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Haytoug

Official Publication on the Armenian Youth Federation
April 2001 Special Edition



Know



Your



Enemy

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The Official Publication of the
ARMENIAN YOUTH FEDERATION
ARF Youth Organization of Western America

Editorial Staff

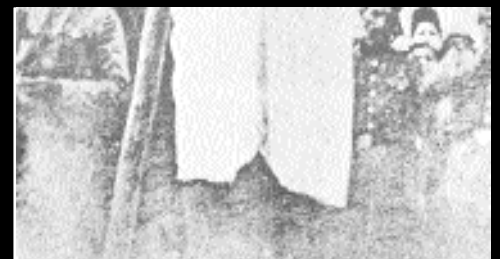
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EDITORIAL: the death of a nation

What is life without a purpose? Existence and social attachment is why we continue to strive for anything. Existence-what an idea. Survival, continuation, being, and reality.

The fundamental rationale for anything we do is to continue life in the best condition possible. To continue life though is not always easy for some people-simply because there is a metaphysical association with a group of people or belief. Stop! I am trying to say something very plain: it is not fair to have someone force your extinction.

People have a right to live and the harshest of all punishments is to take that right away. The debatable issues that are controversial suddenly do not matter if you have no life-death is it-especially when it happens to a nation.

What if your life was threatened? Would you be freighted or scared? Probably. Death because you belong to a certain group-and there is no way out of this disgraceful form of casualty. How does it feel to face true death-everyone you know is dieing and you are next. Death is not only scary, it is unknown and unpredictable.

The murder of an entire nation is a difficult concept to imagine. The death of a nation is evident when young virgins commit suicide to avoid being raped. Death is practical when homes are razed and mothers are slaughtered. The end is clear when marches are endless. The death of a nation is at a brink when young men are beaten and killed in front of their children. Death: the loss of a single life.

Geno-cide: the systematic killing of a generation of people (human beings). The organized death and maximum punishment possible is a very sad notion-too sad to anger some people. Herds of people rounded like sheep and burned like mad cows with diseases. The greatest method of death-genocide.

Murderers are free. Dead people are restricted. Life is not fair-if you have one. Death seems like the end for a person and a genocide would be the end for a nation. A really big system of death is genocide-the death of an entire nation. It hurts so much to feel abandoned however death might be worse-it just seems unfair. I am living here and you take that-it is not fair-stop it.

It seems right to live in peace with all types in harmony, but they could not allow life to go on. For some reason they punished us with death. They punished our entire nation with it. Is it fair? Why would you kill my family and my identification? What if that happened to you-how would it feel? Probably sad, probably anger-it is not fair, right?

Death: the loss of a single life. Genocide: the death of a physical being and more importantly an identity lost forever. I'd rather be killed by you, than drowned by an unknown identity-which you caused anyway.

Oh yeah, thanks for killing us and destroying our existence-you helped our nation, you really did. You'll see. I am trying to say something very plain: it is not fair to have someone force your extinction.

“I am trying to say something very plain: it is not fair to have someone force your extinction.”



TURKISH

Maria Hovsepien

For years and through many texts, from history to literature, they have been called heedens. Their acts of headenism, of cruel crimes and gross human rights violations, are not new to the many Armenians who fell victim to these demonic creatures. But back then no one seemed to really care. Even today, nearly eighty-six years later, there are still many people who refuse to accept the brutal and heinous acts of Genocide, committed by this new, "European" and "democratic" Turkey. They simply ignored all the crimes, asking why should the rest of the world recognize this Genocide. Today, Turkey has thus far escaped from the consequences of their crime against humanity. Why? Why punish Turkey for a crime they committed over eighty-six years ago? Simply because even today these heedens continue committing these acts of gross and widespread human violations. Why? Because for eighty-six years no one has stopped them. Why? Because today no one stops them.

In 1978, the Oliver Stone movie "Midnight Express" brought to the silver screen of Hollywood and to the lives of millions of people around the world, the truths about Turkey, that many Armenians have known for several decades. The world watched with awe, as Billy Hayes' true-life sordid imprisonment and daring escape was brutally and vividly brought to life through the scenes and lines of this controversial movie. After the release of this movie, the world's human rights activists protested, researched, studied, and eventually declared Turkey as the world's leading human rights violator. In a 1997 interview, with USA Today, Hayes said, "The movie was a big deal. The Turkish government was angry at the characterization of Turks. There was not a good Turk in it. It hurt their tourist industry. I hurt them." The truth of these depictions and characterizations of Turks and Turkish prisons has been argued and debated. Hayes himself (I am sure for personal reasons) said that the movie was unfair to most of the Turks within the prison and that it was an unfair depiction of the Turkish guards and prisons.

The following are three real life stories of people who were imprisoned and tortured in Turkey. After reading these true life accounts, you the reader, can judge for yourself if in fact Turkey and the Turkish people can be considered humane and civil people. Are they not the heedens and brutes that you have known them to be for many years?

Father Manuel Yergatian, a 33-year old priest was arrested in Turkey in 1980.

"They opened my luggage and asked me to leave the room. When I was brought back, they pointed to certain maps, books and documents, and asked about them. I explained that those maps and documents had not been in my luggage. They insisted they were found in my suitcase. That's when I realized something was going on. ... The state prosecutor charged me with turning the Jerusalem Seminary students into terrorists. I was also accused of naming my dogs (in Jerusalem) Ataturk.... My whole arrest was a set-up because they wanted to find a victim.... My prison life was more horrible than the beatings during the initial interrogation period.... They didn't allow you to go to the toilet, they delayed brining your daily food, they wouldn't take you to a doctor; they wouldn't even give you medicine if you're sick...The beatings were so frequent that one day, to my amazement, all my cellmates-all 80 of them- formed a human shield around me to protect me. They told the guards 'you have to crush us to get to this man,' that enough is enough. I'll never forget that incident. It was a miracle of God that on that day I was not beaten... When I was freed from prison, there was no teeth left in my mouth - because of the beatings. My heartbeat had increased and several arteries were contracted. In fact, years later when I had heart surgery in Holland, the doctors told me that I had already had two heart attacks caused by the tortures. They said it's possible not to realize that one is having a heart attack. The left side of my heart was dead and, miraculously, I lived in prison for six years with only half of my heart functioning."

AIM: Armenian International Magazine 02-28-2000 V.11; N.2 p.50



PRISONS

Madhi Zana, a Kurdish activist, who has spent more than 15 years in Turkish prisons. The following is about his arrest from 1980-1991 and is adapted from his book "Prison No. 5: Eleven Years in Turkish Jails."

"On September 12, 1980, on the pretext of restoring law and order, the army provoked another coup, with the usual brutality. Parliament was dissolved, and parties, unions, and associations were banned. Municipal councils were dissolved, and mayors were replaced by officers. Following a plan drawn up well in advance, the army and police began arresting people: ministers, legislators, party and union leaders, mayors, professors, activists, and legal and illegal organizations, journalists-in short, everyone they found undesirable or contrary to their ideal Kemalist republic."

"That is when I was arrested and the torture began. Three other Kurds and I were taken straight to the Military Academy, which had 40 tiny cells in the basement.... After two hours, the guards came to get me. They blindfolded me and shoved me ahead of them. I heard soldiers whispering, "That's Medhi Zana coming." Right away about a dozen of them beat me up.... After that, they left me alone for two days, then started up again, with variations so that I would never know what awaited me. They started with falaka, a very old torture that involves beating the soles of the feet with a rod. Another trick was feigned hanging. They would lift me up and slip the noose around my neck, so I thought they were executing me. But they would stop the execution and begin interrogating me again. Sometimes they would put us in coffins with just a crack to breathe through for two or three days, depending on how resistant each of us was. And then there was the "goose dance": naked under a shower of cold water, we had to hop ahead with our feet bound, hunched down under a rain of blows, until we fainted. Our feet were split open, and our testicles were numb. But they were not trying to kill us. No they stepped up the torture degrees to see how much we could take."

