

HAYTOUG

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE ARMENIAN YOUTH FEDERATION WESTERN UNITED STATES
WINTER 2007

JAVAKHK ARMENIANS STRUGGLE TO SURVIVE

IS ANYTHING
BEING DONE IN
JAVAKHK?

FIND OUT WHY
EVERYONE
WANTS A PIECE

THE
MILLENNIUM
CHALLENGE
CORPORATION:
DISCOVER
WHAT'S
IN
STORE
FOR
THE
REGION?

***SPECIAL
JAVAKHK
ISSUE**

**WHAT
DOES
THE DEAL OF
A CENTURY
MEAN FOR
JAVAKHK?**

**INTERVIEW
SPOTLIGHT
ANCA'S
ELIZABETH
CHOULDJIAN**





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For all Armenian Youth residing in Western America who strive for the national, social and economic liberation of the Armenian people. Haytoug is distributed free of charge within the community. Financial contributions may be made to the address below.

The opinions expressed in the Haytoug publication are not solely and necessarily opinions of the Armenian Youth Federation. Haytoug encourages all Armenian youth to express their thoughts and opinions in this publication. *Submissions for publication in Haytoug may be sent to the following address.*

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JAVAKHK'S FUTURE LIES IN OUR HANDS

In analyzing the current condition of the Armenian population in Javakhk there are many geopolitical as well as historical points to examine. To begin with we must understand the dire socio-economic condition of the residents. Rampant unemployment, undeveloped industry, crumbling infrastructure, limited access to education and systematic governmental neglect have plagued the region for years. Officially, Tbilisi recognizes the severity of the situation in Javakhk, but is reluctant to take action and is strongly against granting the region a "special" or autonomous status after having lost control over Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

Additionally, it is crucial to be very cautious in making comparisons and drawing parallels with the current situation in Javakhk and the liberation struggle fought in Karabagh. They are distinct situations with distinct circumstances and should be treated as such. The long and violent history of Azerbaijan's treatment of its Armenian population as well as the pogroms of Baku and Sumgait proved the inability of Karabagh's Armenians to securely live within Azerbaijan; thereby limiting their choice between living under a regime of brutality and a movement for self-determination. This however is not the case with Javakhk as Georgian-Armenian relations have historically been amiable and complementary. The relationship is one of interdependence and strategic

alliance rather than a struggle for power and territory.

However, without prompt attention and resolution, the plight of the Armenian minority within Georgia can escalate to destabilize not only Georgia, but Georgian-Armenian relations. Furthermore, unless the citizenry gets legitimate representation within the government, oppressive practices will continue. With recent local elections fraught in controversy with allegations of vote-rigging, it is hard to imagine the Javakhk Armenians continuing to live complacently with such a muffled voice to their government.

A Georgia where ethnic minorities enjoy autonomy and do not live under the fear of discrimination and oppression can serve as an example for regional stability and integration not just in Georgia but throughout the entire Caucasus. Autonomy to Javakhk then becomes the solution that can not only serve the interests of both Georgia and Armenia, but can serve to preserve a vital and symbiotic relationship.

The inability and unwillingness, of the Armenian government, starting with Levon Ter Petrosian, to vocalize the concerns of Javakhk's Armenians has left much responsibility on the Diaspora; a responsibility which must be taken seriously and addressed promptly.

Today Javakhk is in need of help and expects help from not only Armenia but from the whole Armenian world.

GEORGIA: A NATION DIVIDED

Georgia is a nation divided into 9 administrative regions. In addition to these, there are two regions which have been declared autonomous (Adjara and Abkhazia), one region which has been in a continual struggle for independence (South Ossetia), and one region which is in a desperate socio-economic struggle to keep its identity (Samtskhe-Javakheti). The multitudes of ethnicities create a unique situation in Georgia, one which has fragmented the nation severely.

The population of Georgia (not including the separatist regions of Adjara, Abkhazia and South Ossetia) is roughly 4.4 million. Within this total, Armenians represent the second highest minority population with over 250,000, behind Azerbaijanis who number 280,000.



To better understand the fragmentation within Georgia, we can look at the separatist groups within the nation. Among others, there are three major groups pressing for independence:

SOUTH OSSETIA (pop. 70,000) has harbored desires of uniting with North Ossetia under the Russian Federation. Recently they held an independence referendum vote (Nov. 12, 2006) which garnered 98% support.

ADJARA (pop. 375,000) has been an area that up until recently has been out of the reach of Tbilisi's control. Following the "Rose Revolution" there has been a crackdown on separatism. However, they still maintain autonomy under Georgian law.

ABKHAZIA (pop. 250,000) is the second autonomous region within Georgia but, the Abkhaz separatist government and the majority of the current Abkhazian population considers it to be a sovereign nation. In the case of Abkhazia, there is *de facto* independence which has not been recognized by any other nation. Currently Russia is seeking legal means it may employ to incorporate the region into Russia. As it remains today the region of Abkhazia continues to run as a self-sufficient unit.

WHY THEY ALL WANT A PIECE

ARMENIA

- > Trade route into and out of Russia
- > Alternate to blockaded Turkish and Azeri borders
- > Part of historic Armenia

GEORGIA

- > Key Southern region
- > Link to Armenia
- > Next to Autonomous region of Adjara

TURKEY

- > Obstacle to expanding regional influence
- > Armenian population only thing between Azeri population of Georgia and Turkey
- > Regional trade with Central Asia

AZERBAIJAN

- > Armenian population only thing between Azeri population of Georgia and Turkey

Javakhhk is a vital strategic region due to the newly created Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyan pipeline. The main reason for this being that all plans connecting Azerbaijan and Turkey go through Javakhhk region.

Historically, the Armenian Javakhhk region consists of the districts of Akhalkalaki and Ninotsminda, with the Armenian population constituting 95 percent of the population. In 1994 the Armenian Javakhhk area was incorporated into a much larger administrative region known as the Samtskhe-Javakheti by the Georgian government. This territorial redistricting was a conscious attempt to dilute the Armenian majority by altering the demographics of the region. By incorporating the Armenian districts of Akhalkalaki and Ninotsminda into a greater region with four other districts, the Georgian government sought to gradually diminish the Armenia majority and to reassert Georgian control over its southern areas.

This greater Samtskhe-Javakheti region of Georgia consists of an area of nearly 6413 square kilometers, representing about 9.3 percent of Georgia proper, and has a total population of almost 250,000. The Samtskhe-Javakheti (hereafter called Javakhhk) region is comprised by six districts (Adigeni, Aspindza, Akhalkalaki, Akhaltsikhe, Borjomi, and Ninotsminda). Within this greater region, the Armenian population's majority has been steadily reduced to about 61-62 percent of the population.

Javakhhk shares a roughly 80-90 kilometer border with Turkey to its west and southwest, and has approximately 45-50 kilometers of common border with Armenia, which lies to its south.

DISCRIMINATION, CORRUPTION AND POLITICS: A GEOPOLITICAL LOOK AT THE ARMENIAN SITUATION IN JAVAKHK

By Tamar Yardemian

Most Armenians in Javakhk live in villages, farm to survive and celebrate traditions to preserve their culture. They are a nationalistic people, passionate about their Armenian history and language. They are also fearless in protecting their rights, as any human across the globe should be. But within the last decade, the Georgian government has suffocated these Armenians with discrimination and economic fear.

Beginning with the Georgian nationalist President Zviad Gamsakhurdia in the late 1990's, the Georgian government has been making threats against manifestations of Armenian nationalism, limiting job opportunity, and only repairing certain strategic roads in Javakhk which suit their interests. They act as defenders of humanity by 'finding refuge for Azeris, Muslim Meskhetians and Svans' in Javakhk, while, in reality, they have ulterior political motives, such as demographic change during election cycles. Throughout the years, the situation in Javakhk has only become more severe, with outright ill treatment and disregard for these Armenian citizens of Georgia.

With discrimination and corruption at its peak, many Javakhk Armenians have been forced to travel abroad, to Armenia or Russia, for work and education. For example, 70% of Armenians in Akhaltsikhe, one of the northwestern regions in Javakhk,

have emigrated out of the country within the last decade. Many Armenians in the region understand that overcoming the threat of losing Javakhk depends on sustaining the local Armenian population. Consequently, a large group of determined Armenians obstinately remain in Javakhk and continue to demand their civil rights as citizens of Georgia, insisting on education reform, job opportunity, and road repair.

With the income of a mere single crop of potatoes for the entire year, large Armenian families endure these difficulties with dreams of one day enjoying their basic human rights of life, freedom and prosperity. In the hearts and minds of many Javakhk Armenians, there exists the belief that this freedom is achievable only through autonomy: a degree of separation from the Georgian government consisting of the authority to self-govern and flourish.

As Armenians who are spread throughout the world, we all share a common history and language, yet, often find ourselves divided on various issues. Of course, different countries mean different cultures, economics and, no doubt, politics. Similarly, Armenians within the homeland have a rather different perspective on the issue of Javakhk's request for autonomy. Blockaded from the East and West, the homeland has only Georgia and Iran as outlets to the outside world. Due to the geography of the region, Armenia depends on Georgia for two things: a channel for trade

through the Black Sea and a passageway to Russia (Armenia has import and export routes through Ajaria, the Georgian port at the Black Sea, and Russian military support travels to Armenia through Georgia). These two economic dependencies on Georgia are incredibly important for Armenia today and are only possible through friendly relations, open communication and stability in the region. Therefore conflict between Armenians and Georgians in Javakhk is not an option. In order for Armenia to continue strengthening its developing economy, Georgia needs to remain a friendly neighbor with open borders.

Today, we are faced with important decisions regarding the urgent situation in Javakhk. On the one hand, there exists a group of Armenians who are being neglected and mistreated in a foreign state. On the other hand, the political ties between that state and the homeland are crucial for the betterment of Armenia. The Karabagh movement liberated a group of oppressed Armenians, but created a war and a blockade to the East. Should similar steps be taken in Javakhk, considering the socio-economic ramification of war? Clearly, there are various factors to consider when analyzing the situation in Javakhk. The Armenians living in the area deserve justice and freedom, however the means to achieving these goals must be well thought-out and calculated.

