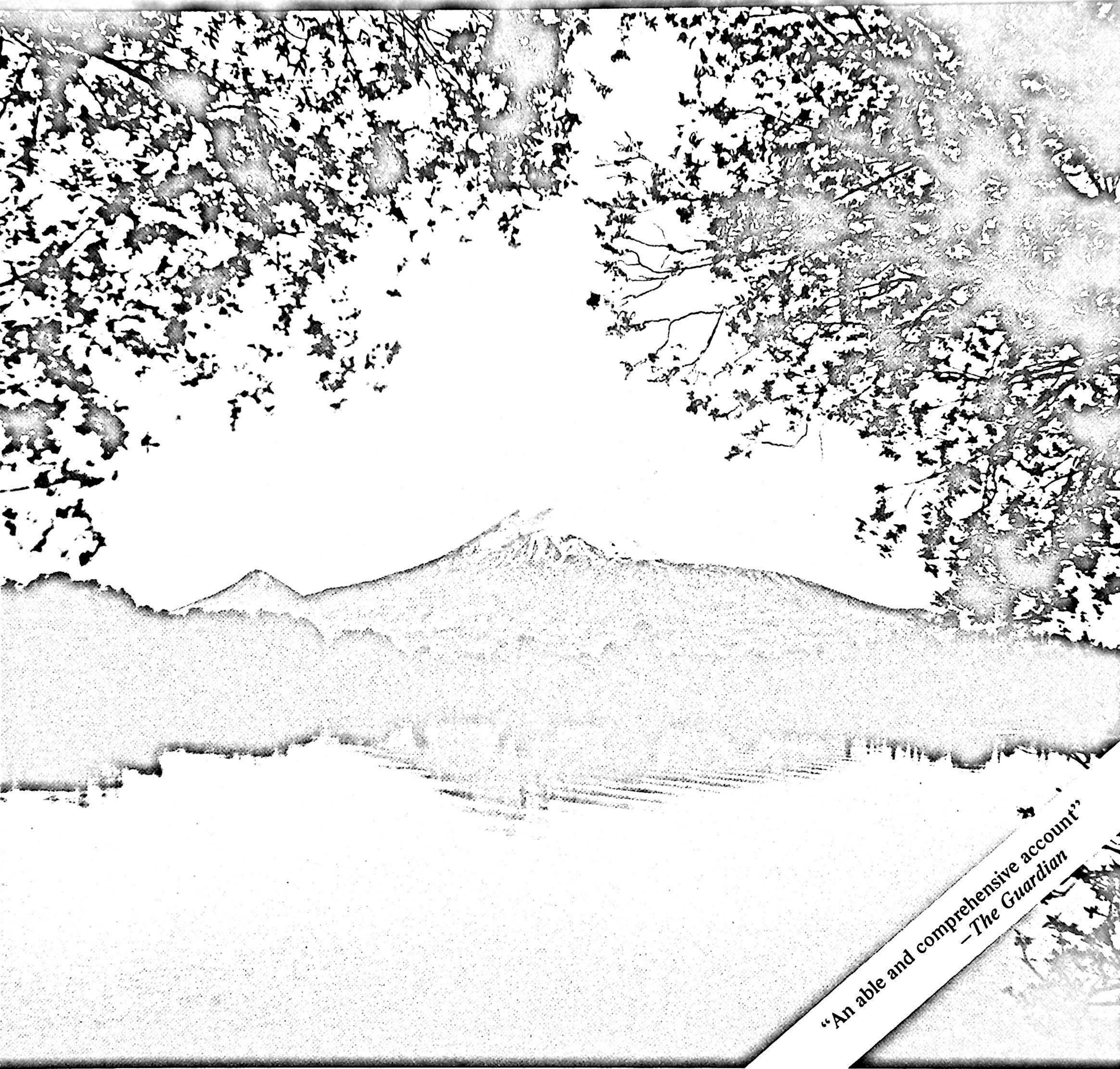
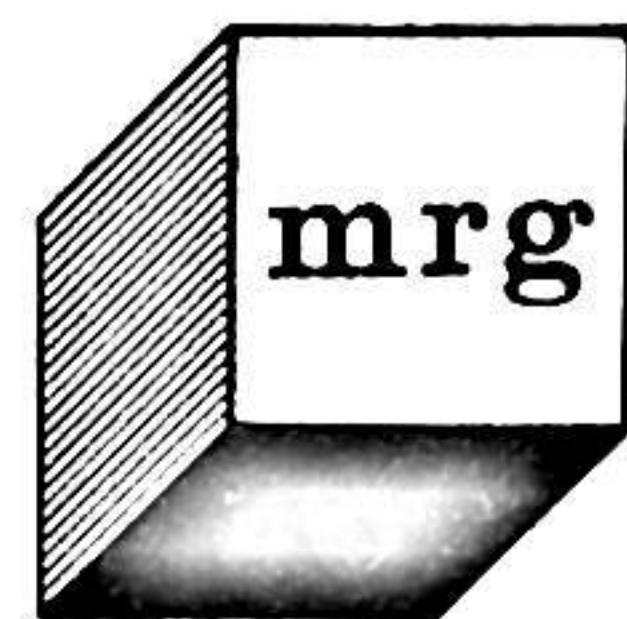


# THE ARMENIANS



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- To help prevent, through publicity about violations of human rights, such problems from developing into dangerous and destructive conflicts which, when polarised, are very difficult to resolve; and
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# THE ARMENIANS

by David Marshall Lang  
and Christopher J. Walker

From the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,  
adopted by the General Assembly of the United  
Nations on 10th December 1948:

*Article 1*

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

*Article 2*

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

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

*Article 10*

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

*Article 19*

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

*Article 20*

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

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

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## INTRODUCTION

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Between 1895 and 1920, the Armenian problem was constantly in the news headlines. The massacres perpetrated by Sultan Abdul Hamid in 1894-1896, and then by the Young Turk regime between 1915 and 1918, aroused horror comparable with later world reaction to Hitler's treatment of the Jews. Adolf Hitler himself was publicly to extol the genocide of the Armenians, and ordered his troops invading Poland in 1939 to behave as the Ottoman Turks had done in 1915. The Führer declared: 'I have given orders to my Death Units to exterminate without mercy or pity men, women and children of the Polish-speaking race. It is only in this way that we can acquire the living room we need. After all, who today remembers the extermination of the Armenians?'

The victorious Allies in 1919 made grandiose declarations about the establishment of a free and independent Armenia, which was to rise upon the ruins of the ancient homeland in eastern Anatolia and Transcaucasia. None of their promises was fulfilled. Why was this? Among the reasons may be cited the complete extermination of the original Armenian population over some three quarters of the affected territory; the war-weariness of the Allied powers; the eclipse of President Woodrow Wilson and the growth of American isolationism; and above all, the agreement concluded in 1920 by two political 'outcasts', Kemal Atatürk and V.I. Lenin, to carve up Armenia's traditional homeland between them, to the exclusion of the Western 'Imperialist' powers.

For nearly half a century after the First World War, the Armenian Question was relegated into the background. The dynamic personality of Kemal Atatürk (d.1938) dominated the Turkish scene. Many foreign observers welcomed the prospect of a regenerated Turkey, and were happy to bury gloomy memories of past racial discord. Turkey was neutral in the Second World War, for which the Western Allies were profoundly grateful.

Stalin the Georgian, with his Armenian lieutenant A.I. Mikoyan, was content for the time being to build up a national home for the Armenians within the cramped frontiers of the Armenian S.S.R. During the past half century, the Soviet government has been very cautious about encouraging revanchist or irredentist tendencies, either within Soviet Armenia, or among the émigré communities. The main exception to this policy was Stalin's 1945 campaign to annex Kars and Ardahan, in conjunction with a parallel drive to take over most of Persian Azerbaijan and Kurdistan. When Armenians demonstrated in Erevan in 1965, during the 50th anniversary of the 1915 genocide, many were rounded up by the Soviet police and sent to labour camps for a few months. In 1976, Mr. Kosygin reaffirmed that the Soviet Union has no territorial claim on Turkey.

The importance of Turkey in NATO and CENTO means that the 'Balkanization' of this country through the

detachment or local autonomy of its Armenian and Kurdish areas is viewed without sympathy by the USA and its allies. Since the Second World War it has suited Western interests to keep Turkey's eastern provinces empty and desolate as a 'buffer zone', rather than see them repopulated with Armenians on friendly terms with their brethren in the Armenian S.S.R.

Talaat Pasha, Turkey's Minister of the Interior during most of the First World War, and chief architect of the 1915 massacres, expressed the hope that his solution of the Armenian problem, if not permanent, would last for at least half a century. This proved quite a good estimate. Outside Istanbul itself, none of the descendants of the million and a half Armenian victims has been resettled in present-day Turkey. Symbolically, one of the main thoroughfares in Ankara today is named Talât Paşa Bulvarı. After the cataclysm of 1915-1918, it was bound to take at least two generations before the scattered Armenians of the diaspora recovered their poise and their sense of national unity. During the past two decades, we have seen a revival of Armenian self-confidence in many areas of the world. Several political events have provoked the now resurgent Armenians to a revived sense of protest and grievance. Among these events we may cite the occasional murderous attacks on Christian minorities in the streets of Istanbul (notably on 6 September 1955), and Turkish excesses committed against Armenians in Cyprus in 1963, and again during the invasion of 1974.

\* \* \* \*

In this Report, the joint authors have tried to put this serious and as yet unresolved minority problem of the Armenians into some kind of perspective. Neither of us has any axe to grind; nor has either of us any Armenian blood or family connection. Both of us have travelled extensively in various parts of Armenia. Lang was in Tabriz (Persian Azerbaijan) from 1944 to 1946, and visited the Iranian foothills of Mount Ararat; he explored Soviet Armenia in 1966 and 1968. Walker visited Turkish Armenia, including Van, Aghtamar, Kars and Ani in 1971, also Soviet Armenia in the same year. We have attempted to be strictly factual and objective in our approach to this tragic and important minority question. It may be that our approach will seem too cold-blooded to some readers, while our Turkish friends may find it too pro-Armenian. Some of the other Reports in this MRG series concern themselves almost entirely with contemporary or recent events of the last ten years or so. We have felt it necessary in this one to dwell also on more ancient events and issues. This is partly because the Ottoman 'final solution' to the Armenian problem was put into effect more than sixty years ago, and partly because Turkish propagandists have constructed elaborate, and quite fanciful, theories to prove that the Turks (who, of course, settled in Turkey from Central Asia some ten centuries ago) are really the descendants of the original inhabitants of Armenia and Asia Minor. Many people have been taken in by these Turkish claims, and we feel it necessary to re-state some of the facts, based on historical and archaeological research.

