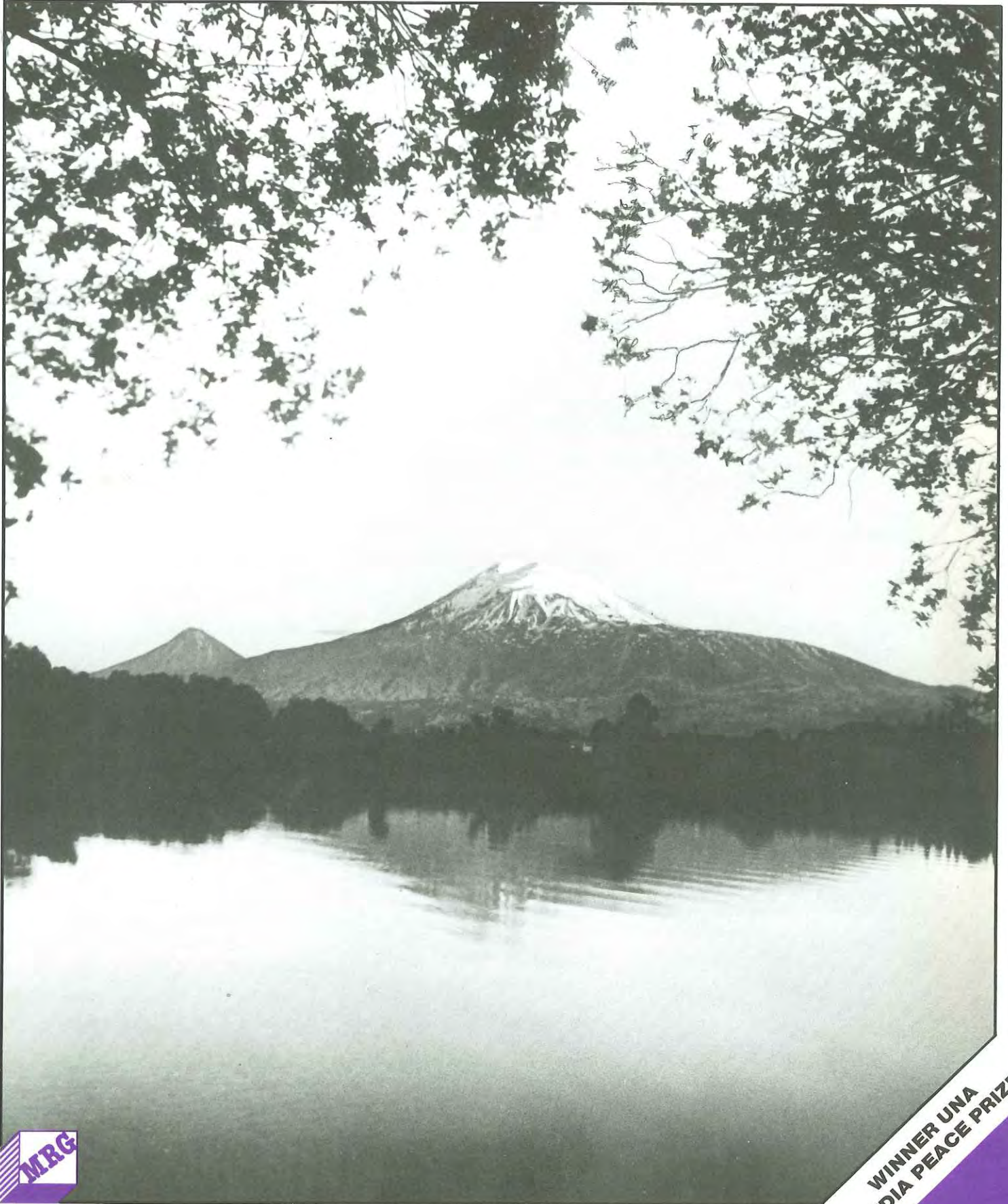


The Armenians

A Minority Rights Group Report



THE MINORITY RIGHTS GROUP

is an international research and information unit registered in Britain as an educational charity under the Charities Act of 1960. Its principal aims are –

- To secure justice for minority or majority groups suffering discrimination, by investigating their situation and publicising the facts as widely as possible, to educate and alert public opinion throughout the world.
- To help prevent, through publicity about violations of human rights, such problems from developing into dangerous and destructive conflicts which, when polarised, are very difficult to resolve; and
- To foster, by its research findings, international understanding of the factors which create prejudiced treatment and group tensions, thus helping to promote the growth of a world conscience regarding human rights.

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The Armenians

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The cover photograph is of Mount Ararat, an important symbol of nationhood for all Armenians.

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THE UNITED NATIONS UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.

Whereas disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from any fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people,

Whereas it is essential, if a man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law,

Whereas it is essential to promote the development of friendly relations between nations,

Whereas the peoples of the United Nations have in the Charter reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

Whereas Member States have pledged themselves to achieve, in co-operation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Whereas a common understanding of these rights and freedoms is of the greatest importance for the full realization of this pledge,

Now, Therefore,

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY proclaims

THIS UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

Article 1. All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 2. Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

Article 3. Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

Article 4. No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

Article 5. No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 6. Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

Article 7. All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

Article 8. Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.

Article 9. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

Article 10. Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

Article 11. (1) Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defence.

(2) No one shall be held guilty of any penal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offence was committed.

Article 12. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

Article 13. (1) Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state.

(2) Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

Article 14. (1) Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.

(2) This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 15. (1) Everyone has the right to a nationality.

(2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.

Article 16. (1) Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.

(2) Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.

(3) The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.

Article 17. (1) Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others.

(2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

Article 18. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

Article 19. Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Article 20. (1) Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.

(2) No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

Article 21. (1) Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.

(2) Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country.

(3) The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

Article 22. Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

Article 23. (1) Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.

(2) Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.

(3) Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.

(4) Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interest.

Article 24. Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

Article 25. (1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

(2) Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

Article 26. (1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.

(2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

(3) Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

Article 27. (1) Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.

(2) Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.

Article 28. Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized.

Article 29. (1) Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible.

(2) In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society.

(3) These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 30. Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.

INTRODUCTION

The history of Armenia over the past 100 years is, like that of few other nations, a highly political subject, which has been bitterly contested. Events which happened during World War I in the highlands of Armenia still stir passions in the lobbies of Washington DC, in articles and political advertisements in the American press, and in university departments of Middle Eastern history. This report will try to explore the nature of the conflict.

The dispute today with Turkey is not principally about territory or frontiers, or about Turkish treatment of the remaining Armenians within Turkey today, although these elements are nevertheless important; it is about what Turkey did to the Armenian population of what was then the Ottoman Empire at the time of World War I. Armenians, and most impartial students of the matter, claim that this amounted to a genocide, in the course of which about 1½ million of the people died. It constituted a massive crime; it was an official attempt to liquidate the Armenian question by exterminating the Armenians. The measures had the further intention of facilitating the Turkish 'great idea' of pan-Turkism (that is, the political unity of all the Turkish-speaking peoples from the Balkans to Siberia). The Turks and their supporters vehemently oppose any talk of genocide; they claim that Armenian figures are exaggerated, and that the events of that time would be best characterized as a civil war between Armenians and Turks. Turks suffered from many harsh Armenian reprisals, they point out.

Although the Armenian question received widespread publicity from about 1894 to 1923 (when the Treaty of Lausanne effectively closed the issue in world diplomacy), thereafter there was virtual silence on the subject until 1965. It suited all parties to keep quiet. The Soviet government had no desire to permit expression of irredentist views within Soviet Armenia (except briefly in 1945); the western world was happy to forget its statements of support for Armenians in its rush to support the modernization programme of Turkey's new dynamic leader, Mustafa Kemal (Ataturk). The half-million Armenian refugees were too busy living a hand-to-mouth existence in their adoptive countries to give any thought of mounting effective campaigns to redress their wrongs; and the Armenian political parties of the diaspora which led them were too absorbed in fighting amongst themselves to unite and press a broad claim against Turkey.

Some of this political and ideological landscape has changed in the last 10 to 20 years. Consequently, Armenian appeals against Turkey are heard more, and not less, strongly as the years pass. Turkey itself remains very sensitive on the subject of the Armenians, even though the events in question took place before the foundation of the Turkish Republic; it prefers not to raise the subject at all. The Soviet government for its part seeks good relations with Turkey, and has repeated that it has no territorial claims against her; nevertheless members of the government of the Armenian SSR take part in the annual commemoration of the events of 1915. And while most western governments remain staunchly pro-Turkish – indeed the Turkish desk at the US State Department in Washington DC appears to act rather more as a Turkish than an American government agency – yet some European leaders (notably President Mitterrand of France) have shown considerable support for the Armenian view, unafraid of the animosity of Turkey. Within the Armenian community itself there is a somewhat grudging spirit of unity abroad now, which makes joint commemorations and other events possible, something which could not have occurred 15 years ago.

When Armenian protests re-emerged in 1965, on the fiftieth anniversary of the massacre, they were ignored and brushed aside. The silence to which all groups had been party had been effective. Turkey itself had evolved an 'official' version of history which excluded any reference to Armenians except as sinister forces conspiring to deny Turkey its true destiny. They were never viewed as a people with legitimate aspirations, for whose plight the Turks, as their imperial rulers, might have had some responsibility.

In the face of the stony blankness of the Turkish response, and the connivance of Turkey's allies (who have been curiously servile in allowing Turkey to forget about Armenians), the renewed Armenian campaign for recognition and rights – even if only the right to one's history – has suffered some frustration. Armenians are primarily looking for recognition of what happened to their people, but have felt walled in by the opportunistic silence which

surrounds the truth about their people's recent past. Some Armenians have since 1975 taken the path of terrorism, claiming in their propaganda that the world has paid them no other attention since 1915 – although it should be pointed out that few Armenians anywhere made any international claims as regards their grievances from 1923 to 1965, and the political campaign which Armenians have fought since that date has not been particularly strong or systematic. Most recently, Armenian lobbying activities have been better co-ordinated and have achieved some successes; and terrorism appears to have died out. It is possible that the two phenomena are connected.

Armenian pressure groups have, despite the opposition, made some headway with their cause – *Hai tad* in Armenian – on four fronts in the last few years. In the first place, the independent 'Permanent Peoples' Tribunal', composed of distinguished international jurists, meeting in Paris in 1984, found Turkey guilty of genocide 'according to the Convention of 9 December 1948'. (The proceedings and verdict of the Tribunal have been published; see Bibliography, below.) Secondly, Armenians in the United States are pressing for a House Joint Resolution (No. 192) to be adopted by Congress. This resolution seeks to declare 24 April, the day on which Armenians worldwide commemorate the genocide of 1915, a US national day of remembrance of man's inhumanity to man. The move is being vigorously opposed by the Turkish government and its agencies. Thirdly, a report has been prepared by Mr. Ben Whitaker (Director, Minority Rights Group) for the United Nations Sub-commission on Human Rights at Geneva, which, in the course of proposing reforms of the 1948 UN Convention on Genocide, cited the Turkish extermination of Armenians of 1915 as an example of the crime. The report was accepted by the Sub-commission. And fourthly, the Political Committee of the European Parliament at Strasbourg has decided that the Armenian question is a fit matter for the European Assembly to concern itself with. None of these measures have as yet led to any significant growth in public awareness of the Armenian situation, or to a belief that Armenia is a legitimate subject for international political discourse; but they undoubtedly constitute a start. For decades Armenians have only thought of duties; now they are thinking of rights.

* * * * *

This report, originally issued in 1976, has been revised to take account of recent developments within the Armenian community, and Turkish attitudes to the Armenian question. However, the emphasis of the earlier edition remains as it was, in order to cast the cold eye of historical and archeological research on the – in the words of the earlier edition – 'elaborate and quite fanciful ideas that the Turks (who, of course, settled in Turkey from Central Asia some ten centuries ago) are really the original inhabitants of Armenia and Asia Minor'.

Part I – THE ARMENIAN PEOPLE

Armenia

The Armenian homeland, known historically as Great Armenia, comprises a large area of mountainous country. If we take the western boundary as situated between Kharput and Malatya in Turkey, and the eastern boundary between Khoi in Persian Azerbaijan, and the Soviet Karabagh, this makes a distance of over 450 miles 'as the crow flies'. From Armenia's northern border between Ardahan and Lake Sevan, southwards to the traditional frontier with Kurdistan, below Lake Van, measures some 250 miles. Allowing for the country's irregular shape, we arrive at an area of not less than 100,000 square miles.

The revised *Encyclopaedia of Islam* includes within 'historical Armenia' – the Arminiyya of the Arab Abbasid geographers – much of present-day Kurdistan, including the Hakkari country. According to that authority, Great Armenia takes in all land between longitudes 37° and 49° East, and latitudes 37.5° and 41.5° North. This encyclopaedia estimates a total area for Arminiyya of about 300,000 square kilometres, or 115,000 square miles. Lesser Armenia during the Middle Ages was a district of north-western Armenia, adjoining what is now the Turkish-Kurdish city of

Erzinjan. From the 11th to the 14th centuries, there existed an important Armenian kingdom in Cilicia, north of the Gulf of Alexandretta, and including St. Paul's birthplace of Tarsus and the modern city of Adana. This kingdom was ruled by the Armenian dynasty of the Rupenids, and then by the French Lusignans. It fell to the Mamluks of Egypt in 1375. Cilicia is also known as 'Little Armenia'.

Soviet Armenia today takes in only 10% of the territory of ancient Great Armenia, comprising 29,800 square kilometres. Within the Soviet Union, several Armenian ethnic areas are enclosed as enclaves within the Azerbaijan SSR, the most important one being the mountainous Karabagh, which is still 80% Armenian.

Modern maps of Turkey exclude all mention of Armenia. The area once known as Turkish Armenia is now shown as being unquestionably part of Turkey, and many Armenian place names have been replaced by Turkish forms. All mention of 'Turkish Armenia' is prohibited.

Parts of Armenia, notably the River Araxes valley, and the Van district, are fertile and beautiful. However, this is true of less than a quarter of Armenia's overall territory. Far from being a 'land of milk and honey', the larger part of Armenia is virtually uninhabitable. The landscape is cut up by enormous mountains, many being extinct volcanoes over 10,000 feet high. Armenia's highest peak, Mount Ararat, rises to 17,000 feet. The average height of the Armenian plateau is over 5000 feet. This windswept region has a harsh climate, winter continuing for seven months, and the short, dry summer being only three months long. A typical Armenian town, such as Leninakan, on the Soviet/Turkish border, stands 5078 feet above sea level, and has an average winter temperature of 12°F, (-11°C). Armenia is often shaken by destructive earthquakes. The Varto area and adjoining regions west of Lake Van were severely affected during the 1970s. Transport is poor throughout much of the area. There are few navigable rivers, though boats can sail on Lakes Van and Sevan. Recently, a rail link between Istanbul and Tehran has been established, via Lake Van, and the trunk road between Tabriz and Erzerum has been improved for heavy lorries and bus traffic. The transport situation is best in Soviet Armenia. Direct air service by Aeroflot links Erevan with Moscow every few hours, and there is also direct contact with Tbilisi, Leningrad and even Aleppo and Beirut. There is also a weekly service from Paris to Erevan. Mainline railway services operate between Erevan and Baku, and Erevan and Tbilisi, and thence to Russia.

Armenia is quite rich in precious and semi-precious metals and minerals. However, there is little or no oil. In Soviet Armenia, great strides have been made in harnessing the waters of the River Razdan (or Hrazdan) for hydro-electric schemes.

A particularly hard fact of geography is Great Armenia's lack of access to the sea. Being cut off from Russia by the main Caucasus range, Armenia's nearest maritime outlets are such ports as Trebizond in Turkey, Batumi in Georgia, and Baku in Azerbaijan. From 1080 to 1375 A.D., the Cilician kingdom of Armenia had direct access to the eastern Mediterranean through several excellent ports, but this was only temporary. Otherwise Armenia is entirely landlocked and has always suffered from this fact both economically and politically.

Who are the Armenians?

Although they speak an Indo-European language, the Armenians are descended from ancient tribes who inhabited their traditional homeland in Eastern Anatolia since prehistoric times. There is a remarkable archaeological record of continuous human occupation of the region around Mount Ararat, since the Old Stone Age. To this extent, the Biblical legend of Noah's Ark reflects historical reality, especially as a number of animals and birds, and useful plants, have developed from prototypes still extant in Transcaucasia. Anthropologists distinguish a special 'Armenoid' physical type - rather short and compact, often with a flat back to the head, and a prominent, bulbous nose.