OIL & INSTABILITY

HOW THE 'DEAL OF THE CENTURY' WILL AFFECT JAVAKHK'S FUTURE

By Serouj Aprahamian

The opening of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) pipeline was officially inaugurated on July 13, 2006. This 1,100-mile oil pipeline, the longest in the world, cost close to \$4 billion dollars and took over 6 years to complete. It is expected to reach full capacity in 2009, wherein it will carry 1 million barrels of oil per day from an Azeri oil field in the Caspian Sea to Turkey's Mediterranean port of Ceyhan. A Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum (BTE) natural gas pipeline is also being built in parallel to the BTC and is expected to begin operations at the end of this year.

The BTC project was hailed by many as the "Deal of the Century" and holds major geopolitical implications for the

U.S., Russia, Turkey, and the countries of the South Caucasus. Given the close proximity of the pipeline to Javakhk, it is also likely to have a major impact on future developments for the people of this unstable region.



Due to opposition from Turkey and Azerbaijan, the BTC project was designed early on to skirt around Armenia—despite the fact that it would have provided a shorter, more cost effective route. What is more, the Georgian portion of the pipeline was purposefully re-routed to avoid the Armenian populated

areas of Javakhk, as well. Nevertheless, the pipeline still traces the border regions of Javakhk and is close enough to be affected by any potential unrest which may take place there. Now that the oil has already begun flowing, the various actors with an interest in the BTC will surely have a much closer eye on developments in Javakhk.

During a formal ceremony for the BTC last year, Georgian president Mikheil Saakashvili made clear the importance his administration places on recent energy projects with Turkey and Azerbaijan when he stated, "In practical terms, [BTC] and the [Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum] gas pipeline are extremely important projects for Georgia. When the gas pipeline is

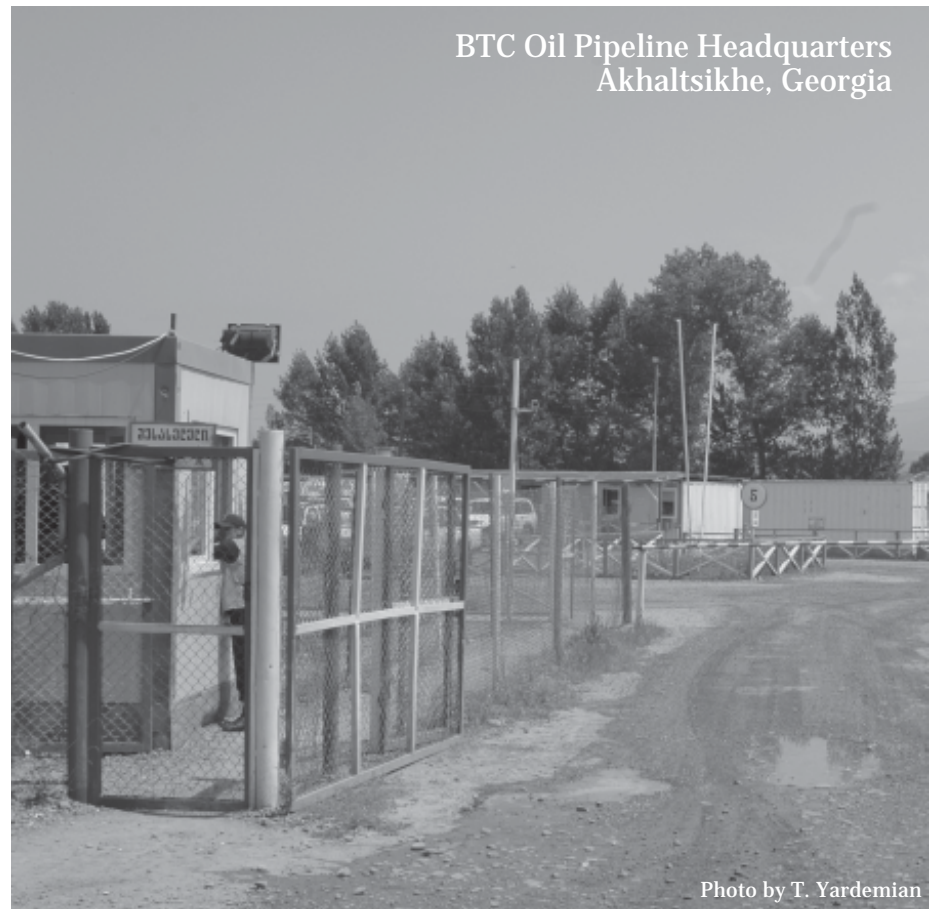
launched, the issue of Georgia's energy independence will be finally solved. Georgia will no longer depend on a single source for its energy supplies. This is the most important guarantor of our energy independence."

Up until the launch of the BTC and BTE pipelines, Georgia's main source of energy was Russia. However, given the increasingly deteriorating and tense relations between the two countries—just last month, four Russian officers were expelled from Georgia on spy charges, to which Russia responded with a transport and postal blockade of Georgia—the Georgian government has sought to break away as much as possible from its energy reliance on its northern neighbor. Not only does the flow of oil and gas via Azerbaijan provide Georgia an alternative source of energy, it also provides it with a significant amount of revenue in transit fees. Thus, the Georgian government sees these new pipelines as their key ticket to prosperity and gravitation away from Russia. Officials in Tbilisi must certainly be concerned with the long-term stability of the BTC project whenever the conditions and grievances in Javakhk are brought to their attention.

It is worth mentioning that Georgia already has some experience dealing with pipelines and instability. In January, two explosions ripped through the main pipeline connecting Russia to Georgia,

leading to a cutoff of gas supplies and significant hardships for both Georgia and Armenia. While Georgia suspected Russian foul play behind the incident, Moscow claimed it was the result of a terrorist attack. It is safe to say that such experiences have shaped the concerns of Georgian officials in regards to Javakhk. Some fear that Russia will seek to stir up sentiments in Javakhk as a way of once again disturbing Georgia's energy security. There is a danger that whatever happens there in the future will be

negative effects of instability in the region. Various measures have already been undertaken to safeguard the pipeline's security. For instance, much of the BTC is buried underground, surrounded with sensors, and guarded by a Georgian "rapid response" military force trained by the United States. Since 2002, US military aid and training to Georgia has skyrocketed in order to improve internal security capabilities and protect the pipeline from 'terrorist' attacks. Such attacks are not uncommon in areas around the world where pipelines pass through. From



automatically attributed to Moscow and, hence, treated in an antagonistic fashion.

Others with a stake in the pipeline have also shown concern over the potentially

Colombia to Nigeria to Burma and Iraq, pipeline projects are notorious for their association with conflict, environmental degradation, human rights abuses local exploitation and repression.

The people of Javakhhk themselves also have some cause for concern regarding the BTC and the legacy of pipeline politics in other parts of the world. Many Javakhtsis are wary of a possible Turkish military incursion into their territory under the pretext of protecting the pipeline. Indeed, growing military ties between Turkey and Georgia over recent years and the close proximity of Javakhhk to the Turkish border, not to mention the historic animosity of the Turkish state toward Armenians, makes residents feel especially vulnerable.

This vulnerability is further accentuated by the gradual removal of the Russian military base in Javakhhk, scheduled to be completed by 2008. One local Armenian store owner in Akhalkalaki was quoted as saying, "The military base protects us. From unemployment and from Turkey. If the Russians go, who will guarantee our safety? Certainly not the Georgians!"

Interestingly enough, should any violence or harm occur in relation to the pipeline, the companies involved in the BTC consortium would be exempt from any legal liability. This is due to specific language included in the contract which relieves private signatories from any responsibility for the actions of security forces. In addition, the companies succeeded in getting government agencies, such as Britain's Export Credit Guarantee Department (ECGD), to underwrite the risk of the project being sabotaged by civil conflict or "terrorism." Clearly, those financing and profiting off of the BTC project are very attentive to the possibility of strife and instability along the pipeline's route.

The main aim of the Western community is to avoid the destabilization of the region.

In this way, the official operation of the pipeline now adds a new dimension to the importance of improving the situation of Javakhhk's Armenians. Despite the various security measures that have been put in place, unrest in the area would undoubtedly affect some of the BTC infrastructure and hamper the smooth flow of oil to Western markets. The same is true for any potential resumption of hostilities in Kharabakh.

Negative developments in Javakhhk would also be detrimental for the energy security and

prosperity of the Republic of Georgia. For this reason, it is essential for Georgian officials to turn their rhetoric about improving the dire conditions of Javakhhk into reality. The unwillingness to do this in the face of rising economic growth and the benefits of the 'oil boom' will only serve to further alienate the people of Javakhhk.

Ultimately, what Javakhtsis are appealing for is improved economic conditions, fair treatment, and cultural freedom. Their interests lie in resolving their regions problems of unemployment, poverty, lack of basic services, access to education, cultural rights

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and health. These interests are by no means incompatible with the interests of the Georgian state. Meeting these needs would go a long way in ensuring stability in the region and the loyalty of Javakhhk's citizens toward the central government. For the interests of all concerned, Georgian leaders would do well to recognize that it is not Russia's meddling, but, rather, the legitimate grievances of Javakhhk's population which need to be attended to. In the end, this will be the only long-term way of maintaining stability and integration in the region.

THE MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORPORATION

(MCC) is a United States government-owned corporation responsible for supervising the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA). The MCA is the mechanism to implement a new model for providing foreign aid to the world's developing nations. The focus of the MCA is to promote economic growth in the recipient countries. The program emphasizes good economic policies in recipient countries; with the understanding that development aid works better in countries with good economic policies, such as free markets and low corruption.

Key Principles:

- 1) Promoting sustainable economic growth that reduces poverty through investments in areas such as agriculture, education and private sector development.
- 2) Countries will be selected to receive assistance based on their performance in governing justly, investing in their citizens, and encouraging economic freedom.
- 3) Countries are responsible for identifying the greatest barriers to their own development and ensuring civil society participation.

Georgia and Armenia have "Compacts" with the MCC.

ARMENIA

Armenia has signed a 5-year \$235.65 million Compact with the Millennium Challenge Corporation.

Today, over one million Armenians live in rural areas and are dependent on semi-subsistence agriculture. Farmers are operating on small plots of land and are constrained by poor roads,

inadequate irrigation, and an under-developed market economy.

The Armenia Compact is focused on one goal: the reduction of rural poverty through a sustainable increase in the economic performance of the agricultural sector. Armenia plans to achieve this goal through a five-year program of strategic investments in rural roads, irrigation infrastructure and technical and financial assistance to improve the supply of water and to support farmers and agribusinesses. The Program will directly impact approximately 750,000 people, or 75% of the rural population, and is expected to reduce the rural poverty rate and boost annual incomes.