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**Part One:****THE ARMENIAN PEOPLE**

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**Armenia**

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

The revised *Encyclopaedia of Islam* includes within 'historical Armenia' – the Arminiyya of the Arab Abbasid geographers – much of present-day Kurdistan, including the Hakkiari country. According to that authority, Great Armenia takes in all land between longitudes 37° and 49° East, and latitudes 37.5° and 41.5° North. This Encyclopaedia estimates a total area for Arminiyya of about 300,000 square kilometres, or 115,000 square miles. Lesser Armenia during the Middle Ages was a district of north-western Armenia, adjoining what is now the strategic Turkish city of Erzinjan. During the Crusades, there existed an important Armenian kingdom in Cilicia, around the Gulf of Alexandretta, and including St. Paul's birthplace of Tarsus. This kingdom was ruled by the Armenian dynasty of the Rupenids, and then by the French Lusignans. It fell to the Mamluks of Egypt in 1375. Cilicia is also known as 'Little Armenia'; it included the modern city of Adana.

Soviet Armenia today takes in only 10% of the territory of ancient Great Armenia, comprising 29,800 square kilometres. Within the Soviet Union, several Armenian ethnic areas are enclosed as enclaves within the Azerbaijan SSR, the most important one being the mountainous Karabagh, which has traditionally been 85% Armenian.

Modern maps of Turkey exclude all mention of Armenia. The area once known as Turkish Armenia is divided up into Turkish administrative districts, and old Armenian place names are replaced by Turkish forms. All mention of 'Turkish Armenia' is strictly prohibited.

Parts of Armenia, notably the River Araxes valley, and the Van district, are incredibly fertile and beautiful. This gives some encouragement to the view that Armenia was the site of the Biblical Garden of Eden. However, this description applies to less than a quarter of Armenia's overall territory. Far from being a 'land of milk and honey', the larger part of Armenia is virtually uninhabitable. The landscape is cut up by enormous mountains, many being extinct volcanoes over 10,000 feet high. Armenia's highest peak, Mount Ararat, rises to 17,000 feet. The average height of the Armenian plateau is over 5,000 feet. This windswept region has a harsh climate, winter continuing for seven months, and the short, dry summer being only three months long. A typical Armenian town, such as Leninakan, on the Soviet/Turkish border, stands 5,078 feet above sea level, and has an average winter temperature of 12°F, (-11°C). Armenia is often shaken by destructive earthquakes. The Varto area and adjoining regions west of Lake Van have been severely affected during the 1960s and 1970s. Transport is poor throughout much of the area. There are

few navigable rivers, though boats can sail on Lakes Van and Sevan. During the past decade, a rail link between Istanbul and Tehran has been established, via Lake Van, and the trunk road between Tabriz and Erzerum has been improved for heavy lorries and bus traffic. The transport situation is best in Soviet Armenia. Direct air service by Aeroflot links Erevan with Moscow every few hours, and there is also direct contact with Tbilisi, Leningrad and even Beirut. Mainline railway services operate between Erevan and Baku, and Erevan and Tbilisi, and thence to Russia. A new branch was built from Erevan up to Lake Sevan some ten years ago, and modern electric trains run at frequent intervals.

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

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

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**Who are the Armenians?**

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

Over a thousand years B.C., Armenia became dominated by a people known as the Urartians. 'Urartu' is actually the same name as Ararat, in the Assyrian language. The Urartians founded an important kingdom, based on the city of Van, where their ruined palaces and castles exist even today. Around 600 B.C., Urartu was overrun by various invaders, among whom were the Scythians, the Medes (ancestors of the present-day Kurds), and some people calling themselves 'Hayasa', who came from Central Anatolia, close to the old Hittite state. The Armenians of today call their land Hayastan, and their legendary ancestor, Haik. The ancient inhabitants of Armenia/Urartu did not die out, but became mingled with these invading elements. Though retaining much of their old ethnic identity, they adopted a new language, which is a distinctive member of the Indo-European group.

Persian and Greek sources begin to speak of 'Armina' and 'Armenians' from about 500 B.C. They were known under these names to the Great Kings Darius and Xerxes of Persia, and to the Father of History, Herodotus. We can thus attest continuous occupation by the Armenian nation of the land known as 'Great Armenia' and adjoining districts, from well before 500 B.C. until the annihilation of virtually all the community living in eastern Turkey

in 1915. This amounts to an uninterrupted period of two and a half millennia.

Today the scattered Armenians number at least six million, spread virtually all over the world. They consistently exhibit a high intelligence and are successful in business and professional life. They are renowned as scientists, mathematicians, doctors and dentists. They excel in the arts and in literature. Armenians are numbered among orchestral conductors and soloists, film directors, sculptors and book illustrators. They are noted for their humour, in spite of their tragic history, and most political jokes in the USSR are ascribed to a mythical Radio Erevan. Armenians are excellent cooks and famed for their hospitality. They are faithful friends, and have produced many military leaders. Their detractors accuse them of being secretive, self-willed and acquisitive.

### **Armenia a Great Power**

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

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

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

### **The Carve-Up: Armenia Falls to Pieces**

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The establishment of a national Church proved of vital importance in preserving Armenian national unity. Such were the political pressures that without their Church the Armenians would long ago have been assimilated by their neighbours. A fateful political decision was taken in 387 A.D., when the Romans and Persians carved up Armenia between them. In 428, the last king of the Armeno-Parthian dynasty of the Arsacids died, and was not replaced. Feudal barons or 'nakharars' vied for supreme power. The Persian Zoroastrian Great King Yezdegird did everything possible to suppress Christianity,

invading Armenia in 451 with an enormous army, including squadrons of elephants. Persian domination was later followed by that of the Arab caliphs, who sent their generals (including one named Bogha the Turk) to ravage the land.

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

### **The Great Dispersion**

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

The fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks in 1453 was followed by a fresh carve-up of Great Armenia, this time between the Ottoman Sultans and the Safavi Shahs of Persia. Like the Greeks, the Armenians of the Ottoman Empire were organized into their own semi-autonomous community or *Millet*. The head of the Armenian community was the Patriarch of Constantinople, who was responsible directly to the Turkish Sultan and Grand Vizier. The office of Patriarch was occasionally sold to the highest bidder. The Armenian community was dominated during most of the Ottoman period by an elite consisting of merchants and high officials. Elsewhere in the Ottoman dominions, the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem which was technically of a higher ecclesiastical order, was demoralized by corrupt Ottoman politics, leading a modern historian, Professor A. Sanjian, to declare that the very name of Armenian became a term of opprobrium in the Holy City. However, the Ottoman government benefited greatly from the talent of the Armenians as bankers and administrators. Until the fatal troubles of the nineteenth century, the Armenian community was known as the 'loyal Millet'.

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

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## Part Two:

### THE ERA OF MASSACRES

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In the course of a quarter of a century – between 1895 and 1920 – the Armenian race lost a million and a half persons by the gun or the bayonet, by deliberate starvation, and by privation and pestilence. About a third of all Armenians in the world died a gruesome, painful death. This national catastrophe is comparable to that suffered by the Jews under the Hitler regime. No Armenian household today, in 1981, is free of memories of this holocaust. It is referred to constantly in the Armenian press, and threatens to become more and more of a live issue in years to come.

#### The Nineteenth Century: Armenians in Ottoman Turkey

Within the Ottoman Empire, Armenians formed four broad classes. The first consisted of the rich and influential men in the government and civil service. The second was the mercantile and trading class of Istanbul and the cities of Anatolia; this was the class with which Western travellers came into contact most. The third class was the peasantry – much the largest of the four and the least regarded, except by a few knowledgeable travellers such as H.F.B. Lynch. The fourth was the warrior class of the mountaineers – men living a tough, independent existence in remote mountain fastnesses like Zeitun. In addition, there was a numerous priesthood and higher clergy.

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

The Ottoman Turkish government had exercised little direct authority over the majority of its Armenian citizens until the second half of the nineteenth century. Up to that date, the majority in the country areas were beholden to local Kurdish feudal lords. When central government encroached, the result was almost always bad: it meant extra taxes for the peasantry, and a hardening of oppressive, anti-peasantry structures within the system. The Armenians in 'Turkish Armenia' (that is, eastern Turkey of today) had an additional problem to cope with. They were heavily intermixed with a large Kurdish population. (See MRG Report No.23: *The Kurds*.) These Kurds, originally from more southerly regions, had been settled there by Sultan Selim in the sixteenth century, on condi-

tion that they guard the frontier with Persia. The Kurds are mostly orthodox Muslims. Though not fanatical, their instincts for pillaging, and for stealing Armenian girls, were strong. Moreover the Kurds were armed, whereas the Armenians, as a Christian subject race, were forbidden to bear arms.

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

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

#### Armenia and the Great Powers

The Armenians watched with sympathetic interest the liberation of Greece in the 1820s. Like the Balkan Slavs, the Armenians hoped that the Orthodox Emperor of Russia would deliver them from the Infidel. They held a naive and altogether exaggerated concept both of Russian power, and of Russian benevolence. In 1801, the Russians had crossed the Caucasus and annexed Georgia; in 1827, they conquered Persian Armenia, and invaded Turkish Armenia as far as Erzerum; during the Crimean War, they captured Kars. By 1864, the Russians had subjugated the largely Muslim Circassians, 600,000 of whom preferred to emigrate as 'Muhajirs' to Turkey, rather than remain under Russian autocracy. Moving into Central Asia, the Russians subjugated Khiva, Kokand, Samarkand, Bukhara and Tashkent, slaughtering thousands of Turcomans in the process.

