

Sakarya University
Turkish - Armenian Relationships Research Centre

Haluk SELVİ

ARMENIAN QUESTION

**FROM THE FIRST WORLD WAR
TO THE TREATY OF LAUSANNE**



SAKARYA - 2007

ARMENIAN DEMANDS AND PROPAGANDA

The Armenians' demands from Turkey are recognition and compensation of genocide, and grant of land. These demands are based on following claims:

1. The Turks occupied Armenia and deported the Armenians.
2. From the beginning of 1915, the Turks methodically annihilated the Armenians.
3. Talat Pasha gave secret commands for the annihilation of the Armenians.
4. 1.5 million of Armenians had been killed in the genocide.

All these claims can be vanished with an objective research:

- When the Turks came to Anatolia, an independent Armenia did not exist; thus, it is impossible to say that the Turks occupied the Armenian lands.

Events of 1915 were just a measure taken by the Ottoman government to provide security in its territories against the Armenians who stabbed the Ottoman Army from its back. Besides United Nations describes genocide as a government's intention to annihilate a race. There is no evidence to prove such an intention of the Ottoman government. The Ottoman archives are opened to the historians and any further investigation would reveal the facts.

Talat Pasha was killed by an Armenian terrorist called Tehliryan, in Berlin. During Tehliryan's trial in Berlin, five of those counterfeit telegrams adduced to the court although their nullity was proven. The language and the paper of the telegrams were not in the Ottoman style and the experts have clarified this fact.

The number of the Armenian casualties does not have any valid basement. It is said that 1.5 million Armenians were killed but, according to the Ottoman records, there were 1.3 million Armenian habitants. If the total Armenian population was, 1.3 million it is impossible to kill 1.5 million Armenians. However, there is neither a method nor a record to count the Armenian casualties. For example, the president of the Armenian delegate in the Lausanne Conference Bogos Nubar stated that, in that time, 700,000 Armenians migrated to other countries and there were only 280,000 Armenians in Turkey. If these numbers are correct and the Armenian population was 1.3 million, the casualties should be 300,000 including the ones joined the Russian Army and died in the First World War.

In 1918 edition of Encyclopaedia Britannica the number of the Armenian casualties is 600,000 but in its 1968 edition, the number is 1.5 million. As seen the casualties increase on paper.



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©Assoc. Prof. Dr. Haluk SELVİ**

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Turkish - Armenian Relationships Research Centre

Selvi, Haluk

**Armenian Question
From The First World
War To The Treaty Of
Lausanne /**

Haluk Selvi

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- ATASE.....Office of the Chief of General Staff, Arcieve of the History of War
- ATBD/ HTVD...Office of the Chief of General Staff, Documentary Magazine of the History of the War.
- ATTB.....Atatürk'ün Tamim, Telgraf ve Beyannameleri (Atatürk's circulars, telegrams and statements)
- BTTD.....Belgelerle Türk Tarihi Dergisi (Magazine of the Turkish History with Documnets)
- B.O.A.....Archieves of the Office of the Prime Minester
B. E. O Sublime Porte Documents Room
DH. Ministry of the Interior
HR. Ministry of the Foreign Affairs
MV. the Ottoman Council of the Ministers
Y. Yıldız Tasnifi
- C.A.....The Archive of Çankaya of the Presidency
- Cumh. A....Prime Ministry State Archives General Directorate
Archives of Republic
- CUP.....Committee of Union and Progress
- D.....Dosya (file)
- F.....Fihrist (indeks)
- K.....Klasör (class)
- MMZC.....Meclis-i Mebusan Zabıt Ceridesi (Minutes of the Otoman Chamber of Deputes)
- TBMM.ZC....Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi Zabıt Ceridesi (Debates of the Turkey Grand National Assembly)
- USNA.....United States National Archives

PREFACE

The Armenian question has been a hotly debated issue ever since it entered the Turkish political agenda, and still raises difficulties for Turkey in the international public opinion. During this period, the Armenians hoped to benefit from this situation, but failed to achieve anything and the result of their efforts was gathered by great powers of the world. One of the dimensions of this question has lasted for about one century, and if the roots of this question are considered it can be more clearly understood. Although the Turkish side has been trying every way to prove its case, the giant powers of the world still side with the Armenians for the future of the Caucasus and Middle-East Politics. Despite this, Turkish researchers have to continue academic research on the Armenian Question. This book is the result of such an intention.