Before 1000 B.C., Armenia became dominated by a people known as the Urartians. 'Urartu' is actually the same name as Ararat, in the Assyrian language. The Urartians founded an important kingdom, based on the city of Van, where their ruined palaces and castles exist even today. Around 600 B.C., Urartu was overrun by various invaders, among whom were the Scythians, the Medes

(ancestors of the present-day Kurds), and some people calling themselves 'Hayasa', who came from Central Anatolia, close to the old Hittite state. The Armenians of today call their land Hayastan, and their legendary ancestor, Haik. The ancient inhabitants of Armenia/Urartu did not die out, but became mingled with these invading elements. Though retaining much of their old ethnic identity, they adopted a new language, which is a distinctive member of the Indo-European group.

Persian and Greek sources begin to speak of 'Armina' and 'Armenians' from about 500 B.C. They were known under these names to the Great Kings Darius and Xerxes of Persia, and to the Father of History, Herodotus. This attests to continuous occupation by the Armenian nation of the land known as 'Great Armenia' and adjoining districts, from well before 500 B.C. until the annihilation of virtually all the community living in eastern Turkey in 1915, amounting to an uninterrupted period of two and a half millennia.

Today the scattered Armenians number at least six million, spread virtually all over the world. Most of them are marked by success in business and professional life. They are renowned as university lecturers, scientists, mathematicians, doctors and dentists. They excel in the arts and in literature. Armenians are numbered among orchestral conductors and soloists, film directors, sculptors and book illustrators. They are noted for their humour, in spite of their tragic history, and most political jokes in the USSR are ascribed to a mythical Radio Erevan. Armenians are excellent cooks and famed for their hospitality. They are faithful friends, and have produced many military leaders.

Armenia in Ancient and Medieval Times

Armenians are understandably proud of the fact that their country was once a great power - though only for a couple of generations, in the time of Pompey and Julius Caesar. The greatest Armenian king was called Tigranes II, and he ruled from 95 to 55 B.C. His realm extended from the Caspian Sea right across the Middle East to Syria and the Mediterranean Sea. However, Tigranes was conquered by the Roman general Lucullus - inventor of the Lucullan banquet, financed by Armenian gold! Further defeats were inflicted on the Armenians by Pompey. It is worth noting that Tigranes' son, King Artavazd II, was a man of outstanding literary culture, who composed plays in Greek, and founded a Greek theatre at his court in Armenia. Artavazd fell foul of Antony and Cleopatra (of Shakespearian fame), who kidnapped Artavazd and his family and put them to death.

If we except the now vanished Christian realm of King Abgar of Edessa, Armenia is the oldest Christian nation in the world. The introduction of Christianity is ascribed to St. Gregory the Illuminator. After enduring cruel tortures, Gregory converted the pagan Armenian sovereign Tiridates III, probably in the year 301 A.D. Christianity developed in Armenia independently of Rome and Constantinople. There are therefore certain doctrinal and liturgical differences. But this does not affect the Armenian church's claim to represent an authentic apostolic tradition in the Near East.

The distinctive Armenian alphabet was invented early in the fifth century A.D., by St. Mesrop Mashtots. Previously, all literature and official documents had been written down in Greek or in Middle Iranian. This invention of a national script enabled the Bible and most of the important works of early Christian literature to be translated into Armenian.

The establishment of a national Church proved of vital importance in preserving Armenian national unity. Such were the political pressures that without their Church the Armenians would long ago have been assimilated by their neighbours. A fateful political decision was taken in 387 A.D., when the Romans and Persians carved up Armenia between them. In 428, the last king of the Armeno-Parthian dynasty of the Arsacids died, and was not replaced. Feudal barons or 'nakharars' vied for supreme power. The Persian Zoroastrian Great King Yazdegird did everything possible to suppress Christianity, invading Armenia in 451 with an enormous army, including squadrons of elephants. Persian domination was later followed by that of the Arab caliphs, who sent their generals (including one named Bogha the Turk) to ravage the land.

The Byzantine emperors also treated Armenia in a domineering manner. They deported thousands of Armenians into Thrace and Macedonia. However, several Byzantine emperors were themselves Armenians. These include remarkable Basil I (867-886) and the able but unpopular Leo the Armenian (813-820). Another Armenian emperor was John Tzimiskes (969-976), one of the most brilliant conquerors ever to sit on the throne in Constantinople. During the ninth century, the Armenian monarchy was restored under the dynasty of the Bagratids, whose capital (now in ruins) can still be seen at Ani, on the frontier between Turkey and Soviet Armenia. Another Armenian dynasty existed in the province of Vaspurakan, further south. One of its rulers, King Gagik, built the famous church of Aghtamar, on an island in Lake Van. The revival of the Armenian independent monarchy proved short-lived. In 1045 the Byzantines annexed Ani and abolished the monarchy of the Bagratids. The Seljuq Turks soon swept in from Central Asia and Iran, and overran Ani and much of Anatolia in 1064.

Armenian emigration from the homeland grew into a flood. The Armenians were successful in founding a new kingdom in Cilicia (ca. 1080-1375), with its capital at Sis. There they became allies of the Crusaders, and the last king of Cilician Armenia, Levon V Lusignan, died in exile in Paris in 1393. A number of Armenians crossed the Black Sea to found trading colonies in the Crimea. Thence they spread into Russia, Romania and Poland. Armenians played an important role in building up the Moldavian state of Prince Alexander the Good (1401-1435), while the ruler John the Brave of Moldavia (1572-1574) was himself an Armenian. In Poland, Armenians were prominent in the commercial and intellectual life of Cracow and Lvov; in the latter city, they founded an Armenian Catholic cathedral.

Within a century of the fall of Constantinople to the Turks in 1453, the Ottoman frontier was established with the empire's eastern neighbour (initially Iran, later Russia), a frontier which persists to this day. Like Poland, Armenia was doomed to have her land divided among other people's empires. Within Ottoman Turkey, the Armenians were organized into their own semi-autonomous community or *millet*, with the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople at its head. (Recent research seems to show that his authority was less absolute than hitherto believed.) Over the centuries, the community came to be dominated by an elite of merchants and high officials; and until a period of internal reform in the 18th century, the Patriarchate was often seen as an office to be sold to the highest bidder, with its attendant corruption. In the wealthy environment of Constantinople, Armenians and Turks developed a remarkable understanding of one another, and Armenians served the empire well as bankers, heads of government concerns and imperial architects. Until the emergence of national sentiment in the late 19th century, Ottoman Armenians were known as the 'loyal *millet*'.

Early in the 17th century, Shah Abbas the Great of Persia deported thousands of Armenians, mostly from the plain of Ararat, to his capital at Isfahan. There they founded a colony at New Julfa, with a cathedral and several fine churches. From Persia, the Armenians spread into Russia, India, Burma, Singapore, Java, and more recently, into Australia.

Part II – THE ERA OF MASSACRES

In the course of a quarter of a century – between 1895 and 1920 – the Armenian nation lost a million and a half persons by the gun or the bayonet, by deliberate starvation, and by privation and disease. About a third of all Armenians in the world died a gruesome, painful death. This national catastrophe is comparable to that suffered by the Jews under the Hitler regime. No Armenian household today, in 1987, is free of memories of this holocaust. It is referred to constantly in the Armenian press, and seems set to become more of a live issue in years to come.

The Nineteenth Century: Armenians in Ottoman Turkey

Within the Ottoman Empire, Armenians formed four broad classes. The first consisted of the rich and influential men in the government and civil service. The second was the mercantile and trading class of Istanbul and the cities of Anatolia; this was the class with which Western travellers came into most contact. The third class was the peasantry – much the largest of the four and the

least regarded, except by a few knowledgeable travellers such as H. F. B. Lynch. The fourth was the warrior class of the mountaineers – men living a tough, independent existence in remote mountain fastnesses like Zeitun. In addition, there was a numerous priesthood and higher clergy.

How many Armenians were there in Turkey? There were no reliable independent population statistics. Ubicini (1854) put the figure at 2,400,000, and held that they constituted a majority in the provinces of Erzerum (which then included Kars, Bayazid and Childer) and Kurdistan (Van, Moush, Hakkari and Diyarbakir). In 1882 the Armenian patriarchate in Constantinople produced figures estimating Armenians in the Empire at 2,660,000, of whom 1,630,000 lived in the 'six [Armenian] *vilayets*' – the provinces of Sivas, Mamuret el-Aziz, Erzerum, Diyarbakir, Bitlis and Van. Later statistics from the patriarchate in 1912 put the total at only 2,100,000; the decrease was due to the massacres of the 1890s, and the continual shift of the Armenian population across the frontier into the Russian Caucasus. Official Turkish figures put the Armenian population considerably lower.

The Ottoman Turkish government had exercised little direct authority over the majority of its Armenian citizens until the second half of the 19th century. Up to that date, the majority in the country areas were beholden to local Kurdish feudal lords. When central government encroached, the result was almost always bad: it meant extra taxes for the peasantry, and an increase in oppression. The Armenians in 'Turkish Armenia' (that is, eastern Turkey of today) had an additional problem to cope with. They were heavily intermixed with a large Kurdish population. (See MRG Report No. 23: *The Kurds*.) These Kurds, originally from more southerly regions, had been settled there by Sultan Selim in the 16th century, on condition that they guard the frontier with Persia. The Kurds are mostly orthodox Muslims. Though not fanatical, their tendencies for pillaging, and for stealing Armenian girls, were strong. Moreover the Kurds were armed, whereas the Armenians, as a Christian subject race, were forbidden to bear arms.

Bit by bit the Armenians were squeezed out. In 1839, Consul Brant had reported that 'in the whole plain of Moush there are not any Mohammedan peasants intermingled with the Armenians', but within a few decades, they were a minority in their own land. The Armenian peasantry was sometimes heavily indebted to the Kurds, who acted as money-lenders, and charged a rate of interest of between 3% and 4% per month.

The reform movements of the 19th century in Ottoman Turkey, known as the 'Tanzimat' or reorganization, hardly benefited the Armenians at all outside Constantinople, the main reason being that the civil administration of the empire was not reorganized. And it is arguable that the 'Tanzimat' was little but a piece of window dressing, designed to pacify European diplomats pressing the 'sick man of Europe' towards some semblance of reform.

Armenia and the Great Powers

Armenia did not feature as an issue in international diplomacy until 1878. Her people were not rebellious, so European diplomats tended to overlook them. But the education that Armenians were receiving, whether in France, Venice or Russia, meant that the old subservience would not last. Moreover, the capture of eastern Armenia by the Russians from the Persians in 1828, and their creation there of an 'Armenian province', gave a boost to nationalist sentiment. However, Russian rule was rather more repressive than the somewhat over-hopeful Armenians anticipated, and in many ways was little improvement on the Persian administration; although Russia contained within itself the seeds of modernization, which Qajar Iran did not.

With the Treaty of Paris (1856), Ottoman Turkey was first admitted as a treaty partner with the great powers; and entry into the 'club' was secured through article 9 of that treaty, which promised ameliorations for the Christian population of the empire. At the time the European powers were thinking not of the Armenians but of the Balkan Christians; however there was no distinction between Balkan and Armenian in the treaty itself. No substantial reforms were made, except for Armenians in the imperial capital; conditions in the provinces continued as they had always been.

At the same time it was a period of 'exchange of populations', exacerbating distinctions of race and religion. Tens of thousands of Armenians fled to eastern Armenia following its Russian conquest

in 1828; and following the Crimean war and the Russian subjugation of Circassia, hundreds of thousands of Muslims fled to the Ottoman Empire. Russia moved on to subdue Central Asia, where the fate of rebellious or disaffected Muslims was frequently death. These things increased rather than diminished racial and religious feelings.

Nevertheless Armenians continued to hope that the administration of their people in the Ottoman provinces would improve. (It is perhaps worth pointing out that Armenians were seeking reforms in the administration, not independence; not until after World War I did any of them, except a small unrepresentative group of revolutionaries, seek independence.) Armenian hopes were highest after the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-78; by this time they had grown in self-awareness, and knew that their people deserved better than to be treated as serfs by the local Turks and Kurds.

But the hopes of the Armenians were frustrated, largely by the British Prime Minister, Disraeli. He viewed the introduction of reforms in the Ottoman Empire merely as an advance in Russian power, which was unacceptable. Disraeli and Lord Salisbury forced the Russians to evacuate Erzerum, although they were allowed to keep Kars and Ardahan. An unworkable clause was introduced into the Treaty of Berlin (1878), laying the Western powers under an obscure collective obligation to check on Turkey's introduction of administrative reforms; the upshot was that 'What was everybody's business became nobody's business', as the Duke of Argyll was later to observe. Half a dozen British consuls were left with the impossible task of policing – without any real powers of coercion – an area the size of England and Wales; and they were ordered home after four years. Disraeli, however, cleverly wrested Cyprus from the Turkish sultan, as the price for a defence treaty with Britain. Britain's guilt in leaving the Armenians unprotected was later recognized by Lloyd George; he noted in 1938 that, in the Treaty of Berlin, which was 'entirely due to our minatory pressure' and which 'was acclaimed by us as a great British triumph which brought "Peace with honour"', 'Armenia was sacrificed on the triumphal altar we had erected. The Russians were forced to withdraw; the wretched Armenians were once more placed under the heel of their old masters...' (However, despite these high sentiments, it should be pointed out that during his premiership, in 1920 Lloyd George did as little for the Armenians as any of his predecessors. He exhibited the fatal tendency of the British to wring their hands at the fate of Armenians but do nothing concrete in their behalf).

Bit by bit Britain lost its position of predominance at the court of the sultan. Reforms were never introduced into Turkish Armenia. And the Turkish court gravitated more and more towards the German capital at Berlin, where Bismarck and later Kaiser Wilhelm II were proclaiming that 'Might is Right'.

The Armenian Revolutionary Movement

Though life continued to be tolerable, even enviable, for the wealthy Armenians of the great cities of the Ottoman empire, the situation in the eastern provinces went from bad to worse. Instead of the administration being reformed, oppression by local officials grew more intense. Abdul Hamid armed the Kurds, and encouraged them to attack the Armenian villagers. In 1891 he formed the Kurdish Hamidiye regiments, which terrorized the civilian population, just as Cossack troops in Russia did during the final years of Tsarism. The Armenians for their part began to form underground defence groups and armed revolutionary societies. The first of these were the Armenakans of Van (1885), followed by the Hunchaks (1887, founded in Geneva) and the Dashnaks (1890, Tiflis). The last two were revolutionary socialist groups, drawing their inspiration from Russian committees like the 'Narodnaya Volya'. The Dashnaks often used armed threats against rich and conservative Armenians who refused to support the cause: they claimed, with some justification, that the regimes they opposed were more brutal and terroristic to the mass of their people than their own intimidation. However, the split which opened within the Armenian community between conservatives and gradualists on one side, and radicals and party authoritarians on the other side, was to have serious and lasting implications.

During the early 1890s, these groups carried out a few acts of armed defiance of the Turkish authorities, and put up seditious placards calling on the people to revolt. But the first really significant action was the attempt by Hunchaks in 1894 to incite

the Armenians of Sasun in Turkish Armenia to defy both the Ottoman government and their local Kurdish overlords. The two leading revolutionaries, Mihran Damadian and Hampartzum Boyadjian, were respectively a teacher and a doctor.

Sultan Abdul Hamid and the 1894-96 Massacres

The Sasun rising was suppressed with considerable ferocity by Ottoman regulars, which led to an international outcry. Foreign pressure forced the sultan to appoint a commission, with delegates from Britain, France and Russia as observers. Abdul Hamid promised reforms, but there followed in October-December 1895 a series of massacres throughout Turkish Armenia, in almost every one of which, impartial observers, including British consuls, noted official complicity. Just before these killings took place, the Hunchaks had organized a large and violent demonstration in Istanbul, which served as an additional pretext for the authorities to slaughter the Armenian populace.

In these massacres, up to 300,000 Armenians perished. Perhaps the grimmest was the second massacre at Urfa on 28-29 December 1895. About 3000 Armenian men, women and children had taken refuge in their cathedral, but troops soon broke in. After shooting down many unarmed victims, the Turks collected straw bedding, poured kerosene on it, and set it alight. British Consul Fitzmaurice later wrote:

'The gallery beams and wooden framework soon caught fire, whereupon, blocking up the staircase leading to the gallery with similar inflammable materials, they left the mass of struggling human beings to become the prey of the flames. During several hours the sickening odour of roasting flesh pervaded the town, and even today, two months and a half after the massacre, the smell of putrescent and charred remains in the church is unbearable.'

In despair, the Armenian revolutionaries resolved to force intervention by the European powers who had signed the Berlin treaty of 1878. In August 1896, a group of armed Dashnaks seized the Ottoman Bank in Constantinople, and threatened to blow it up unless their political demands were met. But they gave in after holding the Bank for thirteen hours; all they obtained was free passage out of the country. However, they were the lucky ones; as they left, the sultan organized another massacre of Armenians on the streets of the capital, right under the noses of the foreign ambassadors. Most of those killed were Armenians of the poorest class – migrant workers, porters, dockers and caretakers.

