporan member of the ADL, he had personally felt the bitter results of the internal divisions plaguing the party for the last six years.

Avedikian and Armenia's Tekeyan Cultural Association Chairman Roupen Mirzakhanian recently visited different countries to feel the pulse of party members. They returned to Armenia convinced that the majority of the traditional membership believes that the party's revival can be achieved only when the headquarters is based in the homeland.

Avedikian also stated that most of the controversies are based on personal conflicts.



Hagop Avedikian addressing the convention



Chairman Armen Manvelian opening the convention

He added, "It has been our belief that all the objectives of the party can be met by united action. We had long negotiations with Mike Kharabian, who failed to understand the potentials of the party even in its sorry state of division. Only on the US East Coast the party has nine active chapters, conducting fundraising drives, lobbying programs and sponsoring publications. The same applies to the structure in Lebanon, where last week two of the candidates, supported by the ADL, won their parliamentary seats. Unfortunately, all the conciliatory initia-

tives were met with stubborn resistance by the Kharabian faction of the party."

Avedikian said that he is convinced support will be forthcoming from Lebanon, Egypt, England and many traditional groups in the US.

Many of the delegates who took the podium endorsed the chairmanship of Armen Manvelian, who they said is a multi-talented leader. He is endowed with an analytical mind and can guide the party with confidence in complex situations. He is courteous and respectful with members and has rightfully earned the confidence of rank and file.

It was Manvelian's turn to submit the slate of candidates for the Central Committee. The slate contained eight members who were voted in unanimously. New members will join the Central Committee during the next General Assembly.

The Armenagan-ADL party plans to launch a broad political platform in Armenia and will extend cooperation with local as well as diasporan members of the ADL.

Plans are underway to hold a united assembly next fall, which will be attended by delegates from Armenia and the diaspora.



A partial view of the convention delegates

Ministers of Economy and Agriculture and Governor Of Armavir Marz Visit ATG Operations

YEREVAN — The Armenian Minister of Economy, Nerces Yeritzyan, joined by the newly-appointed Minister of Agriculture, Gerasim Alaverdyan, made a special working visit to the Armenian Technology Group Foundation (ATG) headquarters in the Armavir Region.

Governor of Armavir Marz, Ashot Ghahramanyan, and Ishkhan Karapetyan, executive director for the Small and Medium Entrepreneurship Development National Center (SME-DNC) of Armenia, also participated in the field trip.

The purpose of their visit was to observe and familiarize themselves with ATG's latest development project — conservation agriculture — and its long-term benefits for the country.

The ministers, accompanied by their senior staff members, visited the ATG warehouses to learn about the new no-till farming equipment and methodology that ATG has introduced to Armenian farmers. The no-till system is widely used in countries around the world at the forefront of agriculture, including the US, Canada, Argentina and Brazil, where more than 95 million hectares of land are being cultivated annually with this conservation technology.

Conservation farming technology provides two major sustainable benefits to the country: it allows farmers to save money and resources; and, it enhances the quality of the farmland and increases its productivity.

Agriculture is a challenging and difficult occupation, especially in Armenia, where farmers use outdated farm equipment that is both inefficient and expensive to operate.

Based on 20 years of working experience in the agricultural sector of Armenia along with its vast network of farmer-coop-

eratives, ATG's focus for the immediate future is to transfer knowledge and technology to farmers by conducting educational seminars and field demonstrations, thus encouraging them to adopt conservation-farming technology and helping them lower their operating costs.

Gagik Mkrtchyan, ATGF country director in Armenia, guided the visit. He emphasized that the no-till system can reduce farm-operating costs between 30-50,000 drams per hectare. This becomes more significant when taking into account the dry land and semi-mountainous areas that abound in Armenia, where profitable farming operation requires much more effort and focus. No-till farming technology should reduce fuel consumption by 37 percent, and farm labor and farm equipment operating costs by 50 percent.

After studying the new equipment that ATG had introduced, the minister of economy stated, "Farm equipment technologies have not been developed in Armenia. This new no-till planter could provide a wonderful opportunity to start cooperation between the government/public sector and private sector. It is necessary to encourage farmers to adapt the use of this system. We must persuade the private sector to be engaged in small business development." Yeritzyan further stated that we should appreciate the possibilities and opportunities that this new system can provide to the republic, adding that Armenia's grain production is not enough to satisfy its consumption.

The current economic situation in Armenia has created a very difficult situation in the country: many farmers are no longer able to afford cultivating their land. The inefficiency of the farm equip-

ment available to them, plus rising fuel and irrigation water costs, makes it almost impossible for the small farmer to break even. As a result, thousands of hectares of land have been left idle and are not being cultivated. In the long term, this will have a devastating and negative impact on local food supplies.

"In these challenging economic times, we believe it is essential to assist the food producers in Armenia to reduce their operating cost as much as possible," said Varoujan Der Simonian, executive director of ATG. "It is not an accident that the *Scientific American Magazine* has devoted one of its cover stories to no-till farming practices, which it calls a 'Quiet Revolution.' We are pleased by the positive evaluation of the Ministries of Economy and Agriculture, and will join forces with them to find a solution in helping farmers reduce their operating costs and increase their profit margins."

The ministers also observed the immediate impact that the new system will have on the environment. It minimizes mechanical soil disturbance, which will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, soil compaction and the potential for soil erosion, and the disruption of soil biological cycles. The system will also maintain moisture in the soil, reducing the amount of irrigation needed and thus allowing Armenia to conserve its scarce water resources.

ATG was established in 1989 in Fresno, Calif. as a 501(c)3 non-profit public benefit corporation. For the past 20 years, ATG has been focused on providing technical assistance to rural Armenia in establishing long-term, sustainable economic development projects in Armenia and Artsakh.



ARMENIA

Event in Yerevan Supports FAR's Homeless Children's Center

YEREVAN — Victory Park on June 2 was packed with business people, activists, politicians and big name celebrities, volunteers and hundreds of others all gathered in support of one common cause — child protection.

The event, called The Best for Our Children, which was held in honor of International Children's Day, raised proceeds to support the Fund for Armenian Relief's Homeless Children's Center (HCC).

It was only the second year, but participation skyrocketed. More than 15,000 people attended. The event was organized by a group of volunteers, led by First Lady Rita Sargsian and former First Lady Bella Kocharian, who is also the head of the HCC's Friends Advocacy Council.

Philanthropy is a relatively novel concept in Armenia, and to strengthen its significance organizers coordinated meetings between celebrities, businesses and artists for their support. By doing this HCC Director Dr. Mira Antonyan noted that the center has also helped to establish and unify a broad charity culture in Armenia.

"Almost all stakeholders in Armenia — public celebrities, businessmen, art and show business representatives and specialists working with the children in difficult and risky conditions — gathered in one crossroad to promote child rights protection. I hope our benefactors from the diaspora are going to be encouraged to see that their peers in Armenia are stepping up too, and will continue to support us — Armenia's children are in dire need," she said.

The day was indeed a testimony to the Armenian community's commitment to help its children. It was not only a rare event when a nation united in a grassroots effort, it was also a day when class boundaries were set aside. All Armenians — rich, poor and middle class — were united and engaged in a single vision of hope to



The crowd gathered for the event.

improve the protection and education of their children.

Representatives from some of Armenia's largest companies, including Coca Cola, Grand Candy, Tamara and Noyan Juice, sold their products at the event, raising more than 1.3 million drams (\$4,000) for the center's programs. Just five companies donated their time and products in 2008. This year 11 took a stand to better the lives of their nation's children.

For some, like dairy producer Ashtarak-Kat, which has traditionally supported needy children in its own way, this was the first time the company had collaborated with others for this cause. This newfound partnership will make

their impact even stronger.

Nearly 70 art and culture representatives, celebrities and government leaders also attended. So did national assembly members and representatives from Yerevan government. Specialists who work with at-risk children were also in attendance and media companies like Shoghakat TV, Ardzagank Radio and Radio Van helped to sponsor the event.

Celebrities, including singers Arsen Grigoryan, Alla Levonyan and Gayane Hovhannisyan participated, as did comedian Ashot Ghazaryan and actress Nazeni Hovhannisyan.

Through the HCC, FAR's work on child wel-

fare and protection has been extensive, and groundbreaking, and all made possible through its supporters. The center has provided homeless and abused children a safe haven since it opened in 2000. Initially started as a temporary shelter that offered crisis intervention and rehabilitation, the center is now a full-service facility where abused and abandoned children can access shelter, counseling, outreach services, healthcare and legal assistance 24 hours a day. Since 2000, FAR has opened more branches of the center to serve even more of Armenia's families. More than 4,500 have been helped through its services and the number of beneficiaries increases each year. In 2008, the center served 924 children, the highest number ever.

While FAR's work has expanded in the last few years, the need is still great and it has been compounded by the global economic crisis.

Thousands of Armenian children still fall prey to abuse, neglect and abandonment every year. With more households stretched thin, more parents are leaving their children in the care of grossly under-resourced state institutions. There, opportunity to better one's life is slim. The number of institutionalized children in Armenia reached 12,000 in 2008 — a dramatic increase from roughly 15 years before when there were none. When they are forced to leave these orphanages, children are often left with no other option than to live on the streets surrounded by drugs, begging and prostitution.

For more information on FAR or to send donations, contact us at 630 Second Ave., New York, NY 10016.

Ex-Foreign Minister Expresses Doubt in Armenian Government, 'Road Map'

By Thomas C. Nash
Mirror-Spectator Staff

WALTHAM, Mass. — At a talk given at Bentley University last week, former Armenian Foreign Minister Vartan Oskanian offered a candid assessment of the political situation in Armenia and its attempt at rapprochement with Turkey.

Oskanian appeared at Bentley on June 17 to promote a book of speeches given during his time as Armenia's foreign minister, published in North America by the National Association of Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR).

Oskanian served in the Foreign Ministry since 1992, serving as the head negotiator for Armenia in the Nagorno Karabagh peace talks from 1993 until his departure from government service in 2008 after the election of President Serge Sargsian. He served as foreign minister from 1998 until June of last year.

"These were truly a very interesting and challenging 10 years for me," Oskanian said of his decision to publish the collection. "I was always concerned that we were living history. This book is a small way of paying back."

Since leaving his position as foreign minister, Oskanian started a think tank, the Civiltas Foundation, to work toward strengthening the government's commitment to democracy. The foundation published Oskanian's book of speeches, titled *Speaking to Be Heard*, earlier this year.

Addressing an audience of around 200, Oskanian focused on the lessons learned during his time as foreign minister — and how the current administration would do well to heed them. Among his strongest criticisms was the lack of perceived legitimacy in the Armenian government and how that has hampered negotiations with Turkey, calling the efforts "extremely disappointing."

A major issue during his tenure as foreign minister, Oskanian said, was the ministry's efforts at complementarity when dealing the US and Russia. He said the progress made is becoming overshadowed by the current admin-



Vartan Oskanian speaking at Bentley University

istration's policies.

"We had to be very clear that Armenia will not choose one over the other," Oskanian said of his tenure. "[By] simply being attentive to the interests of major players, we managed to reconcile their competing interests in Armenia."

"The current administration doesn't seem to be staying that course," he added. "Complementarity today is more important than ever, and the administration needs to consider its position on the issue."

Oskanian also stressed that the lack of democracy in Armenia continues to stunt the country's growth, primarily because the government has yet to establish legitimacy with the public.

"Every time we go to elections, unfortunately we get reminded that despite the fact that in these past 17 years Armenia has come a long way and achieved a lot in democracy and freedoms, still we have a long way to go," he said. "We haven't yet made deep and broad progress in the democratic process."

"Sometimes we pretend that we are a democratic country, but actually we are not," he added. "With no natural resources, the only path we can take to prosperity is democracy. But we need to be frank with this; we cannot just pretend."

He cautioned, however, that the movement led by former President Levon Ter-Petrosian was "petulant" in its displays of public protest.

"It's not power that can bring change, but legitimacy," Oskanian said, later adding, "We cannot bring change through the streets. We have to bring change from within."

Tying in his views on Armenia's domestic situation and its international standing, Oskanian said domestic troubles have weakened the country's negotiating position.

"I've felt over the past 10 years, that whenever we had problems domestically, my effectiveness outside was limited. ... The international community looks to our domestic situation to

gauge the legitimacy of our demands."

Oskanian also lamented that the negotiation process initiated by Turkish President Abdullah Gul's visit to Armenia last September has weakened Armenia's position in the talks. He said negotiations had carried on in secret for years prior to the most recent attempts in an effort to win concessions without allowing Turkey to reap rewards from the US for going through the motions.

"We always had the suspicion that Turkey was more interested in process than the outcome," he said. "The Turks wanted that process made public, so that the Genocide recognition process would get stopped."

He added that the recently-announced "road map" between Turkey and Armenia represented a defeat for the country's interests, saying, "Armenia got taken for a ride."

Oskanian's promotional tour continued with a speech at Fordham University the next day.



Vartan Oskanian (center) with friends from his time spent in Boston prior to becoming Armenian foreign minister. (from left) Daniel Varujan Hejirian, Sarkis Antreasian, Vartan Oskanian, George Maserejian, Azniv Maserejian and Mihran Minassian



INTERNATIONAL

International News

Montreal Mayor Reaffirms Relations with Yerevan Following Elections

MONTREAL — Mayor Gerald Tremblay recently sent a congratulatory letter to recently-elected Yerevan Mayor Gagik Beglaryan.

Tremblay stressed that Montreal aims to offer aid to “improve participative democracy and good governance, with regard to management and improvement of services rendered to the local population.”

The cities of Montreal and Yerevan signed a sister cities agreement in July 2001.

Armenian Peacekeepers Leave for Kosovo

YEREVAN (Mediamax) — A send-off ceremony for the 11th shift of Armenian peacekeepers to Kosovo took place in Yerevan earlier this week.

Speaking at the ceremony, Chief of General Staff of Armenian Armed Forces Yuri Khachaturov noted the peacekeepers are fulfilling a useful mission, providing the security of the civilian population and rendering it humanitarian aid.

April-May Issue of India-CIS Trade and Economic Chamber Is Released

DELHI, India (Noyan Tapan) — The April-May periodical of India-CIS Trade and Economic Chamber has been released. Its main focus is Armenia.

The factor of economic stability conducive to doing business in Armenia and the availability of a skilled workforce and a scientific and technical field in the country are underlined in the introductory article of Chairman of the Chamber Rajan Madhu. In his address the Armenian Ambassador to India Ashot Kocharian touches upon the bilateral Armenian-Indian relations and potential for their further development.

The issue of the magazine contains materials (provided by the Armenian Embassy) on investment policy in Armenia and its business opportunities, information technologies, agriculture, chemical industry, diamond cutting and jewelry sector, pharmaceutical industry, food processing sector, as well as articles on Armenian-Indian trade and economic relations.

According to a press release of the Armenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Press and Information Department, the magazine of India-CIS Trade and Economic Chamber has many readers in India's business and political circles.

Armenia Participates in Eastern European Culture Festival

TILBURG, Netherlands (PanArmenian.Net) — Armenia participated in the Eastern European Culture Festival held here on June 14.

The Armenian pavilion was organized by representatives of the Armenian Consulate in the Hague and the Alfa-Yerevan Armenian community of Eindhoven. A concert of Armenian songs and dances also took place.

The event aimed to promote the development of intercultural dialogue.

Montreal TCA Armenagan Youth Section Opens

MONTREAL — The new Armenagan youth section of the Montreal Tekeyan Cultural Association was inaugurated earlier this month with a reception.

The former TV studio on the second floor of the Tekeyan Center was totally renovated and decorated by the youth, comprising of an office and a multipurpose hall.

TCA Executive Committee member Florida Yessayan-Balian thanked the TCA for allocating the old TV studio to the Armenagan Youth and commended its members for their help with the project.

Matthew Bryza Reportedly to Be Named Ambassador to Baku

By Ken Silverstein

NEW YORK (*Harper's Magazine*) — The indispensable Laura Rozen reported that Matthew Bryza, the deputy assistant secretary of state for Europe and Eurasian affairs and the US chair for the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group, “is being recommended by supporters as US ambassador to Azerbaijan.”

The Minsk Group is tasked with resolving the Nagorno Karabagh conflict.

Rozen describes Bryza as having “liaised intensively with the Georgian leadership, including during the Russian-Georgian conflict last summer, and says that some are concerned that his “appointment as Washington’s man in Baku [the Azeri capital] might potentially put a wrinkle in Obama’s efforts to ‘reset’ relations with Russia and send mixed signals about the kind of relationship he is trying to build.”

But an associate close to Bryza says it is inaccurate that Moscow would perceive him as hostile or too close to Tbilisi, and noted that Bryza has strong and positive relationships with Russian officials.