In this book, the most recent position of the Armenian claims will be discussed. Firstly the claims of the Armenian historians and the historical dimensions in addition to the sources of the Armenian thoughts will be focused on, thus forming out the basis of the study. Secondly, the relocation of 1915 will be dealt with in the light of archival and historical facts by discussing the events up until 1914, especially those occurring between 1908 and 1914, dealing particularly with the reasons and results of the relocation. Moreover, the progress in the Eastern and Southern Fronts will be examined by emphasizing the Mudros Armistice, the conditions and activities of Armenians during this time, the Armenians' stance towards the Turks in Caucasia and Eastern Anatolia, and the results of these viewpoints.

The first edition of this book in Turkish was distributed to many university libraries and was exhausted in a short time. For this reason and in order to make improvements, a second edition was needed. I would like to extend my special thanks to my colleagues who contributed to this book through their comments and criticisms.

I also thank to our Rector Prof. Dr. Mehmet DURMAN, my supervisors Prof. Dr. Enver KONUKÇU and Prof. Dr. Mehmet ALPARGU for their special interest and favours during my studies. I finally thank Ayşegül Amanda Yeşilbursa and Sakarya University Foreign Languages Department.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Haluk SELVİ

INTRODUCTION

THE WRITTEN HISTORY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE AND THE CLAIMS OF ARMENIAN HISTORIANS

The written history of the Armenian Genocide is based on the events that happened between 1894 and 1896 in the Ottoman Empire, the Adana events of 1909 and the Relocation of 1915. Since 1894, the Armenian historians claim that the Ottoman Empire followed a massacre policy which turned into genocide with the 1915 relocation. These historians chose their sources from among the writings of Christian employees who lived in this region during the mentioned times and among the explorations of people who survived that events. For these writers, it is not possible to see a new historical approach by using another resource other than these.

The Armenian diaspora in Europe and America that has been taking shape since 1890 is the base of this approach. However, it is worth mentioning that the British public opinion was especially interested in this topic before the diaspora Armenians. The Academy Journal in particular published articles about the situation of the Armenians during the 1880s. The following poems were published in this journal and they are important evidence of the British interest in the Armenians.

ARMENIA 1883

Upon her soil they say those violets grow
That wove a fragrant carpet for the feet
Of curious Eve, ere by that Snake's deceit
The World lost innocence and suffering knew.

Brave Noe, riding with his motley crew,
Her highest hill-top, black above the sheet
Of turbid water, hail'd as resting-seat,
And thither in his batter'd life-boat drew.
Such honour had she in the years agone,
Whose lands lie desolate beneath the sky,
Whose people, now, the tyrant tramples on,
While few are fain to listen to their cry.
Oh! pray we that before her day be done
She taste again the sweets of liberty!

Percy E. Pinkerton¹

THE CRY OF ARMENIA

Lo, our sisters far away in Britain,
Can you hear our bitter cry and wailing;
Can you hear the shrieks of our poor women;
Can you hear the sobbing of our children?
Lo, our sisters far away in Britain,
Can you see our huts and roof-trees burning;
Can you see flames all red and bloody;

¹ The Academy, 23 (1883, Feb.3, no:561).

Can you see the grim, black smoke-clouds
curling?