"After a month of this routine, I was separated from my companions and put into an isolation cell for 10 days. Then I was taken

before the state's attorney and imprisonment again. When he reviewed my file, the judge could find no reason for my detention.... I was transferred to prison No. 5,... the jailers carried out a carefully thought-out program of psychological torture. They would bring five pieces of bread one, then four, then three, and then none at all-to make the prisoners in the cell fight one another.... I had been in prison for 18 months, when, one day, I was taken to court. I asked to go to the toilet. I wanted to see myself in the mirror. I was surprised at the change. It was me, but it wasn't me anymore. I looked at my face. I was thin, and the four teeth they had broken made me look strange. My skin was pockmarked with vermin. Then there were things that were not visible but that I could feel: my breathing, my back, and perhaps worst of all, the loss of memory.... I was in prison for 10 years and eight months, beginning in 1980.... I had to hold on, to set an example, whatever torture I suffered and despite all I suffered because of the torture inflicted on those who were younger. But they did not break me."

World Press Review Jul 1995, Vol. 4; Issue 7, p.13

Fatma D. Polattas and N.C.S., a sixteen-year-old girl, were arrested in March 1999. The two girls were sentenced to long prison terms because they were charged with membership of the Kurdistan Worker's Party.

"In detention the two-girls were blindfolded, prevented from sleeping, going to the toilet, denied water and food, and forced to listen to loud music and drink spoiled milk. The police made them strip and stay naked, and told them to stand in exhausting positions for long periods of time. N.C.S. was exposed to verbal and sexual harassment, and continually beaten on her genitals, buttocks, breast, head, back and legs. Forced to sit on a wet floor for a long time and roll naked in water, suspended from the arms and exposed to pressurized cold water.

Continued on page 5.



The Shocking Pictures

Robert Fisk

that Turkey is trying to stop us from seeing

Not content with denying the truth of the Armenian Holocaust of 1915, Turkish officials are now trying to undermine the veracity of the photographic evidence of the genocide that killed a million and a half Armenians during the First World War. Following a letter of complaint from the Turkish embassy in London this week, the Hulton Getty picture library has withdrawn three famous photographs of slaughtered Armenians from its website, preventing their use by the media.

One of the pictures - a now-famous image of an Armenian girl and two small children lying dead amid garbage at the height of the genocide - was taken by the German photographer Armin Wegner and has been regularly distributed by Hulton to newspapers for many years. But a letter from a Turkish embassy official in London - who signed his name only as "Korkmazhaktanir" - objected to the picture's caption, which stated that the dead were victims of the Turkish massacres. The dead, according to the Turkish official, had obviously only "starved" to death.

This extraordinary argument - which would presuppose that Jews starved to death by the Nazis in the Second World War could not be counted victims of the Jewish Holocaust - did not impress Hulton's general manager, Mathew Butson. "This picture was used recently by both The Independent and The Times and the key word the Turks objected to in our caption was 'massacred'," he says. "We always routinely examine such complaints and temporarily withdrew these images from our files. But we believe the information in our caption is correct.

"The argument that these Armenians weren't 'massacred' just because they were starved is not acceptable. The Turkish letter went on about how starving can't be part of a massacre, blah, blah, blah. I think that because of their application to join the EU, the Turks want to 'clean' their history - but this isn't the way to do it."

The Turkish government has been mounting an increasingly expensive lobbying campaign to deny the fact of the Armenian Holocaust, funding academic chairs at American uni-

versities - in which professors invariably questioned the details of the genocide - and threatening economic boycotts against European countries that acknowledge the Armenian massacres. When President Jacques Chirac last month publicly accepted the genocide as fact, Turkey cancelled arms and construction contracts with France worth millions of pounds.

Claiming that the Armenians died in "civil unrest" and that the Armenian population supported Turkey's First World War enemies, the present Turkish government has consistently denied eyewitness evidence at the time - including that of US diplomats and missionaries - that the genocide was organised and carried out

"The argument that these Armenians weren't 'massacred' just because they were starved is not acceptable. The Turkish letter went on about how starving can't be part of a massacre, blah, blah, blah. I think that because of their application to join the EU, the Turks want to 'clean' their history - but this isn't the way to do it."

on the specific orders of Ottoman Turkey's rulers. Planning his extermination of European Jewry in the 20th century's second Holocaust, Hitler asked his generals: "Who now remembers the Armenians?"

Turkey's embassies abroad have seized every opportunity to prove Hitler's question valid. The mass execution by firing squads of tens of thousands of Armenian men and the starvation, rape and killing of equal numbers of women and children during the mass deportations to the deserts in 1915 have no place in Turkish history books. And, so far as the Turks are concerned, no place in anyone else's history books.

During its research, however, Hulton concluded that it did not hold the copyright to the three photographs taken - at great personal risk - by Wegner in 1915 and 1916. Mr Butson now says that they belong to an Armenian historical archive in Germany, a fact confirmed by Tessa Hofmann of the Centre for Documentation and Information on Armenia in Berlin - who says that all three photographs were taken by Wegner and show victims of the Armenian genocide. "The rights to these photos are owned by the Schiller Literary National Archive in Marbach, here in Germany," she says.

"They hold items from the Wegner estate and gave us the rights to copies of photographs that relate to the Armenian genocide, courtesy of Wegner's second wife, who is still alive and now lives in Israel."

Continued on Page 11.



Taline Gulesserian

Every year, millions of tourists flock to Turkey, believing that it offers golden sands, amazingly low prices, a unique nature, and a rich cultural history. Turkish advertisements claim the country houses the precious remains of golden civilizations, and that it stands, with all its glamour, as a harmonious link between East and West, past and present, antique and modern. Until today, Istanbul boasts about being "the only city in the world that lies on two continents," making it a gateway to Europe.

However, though it may seem Turkey is a perfect country for a vacation any time of the year, the truth about how the country and its people really treats its tourists remains deeply imbedded. Nonetheless, with a little research, one can quickly find numerous horror stories as told by tourists who visited Turkey with high hopes, only to leave with feelings of humiliation, anger, and sadness, vowing to never return.

In January 1997, an English family decided to vacation in Turkey during the summer. Since it was so hot and the local water supply was unfit to drink, they purchased bottled drinking water outside of the hotel. The hotel treated this as smuggled contraband, and to the family's humiliation and distress, they themselves and their room were searched for bottled water. Upon arrival in England, the Turkish tour company they used compensated them, yet the hotel was still featured in the tour operator's brochure as one of the finest in the area.

In May 1997, a British television (consumer affairs) program highlighted the dangers of participating in any kind of water sport while vacationing in Turkey. They revealed that not only were tourists getting seriously injured, but instructors, also. This was due to the fact that the Turkish instructors were poorly trained and had no qualifications. Unfortunately, a German family learned this fact the hard way while vacationing on the Lycian coast of Turkey. Their young daughter instantly died after being hit by an out of control water bike, a situation which could have easily been avoided had the Turkish company taught its instructors proper directions.

In addition to violation of privacy and neglect, low hygiene and low food safety standards are found in many Turkish hotels. In one situation in Turgutreis, Turkey, hundreds of hotel guests fell horribly ill. The predicament got so out of hand that the hotel was forced to fly out a chef and a number of hygiene experts. Tests showed the problem to be an airborne virus. Once again, precautions that, in this case, come as a result of proper food treatment could have prevented the entire episode. To make matters worse, only later did the tourists find out that the hotel was well aware of its problems. A similar situation occurred nearby, in a coastal town. The tourists suffered severe food poisoning through contracting a strain of E. Coli, the same strain that previously killed 22 people.

Another problem tourists need to acknowledge is the extreme danger of Turkish roads where serious accidents are frequent occurrences. Turkish drivers show little concern for both their own passengers and other drivers. In October 1998, a tourist coach on the way to the airport was involved in a head on collision with a taxi driven by a Turk. The coach careened off the road and down an embankment. All the occupants of the taxi were killed and the few survivors were rushed to a Turkish hospital. However, the abysmal level of medical care in Turkey obliged the British tour company to send out its own medical team to properly take care of the survivors.