Bryza was seen as having gone “beyond what someone in his position would usually do” in showing support

for Mikhail Saakashvili in the run-up and during the Georgian-Russian conflict last summer, a former senior Clinton administration official said. “Not so much by what he said,” but with “frequent public demonstrations that he was” close to the Georgian president.

But Bryza was also representing the preferences of the administration he then served, the former official acknowledged. “A lot of people in the US government have responsibility for the aggressiveness of Georgia last summer and the mistaken belief there that the US was going to come to their support” more than it did, the former official said.

Russia most definitely does have a negative view of Bryza, but there’s a far more direct reason for concern about his potential nomination: Bryza, and his wife Zeyno Baran are totally in the tank for the Azeri dictatorship and his appointment would be demoralizing for democrats (such as they are) in Azerbaijan. In 2007, the Azeri foreign minister reportedly attended the Brzya-Baran nuptials in Istanbul.

Just as Bryza was the point person for the relationship with Saakashvili leading up to the war, he had the same role vis-à-vis the stolen parliamentary elections of 2005 in Azerbaijan. President Ilham Aliyev (who inherited power from his KGB dad) promised the

US government (through Bryza) that he was going to have free and fair elections; the elections were a sham; and there was no negative reaction from the US government.

Meanwhile, Baran periodically says Azerbaijan should take steps towards democracy but is effectively a mouthpiece for the regime. See, for example, this regime-friendly panel she moderated at the Nixon Center.

In her introductory remarks, Baran observed that the elections represented a step forward, citing President Ilham Aliyev’s decision to fire three regional governors involved in election fraud as an unprecedented move. She cautioned that there were equally significant problems that remain to be addressed, and noted that “more needs to be done” before Aliyev can establish his legitimacy and prove to the West and to his own people that he is committed to the democratic process.

Her remarks about Aliyev firing three governors as a positive sign are ridiculous. Aliyev wanted to look like he was trying to do something, and was, I’ve been told by a very well-placed source, going to fire these guys anyway. According to my source, fraud was no different in those regions than in other places, and in fact it was almost certainly less fraudulent than in Baku, where the results were falsified in nearly every district.

Armenia-Iran Visit Cancelled as Violence Continues in Tehran

TEHRAN (ArmeniaNow) — An official visit by an Armenian delegation to Iran was cancelled by the host country, as Iran is in post-presidential election turmoil.

The Armenian delegation headed by National Assembly Speaker Hovik Arbrahamyan was to leave for Iran on June 20 on a two-day visit. The delegation included nine high ranking officials from the Assembly and the Government of Armenia, as well as other officials. According to the NA press service, the visit was postponed indefinitely.

Nairi Petrosyan, press secretary of the speaker, said it would not be proper to publish the reasons for the visit delay.

But days of deadly rioting has suspended routine life for Armenia’s southern neighbor. At least 19 people have been reported killed as civilians have clashed with law enforcement. Unconfirmed reports put the number of casualties at 150.

In Tehran the Armenian delegation was scheduled to have meetings with the newly-elected President of Iran Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, Speaker of the Iranian Parliament Ali Larigani and Secretary of Iran’s Supreme National Security Council Saeed Jalili.

Richard Giragosian, director of the Yerevan-based Armenian Center for National and International Studies (www.acnis.am), says that the delay of the Armenian delegation’s visit to Iran was appropriate.

“There is high inner anxiety in Iran now. It is necessary to wait until the internal situation is stabilized there. Even the US authorities have not strongly responded to the events in Iran, since it would be seen as an attempt of interference into the domestic issues of Iran,” Giragosian said.

Armenian, Syrian Presidents Pleased with Talks

YEREVAN (Mediamax) — Syria learned about Armenia’s steps to normalize relations with Turkey with pleasure, Syrian President Bashar al-Asad stated this week.

Speaking at a joint news conference with the Armenian president, Bashar al-Asad started Syria’s readiness to assist progress in the process of normalizing Armenian-Turkish relations taking into account the good relations of Damascus with both sides.

Bashar al-Asad stated that he has become acquainted with the opinion of the Armenian president on the Karabagh problem, which is especially important on the eve of his upcoming visit to Azerbaijan. He expressed hope that they will manage to avoid complications in the process of Karabagh conflict settlement.

President Serge Sargsian described as “historic” the official visit of the Syrian president and noted the many centuries’ history of Armenian-Syrian relations. He highlighted the fact that at the beginning of the 20th century, the Syrian people lent a helping hand to many Armenians, who had survived the Armenian Genocide.

“Syria is the second homeland of Armenians,” Sargsian said, recalling the words of the late president of Syria, Hafez al-Asad, who had visited Armenia 30 years ago.

The two presidents held a one-to-one meeting, following which a meeting in an expanded format was held.

A number of agreements were signed between the two countries on cooperation in economic and humanitarian spheres, aimed at expanding and developing relations. The two presidents came to agreement on continuing political discussions between the two countries based on the centuries-long friendship between the Armenian and Syrian peoples.



Syrian President Basahr al-Asad, left, paid a visit to the Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II at Holy Echmiadzin during his visit to Armenia.



NATIONAL NEWS

Eastern Diocese Welcomes Iraqi Ambassador and Primate of Diocese of Armenian Church of Iraq

NEW YORK — On Friday, June 19, Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern), hosted a luncheon in honor of Archbishop Avak Asadourian, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of Iraq.

Guests included Ambassador T. Hamid Al-Bayati, permanent representative of Iraq to the United Nations; Ambassador Armen Martirosian, permanent representative of the Republic of Armenia to the United Nations; the Very Rev. Haigazoun Najarian, Vicar of the Eastern Diocese; and the Very Rev. Vahan Hovhanessian, pastor of Holy Martyrs Armenian Church in Bayside, NY.

Barsamian welcomed Ambassador T. Hamid Al-Bayati and Ambassador Armen Martirosian to the Eastern Diocese. He said it is always a pleasure to see Archbishop Asadourian, a dedicated servant of the Armenian Church who is well-respected in the Armenian community of Iraq and elsewhere.

A cordial conversation was shared by the ambassadors and clergy. Al-Bayati emphasized the important role of the Christian community of



Ambassador T. Hamid Al-Bayati expresses his gratitude to Archbishop Avak Asadourian.

Key House Panel Approves \$48M for Armenia, \$10M For NK

Restores Military Parity, Strengthens Section 907

WASHINGTON — This week, a key House panel approved the Fiscal Year (FY) 2010 State, Foreign Operations Appropriations Bill. Armenia is slated to receive \$48 million, \$3 million in Foreign Military Financing (FMF), and \$450,000 in International Military Education Training (IMET) while Nagorno Karabagh will receive \$10 million. Azerbaijan did not receive the funding increase proposed by the administration.

“The Assembly commends Chairwoman Nita Lowey (D-NY) and members of the Subcommittee for ensuring this positive outcome,” said Armenian Assembly of America Executive Director Bryan Ardouny. “US assistance to Armenia helps to offset the impact of Turkey’s ongoing blockade of Armenia.”

The administration proposed a sharp reduction in funding to Armenia from last year’s level of \$48 million to \$30 million in FY 2010. Additionally, the budget request also increased aid to Azerbaijan and overturned long-standing Congressional policy with respect to military parity between Armenian and Azerbaijan.

“Today’s Subcommittee action sends the right message to the people of Armenia and Nagorno Karabagh, that America will continue to assist our friends in the region,” added Ardouny. “However, the Assembly remain concerned about the overall level of assistance to Armenia, especially the impact of the Millennium Challenge Corporation’s (MCC) recent decision to hold funding on a rural roads project. The Assembly will continue to press for increased assistance to benefit the people of Armenia.”

In March of this year, Board of Trustees Member Van Krikorian testified before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on State Foreign Operations and Related Programs, outlining the Assembly’s priorities and urging no less than: \$70 million for Armenia, \$10 million for Nagorno Karabagh as well as \$4 million in Foreign FMF and \$1 million in IMET for Fiscal Year 2010. Armenian Caucus Co-Chairs Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ) and Mark Kirk (R-IL) also called for the funding levels noted above.

The full Committee is expected to consider the bill next week with a vote in the House of Representatives anticipated before the August Congressional recess. As the Bill moves through the legislative process in the House and Senate, the Assembly will continue its advocacy and outreach efforts.

Iraq, noting its centuries-old presence and many contributions to the country. He said he was himself a graduate of a Christian school in Iraq.

Discussion also focused on the Armenian community of Iraq. Al-Bayati noted the challenges of recent years but said the present situation is improving and added that he was optimistic about the restoration of stability in Iraq.

He thanked Barsamian for the opportunity to meet with Asadourian. Al-Bayati also asked questions about the Armenian-American community, and was particularly interested in learning more about Iraqi-Armenians living in the United States.

The luncheon marked the ambassador’s first visit to the Eastern Diocese. Barsamian offered Al-Bayati a tour of St. Vartan Cathedral and the Diocesan Center. The ambassador expressed his gratitude for the hospitality — a warm welcome, which he said made him feel at home.

Martirosian stressed the importance of such meetings in helping to strengthen ties between Armenia and Iraq.



Archbishop Khajag Barsamian welcomes Ambassador T. Hamid Al-Bayati to the Eastern Diocese. Also pictured are Archbishop Avak Asadourian, Ambassador Armen Martirosian and Very Rev. Vahan Hovhanessian.

Natalie Mosher Announces Campaign for Congress

By Betty Apigian Kessel

CANTON, Mich. — Standing in front of a supportive gathering of 150 Hyes on the Armenian Relief Society Centennial Celebration Cruise on Lake St. Clair, Natalie Mosher’s remarks were brief but garnered a hearty round of applause when she announced if elected as a Democratic US Representative, she would be 100 percent supportive of Armenian issues.

Thus the campaign of Mosher, 65, in the 11th District to defeat Republican incumbent Thaddeus McCotter currently in his fourth term is off and running.

The former public school teacher is the daughter of John and Rose Manoogian, active supporters of the St. Sarkis Armenian Church community of Dearborn. She is the granddaughter of Armenian Genocide survivors from Sivas and Marash, Turkey, proudly saying her family has been in this country 94 years.

The life-long Democrat, although never having held elective office, admits she was inspired by President Barack Obama’s inauguration. She is a graduate of Michigan State University.

She states she will get things done by working with members of all political parties. “I

enter this race to get solutions to the problems of rising health care, job losses, falling home prices and the credit crunch.” Her campaign voice will stress that she believes voters disdain political finger pointing to the solutions urgent to the issues facing our time.

Mosher goes on to say, “I have always been a go-to person whether it was working as a community activist, a teacher, a non-profit development director, or a mother.” She says she is a doer that no job is too big or too small for her to get results. As an active member of the League of Women Voters, Mosher promoted K-12 higher education reform across America. She wants to empower teachers by transforming the No Child Left Behind initiative.

She has worked as the executive director of the American Cancer Society in Ohio and served as Chief Development Officer of the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy to create, establish, operate and maintain a series of parks and green spaces along the Detroit riverfront.

Her family has a long history of connection to the Michigan auto industry and she is running to offer solutions that get Michigan back to the prosperity that was enjoyed in the past.

She supports creating alternative energy production and life science jobs in Michigan. Mosher is a proponent of pension protection, expanding

unemployment benefits and is against free trade deals such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and Central America Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA).

Being of Armenian heritage, Mosher indicates she would make certain that the Armenian-American community has an active and effective advocate working to collaborate with Congress and the Obama administration to properly recognize the Armenian Genocide. She plans on increasing the levels of technical assistance for the Republic of Armenia, to support Nagorno Karabagh’s self-rule and direct relations with the United States and advance US policies that promote open borders and stability in the South Caucasus region.

“Additionally, I plan to partner with the co-chairs of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian issues, Representatives Frank Pallone and Mark Kirk, to normalize relations between Armenia and Turkey.”

Natalie Mosher is a woman of accomplishment with an even greater ambition to put her work ethic and passion for getting results into helping the State of Michigan and this country move forward to better times.

Mosher lives in Canton with her husband, Bob, a retired Ford Motor Company engineer. They have two grown sons.



Community News

Armenia's Fledgling Social Work Program Gets Boost From CHA

By Daphne Abeel

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. — “One of our biggest problems is malnutrition.” This statement, offered by one Armenian social worker, stood in stark contrast to more nuanced problems addressed by the array of psychotherapeutic and counseling services described in an information session, hosted by the Cambridge Health Alliance (CHA) at the Cambridge Hospital, Wednesday, June 17.

The session, part of a two-week visit sponsored by the Cambridge-Yerevan Sister City Association (CYSCA), brought together 10 Armenian social work professionals and staff members of the CHA social work program for an informational exchange.

Judy Howe, director of outpatient psychiatric services for children and moderator of the program, described the scope of the CHA program, which includes three hospitals in Cambridge, Somerville and Everett, neighborhood health clinics in seven cities and three school-based health centers. The CHA enjoys a teaching affiliation with Harvard Medical School, Tufts Medical School, the Harvard School of Dental Medicine and the Harvard School of Public Health. It also sponsors training programs in medicine, psychiatry, social work and psychology.

“Our mission,” said Howe, “is to improve the health of the community. We work with the public health departments in the seven munici-



Artak Khachatryan, head of the Department of Social Work at Yerevan State University, asks a question.

palities we serve...We are a large, sprawling community-based hospital complex.”

CHA professionals and the Armenians were communicating, with the help of Armine Medzorian, translator, across a considerable gap in respect to experience, financial support and professional standards. As Nina Masters, director of social work training at CHA, put it late in the session, “Social work in the United States is a mature profession.” In contrast, the concept of social work in Armenia is fledgling. It has received support and assistance from a program at the University of Connecticut, which sends a social work team to Armenia see SOCIAL WORK, page 7



From left, Angela Hagopian Snow, John Wohl, Maria Filar, Suzanne Hagopian, Edgar Hagopian and Rick Rogers (CCS), in front of the winning rug

Celebrating 20 Years Of Collaboration

Hagopian World of Rugs & the College for Creative Studies 2009 Student Rug Design Competition

DETROIT — At the 2009 College for Creative Studies Student Exhibition, in front of the rug produced from the first-place design, Suzanne Hagopian presented awards to the four talented students who placed in this year's competition. Sponsored by Hagopian World of Rugs and in collaboration with the College for Creative Studies, it was conceived to mentor students in the field of textile design and support the school. Students are given the opportunity to submit designs based on specific criteria and compete for scholarship money. In addition, Hagopian has the first-place design made into a rug and displayed at the annual CCS Student Exhibition.

Also present for the awards were the 2009 judges from the metro Detroit Design Community who graciously volunteer their time and expertise to the project; Stanley Lecznar from The Teich Group, Shirley Maddalena, Maddalena Design and John Wohl, Tom Verwest Interiors.

This year's criteria according to Suzanne Hagopian was to design a rug using “green ideas and methods,” a concept she promotes personally and professionally. The idea was embraced by the students and the results were innovative and spectacular.

First Place was awarded to student Virginia Peckenpugh, a sophomore whose design was inspired by the rain forest. Second Place was awarded to senior Maria Filar for her design based on organic shapes; Third Place was awarded freshman Bridge Sullivan for her design inspired by nature and Honorable Mention was awarded to senior Stephanie Kalb for her design based on earth's resources. All the students received a commemorative plaque and scholarship money. In addition, a gift was presented from Hagopian to the College for Creative Studies.

Hagopian rugs is planning a special event in Fall 2009 for students, judges, alumnae and staff to celebrate the 20th anniversary of this competition that exemplifies their ideal of being a catalyst for progress in the communities they serve.

Fulbright Scholar to Discuss Security In South Caucasus at NAASR

BELMONT, Mass. — Dr. Gayane Novikova, founder and director of the Spectrum Center for Strategic Analysis in Yerevan, Armenia, and currently Fulbright Research Scholar at the Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies, Harvard University, will give a lecture on “The 2008 Five-Day War and Shifts in Security in the South Caucasus” on Thursday, July 9, at 8 p.m., at the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) Center, 395 Concord Ave.

The South Caucasus has been characterized as one of the most unstable regions of post-Soviet space since the early 1990s. The insecurity reached its latest peak in August 2008, when military actions on Georgian territory caused drastic changes in the configuration of the security structure in the South Caucasus and illuminated the role and importance of each regional and non-regional actor.

The August 2008 war in Georgia has excluded the possibility of the creation of any acceptable format of regional cooperation in the South Caucasus. Even more, the status quo established after the Five-Day War will be determined in the medium-term by the fol-

lowing factors: the final withdrawal of Abkhazia and South Ossetia from the jurisdiction of Georgia, Russia's additional political and military leverage in the region, Azerbaijan's continued policy of complementarity, Turkey's attempted use of this crisis to increase its overall role in the region, and Armenia's attempts to emphasize its presence in international politics and increase its significance for external actors, trying thereby to balance Russian influence.