Kate Freilingrath Kroeker²

The miserable and oppressed atmosphere seen in those poems symbolise the Hunchaks and Dashnaks. The reflection of these approaches to the Ottoman Empire did not take long. The Armenians living in Anatolian cities and villages began to dwell on Armenian history and the greatness of the Armenian race and to propagandise the empire so as to develop an independent government, and in many cities various documents were found³. One of the Propaganda Organisation's targets was to activate European public opinion by using Christianity against the Ottoman Empire. This Propaganda method was used well in the events of 1894-1896 and those of Adana in 1909; lots of books were published in Europe and America, much news about massacred Armenians and stories of so called Armenian survivors frequently appeared in European newspapers. The Armenians in America did their best in order to convince the American newspapers to write news in the Armenians' favour. Some of the Armenians in New York informed the press that there were 10,000 Armenian residents in New York and that they would

² The Academy, 48 (1885, Dec.21, no:1233).

³ In Andırın in 1904 such a document read secretly by the Armenians was found. In order to give an example it will be useful to mention some lines of that document: "Our Sublime father, I wish your name will be sacred. Vouchsafe your sublime sovereignty to the Armenians. Don't let the Armenians remain slaves. Dried or fresh bread is not wanted. We want you to give weapons to the Armenians' hands. O God! Send us to the battle fields. O Armenians! Take your rifles and cartridges, it's time you revolted!..." (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi /The Office of Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives (B.O.A.) Y. Mtv. 269/8).

subscribe to whichever newspaper mentioned their issue⁴. These attempts were effective. In the Worcester Daily Spy Newspaper (dated 21st March 1894) there was news entitled "the Suffering Armenia" and it included an interview with the Hunchak's leader, Nişan Garabetian stating that Armenians were educated and civilised people and the Turks were tormenting them in Anatolia at that time⁵. After the Sason incidents in which 900 Armenians died, Hayk Newspaper wrote that 10,000 Armenians were murdered there. The newspaper also invited all Americans and Europeans to get involved in this incident⁶. The priest Gabrielian, who was supported and protected by the American Missionary, published a book entitled "The Armenians and Ararat People", about Armenian literature and history including some information against the Ottoman Empire and Islam. The Ottoman Empire took the necessary precautions not to let this book into its country⁷.

In 1895 another book was written by an American missionary, Frederick Davis Greene. Greene worked in Anatolia for four years and his book was entitled "The Armenian Crisis in the Ottoman Empire and 1894 Massacre". This book included some unsigned letters originating from Anatolia and it mentioned that Muslims had massacred the Armenians⁸.

⁴ A correspondence dated 17th May 1893 from Mr. Mavroiani to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler, vol. 12, The Office of Prime Ministry Ottoman Archives' Catalogues, Istanbul, 1988, Document No: 111; Selvi, Haluk, "Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'nde Ermeni Faaliyetleri (1892-1896)", Armenian Researches 1st Turkish Congress' Communiqués vol. III, Ankara, 2003, p. 29.

⁵ B.O.A. Yıldız Mütenevvi (Y. Mtv.), 93/41.

⁶ B.O.A. Yıldız İrade-i Hususi (Y.A.Hus.) 324/4, lef.3.

⁷ Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler, vol.12, Document No: 154 and vol. 13, Document No: 33.

⁸ BOA, Y.A. Hus.327/61.

Three more books were published in America in 1896 by missionaries. All of these books included antagonism against Turkey and they became the main sources for forthcoming research. They were: Monk Edwin M. Bliss, "The Armenian Atrocities"; A.W.Williams, "Bleeding Armenia"; Frederic Davis Greene, "Armenian Massacres or the Sword of Mohammed"⁹. Other books similar to these American books were published in Britain and France.

While these propaganda activities were continuing outside the country, on the anniversary of the events, people were commemorating the old bloody days in the country. Committee members especially chose those days in order to incite the Armenian nation to rebel. At the Armenian National Assembly's foundation anniversary ceremonies in 1890, the orations roused the Armenians, and the marches included invitations to armament and rebellion¹⁰.