Even Turkish tour companies are something tourists should be wary of. "Suntours" was a Turkish owned tour company. On Sunday, October 5, 1997, it went bust leaving many thousands of vacationers stranded. What was particularly odd to all the tourists was that it went bust after a supposedly "very lucrative" season.

In addition to tourists sport enthusiasts also need to think twice about visiting Turkey. On Wednesday, April 5, 2000, Leeds United soccer supporters were out on the streets in Istanbul where they were attacked by a large group of Turkish "thugs." Several of the fans were seriously injured and two even died from knife attacks.

Turkey is heavily promoted by tour operators as an idyllic vacation destination. The country presents itself to the world as a "gateway to Europe." It prides itself on its beautiful landscaping and culturally rich history. It even goes as far as to heavily advertise itself as the cut-price alternative to Greece or Cyprus. As many tourists are now discovering, at their own cost, the hype does not match the reality. Cheaper, in this case, means possibly hazardous to your health. The reality behind the glossy brochures is that Turkey is really a third world nation with an appalling human rights record. Tourist and others flocking to Turkey should realize this as soon as possible in order to avoid future problematic situations.

the truth behind tourism in turkey

(Armin T. Wegner Collection)



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Joint Venture Activity and Investments in Education

Intensive unification efforts are evident in the education sectors of Turkey and the Turkish republics:

- Since 1992, Turkey has furnished financial aid to enable 10,000 students from Turkish republics to study in universities in Turkey. About 2000 Turkish students have attended the universities of the Turkish republics (between 1992-979.
- An exchange program of some 1,000 faculty members from Turkey and the Turkish republics has been in operation 81991*979.
- With the contribution of Turkey joint universities have been established in Turkish republics. Private organizations from Turkey have established 140 secondary educational institutions in the Turkish republics and these institutions are also functioning. These activities are being expanded in a successful manner.

The fruits of such intensive cooperation in the sphere of educutions may be gathered in the form of political, economic, social and political closeness with Turkey and the creation of an infrastructure in the Turkish republics.

Cooperation and Activities in the Sphere of Communications and the Press

In this field, the past 4 to 5 years have yielded meaningful cooperation and close ties between Turkish state and private organisations and institutions of the Turkish republics.

Both the private and public sector of Turkey have provided full support to telecommunication system of the Turkish republics in the region, so that in some countries the entire infrastructure has been completed. This has meant that the majority of communication links to the outside world is through Turkey.

Integration has been accomplished in the television systems, and certain Turkish television channels can be viewed on local stations in the Turkish republics.

Some Turkish daily newspapers have begun publishing in the Turkish republics.

Cooperation and unification efforts communication and press have brought Turkey and the new Turkish republics closer together in the areas of politics, the economy, culture and language.

According to available statistics, though the share held by Turkish republics in Turkey's overall foreign trade volume is small, importance is yet given due to the fact that it represents a development from "scratch". It would be an error to evaluate the situation on the basis of trade statistics. The "grass roots" economic, social, cultural developments between Turkey and these countries assume great importance in terms of demonstrating the depth of these relations. Because the motivation behind these relations appears to have arisen to a high level spontaneously and as a microdynamics, the relations between Turkey and the new Turkish republics indicate both that 1) they are long term and that 2) a very sound socioeconomic and cultural infrastructure is in existence. They further demonstrate that relations between them can be developed independent of government policies.

Nonetheless, we should also note that all Turkish governments since 1990 have attached special emphasis to the cultivation of these relations.

Construction and Tourism Investments and Activities

Turkish construction companies and tourism (hotel management) firms have entered on building activities in various Turkish republics. Besides contracting jobs, Turkish hotel management firms have either been operating existing facilities or are building new hotels. These activities have acted as a positive influence in the case of foreign (incoming) tourism in Turkish republics and are in the process of eliminating infrastructural deficiencies.

Financing and Subsidies

Turkey furnished credits to the Turkish republics in the amount of 1.1 billion dollars in the 1991-96 period. These credits were devoted to the areas of foreign trade and industrial investment. A significant portion of these credits were supplies through the Turkish Exim Bank.

In addition to subsidies, Turkey also made contributions to the Turkish republics in the banking sphere, such as the establishment of central banks and assistance to commercial banks. In addition some Turkish state and private banks opened branch offices in the Turkish republics.

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Activities and Cooperation in the Sphere of Communications

Since 1991, a very rapid development has occurred, particularly in air corridors. Turkey and the Turkish republics have jointly organised regular flights. Moreover, Turkey has furnished technical and financial aid for the development of airports in the Turkish republics. Overland transport with sea links has assumed importance, and a great rise in the amount of activity has been observed in the ports of Trabzon and Samsun. Work to expand the capacities of their port facilities has begun.

Plans are in the works to extend the now-completed Adana-Gaziantep highway eastward. When this route reaches the frontiers of Iran and Georgia, it will greatly enliven economic activities of the area. By this channel, SAP will also secure the inclusion of the Caucasus and Iran in its network.

Cooperation Between Turkey and the Turkish Republics for Oil and Natural Gas

Azerbaijan, the environs of the Caspian sea, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan all possess vast petroleum and natural gas beds. Over the next ten years, this region will represent one of the world's principle oil and natural gas centers.

The issue of transport of this production overland through Turkey to the Mediterranean and Europe has been in negotiation since 1993. Certain preliminary agreements have been made in this connection. Feasibility studies are underway regarding the transport of the petroleum of Azerbaijan and the Caspian region to the bay of Ýskenderun in the Mediterranean. Preliminary agreements have been drawn up concerning the pipeline to carry the natural gas of Turkmenistan across Iran to Turkey and the Mediterranean. An agreement between Turkey and Iran was signed in 1996.

According to the agreement made with Turkmenistan, 2 billion cubic metres of natural gas will be obtained in 1998. This volume will gradually be augmented and will reach an annual volume of 15 billion cubic metres by the year 2010.

The export to Turkey and the Mediterranean of the oil and natural gas of the Turkish republics and Iran bear enormous strategic importance. This structuralization carries a critical significance with respect to closer understanding and the bringing together of Asia and Europe and of Asia and the Mediterranean.

Industrial Activities and Joint Ventures in Industry

A great number of Turkish firms have invested in the Turkish republics in the sectors of manufacturing industry, food-stuffs, textiles, leather, chemicals, machinery manufacture, electrical and electronic goods, communications and transportation. One portion of these investments have been completed and another portion is ongoing. Investments by Turkish firms totalled 6 billion dollars in 1996.

Trading activities

Turkish foreign trading firms initiated activity in these countries. Activity was not restricted merely to the prospect of bilateral trade between Turkey and these countries, but also to the marketing of the products of the Turkish republics in the outside world.

Prior to 1990, trade relations were nonexistent, but by years 1995-1996, the average had risen to the 2 billion level. In the early years, the existence of communications and infrastructure problems held back the speed of development of trade relations. Once the infrastructure problems are resolved the rate of growth in trade relations will accelerate.

Numerous Turkish trading companies are actively operating in both foreign and domestic marketing domain in the Turkish republics. In addition, Turkish and Western companies have established partnership companies that are now operating in the Turkish republics.

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hardly a REVOLUTION

Taline Gulesserian

We have lost once before. Now we'll settle the score, when our cannons will roar...Revolution! Lyrics from "Revolution" by Chris De Burgh

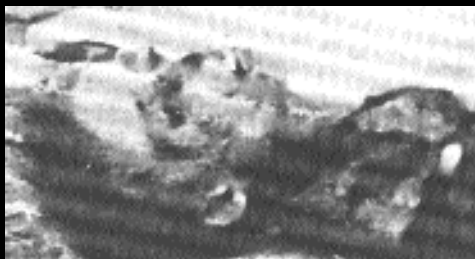
Disclaimer: What I am going to express in the following paragraphs is solely my opinion...I do not want to directly offend anyone, especially since I have many acquaintances in the organizing party I refer to subsequently. Haytoug magazine is a forum for the Armenian youth, and since I belong in that category, I will use this medium to present my arguments and views to my peers, as well as others.