The Compact includes a \$67 million project to rehabilitate up to 943 kilometers of rural roads, more than a third of Armenia's proposed Lifeline road network. When complete, the Lifeline road network will ensure that every rural community has road access to markets, services, and the main road network. Under the Compact, the Government of Armenia will be required to commit additional resources for maintenance of the road network.

The Compact also includes a \$146 million project to increase the productivity of approximately 250,000 farm households through improved water supply, higher yields, higher-value crops, and a more competitive agricultural sector.

GEORGIA

Georgia has signed a 5-year \$295.3 million Compact with the Millennium Challenge Corporation.

In Georgia, 54 percent of the population living outside of the capital city, Tbilisi, lives in poverty. The Georgians identified two barriers to poverty reduction and economic growth in the regions outside of Tbilisi—a lack of reliable infrastructure and the slow development of businesses, particularly agribusiness. A two-pronged program has been created, focused on rehabilitating regional

infrastructure and enterprise development.

The two projects complement one another by facilitating economic growth. The first enables agricultural and other suppliers to more easily connect with consumers and the second facilitates access to capital for business development.

The Regional Infrastructure Rehabilitation Project of the Compact totals \$211.7 million and includes the following three activities: (1) Samtskhe-Javakheti Road Rehabilitation; (2) Energy Rehabilitation; and (3) Regional Infrastructure Development Facility.

The Enterprise Development Project of the Compact totals \$47.5 million and includes the following two activities: (1) the Georgia Regional Development Fund; and (2) the Agribusiness Development Assistance.

The Millennium Challenge Compact with Georgia is expected to improve the lives of the rural poor in the following ways:

- Reduce the incidence of poverty in the Samtskhe-Javakheti region by 12 percent.
- Benefit approximately a half-million Georgians, and over one-quarter of the population of the country will receive indirect benefits from the program.
- Reduce average travel time from regional areas to Tbilisi—currently 6.5 hours—almost three hours or 43% percent, thereby reducing transportation costs for farmers, for small business owners, and for Georgians needing access to social services.
- Reduce the risk that a major accident will occur due to the gas pipeline's dilapidated condition. The completed rehabilitation of the gas pipeline will provide reliable heat and electricity to over one million Georgians.

A more in-depth look at the details of the MCC for each country is available on the following two pages.

STATUS: COMPACT SIGNED

LAST UPDATED: OCTOBER 2006

GENERAL INFORMATION

Population	3,016,312*
GNI Per Capita	\$1470*
Location	Southwest Asia, east of Turkey
Total Compact Amount	\$235.65 Million
Compact Duration	5 Years

VARTAN OSKANIAN Armenian Foreign Minister

"The significance and essence of the Millennium Challenge program is to support those countries which demonstrate good governance, and unwavering commitment to invest in human resources and in the principles of democracy and a liberal economy. Nevertheless, we are very aware that the decision of the Millennium Challenge Corporation is not irreversible, and we have much to do to assure our continuous and complete inclusion in that program."

COMPACT GOAL

The reduction of rural poverty through a sustainable increase in the economic performance of the agricultural sector through a five-year program of strategic investments in rural roads and irrigated agriculture.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Rural Road Rehabilitation Project: Upgrade up to 943 km, providing 265 communities and 360,000 rural residents with reduced transport costs and better access to jobs, markets and social services.

Irrigated Agriculture Project: Increase the productivity of 250,000 farmer households (34% of which are headed by women) through improved water supply, higher yields, higher-value crops and a more competitive agricultural sector by:

- Infrastructure Activity: Irrigation civil works
- Water-to-Market Activity: Assistance to farmers

UPDATE ON PROGRESS

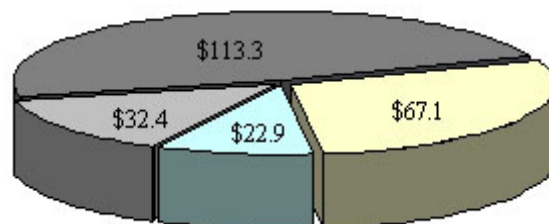
The MCC-Armenia Compact was signed on March 27, 2006 and ratified by the National Assembly on May 24, 2006. The Compact entered into force on September 29, 2006. The Accountable Entity has been formed and staffed with a CEO and six professionals. Several road and irrigation procurements are being advanced in parallel with the initial Disbursement requirements.

COMPACT PROCESS DATE

Eligibility Notification	✓	May 6, 2004
Proposal Receipt	✓	March 28, 2005
Opportunity Memo	✓	May 19, 2005
Congressional Notification on Formal Negotiations	✓	August 22, 2005
Investment Memo	✓	November 17, 2005
Board Approval	✓	December 16, 2005
Compact Signing	✓	March 27, 2006
Entry into Force	✓	September 29, 2006
Initial Disbursement		

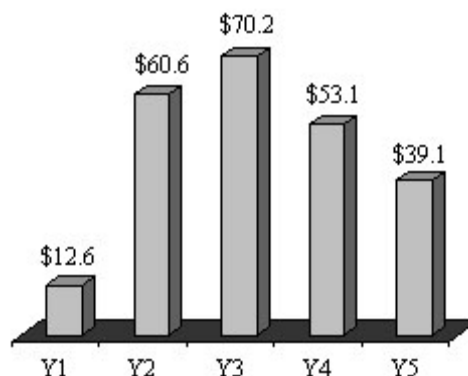
OBLIGATIONS BY KEY SECTOR (IN MILLIONS)

- Rural Road Rehabilitation
- Monitoring & Evaluation & Program Administration
- Water-to-Market Activity
- Infrastructure Activity



ARMENIA DISBURSEMENT SCHEDULE (IN MILLIONS)

Projected Total Annual Disbursement



*World Development Indicators, World Bank, 2005

STATUS: IMPLEMENTATION, YEAR 1

LAST UPDATED: OCTOBER 2006

GENERAL INFORMATION

Population	4,474,404*
GNI Per Capita	\$1350*
Location	Between Turkey and Russia
Total Compact Amount	\$295.3 Million
Compact Duration	5 Years

MIKHEIL SAAKASHVILI
President of Georgia

"I think it's (MCC) really one of the most efficient tools of help I'd ever seen and I've seen many assistance programs in my country for the last decade."

COMPACT GOAL

- Rehabilitate key regional infrastructure by improving transportation for regional trade, ensuring a reliable supply of energy, and improving the delivery of regional and municipal services
- Develop regional enterprises by funding investment and increasing productivity in farms, agribusinesses and other enterprises to increase jobs and rural income

EXPECTED RESULTS

The Program will benefit nearly half a million Georgians and could have an effect on the lives of a quarter of the population. The Program is also expected to reduce the incidence of poverty in the Samtskhe-Javakheti region by 12 percent. Other benefits include an expected increase of about \$37 million in annual income to households and \$27 million in business revenue nationwide through support for farmers, agribusiness and small and medium enterprises.

UPDATE ON PROGRESS

- The Agribusiness Development Activity generated 160 grant applications during first round submissions in October 2006.
- Proposals for the Georgia Regional Development Fund Project Manager have been selected, and final award is expected by late October 2006.
- The tendering process for the Regional Infrastructure Development has started for rehabilitation of the water supply system in the city of Poti.
- Procurements related to pipeline repairs continue to move forward.
- Georgia received a special disbursement (second overall) in the amount of \$6.5 million on September 14, 2006.

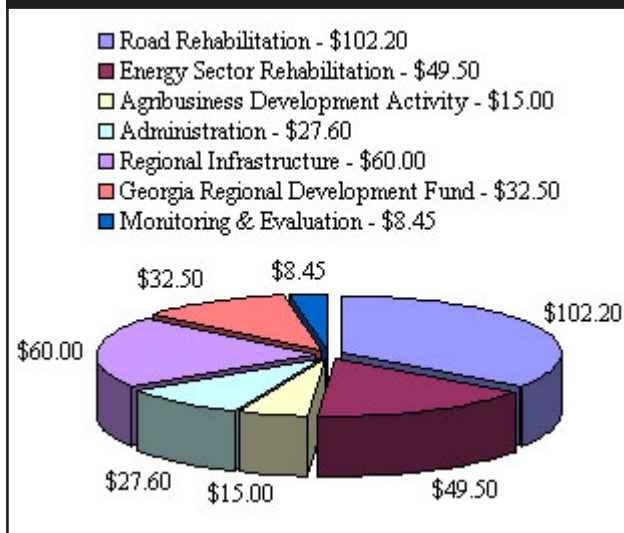
COMPACT PROCESS

DATE

Eligibility Notification	✓	May 6, 2004
Proposal Receipt	✓	September 24, 2004
Opportunity Memo	✓	October 28, 2004
Congressional Notification on Formal Negotiations	✓	November 3, 2004
Investment Memo	✓	July 7, 2005
Board Approval	✓	August 16, 2005
Compact Signing	✓	April 7, 2006
Entry into Force	✓	April 28, 2006
Initial Disbursement	✓	September 14, 2006

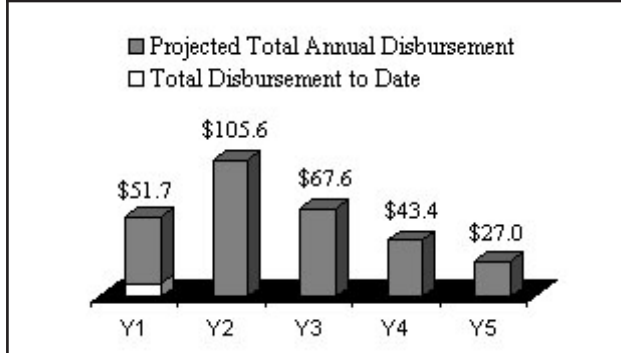
OBLIGATIONS BY KEY SECTOR

(IN MILLIONS)



GEORGIA DISBURSEMENT SCHEDULE

(IN MILLIONS)



*World Development Indicators, World Bank, 2005

THE DANGERS OF THE KARS-TBILISI-BAKU RAILWAY

Staffwriter

For over a year now officials from Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey have been in tense talks over the financing of the proposed Kars-Tbilisi-Baku railway. This railroad would potentially link Asia to Europe, completely bypassing Armenia. The railway which could lay a foundation for a potential Central Asia-South Caucasus-Turkey-European Union transportation corridor has been in the works for years, now seemingly nearing reality.