If we recall that the Ottoman Sultan was recognized as Caliph and Commander of the Faithful, and that the Central Asian Turks were blood brothers of the Ottomans, we can see why these events caused such shock and indignation in Istanbul. Christian minorities, such as the Greeks, Bulgarians and Armenians, who prayed for Russian victory, were obvious targets for Turkish reprisals, especially as these Christians were often richer and more successful than the mass of the Muslim population. (This applies largely to the urban population: the Armenian peasantry was mostly poor.) In 1877-78, the Russians liberated Bulgaria, and almost captured Constantinople itself. The Armenians had high hopes of freedom, or at least of local autonomy within the Ottoman state. They sent a delegation to the Congress of Berlin in 1878.

It remained unheard, as the world statesmen discussed their spheres of influence and strategic interest.

The hopes of the Armenians were frustrated, largely by the British Prime Minister, Disraeli. For the Conservative statesmen of 1878, the Russian advance into the Balkans and the Near East was as unacceptable as more recent advances of Russian power to their modern equivalents. Disraeli forced the Russians to evacuate Erzerum, though they retained Kars and Ardahan. An unworkable but fine-sounding clause

was introduced into the Berlin treaty, laying the Western powers under an obscure obligation to protect the Armenians from Turkish misrule. Half a dozen British consuls were left with the impossible task of policing an area as big as England and Wales, without any means of enforcing their dubious and undefined authority. Armenia remained partitioned and helpless, divided between Russia and Turkey. Disraeli, however, cleverly wrested Cyprus from Sultan Abdul Hamid (1876–1909) as the price of a defence treaty with Britain. Britain's guilt in this 'deal' was later recognized by Lloyd George. At the 1919 Paris Peace Conference, the British Premier recalled with regret that the Tory government of 1878 had 'insisted upon placing the emancipated Armenians once more under Turkish rule, after they had been liberated by the Russian arms.'

The ambiguous provisions of the Berlin settlement led to endless recriminations on all sides. Successive British ambassadors were given the impossible task of 'reforming' the Sultan's administration, as if the proud Ottoman monarch had been some Indian Rajah under the rule of the British 'Pukkah Sahibs'. A *Punch* cartoon of November 1879 shows the British envoy, Sir Henry Layard, shouting at Sultan Abdul Hamid: 'Your Majesty *must* reform!' The Sultan replies: 'MUST!? Is there, then, a new Grand Vizier in England?' British Ambassador: 'No. But there's going to be a GENERAL ELECTION.'

The tactless and hectoring behaviour of British and other European diplomats of those days helped to aggravate Abdul Hamid's morbid and paranoiac character. The Sultan and his viziers looked on the Armenian question as a mere pretext for British and Russian interference in internal Ottoman affairs, and this strengthened their resolve to impose a solution to it, in order to avoid a break-up of the empire. It is no coincidence also that the Turkish court gravitated more and more towards the German capital at Berlin where Bismarck and later Kaiser Wilhelm II were proclaiming that 'Might is Right'.

### The Armenian Revolutionary Movement

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

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

Hunchaks in 1894 to incite the Armenians of Sasun in Turkish Armenia to defy both the Ottoman government, and their local Kurdish overlords. The two leading revolutionaries, Mihran Damadian and Hampartzum Boyadjian, were respectively a teacher and a doctor.

### Sultan Abdul Hamid and the 1894-96 Massacres

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

In these massacres, up to 300,000 Armenians perished. Perhaps the grimest was the second massacre at Urfa on 28-29 December 1895. About 3,000 Armenian men, women and children had taken refuge in their cathedral, but troops soon broke in. After shooting down many unarmed victims, the Turks collected straw bedding, poured kerosene on it, and set it alight. Consul Fitzmaurice later wrote: 'The gallery beams and wooden framework soon caught fire, whereupon, blocking up the staircase leading to the gallery with similar inflammable materials, they left the mass of struggling human beings to become the prey of the flames. During several hours the sickening odour of roasting flesh pervaded the town, and even today, two months and a half after the massacre, the smell of putrescent and charred remains in the church is unbearable.'

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

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

### Armenians in Tsarist Russia

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Armenians had in general prospered from the Russian conquest of the Caucasus. A thrifty and industrious Armenian middle-class grew up in the big cities such as Tiflis in Georgia, and Baku in Azerbaijan. Before the Soviet period,



Erevan in Armenia remained a neglected backwater. However, at the close of the nineteenth century, the Armenian population of Caucasia was still largely rural (65%) as against urban (35%). Of the urban population, the majority were humble, working-class folk.

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

During the 1905 Revolution, the governor of Baku encouraged the local Tatars in a four-day slaughter of Armenians. Similar excesses took place in several regions of Transcaucasia. In September 1905, mob violence led to serious fires in the Baku oilfields. Later on, the Armenians gained the upper hand, and worsted the Tatars. These Armeno-Tatar clashes raised the esteem of the Dashnak Revolutionary party in the eyes of the peasantry; the Dashnaks were seen to be the only effective armed group prepared to protect the peasants; and the armed power of the party had reversed the anti-Armenian policies of tsarism. However, the vicious clashes left a legacy of hatred between Armenians and Tatars. Right up to the eve of the First World War, Tsar Nicholas II continued to combat Armenian nationalism. In 1912, a number of Armenian nationalists were sent to Siberia. Others joined Lenin's Bolsheviks. Among these we must name Stepan Shahumian, one of the ill-fated Baku Commissars; Kamo (Ter-Petrossian), a celebrated revolutionary bank-robber; and A.I. Mikoyan, later a Soviet elder statesman.

### **A False Dawn: Armenia and the Young Turk Revolution**

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

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

'pounding the non-Turkish elements in a Turkish mortar' – a remark which applies equally well to the Turkish government of 1981.

At the same time, a Turkish nationalist ideology was taking shape which was to have grave and far-reaching implications for the Armenians. This was pan-Turkism or pan-Turanianism – a doctrine which continues even today to have many powerful adepts in Turkish ruling circles. Serge Zenkovsky describes the ideology thus: 'First, the Ottoman Turks had to consolidate their grip over their empire and Turkicize its minorities. In the second, "pan-Turkic", phase, the closest relatives of the Ottoman Turks – the Azerbaijanis of Russia and Persia (the south-eastern group of Turkic peoples) – were to be taken into the Turkic state. The third step would be the uniting of all the Turanian peoples of Asia around the Turkish core.'

A biographer of one of the chief pan-Turkists, Zia Gökalp, comments: 'Gökalp, Halide Edib and their associates dreamt of a union of all the Turks under a single ruler who would renew the days of Attila, Jengiz Khan or Timur-leng.' The implications of pan-Turkism for the Armenians were extremely grave. They were among the least willing of the minorities within the empire to be Turkicized, clinging to their ancient Church as a symbol of that defiance. Moreover, their fellow Armenians in the Russian Caucasus stood in the way of the 'second stage' of pan-Turkism – the expansion to Baku, the oil city on the Caspian.

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

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

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It is often stated by Turkish historians that the mass deportation of the Armenians was forced on the Young Turk government of that time, because the entire Armenian population constituted a dangerous 'Fifth Column', sympathetic to the Western Allies and to Russia. This claim is less than the whole truth. There were a number of professions of Armenian loyalty to the Ottoman empire (notably the enlistment of Armenians in the Ottoman army); however, the last forty years had taught the Armenians to be wary of any Turkish government, none of which had shown evidence of being *their* government.

Shortly before the First World War broke out in 1914, the Dashnak party held its eighth party conference in Erzerum. During the conference, Young Turk representatives approached the Dashnaks and suggested that they should foment a rebellion across the frontier, in the Russian Caucasus. In return, Turkey would set up an autonomous Armenia under her own protection. The Dashnaks turned down the plan, proposing instead that Turkey should stay neutral in the impending conflict;

but in the event of Turkey joining the war, Armenians everywhere would be advised to do their duty as Ottoman citizens.

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

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

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

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

This systematic and ably executed genocide resulted from decisions taken at the highest government level. The Interior Minister Talaat Pasha boasted to Morgenthau, the American ambassador, that the Armenian question was dead for fifty years. The government itself was but an instrument of the Young Turk party, the 'Committee of Union and Progress', whose dominant ideology was pan-Turkism. The mass-murder was not just a matter of 'isolated incidents': it was carefully thought out and planned months, if not years, in advance. Nor did it result from religious intolerance, though the Young Turks mobilized the innate fanaticism of the village Mullahs, and the greed of Turkish have-nots. There were in fact Muslim leaders who were shocked by the measures taken, and protested against them.

Who did the killing? In some cases it was ordinary gendarmes. The government also recruited a 'Special

Organization' (*Teshkilat-i Makhsusiye*), mostly composed of common criminals released from prison in Western Anatolia, on condition that they engage in the slaughter of the Armenians.

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

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

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### Part Three:

## THE CURRENT SCENE: RESURRECTION OF A PEOPLE

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### Independent Armenia, 1918–1920

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

After the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, Russia withdrew from the First World War. Lenin and Trotsky signed the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, which left the Caucasian peoples to the mercies of the Turks and their German allies. The Armenians began by forming a federation with the Georgians and the Azerbaijanis (Tatars, Azeris), but soon found themselves stabbed in the back. The Georgians even did a secret deal with the Turks, handing over the strategic fortress of Kars to the enemy. Led by such heroic generals and partisan commanders as Nazarbekov, Dro and Silikov, the Armenians repulsed the Turks at Sardarabad on 22-24 May 1918. The Turks then by-passed the Erevan district, and captured Baku a few weeks before the Ottoman Empire surrendered to the Allies at the Armistice of Mudros, 30 October 1918.