There it was, in black lettering, written on a compact and simple blue piece of paper...one small word with an enormous meaning...Revolution! When I saw this, I jumped up off my seat. I thought, "Excellent. Today's youth is going to make some noise! We are going to stand up and tell skeptics and other heathens that we are not going to take it anymore and we are going to go through all possible means to get what we want and more importantly, what is long overdue!" However, and unfortunately, my hopes shattered when I turned to the back of the little piece of paper. I read the words in disbelief. The postcard size paper, which originally represented so much potential for marking a revolution, was nothing more than an advertisement for a dance held on April 4, 2001. Words like hip-hop, upscale attire, and full bar came into my view. "Wait..." I thought to myself, "Am I seeing this correctly? Is an Armenian organization really throwing a dance in the month of April?" Unfortunately, my eyes did not deceive me. It was true. On that night, the United Armenian Students were really sponsoring a dance, an event designated for dancing, mingling, and having fun.

After clearing my thoughts, I began to wonder why a group, especially an Armenian group, would do something like this. I soon found out that the same group was organizing a march on April 24. Therefore, in order to raise a lot of funds needed to produce such a huge event, such as a march, they needed to do something that would guarantee funds and do so quickly. Nonetheless, I was still disappointed. I still did not understand how a group of educated Armenians could make such an irrational decision. Did they not consider other events, which could provide on an equally monetary level? Had they never heard of a movie night, or a foul breakfast, a car wash, a bake sale...anything but a dance? If anyone were to argue that none of those things would pull in as much money, I would give them a simple reply...cut costs!

In addition, if anyone were to argue that the time for mourning is over, and instead, we, as the youth and the representatives of our cause's future should consider other means to remember our past, I would just turn to that person and say the following: Are you serious? Yes, we must find new ways to realize our cause, but mourning is out of respect and failure to do so, i.e. by throwing a dance, is a blatant example of disrespect. As a result, I claim it is disrespectful to throw a dance in April. However, dances may be used as fundraisers during other months. Some, who do not agree that throwing a dance in April is wrong, may argue against this, claiming that technically, the Genocide occurred in every month, so dances should never be held if you were to adopt my aforementioned claim. To support my belief, I bring up the example of Black History Month, which takes place every February. Were African-Americans only oppressed in February? No! However, they publicly celebrate the overcoming of their oppression one month out of the year, and do so more discreetly the rest of the year. How does this fit into the Armenian situation? It is quite simple. There is no denying it. Dances make a lot of money and they do so in a short amount of time. Therefore, they are very necessary to secure funding for any Armenian organization, and they should be held all throughout the year when we discreetly remember our past, except in April, when we do so publicly. It is strictly designated and accepted by Armenians all over the world that April is the month for remembrance, since it contains within it the most devastating of days in Genocide history. As a result, the month of April is off-limits for any celebratory matter and on-limits for remembrance and prayer for all the victims' souls.


Some may argue that the organizing group was pressed for time, and it needed to make a lot of money very quickly, which resulted in a dance being held in April. Well, if the funds were low, then maybe the event which the funds were to be used for should not occur in the first place. Let me explain. The funds from the April 4th dance were designated for the march, which will take place during the morning of April 24th. There are




many things wrong with having this march. First, ever since before I was born, the AYF has always organized a demonstration in front of the Turkish consulate on April 24th. This event is a known fact by now. Therefore, what is the point of having a separate march on the same day? Isn't the point of demonstrating to get our voices heard? How is that supposed to happen when one half of the voices are on Wilshire Blvd., while the other half are in Little Armenia? What's the point in causing such a separation between Armenians? If politics is the answer, then please do realize that politics are not a part of the April 24th demonstration. That day, we are all Armenians who should stand united and not separated (due to different political beliefs) against the enemy.

Yes, I do realize the march will take place during the morning hours while the demonstration will take place in the afternoon. Still, think about the venue...Little Armenia. Don't get me wrong, I am very proud of that corner and I would love to see it grow in size and in success in the future. However, what is the point of marching there? Do the organizers not realize that all the shops will be closed because of the date and that everyone the attendees will be marching for will already know the significance of their cause. The whole point of a march or demonstration on April 24th is to teach the world of the atrocities Armenians faced during the first genocide of the 20th century. This goal can come to fruition only by teaching the unknowing public, i.e. the "odars." This would never work in "Little Armenia" since the people there already know the facts. It is the outside world we want to teach and they are in areas outside of Little Armenia. As a result, I believe the morning march is opposite of what OUR goal is as Armenians.

These are my thoughts and beliefs. Like I mentioned before, I am not writing this in order to offend anyone. If I have done so, then I did not mean to. However, I do not apologize, because I am writing my opinions in order for my peers and others to hear them and to realize where we, as Armenians living in America in the 21st century, currently stand, and why we should do something to change our current situation. On a final note, I would like to remind all the readers of a quote, "United we shall stand. Divided we shall fall."





Hampig Sassounian C88440
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The Shocking Pictures

(Continued from page 6.)

According to Mrs Hofmann, Wegner - although under strict Turkish instructions to take no pictures - photographed the dead Armenians during and after visits to Turkish concentration camps in the Syrian desert near Aleppo. "We cannot be sure the picture of the three bodies is of a mother and her two children - only that it is a girl and two children. But the pictures are perfectly genuine. In his diary, Armin records seeing all these bodies of starved Armenians around the camps and of taking their photograph. He wrote that many of the bodies had become 'petrified', stiff and unchanging after death."

Ironically, the first copy of the photograph of the three dead Armenians traced by The Independent comes from an American journal also called The Independent and was published on 18 October, 1915. The caption to the picture printed then states that "these victims of Turkish cruelty were driven out to suffer extremes of hunger and hardship in their wanderings through the desert where so many thousands like them also died. Shown here is a mother and her two children found in the desert." The accompanying article begins: "The most extensive, the most atrocious of religious massacres which the world has seen for centuries is now being perpetrated in Turkey..." In fact, it was not until the end of the First World War that the full extent of the Armenian Holocaust - up to a million and a half murdered by the Ottoman Turkish regime - became clear.

Mrs. Hofmann says she is ready to give permission for newspapers to use the Wegner photographs of the genocide. (Her e-mail address is tessahofmann@d-armenier.de and her centre is principally involved in the identification of Wegner's Armenian photographs).

It wasn't his intention, but Mr Korkmazhaktanir's letter to Hulton may have helped to disseminate this invaluable photographic evidence of the Armenian Holocaust even further.

This article was published in the British publication, The Independent, on March 12, 2001. Mr. Fisk is a frequent journalist of Armenian issues pertaining to the Turkish prosecution of the 1915 Armenian Genocide. Visit the site at www.independent.co.uk



C r i t i c ' s

Taline Gulesserian

Forgotten Fire by Adam Bagdasarian

O
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Compelling, beautiful, touching, and in one word...amazing...these were the words that passed through my mind as I finished reading Adam Bagdasarian's novel, *Forgotten Fire*. Based on the true-life experiences that his great uncle, Vahridj Kenderian, went through before, during, and after the genocide, each of the novel's 271 pages is both capturing and heart-wrenching.

The book begins in early 1915, and the narrator, Vahan Kenderian, is twelve-year-old and the youngest son of one of the richest Armenian families in Bitlis, Turkey. Vahan lives a posh lifestyle, including plenty of food, a plethora of activities to participate in, an elegantly designed home, and even two servants. His father, Sarkis Kenderian, is a well-known and highly respected lawyer who works with Turks all day long. His mother is a housewife and his older sisters attend school and attempt to avoid their many suitors. Vahan's grandmother is the matriarch of the family and although she says little, her words are deeply impacting and listened to very carefully. Overall, Vahan believes his life is perfect and his future is set. That is, until one day, when his father and his favorite uncle, Mumpreh, both mysteriously disappear.