Novikova is an experienced researcher in the security and politics of Armenia and the South Caucasus. She has served at the Department of Arabic Studies of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia (1978-2000) and the Armenian Center for National and International Studies (1994-2000). The author of more than 60 articles and four monographs, she is also the editor of twelve collections of articles published by the Center for Strategic Analysis. She is currently carrying out research on the “South Caucasus Between Russia and the West.”

Admission to the lecture at NAASR is free (donations appreciated).

Detroit Daughters Of Vartan Award \$5,000 in Merit Scholarships

DETROIT — On Wednesday, June 10, the Detroit Chapter of the Daughters of Vartan held their eighth Annual Scholarship Awards program. Five outstanding young men and women each were the recipients of \$1,000. With Knights and Daughters of Vartan, the 2009 scholars and their families present, Chairman Jane Hovsepian, a past Grand Matron, welcomed those present and gave a brief overview of their Merit Scholarship Program.

To date, 22 scholarships have been awarded totaling nearly \$16,000. The following are this year's recipients:

- Dannielle Dakhlian is a graduate student at the University of Michigan in the School of Pharmacy. She interned for two years at the University of Michigan Health Management



Dannielle Dakhlian

Center, the Michigan Diabetes Center, and is currently working on a research project for publication. She will earn her doctorate in pharmacy in 2010. She plans to be a specialized clinical pharmacist. Dakhlian is a graduate of St. John's Church School and a former Sunday School teacher. She is the daughter of Stephen and Debbie Dakhlian, and granddaughter of Marguerite and the late Andrew Dakhlian.

- Matthew Rupas, an honors student throughout high school, graduated magna cum laude. A business marketing major at Michigan



Matthew Rupas

State University, Rupas is a member of the Honors College and Phi Chi Theta Business Fraternity. His goal is to head a marketing team for a major corporation. He is a graduate of see SCHOLARSHIPS, page 9



COMMUNITY NEWS

Fledgling Social Work Program Gets Boost from CHA

SOCIAL WORK, from page 6

each year to conduct teaching and training sessions, but it is struggling to establish itself in Armenia, where the concept is new to a majority of the population.

Although the issues did not always come up directly in the information session, in their biographical descriptions the Armenians listed a host of challenges to their work including lack of information, lack of financial support, lack of understanding of social work's role in the society, an inadequate legal system, lack of training and clear standards for the profession, lack of citizens' awareness of their rights and a heavy workload.

Several CHA professionals outlined the scope of their work. Goldie Eder, an independently-licensed social worker, stressed work with immigrants, particularly undocumented immigrants, who need help with insurance, so that they are able to come to appointments and receive medications. She cited the high incidence of cardiac arrest and cancer as serious problems. Services CHA provides include transportation to chemotherapy appointments and support groups for people with cancer, multiple sclerosis.

Jackie Bisbee, who works with the in-patient aspect of social work, described the services offered to patients while they are in the hospital, and noted that an interpreter is on hand for patients and their families.

Anna Martirosyan, who works with children with hearing disabilities at the Havat NGO Center in Yerevan, asked if CHA provides an interpreter for sign language and learned that CHA has a hard-of-hearing clinic. Martirosyan also queried Bisbee about whether hearing aids were provided and was told that technical specialists and speech therapists are available to work with the hard of hearing.

Another question directed at Bisbee probed whether a doctor or social worker informs a patient of an illness. The doctors discuss the specific illness, said Bisbee, but social workers accompany doctors to make sure patients are



Nina Masters, director of social work training at CHA, addresses Armenian social workers. At left, CYSCA project manager Alisa Stepanian

being addressed in such a way that they understand what the doctor is saying.

Lisa Satrin, supervisor of the child and adult psychiatry outpatient department, stated that common cases included children who were not functioning well at school, adolescents with suicidal or homicidal tendencies, and persons with depression and anxiety. CHA works with school-based health centers and physicians and psychiatrists who treat these patients.

Rachel Flynn, a licensed social worker with an advanced degree in psychotherapy, described her work with adult outpatients, which includes evaluation, counseling and therapy.

"We find out what makes a person depressed. Whether there are psychological problems in the family, whether there is a history of trauma, death or illness, what their immigration status is."

Jayne Shorin, clinical director of the CHA's Victims of Violence program, described the pro-

gram, which deals with victims of crime, such as rape or domestic violence.

"We work closely with community groups to establish a connection between the medical model and the community. We are very overt — we teach that violence is not OK; an act of violence is wrong," said Shorin.

Masters concluded the program, noting that social work has evolved from being mainly case-work-based to being a service that provides psychotherapy and counseling. This has required the development of new standards and degrees.

"The National Association of Social Workers is respected by the government and other independent agencies and the Council of Social Work Educators sets standards for schools and for social work. One of the reasons we started to specialize in psychotherapy is that new laws were passed and to get funds, you had to have a patient with a specific diagnosis."

Artak Khachatryan, head of the Department of Social Work, at Yerevan State University, expressed a strong interest in the establishment of standards for certification.

The session ended with the presentation of a gift from the Armenian professionals to the staff of CHA.

In addition to those mentioned above, the group also included: Alina Avelyan, Astghatsolk NGO; Naira Avanesyan, head of the Division of Protection of Children's Rights in Kapan; Lusine Gasparayan; City of Yerevan, Children's Rights Protection Department; Greta Grigoryan, head of the Benefits Department of the Ministry of Labor and Social Issues; Naira Kerkobyan, NGO Zangagatun; Avtandil Markosyan, head of Children's Rights in Tavush; Asthik Minasyan, head of the Social Assistance Department in the Ministry of Labor and Social Issues and Arusyak Safaryan, lecturer at Yerevan State University in the Faculty of Social Work.

Their visit to the CHA was followed by a trip to a domestic violence program in Waltham. The group will return to Armenia on July 1.

TCA Arshag Dickranian School Hosts Graduation Ball

LOS ANGELES — The TCA Arshag Dickranian School held a graduation ball to celebrate the graduation of its students from high school and middle school, on Saturday, June 20, at 7:30 p.m. The ball took place at the school's Walter and Laurel Karabian Hall, where the families and friends of the graduating students gathered to enjoy a night of dinner, dancing and celebrating.

After the first portion of the evening, in which graduating students had their pictures taken, Vatche Semerdjian, who is the homeroom teacher of the eighth grade, introduced the graduates of middle school by recalling fond memories and the distinctive traits of each student. Krikor Soukiasian, who is the homeroom teacher of the 12th graders, invited all the graduates of high school onto the stage of the hall and congratulated them for their hard work and for their acceptance to various well-respected universities. A touching slideshow of the seniors' journey through the years at the school followed; the students cheered as they remembered their fond memories at the Dickranian School.

The most exciting part of the evening came during the naming of the Prom King, Queen, Prince and Princess. The Prom King and Queen of class of 2008, Hovig Najarian and Mary Alexanian, were happy to crown Ruben Khachadryan as the Prom King and Narine Sulian as the Prom Queen for the Class of 2009. As for the crowning of the graduates of middle school, the Prom Prince and Princess of class of 2008, Harout Seropian and Alice Haytayan, were happy to be the first ones to congratulate Razmig Gasparian as the Prom Prince and Lucy Bambalyan as the Prom Princess of 2009.

For more information on the school, visit www.dickranianschool.org.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

A New Cross and Two New Sub-Deacons for Richmond Parish

RICHMOND, Va. — Parishioners gathered at St. James Armenian Church here on Sunday, June 14, to celebrate the ordination of two altar servers and the consecration of a new cross that will soon adorn the church dome.

Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern), celebrated the Divine Liturgy and ordained two young men — Johnny Chadoian and Kevork Ozbalik — to the rank of sub-deacon.

The two have been serving as acolytes for five years and working hard to prepare for the sub-deaconate.

“They are very dedicated to the church,” said the Rev. Mesrob Hovsepyan, pastor of St. James Church. “It is amazing to see how much they have grown in their faith and service.”

In honor of the occasion, four new robes and stoles for the altar servers were donated by

The cross — 1.5 feet wide and 3.5 feet tall — will be installed on the dome of the church later this year to replace the existing stone cross, which was damaged by lightning.

The church dome has never seen an Armenian cross, Hovsepyan said, and the community is looking forward to the addition.

Handcrafted in Aleppo, Syria, the new aluminum cross was made to capture both the simplicity and the elegance of traditional Armenian design.

It was created by Harut Ayyazian’s father, Kevork Ayyazian, whose foundry in Aleppo is known for the metalwork it supplies to Armenian churches worldwide, including the Mother See of Holy Echmiadzin.

Harut and Sevana Ayyazian were both involved in the design process, which took about two months.

The couple is active in the area’s Armenian community. They have been members at the St.



Archbishop Khajag Barsamian consecrates a new cross at St. James Church in Richmond, Va.



Archbishop Khajag Barsamian ordains Johnny Chadoian and Kevork Ozbalik to the rank of sub-deacon at St. James Church in Richmond, Va.

parishioners Jamie and Margaret Accashian, Steven and Dorian Barsamian, Murad and Melanie Kerneklian, Marni Pilafian and Joyce Soghoian. Harry and Liz Deloian donated new altar covers to the church.

Following the ordinations, Barsamian consecrated the church’s new cross, donated by Harut and Sevana Ayyazian.

James parish for some 10 years and run an Armenian store close to the church.

Harut Ayyazian says he is proud of the finished product, and glad to be part of “the enrichment of the Armenian Church,” especially in a small community where it’s particularly important and challenging to preserve the Armenian identity.

Obituary

Gerald ‘Gerry’ Ayrassian

PROVIDENCE — Gerald “Gerry” Ayrassian, 54, of Providence, died on Tuesday, June 16, in the Jane Brown Unit at Rhode Island Hospital.

He was the husband for 24 years of Barbara D. (Hamperian) Ayrassian.

Born in Providence, he was the son of Agnes (Ampagoomian) Ayrassian of Lincoln, RI and the late Deacon Carl Ayrassian.

Ayrassian received his Bachelor of Science degree in accounting from Roger Williams College in 1976 and was vice president of Freeway Liquors in Providence from 1980 to 2005. He was past coach of the North Providence Recreation Girls Softball Team and an active volunteer at Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Apostolic Church.

Besides his wife and mother, he leaves his daughters, Amanda Ayrassian and Christina Ayrassian, both of Providence, and two brothers, Robert Ayrassian of Lincoln and Gregory Ayrassian of Cranston.

The funeral was held on Saturday, June 20 at Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Apostolic Church, Providence. Interment followed in North Burial Ground Cemetery, Providence. Arrangements were made by the Nardolillo Funeral Home. Online condolences may be left at www.nardolillo.com.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to: Sts. Sahag & Mesrob



Gerald “Gerry” Ayrassian

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Detroit Daughters of Vartan Award \$5,000 in Merit Scholarships

SCHOLARSHIPS, from page 6

St. John's Church School and served seven years on the altar first as Tibir and later elevated to Khostoz. He is the son of Peter and Barbara Rupas, and grandson of Nina and the late Albert Sarkisian.

• Christopher Sarkesian attends Indiana University in Bloomington. He is an honor stu-

dent majoring in business. He received the Indiana University Faculty Award Scholarship. He is active in the Sustainable Business Club, the Undergraduate Investment Club, Intramural Sports and Sigma Chi Fraternity. He is a graduate of St. John's Church School and has been a member of the Junior and Senior ACYOA. His goal is to become an



Christopher Sarkesian

Investment Banking Analyst and attend Graduate Business School. His parents are Peter and Marilyn Sarkesian, and he is the grandson of George and Nevart Godoshian.

• Lauren Sarkesian graduated from the University of Michigan, with honors, majoring in English and political science. Through the AGBU, Sarkesian interned at the Manhattan District Attorney's Office and later with Michigan's Sen. Carl Levin. This fall, she will enter law school at Loyola University in Chicago. She is a graduate of St. John's Church

School and an ACYOA member. In 2005 she received the Archbishop Tiran Nersoyan Award and the *Detroit Free Press* Editorial Award. She is the president of the Armenian Students' Cultural Association at the University of Michigan. She is the daughter of Peter and Marilyn Sarkesian and granddaughter of George and Nevart Godoshian.

• Michael Stambouljian attends the College for Creative Arts in Detroit majoring in metal-smithing and jewelry design. He served as his



Lauren Sarkesian

instructor's assistant at the Birmingham Bloomfield Art Center. His artwork has been showcased while in high school and at college. He is a graduate of St. John's Church School and is active in the ACYOA sports program. He has been a counselor at St. John's Day Camp working with children in arts and crafts. He plans on being a Studio Artist and to teach. His parents are Jimmy and Patricia Stambouljian and he is a grandson of Charles and Anabelle Stambouljian.

Bing Makes History in Forgoing Manoogian

DETROIT (Detroit Free Press) — Mayor Dave Bing will be the first elected mayor of Detroit to not live in the Manoogian Mansion since the 15-room house was donated to the city to serve as the mayoral residence in 1966.

Jerry Cavanagh, Roman Gribbs, Coleman Young, Dennis Archer, Kwame Kilpatrick and their families all spent time in the Manoogian Mansion, which sits on the east riverfront across from Belle Isle.

The house gained an unwelcomed notoriety during the Kilpatrick reign as the supposed site of a much-ballyhooed wild party. Though the party was never proven, rumors of it ignited the chain of events that led to Kilpatrick resigning and going to jail.

Bing has said he wants to find a way to make the home, a gift from industrialist Alex Manoogian, a resource for Detroit and to recoup the roughly \$150,000 the city spends for annual upkeep.

Mayoral spokeswoman Meagan Pitts said Monday the mansion is undergoing repairs for plumbing and other problems, and officials continue to plan to use it as a site for conferences, weddings and other gatherings.

Pitts said the repairs are being financed by a nonprofit organization and the city, but a price tag was not immediately available.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Armenian Sisters Academy of Radnor Holds 42nd Annual *Hantes*

RADNOR, Penn. — Sunday, June 7, was a happy day for the students of the Armenian Sisters Academy (ASA). Not only was the end of the school year in sight, but it was also the day of the school's traditional year-end *hantes*. Mother Nature cooperated and delivered a beautiful spring day. As a result, audience turnout was exceptional with many in the local community joining the ASA families, alumni and out-of town guests.

The 2009 *hantes* was high-energy and kept getting better as the 75-minute program progressed. What makes this performance special is that the students genuinely want to be there. All the children, from Montessori to the 17-

dwarfs on a dance around the stage. The youngest Montessori children, adorably dressed as bumble bees, sang *Meghoo* or "The Bee." While singing and "flying" with their arms, they smelled the sweet flowers on either side of the stage. All the Montessori voices rang out together as they sang *Mi Hay Badani* (An Armenian Child). Lastly, the "graduating" kindergartners, outfitted in traditional satin outfits, got the audience clapping with an updated version of *Khel Pane* (No Problem). The boys' stood shoulder to shoulder and stomped their feet to the beat, while the girls circled their arms daintily.

The second part of the program featured first



A cute trio of dancers

member graduating eighth-grade class, were proud of their accomplishments.

Following tradition, the *hantes* began with the graduating class leading the audience in singing the *Hayr Mer* and the American and Armenian national anthems. For those in attendance not familiar with the bond the community has with the school, it was evident immediately as it didn't take long before most of the audience joined in. Graduating class spokespersons then officially welcomed — in Armenian and English — clergy, sisters, honored guests, family and friends who were in attendance for this highly-anticipated event.

Although this was the 42nd annual closing *hantes*, for many young students, it was their first on-stage experience. The first part of the

through third graders in "Scenes from Boaster Opera" which had a nature theme. Each student was spectacularly costumed to resemble his or her plant, and all grade levels sang all songs. The boys were outfitted in green and brown with leaves and "branches" seeming to grow from their head. Together they sang *Dzarar* or "Trees," mimicking the way trees grow and sway in the wind. They were followed by second and third grade girls singing *Gagach* or "Tulip." With realistic red-petaled costumes and hats and green stockings for the stem, we truly felt the essence of the flower. They were followed by the third-grade girls singing *Manooshag* or "Violet." The girls brought the dance to life with their lavender- and lilac-colored costumes. Dressed in whites and pale yel-



Young dancers complete their number.

program began with the Montessori students singing *Hoonis é yégel* or "June Has Come." This led into the youngest Montessori girls dressed as angels singing and bouncing on their toes to the song *Angel Band*. Adorned in white costumes, wings and feathered halos, they looked truly angelic. The angels joined their classmates and continued to sing *Heigh Ho* while Snow White led her colorful seven

lows, the first- and second-grade girls followed dancing and singing *Shooshan* or "Lily." Lastly, the *Markardadzaghig* or "Daisy" dance featured more first- and second-grade girls singing and swirling in their yellow scalloped costumes.