Thanks to initial British support, the territory of independent Armenia was considerably larger than the present-day Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic, since it came to include Kars and Ardahan and areas of what is now Eastern Turkey. But economic conditions were catastrophic. The scenes of famine and privation in the winter of 1918-19 were as bad as the horrors of 1915. Half-a-million refugees, dressed in filthy rags or sacking, roamed the land, or shivered in caves and dugouts; they were reduced to eating grass or gnawing human bones, before death released them from their misery. The British High Commissioner in Tbilisi, Sir Harry Luke, gives in his autobiography, *Cities and Men*, a vivid account of his

three visits to Armenia during that critical period. In October 1919, he found in Erevan only forty officers and soldiers with uniforms to cover their nakedness; an army band in rags bravely attempted a rendering of 'God save the King'. Luke continues: 'The town, ruinous and untidy, was full of starving refugees from Turkish Armenia; on each day of our stay we saw some of these luckless people sink on to the pavements of the streets and die where they fell of sheer weakness, anaemia and lack of food. The unhappy Government did their best for these miserable wretches, but they had neither the personnel nor the resources in money and supplies to cope with more than a negligible fraction of the distressed.'

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

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

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

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

The cession of Kars and Ardahan to Turkey was finally confirmed by the Treaty of Kars (13 October 1921). Curiously enough, this treaty also stipulated that the Nakhchevan district, once an integral part of mediaeval Armenia but later extensively peopled by Tatar Azeris, should be attached to the Soviet Republic of Azerbaijan, based on Baku. The Nakhchevan ASSR is entirely cut off from Soviet Azerbaijan by Armenian territory, and today, over half a century later, forms a much-resented enclave situated between Soviet Armenia and Turkey. Similarly Karabagh, a patriotic Armenian region, was cut off from Armenia, and left as an enclave within Soviet Azerbaijan.

## Soviet Armenia – a National Home

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

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

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

The Soviet leadership under Stalin set out to make Transcaucasia, particularly Georgia and Armenia, a show-place. They rebuilt Armenia so that it would be a mecca for the Armenian diaspora all over the world. Although the Dashnak leadership of independent Armenia had

resisted the Soviet takeover, a number of eminent Armenian revolutionaries had worked in the true Leninist tradition – Stepan Shahumian, one of the 26 Baku Commissars murdered by British-backed elements in 1918; Kamo (Ter-Petrossian), whose daring exploits enriched the Bolshevik party funds; and A.I. Mikoyan, one of the few Old Bolsheviks to survive the Stalin purges.

Foreign relief organizations, organized by high-minded individuals such as Herbert Hoover, accorded Armenia special attention. The dreaded Cheka (OGPU) at least ensured public security of a kind – in that the Armenian peasant was no longer murdered by Turkish soldiers and Kurdish tribesmen. The Leninist New Economic Policy provided a flexible framework within which the small shopkeeper and craftsman could make a modest living – until the clampdown which attended the Five-Year plan campaign from 1928 onwards.

Symptomatic of the resurgence of Armenian cultural life in the Soviet orbit was the foundation of Erevan University in 1921. Two years later, in 1923, the distinguished Armenian architect Alexander Tamanian, Vice-President of the Russian Academy of Fine Arts, was sent from Moscow to Erevan to plan the rebuilding of Erevan on modern lines, but with due regard for Armenian national traditions in building and sculpture.

An important element in the resurgence of Armenia under Soviet rule is the fact that Armenian is the first official language of the republic, along with Russian. Soviet Armenia is the only region of the world where official business is conducted primarily in the Armenian vernacular. Soviet Armenia also has a first-rate public education system. An Armenian branch of the Soviet Academy of Sciences was founded in 1935, and promoted in 1943 to the status of an independent Academy. Associated with the Academy is the Byurakan Observatory, directed by Academician Viktor Hambartsumian, well known in international astronomical circles. Armenians of ability enjoy exceptional opportunities for promotion in the USSR, since they can compete freely for jobs in a vast labour and economic market of some 250,000,000 people. The late Academician I.A. Orbeli became Director of the Hermitage Museum in Leningrad, and his brother Levon was Director of the Institute of Physiology named after Pavlov. The names of Academicians Arzumian, Knunyants, Sisakyan and Alikhanov also won international renown. In music, we have only to think of the fame and popularity of the eminent composer Aram Khatchaturian.

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

Immediately after World War II, Stalin embarked on a forward policy in Transcaucasia, with a view to annexing Persian Azerbaijan, Kurdistan, and parts of

Turkish Armenia. From 1945 onwards, Armenians from abroad were encouraged to return home with promises of special concessions and privileges. An election to the vacant Supreme Pontificate of Holy Echmiadzin (in Soviet Armenia) was held with participation of Armenian delegates from all over the world. The growth of Armenian industry was deliberately fostered by building scores of modern factories and the completion of hydro-electric schemes harnessing Armenia's fast-flowing rivers. (Full particulars are given in the article on the Armenian SSR in the latest *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, written by a Soviet scholar, Dr. A.A. Mints.)

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

#### Population of Soviet Armenia

|      |           |
|------|-----------|
| 1940 | 1,320,000 |
| 1959 | 1,763,000 |
| 1966 | 2,239,000 |
| 1970 | 2,492,000 |
| 1979 | 3,031,000 |

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

In the Armenian SSR, the Armenians themselves therefore now number approximately two and a half millions. This is in addition to substantial Armenian groups in other regions of the Soviet Union. For example, the communities in Georgia and Azerbaijan alone number over half a million in each case. The population density of the controversial Tatar-governed Nakhchevan ASSR is only about half that for the Armenian SSR. (The population density of the Armenian SSR averages 102 per square kilometre.) For a territory of 5,500 square kilometres, we have the following population figures:

#### Population of Nakhchevan ASSR

|      |         |
|------|---------|
| 1940 | 131,000 |
| 1970 | 202,000 |
| 1979 | 239,000 |

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

capital, Erevan, which began life over 2,750 years ago as the fortress of Erebuni, a citadel of the Urartian kings.

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

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

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

The *per capita* income of Soviet Armenia at about \$500 (Nove and Newth, 1967) compares favourably with comparable figures for Turkey (\$149), Spain (\$276) or Greece (\$292).

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

### How many Armenians?

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

The Armenian Apostolic Church plays a central role in the life of the community: many Armenians regard membership of the Church as an essential and integral part of 'being an Armenian'. According to Patriarch Ormanian's history of the Armenian Church, Apostolic Church members immediately before the First World War numbered

3,472,000, all over the world. In addition there were 128,400 Roman Catholic Armenians, and 49,000 Protestant ones. Allowing for persons of Armenian origin not recorded as members of any Church, it is reasonable to allow for a 1914 world Armenian population of about four and a half millions, of whom a million and a half perished in the Young Turk genocide and its aftermath. A world-wide low point of three millions was reached during the famine years of 1918–1920.

We have commented on the systematic build-up of the population of Soviet Armenia, particularly since 1945. In 1954, Bishop Poladian calculated that there were 2,745,000 Armenians living within the Soviet Union as a whole. Due to political and social discrimination by the Atatürk regime and its successors, the Armenian population of Turkey was still (1954) kept down at its immediate post-genocide level of around 100,000. Even in 1978, he it noted, there is still no Armenian resettlement of the area formerly known as 'Turkish Armenia'.

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

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

The Soviet Armenian community is classified as follows:

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

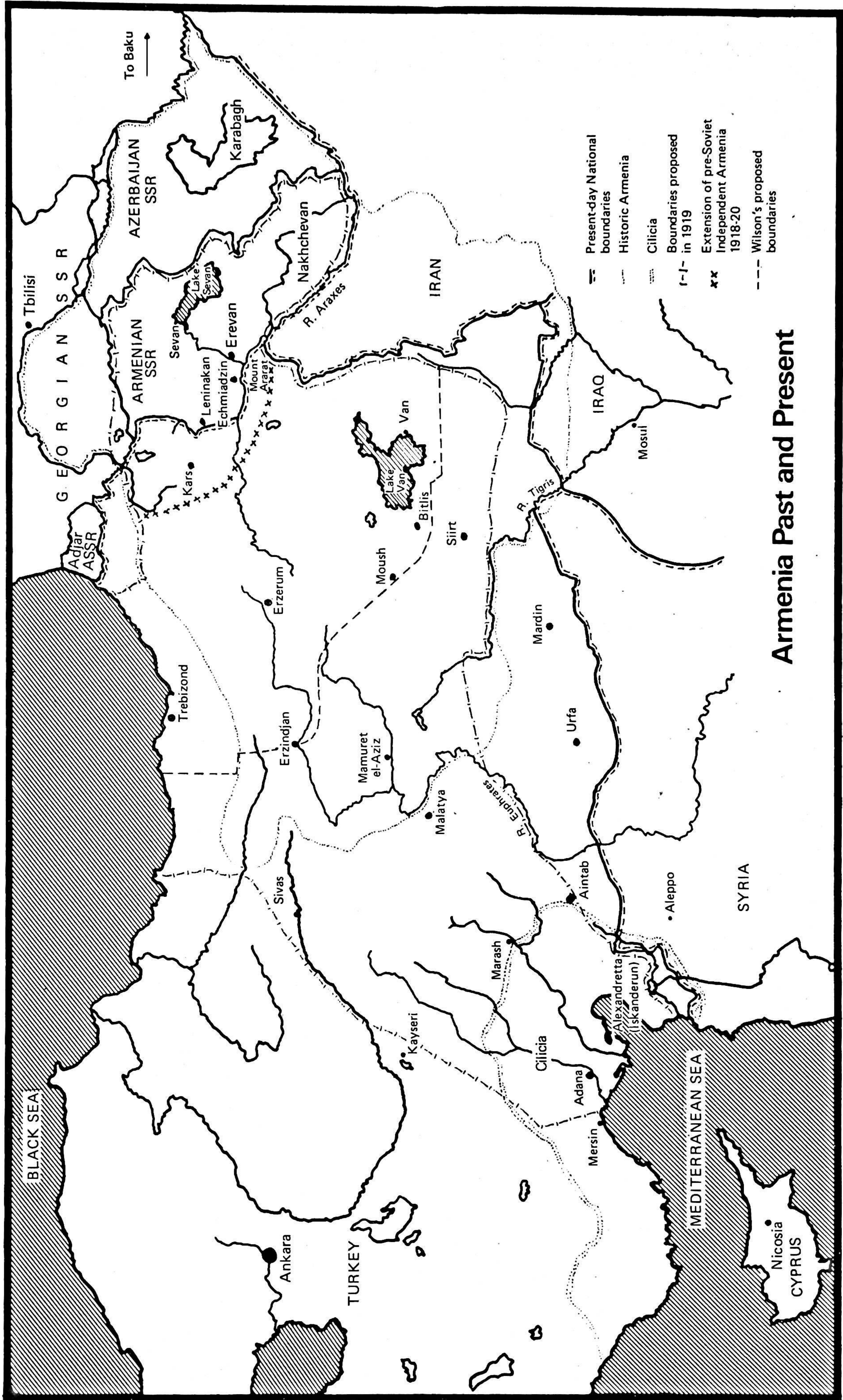
(1979 Soviet census total: 4,151,241)