As an indicator of this approach, the printed announcement distributed by the Dashnaks in Van on the 7th August 1906 is interesting. This text reveals the psychological attitude of the Armenians towards the events. It was prepared on account of the 10th anniversary of the events in 1896. It starts with the following stanzas: "*The sin is not for us, but for the cursed*

⁹ Bilal Şimşir, "Ermeni Propagandasının Amerika Boyutu Üzerine", The Relations of Turks and Armenians During History (8-12 October 1984 Erzurum), Ankara 1985, p. 106.

¹⁰ One of the poems read there is written below:

"Invitation to the War

The pipes are pouring wonderful lightening from Mount Ararat to the plain/ The heroes' blood is one more time swelling under the fire.../ Go ahead! The sons of the brave heroes/ Hey! The Armenians waiting to take revenge of the homeland/ Come on! Go to arms gang by gang/ Go into front with your revenge weapons/ Go into Front! " (Ermeni Komitelerinin Amal ve Harekat-ı İhtilaliyesi, Prepared for publishing by Erdoğan Cengiz, Ankara, 1983, p.37-38).

enemy/ That enemy stated the signs of the bloody war." As it can be understood, the event was not a massacre, but a war. Now, here are some parts of this text:

"..... ten years ago, the arm of the murderers became a monster and pressed against Van. Fatal wars and battles were carried out against the Armenians. What a pity to non-combatants! Respect and regard is for the death of this nation's liberation. 10 years have passed. Let us open the old wounds and let the precious dreams to come into existence... The ones who were killed here sacrificed themselves for the liberation of the country. Give lessons to the children that our unlucky country can only be founded with blood and you were baptized in blood and extreme poverty. We have spent 10 years with our face downwards. It is enough, wake up now! What a pity for those that don't know how to fight. They will be ruined by the outrageous enemy. Face the enemy with your open chest and die as a soldier... death is the same everywhere and a man dies once, but the real happiness is trying for your own nation's victory.(Armenian Dashnak Committee Centre in Van)"¹¹.

These approaches and guidance continued without any change until the 1915 incidences. It is strange that this method has formed the subconscious approaches of even the Armenian historians of today. Armenian historians left out the international propaganda of the First World War and used the correspondence of British, American and other countries' representatives that were against the Ottoman Empire. The First World War was the war during which so many new approaches appeared in the world history: the sides made a move in order to motivate their own people to use every deficiency of the other side, and they

¹¹ B.O.A. Y. Mtv. 289/174

developed new propaganda tactics on national minorities¹². Britain, France and the USA announced that the Christians in Ottoman Empire were being murdered and that help was needed by their citizens so as to support the war of Christianity in the Ottoman Empire. These countries made lots of efforts accordingly. The relocation of 1915 became important material for their efforts and they used it in their public opinion. In the events of 1915, as it had happened in previous situations, they quoted the explanations of the Christians and Armenians living in the Ottoman Empire and they related the events as they wished them to seem. The work of British Lord James Bryce is an example of this and today it is used by Armenian and European writers. Known as "The Blue Book", this work was published in London in 1916 and was entitled "The Treatment of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire 1915-1916" and it included the story of relocation in provinces.

It included the envelopes coming from the missionaries in provinces, the accounts of Armenian immigrants as well as patriarchate and their printed writings in the Russian, British, and USA press. In New York, the ambassador of the USA, who was in Istanbul between 1913 and 1916, published a book in 1918 called "Ambassador Morgenthau's Story". This book aroused the Armenians' interest, because it was written according to Armenian envelopes and experiences. Morgenthau threw the blame of relocation on Talat, Enver and Cemal Pashas, and without even mentioning about the Armenians' activities before the relocation, he claimed that the Turks had exiled innocent Armenians and had treated them badly.

¹² Pierre Renouvin, *The First World War*, Istanbul, 1993, p. 15; Salahi R. Sonyel, "Turkish and Armenian Relations and British Propagandas During the First World War", *Belleten*, LVIII/222(August,1972), p.377-379.