The fourth- through eighth-graders participated in the third portion, which was made-up primarily of traditional Armenian songs. The fourth graders got the audience clapping



Graceful dancing



Impressing the audience by leaps and bounds

with the energetic music of Shalakho. The girls' graceful sweeping movements were highlighted by scarves on each wrist, while the boys were down on one knee and clapping along. When the children wove in and out of each other, the audience could fully appreciate their traditional costumes. Guests continued to clap to the beat of *Kedashen* and the turquoise-and-lilac costumed fifth graders. In two rows, they sang, circled, skipped and bounced their way through the exciting song. The sixth- and seventh-grade girls slowed things down a bit for *Cilicia*. With traditional gold costumes and veiled headbands, the girls sang and soulfully danced while holding (electric) candles in each hand. The effect was mesmerizing. Split into two groups, the sixth through eighth grade boys acted out "Gindos" and Shepherds. The slow-moving shepherds were teased by the Gindos as the two groups tried to outdo each other with their dancing feats. Crab kicks, squat kicks, side-kicks, straddle jumps and jumping over sticks and bent legs all got the audience whistling and calling out encouragement.

The last to perform in this portion were the graduating eighth-grade girls in *Dele Yaman*. While exquisitely costumed in cream with either red, blue or orange veils to their ankles and attached at the wrist, they brought many audience members to tears. The audience seemed to clap extra long for them, and their smiles showed their pride. Someone in the audience liked it so much, he called out "Noren!" (Again!) For the conclusion of the program, these young ladies began singing *Yerevan/Erebouni* as their younger school-mates came back on stage and joined in. Imagine over 70 young voices singing this moving song and you'll see why the audience did not want the program to end.

But end it did, as Principal Sister V. Louisa Kassarian thanked choreographers and dance instructors Ovsanna Sadjonian, Fran Torcomian, Lauren Yeremian and Karine Shamlian. Excellent piano accompaniment was provided as always by music teacher Maroush Paneyan-Nigon. Special thanks were given to Ovsanna Sadjonian and Therese Sajonian for their exceptional hand-made costumes. They especially thanked the children for their hard work and many practices to make this *hantes* a reality. Guests were welcomed back to the school grounds for a picnic.

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New York METRO

Three Leaders to Be Honored at Armenian Medical World Congress in New York

By Florence Avakian

NEW YORK — “It was a great feeling to help my people in Armenia. And it was thrilling that I was able to work with my father on this very important project,” said Dr. Levon Nazarian. Recently, Nazarian received an honorary Doctor of Medicine degree from Yerevan State Medical University, as well as its gold medal in recognition of his dedicated work in setting up the Ultrasound Training Centre of Armenia.

On Saturday, July 4, the gala banquet of the Armenian Medical World Congress at the New York Hilton Hotel, will honor the preeminent father and son humanitarian and Medical Outreach team of Nazar Nazarian and Dr. Levon Nazarian, as well as Great Britain’s Health Minister Lord Dr. Ara Darzi for his world famous scientific achievements.

In a telephone interview, Dr. Levon Nazarian spoke of the crucial ultra-sound project which he established in Armenia. It was at the educational arm of the Thomas Jefferson University Hospital’s Ultrasound Research and Education Institute that it was decided “to spread ultrasound education throughout the world as a cost-effective procedure. Without side effects, it’s a very effective method to diagnose the heart, thyroid, liver, gall bladder, pelvis, tendons, muscular skeletal system, male testicles and normal and abnormal pregnancies,” he explained.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has identified ultrasound as one of the best tools to improve the population’s health in developing countries, and many centers have been set up in different parts of the world.

It was more than 10 years ago that an ultrasound specialist at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital said to Dr. Levon Nazarian, “You’re Armenian. How about setting up the procedure in Armenia? I had been thinking about it. OK, let’s do it,” Nazarian answered. The long and arduous process was put into motion.

In 2000, Levon Nazarian attended the ribbon-cutting of the Ultrasound Training Center of Armenia at the Yerevan State Medical University, established by the Jefferson Ultrasound Research and Education Institute (JUREI). Also attending the ceremony was the Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II and Armenia’s Minister of Health.

The Center’s co-directors Dr. Andreas Hampartsoumian and Dr. Hamayak Sisakyan “developed their own lecture and training programs starting in 2000,” Nazarian continued. “Shortly after, four doctors from Armenia were chosen from 20 applicants to come to Thomas Jefferson University Hospital to train for three months. Two years later, Hampartsoumian also came to Jefferson, taking back with him voluminous training material.

Professionals from all over Armenia, the south Caucasus, Russia, and as far away as India and China came to Armenia’s Ultrasound Center to learn. In Armenia, it performs a crucial diagnostic role as a low cost alternative to the MRI.” (Armenia does not have the MRI).

Nazar Nazarian Makes Large Donation

The majority of the ultrasound equipment was donated by Nazar Nazarian, noted philanthropist and father of Dr. Levon Nazarian, through the auspices of the AGBU working in tandem with the United Nations. “The hospitals in Armenia started with two ultrasound machines, then 27 more were donated to different marzes (provinces) of Armenia, including Karabagh, and the Javakhk province of Georgia.”

In addition, through a joint donation by Nazar Nazarian, and Philips Health Care, a subsidiary of Philips Electronics, a CATscan machine has also been given to Yerevan State Medical University which has now begun publishing the *New Armenian Medical Journal*, the official publication of the university. Dr. Levon Nazarian one of two doctors from the US is a member of the University’s Editorial Advisory Council.

“This ambitious and much-needed project, the Ultrasound Training Centre in Armenia, has succeeded far beyond what we had hoped for through its two leaders, Dr. Hampartsoumian and Dr. Sisakyan,” stated Dr. Levon Nazarian,



From left: Lord Dr. Ara Darzi, Dr. Levon Nazarian and Nazar Nazarian

in his typically humble manner.

Dr. Levon Nazarian is currently Radiology Residency program director, as well as professor of radiology and vice chairman for education at the Thomas Jefferson University Hospital. He has co-authored 69 peer-reviewed scientific papers and 84 abstracts. His pioneering work in ultrasound has received much acclaim in newspapers, magazines, as well as on television, the BBC and the Reuters news agency. He has been named editor-in-chief of the *Journal of Ultrasound Medicine*, a post he will assume in January 2011. He is the recipient of numerous awards, including being listed in the 2007-2008 Best Doctors in America. Following in his father’s footsteps, Dr. Nazarian recently joined the AGBU Board of Directors.

Philanthropy has been the cornerstone of Nazar Nazarian’s life. Longtime member of the AGBU Board of Directors, Nazar Nazarian, former president of Royale Linens in New Jersey, with his wife, Artemis, has given generous donations to many projects throughout the world, including the Nazarian School in Beirut, the

construction of AGBU facilities in various communities in North and South America and the Middle East.

In addition to their funding of the Ultrasound Centre in Armenia, Nazar and Artemis Nazarian underwrote the cost of the St. Trdat Chapel of the Yerevan Cathedral, as well as funded several educational, medical and religious endeavors in Armenia for which they were awarded the 1,700th anniversary medal by the Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II.

Darzi Makes His Mark

Appointed Minister of Health of Great Britain, Lord Dr. Ara Darzi is head of the Department of Surgery at the Imperial College London, and is chairman of Surgery there and at the Institute of Cancer Research in London. He is also an honorary consultant at St. Mary’s Hospital and the Royal Marsden College. He has published seven books and more than 450 peer-reviewed papers.

Educated in Ireland, Darzi was born in Iraq to a family that escaped the horrors of the

Armenian Genocide. Internationally acclaimed for his scientific achievements, he is recognized for his work on surgical robots, for which he and his department received the Rector’s Research Excellence Award. This is one of many honors he has received, which include a Fellowship of the American College of Surgeons and being the first surgeon to be inducted as an Honorary Fellow at the Royal Academy of Engineering. For his exemplary services to medicine, he was knighted in 2002 by Queen Elizabeth II, and was elevated to the peerage in 2007.

In addition to the banquet on July 4, the Armenian Medical World Congress, which will convene from July 1-4 at New York’s Hilton Hotel, will feature four days of medical symposia and meetings, a dinner cruise on a luxury yacht on Thursday evening, July 2, and a bus trip to the Metropolitan Museum of Art to view the magnificent Armenian *khachkar*.

Reservations must be made for the Congress. Information on this event is available on www.aahpo.org/amwc09.

Ararat Center Will Celebrate Burning of Mortgage

GREENVILLE, N.Y. – The sixth annual Ararat Center Festival, scheduled for Saturday, July 11, will focus celebrations on the facility mortgage burning that took place earlier in the year.

Over the past five years, hundreds of people have attended this traditional Armenian-styled picnic held on the scenic grounds of the Ararat Center. This year will be no exception as more than 500 people are anticipated to participate in this annual event which will feature Armenian music by a special assembled Festival Ensemble, entertainment by the Sipan Dance Group of the Capital District, traditional Armenian meals and games for young children. In addition, this year’s festival will once again showcase a variety of vendors selling Armenian jewelry, photos, books, CDs, perfumes and more.

A brief program, presided over by Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern), will be held in the mid-afternoon to thank all those who contributed towards the purchase and ongoing improvements of this facility that is now owned outright by the Diocese since the mortgage payoff in January. More information will also be shared



St. Vartan staff members enjoy food during the annual Ararat Center Festival.



The Ararat Center Festival is a perfect place for families to enjoy an afternoon of food, fun and activities.

about the \$1.5-million endowment fund campaign that is being initiated by the Board of Directors so that the future of the Ararat Center can be secured for generations to come.

Admission and parking are free for this event, which will be held rain or shine under the Sepastia pavilion. The festival is also an opportunity to tour this facility, which is located 30 miles south of Albany nestled on the edge of the Catskill Mountains. The various buildings and recreational areas of the Ararat Center have been named to represent historic Armenian regions. Individuals are welcomed to sponsor a building of their choice to honor their family ancestry. More information on this will be available during the festival.

To inquire about group transportation to the Ararat Center for this event, contact a local parish.

The Ararat Center, purchased by the Eastern Diocese in January 2004, is now the permanent home of the St. Vartan Camp program.

For more information about the Ararat Center, visit www.araratcenter.org or e-mail contact@araratcenter.org.



Ambassador to Armenia Defends US Policies

AMBASSADOR, from page 1

(ACF) on June 19. She also met with Massachusetts Gov. Deval Patrick and state Rep. Peter Koutoujian.

The events were part of a multi-city tour that Yovanovitch said was aimed at creating a dialogue with the Armenian-American community. Other cities on the tour included New York, Los Angeles and Washington.

"The purpose of my trip is to share with people the views that we have about what's going on in Armenia now, to share a little bit about the US-Armenia relationship, as well as the many positive things that the US government is doing in Armenia," Yovanovitch said at a press conference in Watertown at the *Mirror-Spectator* office in the Baikar building on Friday afternoon.

Asked about the timing of the announcement of a "road map" agreement between Armenia and Turkey on April 22, which many in the Armenian-American community saw as suspect, Yovanovitch said the US was playing only a supporting — and supportive — role in the talks.

"We can't force either Armenia or Turkey to do anything," Yovanovitch said. "Opening the border needs to be an agreement that both countries feel comfortable about."

Asked to clarify why the agreement was announced on April 22, Yovanovitch remained evasive.

"Obviously I'm familiar with what you're talking about," she said, "but these discussions have been ongoing for a while and I think that's when the parties decided to release the statement."

Yovanovitch also spoke about the May municipal elections in Yerevan, where she had served as an observer and issued a report on June 7, describing widespread irregularities.

The elections were cited by the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), a US government program that funds developing nations, as evidence that Armenia continued to not meet fair government standards after its June 10 board meeting. A hold has been in place since the widely-criticized presidential elections in 2008 on \$67 million in funds.

"The [May municipal] elections were rather disappointing," Yovanovitch said. "We saw, frankly, an atmosphere of intimidation. We saw people being bussed in from other areas. We saw ballot stuffing. After the counts in various precincts we saw horse trading going on, where we saw different parties getting votes than what was actually the case."

She stressed, however, that the US is the single biggest contributor to the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, from which Armenia has received loans to make up for the lost MCC funding. She also pointed out that the US Agency for International Development (USAID) continues to manage several humanitarian programs there.

Yovanovitch spoke at the ACF in Arlington on Friday night, to an audience of roughly 200, at an event billed as a "community meeting" about US-Armenian relations. Questions from the audience related mostly to US policy on the



Ambassador Marie Yovanovitch answers a question from David Boyajian at the Armenian Cultural Foundation on June 19.

Armenian Genocide and Nagorno Karabagh, with the interaction at times contentious.

One questioner took Yovanovitch to task on a recent statement by Assistant Secretary of State Philip Gordon that the US would support a joint Armenian-Turkish historical commission.

directors observes. Earlier, she said the MCC had noted Georgia passes benchmarks set on government corruption, a requirement to receive funding.

"We certainly want to keep up our end of the bargain," she said, "but we need the Armenian



From left, state Rep. Peter Koutoujian, Ambassador Marie Yovanovitch, Massachusetts Gov. Deval Patrick and James Kalustian in Patrick's Beacon Hill office



Ambassador Marie Yovanovitch, left, and her aide at the press conference at the *Mirror-Spectator* office.

"I'm puzzled that we still talk about this commission," the audience member said. "Do we need a commission to prove whether we had slavery in the US, whether the Holocaust happened? Why do we need one for Armenians?"

"The US has said we will support whatever (Turkey and Armenia) agree to," Yovanovitch said. "We are not advocating any particular way to go. I think that's a question for the parties to decide."

Another audience member asked why Armenia was singled out as having issues with democratic governance while the US ignores issues in Azerbaijan and Georgia, which also receives MCC funding.

"I feel like there's a double standard," the questioner said.

Yovanovitch reiterated that the MCC funding was contingent on the progress its board of

government to keep up its end of the bargain."

As the meeting concluded, Yovanovitch maintained that the US values its relationship with Armenia and looks forward to encouraging its development and helping along the rapprochement with Turkey.

"You won't be surprised to hear I think our policies are good policies," she said.

The next day, Yovanovitch attended the Armenian Night at the Boston Pops. She also visited the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF) headquarters and met Boston-area clergy before attending a reception at the National Association of Armenian Studies and Research.

On Sunday, she met with the board of directors of the Armenian Assembly of America before attending mass at Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Cambridge.



Clergy of the Greater Boston area met with Ambassador Yovanovitch at the First Armenian Church in Belmont.



Ambassador with Armenian Press editors at Baikar Building



Arts & Living

Centennial of William Saroyan's Birth Celebrated In Holland

THE HAGUE — On May 23, the centennial of Armenian-American writer William Saroyan was marked at the American Book Center here. The Abovian Armenian Cultural Association had organized the seminar.

A complete picture of the remarkable Saroyan was brought to life by lectures and audiovisual presentations on his life and work. There was an exhibition of his original artwork and different publications of his books, among which were seven in Dutch translation, as well as live music with songs by Saroyan and from his era.

The event was specially marked by the announcement of the results of the Short Story Contest launched last year by the Abovian Association on the occasion of the Saroyan Centennial.

Both recent publications and second-hand books by Saroyan were available at the seminar and in the American Book Center.

The program started with a lecture by Nairi Hakhverdian, before a full audience in a hall decorated entirely in the Saroyan spirit by his original artwork, posters and books. She gave a general introduction on the biography and work of William Saroyan showing particularly how the Armenian roots had inspired him, how the American literature and popular culture had influenced him and how he finally brought together these two elements in his work. She illustrated her lecture with splendid and unique images.

Visual artist Krikor Momdjian presented Saroyan the painter as a great artist. He placed the paintings by Saroyan (a number of which was exhibited) within the framework of famous painters, among others, Jackson Pollock and Mark Tobey. He referred to the strength of the abstract expressionism and oriental penmanship as inspiration sources.

Then Hans van Leeuwen went particularly on the autobiographical component in the work of Saroyan using in particular the story Rock Wagram from 1951 for explanation of his approach.

Hambartsoem Sahakian recited the Armenian translation of Saroyan's story "The Barber Whose Uncle Had His Head Bitten Off by a Circus Tiger."

Excitement ran high as the chairman of the Short Story Contest jury Prof. Jos Weitenberg assisted by the jury member Dr. Bernard Bichakjian went to announce the results of the Contest. The other jury members were Hasmik and Anahit Tcharents and Prof. Theo Van Lint. The 22 entries received were submitted to the jury anonymously. The jury awarded the stories "Hrayr" by Anahit Avagyan (in Armenian) on a hidden love and "Shant, Life In Diaspora" by Krikor Momdjian (in Dutch), a reflection on migration and migrants, with the shared second and third prizes. The first prize went to the story "My Best" by Eva Demirci (in Dutch), which is, according to the jury, a convincing story in which unuttered, underlying tension on the Armenian Genocide between young Turkish and Armenian girlfriends living in the Netherlands finds a satisfactory release and refinement.

Singer Anahit Manoukian, accompanied by Boris Rziankin, interpreted the songs by Saroyan and from his era, such as the famous song *Come On A My House* and other American songs, followed by several Armenian songs. The seminar was concluded with a cocktail.