Pressed by Gladstone and others to intervene, Lord Salisbury commented that, unfortunately, British battleships could not operate over the Taurus mountains. The European powers discussed the possible partition of the Ottoman Empire, or even the forcible deposition of the bloodthirsty sultan. But their mutual rivalries and mistrust, and the enormous sums invested by some of them in the economy of the Ottoman Empire, prevented any effective action being taken.

Armenians in Tsarist Russia

Armenians had in general prospered from the Russian conquest of the Caucasus. A thrifty and industrious Armenian middle-class grew up in the big cities such as Tiflis in Georgia, and Baku in Azerbaijan. Before the Soviet period, Erevan in Armenia remained a neglected backwater. However, at the close of the 19th century, the Armenian population of Caucasia was still largely rural (65%) as against urban (35%). Of the urban population, the majority were working-class people.

In 1836, the Tsarist government issued a regulating statute or *polozhenie*, permitting the Armenian Church to retain its lands, and Armenian schools to keep their autonomy. But during the 1880s, the favour shown to the Armenians began to evaporate. Among the reasons for this was the assassination of Tsar Alexander II in 1881, and the consequent dismissal of his liberal Chief Minister, the Armenian Count Loris-Melikov. In 1884, the Russian authorities closed the senior grades of the Armenian schools; in 1897, when Prince Golitsyn was appointed Governor-General of the Caucasus, he closed the schools altogether. This officious functionary also reduced the number of Armenians in the civil service. Then Golitsyn struck at the focal point of the Armenian nation: the Apostolic (Gregorian) Church. By a decree of June 1903, the Tsarist authorities nationalized all Armenian Church property. When the clergy resisted, the Russian police

occupied Echmiadzin, the seat of the Catholicos, the head of the Armenian Church. The Armenian revolutionaries were now supported by the hitherto hostile bourgeoisie. Cossack terror led to Armenian bombings and shootings.

During the 1905 Revolution, the governor of Baku encouraged the local Tatars in a four-day slaughter of Armenians. Similar excesses took place in several regions of Transcaucasia. In September 1905, mob violence led to serious fires in the Baku oilfields. Later on, the Armenians gained the upper hand, and worsted the Tatars. These Armeno-Tatar clashes raised the esteem of the Dashnak revolutionary party in the eyes of the peasantry; the Dashnaks were seen to be the only effective armed group prepared to protect the peasants; and the armed power of the party had reversed the anti-Armenian policies of tsarism. However, the vicious clashes left a legacy of hatred between Armenians and Tatars. Right up to the eve of the First World War, Tsar Nicholas II continued to combat Armenian nationalism. In 1911 the Dashnak party was put on trial; defence advocates included Alexander Kerensky and Pavel Miliukov. The trial collapsed in 1912, as Russian policy changed to a pro-Armenian stance for the first time for 30 years.

A False Dawn: Armenia and the Young Turk Revolution

The Young Turk revolution of 1908 removed the autocratic powers of Sultan Abdul Hamid and reintroduced the Constitution of 1876. Initially there was a tremendous sense of liberty and fraternity among the nationalities within the Empire; Armenian Dashnaks had collaborated closely with the Young Turks in staging the revolution, and maintained an alliance with them for a few years thereafter.

Yet even within one year, relations turned rather sour. In 1909 there was a furious massacre of Armenians in Adana, claiming about 30,000 victims. It is not clear whether the Young Turks, or partisans of the deposed Abdul Hamid, were behind this bloodthirsty episode. Soon the Young Turk revolution was degenerating into mere dictatorship, and the policy of the ruling junta became one of 'the Turks above all other nationalities'. The British Ambassador described their policy in September 1910 as 'pounding the non-Turkish elements in a Turkish mortar' – a remark which applies equally well to the Turkish government in the 1980s.

At the same time, a Turkish nationalist ideology was taking shape which was to have grave and far-reaching implications for the Armenians. This was pan-Turkism or pan-Turanianism – a doctrine which continues even today to have many powerful adepts in Turkish ruling circles. Serge Zenkovsky describes the ideology thus:

'First, the Ottoman Turks had to consolidate their grip over their empire and Turkicize its minorities. In the second, "pan-Turkic", phase, the closest relatives of the Ottoman Turks – the Azerbaijanis of Russia and Persia (the south-eastern group of Turkic peoples) – were to be taken into the Turkic state. The third step would be the uniting of all the Turanian peoples of Asia around the Turkish core.'

A biographer of one of the chief pan-Turkists, Zia Gökalp, comments:

'Gökalp, Halide Edib and their associates dreamt of a union of all the Turks under a single ruler who would renew the days of Attila, Jengiz Khan or Timur-leng.'

The implications of pan-Turkism for the Armenians were extremely grave. They were among the least willing of the minorities within the empire to be Turkicized, clinging to their ancient Church as a symbol of that defiance. Moreover, their fellow Armenians in the Russian Caucasus stood in the way of the 'second stage' of pan-Turkism – the expansion to Baku, the oil city on the Caspian.

This theorizing was far from being harmless intellectual speculation – any more than the Aryan myth was under the regime of Adolf Hitler. By 1914 Ottoman Turkey was ruled by a triumvirate of Young Turk militants, and pan-Turkism was the personal ideology of the most powerful of the three, Enver Pasha. The second of the trio, Talaat, was less of a theoretician, but capable of crushing the minority nationalities, and with an abundance of bureaucratic cruelty in his character. The third, Jemal, was of a more affable disposition, but with more than a streak of ruthlessness.

The First World War and the 'Final Solution' of the Armenian Question

It is often stated by Turkish historians that the mass deportation of the Armenians was forced on the Young Turk government of that time, because the entire Armenian population constituted a dangerous 'Fifth Column', sympathetic to the Western Allies and to Russia. This claim is less than the whole truth. Just two years before, Armenians had fought bravely in the Ottoman army during the Balkan War; the British ambassador had remarked that 'the several thousand of Armenian troops have fought better than any of the other non-Turkish elements'. In 1914, there were a number of professions of Armenian loyalty to the Ottoman empire (notably the enlistment of Armenians in the Ottoman army); however, the last forty years had taught the Armenians to be wary of any Turkish government, none of which had shown evidence of being *their* government.

Shortly before the First World War broke out in 1914, the Dashnak party held its eighth party conference in Erzerum. During the conference, Young Turk representatives approached the Dashnaks and suggested that they should foment a rebellion across the frontier, in the Russian Caucasus. In return, Turkey would set up an autonomous Armenia under her own protection. The Dashnaks turned down the plan, proposing instead that Turkey should stay neutral in the impending conflict; but in the event of Turkey joining the war, Armenians everywhere would be advised to do their duty as Ottoman citizens.

When war broke out, most Turkish Armenians behaved as loyal Ottoman citizens. An estimated 250,000 were conscripted into the Ottoman armies. When Enver Pasha was defeated by the Russians at Sarikamish, it was Armenian soldiers who saved him from being killed or captured by the Tsarist forces. However, some Armenians fled from Turkey into Russia, and joined volunteer regiments which the Tsarist authorities were encouraging. In Cilicia, Armenian leaders instigated a revolt against the Ottoman government, but this came to nothing.

Soon events took a tragic turn. Turkish Armenians in the Ottoman army were disarmed and herded into labour battalions, where they were starved, beaten or machine-gunned. On 24 April 1915, two hundred and fifty-four Armenian intellectuals in Istanbul were arrested and deported to the provinces of Ayash and Chankiri, where nearly all of them were murdered by the authorities. Further arrests in Istanbul brought the number to 5000.

Having lost both its able-bodied male population (from the army) and now its intellectual élite, the Armenian community was now almost leaderless, and the authorities turned upon it with fury. In every town and village of Turkish Armenia and Asia Minor, the entire Armenian population was ordered out. The men were usually led away and shot down just outside their villages. A far worse fate awaited the women and children: they were forced to walk southwards in huge convoys to the burning deserts of northern Syria. Few survived the privations of these terrible death marches; for months afterwards, the roads and tracks of Anatolia were littered with corpses and skeletons picked clean by the vultures. There were variations on this pattern. In Trebizond, the local Armenians were embarked in boats, and thrown overboard when well out into the Black Sea. A number were despatched by being hurled down the Kemakh Gorge, near Erzinjan.

Those who survived the long journey south were herded into huge open-air concentration camps, the grimmest of which was that at Deir ez-Zor, in Ottoman Syria, where they were starved and killed by sadistic guards. A small number were able to escape through the secret protection of friendly Arabs in villages in northern Syria. Otherwise, the only refugee routes were to Russian Transcaucasia or the Balkans, apart from the remarkable escapes of four thousand besieged villagers from Musa Dag, near Antioch, rescued by a French warship. (The Musa Dag episode forms the subject of a novel by Franz Werfel.)

This systematic and successfully executed genocide resulted from decisions taken at the highest government level. The Interior Minister, Talaat Pasha, boasted to Morgenthau, the American ambassador, that the Armenian question was dead for fifty years. The government itself was but an instrument of the Young Turk party, the 'Committee of Union and Progress', whose dominant ideology was pan-Turkism. The mass-murder was not just a matter of 'isolated incidents': it was carefully thought out and executed

with precision. Nor did it result from religious intolerance, though the Young Turks mobilized the fanaticism of the village mullahs, and the greed of Turkish have-nots. There were in fact Muslim leaders who were shocked by the measures taken, and protested against them.

In recent years the government of the Turkish Republic has, through various official and semi-official channels, strenuously denied that the former Young Turk regime undertook a genocide against the Armenians. It is currently spending vast sums in propaganda and public relations – the firm of Gray and Company in Washington DC has been hired for the purpose – in order to try to demonstrate that no genocide took place in 1915. Pamphlets are published in Ankara aiming to show that the government orders issued in 1915 were humane; that the Armenians staged a treasonable revolt in Van; and that the events of 1915 would best be characterized as a civil war between various armed bands. All these claims are fallacious. As far as the orders are concerned, we know, from the testimony (which is in the Public Record Office, Kew) of an Ottoman Muslim officer who was a participant in the Armenian genocide that there were two sets of orders, one open and the other secret. The secret orders were the ones which had to be obeyed, and they detailed the violent measures to be undertaken against Armenians. So for the Turks to publish books and pamphlets showing that some orders were benevolent is no more than an exercise in naivete.

As regards Van in April 1915: on the evidence of independent eye-witnesses, the Armenians' defiance of the Turkish governor has been shown to have been self-defence, not rebellion. On the matter of the alleged 'civil war', no reputable military historian gives any grounds for support of this view (least of all the standard work on the subject, Allen and Muratoff's *Caucasian Battlefields*). By equating Turkish and Armenian forces at this time, the proponents of this view are attempting to minimize or ignore the vast power of the Ottoman state, and its extensive deployment of the armed gendarmerie and party officials used to kill Armenian civilians at this time.

Who did the killing? In some cases it was ordinary gendarmes. The government also recruited a 'Special Organization (*Teshkilat-i Mahsusiyé*), mostly composed of common criminals released from prison in Western Anatolia, on condition that they engage in the slaughter of the Armenians.

How many Armenians died? Viscount Bryce, speaking in the House of Lords on 6 October 1915, put the figure then at 'around 800,000'. The slaughter continued well into 1916, and later still. The Turkish offensive into the Russian Caucasus in the summer of 1918 claimed many thousands of victims. The Turks then used Armenian refugees as targets for bayonet practice. When the Ottoman army captured Baku in the autumn of 1918, 15,000 Armenians were butchered. Scores of thousands of refugees died of famine after the October Revolution. As late as 1921, a British colonel in Erzerum found the Kemalists beating and starving Armenian captives to death.

Before 1914, around two million Armenians lived in Turkey; since the First World War this figure has hardly exceeded 100,000. Thus the number of Armenian dead may safely be put at around 1,500,000. Another half-million became refugees, whose descendants, with their tragic memories, can be found in a score of countries today.

Part III – THE CURRENT SCENE: RESURRECTION OF A PEOPLE

Independent Armenia, 1918–1920

The recovery of the Armenian nation dates at least symbolically from the declaration of independence of the Armenian Republic on 28 May 1918. The background to this declaration, however, is one of tragedy and remarkable heroism.

After the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, Russia withdrew from the First World War. Lenin and Trotsky signed the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, which left the Caucasian peoples to the mercies of the Turks and their German allies. The Armenians began by forming a federation with the Georgians and the Azerbaijanis (Tatars,

Azeris), but the three nationalities found it impossible to agree on anything. The Georgians even did a secret deal with the Turks, handing over the strategic fortress of Kars to the enemy. Led by such heroic generals and partisan commanders as Nazarbekov, Dro and Silikov, the Armenians repulsed the Turks at Sardarabad on 22–24 May 1918. The Turks then by-passed the Erevan district, and captured Baku a few weeks before the Ottoman Empire surrendered to the Allies at the Armistice of Mudros, 30 October 1918.

Thanks to the initial British support, the territory of independent Armenia grew to a size considerably larger than the present-day Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic, since it came to include Kars and Ardahan, areas which today are in Eastern Turkey. But economic conditions were catastrophic. The scenes of famine and privation in the winter of 1918–19 were as bad as the horrors of 1915. Half-a-million refugees, dressed in rags or sacking, roamed the land, or shivered in caves and dugouts; they were reduced to eating grass or gnawing bones, until death released them from their misery. The British Chief Commissioner in Tbilisi, Sir Harry Luke, gives in his autobiography, *Cities and Men*, a vivid account of his three visits to Armenia during that critical period. At the same time, the government of independent Armenia embarked on constructing a republic from a war-torn patch of soil, and by early 1920 its diligence was showing some success. Armenia in the spring of that year was unrecognizable from its condition at the time of independence, according to Prime Minister Simon Vratsian.

For over two years, the Armenians hung on to their independence – literally, 'like grim death'. They had some justification for their 'great expectations'. On 20 December 1917, Lloyd George had made a speech in Parliament, describing Armenia as a land soaked in the blood of innocents, and declaring that it would never be restored to the blasting tyranny of the Turk. In summer 1918, Lloyd George again declared that Britain would not forget its responsibilities to the Armenians; French leaders made similar promises. The American President Woodrow Wilson had a deep personal sympathy for the Armenian cause. In the twelfth of his Fourteen Points, he stated that 'the other nationalities which are now under Turkish rule should be assured an undoubted security of life and an absolutely unmolested opportunity of autonomous development'.

Relying on these promises, the Armenian leaders came to the Paris Peace Conference with grandiose ideas for an Armenia stretching from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean. These dreams were later considerably modified, and given international legal recognition in President Wilson's delineation of the Armeno-Turkish frontier (22 November 1920). The 40,000 square miles that the American President awarded Armenia constituted, with the exception of the coastline province of Trebizond, areas which had had a substantial Armenian population prior to the genocide, and in some places an overall majority. His map was, however, doomed, since none of the great powers was prepared to guarantee it by force of arms, and also there were scarcely 100,000 Armenians still living in the Turkish part of the region, although there were the half-million refugees waiting for the ousting of Turkish authority.

During 1920, the world situation changed so dramatically that the Allied powers did their utmost to forget their promises. The British, war-weary and over-extended, evacuated Caucasia, and the Soviets liquidated the White Russian army of General Wrangel in the Crimea. President Wilson, broken in health, faced a hostile Congress, bent on isolationism. The Turks under Mustafa Kemal amazed the world with their national recovery, culminating in 1922 with the reoccupation of Smyrna (Izmir), and the liquidation of the British-backed Greek intervention.

The Turkish Nationalists quickly reached an understanding with Lenin in the Kremlin. In September 1920, the Turkish warlord Kiazim Karabekir Pasha crossed the old 1914 Russo-Turkish frontier, and overran the Kars district. The Bolsheviks closed in from Azerbaijan, and proclaimed a Soviet republic in Erevan (29 November–2 December 1920). After discussions deep into the night of 30 November, the Dashnak government decided to hand over peacefully to the Bolsheviks; in more recent language, they preferred to be 'better Red than dead'.

The cession of Kars and Ardahan to Turkey was finally confirmed by the Treaty of Kars (13 October 1921). Armenians were not consulted over this treaty (which defined their western border). Curiously enough, the treaty also stipulated that the Nakhchevan district, once an integral part of mediaeval Armenia but later

extensively peopled by Tatar Azeris, should be attached to the Soviet Republic of Azerbaijan, based on Baku. The Nakhchevan ASSR is entirely cut off from Soviet Azerbaijan by Armenian territory, and today, over half a century later, forms a resented enclave situated between Soviet Armenia and Turkey. Similarly Karabagh, an Armenian region where there is still a large Armenian majority, was cut off from Armenia, and left as an enclave within Soviet Azerbaijan.