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

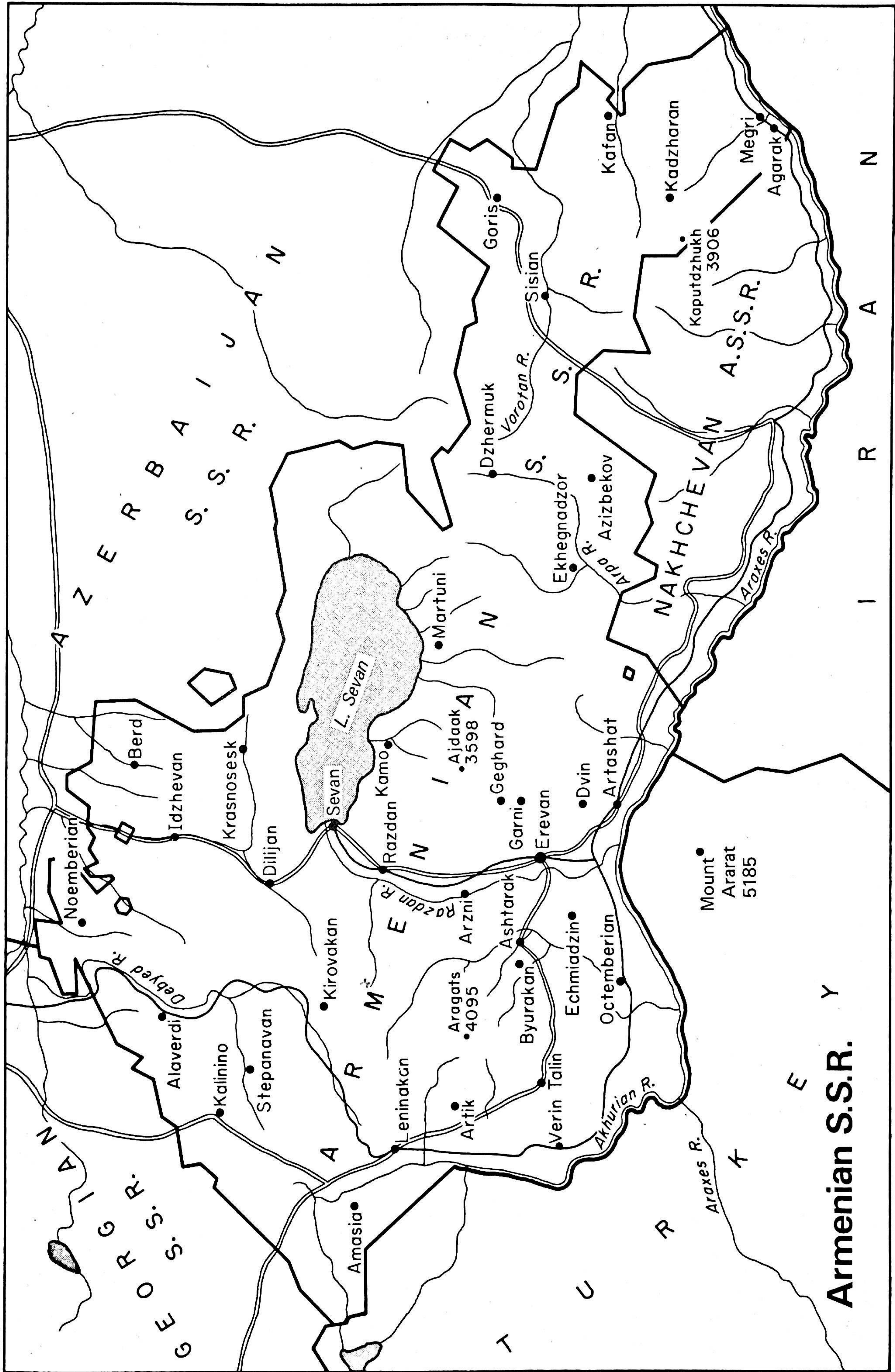
|                  |                  |
|------------------|------------------|
| USA (and Canada) | 450,000          |
| Turkey           | 250,000          |
| Iran             | 200,000          |
| France           | 200,000          |
| Lebanon          | 180,000          |
| Syria            | 150,000          |
|                  | <u>1,430,000</u> |

This leaves (at 1966 figures) 570,000 to be divided between such countries as Great Britain (about 6,000), Germany, Italy, Austria, Switzerland, Bulgaria (about 25,000), Romania, Poland, Cyprus, Egypt, South America, India, Burma, Singapore, China, and Australia. The highly inflated figure of 250,000 for Turkey is very suspect, and must include many 'camouflaged' Armenians who have taken Turkish names and adopted Islam to avoid persecution. With marked exuberance, an Armenian magazine published in Vienna in July 1975 declared: 'Ils sont 7,000,000 dans le monde qui disent AYO!' ('Seven million people in the world say AYO!' – 'Ayo' being the Armenian for 'Yes'.) According to this source, there are today as many as 350,000 Armenians in France alone.

Official Soviet statistics already quoted estimate the population of Soviet Armenia at 3,031,000 (1979 figures),



**Armenia Past and Present**



Armenian S.S.R.

of which total two and three quarter million are Armenians. It is, however, noticeable that the birthrate in Soviet Armenia has shown a significant decrease since the peak year of 1958, when it reached 41.1 per thousand inhabitants, as against 8.1 deaths per thousand. (Net growth rate: 33 per thousand.) By 1973, the growth rate had sunk to a modest 16.9 per thousand. This compares with a generous 28.4 per thousand among the prolific Muslim Tajiks, and an incredibly sparse 4.0 per thousand among the Estonians.

At present, the population of the Armenian SSR is increasing at the rate of close on 45,000 per annum, in addition to immigration from abroad, which varies according to Soviet government policy.

### Republican Turkey: the Ambiguous Inheritor

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

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

Nevertheless, since the establishment of the Republic of Turkey the rights of Armenians have not been fully respected. The main instrument which laid down the principles of the protection of non-Muslim minorities with Turkey was the treaty of Lausanne (24 July 1923), specifically articles 38–44. The signatories of this treaty, which terminated the war in the Near East which had been continuing virtually since 1914, were the British Empire, France, Italy, Japan, Greece, Romania and the Serbo-Croat-Slovene state, and Turkey. Article 38 guaranteed the life and liberty of minorities within Turkey, without distinction of 'birth, nationality, language, race or religion'. It also guaranteed their freedom of movement and of emigration. Article 40 laid down the right of Turkish nationals of non-Muslim minorities 'to establish, manage and control at their own expense any charitable, religious and social institutions, and any schools and other establishments for instruction and education . . .' In Article 41 the Turkish government undertook to grant facilities for

the minorities to teach their children in their own languages (although they would make the teaching of Turkish obligatory). Article 42 underwrote the legality of the minorities' own customs for regulating their own internal affairs; and the following article upheld the right of the minorities not to be compelled to do anything which their religion forbade. Article 44 gave the foregoing articles international significance, since the League of Nations itself guaranteed them.

These provisions have been and currently are being ignored. Due to the achievements of the Kemalists during the 1930s, the great-power rivalry for Turkish support during the Second World War, and the dependence of NATO on Turkish military prowess, none of the signatories of the Lausanne settlement has shown the power or the inclination to invoke the Lausanne Treaty, insofar as minority rights are concerned. At the time the semi-official newspaper *Ileri* commented: 'The Greeks and the Armenians must forget their own language and become Turks or get out.' Rather more crudely, *Ikdam* commented: 'The Armenians in Turkey are to enjoy two privileges only, namely to pray to their God and to bury their dead.'

Relying on the Lausanne Treaty, a number of Armenians returned from abroad and laid claim to lands and property from which they and their families had been ousted from 1915 onwards. In country districts, some of these people were hanged by irate Turkish mobs from their own fruit trees, with the encouragement of local gendarmes. Only in Istanbul and a few other cities was it possible for Armenians to resume their interrupted community life. Most areas of the former six 'Armenian vilayets' of Eastern Turkey were declared a forbidden military zone. Armenian tourists from abroad, before being granted a visa, were obliged to sign an undertaking not to proceed with legal claims for return of their sequestered property in Turkey.

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

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



Since the Second World War it has been possible for most Armenians in Istanbul to make a living, and indeed live quite comfortably, provided that they abstain from political activity. There has been only one serious outbreak of fanaticism, in September 1955 when, after reports of damage to Atatürk's birthplace in Thessaloniki, mobs ran riot in Istanbul, looting and pillaging the shops and property of the minorities. But apart from police repression, psychological factors also inhibit Armenian refugees from resettling their ancestral lands. A member of the London commercial community who often visits Turkey on business informed us that he is afraid to venture outside Istanbul, to visit the small coastal town on the Black Sea where his family lived prior to 1915. This man is haunted to this day by memories of his parents being taken out to sea in a Turkish boat, cast into the waves, and left to drown.

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

The undisputed head and spokesman of the Armenian community in modern Turkey, as in the Ottoman Empire, is the Patriarch of the Armenian Apostolic Church in Constantinople. Since 1961, this position has been occupied by the outspoken Patriarch Shnork Kaloustian, who is tireless in his efforts to protect his Armenian flock from victimization by the Turkish civil and military authorities. It is a sad fact that His Beatitude's efforts have been, and currently are systematically hampered and misrepresented by the American State Department, whose pro-Turkish policy, of course, led directly to the success of the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974 (see MRG Report No. 30: *Cyprus*).