Turkey has pledged \$200 million to finance its 68km portion of the railway from Kars to the Turkish-Georgian border. Azerbaijan has similarly stated its readiness to fund the Baku-Georgian border side. The funding of the Georgian section, however, remains up in the air. The 220km portion of the railroad (which connects Turkey to Javakhhk to Tbilisi and finally to Azerbaijan) will require \$220 million to build and modernize. The reason for the Georgian delay has been sheer cost. The issue was recently complicated when one of Georgia's largest financiers, the United States, was removed from the picture.

Action taken by the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA) helped pass legislation (S. 2461, H.R. 3361) prohibiting the U.S. government from aiding the construction of any Caucasus railroad which would bypass Armenia. It is the standpoint of the ANCA that

the functioning but inactive Kars-Gyumri-Tbilisi railroad (providing the most direct route, running through Armenia), which already exists, can be revitalized for minimal cost for all parties involved. However, due to Turkey's unilateral closure of the Armenian border, this option cannot be considered.

The consequences of the eventual construction of such a railroad are very significant to Javakhhk and to Armenia itself. First, the repercussions for Javakhhk would be an immediate connection to Turkey and probable presence of the Turkish military. Furthermore, a railroad may promote the influx of different ethnic groups into Javakhhk to skew and distort its demography. The implications for Armenia would be



more long term damage to trade. By bypassing Armenia, this railroad would take away any transit benefits and would economically isolate Armenia from the global market as well as increase Armenia's dependence on Georgia as a trade partner.

We must strongly oppose this, and any other, politically motivated effort to circumvent and suffocate Armenia. We simply cannot stand idly by as projects amounting to modern day versions of Pan-Turkism are damaging the future prospects of our homeland.

INTERVIEW WITH ELIZABETH CHOULDJIAN



The Armenian Youth Federation recently had the opportunity to interview Elizabeth S. Chouldjian, the Communications Director of the ANCA National Offices. We have provided a truncated version of the discussion in this issue of the Haytoug. For the full text of the interview please visit the Haytoug section of www.AYFwest.org.

HAYTOUG: *Not too long ago, you traveled to Javakhk. Can you tell us when this trip took place, what its purpose was, and what you think was the most significant thing to come out of it?*

ELIZABETH: It was an eye-opener for me. This was the second time I had gone to Javakhk - the first time was back in 2002, again during the winter. In 2002, there were no international organizations functioning in Javakhk to speak of. In 2005, both U.S. and European organizations had set up shop in Akhalkalak and Akhaltsikhe, and had already started on a variety of projects in the area - from agricultural to road building to irrigation, democracy building, etc. Clearly the interest level has increased in the region, particularly by the United States, which chose to focus assistance to the area after the Russian government announcement to vacate their army base in the region. The departure of the Russian base will create significant economic hardship for the region, and the U.S. stated goal has been to assist the population to create economic opportunities to compensate and promote stability.

HAYTOUG: *One of the main problems for Javakhk is economic under-development and unemployment.*

What are some of your observations regarding the level of socio-economic development in Javakhk? What role does the Russian military base and its expected closure play in the region?

ELIZABETH: The economic situation is devastating in the region, made all the more difficult by the poor communication and transportation infrastructure. Traveling to the region in the winter really sent the message home as to how difficult it is to move around, much less get to the region. In 2002, I had to delay travel to Javakhk from Yerevan by close to 5 days - because the roads were simply impassable once you crossed the Armenia / Georgia border into Javakhk. In 2005, we got there fine, but moving around within Javakhk was a big production. Now, imagine having to take agricultural products to market, provide emergency health services, etc. in those circumstances.

The Russian base is a primary source of economic stability in the region and will certainly be missed. The goal with the various aid programs in the area is to offset that by helping farmers make their farms more profitable, and to help get goods to market. The Millennium Challenge Account funding to Georgia will help build a main road from Tbilisi to the Javakhk region, to help greater integrate Javakhk into the rest of Georgia as well as to the borders with Armenia and Turkey.

HAYTOUG: *What is the current demographic situation of Armenians in Javakhk? Have there been any recent attempts by the Georgian government*

to populate the region with Georgians and/or decrease the Armenian majority?

ELIZABETH: When we talk of Javakhhk we should remind ourselves that today the administrative region is officially called Samtskhe-Javakheti, which was formed by a presidential decree in the 90s. According to the most recent census in Georgia, the population of this region is a little over 200,000. In the region as a whole the Armenians constitute around sixty percent of the population. The region is divided to six districts, with Akhalkalak and Ninotsminda having around 95% Armenian population and Akhaltskhe, the administrative center of the region, with around 45% Armenian population.

The Armenian population in the region has openly been concerned about Georgian government efforts to increase the non-Armenian population in the region. There is constant discussion of moving Meskhetian Turks to the overall Samtskhe-Javakheti region, although to date, I am not aware of any official repopulation efforts that have taken place.

HAYTOUG: *Did you meet any Georgian officials as part of your trip? What are the Georgian government's official and unofficial policies toward the region of Javakhhk? Is the general stance one of neglect or does it go beyond that to include targeted actions against the local inhabitants?*

ELIZABETH: I did not meet Georgian officials during the trip – I met primarily with U.S. non-government organizations and with some folks at the U.S. Embassy in Tbilisi. I am aware, though, that the Georgian official position on the situation in Javakhhk is that it suffers from the same socio-economic problems that the rest of the regions in Georgia face. This is not completely true. During Soviet times, Javakhhk was considered a border region and a military zone, where visiting was not simple. Therefore, the region was practically cut off from the rest of Georgia in its everyday life. After the break-up of the Soviet Union, the ultra-nationalist Gamsakhurdia came to power in Georgia and he made sure that all ethnically non-Georgians felt uncomfortable. With the break-up of the Soviet empire so went the economic infrastructures of the

newly independent states. There was never any effort by the Georgian authorities to revitalize the factories and agricultural facilities in Javakhhk. Shevardnaze's approach was a little different; he created the Samtskhe-Javakheti region, in order to decrease the proportion of the Armenian population in the region. He promised to help alleviate the socio-economic situation there, but there were never any funds allocated for that purpose. With Saakashvili coming to power, things looked more promising, especially with the Millenium Challenge Account project which would help with Javakhhk roads. But none of Saakashvili's promises have been fulfilled either.

Further, the local government system as a whole in Georgia has turned out to be discriminatory against the majority Armenian population in Javakhhk. For example, an Armenian populated village with around 3,000 people has the same number of representatives in the district council as does a Georgian populated village of 150.

HAYTOUG: *Did you get the sense that the population of Javakhhk has any secessionist aspirations? How do you think Javakhhk relates to Georgia's breakaway republics of Abkhazia and South Ossetia?*

ELIZABETH: The definite sense that you get from people is frustration. Frustration that the Georgian government has paid so little attention to the region and let the infrastructure deteriorate to the level that it has. Frustration that, overt or otherwise, there is a constant undertone of trying to assimilate the population. You really get that sense when talking to teachers at the local schools. Armenian schools get poorer quality equipment and fewer resources to work with the children. The Georgian school in Akhalkalak gets preferential treatment, better equipment and better facilities. Georgian teachers — imported from other parts of Georgia to teach the Georgian language — now get paid close to double other indigenous teachers. And, because it is a poorer part of the country, the schools attract less effective Georgian teachers — perpetuating the problem of poor Georgian language skills. Frustration with the Georgian military, which essentially puts a glass-ceiling for Armenian recruits, who are simply not elevated to officer level. In that

sense, many of the young people choosing the military option in the region consider the Russian army as an option, simply because of better resources and great opportunities to rise up in rank. Frustration due to the poor economic situation in the region – lack of employment opportunities and difficulty in having the necessary funds to maintain a family. So many are forced to travel far and wide – to Russia, etc., – to be able to earn a decent wage to ensure their family has the most basic of necessities.

And frustration is a very dangerous thing. If the root causes are not dealt with properly, or if the government is not seen to be putting in an honest effort to deal with the problems, situations deteriorate and people turn to options that they would not otherwise resort to.

On the other hand, Javakhhk could become a showcase for the Georgian authorities to demonstrate to the breakaway regions that Georgia is seriously ready to accommodate them. For example, Georgia has offered South Ossetia a high level of autonomy, with great advantages to keep and flourish their language and culture. But, when the Armenians of Javakhhk, who unlike the South Ossetians have not raised any arms against Georgia, ask for the same rights, they are called extremists or separatists. This does not help the situation.

HAYTOUG: *To what extent is the Armenian government involved in Javakhhk? What is its official policy toward the region and how does this affect Georgian-Armenian relations?*

ELIZABETH: The Armenian government has a number of programs to help the people of Javakhhk. Among them are education programs. The Armenian government has time and again offered to assist the

Georgian authorities to ease the socio-economic situation there, but so far those suggestions have fallen on deaf ears.

The Armenian-Georgian relations are very delicate, because around 80% of Armenia's land transport with the rest of the world is through Georgia. Javakhhk can become the strongest link between Armenia and Georgia, if the Georgian authorities genuinely try to resolve the region's problems and let the Armenian government assist in its efforts.

HAYTOUG: *What have the economic, social, and security implications of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline, which passes right through the region, been for the residents of Javakhhk?*

ELIZABETH: It is interesting to note that the shorter route of the BTC pipeline was through Akhalkalak, but the then president Shevardnadze intervened to have it bypass Akhalkalak and go through Akhaltskhe, expressing concern that there's a Russian military base in Akhalkalak. He knew, of course, that the base would move out eventually. This didn't help to get locals interested in working on the construction of the pipeline. And, there's still a concern in

Javakhhk that at some point, Turkish forces could be brought in to safeguard the security of the pipeline.

HAYTOUG: *Can you tell us a little about which governmental and/or non-governmental agencies and organizations are working in Javakhhk? What is your impression of the size, nature, and impact of their work?*

ELIZABETH: There are a number of U.S. and European entities working in Javakhhk, focusing on democracy building to agriculture, to education, micro-enterprise loans, etc. USAID is funding programs like AgVantage, through ACDI/VOCA, which is helping farmers get

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better yields of their potato crops, milk and cheese supplies and fisheries.