Soviet Armenia – a National Home

The Soviet Republic of Armenia set up at the end of 1920 began its life in conditions scarcely less grim than those prevailing when independent Armenia was established less than three years previously. The economic situation had improved little since 1917. Heavy snow blocked the roads, isolating Armenia from the outside world. The Revkom or Revolutionary Committee resolved to 'requisition and confiscate food from private individuals in the cities, and grain from the peasants'. Parties of soldiers, heavily armed, proceeded to every house, rich or poor, and forcibly removed all rice, wheat and oats, tinned or condensed milk. Sheep and cattle were taken away from the peasants. Personal property, such as carpets, jewellery, even overcoats, were taken as well, and barbers' shop appliances, beehives and musical instruments were 'expropriated' by the Bolsheviks.

These excesses, and the general despair of the starving population, soon provoked an uprising headed by the surviving leaders of the Dashnak party, who attacked Erevan and deposed the local Soviet regime. But the Armenian Dashnak triumph was short-lived. In neighbouring Georgia, the Red Army conquered the local Menshevik government in February 1921. The Soviet forces then turned on Armenia, and Erevan was retaken from the Dashnaks on 2 April 1921. In the mountainous region of Zangezur, several thousand Dashnaks continued their desperate resistance until, exhausted, they fled across the border into Persia in July.

Soviet Armenia is even smaller than independent Armenia had been, and embodies only a tenth of historical 'Great Armenia'. Kars, Ardahan and Iğdir were by 1921 already firmly in Turkish hands. The region of Surmalu, on the northern slopes of Mount Ararat, in which Iğdir is situated, became part of Turkey, even though it had never been an integral part of the Ottoman empire: in 1827 Russia had captured it from Persia. Thus the Turkish republic could claim no historical right to it. This was implicitly acknowledged by Mustafa Kemal, since he never even claimed it in his maximalist 'National Pact'. To wipe out local patriotism in Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan, Stalin merged several territories into a single Transcaucasian federation. This arrangement continued until the local leadership had been thoroughly purged by firing squad and Siberian exile. The republics did not emerge as separate entities until after the promulgation of the Stalin constitution in 1936.

The Soviet leadership under Stalin set out to make Transcaucasia, particularly Georgia and Armenia, a show-place. They rebuilt Armenia so that it would be a focus for the Armenian diaspora all over the world. Although the Dashnak leadership of independent Armenia had resisted the Soviet takeover, a number of eminent Armenian revolutionaries had worked in the true Leninist tradition – Stepan Shahumian, one of the 26 Baku Commissars murdered by British-backed elements in 1918; Kamo (Ter-Petrossian), whose daring exploits enriched the Bolshevik party funds; the young poet Vahan Terian, who advised Lenin on Turkish Armenia; Alexander Miasnikian, Armenia's prime minister in 1921; A. I. Mikoyan, one of the few Old Bolsheviks to survive the Stalin purges.

Foreign relief organizations, organized by dedicated individuals such as the Rev. Harold Buxton, helped to feed Armenia's teeming refugees. The dreaded Cheka (OGPU) at least ensured public security of a kind – in that the Armenian peasant was no longer murdered by Turkish soldiers and Kurdish tribesmen. The Leninist New Economic Policy provided a flexible framework within which the small shopkeeper and craftsman could make a modest living – until the clampdown which attended the Five-Year plan campaign from 1928 onwards.

Symptomatic of the resurgence of Armenian cultural life in the Soviet orbit was the foundation of Erevan University in 1921. Two years later, in 1923, the distinguished Armenian architect Alexander Tamanian, Vice-President of the Russian Academy of

Fine Arts, was sent from Moscow to Erevan to plan the rebuilding of Erevan on modern lines, but with due regard for Armenian national traditions in building and sculpture.

In Soviet Armenia today, Armenian is the first language, although of course Russian is an official language. Far more people speak Armenian than Russian. Soviet Armenia is the only region of the world where official business is conducted primarily in the Armenian vernacular. Armenia also has a first-rate public education system. An Armenian branch of the Soviet Academy of Sciences was founded in 1935, and promoted in 1943 to the status of an independent Academy. Associated with the Academy is the Byurakan Observatory (with its immense 2.6 metre telescope), directed by Academician Viktor Hambartsumian, well known in international astronomical circles. Armenians of ability enjoy exceptional opportunities for promotion in the USSR, since they can compete freely for jobs in a vast labour and economic market of some 250 million people. The late Academician I. A. Orbeli became Director of the Hermitage Museum in Leningrad, and his brother Levon was Director of the Institute of Physiology named after Pavlov. The names of Academicians Arzumanyan, Knunyants, Sisakyan and Alikhanov also won international renown. In music, we have only to think of the fame and popularity of the eminent composer Aram Khatchaturian and of the Komitas String Quartet of Erevan.

The economic and cultural resurgence of Soviet Armenia provoked acute dissension among the Armenian diaspora, especially between World War I and World War II. Many old Dashnaks regarded the Soviet Union as an arch-enemy, surpassed in wickedness only by the Turks. Others came to see the fostering of a national home in Soviet Armenia as the only hope for preserving the national ethos in the harsh and competitive circumstances of the 20th century. Sometimes the division in outlook took tragic forms, as when in 1933 a leading Armenian cleric suspected of pro-Soviet sympathies was murdered during a service in a New York church. Today, however, the Armenian Dashnak press around the world follows Soviet Armenian affairs with sympathetic and alert interest.

Immediately after World War II, Stalin embarked on a forward policy in Transcaucasia, with a view to annexing Persian Azerbaijan, Kurdistan, and parts of Armenia which had been part of Russia from 1878 until World War I. From 1945 onwards, Armenians from abroad were encouraged to return home with promises of special concessions and privileges. An election to the vacant Supreme Pontificate of Holy Echmiadzin (in Soviet Armenia) was held with participation of Armenian delegates from all over the world. The growth of Armenian industry was deliberately fostered by building scores of modern factories and the completion of hydro-electric schemes harnessing Armenia's fast-flowing rivers. (Full particulars are given in the article on the Armenian SSR in the latest *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, written by a Soviet scholar, Dr. A. A. Mints.)

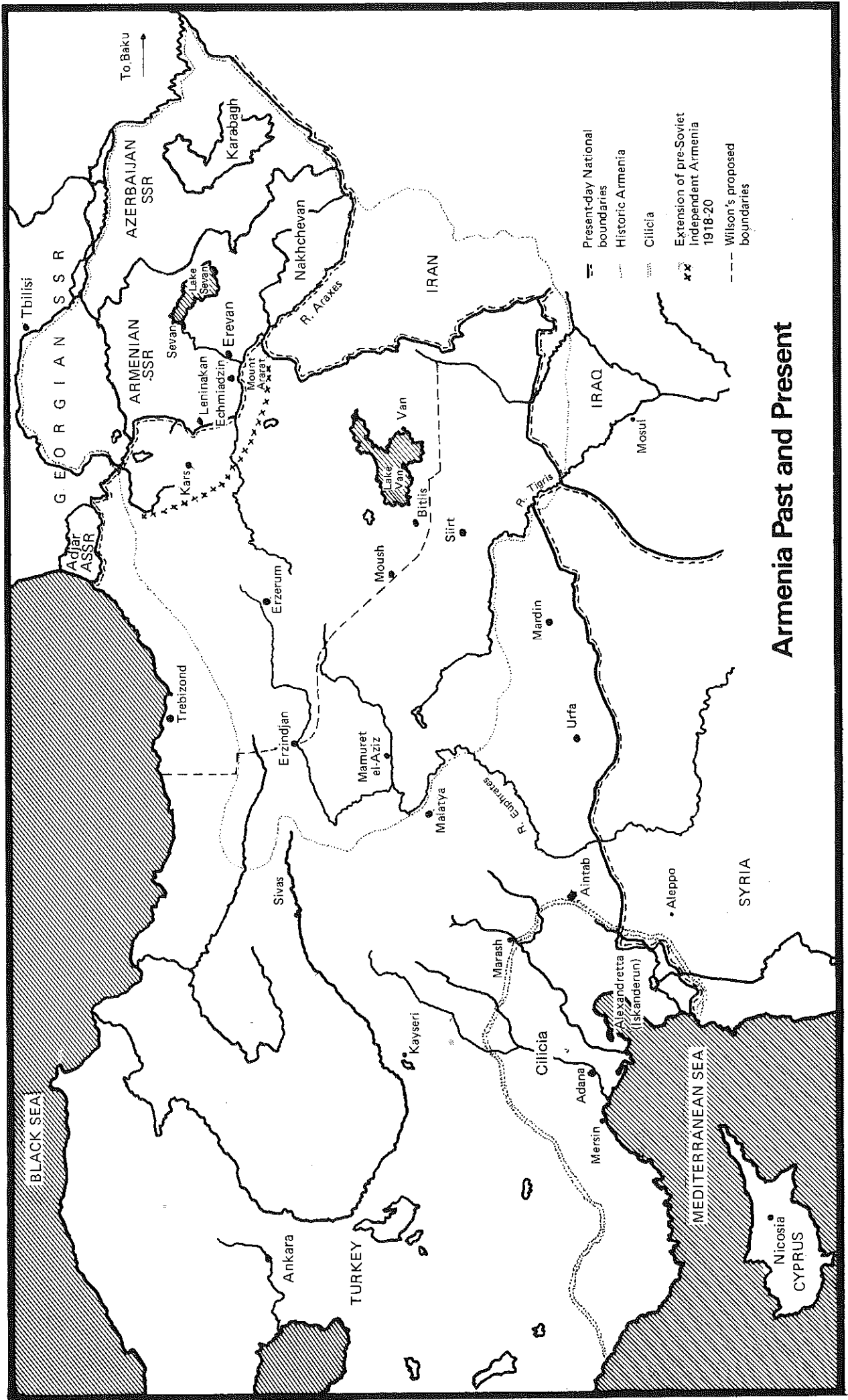
Immediately after 1945, conditions were harsh. Many immigrants regretted their decision to return home. But during the 1950s, Soviet Armenia really 'took off' in terms of economic growth and social improvement. In addition to natural increase through a healthy birthrate and improved medical care, Armenians streamed home from Turkey, Persia and the Lebanon – even a few from the United States. The following figures from the Russian-language *Bulletin of Statistics* (Moscow, 1980) and *USSR Population Census for 1984* (1985) speak for themselves:

Population of Soviet Armenia

1940	1,320,000
1959	1,763,000
1966	2,239,000
1970	2,492,000
1979	3,031,000
1985	3,317,000

The Armenian ethnic majority in the population is as high as 88%, significant minorities being Azerbaijan or Azeri Tatars (6%) and Russians (3%).

In the Armenian SSR, the Armenians themselves therefore now number a little under three million. This is in addition to substantial Armenian groups in other regions of the Soviet Union. For example, the communities in Georgia and Azerbaijan alone number over half a million in each case. The population density of



Armenia Past and Present

The Armenians

A MINORITY RIGHTS GROUP UPDATE • BY CHRISTOPHER J. WALKER

The Armenians, despite their history of persecution, oppression and dispersion, continue to display a determination for survival and a high degree of national self-awareness. Perhaps 2.5 million Armenians live in the diaspora and communities throughout the world, but the majority live in the former Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic (SSR), since August 1990 the Republic of Armenia, where they comprise 90% of the 3.3 million population. Another 1.3 million live elsewhere in the USSR, mainly in neighbouring Georgia and, until recently, in Azerbaijan. The earthquake of December 1988, in which 28,000 died, the violence generated by the conflict with Azerbaijan and the re-emergence of Armenian political nationalism have focussed world attention on Transcaucasian Armenia.

Perestroika and glasnost found Soviet Armenia unprepared when these concepts emerged in Soviet discourse in 1985. For over a year there was virtually no change. Then the new situation manifested itself in two different but interconnected ways. One was an attack on the ossified party structure in Armenia, which had hitherto been underpinned by an elaborate system of bribes. Changes in the party apparatus began in early

1987, and accelerated with the territorial dispute over two erstwhile Armenian territories, now part of Azerbaijan SSR. As a result of nationalist confrontations, by May 1988 the former Brezhnevite leader in Armenia had been ousted and replaced by Suren Harutiunian, who held power until April 1990. Other ideas, most notably the Green struggle to clean up industrial pollution, and to end nuclear power generation in Armenia (an earthquake zone), stimulated ideas of political and economic change.

The other manifestation of perestroika was a demand for the retrocession to Armenia of one, and possibly two, territories, that most Armenians considered should be part of their national homeland - Nakhichevan and Mountainous Karabagh (Nagorno Karabakh in Russian; Artsakh in Armenian). While both territories were relatively small in population (267,000 and 160,000 respectively), discrimination against Armenians there was seen as a denial of Armenian identity. Here the Armenians have not been successful, for the unspoken theme of perestroika has been that issues relating to nationalities and territory are off-limits.



NOYOSTI PRESS AGENCY (APN)

DISPUTED TERRITORIES - NAKHICHEVAN AND KARABAGH

Nakhichevan, an enclave on the southern borders with Iran, and since 1932, with Turkey, had been disputed between Armenia and Azerbaijan during the brief period of Armenian independence (1918-20) but despite an apparent surrender of Azerbaijan's claims in 1920, it never became part of Soviet Armenia. It became the subject of a clause in the bilateral treaty signed between Kemalist Turkey and the Soviet state in March 1921, which laid down that Nakhichevan would remain part of Azerbaijan and that its status could not be altered without the agreement of Turkey. Nakhichevan in recent times has scarcely had an Armenian majority - at the time of sovietization Armenians constituted 45%-50% of the population - yet in the succeeding 70 years of Communist rule during which local rulers instituted an anti-Armenian policy this was reduced to 5% and is currently less than 2%.

The situation was different in Karabagh, where the Armenian population was long established as a majority and where the territory had a distinguished tradition as a centre of Armenian culture and intellectual life. During the 20th century, Karabagh has been denied an Armenian identity by the succeeding Russian, British and Azeri rulers; although the population (93% Armenian in 1919) consented to temporary unity with Azerbaijan in 1919 to gain some peace, their preferred status was clearly for union with Armenia. Fighting continued in Karabagh and with the sovietization of Azerbaijan in April 1920, a massacre by Azeris in the town of Shushi effectively ended Armenian habitation there, resulting a majority Azeri population in Shushi today.

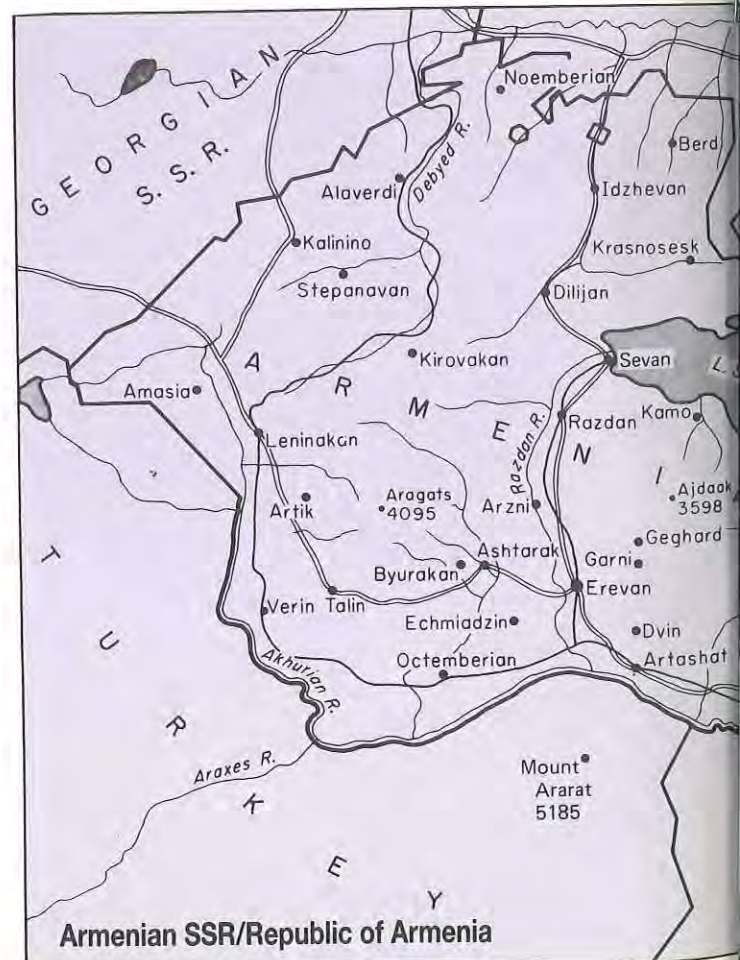
Despite the offer of the Azerbaijani Communist Party leader in December 1920 to give up title of Karabagh to Armenia, and of the majority vote of the Kavburo (Caucasian bureau) for Karabagh to be united with Armenia, these decisions were overruled by the Soviet authorities, apparently under Stalin's direction. In 1923 Karabagh became an 'autonomous oblast [region]' under Azerbaijani rule but it was not designated an 'Armenian AR of Nagorno Karabagh' indicating its majority national group, as were all other Soviet autonomous regions. This was a reflection of the pan-Turkist principle of, if possible, not referring to Armenians, adopted by the Azerbaijan rulers. Then, as today, the majority people of Karabagh define themselves as Armenian, and their language was, and is, despite its heavy dialect, quite clearly Armenian.