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

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

There are 34 Armenian Apostolic churches in Istanbul and six in the provinces. There are 31 clergymen in Turkey: one bishop, two *vartabeds* (celibate priests) and 28 *kahanas* (married priests). Four *kahanas* and three *vartabeds* attached to the Patriarchate serve in various countries. The Religious Council held 12 meetings; however, new elections were not held because government permission was not received during the year. The Calfayan Orphanage was not able to build a new school, because the authorities had turned

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

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

Hopes for an improvement in Turkish attitudes towards the Armenian minority in 1977 were not fulfilled. The Patriarch's annual report spoke of continued failure to solve legal difficulties regarding the Church schools and other charitable institutions. Following some sensational articles in the Turkish daily newspaper *Gunaydin*, bombs were thrown at the Armenian patriarchate, cathedral and school in Istanbul. (A similar attack later occurred after the bomb incident at a Turkish bank in London in January 1978.) Damage was relatively slight, and no serious casualties were reported. However, on one occasion Patriarch Shnork was assaulted by Turkish youths in his own cathedral.

At one time in 1977, foreign tourists with Armenian surnames were refused entry into Turkey and turned back at the border. This measure was soon rescinded, as was a Ministry of the Interior order closing the Armenian church in the village of Kirk-khan near Iskanderun. To be fair, it must be stated that these events occurred against a background of mounting unemployment and political instability within Turkey, and followed a series of murderous attacks on Turkish diplomats abroad, for which extremist Armenian groups were said to have claimed responsibility.

Many foreign scholars and travellers have protested about the neglect and destruction of Armenian cultural monuments in Turkey. For example, the blowing-up of the *vank* (monastic complex) of Khtsgonk, which dates from the sixth century A.D. and is situated a few miles south of Ani, close to the Soviet-Turkish border. The damage is of such a kind that it cannot have been the result of an

earthquake and must have been done by explosives. To deter protest the French archaeologist Dr. Thierry, an expert on medieval Armenian architecture, was arrested by gendarmes in Moush in 1974, and held for three days in a dungeon, without food or water — 'pour encourager les autres'.

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

### **The Role of the Armenian Apostolic (Gregorian) Church**

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

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

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

The problems of the Church after the establishment of Communist rule in Armenia were immense, and for long periods the catholicosate of Echmiadzin was left vacant. The Cilician catholicosate (which in theory had similar powers, while recognizing that the title of the Echmiadzin catholicos was 'Catholicos of all Armenians') moved after the First World War to Antilias, north of Beirut, where it continues to exist today. After its reconstitution in 1929, the Cilician catholicosate comprised the bishoprics of Aleppo, Damascus, Beirut and Cyprus. In 1956, it adopted a new constitution which permits it to appoint bishops in

regions hitherto under the jurisdiction of Holy Echmiadzin. It now has responsibility for additional dioceses in Iran, Greece, Kuwait, and parts of the USA and Canada.

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

Since 1956, various attempts have been made to heal the split in the Church, which also adds up to a split in the Community. What has, if anything, brought the different wings together, and gone some way to creating an atmosphere for reconciliation within the Church, were the activities of April 1975 (the sixtieth anniversary of the Armenian genocide), for which a united committee of all main factions was created. This committee has proved to be of enduring value throughout the Lebanese civil war, protecting the entire community from attacks (whether accidental or deliberate) from either side, and ensuring Armenian neutrality. In the United States, this reconciliation is represented by the Armenian Assembly in Washington, which is a congress in which all Armenian groups are represented.

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

Another good augury is the recent election of the able, Western educated Archbishop Karekin Sarkissian to be Catholicos Adjunct or coadjutor to the ailing Catholicos Khoren I of Cilicia. Two representatives of Supreme Catholicos Vazken of Echmiadzin attended the election ceremony at Antilias on May 21–22 1977. Catholicos Karekin II is dedicated to a policy of reconciliation and close co-operation between the two catholicosal sees.

### **Some Leading Armenian Communities Today — The Diaspora**

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We have frequently mentioned the deportations and mass emigration from the homeland which have been a tragic feature of Armenian history through the ages. The dispersion began in the early Middle Ages, was intensified during Sultan Abdul Hamid's massacres of 1895–96, and reached a climax during the Young Turk genocide of 1915. The only consolation is that the horrors of exile have served to develop the innate resourcefulness of the Armenian character, and provide a world-wide outlet for Armenian dyna-

mism and professional acumen. Such qualities have reached their highest point (outside the Armenian SSR) in the United States of America.

This Report's terms of reference require us to concentrate on areas where Armenians present a specific minority problem, or are actively discriminated against as a community. Therefore we describe only briefly the many other countries where they have received refuge and encouragement, and constitute a well-integrated, prosperous group.

## America

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

Armenians have made their mark in big business (Alex Manoogian, Kirk Kerkorian, Eduard Mardigian), American literature of the 'folksy' type (Saroyan), also athletics and baseball, science and technology, popular music and opera. One American Armenian public servant was mentioned in connection with the Watergate affair.

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

The burgeoning confidence of the US Armenians is typified by Michael Arlen's recent book, *Passage to Ararat*. Arlen's father was a famous Anglo-American novelist of the roaring 1920s, who used to hide his Armenian origins from his friends in smart society. Michael Arlen Junior relates in his book how he came to identify himself with his Armenian forebears and accept his national heritage. The account of this spiritual pilgrimage makes significant reading. Since the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974, the US Armenians make common cause with the powerful Greek lobby. They picket Turkish consular offices and disrupt Turkish cultural events, and have several friends among members of the US Congress. Their importance as a pressure group is clearly on the increase.

There are also substantial Armenian communities in the main cities of Canada, and in South America – notably Uruguay, Venezuela, Brazil, and the Argentine Republic.

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

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

## Western Europe

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An important, long-established Armenian community is that of *France*. French links with Armenia go back to the Crusades, and the last king of Armenia is buried at St. Denis. The main Armenian centres of France are Paris, Marseilles, Lyons and Valence. Armenians do well in many professions.

A leading 'growth area' is the Armenian community in *Great Britain*, especially in London and Manchester. The Manchester community dates back to the 1840s, and played a part in the nineteenth-century textile boom. The ranks of the London Armenians are constantly swelled by refugees from disaster areas such as the Lebanon and Cyprus. London has several Armenian restaurants, two Apostolic churches, and the Armenian House cultural centre. The Supreme Catholicos at Holy Echmiadzin maintains his personal representative (residence: Iverna Gardens, Kensington), accredited to the Archbishop of Canterbury. Prominent Armenian musicians, including the violinist Manoug Parikian, the Chilingirian Quartet, the conductor Loris Tjeknavorian and the singer Cathy Berberian, give frequent concerts at the Festival Hall and elsewhere. The Armenian General Benevolent Union, the Armenian National Committee, and the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation of Lisbon, all maintain branches in London.

The Armenian colony in *Italy* is of long standing, reflecting the Papacy's traditional friendship with Armenia. The Armenian Catholic order of the Mekhitarists has a monastery on the island of San Lazzaro at Venice. The order was founded over 250 years ago in Istanbul, and later went to San Lazzaro at the invitation of the Venetian Republic. It was dedicated to the dissemination of knowledge, and played a vital role in the Armenian emancipation movement since about 1800. The monastery has a valuable library, damaged by fire in 1975. In Venice itself, there is an Armenian High School. Substantial Armenian industrial and business interests exist in Milan, Turin and elsewhere.

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

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

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

## Eastern Europe

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

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

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

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

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

promoting the detention of Soviet dissidents in lunatic asylums, and injecting them with harmful drugs.

## Near and Middle East

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

The Armenians constitute 7% of the entire Lebanese population, and the majority live (or used to live) in Beirut and its suburbs. They include wealthy businessmen, farmers, and poor workers and peasants. The Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia, the Patriarch of the Armenian Catholics, and the President of the Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Middle East, all have headquarters in the Beirut area. Before the outbreak of the civil war, sixty Armenian schools – kindergartens, primary schools and high schools – and the Haigazian College, were operating in the Lebanon. There are (or were) over twenty Armenian churches, four daily newspapers, and more than a dozen weekly, monthly and quarterly magazines. The three major political parties – the nationalist Dashnaks or ARF, the more conservative Ramgavars, and the progressive Hunchaks – all play their role in the political, cultural and athletic life of the community.

Armenians long played an important, though secondary, role in the business world of Beirut. The devastation of that city is a disaster which has repercussions for Armenians all over the world. Throughout the fighting, the Armenians had sought to maintain a neutral stance. However, at least 140 Armenians had been killed by September 1976, and two thousand wounded. According to an Armenian Revolutionary Federation spokesman, damage to Armenian property had reached \$200,000,000. All over the world, Armenian communities are organizing relief for their stricken kinsfolk in the Lebanon. Many left the country, and those who stayed behind were at one time menaced by famine.

Another present-day Armenian disaster area is *Cyprus*. In Nicosia, the Melkonian High School was bombed by Turkish forces during the 1974 invasion, and largely destroyed. Its reconstruction has cost the Armenian General Benevolent Union about \$1,000,000. Armenians in the northern sector of Cyprus have been turned out of their homes and shops, and beaten up. (We have interviewed several of them who escaped to London.) In Famagusta and elsewhere, Armenian churches and monuments have been vandalized or demolished by Turkish villagers or units of the Turkish armed forces.

Serious problems of another kind beset the Armenians of *Iran*, about 180,000 strong. From the 17th century Armenian township of New Julfa, close to Isfahan, the main Armenian population centre has shifted to Tehran. Here the community has several churches and cultural institutions. Before the late Shah's overthrow, Tehran Armenians owned many prosperous business concerns, including breweries. Current economic and political upheavals have proved disastrous to Armenian interests here, while Muslim extremists are attempting to restrict the operation of Tehran Armenian schools. The historic Armenian community in Tabriz, capital of Persian Azerbaijan, is also of present-day importance. It has an archbishopric subordinate to Antilias, with an interesting museum. From Tabriz and Tehran, thousands of Armenians make an annual pilgrimage in July to the fourteenth-century church of St. Thaddeus, on the south side of Mount Ararat.