Abovian Armenian Cultural Association was founded in 1984 in The Hague, The Netherlands. On the occasion of its 25th anniversary, Diaspora Minister Hranush see SAROYAN, page 15



The Armenian Chamber Choir performs at the YP Burgas concert.

AGBU Young Professionals Group Hosts Successful Kick-Off Concert

BURGAS, Bulgaria — The AGBU Young Professionals of Burgas (YP Burgas) recently co-sponsored a Genocide commemorative concert with the city that brought in more than 200 people from the local Armenian and Bulgarian community.

The event took place at the Burgas Concert Hall and aired on a local public television station, TV SKAT. YP Burgas chairman Levon Manukyan served as the director of the show, which included a Genocide commemoration play and musical performance written by Julia Manukyan. The concert began with a performance of the Armenian liturgy by the city's Armenian Chamber Choir and was followed with poetry readings, solo piano renditions and Armenian pop songs. The script and selected texts featured music, and video images, which created a performance memorial for the Armenian Genocide of 1915. A dinner reception followed the concert.

The newly-established YP Burgas is headed by Manukyan and secretary Kevork Tanielian under the guidance and encouragement of Roupen Chavoushian, AGBU Plovdiv chairman. With 15 current members, YP Burgas is the third AGBU Young Professionals group in Bulgaria.

Following this initial concert, the group is planning music and poetry evenings, an Armenian arts festival and sports competitions. On June 1, the group also hosted a ceremony for 30 kids and parents for Children's Day, which featured games, quizzes, a talent show and refreshments.

"Our goal is to bring the young Armenian professionals in Burgas together as often as possible," said secretary Kevork Tanielian. "We also hope to popularize Armenian culture to the Bulgarian community."



From left, Petko Ganey-Kaval and Levon Manukyan entertain the audience in Burgas. Julia Manukyan wrote the script for YP Burgas' performance commemorating the Armenian Genocide.

Bachik the Birthday Kiss Released

DETROIT — A new children's book has been released and the story behind its author is just as interesting as the book itself. Author Lori Wagner called upon her strong familial connections to the Armenian relatives of her first marriage to create *Bachik the Birthday Kiss*, now available in hard cover.

Bachik the Birthday Kiss's cover shows a young boy with full lips and big brown eyes tenderly receiving a birthday kiss on each cheek by adoring relatives. The opening page shows an Armenian grandmother on a sofa teaching the toddler grandson "Dzapik, dzapik," clap, clap." English and transliterated Armenian appear on each page like "Mek, yerku, yerek, one, two, three. The back of the book contains Armenian words, pronunciations and meanings.

So what does a girl raised in the insular atmosphere of Paducah, Ky. know about Armenians and why do several of her books have an Armenian theme? She married one, Peter Kalajian, from the Boston area, when he was 42. He had come to Michigan to work for General Motors, carving a very successful career designing automotive interiors. He also taught Sunday School in Troy, Mich., where they met.

Brought together by their spirituality, she says, "He was a Godly, very talented man with a fine character. I am glad he waited for me. He whisked me off my feet, making me feel like Cinderella." They honeymooned in Peru and their interest in different cultures blended. Together they traveled to Switzerland, St. Thomas and the Amazon. Their children, Noelle and Charles, were only 5 and 1, respectively, when Kalajian died of cancer.

Wagner dedicated *Bachik* to his family and his Armenian heritage. She said, "With the Armenian deep love of family I wanted to share from a treasure chest of wonderful memories I cherish of my children playing games on grandma's porch."

Maintaining the theme of family, Wagner's niece, Andrea Kalajian of West Bloomfield, Mich., daughter of her husband Peter's twin brother, has filled the pages with brilliant, vibrant illustrations. She is an award-winning artist pursuing a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the California College of Arts.

Bachik is dedicated to Wagner's Armenian mother-in-law, whom she describes as a phenomenal cook and also to the countless Armenian families whom she says, "open their hearts and homes to odars like me."

Wagner and her children still pay annual visits to her in-laws at their summer camp home on Cape Cod where her husband spent time growing up. Her now 17-year-old daughter is taught Armenian recipes by her grandmother and Wagner documents these events with photo shoots, then making a scrapbook so that the memory of the grandmother will always remain alive.

Wagner recently shared a well-received Power Point presentation of *Bachik* at the AGBU Alex and Marie Manoogian Day School in Southfield. Her next project is a middle-school chapter book titled *The Pirates of Castle Rock*, about the growing up exploits of her husband and his twin brother during their times at a Cape Cod camp in Massachusetts.

Portions of *Bachik's* proceeds are designated to support the Armenian Children's Milk Fund. Founded in 1989, this charitable organization provides soy-based infant formula and powdered milk to sick children and poor infants in Armenia.

Wagner serves as the Detroit Metro Area Coordinator for the National Day of Prayer and as a member of the Society of Children's Book writers and Illustrators.

Autographed copies of the full color 32-page book, *Bachik the Birthday Kiss*, can be ordered from the publisher, Affirming Faith. For further information visit www.affirmingfaith.com.



ARTS & LIVING

Dream Factory or Ghost Studio? Armenian 'Hollywood' Far from Glamour

By Karine Ionesyan

YERVAN (ArmeniaNow) — The new owners of HayFilm Studio, after purchasing it four years ago, promised that soon the studio would be beyond recognition with the newly-constructed building instead of an old shabby studio, new heating and air systems, elevators. In short, they said the film studio would be equipped up to the standard of super modern Hollywood studios.

Years have already passed, yet the distinguishing badge of the “Armenian Hollywood” remains the dilapidated buildings and deserted territory, while not a single movie was produced during that time. (The only use of the studio so far has been as premises for shooting soap operas.)

Hamo Bek-Nazaryan HayFilm studio, the country's only film production studio, was founded in 1933 and produced more than 350 full-length feature films, more than 150 cartoons and dozens of short-length films.

In 2005 it was sold for 350 million drams (about \$946,000) to Director of Armenia Studio CJSC Bagrat Sargsyan, who presented himself in the name of Cafesjian Foundation (whose founder is Gerard Cafesjian, also known in Yerevan as the owner of the Cascade complex, one of the capital's landmarks, which itself is far behind in anticipated completion).

Besides the fact that the new owners have not started reconstruction yet, many employees of former HayFilm stayed unemployed. (The name of the studio was changed into CS Films, and this year the old name of HayFilm was reinstated.)

According to a government decision, after privatization, the new owners should have signed working contracts with the employees of HayFilm for a year. However, soon after the privatization some 100 people were fired. Cameraman Karlen Hovhannisyanyan was one of them.

“There was no film production during the period we were working. They managed to destroy the laboratory of film development — a huge territory covering 40 hectares was transformed into warehouses; part of it became a warehouse for Osram Lamps (produced in Germany), another part — into greenhouses or hotbeds,” Hovhannisyanyan says.

As he mentions, only film production areas are being used in that territory, because they provide profit: soap operas are being shot there.

“There was a time when specialists of the film sphere were forced to work at an Osram Lamp warehouse. So they were putting lamps into boxes and gluing the holographic film on them,” says a person who is knowledgeable about the work of HayFilm employees but asked ArmeniaNow not to disclose his identity.

Ruben Gevorgyants, Art Director of HayFilms, said in an interview with ArmeniaNow that they (new owners) had already changed all the windows of the building; new equipment had been bought, which they rent out. However, he cannot say what specifically was bought.

“But we do not shoot films yet, because still preparatory works are being conducted. And I am not sure when exactly they will be over,” he adds.

As for Osram Lamps, Gevorgyants said that it is the owners' business; they can have whatever they want to have. In accordance with the

Armenian Government's decision N 727-A of 2005, the winner of the open bid for the property of the Hayfilm Film-Studio State Non-Commercial Organization “must carry out filmmaking and other related activities at least for 50 years from the day of getting a state registration.”

Nairi Harutyunyan, head of staff of State Property Management Department attached to the Armenian Government, stated that this is a private business, and if CS Films fulfills its obligations, it can do whatever it wants concerning other issues. “They present us regular reports, and we know that they work. For example, they have already digitized 160 films, and 134 films have been recovered on their initiative. They were obliged to invest 10 billion drams (\$27million) within 10 years; they have already invested 900 million drams (about \$2.5 million) within four years, four feature films are already shot.”

Gevorg Gevorgyan, director of the Armenian National Cinema Center State Non-Commercial Organization, contends, however, that not a single movie has been shot.

“What four films are they talking about?” he says. “Films currently cannot be produced. Sometimes they give us equipment for rent. Up to now they have only participated in the production of Albert Mkrtychyan's ‘The Dawn of Sad Street’ film. And as for the rest of the films, they had no participation there. We have allocated money, about five million drams (over \$13,500) to them during these four years, and they gave us equipment instead,” he says.

As for the digitized films, this process must be monitored by the Ministry of Culture and Youth Affairs. According to agreement CS Films must digitize 396 films within three years and present two sealed versions (with corresponding techni-

cal standards certificates) of each within two months.

The Ministry of Culture has not assessed the



The current dilapidated state of HayFilm Studio



From left, Paul Boghosian and Dick Flavin

‘According to Tip’ Wins Big in Regional Awards

BOSTON — New England theater professionals gathered at the Boston Center for the Arts Cyclorama for the annual Independent Reviewers of New England (IRNE) Awards. Paul Boghosian of Belmont, Mass., producer of “According to Tip,” a one-man play based on the life and times of the legendary Speaker of the House, Thomas “Tip” O'Neill, was the winner, along with playwright Dick Flavin, of the award for Best New Play of 2008.

“According to Tip” was presented in June and July 2008 at the NewRep Theater in Watertown. During its one-month run, the play performed to 93 percent of capacity and generated positive reviews. The star of the play, Ken Howard, also received the IRNE Award for Best Solo Performance in a Play for 2008.

At the IRNE Awards, Flavin said that “Paul Boghosian made it happen for all of us, and the creative and producing team of Rick Lombardo, Artistic Director of NewRep and director of ‘According to Tip,’ Howard, Boghosian and myself worked in remarkable harmony to produce a first class production of one of the most notable political figures of the last century.”

During fall 2008, “According to Tip” also played successfully at the Stuart Street Playhouse in Boston.

The next production is planned, Boghosian said, for a limited engagement at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC. If that goes well, the play will move to New York City for a run for the Tony Award in 2010.

Sponsored by St John Armenian Church at the Cultural Hall
22001 Northwestern Highway, Southfield, Michigan 48075
For reservations please contact: Anahit Tournajan at (248) 357-2234
General admission \$30.00 Priority seating \$50.00



ARTS & LIVING

C A L E N D A R

CONNECTICUT

AUGUST 23 — Annual Picnic, Armenian Church of the Holy Resurrection, 1910 Stanley St., New Britain (Rte. 71). Armenian and American foods — shish kebab (lamb), losh kebab, khema, tabooleh, pilaf, hot dogs, salad, etc. Live Middle-Eastern music by the New England Ensemble: Hagop Garabedian, Roger Derderian, Carnig Mikitarian and Gary Hovhannessian. Free admission and parking on church grounds. 12-6 p.m. For more info., call the church at (860) 223-7875.

SEPTEMBER 26 — Richard Hagopian, Hachig Kazarian, Jack Chalikian, Mal Barsamian, Ron Tutunjian and Paul Mooradian will play in West Hartford, on Saturday. Details will follow. Dance will start at 6 p.m. and end at midnight. The event has been moved to a smaller venue. Make reservations.

FLORIDA

JANUARY 16-23, 2010 — Join Armenians worldwide on the Armenian Heritage Cruise XIII 2010. Sailing on Saturday. To San Juan, PR, St. Thomas and Grand Caicos Islands on the Costa Atlantica. Prices start at \$679 per person. Contact TravelGroup International 1-866-447-0750, ext 102 or 108. Westcoast: Mary Papazian (818) 407-1401; Eastcoast: Antranik Boudakian (718) 575-0142.

MASSACHUSETTS

JUNE 27 — Armenian Youth Foundation 35th Anniversary Dinner-Dance, featuring John Berberian Ensemble. Crown Plaza, 1360 Worcester St., Natick. Cocktails, 6:30 p.m. Dinner, 7:30 p.m. Donation, \$100. Silent auction. For reservations, call Shooshan (508) 842-3562 or Susan (781) 449-1412.

JUNE 27 — Armenian Church at Hye Point, Women's Guild presents a fashion show with original designs by Farrah Derderian and fellow graduates of Laselle College. Also featuring Vintage Wedding Gowns. Saturday, 1-4 p.m. at the Rose Ballroom, Days Hotel, 159 Pelham St., (Exit 47 off Route 93), Methuen. Refreshments will be served. Donation, \$20. Contact Barbara (978) 685-4945 or Bea (978) 686-3715.

JULY 13 — ALMA's Fifth Annual Sports Raffle Hosts "Final Inning" Reception. The Armenian Library and Museum of America (ALMA) will host a "Final Inning" Reception prior to the prize drawing for the fifth annual sports raffle. Raffle participants will have the opportunity to meet Boston Globe sportswriter Tony Massarotti, meet a surprise sports celebrity, enjoy ballpark snacks and beverages, purchase last-minute raffle tickets and watch the prize drawing, which will be done by Massarotti and the surprise sports celebrity, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. in ALMA's Contemporary Art Gallery. To purchase raffle tickets or to see a detailed list of the packages that are offered this year, visit www.almainc.org.

JULY 20-24 — St. James Armenian Church Vacation Bible School. The Armenian Church Around the World. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Arts and crafts, music, activities, games and sports. Learn more about the Bible and the Armenian Church by traveling with us around the world to Jerusalem, Armenia, New York and more. For children entering grades K-5. Deadline to register is July 1. Space is limited. For registration forms or info., e-mail info@sthagop.com or call Yeretzgin Natasha Aljalian at (617) 923-8990.

JULY 9 — "The 2008 Five-Day War and Shifts in Security in the South Caucasus," by Dr. Gayane Novikova, at the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) Center, 395 Concord Ave., Belmont. For info., contact (617) 489-1610 or hq@naasr.org.

AUGUST 8 — Save the Date. The Armenian Church of Cape Cod presents their annual dinner and dance at St. George's Greek Cultural Hall, Route 28, Centerville. Music by George Righellis. For more info., call (508) 477-1725.

AUGUST 20-31 — St. James Armenian Church Pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Itinerary will include visits to Biblical and Historical Sites, including the Armenian Quarter, St. James Armenian Monastery, Church of the Holy Sepulcher, Tomb of Christ, Bethlehem, Nazareth, Garden of Gethsemane,



On July 13, the Armenian Library and Museum of America (ALMA) will host a "Final Inning" reception prior to the prize drawing for the fifth annual sports raffle, featuring Boston Globe sportswriter Tony Massarotti, pictured here (left), from 6:30-7:30 p.m. at ALMA, in Watertown, Mass. For more info, visit www.almainc.org.

Mount of Olives, Galilee, Dead Sea, Jericho, Jordan River and Masada. For more information about the trip, call the St. James church office at (617) 923-8860 or e-mail info@sthagop.com.

SEPTEMBER 1-15 — Armenian Heritage Tours 2009. Fully-escorted tour to Armenia flying with Air France from Washington, New York and Boston. Marriott Armenia Hotel, from \$2,890 plus tax per person based on double occupancy. Visiting sites: Yerevan City tour, museums, Khor Virap, Noravank, Areni, Haghbat, Sanahin, Lake Sevan, Dilijan, Echmiadzin Cathedral, Sardarabad, Tsaghkadzor, Garni and Geghart and more. Optional excursion: Karabagh tour — three days and two nights. For info, contact Maro Asatourian, ACAA representative at (301) 340-1011, e-mail asatourian@msn.com visit www.AcaaArmenianTours.com.

SEPTEMBER 18 — St. James Hye Café. Delicious Armenian food and fellowship. Children's activities will be provided. 465 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown. Friday, 6:30 p.m. Parties of six or more are encouraged to make reservations by calling the St. James church office at (617) 923-8860, no later than 5 p.m. on September 17.

OCTOBER 3 — Second St. James Parish Reunion and kef, hosted by the St. James ACYOA Seniors. Saturday, 8 p.m.-1 a.m. at St. James Armenian Church. Charles Mosesian Cultural and Youth Center, Keljik Hall. 465 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown. Featuring Bob Raphaelian (oud), Leon Janikian (clarinet), Harry Bedrossian (keyboard and vocals), Kenny Kalajian (guitar) and Leon Manoogian (dumbeg). \$25 per person. Tables of 10 may be reserved with advance payment. For tickets, contact Melanie Khederian at (617) 694-1057 or at mkhederian@gmail.com. All proceeds to benefit the 2010 ACYOA General Assembly and National Sports Weekend hosted by St. James ACYOA.

OCTOBER 9, 2010 — 30th Anniversary celebration of the Armenian Independent Radio of Boston. Please mark your calendar. Details to follow.