Thus for six decades the Armenians of Karabagh were immured against their will in Azerbaijan. They were deprived of the right to travel to Armenia and attempts were made (largely fruitless) to destroy their cultural identity. Armenians tried but failed to raise the issue in the 1930s, in 1964, 1967 and 1977. Perestroika saw the re-emergence of the Karabagh issue, which came massively to the fore in February 1988, following a vote of the soviet of Mountainous Karabagh to secede from Azerbaijan and unite with Armenia. The initiative came from Stepanakert, the capital of Karabagh, and not from Yerevan. When, days later, news of this vote reached Yerevan, vast demonstrations, hitherto unknown in the USSR, started occurring daily.

There was a violent response from Azerbaijan. For three days (27-29 February) groups of Azeri thugs, with

implicit connivance from the Azeri authorities, looted, raped and murdered the minority population of Sumgait, an Azerbaijani town on the Caspian Sea. These were organized killings (for example names of Armenians had been collected in the preceding days) and the scenes were reminiscent of the pogroms of 80 years earlier. By their introduction of violence into the situation, the Azeris derailed an issue which could have been resolved by peaceful, democratic means into darker, atavistic regions of ethnic violence. No proper inquest or judicial process was carried out after Sumgait and many Armenians, hitherto pro-Gorbachev and perestroika, believed that the Soviet authorities and Azerbaijani killers were acting in collaboration.

The Karabagh issue was discussed twice at the highest Soviet level (in March and July 1988). The Supreme Soviet decided that there should be no change in its status, since (it was argued) under the Soviet Constitution such changes could only take place if both republics agreed. A request that Karabagh be declared an autonomous republic was also ignored and the request for a change of name to the Armenian Autonomous Region of Karabagh was refused. Azerbaijan imposed a steadily tightening blockade on Karabagh from February 1988 - in effect holding the inhabitants of Karabagh hostage and removing them from the protection of the rule of law. Between January and November 1989 the Soviet authorities introduced direct rule for Nagorno Karabagh from Moscow but this was withdrawn, either as a result of the growing political inertia in Moscow or because of the collusive relationship, with more than a whiff of political



corruption, developing between Moscow and Baku.

Since November 1989 the territory has been ruled from Baku and the Azerbaijani authorities there are doing all that they can to make life impossible for the population, with the apparent aim of driving them out and re-populating the territory with Azerbaijanis. In July 1990 the Second Secretary of the Azerbaijan Communist Party seriously formulated a plan for deporting all Armenians from Nagorno Karabagh - a grisly echo of the 1915 massacres. Armenian villages in Azerbaijan proper (ie. outside Nagorno Karabagh) have endured severe restrictions and hardship. The village of Getashen is under siege and the people survive through helicopter relief flights organized by the Armenian government. The population of the village of Kamo has been driven out.

POLITICAL CHANGES WITHIN ARMENIA

The Karabagh issue been the most significant in Armenia and has acted as catalyst for the changes that occurred within the republic itself. Gradually the old Communist-KGB structure has crumbled. However, the new Gorbachevian order, initially regarded with favour, was soon seen by Armenians as without principles. One result has been that the Armenians have sought to create their own political institutions, one of the earliest being the Karabagh Committee, an unofficial grouping created in 1988 to press for the return of Karabagh to Armenia. Leading members of the Committee were jailed by the Soviet authorities in the turbulent aftermath of the Armenian earthquake and were not released until summer 1989. However they were not broken by this

experience and it is significant that one of their number, Levon Ter-Petrosian, became President of Armenia in August 1990. On the negative side, it has to be said that the Armenian voice in defence of Karabagh was sometimes muffled and confused, expressed in turgid rhetoric in which the essential strength and simplicity of the Karabagh claim, based on democratic choice and human rights, was lost.

Further violence towards Armenians occurred in Baku in January 1990. The Azeris set upon the minority Armenian community in the city with brutal determination, killing scores, and resulting in a massive exodus of Armenian refugees attempting to escape the violence. After seven days of this brutality the Soviet army entered Baku, but its subsequent actions showed the Kremlin's desire was more to suppress the Azerbaijani Popular Front than to protect the Armenians, who were left as defenceless as before. The effect of these events on Armenian opinion has been to turn it violently against Moscow and the Communist Party establishment. Since the summer of 1989 Azerbaijan has imposed a food and fuel blockade of Armenia itself. This has resulted in serious shortages since Armenia receives 85% of its supplies via Azerbaijan and a mere 15% through Georgia.

A dangerous manifestation of Armenian disillusion was the growth of militias in Armenia. These grew rapidly following the events in Baku, and by the summer of 1990 some 10,000 men were members of unofficial Armenian militias. They obtained most of their weapons by looting Soviet barracks. Gorbachev issued several fruitless demands for them to disband, but they, seeing the denial of the rule of law and unprotectedness that perestroika had brought them, refused to do so. Only the emergence of Ter-Petrosian's non-Communist administration has begun to bring the militias under control.

Ter-Petrosian was elected to the position of President by the Armenian Parliament, following the elections of May-August 1990. These elections provided a working majority of 35% for the All-Armenian National Movement (Hai Hamazgain Sharzhoum). Ter-Petrosian was elected by almost two-thirds of the parliamentary deputies. It appears that Ter-Petrosian and his mild but firm, non-adventurist, non-ideological, non-Communist administration, is seen as the best hope for Armenia. It was clear that Communism could no longer work in the republic since it had failed to protect Armenians, to break the blockade or to grant democracy in Karabagh. Nor do Gorbachev's proposed reforms appeal to most Armenians. In August 1990 the Armenian SSR became the Republic of Armenia and declared itself a sovereign nation.

THE FUTURE FOR ARMENIA

The Republic of Armenia still faces serious problems. Some are political and economic; how to break the continuing Azeri blockade; how to gain supplies (especially food and gas) for the severe winter; how to bring democracy, if not unity, for Karabagh; how to stave off the prospect of civil war. In addition there are new issues of international relations. Armenia must negotiate reasonable treaties with neighbouring states. Of the four states which border Armenia, Azerbaijan, in view of the virtual state of war between the two, and



Turkey, with its long and continuing anti-Armenian ideology, will prove most difficult. Georgia, in theory, should be the least problematic but the election in October 1990 of Zviad Gamsakhurdia as President does not hold out the hope for easy relations, since he has accused the head of the Armenian Church of plotting to annex southern Georgia. Only Iran promises to offer anything like normal diplomatic relations to the Armenian republic.

Some sort of a new treaty will need to be negotiated with Moscow. Not all of Armenia's connection with Russia, or even with Soviet Communism, has been as bad as the years 1988-90 have been. Soviet Russia built factories in Armenia, it educated the people and gave them skills, it modernized the country and gave it roads. There is hope that at some future date a government in Moscow will show an attitude to Armenia different from that of Gorbachev.

There is a danger that in the interim Armenia will hanker after unrealistic relations with overseas powers, in particular to reactivate sentimental relations with the USA or France. (It is unlikely to be with the UK, which for the past 150 years has usually been pro-Turk in its policies). The Republic of Armenia should seek new relationships in the world arena rather than search for alliances with western powers, a dangerous trap since post-Napoleonic history shows that great powers will always sell out Armenia at a whisper from one of her large or well-placed adversaries. Armenia certainly needs a seat at the UN as soon as possible, and beyond this should seek to negotiate alliances with her immediate neighbours, in the long term a much more secure guarantee for the safety of the Armenian people.

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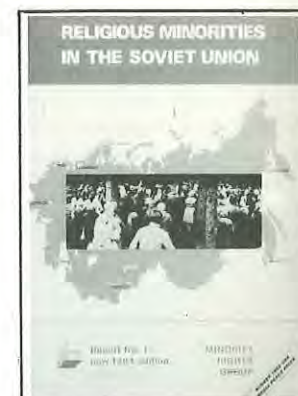
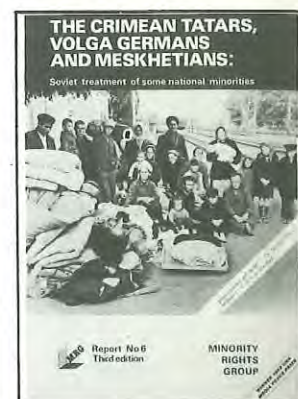
This MRG Update complements and updates the Minority Rights Group report on the same subject.

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January 1991

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the controversial Tatar-governed Nakhchevan ASSR is only about half that for the Armenian SSR. (The population density of the Armenian SSR averages 102 per square kilometre.) For a territory of 5500 square kilometres, we have the following population figures:

Population of Nakhchevan ASSR	
1940	131,000
1970	202,000
1979	239,000
1985	267,000

Thus the population explosion in Soviet Armenia is bound to lead to renewed pressure for annexation of the Nakhchevan ASSR, as it has in respect of the predominantly Armenian Mountainous Karabagh *oblast*. In the latter, Armeno-Azeri inter-communal clashes and riots are not uncommon. The Armenian majority complain bitterly and quite openly about discrimination against them exercised by the Azerbaijan Tatar government in Baku. In 1977, a senior Armenian communist named Sero Khanzadian, member of the executive committee of the Soviet Writers' Union, addressed a strongly worded open letter to Mr. Brezhnev, urging the reunification of the Karabagh region with Soviet Armenia. Particularly instructive is the rapid growth of the Soviet Armenian capital, Erevan, which began life over 2750 years ago as the fortress of Erebuni, a citadel of the Urartian kings.

Population of Erevan	
1917	34,000
1926	65,000
1939	204,000
1970	767,000
1979	1,019,000
1985	1,148,000

From this, it can be seen that Erevan now contains over a third of the entire population of the Armenian SSR. This rapid urban growth reflects the world-wide drift of rural farmers into big cities, resulting from industrialization and the search for town comforts and amenities. This somewhat artificial situation in Armenia also results from deliberate concentration of industry in the capital, and from the stony, inhospitable character of much of the countryside. Armenian industry would not be viable without substantial investment made by Moscow, in pursuance of the Kremlin policy of building up Soviet Armenia as a national home, a centre for Armenians all over the world. The products of Armenian factories could not be sold without access to the vast Soviet market; both the urban and the rural population would starve without imports of wheat from the Ukraine.

Soviet Armenia is, of course, a one-party Communist state, dependent politically on the dictates of the Kremlin – which Armenians can sometimes influence in one direction or another. Armenians are somewhat privileged compared with other Soviet nationalities, enjoying a reasonable standard of living, a health service highly acceptable by Near Eastern standards, and excellent educational facilities. Armenians travel extensively abroad, and there is usually a direct Erevan–Aleppo (and now Erevan–Paris) air service in operation. The writers of this Report have met a number of Armenians with dual nationality, e.g. holding both British and Soviet passports.

The fact that the hallowed peak of Mount Ararat, now in Turkish territory, is visible from many parts of Soviet Armenia provides a standing grievance, and sometimes provokes violent demonstrations. The Soviet authorities suppress these, and periodically assure the Turks of their peaceful intentions. Demands for the return of Nakhchevan, the Karabagh, and parts of southern Georgia, also erupt from time to time. However, most USSR Armenians know that without Russia, they would be politically and economically lost, and their underlying loyalty to and dependence on the Soviet Union is strong.

How many Armenians?

The Armenians are a mobile, as well as being a widely scattered people, so it has always been hard to establish the total world population of Armenians at any given time. Estimates – even seemingly reliable ones – vary widely.

The Armenian Apostolic Church plays a central role in the life of the community; many Armenians regard membership of the Church as an essential and integral part of 'being an Armenian'. According to Patriarch Ormanian's history of the Armenian Church, Apostolic Church members immediately before the First World War numbered 3,472,000 all over the world. In addition there were 128,400 Roman Catholic Armenians, and 49,000 Protestant ones. Allowing for persons of Armenian origin not recorded as members of any Church, it is reasonable to estimate a 1914 world Armenian population of about four and a half million, of whom a million and a half perished in the Young Turk genocide and its aftermath. A world-wide low point of three million was reached during the famine years of 1918–1920.

We have commented on the systematic build-up of the population of Soviet Armenia, particularly since 1945. In 1954, Bishop Poladian calculated that there were 2,745,000 Armenians living within the Soviet Union as a whole. Due to political and social discrimination by the Atatürk regime and its successors, the Armenian population of Turkey was still (1954) kept down at its immediate post-genocide level of around 100,000. Even in 1986, there is still no Armenian resettlement of the area formerly known as 'Turkish Armenia'.

The world upward trend is further confirmed by the break-down given in 1966 by the Erevan periodical *Hayreniki Dzayn* (summarized by Dekmejian in *Soviet Studies* of Glasgow University, 1968). Here we find a world-wide total of five and a half million Armenians, sub-divided as follows:

USSR	3,500,000
Rest of the world	2,000,000

The Soviet Armenian community was classified as follows:

Armenian SSR	2,000,000
Azerbaijan SSR	560,000
Georgian SSR	550,000
Russian SFSR	330,000
Others	60,000
	<hr/>
	3,500,000

(1979 Soviet census total: 4,151,241)

Outside the Soviet Union, the main communities were estimated to comprise:

USA and Canada	450,000
Turkey	250,000
Iran	200,000
France	200,000
Lebanon	180,000
Syria	150,000
	<hr/>
	1,430,000

This leaves (at 1966 figures) 570,000 to be divided between such countries as Great Britain (about 6000), Germany, Italy, Austria, Switzerland, Bulgaria (about 25,000), Romania, Poland, Cyprus, Egypt, South America, India, Burma, Singapore, China, and Australia. The inflated figure of 250,000 for Turkey is suspect, and must include many 'camouflaged' Armenians who have taken Turkish names and adopted Islam to avoid persecution. With marked exuberance, an Armenian magazine published in Vienna in July 1975 declared: 'Ils sont 7,000,000 dans le monde qui disent AYO!' ('Seven million people in the world say AYO!' – 'Ayo' being the Armenian for 'Yes'.) According to this source, there are today as many as 350,000 Armenians in France alone.

Official Soviet statistics already quoted estimate the population of Soviet Armenia at 3,317,000 (1985 figures), of which total almost three million are Armenians. It is, however, noticeable that the birthrate in Soviet Armenia has shown a significant decrease since the peak year of 1958, when it reached 41.1 per thousand inhabitants, as against 8.1 deaths per thousand. (Net growth rate: 33 per thousand.) By 1984 the growth rate had sunk to 18.4 per thousand. This compares with a generous 28.4 per thousand among the prolific Muslim Tajiks, and a sparse 4.0 per thousand among the Estonians.

At present, the population of the Armenian SSR is increasing at the rate of close on 61,000 per annum, in addition to immigration from abroad, which varies according to Soviet government policy. This was balanced by an emigration of nearly 10,000 Soviet Armenians to the USA during 1975-80.

Republican Turkey: The Ambiguous Inheritor

In the years in which Kemalist Turkey was fighting to establish itself, and to receive international recognition (1919-22), the embryo state showed as much fanaticism and ferocity towards Armenians and Greeks as any of the earlier Turkeys: as examples we would cite the Kemalist capture of Marash (February 1920) and of Hadjin (October 1920); the capture of Kars and Alexandropol by the troops of Kiazim Karabekir (also October 1920), with its sequel of massacre; and perhaps the best-known, in view of the recent book on the subject (Marjorie Housepian, *Smyrna 1922: The Destruction of a City*), the sack of Smyrna in September 1922, and the deliberate destruction by fire of the Armenian quarter, with extensive loss of life. (Naval units of the Western powers stood by offshore, but made virtually no effort to intervene or to put a stop to the atrocities.)

However, during the years of the internal reconstruction of Turkey, the Armenians and other Christian minorities were relatively unmolested, except for an outbreak in 1929. There were few Armenians left, and Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) rightly gauged that the outside powers had lost interest in them. Kemal's attention was fixed on his goal of modernization, and this, coupled with his own personal dislike of religious or social fanaticism for its own sake, meant that on occasion he looked favourably upon Armenians: thus, when Armenians from Kayseri petitioned him in 1928 in the reformed (Latinized) script to permit the re-opening of their church, he immediately assented.

Nevertheless, since the establishment of the Republic of Turkey the rights of Armenians have not been fully respected. The main instrument which laid down the principles of the protection of non-Muslim minorities with Turkey was the treaty of Lausanne (24 July 1923), specifically articles 38-44. The signatories of this treaty, which terminated the war in the Near East which had been continuing virtually since 1914, were the British Empire, France, Italy, Japan, Greece, Romania and the Serbo-Croat-Slovene state, and Turkey. Article 38 guaranteed the life and liberty of minorities within Turkey, without distinction of 'birth, nationality, language, race or religion'. It also guaranteed their freedom of movement and of emigration. Article 40 laid down the right of Turkish nationals of non-Muslim minorities 'to establish, manage and control at their own expense any charitable, religious and social institutions, and any schools and other establishments for instruction and education ...'. In Article 41 the Turkish government undertook to grant facilities for the minorities to teach their children in their own languages (although they would make the teaching of Turkish obligatory). Article 42 underwrote the legality of the minorities' own customs for regulating their own internal affairs; and the following article upheld the right of the minorities not to be compelled to do anything which their religion forbade. Article 44 gave the foregoing articles international significance, since the League of Nations itself guaranteed them.