Armenians are found in virtually all main cities of the Near East. In *Egypt*, the Armenian connexion goes back to the 11th century Fatimid Grand Vizier Badr al-Jamali, who was an Armenian and served from 1073 to 1094; and in modern times to the officials who served the dynasty of Muhammad Ali, notably Nubar Pasha, who became prime minister. More recently, the Cairo Armenians lost much ground following the withdrawal of British power and the growth of Nasserism, but some are prospering in the more free-and-easy atmosphere cultivated by President Sadat.

In *Syria*, Armenians are in evidence in Damascus, and also at Aleppo, where they engage in hotel management and in medicine. The community in *Iraq* at Baghdad is also substantial; but the dictatorial nature of the Iraqi regime has cowed it into submission.

There is an active Armenian community in *Jordan*, which a few years ago built itself a church in Amman. Many Jordanian Armenians are 'double refugees', having fled from Palestine during the war of 1948-9, in addition to their flight from their homeland.

In *Israel* there is a small (300) but flourishing community in Jaffa, although in recent years it has been troubled by factionalism. In Jerusalem, in the section of the city which Israel captured from Jordan during the 1967 war, there is an ancient and venerable community, centering around the cathedral and monastery of St. James. The monastery owns a printing press, which published its journal, *Sion*, from 1866 to 1877, and in more recent years; the Gulbenkian Library there is also noteworthy. The present patriarch, His Beatitude Yeghishe Derderian, is a vigorous and colourful figure. After being installed as patriarch in 1960 by a detachment of Jordanian soldiers, he now cultivates close relations with the Israelis.

### India and South East Asia

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

This applies also to the once-flourishing Armenian colonies in Rangoon and in Singapore. It is noteworthy that the Armenians of Singapore played a prominent part in setting up the independent state there in 1965, and made their administrative and political talent available at the highest ministerial level. The Armenian-founded Raffles Hotel remains outstanding among the hostleries of the Orient.

### Africa

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

Particularly interesting is the long-established Armenian

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

### Australia

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Among the younger Armenian communities, that of Australia is one of the most dynamic.\* There are 9000 Armenians in Sydney, 3000 in Melbourne, and 800 in Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth combined. The total is thus close on thirteen thousand. The Armenian church in Sydney is directed by a bishop, that in Melbourne by a Vardapet (learned doctor of theology). The communities publish two monthly journals and organize cultural events which are open to the Australian public. Apart from many individuals engaged in commerce and industry, the Australian Armenians can muster at least six persons holding the Ph.D. degree, two University lecturers, eight engineers, two doctors of medicine, eight scientific workers and five engaged in music and the fine arts.

### CONCLUSION: FLASHPOINTS TODAY

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'He knew also a little Armenian, but aunt Dot told him that this language was a mistake with Turks, and only vexed them, as they had long since pronounced *delenda est Armenia* over this so unfortunately fragmented people, and did not care to hear them referred to.'

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

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

Principally this must concern Turkey. To anyone who has read the relevant literature, and who is not a dedicated Turkist, it is absurd that the 'official doctrine' propagated in Ankara is that there never was an Armenian problem, or if there was, it was just the problem of a few bandits and subversives who met their just deserts. Too many people are learning the truth for that view to have credence for much longer. It might even be in Turkey's interest to recognize that a crime was committed against Armenians; although we recognize that the present (1981) NATO-backed military regime headed by General Evren is unlikely to do that. More realistically, we believe that there is a case to make for insisting that Turkey observe the relevant clauses of the Treaty of Lausanne correctly, with particular regard to Armenian schools in Istanbul. Also we would like to see the Armenian monuments in eastern Turkey better cared for, although we would warn any western governments (or UNESCO) from pressing the Turks on this matter, a course of action which might only hasten the destruction of the monuments that remain.

Since 1975, several murderous attacks have been made on Turkish diplomats abroad. On many occasions, newspapers later received telephone calls from individuals claiming responsibility for these acts, allegedly on behalf of hitherto

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\* We were fortunate in receiving up-to-date, first hand data about this group from Mr. Robert Minasian, a London University student whose home is in Melbourne.

unknown Armenian underground organizations having grandiose and pretentious titles. A similar claim was made following an abortive bomb attack on a Turkish bank in London in January, 1978.

Three Armenians have been arrested on charges related to the attacks and two of them have been tried and convicted (in Geneva). The third (a French Armenian) has been imprisoned without charge or bail since February 1980.

If Armenians are responsible for all, or some, of these attacks a tentative conclusion would be that some of the younger members of the Armenian community are becoming more militant against Turkey. However it is highly questionable that these attacks will achieve any results, such as a rectification of international boundaries, let alone create a favourable world-wide opinion towards Armenians and their claims.

Armenians both within Soviet Armenia, and as members of the world-wide Armenian communities observing her, have fewer grievances. As in tsarist times, the Armenians are still the most loyal of the Transcaucasian people (although Armenian patriots in the diaspora say that, given the opportunity, Armenia would at once secede). Yet the state oppression which bears down on any Soviet citizen who steps out of line inevitably bears down on them too, and it would be idle to overlook the constraints on freedom imposed on Soviet Armenians, even though no substantial 'dissident' movement seems to exist. (We do not attach

much significance to the revelations about student protest groups at Erevan University and related institutions, published by the French lecturer Françoise Aupetit in some newspapers in January 1978.) As a domicile, Soviet Armenia remains one of the best options for an Armenian since it is part of the historic land of Armenia. Given Armenia's geographical position, no other government than the Soviet regime could be envisaged as having sufficient power and military backing to maintain the existence of Armenians there.

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

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



*Massacred Armenians in Turkey, 1915*

**RESTRICTIONS ON THE ARMENIAN COMMUNITY IN TURKEY (1974)****I. Real Estate and Financial Restrictions**

1. Many Armenian church people would like to donate their real properties to the Armenian churches, hospitals and orphanages, as endowments. The authorities concerned however do not recognise such endowments, and sometimes they are confiscating them, as has happened in at least one case, namely that of the Armenian hospital in Yedikuleh.
2. The authorities concerned refuse to give the ownership papers for those church properties, for which a law court decision has been given in favour of the communal religious or charitable organizations.
3. The authorities concerned consistently refuse to give permission to build new buildings on vacant church properties, from which they assess the property taxes without allowing the church organization to utilize them.
4. Permission for repair and restoration, even at times proper maintenance of churches, schools, orphanages is given with immense difficulties, and long delays, without any right of additions or alterations.
5. Two churches and two orphanages, one for boys, called Nersesian, and the other for girls, called Kalfayan, have been demolished in the section of Halicioglu of Istanbul, due to the construction of another bridge over the Golden Horn. The civil authorities have not as yet given permission to replace the demolished buildings with new ones. The orphanages are continuing their existence in rented buildings, which is a great financial burden on these charitable organizations. This is one of the reasons why these orphanages have greatly reduced their service to the poor children of the community.
6. The sale price of the demolished buildings and other properties seized by the Bridge Construction Authorities has not been given to these communal organizations, but put in trust, pending presentation of the title deeds of properties.
7. A regulation promulgated in 1936, says that apart from normal operational expenses, the communal authorities cannot spend more than 250 liras without the permission of 'Vakiflar'\* authorities. This regulation was not practised until lately. Observance is now very strict on this regulation. But those in authority ignore the fact that the value of 250 liras in 1936 was equivalent nearly to 20–25,000 Turkish liras of the present days.
8. The 'Vakiflar' authorities have lately levied 5% surtax upon the income of communal organizations, which have already paid their proper government and municipal taxes. They are taking this surtax of 5% even upon the special collections made to balance the budget of the organization.
9. Upon selling a communal property, the 'Vakiflar' authorities demand that the money from the sale of any property be deposited in the 'Vakiflar Banks'. The capital is frozen, and the communal organizations can never get it back, but they receive a nominal interest on the capital.

**II. Educational Restrictions**

1. There is very strict control upon the Armenian communal schools – 32 in number. Despite the fact that the Armenian directors of the schools are Turkish subjects, the Educational Department has appointed also a Turkish 'sub-director', who is the 'de facto' director of the school, and without the approval of the latter, the 'de jure' Armenian director cannot do anything. Their aim is to 'Turkify' the Armenian schools as much as possible.
2. The directors of Armenian schools, although appointed by the communal authorities, must be approved in addition by the Educational Department. Lately in most cases, after long delays, the Ed. Dept. has refused to confirm them. Usually they refuse to confirm strong characters and capable persons. They easily approve mediocre ones. During the last three years more than four appointed directors were refused confirmation by the Ed. Dept. and at present there are at least three schools without Armenian directors, which are managed by the Turk 'sub-directors'.
3. The Armenian school authorities are having great trouble in finding teachers for their PRIMARY SCHOOLS. The reason is this. Until lately any graduate from an Armenian Lyceum – senior High School – could teach in any Armenian Primary School. Now they cannot, by an order of Ed. Dept. The latter requires a Teacher's Certificate from every Primary School Teacher. The Armenians wouldn't mind this regulation, if facilities were given, for the candidates to promote their Armenian language studies as well. There are no such facilities, and the Armenian teacher candidate, after finishing eight years of education in his or her communal school, should enrol in the government Teachers School, and graduate from it in four years. By the time he – or she – is graduated, he usually forgets most of the Armenian language he has been taught in his own communal school. Teachers are supposed to teach in the Armenian language in the communal Primary Schools. The Armenian schools now need at least 25 additional Armenian teachers for their own Primary Schools. Since these are not available, the vacancies are now filled by Turkish teachers, which is the aim of these restrictions.
4. Lately the most capable directress of an Armenian Lyceum was removed from her office without any stated reason.
5. Any so-called 'Müfettish' or inspector, can go to any Armenian school any time, and waste the precious time of the directors for any trifle or nonsensical matter. They ask, for example, why they are having correspondence in Armenian, or in any other foreign language . . . Why the students are saying prayers at the dinner table in the refectories? (not in the classes any time).
6. Last year these 'Müfettish'es expelled from an orphanage-school ten little boys for the reason that 'they don't know the Armenian language'.