NEW JERSEY

SEPTEMBER 20 — An Evening Honoring Edgar Hagopian in recognition of his commitment to the Armenian-American community. 4-9 p.m., 4 p.m. cocktails and hors d'oeuvres, 5 p.m. program, 5:30 p.m. dinner at the Royal Park Hotel, 600 East University Dr., Rochester. Patron, \$250; benefactor \$125; friend, \$75. For more info., call Pam at (248) 646-7847.

MICHIGAN

OCTOBER 10 — Tekeyan Cultural Association — Mher Megerdchian Theatrical Group Presents "Who Killed The Eastern Dentist?" A Masquerade Party in Baronian's 1860s Istanbul. A Murder Mystery Dinner Theater prepared by Harout Chatmajian. Assyrian Orthodox Church of the Virgin Mary, 644 Paramus Road, Paramus. Saturday, at 8 p.m. Donation, \$60; BYOB; dress code (optional); 1860s attire and mask. For tickets, call Marie Zokian (201) 745-8850, Noushig Atamian (718) 894-5878, Maro Hajakian (201) 934-3427 or Missak Boghosian (212) 819-0097.

NOVEMBER 7 and 8 — Tekeyan Cultural Association Mher Megerdchian Theatrical Group presents William Saroyan's "My Heart's in the Highlands." A Bilingual Play in Three Parts. Original direction by Tamar Hovanissian. Reenactment directed by Harout Chatmajian. Details to follow.

The Mirror-Spectator has a new Calendar Policy: The Mirror-Spectator is now accepting all calendar items for free. All items may be sent to mirro-rads@aol.com. Due to the anticipated shortage of space, items may be edited to fit the space.

Centennial of William Saroyan's Birth Celebrated in Holland

SAROYAN, from page 13

Hakobyan sent a congratulatory letter to the Association.

In order to mark this anniversary, the association is organizing an Armenian Film

Festival in cooperation with the Filmhuis Den Haag in The Hague and the Golden Apricot Film Festival in Yerevan. The festival will present an overview of the Armenian cinema and will take place from October 22, for two weeks in the Filmhuis Den Haag.

The association also plans to publish some books this year, among others a Cookbook, which will include the favorite recipes of members and friends of the Association. By this way the diversity of cooking culture of Armenians from different countries of origin

will be brought together.

The 25th anniversary of coincides with the 200th birthday of Armenian great writer and pedagogue Khachatur Abovian. An appropriate tribute will also be paid to this anniversary later this year.



COMMENTARY

COMMENTARY

Armenia-Turkey Relations: Road Map or Roadblock?

By Edmond Y. Azadian

Most people believe in the adage of “honesty is the best policy.” But for the architects of the Turkish foreign policy the motto seems to have a different spin: “duplicity is the best policy.”

When it comes to the relations with Armenia, Turkish leaders resort to perfectly-orchestrated scenarios, raising hopes on one hand and contradicting or neutralizing these same hopes on the other hand. Indeed, President Abdullah Gul makes a statement leading the diplomatic world to believe that Ankara’s relations with Armenia are on the verge of a breakthrough, but then, Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan flies to Baku and makes a contradictory statement. In the meantime, the gullibility machine is at work enticing Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to announce that she is very encouraged to see the “progress” made in Armenian-Turkish negotiations.

There was widespread optimism in Yerevan about the impending opening of the border soon after April 24. It seemed that such assurances were given to Armenia’s Foreign Minister Eduard Nalbandian. The reason the border issue was delayed until after April 24, they said, because Ankara had some domestic concerns: they believed that President Obama would use the word genocide, and had Ankara by then opened the border, there would be a public backlash. But President Obama did not use the scary “G” word. April 24 came and went, but the border is still closed.

Now comes the second round of duplicity. The new foreign minister of Turkey, Ahmed Davoudoglu, who is characterized more as an academic than a politician, has brought a new philosophy to Turkey’s foreign policy thinking: he is clamoring to reduce to zero all the conflicts that his country has created over the years, and which succeeding administrations have failed to resolve them because of their intransigence. Davoudoglu made several positive statements about his country’s relations with Armenia. For example, he announced that the “cold war with Armenia is over.” Very recently he spoke about normalizing relations with Armenia because, he said, the current state of affairs not only is complicating Turkey’s policy in the Caucasus, but also has a negative impact on Ankara’s relations with Washington. This is an indirect reference to the pressure Obama administration is exerting on Turkey to lift the blockade on Armenia. Lack of progress on Armenian-Turkish relations have also been hampering Washington’s arm twisting in Europe in promoting Turkey’s admission into the European Union (EU). When asked if the “Road Map” has been placed on the back burner after Prime Minister Erdogan’s visit to Baku, Mr. Davoudoglu responded: “Of course not, we are persistent in our negotiations with Armenia, because we are located in the same region and we wish to pursue a constructive policy and refrain from any action that would hurt those negotiations.”

Now comes another duplicity; after having made all those cautious and seemingly positive remarks, Mr. Davoudoglu makes a 180-degree turn answering in the positive a question on whether Turkey would take up the Karabagh issue at the UN Security Council, now that his country has assumed the presidency of the Security Council. We need to be reminded that Azerbaijan had introduced the Karabagh issue on the agenda of the UN General Assembly, where a majority vote was garnered with the help of Islamic countries, along the “brotherly” republics of Georgia and Ukraine. Unlike General Assembly resolutions, the Security Council resolutions are

enforceable, especially against weak countries like Armenia.

In the meantime, some serious developments in Russian-Turkish relations have become a cause for concern. Indeed, the military commentator of RIA Novosti, Ilya Kraminik, has revealed that a Turkish military delegation has been visiting Russia to fill in some military hardware orders. Turkey is planning to purchase 12 MI-28 attack helicopters. The Turkish army’s inventory already holds 23 Cobra helicopters, bought from the US. It is said that this is not the first time that Russia has been selling arms to Turkey. A few years ago Turkey bought from Russia \$100 million worth of military hardware.

This dangerous business raises two questions: Turkey has one of the strongest standing armies within the NATO structure and from that position has intimidated fellow NATO member Greece, has occupied 38 percent of Cyprus, has threatened Syria and Armenia and has indiscriminately bombed Northern Iraq. Therefore, who will benefit by arming Turkey further? While Russia has been keeping a military base in Armenia, supposedly to defend the latter against a potential Turkish attack, where does rearming Turkey lead? Does this process render as window dressing the Russian military presence in Armenia?

Therefore, Armenia finds itself in a very precarious position, because not only are its relations with the US complicated by the Turkish factor, but also now, its relations with Moscow.

Where do all these activities figure in the Road Map, whose existence was announced with so much optimism on the eve of April 24? Unfortunately, when we sort out the rhetoric from fact, very little remains to count as progress.

Besides, in the absence of solid information from official sources, most of the speculations are based on published reports in the Turkish news media, which is notoriously unreliable.

According to the Turkish news media, the “Road Map” is composed of the following major components: Turkey will lift border restrictions in stages, based on progress made in the negotiations; formal diplomatic relations will be established between the two countries; a joint committee to study all the outstanding issues, including the Genocide issue will be formed, and Armenia will recognize Turkey’s current border and reaffirm its adherence to the Kars Treaty of 1921.

If this is truly the Road Map, it is certainly a non-starter for all the Armenians. If there is more in the Road Map than what the Turkish media presents, then what is it?

These are truly troubling questions.

By flying all these balloons Turkey had some objectives to achieve and probably it has already achieved them, without giving in on any concrete issue. The EU observer, Peter Semneby, in the Southern Caucasus believes that Ankara has made a U-turn in its negotiations with Armenia. His announcement to Turkish Kanal-D states that domestic concerns and relations with Azerbaijan have impacted Turkey’s negotiations with Armenia negatively.

In fact, Turkey benefited from those trial balloons by promoting its “stability and cooperation platform in the Caucasus,” by being elected as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council, by convincing President Obama that using the “G” word by him would complicate negotiations with Armenia.

Unfortunately, Turkey won on all counts by fooling the international community. After scoring victory on all these short-term goals, Ankara is emboldened to play its hand on long-term goals as well. One of those goals remains its ambitions to join the European Union and Ankara believes the same tactics may open the gates of Europe too. Let’s wait and see.

In the meantime, the Road Map seems to have become a Road Block.

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Notice to Contributors

The *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* welcomes articles, commentaries and community news from our readers. In order to assure the accurate and timely publication of articles submitted, please note the following policies:
– All articles submitted should be typed, double (or triple) spaced and printed in a type size large enough to be clearly legible (10 point or larger). Submissions that do not conform to these specifications will be assigned lowest priority.
– Articles sent by fax are acceptable, and e-mail submissions are encouraged.

– All submissions should include the name of a contact person and a daytime telephone number.
– Deadline for submission of all articles and advertising is 12 noon on Monday of the week of publication.
– Photos will be published without charge at the discretion of the editors and art director. Photos will be returned only if a self-addressed and stamped envelope is included.
– The *MS* will publish only one article about an upcoming organizational event. For major special events, exceptions may be made only by special arrangement with the editors.
– Telephone numbers, ticket prices and other details (at the discretion of the editors) will not be included in press releases, but should be reserved for calendar listings and advertisements.



COMMENTARY

Transmit Our History to the Next Generations

By Baidzig Kalaydjian

Have you ever been fortunate enough to listen to gypsy artists, who tell the story of their life in a unique style and interpret the song of the earth by lightly strumming their string instruments?

With deep feelings, I relished the supplication of their enamored soul, which sometimes had the velvety touch of love and, at other times, extolled the pain from the loss of paternal soil. That day, the old gypsy wasn't part of his band. Alone, he was anxiously playing the guitar inherited from his father. He had exerted himself such that torment was visible on his face, and the longing for his paternal soil was evident in his soul.

That day, at that moment, he wished to perform his best, to make it the best of all his performances to date. He knew that the days of his life were numbered. He knew that there wasn't a musician among all the gypsies who was worthy of replacing him. Those listening to him, the pregnant young gypsy women, also shared his distress.

Therefore, the gypsies' hope was on those soon to be born. While still in their mother's womb, they had to hear the master's music. Hear and be inspired by it. Hear it and come into the world. Hear and play it. Hear and take the place of the old guitarist.

The gypsy believes in this.

Forty years ago, we would have interpreted this belief as naïveté and perhaps a benign yet sarcastic smile would have appeared on our faces. In our scheme of things, it would have been incomprehensible to logically accept a fetus as an individual entity, as a being having developed into a being that could feel us. However, in these past 40 years, science came forth and proved the gypsies correct in their wisdom, albeit unformulated and unexplained,

accepted rather on the basis of deeply felt life's experience. Yes, even a fetus is an individual entity. Each medical, psychological and biological discovery emerged to prove this and revolutionize our perceptions about that being, which is a part of our body and which one day will be born and become an individual.

Our relations with it start as early as the first day of conception. We communicate with it. It develops according to the quality of the relationship we have with it. It feels us, it shares our joy. Its little heart beats in harmony with our feelings.

Our communication is a transmission. The transmission is a responsibility, which will continue anew and in a conscious manner after birth. Our responsibility is great, very great, and even definitive.

I won't be exaggerating if I say that especially during the first six or seven years of life, a child's future destiny is conditioned by the quality of what we have transmitted.

From the vocabulary used by us, our feelings and sensations, our ability to judge, our disposition, our perception of the world and, finally, the most important thing being the sincerity shown by us toward love and the strength to live our love.

No educational, instructional or pedagogical innovation has had as much decisive significance in the formation of a child as a person as what is achieved in the natural course of parent-child interrelations.

This is the conviction arrived at even by scientists, who have devoted entire careers to this field.

As parents, what we transmit will prepare our children for life, the external world, also abroad. In this fast-moving, ever-changing world, they must present themselves as distinct persons. They must be ready to perceive not only the world, but also the place of the Armenians and Armenia in that world.

As Armenians, they must give their own

peculiar and independent interpretation to life — without an inferiority complex and without an insular mentality.

Here is where our history, our past, our life experience, with its inimitable richness, must present itself before them, and be interpreted with all its variety. That history, as a precious factor, must shape the personal character of our children. Our life experience, without exaggeration, must shed light to create a more accurate perception of the realities of the world.

Our past, whose experience still hasn't been fully evaluated, is not a series of past events having become anachronistic. Our history is a treasury full of events leading to constructive, rich conclusions for all of mankind.

As an example of these generalizations, at this time when the 94th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide is being commemorated, I shall cite merely the example of the ingenious Polish lawyer Raphael Lemkin. It was R. Lemkin who, in 1933, first used the word "genocide." As you know, the word "genocide" is composed of the Greek word "gen" (race, nation) and the Latin word "cide" (to kill). On a legal basis, he mentioned crimes that had been committed above and beyond war crimes — crimes committed against a peaceful population; premeditated crimes; planned crimes; crimes committed by states, which were committed against national groups and minorities.

For the definition of the word "genocide," for his conceptions, Raphael Lemkin had before him the case of the Armenian Genocide, having been carried out by the Union and Progress Party, which went unpunished.

The Nuremberg Trials, which punished those responsible for the Holocaust, took place on the basis of his legal formula in 1945. During the course of these trials as well, there was discussion of the Armenian Genocide, whose perpetrators went unpunished. It was at these trials that sentences were handed down

on the Nazi war criminals that were principally responsible for the genocide of the Jews, Gypsies and Slavs. The distinction "crime against peace and humanity" also entered the formula of the understanding of "war criminal." The types of that crime were diverse, such as genocide, murder of culture, language, uricide, verbicide, etc. Thus, the question of genocide not only entered the agenda of all philanthropic organizations but also became the object of specialized studies of certain sciences and, with that, the formation of genocide scholarship proceeded rapidly.

Each April 24 comes to remind us of that horrific day of crime, when hundreds of the top Armenian intellectuals were taken away from their homes and, with heads bowed, they silently murmured the prayer deep in their soul. Today, after the passage of 94 years, who doesn't hear the voice of our martyrs of April 24? The desert sands of Der Zor attest that their doleful eulogies still resound, as do the "Andoonies" [type of ancient popular melodious song, largely about émigrés or weddings—tr.] of Komitas, and such monumental pieces of literature as Siamanto's "I wish to die by singing...." The prayers uttered by the Armenians still flutter in the burning desert; their echoes reach us and call us to them, to light candles before the altars, in the sands mixed with their remains, and in the depths of our souls.

It is only in this way that we will be able to transport the remains of our martyrs to the soft ancestral soil. Leaning over their burial mound, it is only then that we will whisper "May you rest in peace..."

Finally, our appeal to universal mankind is not for mercy and justice. The Calvary experienced by our parents is man's indifference toward man. Human indifference was committed with regard to the crime. Furthermore, this indifference is man's denial by man himself.

These declarations of ours would be self-consolation for the weak, if the 20th century hadn't been the most tragic one in world history. The deaths of more than 100 million people were recorded in the 20th century. Horrible things happened and are continuing to happen practically everywhere in the world. The annals of the 20th century contain 35 genocides and genocidal acts.

Today, 94 years later, we admit that we deeply hear the soulful cries of our genocide martyrs...then, with deep conviction and sublime awareness of responsibility, let us open our souls to the present imperative posed by our homeland and piously bow before the millions of our 1915 martyrs. Otherwise we will have condemned them to death for a second time. Furthermore, if we don't take control of our reborn homeland, if we don't feel proud of our Armenian identity, if the Armenian spirit doesn't flutter in Armenian homes, and if Armenian songs and verses don't resound in our souls, then we shall consciously destroy the relics of our martyrs' remains on the sandy road of exile.

It is the responsibility of our generation and the ones to follow to spread the word, to explain that the very destiny of mankind, as well, depends on the respect to be shown toward the fate of the Armenian children killed in 1915 on the deportation route from Sebastia to Malatia, the Armenian grandmothers who died of starvation under the scorching sun in the deserts of Der Zor; on the proper appreciation of that fate, and the restitution of justice.

We and the generations succeeding us shall shout this matter in the face of indifference. We shall remind mankind that the pursuit of our cause has no connection whatsoever with revenge. Our cause of humanizing man is a struggle being waged in the pursuit of justice and for its triumph. Our cause of humanizing man is a struggle being waged for the triumph of the voice of conscience.

Our struggle is the struggle of reality.

(This article, translated by Aris G. Sevag, was first published in the April 24 issue of the Beirut daily Zartokn.)