As a total side note, some of the best potatoes in the world (yes, in the world) come from Javakhk. Researchers actually sent Javakhk potatoes to the U.S. for study, and apparently they are unique in their purity and quality. Javakhk is actually ahead of the U.S. in potato yield, able to plant more rows of potatoes in the same amount of land, due to the richness and density of the Javakhk soil.

But going back to other programs, groups like Urban Institute are funding city infrastructure projects throughout Georgia, including Javakhk. In 2005, they helped renovate the mayoral building in Akhalkalak, provided garbage collection trucks to the city, installed street lamps, etc. Groups like CHF are doing local infrastructure projects helping provide clean water, road repair, irrigation, school renovation, etc.

The Armenian Relief Society has been a leader in completing regional health and youth projects. Since 2003, the ARS Javakhk Fund has set up a diagnostic center at the Akhalkalak Hospital, and 16 Ambulatory Care Centers throughout Javakhk. They are currently working on providing each Ambulatory Care Center with an ambulance to transport patients to regional hospitals as necessary. The ARS has also opened a number of Youth Centers in the region, in Aklhatsikhe and Poga, with other centers in progress. They also completely renovated a school in Ghado village, near Akhalkalak.

But that's not all. Some of the ARS projects are truly inspirational. In one case, they held a mass baptism of villagers in Kardzakh, located a stones throw from the Turkish border. This may sound odd to us, but the local church was used for target practice by the Turks in the early 20th century and later closed down by the Soviet regime in 1933. No priest had visited the area in 70 years. The priests from Ninotsminda and Akhalkalak, Father Yeghia and Father Samuel, respectively, traveled to Kardzakh for the ceremony where 70 children were baptized

and over 200 attended. It was a huge boost in morale for the local community.

HAYTOUG: *What are some of the critical issues facing the Armenian youth of Javakhk? Are there any youth organizations active on the ground? If so, what sort of work do they carry out?*

ELIZABETH: First of all, let me say one thing. I was thoroughly impressed by all the young people I met in Javakhk — bright, energetic and motivated. But I was equally disappointed by the lack of resources available to them. Homenetmen has done work there, other youth organizations are also working — but they are in need of outreach and assistance from AYF chapters around the world. The ARS has worked hard to provide youth centers in major cities — but those centers could use computers, internet facilities, recreational / exercise equipment, books for a library. You get the idea. And most of all, they would enjoy meeting our young people, doing a joint program, exchanging ideas on how they can organize better, programs they can do. The opportunities are endless.

HAYTOUG: *What can Diaspora Armenians, specifically those of us in the United States, do to help improve conditions in Javakhk?*

ELIZABETH: The first thing to do is learn more about the region, the challenges they are facing and get a greater understanding of the day to day life in Javakhk. The next thing would be to work with the ARS and through the AYF International office to explore ways you can get active with the people and youth in Javakhk.

The main thing is — never take no for an answer. Keep asking questions and pitching projects until you find the one that would work for your region. Be creative with the resources available to you locally and see how far you can take them in assisting the community in Javakhk. Just as your programs in Armenia and Karabagh and here in the U.S., these will be some of the most rewarding projects that you will work on.

For the full text of the interview please visit the Haytoug section of www.AYFwest.org.

Զավախքահայերուն Իրավիճակը

Ըստ 2002 թուականի մարդահամարի տուեալներուն, Վրաստանի մէջ կ'ապրին շուրջ 280,000 հայեր որոնցմէ 120,000 կը բնակին Զավախքի շրջանը: Այս ժողովուրդը կը դիմագրաւէ շատ մը արգելքներ, անոնք, իսկապէս չափազանց ոգետրութեան ու հաւատքի պէտք ունին յաղթահարելու զանոնք. իրենց մարդկային իրաւունքերը պաշտպանելու, ելեկտրականութիւն ունենալու, որը քանի մը ժամէն աւելի չէ, սառնամանիք ձմեռները գոյատեւելու, իրենց զաւակները հայկական ոգիով մեծցնելու: Ասոնք միայն Վրացահայութեան դիմագրաւած դժուարութիւններէն քանի մը օրինակներ են, որոնք կ'ազդեն իրենց ամէնօրեայ կենցաղին:

Սկսելով ելեկտրականութեան հարցէն, որը ներկայիս կեանքի անհրաժեշտութիւններէն մէկն է Աշոցք-Նինոծմինդա ելեկտրաշողորդ բարձրավոլթ գիծերը քանի մը տարի առաջ կառուցուեցան Հայաստանի հանրապետութեան կառավարութեան կողմէ, որպէսզի 24 ժամ ելեկտրականութիւն տրամադրուի Զավախքի շրջանէն ներս: Այս փրկիչ գործողութիւնը հազարաւորներու կեանքը դիւրացուց, նկատելով թէ միայն քանի մը տարի առաջ ելեկտրականութեան հոսանքը 3-6 ժամ կ'աշխատէր:

Ինչպէս յայտնեցինք, 280,000 հայեր կ'ապրին Վրաստանի մէջ, սակայն չունին իրենց բնակչութեան համապատասխան կառավարական ներկայութիւն: Վրաստանի կառավարութենէն որեւէ յոյս չկայ բարեփոխուելու, եւ դիւրացնելու Վրացահայութեան ապրելակերպը: Ընդհակառակը, սկսած են ստիպելու Վրացերէն լեզուի իմացութիւնը. Զավախքահայերուն

մէջ Ռուսերէնը տիրապետող լեզուն է, որովհետեւ Համայնավարութեան ժամանակ Ռուսերէնը Սովետական հանրապետութիւններու մէջ պաշտօնական լեզուն դարձած էր մինչեւ իր փլուզումը: Նաեւ Զավախքի մէջ սկսած է Վրացի պաշտօնեաներու թիւը շատնալ ու իրենց ուժը աւելնալ. նաեւ Վրացական բանակի զօրախումբեր սկսած են հաստատուիլ Զավախքի մէջ: Այս վարմունքը Զավախքահայերուն համար բարեբաստիկ չէ, նկատելով թէ իրենց ինքնավարութեան ուժը կամաց-կամաց սկսած է պակսելու ու վախ կայ ապագային բոլորովին դադրելու իրենց ինքնավարութեան կացութիւնը ու Վրաստանի կառավարութեան իշխանութեան տակ մնալու:

Վատահաբար կարելի է ըսել, թէ Զավախքի ապագան կախեալ է զուտ հայաբնակ գիւղերու բնակչութեան պատկերէն եւ ժողովրդական դիմագիծէն:

Զավախք՝ պատմական Հայաստանի անբաժան մէկ մասնիկը, որ ներկայիս Հայաստանի հանրապետութեան սահմաններէն դուրս կը գտնուի, կը դիմագրաւէ տնտեսական, ընկերային եւ քաղաքական դժուարութիւններ: Զավախքի բնակչութեան 95 տոկոս կազմող բնիկ հայերը, կը ջանան յաղթահարել բազմաթիւ խոչընդոտներ: Սակայն իրենց սահմանափակ կացութեան պատճառաւ, պէտքը ունին համայն Հայութեան աջակցութեան:

Սանան Հարուն

Նոր Մարտահրավերներ

Յովիկ Գանտիլեան

Պատմության ընթացքին, ըլլայ 400 թէ 1800 թուականներուն, հայերը նոյնիսկ իրենց ամենէն տաքնապալի տարիներու ընթացքին կրցած են ազգային եւ գրական զարթօնք ստեղծել: Ասոր կողքին մեր յաղթանակներէն ետք միշտ կարիքը ունեցած ենք Հայը պաշտպանելու: 401-ին այդ՝ Պարսիկներուն դէմ էր, իսկ 1800-ականի վերջաւորութեան Օսմանեան կայսրութեան դէմ: Հայ ժողովուրդի յաջողութիւնները միշտ նախանձի առարկայ դառնալով՝ Հայաստանի դրացի երկիրները փորձած են մեզ նեղ կացութեան մատնել:

Վրաստան, այսօր հպարտութեամբ կ'ընդունի այդ «անգութ դրացի» երկրի տիտղոսը անցնելով Թուրքիոյ եւ Ազրպէյճանի շարքին, ճնշում կը բանեցնէ Զավախքի հայորդիներուն: Վրաստանը արդեօք մոռցա՞ծ է Հայ ժողովուրդի ըմբոստ նկարագիրը, թէ կը փորձէ Հայութեան համբերութիւնն ու միասնական ուժը: Նախ նայինք թէ ինչպէ՞ս Վրաստանի կառավարութիւնը Հայուն կեանքը կը դժուարացնէ Զավախքի մէջ:

Վրաստանի տարածքին երկրորդական վարժարանները ձրի չեն, ինչպէս Ամերիկայի Միացեալ Նահանգներու հանրային դպրոցները: Իսկ Զավախքի շրջանին մէջ, նիւթական տաքնապներէն անջատ, հիմնական դժուարութիւններ կան երկրորդական վարժարաններուն մէջ: Դասագիրքերու, ելեկտրականութեան, ջեռմուցիչներու եւ գրեմական պիտոյքներու չգոյութիւնը կը դժուարացնեն Հայ Զավախքցիին երկրորդական ուսում ստանալը: Այս մէկը Վրաստանի ներքին կեղտոտ քաղաքականութեան արդիւնք է եւ ո՛չ թէ դիպուած: Վրաստան իր ազգային կանոնագրին համաձայն, պարտաւոր է տրամադրէ ձրի ուսում մինչեւ երկրորդական վարժարան եւ

ֆինանսաւորել դպրոցական անհրաժեշտ ծախսերը: Բայց ըստ երեւոյթին Զավախքի շրջանը Վրաստանի ամենէն քիչ կրթական նպաստ ստացող շրջաններէն մէկն է: Այս զատորոշումը նպատակադրուած է խրջեցնելու հայութիւնը եւ անուղղակիօրէն տեղափոխելու հայութիւնը Զավախքէն: Դժբախտութիւնը այդ է, որ Հայութիւնը Օսմանեան կայսրութեան հպատակ եղած ժամանակ ալ, նոյնանման դաւադրութեան կ'ենթարկուէր:

Ինչպէս կը նկատենք, պատմութիւնը նոյնը մնացած է, սակայն բարեբախտաբար, նաեւ նոյնը պահած է Հայուն աշխատասէր նկարագիրը: Հայերը Զավախքի մէջ յամարօրէն կը շարունակեն իրենց ուսումը եւ ամէն ջանք կը թափեն բաց պահելու դպրոցներու դռները, ըլլայ այդ մէկը ժողովուրդէն հանգանակութիւններ հաւաքելով թէ հասութաբեր ձեռնարկներ կազմակերպելով: Այլազան միջոցառումներով՝ 2001 թուին Զավախքի մէջ կը գտնուէին մօտ 110 Հայկական դպրոցներ ընդգրկելով 22 հազար աշակերտներ: Վերջերս այս դպրոցներուն մեծ մասը Հայաստանէն կը ստանան իրենց դասագիրքերէն մաս մը: Հայաստանի Հանրապետութեան կրթական նախարարութիւնը ականատես ըլլալով Զավախքցիին տարապանքին, Վրաստանի կառավարութեան հետ համաձայնութիւն կնքած է ուսողութեան եւ գիտութեան դասագիրքեր ապահովելու: Պայմանագիրը նաեւ կը շեշտէ, որ դասագիրքերէն ոչ մէկը պէտք է Հայերէն լեզուի կամ պատմութեան առնչուող գիրք ըլլայ:

Հայաստանի կրթական նախարարութիւնը նաեւ տարբեր ծառայութիւններով կը հոգայ Զավախքի դպրոցականներուն պէտքերը: Հայաստան Զավախքի ուսանողներուն յատուկ կրթաթոշակներ կը տրամադրէ՝ առիթ ընծայելով անոնց բարձրագոյն ուսման հետեւելու: Կրթական նախարարութիւնը նոյնիսկ յանձն առած է

ուսուցիչներ պատրաստելու յատուկ աշխատանք՝
 Զավախքի շրջանին համար: Իսկ անդին սփիւոքի
 տարածքին, մենք ականատես վկաներն ենք թէ
 Հայ Օգնութեան Միութիւնը, ինչպէս միշտ, անգամ
 մը եւս Հայութեան վարկը բարձր կը պահէ դրսեւորելով
 իր մարդասիրական ուժը այս անգամ Զավախքի մէջ:
 Այսու ՀՕՄ-ի Զավախքի հիմնադրամը միջոց եւ
 ճանապարհ դարձած է շրջանի դպրոցներու վիճակի
 բարելաւման աշխատանքին: Այսպիսով Հայաստանն
 ու ՀՕՄ-ը ձեռք-ձեռքի իրենց կարելին ի գործ կը
 դնեն, Զավախքի շրջանի վարժարանները բաց
 պահելու:

Վրաստան, այսպիսի անմարդկային բաց
 միաժամանակ ճկունութեամբ կ'ուզէ Զավախքը պարպել
 Հայութենէ: Հայութեան միասնականութիւնը եւ
 Զավախքի Հայորդիներուն իրենց հողերուն կառչած
 մնալու կամքը բոլորիս առջեւ հէքիաթային եւ
 պատմական պատկեր մը կը գծագրեն համայն Հայ
 ժողովուրդին ներքին գոհունակութիւնը բարձրացնելով:

Այս է ներկայիս, Զավախքահայութեան
 դիմագրաւած կրթական դժուարութիւնները, որոնք մեզ՝

սփիւոքահայ երիտասարդներս, դէմ հանդիման կը դնեն
 նոր մարտահրաւերներով զօրաւիք կանգնելու
 Զավախքահայութեան: Անդին մեր շուրջ պատկերը
 կը շրջուի, դժբախտաբար, ան կը քայքայուի Միացիալ
 Նահանքներու տարածքին, այսօր ընդհանրապէս
 Հայկական դպրոցներու աշակերտութեան թիւը երթալով
 կը նուազի, հակառակ հայութեան թիւի արձանագրած
 աճին, եւ տակաւին կարգ մը վարժարաններու
 պարագային կը սպասուի, որ իրենց դռները փակեն:
 Երբ մարդիկ Հայկական դպրոց փակելը համահասար
 ձեւով կը ստորագրասեն այլազան քուէաատակ
 հարցերու, ժողովուրդս պիտի նահանջէ...:

Ահաւասիկ մարտահրաւեր մը եւս, այս անգամ
 բոլորվին ազատ պայմաններու մէջ Հայ դպրոցը
 կանգուն պահելու իրավիճակ:

Հարց կու տամ, արդեօ՞ք Աստուած միշտ
 Վրաստանի նման պետութիւններ Հայութեան դէմ պէտք
 է դնէ, որպէսզի մենք մեզի չկորսնցնենք, միասին
 աշխատինք, եւ անդրադառնանք մեր ազգային եւ
 մարդասիրական պարտականութիւններուն Հայութեան
 հանդէպ:



Photo by T. Yardemian



Photo by T. Yardemian

STRUGGLING TO SURVIVE: ARMENIAN LIFE IN JAVAKHK

By Shant Baboujian

This summer I had the blessed opportunity to visit Javakhk for the first time. It was truly an eye opening and mind-expanding journey. Although it is important to know our history in the country of Georgia, the situation in Javakhk and the important role it plays in the bigger political scheme have allowed us to turn our attention to the people in Javakhk. The Armenians there live through economic suppression, financial hardship, unemployment, injustices, and are denied basic human rights. In this article, I will do my best to show my translations from the people of Javakhk, as I experienced their determination, their vigilance, and their fight for basic human rights.

My trip began with negotiations in Armenia with several taxi drivers to transport us to Javakhk. After several days and visits to the taxi rest stop, we finally found a reasonable driver who would take us to Javakhk at a fair price, so we thought. The sensible price came with a life threatening drive, by a man who believed that

God had created the world only for him. As we were driving out of Yerevan, at what seemed to be close to 80 mph, an Armenian police officer raised his baton to the air to stop the speeding taxi driver. The driver completely ignored the police officer as he continued to speed away and

also become angry because of all the things I had heard about what the Armenians of Javakhk endure on a daily basis. After paying our dues to the Armenian Government for our visas again, we entered Javakhk. One sharp difference between Armenia and Javakhk was apparent right at the border. The

roads on Armenian territory were fixed and paved. On the Georgian side, right after the border, the roads were made of dirt and rocks, without any pavement. Consequently, our speed had to drop tremendously. As we passed a few villages, I noticed a certain village lifestyle, which was labor intensive. From children, to parents, and even grandparents, they were carrying hay, on horseback, and doing farm work.

Our first stop was at the first lake we saw, called "Madatapa". At this point, our very nationalistic guide Nayri took out his well-hidden Armenian flag and ran with it near the water. It was an amazing site to the see the Garmeer, Gabouyd, Narinchakouyn flowing so mighty and proud. With each gust of wind,

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WITH A CALL TO ALL
ARMENIANS AROUND
TO WORLD TO WAKE UP.

smoke cigarettes all the way to Javakhk.

As we approached the Armenian border I was filled with mixed emotions of anxiety and anger. I was anxious because I couldn't wait to see part of my homeland and didn't know what to expect. On the other hand, I had



***Picture of Bedros Tourian in a classroom at
Ruben DerMinassian Armenian School
Akhalkalak, Georgia***

Photo by T. Yardemian

the flag roared with a call to all Armenians around to world to wake up. It was roaring with a purpose to quench its hunger for justice and equality.

Throughout our 5-day trip, we traveled from village to village talking to people and getting a better understanding of how they live out their days. The people of Javakhhk are by far the most hospitable people I have met in my life. We went from home to home and were fed at each location. People treated each other with respect and love. In the village of Deleaf, we met a lady known to the village youth as Sona morkour. She lived off the land, making her own butter, bread, and used several types of animals to survive. She brought us homemade wine, and cooked some eggs with about a jar of butter and forced us to eat. The village youth came over to welcome us, as we ate and they sang nationalistic songs about their village. Sona morkour spoke a lot

about her homeland. She said that although this was her home, she feels like she is part of the Diaspora. She spoke sadly about how the displacement of our people away from the homeland is unfortunate, but her soul and spirit rang with confidence when she spoke of how Javakhhk will unite with Armenia.

In the same village, we stopped at an Armenian church. The church had no roof, weeds were growing inside the church, and the door had a big lock to stop villagers from going inside. An old lady told us about how the devout villagers prayed daily and lit candles while waxing them on the door of the church. She proudly claimed that no ruined church or metal lock could stand between the villagers and their faith.

As we traveled to Armenian schools throughout Javakhhk, the same theme of rubble rang all across. With Georgian flags at the doorsteps, most schools had walls

caving in, rooms closed off because roofs had collapsed, pictures of Fedayees hanging from the walls. These pictures signified a struggle in many of the students and villagers in each town, including our guide Nayri. The people of Javakhhk are not willing to give up the lands, which they were raised on. They are reminded each day that living in unbearable conditions could only lead to a civil unrest.

Towards the end of our trip, we approached the Baku-Ceyhan pipeline headquarters. Surprisingly, in the middle of potato farms, the headquarters was completely renovated with brand new expensive cars in the parking lot. We were told that even though this structure was right in the center of Armenian population, the government of Georgia did not employ any Armenians here. When they are short on workers, rather than hiring local Armenians, they bring

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Photo by T. Yardemian

workers from different countries for cheaper pay, and keep the Armenians unemployed. Right across the street from the headquarters, we saw an old Armenian man farming potatoes. In his 70's, he was still doing labor-intensive work on the farm to survive.

We also had the opportunity to visit the new agoump, which was built in Akhaltsikhe, with the help of the Armenian Relief Society. This part of my trip gave great hope and strength to all the despair I had experienced thus far. Without any furniture just yet, the Armenian center was filled with youth day and night. When we visited, some local youth were giving educationals to the badanees on various topics. The kids, eager to learn, asked a lot of questions. The foundations of the Armenian people in Javakhk were being replanted in the children and gave them the opportunity to have a second home at the Armenian center.

On my way back from Javakhk, I had a lot of time to reflect on my trip. It occurred to me that our lives are so different, but it was strange to be able to connect instantly with the Javakhk youth.

In America, the daily challenges of our youth include fighting assimilation; educating ourselves about our history; preparing young minds to serve as future leaders; fighting for recognition, reparation, and restitution of the Armenian Genocide; and keeping ourselves politicized. The Armenian youth in Javakhk are faced with different daily struggles. They are forced to deal with unemployment, a labor-intensive lifestyle, the fight to keep their heritage and culture alive, suppression from their government, and living with the uncertainty of their fate on that land. Although our daily struggles differ, we are both Armenian youth actively working towards the betterment of our people and for the future of our nation. The ideology that makes us a nationalistic youth is also the one that unites us around the globe.