Over the course of the next three weeks Vahan's life shatters. He witnesses his two older brothers shot before his eyes. He sees his mother, grandmother, sisters, and younger brother for the last time. He goes from having a huge family to being orphaned. He wanders around aimlessly and hopelessly after escaping the marching procession towards the unforgiving desert.

Luckily, Vahan is taken in by a friend's family for a week. However, the mother fears she will be punished for hiding an Armenian, so she ships him off to work in the stables belonging to the Horseshoer of Bashkale, Selim Bey, a Turkish governor famous for his practice of nailing horseshoes to the feet of his Armenian victims. To Vahan's dismay he befriends the Turk until he witnesses what a truly horrific creature this man really is. He flees once again and over the next three years Vahan acts as a deaf mute in order to live in a Turkish village. He falls in love with the daughter of the only man who guesses he is Armenian (and wants to kill him strictly because of that), and ends up as a servant for the Armenian doctor of the German consulate.

Throughout these years Vahan sees friends and family around him murdered and deported. He witnesses horrific crimes Turkish soldiers commit. He does not sleep most of the nights, either because of the nightmares he sees or because he is afraid of being caught and subsequently murdered by a Turk. However, throughout the same appalling years, he begins to build a strength within himself, in addition to a fighting spirit, which wants to move on. He follows his father's advice to "be steel" since "steel is made strong by fire," and Vahan knows the life (or lack thereof) around him is certainly fuel to feed his fire.

I will not tell you the ending to the book, but I will say a few more things about it. If I have to describe the book in one word, I have to say it is astounding. In my opinion, rarely will you ever find a novel or any other type or writing that you could read in one sitting. This book is certainly an exception to the rule and because it is compellingly written, I was able to finish it in one sitting. In my opinion, Adam Bagdasarian is a literary genius, because he combines facts gathered from tapes of his great uncle's experiences and approaches them with a fictional feel. It is because of this approach that while reading the reader cannot stop himself from flipping over the page to see what happens next.

I strongly recommend this novel to every member of the Armenian community, regardless of his or her age. *Forgotten Fire* is one of those books that every Armenian must be proud of, because it is a type of book that compels the reader to really evaluate what the Genocide was and how it affected individual Armenians. It makes the reader want to get up and begin working for our cause as quickly and vigorously as possible. It makes the reader want to grab the book and throw it as evidence to anyone who denies the Genocide.

After reading this book, I began to think about what I learned about the Genocide as a child. I remembered all the stories and all the pictures I had seen throughout the years. However, I realized I had never really assessed the Genocide through a survivor's eyes. This book allowed me to do just that. Because of this, I feel I am now completely ready to truly fight for the justice we still deserve. As a result, I give a heartfelt thank you to Mr. Bagdasarian for awakening the feelings I thought I had, but had really embedded deep inside.

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FRANCE

recognizes armenian genocide

Houry Kizirian

Late 2000 early 2001, the French Senate overwhelmingly passed a law publicly recognizing the killings of the Armenians during the Ottoman Empire as genocide. This is, no doubt, a huge step towards "recognition of this crime against humanity."

French President Jacques Chirac and French Administration received intense pressure from the Turkish government stating that if the law were passed the French-Turkish relations would suffer. "The French parliament has made an extremely unjust decision, accusing Turkey of an imaginary genocide." "It is not possible to accept this unfair decision. The necessary reaction will be shown," said Turkish Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit. After a heated four-hour debate the French Senate and the upper house of the French Parliament adopted a measure of publicly recognizing the Armenian Genocide by a vote of 164 for, 40 against, and 4 abstentions. It was also suggested that Armenians participate in Britain's Holocaust Day. In addition, the city of Paris said it would put up a bronze memorial to all of the victims of the 1915 genocide.

Once the bill was passed, Armenians all over France united to celebrate. They hope that this will open doors for other nations to respect human rights and come up with similar bills that will recognize the Armenian Genocide.

In retaliation, Turkey responded quickly by canceling road tenders worth about \$1.44 billion, installations of electronic systems on 80 warplanes, a satellite contract along with many other contracts that included French Firms. "We are doing what is necessary. We are reconsidering our political and economic relations," said Ecevit. Along with Turkey, Ankara has also taken action against the French in the form of economic boycotts.

Meanwhile, Armenian President Robert Kocharian visited France to seek moral support from French leaders. On February 12 a two-hour meeting was held between the French and Armenian presidents discussing a range of issues, such as, more French investments in Armenia to Karabakh conflict settlement. During the meeting President Chirac gave Kocharian the Greta Cross of Honor Legion and in return President Kocharian gave Chirac the Armenian Order of Saint Mesrop and also gave an official invitation to visit Armenia, which was accepted.

The Armenian Genocide has been recognized by the **European parliament**-June 18, 1987, **Council of Europe**-June 18, 1987, **Italy**-33 Italian towns, **Russia**-April 14, 1995, **Belgium**-March 1998, **Lebanon**-April 3, 1997, **Canada**-April 23 1996, **Oriental Republic of Uruguay**-April 20, 1965, **Argentina**-April 16, 1998, **Greece**-April 25, 1996, **Australia**-April 17, 1997, **United States**-10 states, **Sweden**-March 29, 2000, **France**-January 18, 2001. (SNARK News Agency. "French Parliament Recognized Armenians' Genocide." 30 March 2001 <<http://www.snark.am/genocid.html>>)

Turkish Prisons

(Continued from page 5.)

While in detention, the girls underwent several medical examinations, including virginity tests, by different doctors. None of the doctors reported signs of violence. A later report by the Turkish Medical Association describes medical symptoms, which match the girls' testimonies of sexual torture. The Turkish Medical Association has stated that enforced gynecological examinations are used simply to violate a woman's dignity and that can be traumatic."

Nineteen-year-old Fatma Deniz Polattas confession.

"A police officer asked me to 'take off my trousers and socks.' I again was scared and obeyed. A police officer in uniform asked me to 'bend.' Afterwards he inserted something into my anus. It was something long and serrated. At that moment a bleeding started. I was totally bent. They were beating me with their sticks, saying 'stand straight.'"

Amnesty International report.
A1 index: EUR 44/01/99
November 19, 1999

email your comments/contributions to Haytoug at haytoug@mail.com



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TURKISH PEOPLE

hate or educate?

Talin Pushian

I have been often asked by friends and acquaintances as to why I hate all Turkish people. Most of these people counter my argument by explaining that present day Turks are not at fault for the Armenian Genocide. However, after extensively contemplating this contention and researching the matter, I discovered evidence that only supports my hatred for modern day Turks.

As an Armenian student and a member of the Armenian Student Association I was interested in knowing how active Turkish students were, and whether they publicly state their stance on the Armenian Genocide. My curiosity led me to the website, where I discovered numerous Turkish websites filled with revisionist propaganda. One of the more anti-Armenian websites belonged to the Turkish Student Association at Duke University. This site dedicated an entire section to Mustafa Kemal, where he is praised as one of the greatest leaders in history and an "inspiration to the world at large." In effect, Duke's Turkish Student Association is paying tribute and honoring a man who helped engineer and implement the systematic slaughter of 1.5 million Armenians.

In the course of my research my level of amazement, shock and anger reached its apex upon visiting the Turkish Students Association web site. This site is organized by students from the Republic of Turkey and Turkic States who are studying at San Diego State University. This site contains a bold heading entitled "Information on Turkey and Turk related issues." When I clicked on this heading I entered the area called the Turkish forum. In one part of this area there is a section dedicated to the Armenians and their allegations. There is also a plea asking people to "Help us have our side of the story heard and help yourself understand the issue objectively where ever you may be around the world by visiting the Armenian Question section." This section leads to various links that present the Turkish side of the story.