These provisions have been and currently are being ignored. Due to the achievements of the Kemalists during the 1930s, the great-power rivalry for Turkish support during World War II, and the dependence of NATO on Turkish military prowess, none of the signatories of the Lausanne settlement has shown the power or the inclination to invoke the Lausanne Treaty, insofar as minority rights are concerned. Yet the provisions remain valid in international law, since the United Nations has been proved to be the legitimate successor organization to the League of Nations in the case of Namibia (South West Africa). At the time the semi-official newspaper *Ileri* commented: 'The Greeks and the Armenians must forget their own language and become Turks or get out.' Rather more crudely, *Ikdam* commented: 'The Armenians in Turkey are to enjoy two privileges only, namely to pray to their God and to bury their dead.'

Relying on the Lausanne Treaty, a number of Armenians returned from abroad and laid claim to lands and property from which they and their families had been ousted from 1915 onwards. In country districts, some of these people were hanged by irate Turkish mobs from their own fruit trees, with the encouragement of local

gendarmes. Only in Istanbul and a few other cities was it possible for Armenians to resume their interrupted community life. Most areas of the former six 'Armenian vilayets' of Eastern Turkey were declared a forbidden military zone. Armenian tourists from abroad, before being granted a visa, were obliged to sign an undertaking not to proceed with legal claims for return of their sequestered property in Turkey.

Armenian community interests suffered in 1939, when the French mandate over the *sanjak* (district) of Alexandretta – part of Syria – was abandoned in favour of Turkey, in an attempt to propitiate the Turks on the outbreak of World War II. A number of Armenians lived in villages there – the very reduced descendants of outlying districts of medieval Cilician Armenia; and 15,000 of these were unable to contemplate Turkish sovereignty, and left in July 1939 to swell the number of Armenians in Syria and Lebanon to about 200,000. (See the article by Christopher J. Walker in *The Times*, 5 September 1974.)

During World War II, as a manifestation of a revival of pan-Turkism, the government of Ismet İnönü imposed burdensome and discriminatory taxes (*varlık vergisi*) on non-Muslim minorities, especially the Armenian community. Those unable or unwilling to pay were sent, regardless of age, to Eastern Turkey, and made to do forced labour in quarries and on roads, living in atrocious concentration-camp-like conditions. The pro-Nazi sympathies of the Turkish regime and public found expression in March 1943 in the ceremonial repatriation of the mortal remains of Talaat Pasha, who had been assassinated in Germany by an Armenian patriot shortly after the First World War. (The assassin was exonerated by a German court, partly on the strength of evidence of Turkish atrocities given by General Liman von Sanders.) A leading Turkish journalist commented that the Turkish nation would be grateful to its government for bringing home Talaat Pasha's remains to his own country – where 'his own ideals had now been realized'. Talaat's reinternment on the Hill of Liberty was attended by representatives of Hitler's ambassador to Turkey, Herr von Papen.

Also during World War II there was an interesting and significant echo of the Armenian genocide. On 22 August 1939 Hitler said to his commanders, 'I have sent to the east my "Death's Head Units", with the order to kill without pity or mercy all men, women and children of the Polish race. Who still talks nowadays of the extermination of the Armenians?' The remark manifestly connects the genocidal mentality of Hitler with that of the Young Turk leaders – although it did not, at this stage, link the fate planned for the Jews with that of the Armenians, dealing as it did with Poland. It nevertheless shows that an unpunished genocide undertaken by one set of dictators is likely to breed genocidal views in another dictator, leading by an apparently natural progression to a holocaust such as that suffered by European Jewry.

Since World War II it has been possible for most Armenians in Istanbul to make a living, and indeed live quite comfortably, provided that they abstain from political activity. There has been only one serious outbreak of fanaticism, in September 1955 when, after reports of damage to Atatürk's birthplace in Thessaloniki, mobs ran riot in Istanbul, looting and pillaging the shops and property of the minorities. In recent years, largely as a result of the campaign of Armenian terrorism against Turkish diplomats abroad and airline offices, the position of Armenians within Turkey has become considerably more precarious.

In the official Turkish census report of 1960, the national total of primary Armenian speakers is given as 52,756. The largest concentration was in the Istanbul area, the figure being 37,280. Then came the province of Mardin, with 10,232. The Kastamonu region contained 1204 Armenian speakers, the Sivas area 565. No other Turkish province numbered more than 500 Armenians – the total for the once flourishing Armenian community of Adana in Cilicia being only six! Even more startling is the fact that the district of Van, the ancient heartland of Turkish Armenia, numbered only two persons who dared to list their mother tongue as Armenian.

The undisputed head and spokesman of the Armenian community in modern Turkey, as in the Ottoman Empire, is the Patriarch of the Armenian Apostolic Church in Constantinople. Since 1961, this position has been occupied by the outspoken Patriarch Shnorh Kaloustian, who is tireless in his efforts to protect his Armenian flock from victimization by the Turkish civil and military authorities. His Beatitude's efforts have been hampered and

misrepresented by the US State Department, whose pro-Turkish policy led to the success of the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974 (see MRG Report No. 30: *Cyprus*).

About that time, the State Department sent a special envoy to visit the Armenian Patriarch in Istanbul, on the initiative of powerful Armenian interests in the United States. Patriarch Shnork handed the US representative a three-page document, summarizing the grievances of the Turkish Armenians. This document was subsequently suppressed on orders from Washington, Dr. Kissinger's office denying that any complaints were voiced by the Patriarch during the US envoy's visit to the Armenian community in Istanbul.

In view of its importance, the Istanbul memorandum of 1974 is reproduced in the Appendix to this Report. Little of substance has changed in the intervening decade. In addition we print below a summary of His Beatitude's 1976 review of problems affecting the Armenians in Turkey. (By kind courtesy of *The Armenian Observer*, 2 June 1976.)

'There are 34 Armenian Apostolic churches in Istanbul and six in the provinces. There are 31 clergymen in Turkey: one bishop, two *vartabeds* (celibate priests) and 28 *kahanas* (married priests). Four *kahanas* and three *vartabeds* attached to the Patriarchate serve in various countries. The Religious Council held 12 meetings; however, new elections were not held because government permission was not received during the year. The Calfayan Orphanage was not able to build a new school, because the authorities had turned down the Armenian request for a new school building permit, despite the fact that the old structure was demolished. The same fate also befell St. Stephen's Church in Khaskugh, which was not able to obtain a permit for a new building construction. The Nersesian School, adjacent to the church, was able to rent a building to use it for school purposes in a different section of the city. The legal rights of these two institutions are now being defended in court, demanding justice and proper treatment; the community has assumed heavy and unnecessary financial burden in these matters. The Sourp Purgich Hospital was pressured to pay heavy taxes, and in the past 20 years operational expenses have increased tenfold, while the income of the hospital has virtually remained the same. The government has refused the request by the hospital to raise the income on its various properties. In fact, the Government subsidy, which was 100,000 Turkish liras some ten years ago, has been reduced to a mere 15,000 liras without any explanation or reason, creating a difficult situation. (The Government subsidy of 15,000 liras is less than half the cost per single patient per year.) The harassment in the educational field is more overt. Students whose parents have been Islamized for various reasons, and who have reverted to their original religion, Armenian Apostolic, through legal procedures, are denied the right to attend Armenian schools. If an Armenian has attended a non-Armenian school, he cannot change his mind and attend an Armenian school the following year, despite the fact that Armenian schools are recognized by the Education Ministry as accredited institutions. Another restriction imposed stipulates that Armenian schools cannot accept students from other districts. One of the more obvious pressures is the suppression of the word "Armenian" from identity cards.'

Turkish government spokesmen have consistently declined to comment on – or to refute – these charges. This fact, combined with abundant independent corroboration, suggests that the complaints are amply justified.

Hopes for an improvement in Turkish attitudes towards the Armenian minority in subsequent years have not been fulfilled. The annual reports issued by the Patriarchate have spoken of continued failure to solve legal difficulties regarding the Church schools and other charitable institutions. Following some sensational articles in the Turkish daily newspaper *Gunaydin*, bombs were thrown at the Armenian patriarchate, cathedral and school in Istanbul. (A similar attack later occurred after the bomb incident at a Turkish bank in London in January 1978.) Damage was relatively slight, and no serious casualties were reported. However, on one occasion Patriarch Shnork was assaulted by Turkish youths in his own cathedral.

At one time in 1977, foreign tourists with Armenian surnames were refused entry into Turkey and turned back at the border. This measure was soon rescinded, as was a Ministry of the Interior order closing the Armenian church in the village of Kirk-khan near Iskenderun. To be fair, it must be stated that these events occurred against a background of mounting unemployment and political instability within Turkey, with the growth of the terrorist movement against Turkish diplomats abroad, for which Armenian groups claimed responsibility. (See below.)

In the early 1980s, under the military regime in Turkey, there was a revival of pan-Turkish consciousness and nationalist sentiment. This led to a flood of bullying, anti-minority invective in the press,

especially directed against the Christian communities, and of them against the Armenians above all. With tacit government support, the Turkish press insulted and threatened Armenians on an almost daily basis. 'The Armenians should pack up and get out of Turkey', was one of the milder expressions of this mood. Writers demanded vengeance in response to Armenian terrorism abroad.

This racist campaign had a serious effect on the few isolated Turkish Armenians left outside Istanbul. Local Turkish right-wing opinion compelled several of the community to leave Diyarbakir, and the last Armenian had to leave Viranshehir in 1981. Within Istanbul the community was further cowed with fear. Several instances have been reported of the police refusing to come to the assistance of minorities threatened with violence, or suffering a physical attack. Despite official claims that Armenians are Turkish citizens like everyone else, it appears that in some areas the rule of law is just not extended to them, and that within Turkey itself there are forces pulling Republican Istanbul in the direction of Ottoman Constantinople.

Many foreign scholars and travellers have protested about the neglect and destruction of Armenian cultural monuments in Turkey. For example, the blowing-up of the *vank* (monastic complex) of Khtsgonk, which dates from the sixth century A.D. and is situated a few miles south of Ani, close to the Soviet-Turkish border. The damage is of such a kind that it cannot have been the result of an earthquake and must have been done by explosives. To deter protest the French archaeologist Dr. Thierry, an expert on medieval Armenian architecture, was arrested by gendarmes in Moush in 1974, and held for three days in a dungeon, without food or water – 'pour encourager les autres'.

In the eastern *vilayets*, those Armenian churches which survive do so through having been converted into barns or local museums. One celebrated church is shown to tourists as an outstanding production by 'early Christian Turks'. The idea of placing these buildings under UNESCO protection has never come to fruition. This is largely due to fear that this step would prove to be their death-warrant – in the same way that property developers in Great Britain immediately knock down historic buildings when they are threatened with a preservation order.

The Role of the Armenian Apostolic (Gregorian) Church

During the long years of Armenia's subjection to foreign empires, the national Apostolic Church was the one factor which kept the national spirit alive, even if it was dormant. By the late 19th century, the Church had come to be recognized as a vehicle of nationalism and self-defence within the empires. It was through the Church that Armenian leaders sought to educate their people, and imperial functionaries (especially Turkish ones) were not slow to discover that education was dangerous.

Besides the adherents of the Armenian Apostolic Church, there were a number of Armenian Uniate Catholics, some dating from the time of the Crusades and others from later Dominican missionary activity. In the 18th century their patriarchate moved from Aleppo, where there had been disturbances between them and adherents of the Armenian Apostolic Church, to Bzommar in Mount Lebanon, which is situated in land belonging to the powerful Maronite Khazen family. Armenian Protestants dated from the period of American missionary activity (1830s onwards) and by the middle of the century were an officially recognized community within the Ottoman empire.

In the period of the persecutions of the 1890s, adherents of the 'national' Church were singled out for especially harsh treatment. This was partly because the Church, as the guardian of the people, was inevitably being forced into a more political role as persecution increased, and partly because the Ottoman government understood that it would encounter no diplomatic response if it attacked Gregorian Armenians, whereas if Armenian Catholics were attacked, the French (or Austro-Hungarian) ambassador would protest, and if Protestants were attacked, the British or Americans would make their voices heard. During the Young Turk genocide of 1915 such distinctions were ignored, and Armenians regardless of adherence were killed.

The problems of the Church after the establishment of Communist rule in Armenia were immense, and for long periods the catholicosate of Echmiadzin was left vacant. The Cilician catholicosate (which in theory had similar powers, while recognizing

that the title of the Echmiadzin catholicos was 'Catholicos of all Armenians') moved after the First World War to Antilias, north of Beirut, where it continues to exist today. After its reconstitution in 1929, the Cilician catholicosate comprised the bishoprics of Aleppo, Damascus, Beirut and Cyprus. In 1956, it adopted a new constitution which permits it to appoint bishops in regions hitherto under the jurisdiction of Echmiadzin. It now has responsibility for additional dioceses in Iran, Greece, Kuwait, and parts of the USA and Canada.

A split in the Armenian Church began in 1933 and was formalized in 1956. The point at issue was the authority of the catholicos in Echmiadzin (Soviet Armenia): was he an authentic, independent church leader, or a Communist puppet? The Dashnak party threw its powerful organization behind opposition to the claims of the Echmiadzin catholicosate; and in 1956 the effective division of the Church came about, with the election of a pro-Dashnak catholicos in Antilias. It should be noted that the liberal, capitalistic Ramgavar party supported the candidate who would have kept the Church united, not on the grounds of sympathy with Communism but because in its opinion the unity of Armenians was a more important matter than a hypothetical increase of Soviet influence.

Since 1956, various attempts have been made to heal the split in the Church, which also adds up to a split in the community. What has, if anything, brought the different wings together, and gone some way to creating an atmosphere for reconciliation within the Church, were the activities of April 1975 and 1985 (the 60th and 70th anniversaries of the genocide), for which a united committee of all main factions was created. This committee has proved to be of enduring value throughout most of the Lebanese civil war, protecting the community from attacks (whether accidental or deliberate) from either side, and ensuring Armenian neutrality.

The international standing of the Armenian Apostolic Church was enhanced by the official visit of the then Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Donald Coggan, to Echmiadzin early in October 1977. Armenian prelates from all over the world gathered there to welcome the first primate of the Anglican Church ever to visit Armenia. British press reports expressed amazement at the large crowds, including many young people, who assembled for the occasion, and commented that expression of religious enthusiasm was freer here than in other Soviet republics which the British delegation had visited.

The present Catholicos of Cilicia, Karekin II, is a man of broad outlook, whose Oxford thesis was published by SPCK as *The Council of Chalcedon and the Armenian Church* (1965, reprinted). He has recently been instrumental in laying the foundation stone for an Armenian church at Deir ez-Zor, where hundreds of thousands of Armenians perished in a concentration camp in 1915.

Armenian Terrorism

Since 1975 some small Armenian groups have engaged in terrorism. This has usually consisted in the assassination of Turkish diplomats, or attacks on Turkish airline and other property, often resulting in indiscriminate killing. Some attacks have taken place in Turkey itself. The impetus for this campaign undoubtedly came from the assassination in Santa Barbara, California, of a Turkish diplomat in January 1973 by Gourgen Yanikian, a 77-year old survivor of the massacres of 1915. Until that date there had been no Armeno-Turkish terrorism since 1922. Yanikian's was not the act of a madman, but of a man who had considered matters deeply (if misguidedly) for decades and believed that his course of action was the only one to resolve a sense of desperation.

A couple of years after Yanikian's action, two Armenian groups emerged as dedicated to armed action. The first to record an incident called itself the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (ASALA). Its origins can be traced to 1965, to the disaffection of young Armenians with the three existing political parties; and the movement gathered support with the general radicalization that occurred with the Lebanese civil war. Terrorist – or 'revolutionary' – attacks followed, reaching a peak in late 1979, when there were 15 attacks in four months. Only in 1980 were any ASALA members arrested; until then, doubts were expressed that the actions were perpetrated by Armenians. The Turkish government, keen to keep the spotlight away from Armenians, preferred to ascribe the actions to Greek Cypriots.

ASALA's political platform was radical, rhetorical and third-world leftist. It was however unquestionably Armenian, and to describe the movement as a mere aspect of 'international terrorism' is to ignore ASALA's essential dynamic, and to yield to the pretentious folly of those who comment, patronizingly, on 'international terrorism' as an indivisible concept, while ignoring the local conditions and historical grievances which lead to terrorist movements. While there is no doubt that ASALA received help and advice from other groups, its own *raison d'être* was always Armenian.