The British Ministry of Foreign Affairs made similar publications. In 1917, the ministry followed the same method and published a book in London called "Germany, Turkey and Armenia: a selection of Documentary Evidence Related to the Armenian Atrocities from German and Other Sources". The book gathered the writings that came from Van, Muş, Erzincan, Malatya and Zeytun, and published them in the newspapers by means of the German Mission over there. The additional part of this book under the name of "the Reports of Muslim Officers in the Turkish Army" included quotations from Ambassador Morgenthau and Bryce.

Current studies on this matter follow the same method and deal generally with the Armenian Question using these resources. Dikran H. Boyacian claims in his study "Armenia, the Case for a Forgotten Genocide" (New Jersey, 1972) that the Armenians were certainly subjected to genocide, the Allied Countries did not make any self-sacrifices and Lord Curzon frankly confessed this situation in the Treaty of Lausanne (p. 45, 246). Three important names that have become famous among current Armenian historians and their approaches to the Armenian Question are important indicators for us, because they and their studies reflect the approach of the Armenian historians of today in the international area:

Richard G. Hovannisian is a lecturer at California University and his principal studies are stated below:

- Armenia on the Road to Independence, Los Angeles, University of California Pres, 1967.
- Republic of Armenia, I-II, London, 1982.
- The Armenian Image in History and Literature, California, 1981.

- The Armenian Genocide in Perspective, New Brunswick, New Jersey, 1986.

- The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times: Foreign domination to Statehood: The Fifteenth Century to the Twentieth century, New York, 2004.

In his latest studies in the International Congress, he mentions and observes the Armenian history of Anatolian cities. Under the leadership of Hovannisian the following symposiums have been held by California University since 1997:

- Series on Historic Armenian Cities and Provinces: The Armenian Community of Smyrna/Smyrna, 2-3 November 2002.

- Series on Historic Armenian Cities and Provinces: The Armenian Community of the Black Sea and Pontus Region, 4-5 May 2002.

- Series on Historic Armenian Cities and Provinces: Kars and Ani 10-11 November 2001.

- Series on Historic Armenian Cities and Provinces: Armenian Constantinople 19-20 May 2001.

- Series on Historic Armenian Cities and Provinces: Armenian Cilicia 20-21 October 2000.

- Series on Historic Armenian Cities and Provinces: Tigranakert / Diarbekir and Edessa/ Urfa 13-14 November 1999.

- Series on Historic Armenian Cities and Provinces: Pokr Hayk/ Armenia Minor and Sebestia/ Sivas 15 May 1999.

- Series on Historic Armenian Cities and Provinces: Karin/Erzerum, 1-4 November 1998.

- Series on Historic Armenian Cities and Provinces: Kharpert/Tsopk, 16 May 1998.

Haluk SELVI

- Series on Historic Armenian Cities and Provinces: Taron, Moush and Beghesh / Bitlis, 22 November 1998.

- Series on Historic Armenian Cities and Provinces: Armenian van/ Vaspurakan, 17-18 May 1997.

The mentioned Turkish cities in these symposiums were examined by their cultural, artistic, lingual and literature sides, and by presenting Armenian findings in those cities, they tried to suggest that those cities belong to the Armenians¹³.

We can summarise Hovannisian's view of the Armenian Question with the following lines:

The Ottoman Empire exterminated the Armenian population by massacres and forced relocations. The Ottoman Empire was a really big and powerful state; but the Armenians were treated as second- class citizens. Defenceless Armenian farmers were exposed to the biggest amount of violence and cruelty. Besides them, there were a few rich Armenian merchants and they had a big role in commerce. As the Ottoman Empire got weaker, nationalist ideas came out among the minorities. Most of them were supported by the Europeans. On the contrary of Balkan Nations, Armenians never supported separation and independence thoughts. They remained devoted to the Sultan. But Since the 19th century Armenians went through a cultural progress in which they studied on education, press and literature areas. When the Ottoman Empire's reforms and international negotiations failed, many Armenians started to carry out movements against the existing regime. As a result of these movements since 1808s they had attempted to set up secret organizations as the Christians did in Balkans. Those Organizations caused the Armenian Events in Sason in 1894 so as to