In addition, I located one particular link that upset and offended me the most. I clicked on the area entitled Message Board and found one student's note. The author of this site directly addresses Armenians and even refers to us as "friends" in a sarcastic manner,

O my Armenian friends! You can poison your youth with your hatred, you can dupe academics, you can buy the politicians, you can alter the history with your fabricated lies, but do not expect the Turk to roll over and accept your unacceptable demands. Do not deceive yourselves that we will give in. **YOU ARE TERRIBLY UNDERESTIMATING THE WILL OF THE TURKISH NATION!** There is no ifs or buts about it. To demand land from us is to declare war upon us!

Consequently this student, who lives in the 21th century, is supporting his forefather's actions with his claims and statements. He is in essence telling us that the Genocide did not take place and that Turks are convinced with their side of the story and will not budge. Furthermore he asserts that if need be they, the members of the current Republic of Turkey, are ready for war if we take things too far because they are strong and we, the Armenians, have severely underestimated their power.

How can I not hate all Turks? Not only are they the direct descendants of the people that killed and murdered my ancestors, but also they openly support the actions of their forefathers. They are the ones holding our bloodstained lands. They are the ones responsible for an apology and reparations, and as long as they do not complete these minute tasks I will not only hate them but also loathe them.

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De.moc.ra.cy

Tania Gulesserian

De.moc.ra.cy \ di-`mak-re-se \ n, pl: 1: government by the people; esp.: rule of the majority. 2: a government in which the supreme power is held by the people...The definition to democracy goes on and on and can be defined in several ways, yet no matter which meaning one chooses, it all boils down to the main idea that democracy is a government of the PEOPLE. It is not a government that puts on the cloak of democracy when convenient and disrobes to show its true colors when necessary.

Turkey claims itself to be a democratic nation with elected officials and prime ministers. But democracy does not end by just having elected members of parliament. Upholding rights and all freedoms is a major component of democracy, and this is a task that Turkey greatly lacks in. In a press release by Amnesty International dated March 21, 2001, entitled "Turkey Attempts to Silence Human Rights Activists" - the human rights group brings to public awareness the wrongdoings of the Turkish government. Akin Birdal, president of Turkey's largest human rights organization - The Human Rights Association (IHD) - is being held prisoner for now two years under a very controversial Article 312 of the Turkish Penal Code. This article under Turkish "democratic" law can be used to silence their own freedom of speech law. Akin Birdal will be tried for three separate speeches he had made calling for a peaceful approach to the Kurdish issue and for using the term "the Kurdish people." The charges brought up against him were "inciting people to hatred and enmity on the basis of class, race, or regional differences."

Article 312 has not only curbed Akin Birdal's freedom of speech, but many other leading human rights activists and government officials. Just few of these men are:

✂ Esber Yagmurdereli - lawyer and human rights activist

✂ Recep Tayyip Erdogan - former mayor of Istanbul

✂ Necmettin Erbakan - former prime minister and leader of the banned Welfare Party

The issue of infringement of democratic rights does not stop with silencing freedom of speech by Article 312. It goes deeper than that to the point of attempted assassinations and constant imprisonment on the part of the government against The Human Rights Association (IHD) and other human rights organizations. Amnesty International was quoted as saying, "The government should ensure that no article of domestic law is used to suppress freedom of expression." Ironically enough, trials continue to be opened against those who express opposing views on the Kurdish issue and on the role of Islam.

With a country like Turkey who is continually trying to gain membership to E.U. (The European Union - a loose system of economic trade. This union that Turkey is trying to gain membership to is similar to NAFTA with its own political and monetary system. Basically, it is a United Nations for Europeans) turning a blind eye to warnings from Amnesty International is not a wise choice, especially when it comes to democratic rights and laws. There is an ongoing trend in Turkey for setting up offices for human rights monitoring and then having the government shut them down under "Emergency Rule." Amnesty International drew President Sezer's attention to persistent harassment of and attempts to suppress human rights and urged him to exercise his good offices to have steps taken to the reopening of The Human Rights Association's offices that were shut down May 12th.

Amnesty International feels that the closing of these offices is intended to prevent the effective monitoring of human rights violations. This, in fact, may lead to an increase in human rights violations and give confidence to those who violate human rights and know that their crimes will not be punished.

"Torture and incommunicado detention in Turkey persist as a major concern for AI. Clear guidelines should be set up to ensure that all detainees have in practice immediate access to legal counsel." Comparing this comment to the acts of Turkey trying to get admitted into the European Union strikes one as above and beyond contradictory. Not only does this country, which is considered to be the gate to Eastern and Western Europe, show a great lack in trying to follow basic human rights laws, yet it goes to prove that an old dog can not learn new tricks. On the outside Turkey puts on a great show as being a westernized country with a "democratic" government, welcoming arms towards tourism, and a well-established economy. But when one looks under this thin film of "democratic" pretext there remains a body of officials that still function as they did in the early 20th century, using force and discrimination to silence those that brave to stand against the laws and leaders.

(Armin T. Wegner Collection)



(Armin T. Wegner Collection)



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Cooperation within the Framework of Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO)

This organisation originally founded among Turkey, Iran and Pakistan has now been enlarged with the inclusion of the new Turkish republics and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, even though the latter has only observer status. Through the participation of the Turkish republics, this organisation- whose goals are cooperation in the areas of trade, industry, technology, communications, energy and tourism- has reinforced the institutionalisation of cooperation on a permanent basis, both regionally and internationally.

On the other hand, Turkey sustains efforts for an ongoing dialogue with the new Turkish republics and their organizations through a number channels, such as

- various state ministries and agencies, and universities,
- professional organisations and channels in the private sector and
- NGOs.

As we have outline so far, post-1990 developments between Turkey and the Turkish republics are truly forward looking. They constitute a very comprehensive and multi directional rapport-building and also a structuralization from which may emerge a "natural" integration of people, sectors and firms of Turkey and the Turkish republics, which indicates that they are developing in a healthy manner. From an economic perspective, Turkey has sufficient power to enable her to provide a significant contributions to the Turkish republics, because of her international experience, dynamism of her private sector and financial potential. The most important confirmation of this is the 6 billion dollars' worth of investments made by Turkey between 1991-1996. The share of government support in these investments was only 15% in the form of credits. The level of cultural and social cooperation and closeness is more advanced than that of economic relations. This situation means that a sound sociocultural infrastructure is being prepared, so that economic cooperation may attain a more advanced level in the future.

Investment Activity in the Region by Turkish Firms

As of 1996, we notice that a great number of Turkish firms have become active in the Russian Federation and Ukraine. Quite a few Turkish firms gave notice of this activity by making investments in Moscow. In addition, quite a few firms established partnerships. The positive influence of this will begin to become evident in the coming years.

Some 2,500 large and small Turkish firms are in business in Romania and Bulgaria. They are concentrated in the sectors of foodstuffs, textiles, tourism and transportation.

Investment firms in the Turkish private sector have also made their presence felt to a significant degree in the countries of the Black Sea region. The dynamic and open structure of the Turkish private sector clearly shows its positive influence in this region. The giant transfer of capital from Turkey to the countries of this region has appeared in the form of investments. This situation has had a significant impact on securing integration in terms of trade, services, industry, financial institutions and transportation.

Activities by the Contracting and Construction Sector

The volume of contracting activities conducted by Turkish firms in the Russian Federation, Ukraine, Georgia, Romania and Bulgaria added up to 5 billion dollars in 1991-1996. Current developments suggest that this figure will very likely mark a fast growth in the coming years.



The Black Sea Economic Cooperation Region (BSECR)

Initiated under the leadership of Turkey, the BSECR project was founded in Istanbul by the heads of state and governments from countries around the Black Sea. BSECR has targeted the development of economic cooperation of the 11 countries in this region. Priority lies with securing commercial, industrial and financial cooperation and the development of a transportation and communication infrastructure. For many years, the world was deprived of the opportunity of establishing close ties with the countries of this region because of the division between the eastern and western blocs. The change in conditions after 1990 led to the creation of the BSECR with Turkey in the vanguard.