CAUGHT BETWEEN A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE

By Shant Melkonian

Since independence, Georgia has been one of the most vital and strategic neighbors for Armenia. This strategic relationship is one based largely on economic necessity driven by Armenia's dependence on Georgia as the sole external link to Russia. With the dual blockades posed by Turkey and Azerbaijan, Armenia relies on trade routes running through Georgia for much of its commerce. This obvious dependant relationship has been exploited with discriminatory price structuring for Armenian goods which pass through Georgia, as well as being used as a sort of ransom held over the heads of Javakhtsis. Armenia has been forced into a

position of complacency when it comes to the issue of Javakhk and the treatment of Javakhk's Armenian population. Looking closer at this relationship we can begin to understand Georgia's political strong-arming of this social problem. With Armenia's economic viability at stake, Yerevan has been forced to accept the constraints inherent from such a dependency; in this case the hollow promises of reform within the region of Javakhk. Taking into account the economic neglect of Javakhk and the inability of Armenia to properly respond, the desperate need for change exists in this volatile relationship.

Relations between Javakhk and the central Georgian government have been strained for several decades, stemming from the latter's conscious policy of economic neglect. For years Javakhk has been the most underdeveloped region in the country, with the highest unemployment rate, lowest level of

state investment and home to one of the oldest and most damaged infrastructures in the area. The Javakhk economy is being crippled by the Georgian government, who smacks the region with neglect, leaving no room for economic stability or growth. They corral their heavy wooden stick and impose burdens on the citizens of Javakhk. This oppressive influence includes cutting off the helping hand of Armenia by limiting the amount and type of resources Armenia is able to provide for the region. In order to establish economic stability, Javakhk's citizens need control over accumulation of necessary resources—which is the natural desire of any people throughout the globe—and the necessary jobs to improve and grow this struggling region.

Javakhk has clearly been underserved by its parent country which has ignored the regions economic development. The Republic of Armenia has tried to gallop into this dire circumstance as the white knight, providing resources and economic assistance for this neighboring land. The Republic of Armenia has faced its own share of economic suffering in past years, but has recently seen a heightened level of progress as the country attracts ever increasing development and construction projects. The experience it has gained through the struggles of managing its own economy has compelled Armenia to lend an invaluable helping hand, one that has rekindled the spirits of this thirsty region. With the foresight of keeping Armenian culture and heritage alive in Javakhk, the Republic of Armenia has played an

important role in assisting the Armenian population of Javakhk, with particularly notable examples in the field of education. For example, the Armenian government allocates approximately 100 million dram (about \$180,000) annually for textbooks and supplies to Javakhk's schools. Another important component of this Armenian aid program is the award of specialized scholarships for Javakhk students in Armenian state universities. Administered by the Armenian Ministry of Education, this scholarship program waives all admission and testing requirements, including financial enrollment fees for university students from Javakhk, in return for the pledge that students return to their native land upon graduation.

Additionally, the ability for Armenia to supply electricity directly to Javakhk without connecting to the main Georgian national energy grid is a tremendous step for the Republic of Armenia to take. Although some outstanding questions remain concerning the ownership and payment schedule for this Armenian-Javakhk energy deal, it allows Armenia to directly meet an important need of the Javakhk population and sets an important precedent in establishing a special Armenian role in assisting the region.

However, there remains much to be desired in terms of tangible aid to the daily lives of the citizens of

Javakhk. There exists the serious need by the Armenian nation (in its entirety) to aid Javakhk.

In Soviet years, there were three large factories in Javakhk, making cheese, cement and cables. Now all three stand idle, victims of the Soviet collapse and asset stripping after industry was privatized. The people of Javakhk mainly survive in three ways today: by simple commerce, through working at the local Russian military base and periodically leaving for seasonal labor in Russia.

Commerce in the region is very underdeveloped; the most developed facet being the agricultural sector, focused on the cultivation of cereals (barley, wheat, oats) and potatoes as well as stockbreeding (cows and sheep). Individuals who own shops face discrimination and wholesale closures while those who work within the local government face indiscriminate firing, only to have their jobs filled by Georgians. Local

industry is virtually nonexistent, aside from the service industry connected with the local Russian military base.

The Russian military base is the backbone of the region, but faces a



Photos by T. Yardemian

plan for evacuation in 2008. The base has been favorable to the Armenian population of Javakhk because of the jobs it is able to provide for the region. The 62nd Divisional Russian base at Akhalkalaki, with its force of 3000 soldiers, is home to the Russian 147th Motorized Rifle Division. It is also the largest, and only reliable, source of employment in Javakhk. The base provides jobs for several thousand local Armenians, offers the local workers access to decent health care and includes the operation of a 500-person factory on the grounds of the base. Some estimates also reveal that nearly half of the region's population is engaged in work related to providing goods and services to the base, a fact of obvious importance to the struggling Javakhk regional economy and its high unemployment rate. Nearly half of the 3000 Russian soldiers, both officers and enlisted men, stationed at the base are in fact local Armenian residents. The negotiated closure of the Russian military facilities in Georgia has been ongoing for several years, with the Javakhk Armenians consistently opposed and fearful of the implications and insecurity that would result from a Russian withdrawal. The Russian military presence in the region, first established in 1828, offered the Javakhk Armenians their only tangible reassurance in the face of the population's fear of the Turks. Having a border with Turkey twice as long as with Armenia, Javakhk

is quite vulnerable to a potential Turkish offensive. Therefore, the Russian military presence also serves as a strategic defense against possible Turkish aggression. Unfortunately, the Armenian

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Photo by T. Yardemian

population in the region has not had very much of a say in the Russian evacuation and many fear that the base risks eventually falling into the hands of Istanbul or NATO.

For Javakhtsis who are not "fortunate" enough to have work associated with the military base, conditions force the male population to seasonally migrate to Russia in search of work, only returning to their families in the

winter. This phenomenon has proven to be a leading factor of the population's demise. As more people leave less are coming back.

Recently the Millennium Challenge Corporation pledged over \$102 million for the rehabilitation and construction of 245 kilometers of main roads to reconnect Javakhk with its capital. Only time will tell if this helps revive the local economies and helps keep Javakhk's population Armenian.

How we deal with Javakhk today is a premier question which will affect the future of the Armenian story. As the pages unfold, will they deliver a depressing assessment of what happened to Armenians there or will they tell us how the region added economic value to a united Armenian state, comprised of the Republic of Armenia, Karabagh, Nakhichevan, and Javakhk?

Discriminatory policy in Javakhk aimed at pressuring the local Armenian population to migrate must end. The future of Javakhk and its residence rests in its ability to govern itself autonomously within the framework of a Georgian federation and to serve as an intermediary of economic integration between Georgia and Armenia. Providing both sides this type of cooperation could solve all accumulated issues by providing the people an opportunity to expand their ties to both Tbilisi and Yerevan, benefiting all three.

Source: This article is based in part on the following:

Khatchik Der Ghoukassian and Richard Giragosian. 2001. Javakhk: Stability Through Autonomy.

ANSWERING THE QUESTION: WHAT'S BEING DONE?

By Lilian Abedian

Living in a region where socio-economic pressures are increasing and culture is continually threatened, Armenians worldwide must do as much as they can to help the residents of Javakhk and at the same time help preserve the conceptualization of the complete Armenian identity.

Many organizations including the Armenian Youth Federation, the Javakhk Fund and the Armenian Relief Society have made Javakhk a priority on their agendas. The AYF, with its thirteen chapters throughout the Western Region, tries to raise awareness amongst its members and communities and contribute by all means, financial and otherwise.

Whether it's by holding chapter educationals to strengthen knowledge and understanding of this forgotten region or by creating fundraising events to contribute directly to Javakhk, the AYF has kept Javakhk a part of its consciousness with the hopes of one day seeing this Armenian populated region grow and flourish.

Reconnecting with the homeland has been an omnipresent theme within the AYF. Whether with Armenia proper, Karabagh or Javakhk, the importance for Armenian Diasporan youth to have a connection to their ancestry is invaluable. One project organized by the AYF with the intentions of strengthening our bond with Hayastan is Youth Corps. Youth Corps is one of the best opportunities for Armenian youth to engage in and to play an active role in making a tangible difference within our homeland. The program allows young Armenians to spend approximately five weeks in Armenia and Karabagh supplying the manpower to villages where residents are attempting to rebuild their lives. By helping with the rebuilding process, participants establish priceless relationships

with locals, as well as the land itself. Aside from supplying real, positive assistance to our brethren in Armenia, participants experience the homeland in the most meaningful way. Recognizing the need for Diasporan assistance, the AYF is in planning to hold future Youth Corps programs within the Javakhk region. One more building block in the progress of our nation. For more information about the AYF Youth Corps program please contact www.AYFwest.org.

The Armenian Relief Society (ARS), the organizing body of the Javakhk Fund, has been working towards the economic, spiritual and cultural betterment of Javakhk for many years now. With multifaceted humanitarian programs operating in Javakhk, the ARS tries to help the people to help themselves. Due to an insufficient amount of hospitals and medical assistance, much aid goes to providing access to health care. Since unemployment is a major issue in Javakhk, farming projects such as production plants are being established to help the economic hardship of unemployed residents. Besides providing basic medical aide and agricultural opportunities, one of the organizations proudest contributions to the people of Javakhk is the openings of youth centers in the region. The centers, which contain libraries, computer stations and cafés, serve as a distinct environment for the youth. Used for various events such as athletic games, seminars and as venues to host lectures, as well as for entertainment purposes, the centers have created an atmosphere which fosters Armenian culture, language and heritage. The ARS has many projects planned for the near future, including work within the local schools of Javakhk. For more information about the Armenian Relief Society please contact www.ARS1910.org.

THEIR STRUGGLE IS OUR STRUGGLE

By Vatche Soghomonian

Western Armenia consists of cities such as Van, Moush, Gars, Ardahan and many others. Today, Western Armenia is under Turkish control and belongs to the Republic of Turkey.

In the years following the Armenian Genocide and the Armenian battles for independence in Sardarabad, Gharakiliseh, and Bash Abaran, the 28th President of the United States, Woodrow Wilson—along with Turkey and the

Allied Powers—signed the Treaty of Sèvres which promised the formation of “Wilsonian Armenia”. This Armenia had its borders stretched to the Black Sea and incorporated such lands as Van, Moush, Gars, Bitlis, Erzerum, Trebizond and so on. However, the Treaty of Sèvres was not enforced and the Ottoman Turkish Government never respected these borders.