¹³ <http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/history/centres/armenian/events.html>.813. 3.2003). From these announcements the ones about Van-Erzurum and Harput were published in California during 2000-2001.

attract Europeans' attention on Armenians. In those events thousands of Armenians including children and women were put to the sword. Young Turks (JonTurks) put heavier pressure than Abdülhamit. Europeans wanted to solve the Armenian Problem after the Balkan Wars. They prepared a reform programme and presented it to the Ottoman Empire. That reform couldn't be put into practice because of the starting of the First World War. During the war under the management of Enver and Talat Pashas, Armenians were exposed to massacres and oppressions. Charged with cooperating with the enemy, Armenians were massacred. Apart from this massacre, Armenians were sent into exile. During this exile they were massacred by police soldiers and groups formed by the government without differentiating women and children. This massacre is at the same level with the Nazi's. That massacre got a big place in the European public opinion and newspapers were full of such news. Entente Powers described that act of the Ottoman Empire as a crime of civilization and humanity and they warned the Ottoman Empire¹⁴.

Another Armenian historian, Prof. Dr. Dennis R. Papazian's opinion is also important for us. Papazian is the founder and director of the Armenian Research Centre at Michigan University. His studies are as follows:

- Negorno-Karabag: a Case Study in "Perestroika" Conference of The American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies, Washington, 19th October 1990.
- "Armenians" General history prepared on 8th September 1987.

¹⁴ Richard Hovannisian, *The Historical Dimensions of the Armenian Question (1897-1923)*, *The Armenian Genocide in Perspective*, edited by Richard Hovannisian, New Jersey 1987, pp. 19-41.

- "What Hope is there for Armenia and Negorno-Karabag?" knights of Vartan Armenian Research Centre Bulletin, January 1994.
- "Lesson of Armenian Genocide Remains Relevant to All Nations" Detroit Free Press, 21st April 1997.
- "Why the Armenian Genocide is Still Relevant Today" Detroit Free Press, 21st April 1997.

His opinions of the Armenians and massacre are stated below:

The Ottoman Empire at its zenith was well governed, and religious and national minorities were treated as well as any place in the known world. With its decline, however, the Empire became a corrupt and backward state. Christians were treated as gaviours (infidels) and denied basic civil, religious, and human rights; and, at times, they suffered dire persecutions...In the nineteenth century, when so much of Europe was being inspired by the ideas of the French revolution--liberty, equality, and fraternity--reforming Sultans in the Ottoman Empire sought to bring about progressive change under the banner of the Tanzimat. The coming to power of Abdul-Hamid II (1876-1909) marked the end of the Tanzimat, especially after the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78. Abdul-Hamid, who had witnessed the empire disintegration in the Balkans and the Caucasus under Russian pressure, decided to punish--through periodic massacre--his subject Christians, whose general plight served as an excuse for European intervention. It was the Young Turks (1908-1917), however, inspired by neo-fascist and pan-Turanian ideologies, who decided to rid themselves (under the cover of The First World War) of the Armenians. The Armenian genocide of 1915-1916 effectively wiped out the Armenian population of Turkey,

*claiming some 1.5 million victims. Perhaps 75,000 Armenians endure in Turkey today, most of them in Istanbul*¹⁵.

Another Armenian researcher is Vahakn N. Dadrian, who is a sociology professor at New York University. He mostly mentions the event's international jurisprudence dimension and has produced the following studies:

- "The Convergent Aspects of the Armenian and Jewish Cases of Genocide": Reinterpretation of the Concept of Holocaust, *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, Vol.3 No:2, 1988, p.151-169.