Between 1992 and 1997, a series of meetings were held among the 1) economic organizations and 2) government agencies and parliaments in order to cultivate close regional ties among the BSECR countries. By means of the channel provided by the BSECR established in Istanbul, these efforts were coordinated both institutionally and sectorally. In time, with the development of BSECR, the elimination of the factors impeding cooperation among the countries of the region will result in their natural economic integration.

The geographical situation of this region is favourable for it to function as a facilitator in achieving closer ties and unification among the regions of Eastern Europe, the Balkans, the Caucasus and Asia.

Trade with the Black Sea Region and the Russian Federation

A sudden surge had occurred in the trade relations with this region since 1991. Official statistics on trade with the Russian Federation indicate a total of 4 billion dollars (as an average of the three years between 1994-1997); however, this figure fails to reflect the reality. The trade volume generated by what is known as the "suitcase trade" conducted by tourists from the Russian Federation who visit Turkey regularly to purchase merchandise amounts to around 10 billion dollars annually. This trade is heavily concentrated in the purchase of textiles and clothing items.

The invisibles generated by the suitcase trade from such countries as Ukraine, Romania, Bulgaria and Georgia come to about 4 billion dollars per year. Consequently, as an addendum to the official figures, the annual volume of trading activity between Turkey and the Russian Federation and Ukraine and the countries around the Black Sea totals about 15 billion dollars. This is not a small sum and serves to indicate the current volume of "natural trading activity need" felt by the region.

Turkey's Relations with Black Sea Countries

Of those countries situated in the environs of the Black Sea, Turkey has traditionally nurtured relations with its Balkan neighbours Bulgaria and Romania. On account of the closed regimes of these countries during the Soviet era, economic relations did not develop sufficiently. By contrast, great importance was first given to relations with the Russian Federation and Ukraine to the North of the Black Sea as from 1990, after the break down of the Soviet Union. The most important sectors of the sizeable economic activity with these two countries are:

- natural gas
- trade
- contracting work
- transportation and
- tourism.

In the period between 1993 and 1996, the number of tourists from the Russian Federation who visited Turkey for trading purposes ranked second after those from Germany.



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I came

I saw

I conquered . . .

Levon Tourian

I met a guy once who was married to a woman and was the father of 11 kids. I got to know him more. One day out of the blue he suddenly died and immediately his wife and 11 kids asked me to play the role of husband and father. They said that I would bring in change, that I would make the family a better, more harmonious unity. So, with the mindset of helping out the family they all accepted me happily. What they did not know was I did not care about the family at all; I just wanted to have their big house to myself and myself only. One night after I got back from a whorehouse, I was a bit drunk and high on opium and the vision of having the whole house to myself became a clear picture in my mind. I went upstairs to the bedroom of the wife and with my hands strangled her until blood came out of her nose. I walked down the hall where 4 of the kids and their children were sleeping. I lifted a silver hammer and exploded the youngest child's face. At the noise of the cracking and shattering of his cheekbones the rest of the children awoke. They were crying for some reason. I launched the hammer towards another child's chest, to my surprise; it punctured the skin and became deeply lodged in his heart. As the rest of the kids tried to attack me I reached down to remove the hammer and the child's heart fell out. I grabbed the heart and made another child eat it. In a matter of moments the whole house was rudely awakened. It was like nothing they had imagined before. Those who I did not chop up and slaughter ran for their lives. And I, in turn, did my best to take as many lives as I could. To save myself the time needed to clean all the blood off the floor, I thought it would be easier just to send them out and let their acids in their stomachs eat away whatever of life they had left.

I did what I set out to do. I accomplished my mission. I killed them all.

THE HOUSE WAS MINE!!!!

Today, the house is still mine. I do what I want and nobody cares about what I had done or what I still do. It was actually a good move on my part because now, with the friends that I have made, I control most of the houses on the block and nobody can tell me what to do.

Every now and then the surviving kids of the original 11 and their kids, and newer generations bring up the issue and demand that I be punished, but the true judges are on my side.

I am Talaat and the family was 1, 500,000 Armenians. I just laugh thinking how long the Armenians can remain a victim?

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AYF

Fight to Genocide Recognition

Vicken Sosikian

Since 1933, the Armenian Youth Federation has been a leading force among Armenian- American youth. One of its main goals has been to achieve justice for heinous crime of genocide perpetrated by the Turkish government toward 1,500,000 Armenians between 1914-1923. The Armenian Youth Federation, until today continues to strive and struggle for justice.

Today, the Turkish government spends millions of dollars every year in efforts to revise the history of the Armenian Genocide, the international recognition of which, besides providing closure to the survivors will lead to reparations and restitutions.

The Armenian Youth Federation, unlike the Turkish government is not motivated by money. The force behind the Armenian Youth Federation's drive is for justice and to prevent such atrocities from occurring again in the future. For over four decades the Armenian Youth Federation has been protesting against the Turkish government's insidious campaign of denying the Armenian Genocide.

The Failure to punish the perpetrators of the Armenian Genocide shows the faulty standard we live in today. With the passing of each day without the punishment of those who stage such crimes, society will continue to decline as a civilization. This has been evident in the last few years. A few years ago Turkish soldiers were staging genocidal campaigns against Kurds. In fact, they were using the same techniques of massacre they used during the Armenian Genocide.

By not fighting to assure the punishment of governments like turkey for such crimes against humanity, the world emboldens others to repeat their crimes.

As a crime does not get punished its perpetrators feel that's it's their right to commit such crimes in the future. It's our duty as members of this society to ensure that crimes against humanity never occur.

This year, once again, a protest against inhumanity has been organized at the Turkish Consulate. The Armenian Youth Federation invites you to make your voice heard this April 24th. Be certain that every protestor can make a difference. Protest the denial, protest the injustice, and protest the inhumanity!

The Protest Against Inhumanity will be held at the Turkish Consulate at 4801 Wilshire Blvd. In Los Angeles, beginning at 3PM.

1915

8/99 Sahak Dulguerian

The child awoken
Frightened by soldiers.
Fears for his life
No words are spoken.
Panic fills
What once was home.
Torn apart now
Left are bones.
Pillaged pride
Nowhere to hide.
Plot of genocide
None to remain alive.
Marching through deserts
The seasons pass.
Gold exchanged for food
By a turk on his ass.
Mother pawns
To keep her child alive.
Dies along the way
Now food for flies.
Where is god now?
To stop these menaces.
Believe and be saved
All empty promises.
What once were citizens
Martyrs of a ruined homeland
Denied justice,
Left unforgiven.
Money talks,
Armenians speechless.
The truth unexposed,
Who's to believe us?



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OPEN LETTER

OPEN LETTER

30 November 2000

Turkey/EU: Open letter to EU Heads of State and Heads of Government

Dear Presidents, dear Prime Ministers,

Amnesty International is writing to you in order to raise our concerns related to the human rights situation in Turkey.

Amnesty International takes no position on whether or not any candidate country, including Turkey, should join the European Union (EU). The organization welcomes the EU's decision to monitor the human rights situation in the candidate countries and to report regularly on progress made. Amnesty International fully agrees with the conclusion in the 2000 Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey's Progress towards Accession (Turkey 2000"), issued on 8 November 2000, that compared to last year, the situation on the ground has hardly improved.

Amnesty International understands that during the accession process Turkey, like other candidate states, will benefit from EU encouragement and support for its reforms. In order to further contribute to an improvement of Turkey's human rights situation we take the opportunity to draw your attention to our recommendations, especially those which are not yet included in the EU recommendations in the Turkey 2000" report or in Turkey's Five Year Plan (known as the Demirok report).