As a result, the world expected Armenians to forget about Sèvres and forget the lands promised by it. They made these expectations as if these lands

were never ours in the first place and we had no tie to them. Eighty-eight years have passed since the signing of the Treaty, and in those eighty-eight years, we have not once forgotten its text, nor have we forgotten the lands; our lands.

Why are these lands so important to us? Why do they matter? The simplest response would be, because they represent our past and future. No matter how long they have been taken captive they are still ours. Armenians have lived on these lands from the beginning of our history including the time period throughout the existence of the Ottoman Empire. On these lands we preserved our history, religion, culture, and language, regardless of Turkish oppression. Armenians were always the majority population in these lands; in areas like Sassoun, Zietoun, Cilicia, and Van, the Armenian majority kept and defended actual autonomy—meaning they had self governing communities within the Ottoman Empire. Imagine Armenians in the United States, being the majority population in a city, and then governing that city with its own laws. That is what we had in Western Armenia until Turks carried out the Genocide. Armenians in western provinces were slaughtered by the Turks and driven from their homes. In areas like Van, we fought, not with an expectation of victory; rather we fought from an instinctual reaction to prolong survival.

Today, the whole world may

believe that these lands actually belong to Turkey, that there is no way they will come back to their rightful owners, and they very well may be right. Logic says that Turkey has no reason to fear Armenia militarily and so far not too much reason to worry legally. Collectively, as Armenians we may see this task of getting our lands back as a goal for dreamers and idealists while we continue to wait for the international community to condemn Turkey and recognize the Armenia Genocide. Along with that recognition, we also hope that the international community will demand reparations and restitution from Turkey in the form of the return of our occupied territories.

I was fortunate enough to have gone to Western Armenia. There, I was able to swim in Lake Van, to see the Monastery of Akhtamar and to climb the mountains which our Fedayees climbed. I was able to stand on Solugki Gamourj, the Bridge of Solugh, where Kevork Chavoush

Armenia that I walked the land that our forefathers and mothers lived on, fought for, and died for.

Without struggle there is no progress. This is something we must repeat to ourselves daily. After the Genocide and into the 1980's, the dream of having Karabagh seemed so distant; the dream of having an independent Armenia seemed so remote. It did not seem possible that those lands would once again be ours, but the actions and sacrifices of dreamers and idealists made it reality.

We simply did not forget about Armenia, about Karabagh; we chose not to accept the concept that Karabagh was lost and will never be ours again. We told our mothers, fathers, sisters, and brothers in Karabagh that we think of them, we love them, we stand with them in their struggle and that their struggle is our struggle. We sent them clothes, food and anything else we could. It was then that we knew that, as a people, we were united, and no matter what hardships we go

war broke out the Diaspora stood up and said, "Our brothers and sisters, we remember you and we are you." During the Karabagh war we sent anything we could to help the fight. In addition to supplies, we sent something else, something that showed that we simply do not see Karabagh as a place in need of charity; that we do not help Karabagh to make ourselves feel better. The Diaspora sent something that showed that we are Karabaghtsis as well: we sent lives. Many people went to fight and die so that that land could once again be ours. It has been 14 years since the cease-fire and that war is by no means over, but we have succeeded; succeeded in the fact that we have regained control of Karabagh and succeeded in proving to ourselves the resilience of our people... when united.

We must now once again come together, unified, to the aid of our Javakhhk. Here too we find a land of subjugated Armenians awaiting the aid of the vast power which is our Diaspora. Just like we sent the message to Karabagh, we will send the message to Javakhhk. Just as we are Karabaghtsi, we are at the same time Javakhktsi as well, and we do not see their struggle for survival as "their struggle" because it is OUR struggle.

When thinking about the Armenian Nation, think about the following:

No one is free when any others are oppressed...

WHEN THINGS GOT HEATED AND WAR BROKE OUT THE DIASPORA STOOD UP AND SAID, "OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS, WE REMEMBER YOU AND WE ARE YOU."

fought and died. I was in Van, where our people heroically fought against the Turks who were attempting to wipe out our existence. It was in Western

through and how many thousands of miles apart we are, the lives of any Armenian affects the lives of all Armenians.

When things got heated and

Երկիր Նայիրի

Ինչպէ՞ս չը սիրեմ, երկիր իմ կիզուած,
Պարզուած վերստին սրերին սուրսայր.
Ինչպէ՞ս չը սիրեմ– հեզութեամբ լցուած,
Դու եօթնապատիկ խոցուած Տիրամայր:

Որքան որ ելան արինիդ ագան,
Դու կամաւոր զոհ– բոլորը տուիր.
Դու յաւէտ եղար անարատ վրկայ–
Չարերի կոխան, խաշուած իմ երկիր:

Հրկէզ քո հոգին, որպէս առատ խունկ,
Աշխարհի համար պարզեցիր անպարտ,
Հեզ ընդունեցիր երդում ու երկունք,
Դու արքայաբար վեհ ու անհպարտ:

Ժամ է, ե՛լ նորից, իմ ծիրանավառ,
Զրահաւորուիր խանդով խնդագին,
Վառիր երկունքի գիշերում խաւար,
Հրով մկրտուած նայիրեան հոգին...

1915 Վահան Տէրեան



Photo by T. Yardemian

Զավախքահայ Դեմքեր

Համօ Օհանջանեան

Համօ Օհանջանեան ծնած է 1873-ին, Վրաստանի Ախալքալաք գաւառը: Կեանքին ընթացքին եղած է քաղաքական եւ գործիչ ու Հայ Յեղափոխական Դաշնակցութեան կուսակցութեան անդամ:

Օհանջանեան իր դպրոցական տարիները անցուց Թիֆլիս ու Ռուսիա, ուր Ռուսիայէն ստացաւ իր բժշկական տիտղոսը: Այս տարեշրջանին նաեւ ժնեւի մէջ Հայ Յեղափոխական Դաշնակցութեան կուսակցութեան մէջ աշխատանք տանելով, աշակցութիւնը ներկայ էր Քրիստափոր Միքայելեանի կողքին: 1902-էն մինչեւ 1905 իբր բժիշկ գործունեայ էր Թիֆլիսի Բաքում շրջանը: 1908-ին Ռուսիոյ ցարը, Օհանջանեանին ձեռքակալել տուաւ, բանտարկելով զինք ապա աքսորելով Սիպերիա:

Առաջին Համաշխարհային պատերազմի

ժամանակ, Օհանջանեան ներումով վերադարձաւ Թիֆլիս, իբրեւ բժիշկ գործելով Կովկասեան ռազմաճակատին վրայ: Նաեւ Վանի մէջ իր բժշկական գիտակցութիւնը ու օգնութիւնը ցուցաբերած է: 1917-ի Ռուսիոյ Փետրուարեան յեղափոխութենէն ետք, համառուսաստանեան սահմանադրի ժողովին պատգամաւոր եղաւ: Նաեւ Հայաստանի հանրապետութեան առաջին անկախութեան ժամանակ Օհանջանեան եղաւ արտաքին գործոց նախարար ապա՝ հանրապետութեան վարչապետը: Իր օրով ստորագրուեցաւ Սեւրի դաշնագիրը, որուն հետեւանքով

Հայաստանի հանրապետութիւնը ճանցչուեցաւ: 1920-ական թուականներուն Գահիրէի մէջ եղաւ «Համազգային» մշակութական եւ ընկերակցութեան հիմնադիրներէն մէկը: Մահացաւ Գահիրէ, 1947-ին:



Ռուբէն Տըրմինասեան

Ռուբէն ծնած է Վրաստանի Ախալքալաք շրջանը 1882-ին, եղած է ազգային-ազատագրական շարժման գործիչ:

Կրթութիւնը ստացած է Էջմիածնի Գէորգեան ճեմարանը եւ Ռուսիոյ Լազարեան վարժարանը: Բարձրագոյն ուսումը շարունակելու համար յաճախած է ժնեւի համալսարանը:

Ան գործօն եղած է Կարսի մէջ: Նիկոլ Դումանի կողքին, կոռւած է քիւրտերու դէմ, նաեւ Գէորգ Չաւուշին հետ, Տարօնի շրջանը, մաս կազմած է «Սուլուխի Կռուին»: Չաւուշը մահանալէն ետք, Ռուբէն կ'ըլլայ Դաշնակցութեան ուժերու պետ:

Անդամակցելով Հայ Յեղափոխական Դաշնակցութեան, մասնակցած է 1909-ի «5-րդ» եւ 1911-ի «7-րդ» ընդհանուր ժողովներուն: 1915-ին ղեկավարած է Սասնոյ հիքնապաշտպանութիւնը, յաղթահարելով Թուրքին

ու անցնելով դէպի Կովկաս:

Անդամակցած է Հայոց Ազգային Խորհուրդին, մասնաւոր ուշադրութիւն դարձնելով արեւմտահայ գաղթականներու տեղաւորման հարցին, ապա՝ ընտրուած՝ Հայաստանի Հանրապետութեան զինուորական նախարար:

Ռուբէն, իր եռուն ու գործունեայ կենցաղը կ'արձանագրէ 7 հատորնոց յիշատակագրի մը մէջ, փրկելով բազմաթիւ ֆետայիներու անուններն ու իրենց ազգային կեանքերը մոռացումէ: Այս գործը ցարթ կը պահէ իր կարեւորութիւնը, ո'չ միայն որովհետեւ այն օրերու ֆետայիներու չարձանագրուած դէպքերն ու մոռացուած դէմքերու մասին կը խօսի, այլ նաեւ որովհետեւ կը պահէ իր դաստիարակչական բնոյթը՝ առաջնորդելով ներկայ սերունդը դէպի ազգասիրութիւն եւ հայրենասիրութիւն:

Կը մահանայ Ֆրանսա:



You have a gun
And I am hungry

You have a gun
Because I am hungry

You have a gun
Therefore I am hungry

You can have a gun
You can have a thousand bullets and even another thousand
You can waste them all on my poor body
You can kill me one, two, three, two thousand, seven thousand times
But in the long run
I will always be better armed than you

If you have a gun
And I
Only hunger.

- *Otto Rene Castillo*



Photo by T. Yardemian

FIGHT tHE gEnOcIdE dEnIAL mACHInE



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