- "The Young-Turk Ittihadist Conference and the Decision for the The First World War Genocide of the Armenians", *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, Vol.7 No:2, 1993, p.173-201.

- "A Review of the Main Feature of the Genocide", *Journal of the political and Military Sociology*, Vol.22 No:1, Summer 1994, p.1-11.

- "Genocide as a Problem of National and International Law: The War I Armenian Case and its Contemporary Legal Ramifications", *Yale Journal of International Law*, Vol.17, No:2, 1989. (Turkish version: "Ulusal ve Uluslararası Hukuk Sorunu Olarak Jenosid Istanbul", Translated by Yavuz Alagan; Belge Yayınları, 1995).

Referring to Dadrian's point of view about the Armenian genocide:

The Ottoman Empire's participating in The First World War shows that it was influenced by the aim of solving immediately the delayed arguments inside the country whatever they cost. Unionists

¹⁵ Dennis R. Papazian, "Armenians", <http://www.umd.umich.edu>.(17.01.2001).

wanted to camouflage their plans on the eradication of Armenians with the relocation law. They formed out the following opinion in Istanbul: 'Armenians are collaborating with our enemies and we have to make them harmless'. Although they accepted many laws they never put them into practice. The Armenians were not returned from relocation. It was understood that the relocation was in fact an eradication of the Armenian nation. According to the formal Turkish registrations the number of people murdered directly is about 800.000. After the war, the efforts to punish the criminals ended in failure because of the Allied Countries' manner¹⁶.

It is clear that this study has no difference from the ones prepared during the war time. Even writers who were not interested in Armenian history started to write on this topic. The best example of this is a French medical doctor, Yves Ternon whose book entitled "*Les Armenians Historie d'un Genocide*" was published in Paris in 1977. In his book, Ternon quotes from A. Andrian, The Blue Book and Morgenthou's stories in order to prove the genocide¹⁷.

Another example is Prof. Dr. Mark Mazower who teaches at Columbia University, Department of History and Birbeck College, London. He wrote an article named as "The G. Word" and published in the Journal of London Review of Books in 8th February 2001. In his article he examined the matter from only one dimension that does not reflect the historical facts¹⁸.

¹⁶ Vahakn N. Dadrian, *Ulusal ve Uluslararası Hukuk sorunu Olarak Jenosid*, Istanbul, 1995 s.43-45; "A Review of the Main Feature of the Genocide", *Journal of the political and Military Sociology*, Vol.22 No:1, Summer 1994, p.1-11.

¹⁷ Yves Ternon, *Ermeni Tabusu (Armenian Taboo)*, Istanbul, 1993.

¹⁸ In one of his studies Prof. Dr. Ahmet Özgiray proved that Mark Mazower's inconsistent claims are invalid. Özgiray's study is a good example to those who are working on the Armenian Question. [Ahmet Özgiray, "Mark Mazower ve Ermeniler Hakkında Gerçekler", İ.Ü.

It has been mentioned that war-time approaches continued after the war. The psychological approach of that period has not been abandoned either by the Armenians or by European and American researchers. The information gathered from special research areas started to be included in general encyclopaedias. Current British encyclopaedias include the following explanations under the items of Armenians and Armenian genocide:

The Cambridge Encyclopaedia: *"Armenians... During The First World War, the Turks deported two-thirds of Armenians (1.75 million) to Syria and Palestine; 600 000 were either killed or died of starvation during the journey"*¹⁹.

The Oxford Dictionary of the World: *"Armenia... In 1915 the Turks, at war with Russia, suspected their Armenian subjects of sympathizing with kinsmen across the border and with the Western forces who had embarked on the Dardanelles campaign, and decided on mass deportation of an estimated 1,750.000 Armenians to the deserts of Syria and Mesopotamia"*²⁰.