Another group, the Justice Commandoes of the Armenian Genocide, also claimed responsibility for attacks from 1975. Its programme was largely devoid of leftist rhetoric, concentrating on recognition of the Armenian genocide, and unspecific demands for the return of Armenian lands. In its language and communiqués it took a line very close to that of the Dashnak party, leading some to conclude that it was a section of the party. Actions by this group also reached a peak in 1980. It seems to have disappeared from the headlines recently. Another group, calling itself the Armenian Revolutionary Army, appears to have taken its place. Other shadowy groups, with names such as the New Armenian Resistance, have also surfaced in recent years.

The main purpose of Armenian terrorism would appear to be to make Turkey, and the western world in general, take note of Armenians, and end the guilty and embarrassed silence about them. (Terrorism has usually been an instrument of publicity, with any demands in fact merely a way of articulating the group's existence to the world's media.) The actions of ASALA and the JCAG should be seen primarily as dramatizing the Armenian genocide – as forcing the issue to the attention of Turkey, and its allies and sponsors in Europe and America. The Armenian experience of 1915 has been written out of the script of 20th-century political consciousness since the time of the Treaty of Lausanne, 1923. The terrorist groups are by their violent methods determined to make the issue a live one again, claiming (wrongly) that peaceful methods have failed. (One has only to see the inadequacy of Armenian original scholarly research on the events of 1915 to see how far Armenians are from putting over a peaceful case competently.)

Armenian terrorism has abated in recent years (as of writing, November 1986). This appears to be partly because of splits within ASALA, after a particularly grisly and random series of episodes in France in November 1983, which followed the arrest of an Armenian at Orly airport. Partly, too, it may result from the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in June 1982, which destroyed a substantial part of ASALA's training facilities and infrastructure. It is possible, too, that the airing of the Armenian question at the United Nations in Geneva in August 1985 has deflated the claims of the proponents of terror, who insist that Armenians have met only with silence for 60 years, and that terror is legitimized by the refusal of any other party to listen.

By any standards, even the most corrupt, there is in fact no justification for Armenian terrorism, since the articulation of Armenian claims is still in its infancy. Armenians are astonishingly backward at expressing political hopes sensibly and rationally in the political language of today, and in supporting any demands with accurate facts and figures, and clear and unambiguous historical facts. One is often surprised at the amount of outrage expressed over the Armenian genocide, when it is placed alongside the absence of any coherent research telling the average uninformed person what happened and why it happened, backed up with names, dates and places. The reaction of 'Nobody listens to us, so let's try terrorism' is – to put it mildly – premature, when so little straightforward research and historical writing has been carried out – other than the statutory repetition of 'what great western figures have said about the Armenians', which many Armenians mistake for the story of their people in their original towns and villages. One or two organizations, such as the Zoryan Institute of Cambridge, Mass., have begun to work on collecting and publishing relevant genocide material, but their findings have not filtered down yet to the consciousness of the majority.

Some Leading Armenian Communities Today in the Diaspora

We have frequently mentioned the deportations and mass emigration from the homeland which have been a tragic feature of

Armenian history through the ages. The dispersion began in the early Middle Ages, was intensified during Sultan Abdul Hamid's massacres of 1895-96, and reached a climax during the Young Turk genocide of 1915. The only consolation is that the horrors of exile have served to develop the resourcefulness of the Armenian character, and provide a world-wide outlet for Armenian dynamism and professional acumen. Such qualities have reached their highest point (outside the Armenian SSR) in the United States of America.

This Report's terms of reference require us to concentrate on areas where Armenians present a specific minority problem, or are actively discriminated against as a community. It is encouraging to report that Armenians in most countries constitute a prosperous, well integrated group.

America

By far the most prosperous and internationally important diaspora community is that of the USA and Canada. Large groups of Armenians exist at Fresno in California and at Watertown, a suburb of Boston, Mass.; however, the highest concentration of US Armenians is today around Los Angeles. The Armenian population of the USA and Canada, calculated two decades ago as around 450,000 strong, is now well above the half million mark and increasing rapidly.

The most visible public figure in the US today is George Deukmejian, the governor of California, whose term of office has been remarkably successful. Another notable Armenian public figure is Congressman Charles ('Chip') Pashayan. Aside from such figures, perhaps the most remarkable Armenian to have come into the public eye in the US in recent years is Vartan Gregorian, who was born in Tabriz, Iran, and is now the highly regarded president of the New York Public Library. He was the subject of two long and searching articles in the *New Yorker* in April 1986. Of the Armenians who have been in the public eye for business and charitable activities over the decades, pride of place must go to Alex Manoogian, the success of whose Masco Corporation is only balanced by the founder's generosity in making donations to Armenian (and non-Armenian) causes. Some Armenians, in the US and elsewhere, have expressed the view that it is time for successful Armenians other than Mr. Manoogian to be generous to Armenian cause, on a smaller scale, since none has achieved his kind of business success.

There are many Armenian patriotic organizations based in the USA. Among them we should mention the energetic Hairenik Association of Boston (Dashnak, activist and publishers of the *Armenian Weekly*, and the daily *Hairenik*), Baikar Association of Boston (Armenian Democratic Liberal Organization, Ramgavar, publishers of the weekly *Mirror-Spectator* and *Baikar*), the popular and more conservative Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU), founded in 1906 in Cairo, Egypt. The AGBU itself was reorganized during the 1915 holocaust to set up refugee camps, rescue orphan children from the desert, and generally salvage the remnants of the shattered Armenian people dispersed throughout the Near East. Today the AGBU supports Armenian schools, charities and other good causes throughout the world. There are several AGBU schools in Lebanon, Latin America, the United States, and the Melkonian Institute in Nicosia, Cyprus. The other main international agency in this field is the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation in Lisbon. There is also the Armenian Relief Society, affiliated with the Dashnak community, founded in 1910 in New York to undertake worldwide Armenian relief. During the period of the republic it was recognized by the ICRC as the 'Armenian Red Cross'. Today, the ARS is active worldwide in assisting the welfare of the Armenian people.

The growing confidence of US Armenians is typified by Michael Arlen's 1976 book, *Passage to Ararat*. Arlen's father was a famous Anglo-Armenian novelist of the roaring 1920s, who used to hide his Armenian origins from his friends in smart society. Michael Arlen Junior relates in his book how he came to identify himself with his Armenian forebears and accept his national heritage. The account of this spiritual pilgrimage makes significant reading. The growth of the political clout of the Armenian lobby has been remarkable since 1976. Most notable has been its sponsorship of H.J. Res. 192, in Congress, seeking to declare 24 April a national day of remembrance for 'man's inhumanity to man'. Every April there are meetings, demonstrations and

picketings of Turkish consular buildings, showing that, however close is the strategic relationship between the US and Turkey, Armenians are determined to have the right to their own history.

There are also substantial Armenian communities in the main cities of Canada, and in South America - notably Uruguay, Venezuela, Brazil, and Argentina. Judge Leon Arslanian was presiding judge in the 1985-6 trial in Buenos Aires of General Galtieri and the other leaders of the former Argentine junta. Arslanian is internationally recognized as a firm upholder of human rights in Latin America.

Armenian journalism in the United States is represented by five Armenian English-language newspapers, including the *Armenian Weekly* (Boston), the *Armenian Reporter* (New York), the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* (Boston), the *Armenian Observer* (Los Angeles), and the *California Courier* (L.A.). Major Armenian language newspapers are *Baikar* (Watertown), *Hairenik* (Boston), *Asbarez* (Los Angeles), as well as *Nor Or* (Los Angeles).

There are currently eleven Armenian day-schools in the United States and two in Canada. Church life of Armenians in America is quite active. There are over 90 parishes, most of which have cultural and recreational facilities, located around the major cities of the east, central states and west coast. A seminary, St. Nerses, opened in 1962, is presently associated with St. Vladimir's Orthodox Seminary in New York.

Western Europe

The Armenian link with *France* is of considerable antiquity, dating back to the time of the Crusades. The last king of Armenia is buried in St. Denis. Today, the community is the most important in Europe. It numbers about 250,000, and is centred mainly in Paris, Marseille, Lyon and their suburbs. The Armenian Apostolic Church has 16 churches, including the cathedral of S. Garabet, Paris. It also runs a school for girls just outside Paris. Armenian Catholics are well established in France, with eight parishes throughout the country. They operate a *lycée* for boys (the Collège Samuel Moorat, at Sèvres), and three boarding schools for girls. There are also a handful of Armenian Protestants. Cultural matters are well cared for among French Armenians. In addition to thriving organizations run by churches or political organizations, there is a fine research library in the capital, the Bibliothèque Nubarian, in Place Alboni. It was founded by the AGBU, and contains over 10,000 volumes in several languages. About 12 Armenian or Armenian-and-French newspapers and journals are published. Armenians are well integrated into the French cultural scene - one has only to think of household names like Charles Aznavour, Sylvie Vartan, Anouk Aimée, Henri Verneuil (born Ashot Malakian), and Henri Troyat, biographer of Tolstoy. French Armenians were in the early 1980s heartened by the support given to their cause (recognition of the past) by President Mitterrand, who was prepared to challenge the big battalions of Turkey and the United States in the cause of truth.

The Armenian community in *Great Britain* is also well established, especially in London and Manchester. The Manchester community dates back to the 1840s, and played a part in the 19th century textile boom. The ranks of the London Armenians have been swelled by refugees from disaster areas such as the Lebanon, Cyprus, and most recently, Iran. London has one Armenian restaurant, two Apostolic churches, and the Armenian House cultural centre. The Supreme Catholicos at Holy Echmiadzin maintains his personal representative (residence: Iverna Gardens, Kensington), accredited to the Archbishop of Canterbury. Prominent Armenian musicians, including the violinist Manoug Parikian, the Chilingirian String Quartet and the conductor Loris Tjeknavorian, give frequent concerts at the Festival Hall and elsewhere. The Armenian General Benevolent Union, the Armenian Relief Society, the Armenian National Committee (a lobbying group), and the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation of Lisbon, all maintain branches in London. An 'Armenian Arts Council' has recently been set up there too.

The Armenian colony in *Italy* is of long standing, reflecting the Papacy's traditional friendship with Armenia. The Armenian Catholic order of the Mekhitarists has a monastery on the island of San Lazzaro at Venice. The order was founded over 250 years ago in Istanbul, and later went to San Lazzaro at the invitation of the Venetian Republic. It was dedicated to the dissemination of

knowledge, and played a vital role in the Armenian emancipation movement from about 1800. The monastery has a valuable library, damaged by fire in 1975. Unfortunately the monastery has recently been a victim of unwise speculative investments, and has gone bust. This in itself is a curious plight for a monastery to find itself in, but what is alarming is the prospect that San Lazzaro may be compelled to sell off all or part of its remarkable historical and artistic treasures. Assistance from other Armenian communities seems to have held off this possibility for the present at least. In Venice itself, there is an Armenian High School. Substantial Armenian industrial and business interests exist in Milan, Turin and elsewhere.

The Armenian colony in *West Germany* is less prominent today than in pre-war times. However, there is an active communal organization, whose president resides in Berlin. Some Armenian carpet merchants in London have subsidiaries in Düsseldorf. The Armenian church fellowship in Cologne operates under the patronage of the German Cardinal-Archbishop there. At the University of Heidelberg we find a German-Armenian cultural society: President, Professor Dr. Friedrich Heyer. There is also an Institute of Armenian Affairs in Munich, directed by Edward Oganessian.

In *Austria*, the Armenian colony is centred in Vienna, where the Catholic Mekhitarist Fathers have a magnificent library, and publish a renowned scholarly journal; they also operate a commercial printing works. The importance of the community is recognized by the existence of an Apostolic church, subordinated to Echmiadzin.

The *Swiss* Armenians have redoubled their activity in Geneva in recent years. In an attractive city suburb, they have built and consecrated a handsome new Apostolic church.

Eastern Europe

The East European Armenian diaspora has a long and interesting history, going back to the Byzantine era. (See Part One, above.)

In *Poland* and in Habsburg-dominated *Transylvania* and *Hungary*, the Armenians were obliged to adopt Roman Catholicism, which led to a certain loss of identity. However, Armenians have played a distinguished part in the intellectual, commercial and ecclesiastical life of modern Poland, and are well respected there.

Before World War II, some 50,000 Armenians lived in *Romania*. They dominated the entire northern quarter of Suceava, the former capital of Moldavia and owned a fortified monastery (Zamca), dating from about 1600. The trade of Jassy, Moldavia's modern capital, was largely in their hands. Bucharest is the centre of an Armenian Apostolic bishopric, once occupied by the present Supreme Catholicos, Vazken I. The handsome Armenian cathedral in Bucharest was completed in 1915. After World War II, the Communist regime headed by extremists like Anna Pauker was hostile to private enterprise. Most of the local Armenians emigrated to the Armenian SSR, to America, or to the Lebanon. Only about 5000 remained behind. In 1973, however, the general manager of the main Bucharest department store was an Armenian, Harutiun Asadurian; the Minister of Machine Tool Production in the Romanian government was Mr. Virgile Aktarian. An Armenian weekly paper, *Nor Giank* ('New Life'), appears in Bucharest. Popular opera singers there include David Hovanesian and Eduard Tumajanian; theatre stars include Harutiun Zakarian and Luisa Berberian.

Particularly favourable is the situation of the Armenians in the *Bulgarian People's Republic*, where they number about 25,000. The main Armenian centres are at Plovdiv, Sofia, Varna and Ruse. They have several clubs, guest houses, theatres and choral societies. The flourishing churches come under the jurisdiction of the Armenian bishop in Romania, the Rt. Rev. Dirair Mardikian.

In the *Soviet Union*, Armenians are found in most major cities and are prominent in all professions, in the arts and sciences, and in trade and industry. The colonies in Moscow, Nor Nakhchevan (near Rostov), and Astrakhan have a long and chequered history. The Lazarev Institute in Moscow was founded by a wealthy Armenian family in 1815; the original edifice still stands, in the Armyansky Pereulok. The Soviet motor industry in Central Asia owes much to Armenian mechanics and engineers, centred in the town of Ashkhabad. Armenian doctors and dentists are outstanding in the otherwise backward Soviet medical profession. However, there are exceptions to the rule, and an Armenian psychiatrist has

become notorious for promoting the detention of Soviet dissidents in mental hospitals, and injecting them with harmful drugs.

Near and Middle East

The metropolis of the Armenian Near Eastern diaspora has for half a century been Beirut, the Lebanese capital, still torn asunder by civil war. The *Lebanon* must now be considered an Armenian disaster area.

The Armenians (perhaps 200,000) constitute 7% of the entire Lebanese population, and are the seventh largest community there. The majority live in Beirut and its suburbs. They include wealthy businessmen, farmers, and poor workers and peasants. The Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia, the Patriarch of the Armenian Catholics, and the President of the Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Middle-East, all have headquarters in the Beirut area. Before the outbreak of the civil war, sixty Armenian schools – kindergartens, primary schools and high schools – and the Haigazian College and the Nshan Palandjian Academy, were operating in the Lebanon. There are over twenty Armenian churches, four daily newspapers, and more than a dozen weekly, monthly and quarterly magazines. The three major political parties – the nationalist Dashnaks or ARF, the more conservative Ramgavars, and the progressive Hunchaks – all play their role in the political, cultural and athletic life of the community. The Dashnaks have the headquarters of their Homenetmen sporting club in Beirut, a worldwide organization with 17,000 members. The Hunchaks also have their similar but smaller Homenmen organization based there.

Armenians long played an important, though secondary, role in the business world of Beirut. The devastation of that city is a disaster which has repercussions for Armenians all over the world. Throughout almost all the fighting, the Armenians had sought to maintain a neutral stance. However, an estimated 1000 Armenians had been killed by September 1986, and many thousands wounded. According to an Armenian Revolutionary Federation spokesman, damage to Armenian property had reached \$200 million. All over the world, Armenian communities are organizing relief for their stricken kinsfolk in the Lebanon. Many have left the country, and those who stayed behind were at one time menaced by famine.

Another present-day Armenian near-disaster area is *Cyprus*. In Nicosia, the Melkonian High School was hit by a Turkish bomb during the 1974 invasion. Its reconstruction has cost the Armenian General Benevolent Union about \$1 million. Armenians in the northern sector of Cyprus have been turned out of their homes and shops, and beaten up. (We have interviewed several of them who escaped to London.) In Famagusta and elsewhere, Armenian churches and monuments have been vandalized or demolished by settlers from the Turkish mainland, Turkish villagers or units of the Turkish armed forces.