Torture and impunity

Amnesty International is concerned that torture is still widespread in Turkey. Reports received by Amnesty International indicate that torture is not only inflicted on people suspected of politically motivated offences, but also on detainees who were arrested on suspicion of having committed criminal acts. The latter cases, are however, more difficult to document, because due to intimidation and fear of reprisals these people rarely contact human rights organizations.

Measures to prevent torture should be taken immediately rather than in 2002 or 2003 as the Demirok report anticipates. Incommunicado detention should be abolished completely and immediately, and clear guidelines should be introduced to ensure that all detainees have immediate access to a lawyer. Amnesty International is aware that under current law a certain group of political suspects are denied the right to see a lawyer in the first four days after arrest. The organization receives regular reports that even when detainees are entitled under the law to see a lawyer this often does not happen in practice.

In the Demirok report the protection of women and children is mentioned, but not explicitly in relation to torture. Amnesty International has documented several cases of rape and other sexual abuse of women in custody; some of these offences have taken place over the last year. The definition of rape as interpreted by Turkish courts is very narrow (forced penetration of the vagina by a penis) and other forms of physical sexual abuse are not even defined as a crime. Amnesty International urges the Turkish authorities to amend the law so that all acts of sexual violence and abuse are defined as crimes with appropriate sanctions commensurate with the seriousness of these offences. All officials involved in the custody, interrogation and medical care of detainees and prisoners, as well as all prosecutors and judges should be informed that rape and sexual abuse by law enforcement officials are criminal acts which constitute torture or ill-treatment and will not be tolerated.

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Detainees should have immediate access to independent, impartial and competent medical doctors. Independent medical or psychiatric reports should be admissible in the investigation of torture allegations. Amnesty International has documented several cases in which such reports have not been taken into consideration, and investigations into allegations of torture were discontinued. Medical examinations should be conducted in private under the control of the medical expert and outside the presence of security or other government officials. In the case of rape and other forms of sexual abuse the examining health personnel should be of the same sex as the victim unless otherwise requested by the latter. For further recommendations please see Amnesty International's recommendations to the Turkish government which are attached to this letter. (AI Index: EUR 44/19/00)

As the report Turkey 2000" acknowledges, a climate of impunity for law-enforcement officials continues. Amnesty International has documented the different factors contributing to this climate.¹ In this regard, the organization does not, however, agree that the law on the prosecution of civil servants, adopted in December 1999, was a step forward, as suggested by the Commission's report. This law still requires the permission of a superior official for a prosecution against a security officer to be opened.² Amnesty International has documented several cases in which such permission was refused under the new law:

Ramazan Tekin, Deputy Mayor of Diyarbakir, was arrested in January 2000 and held for 10 days at Diyarbakir Gendarmerie where he was reportedly beaten, suspended by the arms, sexually abused and given electric shocks. Doctors from the Forensic Institute who examined him reportedly confirmed that his ribs were broken and his kidneys damaged. His lawyer filed a formal complaint against the security officers suspected of being responsible, but the governor of Diyarbakir did not give permission for the two gendarmes to be prosecuted. The appeal against this decision was rejected.

In September 1999 10 prisoners died and dozens were injured in a violent clash with guards and soldiers in Ankara Central Closed Prison. On 3 January 2000 the governor of Ankara refused permission to prosecute 150 gendarmes who were implicated. The appeal against this decision was accepted by a local court in May 2000. In June the Turkish Parliamentary Human Rights Commission made public their conclusion that excessive force had been used. Amnesty International has called for an amendment of the law in order to ensure that decisions as to whether or not to prosecute a government officer for human rights violations are taken solely by prosecutors and judges.

Prison conditions

Amnesty International welcomes the EU Commission's recommendation that the Turkish authorities should cooperate with the Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) on the management regimes of the new prisons, and should pay particular attention to measures ensuring that prisoners spend a reasonable part of day engaged in purposeful activities outside their living units. Amnesty International also calls for prisoners to be allowed to associate with other prisoners. Amnesty International would like to draw your attention to the fact that regimes of solitary confinement and small group isolation already exist in Kartal Special Type Prison and in the prison on Imrali where Abdullah Ocalan has been held in solitary confinement since February 1999.

Death Penalty

Amnesty International notes that Turkey is abolitionist in practice, and continues to call on the government to abolish the death penalty immediately and fully in law.

Freedom of Expression and Human Rights Defenders

Amnesty International agrees that legal and constitutional guarantees for the right to freedom of expression must be strengthened so that they are compatible with Article 10 of the European Convention of Human Rights. It must be ensured that the law can no longer be interpreted in such a way as to restrict this right. This requires a basic change of attitude on the part of the government and the judiciary which would lead to a revision of both law and practice. Amnesty International believes that any peaceful expression of views, even regarding the political structure of the state and possible secession should be permitted, and in this regard disagrees with the Demirok report. The European Court has interpreted restrictions to Article 10 very narrowly. Peaceful advocacy of reform, including in relation to matters affecting territorial integrity, may not be restricted even if there is domestic concern about violent separatism.

Amnesty International is concerned that human rights defenders are subjected to pressure and harassment which inhibits their work.

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Open Letter *(continued from page 20.)*

This includes the closure of branches of human rights organizations (the Mazlum Der branch in Malatya has remained closed since 1999). Amnesty International has asked the Turkish government to reopen these offices and refrain from further arbitrary closures and prosecutions of human rights defenders for their peaceful activities. Also, effective action should be taken to ensure all public servants, including the security forces, recognize the legitimacy of the work of human rights defenders and abstain from making unsubstantiated allegations against them. Statements of this nature must be publicly countered, and appropriate measures applied against those responsible.

Fair Trials

The Commission's report recommends that the State Security Courts need to be brought further into line with standards existing in the EU, and that the efficiency of the judicial system must be strengthened. However, the report does not mention the independence of the judiciary. In this regard, Amnesty International welcomes the recommendation in the Demirok report for a constitutional change so that all judicial appointments are made by an independent body, rather than the executive. Amnesty International recommends that this measure should be implemented as soon as possible.

In addition to this, Amnesty International calls for immediate measures to ensure compliance with international standards for fair trials. Pre-trial rights for all suspects should include the right of immediate access to a lawyer and being brought promptly before a judge; incommunicado detention should not be allowed under any circumstances, particularly as it often facilitates the use of torture. All suspects should have the right to a trial within reasonable time and the right to adequate time and facilities to prepare a defence. Any evidence elicited as a result of torture or ill-treatment should be excluded at trial. Also, the Turkish government needs to ensure that all defendants are tried before a competent, independent and impartial tribunal.

Turkey made a commitment in 1988 to establish Children's Courts in all provinces by 1998. Yet, to date, there are only six Children's Courts in four provinces, none of them in the east of the country. Also, the Turkish Law on Children's Courts defines children only as those under age of 15, instead of those under 18 which is the usual age of adulthood in international standards relating to juvenile justice. In Turkey, children between 15 and 18 years can be tried by ordinary courts. Children charged with offences under the jurisdiction of the State Security Courts and Military Courts are excluded from the right to be tried before a Children's Court. Amnesty International is concerned that children in this situation have very limited rights to a fair trial. Law and practice in Turkey must be brought in line with international standards.

Amnesty International calls upon the member governments of the EU and the EU institutions to address Amnesty International's concerns and recommendations in their dealings with Turkey, and to use their influence for a speedy, comprehensive and effective improvement in the human rights situation in Turkey, in line with international standards set by the Council of Europe and the United Nations.

Yours sincerely

Pierre Sane
Secretary General

**Taken from Amnesty International Web Site.*

Visit the Amnesty International Web Site
www.amnesty.org

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years



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I should like to see any power of the world destroy this race, this small tribe of unimportant people, whose wars have all been fought and lost, whose structures have crumbled, literature is unread, music is unheard, and prayers are no more answered. Go ahead, destroy Armenia. See if you can do it. Send them into the desert without bread or water. Burn their homes and churches. Then see if they will not laugh again, sing and pray again. For when two of them meet anywhere in the world, see if they will not create a new Armenia.

~William Saroyan