LETTERS

Armenians Need to Think out of the Box

To the Editor:

At this point it should be blatantly obvious to those of us in the Armenian community that politicians, businessmen — and yes even self-proclaimed human rights activists — embrace expediency over morals and ethics as their policy of choice. About four or five years ago at an AAA [Armenian Assembly of America] briefing in New Jersey, as well as in a public letter, I proposed that a committee of high-level businessmen be organized with the sole purpose of enticing big business to Armenia. I suggested that the benefits of this would be two-fold, the first being the obvious creation of jobs. Since business requires stability in the regions where it is established, not to mention the need to be looked upon with favor by the host government, the second benefit would be that these companies, (with deep pockets), would lobby for our agenda in Washington. (Wouldn't it be in the interest of businesses with a footprint in Armenia to get Turkey to lift the blockade?) Since Armenia doesn't have natural resources

and since we can't depend on the majority of politicians taking the moral high road we have to create the need. Of course this suggestion fell on deaf ears only to read in the June 20 issue of the Mirror-Spectator that "Companies are lobbying (quietly) on Armenian Genocide Bill" (against Armenia).

Since 42 states officially recognize the Armenian Genocide, my second suggestion was to concentrate on getting all 50 states to do so. If that happens, then the federal government, and especially the executive branch, which is supposed to represent all of the people, looks absurd if it too doesn't officially recognize the Genocide. We can't continue to have tunnel vision with respect to the promotion of Genocide recognition or other aspects of Armenia's agenda since these efforts haven't worked. The organization of a "think tank" including non-Armenians dedicated to formulating strategy is another thought. Thinking out of the box is long overdue.

— Adrienne Alexanian
New York City

Azadian Is Taking Prudent Stance toward Obama

To the Editor:

Your correspondent Edmund Azadian must be applauded for the consistently balanced opinions on issues that face Armenians today. He has not been a member of the mob to lynch President Obama because he would not use the "G" word while in Ankara this past April.

Azadian supported, as sufficient, his statement of his support for the Armenians which has not diminished. It seems that it might be more productive to stop waving a red flag in the face of the Turkish bull. Certainly the results of this intransigent has brought nothing but doom

to Turkish-Armenian relations, and these relationships, though apparently irrelevant to many Western Armenians, are vital to the well being of the people in Armenia.

Armenia is not doing too well; part of the problem is the level of poverty that much of the country is in. This can be made better by trade with Turkey. Ask the Turks to apologize for the many hundreds of thousands of deaths, and go ahead with the less than satisfying response, and then forge trade relationships. Frankly; I'd like to see more soccer games.

—Prof. John A. C Greppin
Cleveland State University

Silvergate Is Just Part of Turkish Denial Machination

To the Editor:

The machinations on behalf of Turkey to deny the Armenian Genocide, represented by the lawsuit filed by Harvey Silvergate, et. al., which sought to introduce Turkish propaganda into the Massachusetts Department of Education curriculum guidelines, is a shameless attempt to cast doubt on a well-documented tragedy that fits all of the definitions of genocide.

I'd have more respect for Mr. Silvergate's sincerity if he were also out there defending the free-speech rights of Holocaust deniers. These people are taking advantage of the fact that there isn't visual evidence of this crime as there is for the holocaust. No allied armies came to uncover the killing fields of the Armenians. The Jewish people are granted feelings of universal sympathy for the Holocaust, which is as it should be. But where is the same for the Armenian people? The Armenian victims had to wander aimlessly over long distances while in danger of being hacked to pieces by swords and axes or suffering a slow death by starvation.

The Armenian community of the world not only has to endure the pain of knowing what happened to its forebears, but also the denial of expiation from the perpetrator as well as that gratuitously added by the likes of the Silvergates of the world.

— Berge Tatian
(This letter had been originally sent to



COMMENTARY

Armenian Golgotha Captures True Horrors of the Genocide

By Vartkes Sinanian

I was a little boy living in Nicosia, the capital of the Island of Cyprus. Hagop Oshagan, the famous Armenian novelist and literary critic, was a close friend of my father and was a frequent visitor to our house. At that time Oshagan was working on his novel Remnants, which was based on the Armenian deportations and massacres in the Ottoman Turkish Empire. Oshagan wanted to include my mother's ordeal during the Smyrna holocaust but my mother tearfully resisted his pleas. At one point Oshagan, turning to my father, remarked that the enormity of the crime perpetrated by the Turks was so overwhelming that he doubted if ever anyone would have the courage to attempt to depict that catastrophe of such magnitude with all its disastrous consequences.

Gregoris Balakian's Armenian Golgotha, translated from the original Armenian to English by his grand-nephew Peter Balakian, with Aris Sevag, comes as the closest documentation of that darkest period in our people's history. It opens a window into a disturbing country during World War I, when the world was oblivious to the tragedy unfolding in the Ottoman Turkish Empire. It is also a strong reminder of a terribly frightening chapter of our bloody history. The memoir is a comprehensive account of the killing fields and the bloodbath that followed as well as the systematic ethnic cleansing of the Armenian population as seen and miraculously endured by a victim who was arrested and exiled on that dreadful night of April 24, 1915, in Constantinople along with hundreds of intellectuals and clergy.

Among those well-known intellectuals who were arrested that fateful night were Krikor Zohrab, Vartkes, Daniel Varoujan and Siamanto, who were later murdered. Hundreds of thousands of Armenians were wiped out — Anatolia became a nightmare landscape littered with human skulls and limbs of men, women and children. This diabolical plan was the work of the Interior Minister Talaat and his henchmen Enver, Jemal and Behaeddin Shakir. The once prosperous and vibrant Armenian population of the towns and villages were deported to Der Zor, "that graveyard without tombstones," in the north of Syria. "The Ittihad government had caught us in one net in a single night," he writes, "We move towards our graves, nameless and unknown to be buried forever."

Gregoris Balakian was born in 1876. He was one of the outstanding clergymen of his generation. Educated at Sanasarian College in Erzerum, he later went to Germany for higher studies. He was ordained a priest and served as an emissary of the Holy See in Europe. After surviving the Armenian Genocide, he was elected prelate of Marseilles in the south of France until his death in 1934. His escape through the killing fields in disguise as a German is a suspenseful narrative, which he wrote as a fugitive in a vineyard in Cilicia.

Unfortunately the Armenian leadership considered the Ittihad government as their ideo-

logical comrades who had come with the ultimate aim of democratizing the entire country. They were unaware of the murderous plan which was unfolding around them. Writing about Khachadour Maloumian (Agnouni) the political leader who was one of the early victims, he writes "The unfortunate Agnouni, being an idealistic and honorable man, could not comprehend how Talaat could plot against him cynically — the same Talaat whom he had sheltered in order to save Talaat's life while risking his own during the counter revolution."

Yet another incident, which comes to our mind, is the case of the prominent member of the Turkish parliament Krikor Zohrab who expressed disbelief about Talaat's hand in his arrest. Zohrab was at Talaat's home the night before his arrest playing cards with him and to Zohrab's astonishment, Talaat had kissed him goodnight before departing. Even when the

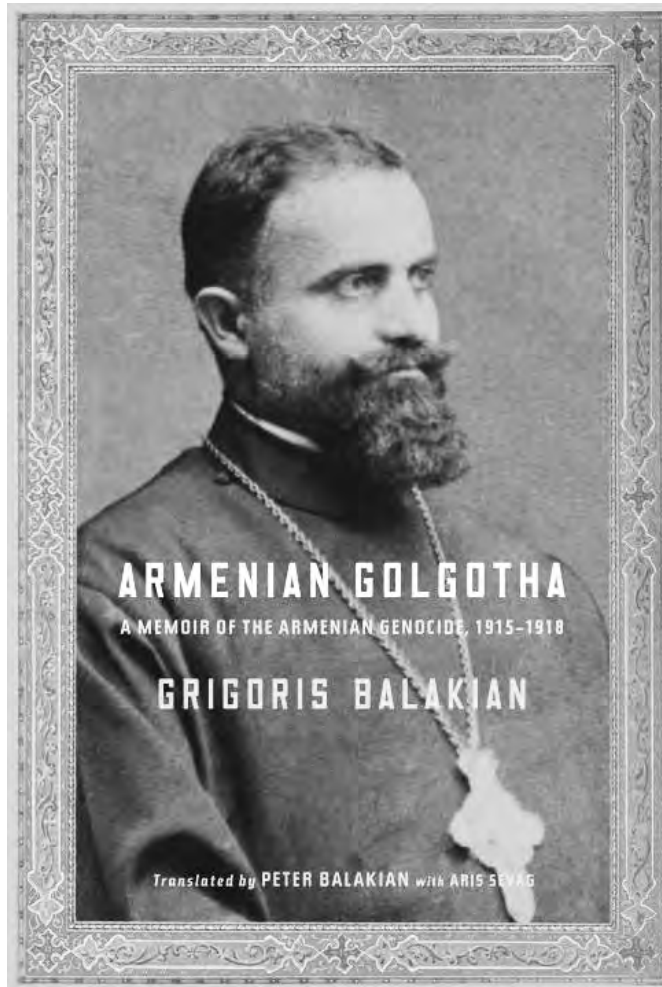
death's shadow was chasing them they were naive of the danger lurking around them. Talaat had issued an order, which precisely said, "It is necessary to eradicate the Armenians. For if 1,000 Armenians are left alive by some misfortune, before long they will become 100,000 and again they will be trouble for the Turkish government." Talaat had a mission to accomplish in a most heinous way.

Balakian is witness to the hundreds of thousands of his countrymen sent by carts and by foot to the scorching Syrian desert to be raped, decapitated and die from hunger and thirst. He writes "Hundreds of chetes (irregulars) attacked from all sides, cutting and hacking off legs and arms with axes and hatchets, ripping them off partly or entirely and crushing heads with rocks. Then the bodies were thrown half alive, or in the throes of death into prepared ditches and covered with lime. Those were partly sticking out of the dirt and the lime made the heavenly arches resound with their cries of agony; more dirt was poured on them until they were buried alive." It is the horrific story of blood and tears, death and mourning all over. It is mind-numbing in its brutality and savagery. It reminds us of Dante Alighieri's classic Inferno — the journey through different levels of hell encountering all forms of chaos in each, which precisely reflects our people's Golgotha. In the Inferno, though the sinner reaps what he sows while in our case the "open wound" is left unhealed.

Armenian Golgotha is a memoir of horror and endurance. About a century later our grief and outrage have not diminished and we are so traumatized that the past is still very present in our

lives. It reveals the enduring power of the Armenian people and its faith in resurrection even under critical circumstances. It is also the ultimate rebuke to those who deny the Armenian Genocide.

(Vartkes Sinanian lives in Montrose, Calif.)



Lebanon Feels the Obama Effect

The Pro-West Coalition's Narrow Win in Beirut Is first Indication US president's Middle East Message Being Heard

By Simon Tisdall

Foreign policy experts and commentators have been trying to elucidate an "Obama doctrine" ever since the new US president took office. Lebanon's surprise election result, in which a pro-western coalition narrowly triumphed, suggests these analysts have got things the wrong way round. Whatever the theory may be, the Beirut turnabout is the first, circumstantial evidence of a tangible "Obama effect" in the Middle East. It could be catching.

It would be fanciful to claim that Obama's bridge-building speech to the Muslim world in Cairo last week, attractive though it was, crucially influenced Lebanese voters. But the calmer, unfrontational tone adopted by Washington on Middle East issues since George Bush trudged home to Texas appears

to have struck a chord in a country that was teetering on the brink of sectarian civil war one year ago.

Pre-election visits by Hillary Clinton, the US secretary of state, and Joe Biden, the US vice-president, underscored the importance that Obama attached to the poll. Some resented these interventions as unwarranted interference. But many Lebanese, particularly the nearly 40% of the population that is Christian, seem to have approved of Washington's increased engagement; and to have heard its implicit message that a vote for Hezbollah and its allies would be a backwards step.

That refrain was underscored by exaggerated claims that Hezbollah and its Tehran backers, if further empowered, would turn Lebanon into a second Gaza. And if that was not enough, an eve-of-poll demarche by Boutros Sfeir, spiritual leader of the country's Maronite Christians, may have done the trick. He warned the country was in danger. It was clear from whom he believed the danger emanated.

By giving the nod to Saad Hariri and his 14 March bloc of Sunni Muslim, Druze and Christian parties, which won 71 parliamentary seats against 57 for the opposition, Lebanon has provided Obama with his first significant regional policy success. The result is a setback for Iran, which has sought enhanced influence via Hezbollah.

And it confirmed Lebanon's 2005 rejection of Syria as the master manipulator of its affairs, confounding suggestions that Damascus was inching back.

The results are also a boost for western-leaning Arab regimes, such as Egypt and Saudi Arabia that helped prevent Lebanon falling into the abyss after the assassination of Hariri's father, the former Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri, and the subsequent, disastrous Hezbollah-Israel war of 2006. Saudi Arabia's rapprochement with Syria, and a parallel warming of ties between Syria and the US, will be all the easier to pursue as a result of Sunday's election.

In contrast, the rightwing Israeli government of Binyamin Netanyahu may view the vote with ambivalence. The prospect of the non-ideological Hariri as Lebanon's prime minister, a likely though not yet certain outcome, must be welcome in Tel Aviv. But this dash to moderation robs Israel's favorite contemporary narrative — the inexorable, region-wide advance of an existentially threatening, nuclear armed Iran — of some of its power to alarm.

Peace suddenly breaking out is not part of the story as told by Netanyahu, not while the mullahs march unchecked. The Palestinians know this only too well.

Visiting London earlier this year, Hariri spoke of "four fateful years" that had followed his father's murder culminating in

this month's "historic" election. "We are determined to end the sectarian violence. We want to put the years of turmoil behind us," he said. This could be achieved by continuing the dialogue with Hezbollah and other opposition groups that produced a unity government last year. Noting increased US engagement, he urged the EU to do more.

Hariri will need all the help he can get, for power-sharing is only one of many daunting challenges. His ally, Walid Jumblatt, the veteran Druze leader, said this week that Hezbollah should be included in a new unity government but that the veto power it gained in last year's compromise should not be renewed. The Shia party will fiercely resist any attempt to reduce its influence, just as it continues to resist demands that it disarm.

Massive economic difficulties, the uncertain impact of the international tribunal investigating Rafiq Hariri's murder, problems with Palestinian factions and Sunni militants linked to al-Qaeda and border disputes with Israel and Syria also await Lebanon's new leaders. None of this will be sorted out quickly if at all.

But Hariri has a powerful friend. Having got the result he wanted, Obama will help. And who knows? It's possible that watching Iranians will be encouraged in their turn to go out and vote for reformist, west-friendly candidates in Friday's presidential election. Lebanon may be just the beginning of the "Obama effect."

(This article originally appeared in the Guardian on June 8.)



COMMENTARY

Turkey to Buy Russian Night Hunter Helicopters

By Ilya Kramnik

A Turkish military delegation has come to Russia to discuss the possible acquisition of Mi-28 attack helicopters. This is not the first time the two countries have discussed cooperation.

In the 1970s and the early 1980s, Turkey bought 32 used AH-1P/S Cobra attack helicopters in the United States and later upgraded them to the AH-1F specifications. The Turkish army still has 23 AH-1P/S Cobras.

However, Turkish military authorities started thinking about replacing them in the mid-1990s.

During the subsequent tender they considered

several models of combat helicopters, including the Ka-50-2 Erdogan, a version of the Russian Ka-50 Black Shark developed by Russia and Israel for Turkey. Unlike the Ka-50 where the pilots sit side-by-side, the seats in the Erdogan are placed in tandem as in the US Cobra chopper.

However, Turkey did not choose the Kamov helicopter for political reasons, such as growing

US influence in Turkey and, conversely, the lack of Russian influence. Also, Russia could not then guarantee the timely production of the required number of new helicopters or post-sale service. Lastly, the Ka-50 was not mass-produced even for the Russian army at that time.

An updated Cobra with new weapons and equipment was the most probable winner in the Turkish tender, but the contract was eventually awarded to a European producer, the Anglo-Italian AgustaWestland, which proudly proclaims to be “a total rotorcraft capability provider.”

AgustaWestland, announced as the winning bidder in March 2007, pledged to assemble 50 T129 prototypes in Turkey. However, the first T129 will be rolled out only in 2015, whereas Turkey needs choppers now to fight Kurdish militants.

The purchase of seven used AH-1W SuperCobras in 2008 has not solved the problem either. Turkey needs modern attack helicopters to fill the gap until 2015 and for several more years while its pilots learn to fly the T129 choppers.

As a result, Turkey has decided to purchase Russian machines. It has opted for the Mi-28N Night Hunter, which, unlike the Ka-50, has been mass-produced since the 1990s and is supplied to the Russian Armed Forces.

Turkey may buy between 12 and 32 helicopters within two or three years. It is unclear if it wants the choppers with or without top-mounted radar, which is an extremely expensive option.

The Turkish military had once considered buying the Mi-24 Crocodile, which has several common structural elements with the Mi-28. The Mi-17 multirole helicopter is currently used in Turkey for military, police and civilian purposes.

Significantly, the Mil helicopters have for years been used in similar terrain in the Caucasus, Central Asia and the Middle East. Moreover, Russia's influence and relations with Turkey have grown dramatically and many contradictions in bilateral ties have been smoothed over since the 1990s.