Serious problems of another kind beset the Armenians of *Iran*, about 180,000 strong. From the 17th century Armenian township of New Julfa, close to Isfahan, the main Armenian population centre has shifted to Tehran. Here the community has several churches and cultural institutions. Before the late Shah's overthrow, Tehran Armenians owned many prosperous business concerns, including breweries. Current economic and political upheavals have proved serious to Armenian interests here, while extremists are attempting to restrict the operation of Tehran Armenian schools. Nevertheless, Armenians are free to commemorate 1915 every April; and the Armenian cultural and sporting club is more often open than not. A newspaper, *Alik*, is published. The historic Armenian community in Tabriz, capital of Persian Azerbaijan, is also of contemporary importance. It has an archbishopric subordinate to Antilias, with an interesting museum. From Tabriz to Tehran, thousands of Armenians still make an annual pilgrimage in July to the 14th century church of St. Thaddeus, on the south side of Mount Ararat.

Armenians are found in virtually all main cities of the Near East. In *Egypt*, the Armenian connexion goes back to the 11th century Fatimid Grand Vizier Badr al-Jamali, who was an Armenian and served from 1073 to 1074; and in modern times to the officials who served the dynasty of Muhammad Ali, notably Nubar Pasha, who became prime minister. More recently, the Cairo Armenians lost much ground following the withdrawal of British power and the growth of nationalism, but some are prospering in the more free-and-easy atmosphere which exists today.

In Syria, Armenians are in evidence in Damascus, and also at Aleppo, where they are prominent in hotel management and in medicine. Until his recent retirement General Karamanougian was counted among the 'top brass' of the Syrian army. Armenian schools in Syria have had their curricula severely reduced over the years. The community in Iraq is also substantial; but the dictatorial nature of the Iraqi regime has not allowed it much freedom. 70% of Iraqi Armenians live in Baghdad; the rest in Basra or Kirkuk/Mosul.

There is an active Armenian community in Jordan, which a few years ago built itself a church in Amman. Many Jordanian Armenians are 'double refugees', having fled from Palestine during the war of 1948-9, in addition to their flight from their homeland. In Israel there is a small (300) but flourishing community in Jaffa, although in recent years it has been troubled by factionalism. In Jerusalem, in the section of the city which Israel captured from Jordan during the 1967 war, there is an ancient and venerable community, centering around the cathedral and monastery of St. James. The monastery owns a printing press, which published its journal, *Sion*, from 1866 to 1877, and in more recent years; the Gulbenkian Library there is also noteworthy. The present patriarch, His Beatitude Yeghishe Derderian, is an equivocal figure. After being installed as patriarch in 1960 by a detachment of Jordanian soldiers, he now cultivates close relations with the Israelis. In recent months the Ramgavar party has been calling strenuously for his removal, alleging serious abuses.

India and South East Asia

The great days of the Armenian presence in India both preceded and coincided with those of the British Raj – from the early 18th to the mid-20th century. The Armenians of Bombay and Calcutta played a great role in international trade with Europe, with Persia and the Ottoman Empire, and with the Far East. They were highly cultured, well educated, and strongly patriotic, and financed many useful enterprises among their poorer brethren scattered in other lands. After the withdrawal of the British, who favoured the Armenians as Christians, the community has languished somewhat, and many Indian Armenians have emigrated.

This applies also to the once-flourishing Armenian colonies in Rangoon and in Singapore. Armenians held important positions at court in 18th century Burma, and more recently those of Singapore played a prominent part in setting up the independent state there in 1965, and made their administrative and political talent available at the highest ministerial level. The Armenian-founded Raffles Hotel remains outstanding.

Africa

Armenians have engaged in trade, diplomacy and missionary work in Africa since the Middle Ages. The ports of East Africa have attracted their mercantile talent; Armenians have been active in South African industrial centres such as Johannesburg and Cape Town.

Particularly interesting is the long-established Armenian colony in Ethiopia. The Armenian Apostolic Church has close links with the national Church of Ethiopia. The late Bishop Derenik Poladian (murdered in 1963) was for some years Dean of the Ethiopian national Church's seminary in Addis Ababa.

Australia

Among the younger Armenian communities, that of Australia is one of the most dynamic. There are 9000 Armenians in Sydney, 3000 in Melbourne, and 800 in Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth combined. The total is thus close on 13,000. The Armenian church in Sydney is directed by a bishop, that in Melbourne by a *Vardapet* (doctor of theology). The communities publish two monthly journals and organize cultural events which are open to the Australian public. Apart from many individuals engaged in commerce and industry, the Australian Armenians can muster several holders of Ph.D. degrees, university lecturers, engineers, doctors of medicine, scientific workers and people engaged in music and the fine arts. There is also a radio station broadcasting in Armenian.

CONCLUSION: FLASHPOINTS TODAY

‘He knew also a little Armenian, but aunt Dot told him that this language was a mistake with Turks, and only vexed them, as they had long since

pronounced *delenda est Armenia* over this so unfortunately fragmented people, and did not care to hear them referred to.’

– Rose Macaulay, *The Towers of Trebizond*, p.23.

Armenians today are a law-abiding people, who, despite the fact that periods of the history of the earlier part of this century could be interpreted as a world-wide conspiracy against them, have shrugged their shoulders and resolutely made the best of events. Yet since a sense of grievance persists – that the crimes against their people are not only unatoned, but largely unrecognized also – the possibility of direct action remains, too.

Principally this must concern Turkey. To anyone who has read the relevant literature, and who is not a dedicated Turkist, it is absurd that the ‘official doctrine’ propagated in Ankara is that there never was an Armenian problem, or if there was, it was just the problem either of a ‘civil war’, an absurd idea, or of a few bandits and subversives who met their just deserts. Too many people are learning the truth for these views to have credence for much longer. It would unquestionably be in Turkey’s interest to recognize that a crime was committed against Armenians in 1915; although no Turkish government has shown any moral courage in that direction. Perhaps more realistically, there is a case to make for insisting that Turkey observe the relevant clauses of the Treaty of Lausanne correctly, with particular regard to Armenian schools in Istanbul. Also we would like to see the Armenian monuments in eastern Turkey better cared for, although no western government (or UNESCO) should press the Turks on this matter, a course of action which might only hasten the destruction of the monuments that remain.

Within Turkey, Armenian terrorism has increased the insecurity of the community, situated for the most part in Istanbul. And indeed it is hard to see what Armenian terrorism has achieved anywhere, since the legitimate advances in the Armenian case (broadly four – see Introduction, above) would most likely have been achieved without terrorism. The worldwide development of Armenian participation since 1975 in public affairs, in university life, and in journalism has meant that a higher Armenian political profile is a natural corollary. These things, rather than terrorist attacks, have brought about the small but significant advances in the worldwide awareness of Armenian rights. It does seem, fortunately, that the legitimate prosecution of the Armenian case, in lobbying, in resolutions, and so forth, has led to a decrease in terrorist activity, as terrorists (maybe) realise that their attacks hinder, rather than help, the political process.

Armenians both within Soviet Armenia, and as members of the world-wide Armenian communities observing her, have fewer grievances than those in or from Turkey. As in tsarist times, the Armenians are still the most loyal of the Transcaucasian people (although Armenian patriots in the diaspora say that, given the opportunity, Armenia would secede). Yet the state oppression which bears down on any Soviet citizen who steps out of line inevitably bears down on them too, and it would be idle to overlook the constraints on freedom imposed on Soviet Armenians, even though no substantial ‘dissident’ movement seems to exist. As a place to live, Soviet Armenia remains one of the best options for an Armenian since it is part of the historic land of Armenia. Given Armenia’s geographical position, no other government than the Soviet regime could be envisaged as having sufficient power and military backing to maintain the existence of Armenians there.

Armenian refugee colonies have suffered as a result of the wars both in Cyprus and Lebanon. In Cyprus, although the community is far smaller, they have been brought face to face with a Turkish army, which they have seen behave in a way similar to Turkish armies of the past. In the Lebanon, although many of them lost a great deal (especially in the heavily fought-over commercial district of Beirut) they remained neutral, and their neutrality was recognized by the warring parties – although the viciousness with which the war was fought, and especially the indiscriminate shelling by both sides, meant that there were many casualties.

In the face of the loss and disruption which both wars have brought, the traditional Armenian attitude of making the best of a bad job is likely to prevail. Within the Armenian community itself it seems that a more conciliatory spirit is abroad, and that the internal strife of past decades has given way to an uncertain harmony: which is indeed necessary in view of the events in Lebanon, Iran and Cyprus.

APPENDIX

RESTRICTIONS ON THE ARMENIAN COMMUNITY IN TURKEY (1974)

I. Real Estate and Financial Restrictions

1. Many Armenian church people would like to donate their real properties to the Armenian churches, hospitals and orphanages, as endowments. The authorities concerned however do not recognise such endowments, and sometimes they confiscate them, as has happened in at least one case, namely that of the Armenian hospital in Yedikuleh.
2. The authorities concerned refuse to hand over the ownership papers for those church properties, for which a law court decision has already been made in favour of the communal religious or charitable organizations.
3. The authorities concerned consistently refuse to give permission to build new buildings on vacant church properties, from which however they continue to assess property taxes.
4. Permission for repair and restoration, sometimes even proper maintenance, of churches, schools, orphanages etc. is given only after immense difficulties, and long delays.
5. Two churches and two orphanages, one for boys, called Nersesian, and the other for girls, called Kalfayan, have been demolished in the section of Halicioğlu of Istanbul, due to the construction of another bridge over the Golden Horn. The civil authorities have not as yet given permission to replace the demolished buildings with new ones. The orphanages continue to exist in rented buildings, which is a great financial burden. This has resulted in greatly reduced services to the poor children of the community.
6. The sale price of the demolished buildings and other properties seized by the Bridge Construction Authorities has not been given to these communal organizations, but put in trust, pending presentation of the title deeds of properties.
7. A regulation promulgated in 1936, says that apart from normal operational expenses, the communal authorities cannot spend more than 250 liras without the permission of 'Vakiflar' [religious property trusts] authorities. This regulation was not enforced until recently but is now strictly observed. Those in authority ignore the fact that the value of 250 liras in 1936 was equivalent to approximately 20-25,000 Turkish liras in 1974.
8. The 'Vakiflar' authorities have recently levied 5% surtax upon the income of communal organizations, which have already paid their government and municipal taxes. This surtax is levied also upon the special collections made to balance the budget of the organization.
9. Upon selling a communal property, the 'Vakiflar' authorities demand that the money from the sale of any property be deposited in the 'Vakiflar Banks'. The capital is frozen, and the communal organizations can never withdraw it, although they receive a nominal interest on the capital.

II. Educational Restrictions

1. There are very strict controls upon the Armenian communal schools - 32 in number. Despite the fact that the Armenian directors of the schools are Turkish citizens, the Educational Department has also appointed a Turkish 'sub-director', who is the 'de facto' director of the school, and without the approval of the latter, the 'de jure' Armenian director cannot act. The aim is to 'Turkify' the Armenian schools as much as possible.
2. The directors of Armenian schools, although appointed by the communal authorities, must be approved in addition by the Educational Department. Recently in the majority of cases and after long delay, the Ed. Dept. has refused to confirm them. Usually they refuse to confirm directors who are strong and capable and approve mediocre ones. During the last three years at least four appointed directors were refused confirmation by the Ed. Dept. and at present there are at least three schools without Armenian directors, which are managed by Turkish 'sub-directors'.
3. The Armenian school authorities are having great trouble in finding teachers for their primary schools. Until recently any graduate from an Armenian Lycée - senior High School - could teach in any Armenian Primary School. Now they cannot, as an

order of the Ed. Dept. requires a Teacher's Certificate from every Primary School Teacher. The Armenians wouldn't object to this regulation, if facilities were given for the candidates to promote their Armenian language studies. There are no such facilities. The Armenian teacher candidate, after finishing eight years of education in his or her communal school, can enrol in the government Teachers College, and graduate from it in four years. By the time he - or she - has graduated, he has usually forgotten most of the Armenian language he has been taught. Teachers are supposed to teach in the Armenian language in the communal Primary Schools. The Armenian schools now need at least 25 additional Armenian teachers for their own Primary Schools. Since these are not available, the vacancies are now filled by Turkish teachers.

4. Recently the most capable directress of an Armenian Lycée was removed from her office without any stated reason.

5. Any so-called 'Müfettiş' or inspector, can go to any Armenian school at any time and ask questions, many on trivial matters. They have been known to ask, for example, why the schools receive correspondence in Armenian, or in any other foreign language . . . Why the students say prayers at the dinner table in the refectories? (Students are not allowed to pray in the classrooms at any time.)

6. In 1973 'Müfettişes' expelled from an orphanage-school ten little boys giving as the reason that 'they don't know the Armenian language'.

7. Just at the beginning of 1973-1974 academic year, an order came from the Ed. Dept. to the effect that all the new students, and those who were changing their schools, must not register at school until they have obtained a permit from the Ed. Dept. This caused unnecessary delays. There are cases where some of the children got their permission only three months after the opening of schools. About 40-50 students did not get permission for the simple reason that the religion of their fathers or grandfathers was written in the state record offices, as 'Christian', (without the addition of the word 'Armenian') or 'Armenian Orthodox', which the authorities consider a denomination other than the Armenian Apostolic Church (which is definitely not the case). These bureaucratic reasons for refusals reveal the real intention of the authorities concerned, namely to reduce the numbers of Armenian students.

8. The authorities have refused to give permission to transform at least some schools into boarding schools for poor children, particularly those coming from the needy families of Asia Minor, who need better care, better shelter, and better nourishment, than they have at home. The communal organizations are now caring for these poor children in ordinary rented houses, which besides creating accommodation difficulties, is an extra financial burden.

These are some of the restrictions which are openly contrary not only to the provisions of the Treaty of Lausanne, but also to the Constitution of the country, because parents are free to send their children to any school they prefer. Secondly there is no law against transforming any private school - *özel okul* - into a boarding school as long as legal requirements have been fulfilled. These restrictions, besides being against the law, in most cases are also against elementary human rights and conscience.

III. General Restrictions

Other restrictions, which are neither financial nor educational, include the following:

1. From ancient times through the Republican period and up to the downfall of the Menderes regime, the Armenian Community had a Central Executive Committee. In 1960 it was abolished. It is a fundamental law in the Armenian Church, that all communities, besides having their local Executive Committee, must also have their Central Executive Committee or Council. This is the situation in the USA, in France, in the Middle East, and even in Soviet Armenia. Only in Turkey is the Armenian Community deprived of its own Central Council at present.

2. The authorities permitted the Religious Council of the Armenian Church in Turkey to continue its existence and function. The last Religious Council was elected in 1961, with the election of the present Patriarch. The Council is composed of nine members, four of whom have since died. The Patriarch has applied to the authorities to give permission to elect a new Council according to the rules and regulations of the Church. No permission has ever been received.

3. The formal common names of all the communal organizations has always been 'Müfetelli Heyeti'. In 1965, the 'Vakıflar' Department changed it into 'Yönetim Kurulu'; when asked why this change was made, the answer was that they were changing the old Arabic expression into modern Turkish. However, it was later found that the terms had very important different legal definitions. The first one meant a 'vakıf' organization with all rights of property ownership – selling, buying, building, repairing, restoring, etc., whereas the second one was only a managing body without any ownership rights. Thus the authorities argue that the communal organization can no longer purchase or possess new properties nor receive such properties, even as a gift or in a will. The authorities concerned also refuse to hand over title deeds to the communal organizations for properties, for which they had not obtained the title deeds earlier for one reason or another.

Update – 1987

Restrictions on Armenians in Turkey continue. In December 1986 Bishop Mesrob Moutafian was arraigned at the Third Criminal Court of Istanbul, along with Sarkis Oflaz, a church lay official, on charges of acting against the law for the protection of historical monuments. Specifically they were accused of temporarily covering a small balcony of the Armenian Patriarchate with material to keep out rain. The prosecutor has asked for 5 years imprisonment for both men.

Similarly the Turkish state continues to deny an Armenian historical presence. The publisher of a Turkish version of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* was facing prosecution in December 1986 because it contained an article on the existence of an Armenian State in southern Anatolia in the 11th century.

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The Hidden Holocaust

During the course of the First World War considerably over a million Armenians were slaughtered in one of the most horrific but least known genocides of recent history. The then government of Ottoman Turkey made a decision to liquidate their Armenian Christian subjects as a people. Armenian conscripts in the Ottoman armies were starved, beaten and machine gunned. Armenian intellectuals were murdered. In Armenian villages men were taken away and shot, while their women and children were rounded up and forced to walk southwards into the deserts, where many collapsed and died of hunger and exhaustion. The survivors were then incarcerated in open-air concentration camps, from which few emerged alive.

All of this has been recorded in documents and individual memoirs. There can be no doubt that the genocide took place with full government knowledge and approval. But even today the present Turkish government denies the reality of the Armenian genocide and has erased it from official Turkish history. Yet for the Armenian people it is essential that the facts of their sufferings are recognized and their claims acknowledged.

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