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\* i.e. religious property trusts

7. Just at the beginning of 1973–1974 academic year, an order came from the Ed. Dept. to the effect that all the new students, or those who were changing their schools, must not be registered before getting a permit from the Educational Department. This caused unnecessary delays. There are cases where some of the children got their permission three months after the opening of schools. About 40–50 students never got their permission for the simple reason that the religion of their fathers or grandfathers were written in the state record offices, as 'Christian', (without the addition of the word 'Armenian') or 'Armenian Orthodox', which they consider another denomination than the proper Armenian Apostolic Church (which is definitely not the case). These ridiculous reasons of refusal reveal the real intention of the authorities concerned, namely to reduce the number of the Armenian students.

8. The authorities have refused to give permission to transform, at least a few of the schools, into boarding schools, as there are many poor children, particularly those coming from the needy families of Asia Minor, who need better care, better shelter, and better nourishment, than they have in their homes. Besides, these are big families with many children, sometimes ten or more.

The communal organizations are now caring for these poor children in rented ordinary houses, which beside creating accommodation difficulties, is an extra financial burden upon the communities concerned.

These are some of the restrictions which are openly contrary not only to the Treaty of Lausanne, but also to the Constitution of the country, because parents are free to send their children to any school they prefer. Secondly, there is no law against transforming any private school – özel okul – into a boarding school as long as legal requirements have been fulfilled. These restrictions, besides being against the law and logic, in most cases are also against elementary human rights and conscience, like refusing to allow a hospital an endowment, which is made in a religious and humanitarian spirit, or even confiscating it, or refusing the poor children of the country decent facilities to live in.

### III. General Restrictions

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

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

b) The authorities permitted the Religious Council of the Armenian Church in Turkey to continue its existence and function. The last Religious Council was elected in 1961, with the election of the present Patriarch. The Council is composed of 9 members, four of which have died since 1961. The Patriarch has applied to the authorities to give permission to elect a new Council according to the rules and regulations of their own Church. Three years with many applications have now passed. No permission has ever been received.

c) The formal common names of all the communal organizations has been always as 'Müfetelli Heyeti'. In 1965, the 'Vakıflar' Department changed it into 'Yönetim Kurulu'. When asked what the intention of this change was, the answer was that they were changing the old Arabic expression into modern Turkish. However, years later it was found that the terms had very important different legal definitions. The first one meant a 'vakıf' organization with all rights of property ownership – selling, buying, getting, building, repairing, restoring, etc., whereas the second one was only a managing body without any ownership rights. Thus civil authorities argue that the communal organization can no longer purchase or possess new properties. Nor can they obtain such properties, even as a gift or in a will. And in fact the authorities concerned refuse to give title deeds to the communal organizations even for their own properties, for which they had not got the title deeds earlier for one reason or another.

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## APPENDIX II

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Extract from evidence submitted to the MRG by Mr. James H. Tashjian  
on behalf of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, Boston, USA (10 July 1976)

### RECENT REVIVAL OF THE ARMENIAN QUESTION

Since the loss of their homeland and their forcible deportation therefrom, the Armenians have seized every opportunity to project their national claims – they have done so after World War One at the Paris Peace Conference, at the Lausanne Conferences, and in the League of Nations, and again at the San Francisco Conference of the United Nations in 1945; and they have subsequently supported the Soviet claim for the return of Kars and Ardahan in Turkey to Soviet Armenia. (See British Foreign Office Report, dated 5 October, 1945).

It was however with 1965, that is the fiftieth anniversary of the Armenian genocide, that the Armenians everywhere have taken up their demands for nationhood and the return of their homeland in greatest strength. Thousands marched in Beirut, Teheran, Athens, Paris, Marseilles, New York, Boston, Los Angeles, Buenos Aires and Montevideo. Smaller numbers demonstrated in London, Munich, Ottawa, Sydney, etc. Petitions were sent to the United Nations, heads of States and Embassies. These mass rallies in some places gave rise to clashes with the police.

In 1975, the sixtieth anniversary of the genocide was marked on even a larger scale by Armenians wherever they lived. Large crowds of marchers and huge mass rallies took place. For example, 50,000 marched in Beirut, 100,000 in New York and an equal number in Buenos Aires. More than 20,000 Armenians attended a mass rally in Tehran.



Sixty-one years after the genocide, there exists an increased consciousness, especially among the new generations of Armenians, toward their cause, with an increased determination to win their just rights. Recently, some Armenian secret organizations seem to have resorted to desperate acts of terrorism. This is a new development which indicates, on the part of some people at least, a loss of hope in peaceful means in their pursuit of their just cause.

The Armenians are well-organized. They have Armenian National Committees, centrally directed, in all countries where Armenians live, to pursue the Armenian cause. This is characterized by intensive activity in the countries in which they live and by contacts with a number of States. The Resolutions of the Uruguay House of Representatives and Senate of 1970 and 1971, to submit the problem of the Armenians to the United Nations and the Resolution passed by the House of Representatives of the United States in 1975 pertaining to the Armenian massacres were some of the results of such activity.

The Turkish lobby in the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations, in terms of a paragraph about the Turkish genocide of the Armenians in a report on Genocide submitted to the sub-commission, met with a strong reaction on the part of Armenians everywhere. Hundreds of letters were sent to the members of the sub-commission deploring such interference with its humanitarian work. The result was that many voices, including that of the expert of the United Kingdom, were raised at the last meeting of the sub-commission in Geneva to protest the objectivity of the report and the independence of the Rapporteur from undue political pressure.

### Claims

1. The Armenians demand that the crime of Genocide committed against the Armenian nation in 1915 and the subsequent years be condemned by the international community, through the United Nations, or otherwise, and by Turkey.
2. There must be a recognition of the fact that the Genocide started in 1915 continues as long as the Armenians are not permitted to return to their homeland and are consequently gradually losing their identity in foreign lands; and that the monuments of an ancient Armenian culture are being purposely destroyed in Turkey or left to decay; and that the Armenians are being subjected to harassments in Turkey – what is left of the Armenians in Turkey.
3. To bring an end to this injustice, the larger part of the Armenian homeland, now under Turkish occupation, and emptied of its native Armenian population, should be returned to its rightful owners, the Armenian people.

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722247 "Man Lands on Ararat" (24 minutes 7", colour). Film shows Armenia and its people today, a modern commune, urban youth in Yerevan, etc. P-Oy Mainos TV Pasilankatu 44, 00240 Helsinki 24.  
 723731 "The Ararat Valley" (30 minutes, colour) shows Armenia and its people, art, architecture, etc. and includes the astronomer Hambartzumian, the composer Khatchaturian and the Armenian Catholicos Vazken I. P-Polish TV, Woroniscza 17, Warsaw, Poland.  
 X7501d "USSR–40th Parallel" H. Clemens and R. Koch were allowed to film in Armenia with the aid of the official Novosti News Agency, but much of the country is out of bounds. B-24 Jan. 75 Hessischer Rundfunk, Bertramstr. 8, 6 Frankfurt 1, Germany.  
 755040 "Singing in the Night: The Armenians in Iran" (49 minutes 26") After the 1915 deportations, a group of Armenians settled in Isfahan, where there are still many typically Armenian villages with a culture of their own. P-1974 NCRV D-NOS, Postbus 10, Hilversum, Holland.

760131 "And Still the Hope" (30 minutes) commemorates the Armenian Massacres and includes pictures of Armenian heritage and a discussion (with the Primate of the Armenian Church of America and Dr. V.L. Parsegian, nuclear physicist, and Dr. H. Nersoyan, professor of philosophy) on genocide and mass violence. B-13 Apr. 75 CBS news (in Lamp Unto My Feet). D-Viacom International 345 Park Avenue, New York 10022.  
 760724 "Armenian Mass", sung in its entirety in its original 5th century language, at the Armenian church of Saint-Hagop in Troinex, Switzerland. B-25 Jan. 76 Swiss French TV, 20 Quai Ecole de Médecine, 1200 Geneva.  
 760725 A film to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Diocese of the Armenian Church in North America. The church is also a guardian of Armenian culture and tradition. The Most Rev. Torkom Manoogian discusses the church's link with the hierarchy in Soviet Armenia. B-23 Sept. 73 CBS News (in Lamp Unto My Feet). D-Viacom International, 345 Park Avenue, New York 10022.

The above film list was provided by Richard S. Clark, TELCO, 19 Gurnells Road, Seer Green, Beaconsfield, Bucks. HP9 2XJ, UK.

Enquiries regarding these films should be addressed to the broadcaster or distributor listed, and not to TELCO.

Born in 1924, Professor David Marshall LANG was educated at St. John's College, Cambridge (Research Fellow, 1946-52). From 1944 until 1946, he was British Vice-Consul at Tabriz, Persian Azerbaijan. He held visiting appointments at Columbia University, and at UCLA, and visited Soviet Armenia in 1966 and 1968. He is now Professor of Caucasian Studies at SOAS, University of London. He is author of 'Armenia, Cradle of Civilization' and (with Charles Burney) of 'The Peoples of the Hills, Ancient Ararat and Caucasus'.

Born in Manchester in 1942, Christopher J. WALKER was educated at Lancing College (scholar) and Brasenose College, Oxford. He has worked in the Manuscript Department of Sotheby's and in the editorial department of Penguin Books. In 1971 he received a Churchill Fellowship to write a modern history of Armenia, and has travelled in Soviet and Turkish Armenia, having visited Erevan, Holy Echmiadzin, Leninakan, Van, Kars and Ani. He has contributed articles to *The Times* and *The Observer*, and correspondence to *Middle Eastern Studies*. He is the author of 'Armenia: The Survival of a Nation'.



The photograph on the cover is  
of Mount Ararat

The photograph on page 20 is from  
*Ambassador Morgenthau's Story* by Henry Morgenthau.

The map on page 12 is by Georgina Ashworth.



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- **No.22 Race and Law in Britain and the United States (New 1979 edition)**  
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— 'a warning that unless moderation and statesmanship are more prominent, terrorism could break out'.
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— 'discrimination officially outlawed . . . remains as prevalent as ever'.
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