Therefore, Turkey could buy the Mi-28, whose track record over the past 20 years and the initial results of its combat use show that this highly versatile helicopter could remain on combat duty even after the T129 assembly start-up in Turkey.

And the final touch: the protection and combat payload specifications of the T129 are below those of the Mi-28.

(This opinion piece by RIA Novosti military commentator Ilya Kramnik was published in June.)

Dr. Avedis Khachadurian Should Have Shared Nobel Prize

By Nubar Dorian

PRINCETON, N.J. — There was little public fanfare, upon the retirement of Dr. Avedis Khachadurian of Princeton. Hackensack University of Medicine and Dentistry had established a chair in his honor in October 2008. As a result, congratulations poured in from all across the medical world. Among them was a letter dated October 28, 2008, signed by Doctors Michael S. Brown and Joseph L. Goldstein, of Southwestern Medical Center, Department of Molecular Genetics, who shared the Nobel Prize in 1985. It states in part, “Your insightful and groundbreaking studies in the genetics of homozygous familial hypercholesterolemia (FH) in Lebanon were of primary importance in attracting us to this field.” They continue to tell him, “We are forever grateful that your genetic insights were correct, without [which] the complete defect in fibroblasts would never have been revealed.”

It is very interesting and should gladden all Armenians across the world to know that an abstract was published on the “objectivity” of leading scientists in light of their citation of other people's work when they are presenting their own work. It goes on further to state “As an illustrative example of subjective citation, we show evidence that Khachadurian was a major contributor to the discoveries which led to the diagnosis and mechanism of FH.” The evidence indicates that Khachadurian at least should have shared the Nobel Prize in 1985.

His remarkable and inspiring journey began in Beirut, Lebanon. After graduating from the American University of Beirut in 1957, he chose as his specialty biochemistry and metabolism and for two years attended Joslin Clinic and Harvard Medical School. Returning to Beirut, he was appointed assistant professor of biochemistry and internal medicine; then, associate professor from 1959 through 1971, when he became professor of biochemistry. While burdened with all the duties and responsibilities of his position, he was invited to lecture at medical schools and medical conferences in the Middle East and Europe.

Khachadurian's fame and name in his field, and his passionate desire to do research, finally landed him in the US. At the invitation of the Northwestern University Medical School in Chicago, he accepted the position of professor of pediatrics and director of the Clinical Center Northwestern University McGaw Medical Center and Children's Memorial Hospital. From 1972 through 1973 he became consultant, Atherosclerosis Program, University of Chicago's Pritzker

School of Medicine. During all this time, Khachadurian was deluged with invitations for lectures and conferences and traveled worldwide to impart his knowledge and results of his research.

As teaching and research had become his passion, he could not pass up the opportunity offered to him and accepted to become a faculty member, graduate program in biochemistry, Rutgers University-University of Medicine and Chief, Division of Endocrinology, Metabolism and Nutrition, Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, New Brunswick, NJ. Avedis Khachadurian and his charming wife, Lora, and their two daughters moved to Princeton, where they reside presently.

The medical world knows that grants come only to those researchers who experience inevitable pain and suffering in solitude, know disappointment, despair and defeat but never quit. They want to fight sickness, suffering and pain. Khachadurian was such a distinguished physician-researcher-teacher. The grant history of Avedis Khachadurian — more than \$3,000,000 — as a principal investigator, lists among them such world-famous institutions and companies as Johnson and Johnson, Merck, Squibb, Warner Lambert, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Bayer and Novart along with the American Heart Association, National Institute of Health, Cardiovascular Research Institute, Juvenile Diabetes Foundation, just to name a few. As a co-principal investigator, he received more than \$5,000,000 from all across the medical world in search of new and better ways to heal and help.

In addition to teaching and doing research, he miraculously found time to write hundreds of articles, monographs, abstracts and upon invitation, submitted chapters for medical books used to this day. He still, even after his retirement, serves on the Board of American Diabetes Association and continues to serve on many national and regional assignments such as the Governor's Commission on Diabetes, Research Peer Review Committee, American Heart Association and serves on the editorial boards of Journal of Biological Chemistry, Journal of Clinical Nutrition and Metabolism.

Almost everything we do showcases us and that is how image is made.

Avedis Khachadurian is not part of the culture of our times bound by its conventional superficialities. For him, compromise is simply justified only when what is to be gained is of greater importance than what is lost in the compromising. All of his colleagues and friends respect and love him not only for his brilliant mind, but also for his refusal to be a slave to worldly praise, influence, power and fame. Khachadurian is truly the finest example for our children who wish to pursue the noble profession of healing the sick.

(Nubar Dorian resides in Cliffside Park, NJ.)



By Harut Sassounian

Israel's New Ambassador to the US Calls Armenian Killings “Genocide”

Israel's new ambassador to the United States, Michael B. Oren, is a firm believer in the veracity of the Armenian Genocide, despite his government's denialist position on this issue.

Prior to his ambassadorial appointment, Oren repeatedly confirmed the facts of the Armenian Genocide in his writings. In the May 10, 2007 issue of the New York Review of Books, he wrote a highly positive review of Taner Akcam's book: A Shameful Act: The Armenian Genocide and the Question of Turkish Responsibility. The review was titled: “The Mass Murder They Still Deny.”

In his most recent book, Power, Faith and Fantasy, Oren made dozens of references to Armenia and Armenians, including lengthy heart-wrenching descriptions of the mass killings before and during the Armenian Genocide. Here are some of the most striking quotations from his book:

“The buildup of Ottoman oppression and Armenian anger erupted finally in the spring of 1894, when Turkish troops set out to crush a local rebellion, but then went on to raze entire villages and slaughter all of their inhabitants.... Some 200,000 Armenians died — 20 percent of the population — and a million homes were ransacked. ‘Armenian holocaust,’ cried a New York Times headline in

September 1895, employing the word that would later become synonymous with genocide.”

Oren then went on to establish that more than a century ago, similar to today's acrimonious political tug-of-war over the genocide recognition issue, the Armenian atrocities seriously affected US-Turkish relations. He wrote: “Maintaining amicability with Turkey would prove complicated, however, because ties between the United States and the Porte [Sultan] had long been frayed. The perennial source of friction was the oppression of Armenian Christians. Though a band of modernizing Young Turks, many of them graduates of Roberts College, had achieved power in Istanbul in 1908 and promised equal rights for all of the empire's citizens, barely a year passed before the slaughter of Armenians resumed. Some thirty thousand of them were butchered by Turkish troops in south-central Anatolia.”

In a section titled, “The most horrible crime in human history,” Oren wrote: “The first reports, from December 1914, told of anti-Christian pogroms in Bitlis, in eastern Turkey, and the hanging of hundreds of Armenians in the streets of Erzerum. Armenian men between the ages of twenty and sixty were being conscripted into forced-labor battalions, building roads, and hauling supplies for the Turkish army. The following month, after their defeat by Russian forces in the Caucasus, Turkish troops salved their humiliation by pillaging Armenian towns and executing their Armenian laborers. In the early spring, Turkish soldiers laid siege to the Armenian city of Van in eastern Anatolia and began the first of innumerable mass deportations. The slaughter then raged westward to Istanbul, where, on April 24, security forces arrested and hanged some 250 Armenian leaders and torched Armenian neighborhoods. Interior Minister Talaat Pasha informed the Armenian Patriarch that ‘there was no room for Christians in Turkey’ and advised him and his parishioners ‘to clear out of the country.’”

Oren then exposed Turkey's attempts to falsify history by

pointing out that: “Most contemporary observers agree that the massacres were scarcely connected to the war, but rather represented a systematically planned and executed program to eliminate an entire people. Indeed, foreshadowing the Nazi genocide of the Jews twenty-five years later, Turkish soldiers herded entire Armenian villages into freezing rivers, incinerated them in burning churches, or simply marched them into the deserts and abandoned them to die of thirst.... By the end of summer, an estimated 800,000 Armenians had been killed and countless others forcibly converted to Islam.”

After citing numerous eyewitness accounts of the mass killings, Oren concluded: “In all, as many as 1.5 million Armenians were killed in a genocide that the Turkish government would never acknowledge, much less regret.”

While it is true that Michael Oren published this book before his assignment as Ambassador to Washington, his compelling position on the Armenian Genocide would hopefully make him refrain from following the footsteps of his predecessors who shamefully lobbied against the congressional resolution on this issue.

The appointment of a staunch supporter of the truth of the Armenian Genocide as Israel's Ambassador to Washington comes on the heels of a serious rift between Turkey and Israel following the Gaza war earlier this year. On that occasion, there were major manifestations of anti-Semitic statements and acts throughout Turkey, including anti-Israeli remarks by Turkish Prime Minister Recep Erdogan. His insulting words to Israel's President Shimon Peres in Davos, Switzerland, antagonized Israelis and Jews worldwide. Even though Israel downplayed Erdogan's offensive words, they did a lasting damage to Israeli-Turkish relations.

The combination of an Israeli government that is less sympathetic of Turkey and the presence of Israel's Ambassador in Washington who is a firm believer in the facts of the Armenian Genocide may facilitate the passage of the pending congressional resolution on the Armenian Genocide.



Lives Frozen by Conflict

STEPANAKERT
(Institute for War and
Peace Reporting) –
With no sign of

By Karine Ohanian, Seymour Kyazimov Baku and Gegham Vardanian

Karabagh stand-off being resolved, refugees will remain in legal and economic limbo, their lives frozen by the frozen conflict.

Some 15 years have passed since a ceasefire was signed in the Nagorno Karabagh conflict, yet the people forced out of their homes by the fighting have still not found peace. They still suffer from homesickness, poverty, discomfort and legal difficulties.

Refugees in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Karabagh “a majority-Armenian territory that broke free of Azeri control with the collapse of the Soviet Union, and unilaterally declared independence” have said they feel abandoned in the student hostels, old hotels, schools and offices they now call home.

“Refugees today would like to forget that they are refugees, but this does not happen. What we lived through is unforgettable,” said Sarasar Sarian, an Armenian from Baku now living in Karabagh.

Ethnic tensions between Armenians and Azeris boiled over in the late 1980s, when the Karabagh Armenians petitioned Moscow to detach their region from Azerbaijan and cede it to Armenia. Reciprocal demonstrations in Baku turned violent, leading to violence in Karabagh and Armenia. Riots between the two communities forced hundreds of thousands of civilians to flee each others’ countries, although at that time they were all citizens of the Soviet Union.

With independence in 1991 came war. At the ceasefire in May 1994, Armenian forces were occupying 14 per cent of Azerbaijan proper. At least 800,000 Azeris had fled to Azerbaijan from Armenia and parts of their own country seeking safety.

Since the war is not technically over, these people are still desperately hoping one day they can return to their homes.

“The problems of the forced migrants will be resolved when they return to their homes. The

government of Azerbaijan is already drawing up a plan of return,” said Sanan Huseynov, head spokesman for Azerbaijan’s State Committee for the Affairs of Refugees and Forced Migrants.

He said the government was building accommodation for the refugees, and had set up whole villages in the Beylagan, Khajavend and Goranboy regions.

“Forced migrants live in some military bases,” he said. “There are around 11,000 middle schools, half of which are occupied by forced migrants. We also plan to resettle [them] by 2011. In Baku, there are also some places where forced migrants continue to live in terrible conditions. We are building new houses.”

Before 1991, Baku was a city with a very large Armenian population, many of whom spoke only Russian between themselves, a legacy of the Russian language’s role as the lingua franca of the former Soviet Union. As a rich city, with a booming oil industry, it had attracted immigrants from all across the South Caucasus and beyond.

Fleeing Azerbaijan, these 500,000 Armenians primarily moved to Armenia proper, which is to the west of Azerbaijan. Many of them settled in Karabagh, however, where they took the place of Azeri refugees fleeing eastwards.

Since Karabagh’s independence has not been recognized by other countries, they are technically not refugees, but internally displaced people, IDPs a source of considerable bitterness, since that cuts them off from much international aid.

“In this question, the international community is guilty of double standards,” Sarian said. “Because we live in an unrecognized republic, international organizations like the Danish Refugee Council or the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) do not recognize us as refugees,

and we do not have the right to receive international humanitarian

an aid, which goes to refugees in Azerbaijan.”

UNHCR, which has to help refugees while negotiating the complex legal tangle of the South Caucasus’ frozen conflict, said such IDPs were the responsibility of the Azerbaijan government.

“For the IDPs from Nagorno Karabagh, it is clear that they have the right to return to their places of origin with safety and dignity,” said Arun Sala-Ngarm, UNHCR’s newly-appointed representative in Azerbaijan.

Victoria Taliskhanova, UNHCR assistant program officer, said the agency was now focused on trying to help refugees raise their standard of living and access to services available to ordinary citizens.

“The main aim of our donors is an improvement in forced migrants’ social conditions, the creation of conditions for education and work, the prevention of sexual or gender-based violence, the support of sport and education and so on,” she said.

On the Armenian side, the concerns are similar. Armenia and Azerbaijan still lack diplomatic ties. Since Azerbaijan has been supported by its ally Turkey, that has left Armenia in an almost total blockade, effectively only with access through Georgia to the outside world.

Some 360,000 of the half-million Armenians who fled Azerbaijan ended up in Armenia, and most of them are poor even by the standards of their impoverished country. A survey in 2007 showed that less than 10 percent of them managed to take their wealth or property out of Azerbaijan with them, most having fled just with what they were carrying.

“The social problems of refugees are extremely urgent. The housing problem is still not resolved, and added to that refugees can only find work with great difficulty,” said Nikolai Babajanian, himself a Baku Armenian who lived in a hut for 14 years until he managed to obtain a one-room apartment.

The Yerevan government is steadily trying to build housing for refugees, but the process is slow, and refugees are often forced to find housing by themselves. In the first years of the influx, Armenian arrivals were able to exchange their houses with Azeris going in the opposite direction, and most of them are now relatively well-off.

“We have our own land, we farm livestock, we sow and we reap, and we live okay,” said Albert Dalakian, who fled Baku and has lived for 20 years now in an Azeri’s house in the village of Ranchpar.

But they were the lucky ones. There are 1,000 refugees in the village, and many of them did not manage to exchange their houses before they left Baku.

Analysts see no signs that the Karabagh stand-off could be resolved any time soon, meaning that the refugees in both countries and in the territory itself will remain in legal and economic limbo, their lives frozen by the frozen conflict.

IMF Approves Increase in Armenia’s Financial Support to \$822.7 Million

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – The Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) this week completed the first review of Armenia’s economic performance under a Stand-By Arrangement (SBA) and approved an increase in the IMF’s financial support to an amount equivalent to \$822.7 million; or 580 percent of Armenia’s quota. An official from the IMF Armenia office said that these decisions enable the immediate release of about \$158.3 million, bringing the total disbursed to \$400 million. The board also granted a waiver of performance criteria on net banking system credit to the government and the program’s fiscal balance.

The revised arrangement will support the government’s economic program amid a sharper-than-expected impact from the global financial crisis. The 28-month SBA was approved on March 6.

The key objectives of the program are to help Armenia adjust to the external shock, maintain confidence in the currency and the financial system, and protect the poor. The sharp contraction in economic activity, the fall in remittances, an increase in unemployment, and difficult conditions in credit markets require an easing of macroeconomic policies and the implementation of several measures to stimulate domestic demand and create new jobs.

Following the Executive Board’s discussion on Armenia, Murilo Portugal, deputy managing director and acting chair, stated: “Since the approval of the stand-by arrangement in March 2009, the external economic outlook has deteriorated significantly for Armenia. Falling private transfers and capital inflows have aggravated external imbalances and affected household incomes and investor confidence. Construction activity, the main driver of growth

in previous years, has collapsed, and the economy is experiencing a deep contraction.

“The additional financial assistance from the Fund will help cover Armenia’s growing financing needs, while the recalibration of the authorities’ economic program will help them better respond to the deepening downturn. The program envisages an easing of monetary and fiscal policy to mitigate the severity of the crisis, while laying the ground for future fiscal consolidation primarily through one-off investment expenditures and measures to strengthen tax policy and administration. The authorities remain firmly committed to achieving the program’s objectives of adjusting to the changed external environment, supporting confidence in the currency and the banking system, and protecting the poor.

“Following the successful return to a flexible exchange rate, monetary policy will focus on maintaining low inflation. With the fall in inflation rates, the recent reductions of policy interest rates are appropriate. In addition, the authorities are taking active measures to provide liquidity to the banking system and help resume lending. Fiscal policy will provide crucial support by accelerating growth-enhancing investment in infrastructure and strengthening social safety nets.

“As external conditions improve in 2010, growth is expected to resume gradually. The short-term outlook remains, however, very challenging. Continued reforms will be necessary to boost the medium-term growth potential of the economy, including efforts to improve the business climate, completion of the unfinished tax policy and tax administration reform agenda, and progress on financial sector reforms,” Portugal said.

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