The Hutchinson Encyclopaedia: *"Armenian Massacres: Series of massacres of Armenians by the Turkish soldiers between 1895 and 1915. In 1890-1896 demands for better treatment led to massacres of Armenians in eastern Asia Minor. Over 50.000 Armenians were killed by Kurdish gangs and Ottoman troops. The killing was stopped by the major European powers, but in 1915 the Turks deported 1.75 million Armenians to Syria and Palestine; 600.000 were either killed or died of starvation during the journey"*²¹.

International Turkish-Armenian Relations Symposium (24-25 May 2001)
Istanbul 2001, pp. 373-379].

¹⁹ Cambridge, Third Edition 1997, p. 84.

²⁰ Oxford University Press, 1995, p. 79.

²¹ Oxford, U.K., 1999, p. 46.

Collins Paperback Encyclopaedia: *"Armenia... It is estimated that 200.000 Armenians were killed in 1896 alone. During the First World War, over 600.000 Armenian were killed by Turkish troops, and 1.75 million were deported to Syria and Palestine"*²².

Philip's Essential Encyclopaedia: *"Armenian Massacres: Series of massacres of Armenians by Turkish soldiers between 1895 and 1915. In 1895, again in 1909 and 1915, the Turks massacred altogether more than a million Armenians"*²³.

These encyclopaedias are the primary sources for English speaking people and other nations who want to obtain information about the Armenians. Thus, the Armenian history writings and genocide claims that were revealed during the war time are nowadays accepted as if they were proved with definite evidence. The European intellectuals who have grown up with these opinions designate their sides in Turkish- Armenian conflict. Approaches such as "Armenians are innocent" and "the Armenian nation has suffered a lot" are still on the agenda and has formed the characteristics of Armenian history and historians.

As it can be understood from all of these findings, the literature of the Armenian Question has developed in a dramatic way over the last 40 years. The memories of living people, historical and social studies transformed that Armenian period into history and transmitted it. Most of the Jews and Christians accept that the Nazi holocaust had religious roots. The Armenian Clergy did not focus much on the spiritual aspects of Armenian Christianity shaped by the massacre, but nowadays this kind of study is carried out.

²² Glasgow, U.K., 1998, p.36.

²³ London, 1998, p. 56.

The events that the Armenians had experienced and stories told to them revealed the following emotions: Denial/rejection, giving up/submitting/reconciling, avarice/anger and revenge. Being 2nd-3rd generation, today's Armenia and Diaspora Armenians have much more hatred towards Turks than their ancestors and have a sullenness towards God. In the Oxford Dictionary of Christianity the followings are stated: "*Armenians have been exposed to oppression from time to time during their history. Most of that nation was massacred by Turks and currently it is being suppressed by Soviets. In the 1915 mass genocide 1.500.000 Armenians died. That genocide didn't end the suffering of the Armenians. Since 1921 Soviet's savageness and violation of human rights have been suppressing the Armenians.*" One Armenian writer wrote the following: "Let us swear / We shall say to God, / that when we find / God in paradise offering comfort / to make amends for our pain,/ let us swear that we will refuse, / saying No, send us to hell again./ We choose hell. You made us know it well. / Keep paradise for the Turk"²⁴.

As we have mentioned above, Armenian historians follow a new method and try hard to put forward similarities between the Armenian genocide and the Jewish Holocaust. As an example, Papazian claims that there are close similarities between these two events happening during the 1st and 2nd World Wars; that humankind should take lessons from them; that the Turks still deny the assassination of 1.5 million Armenians, and although Nazis were punished, the Turks were not²⁵. In addition, Robert Melson wrote the following: "*The Armenian Genocide and the Holocaust are the quintessential instances of total genocide in the*

²⁴ Vigen Guroien, "Armenian Genocide and Christian Existence", Cross Currents, Fall 91, vol. 41, p. 324.

²⁵ Dennis R. Papazian, "Lesson of Armanian Genocide Remains Relevant to All Nations", Detroit Free Press, 21 April 1997.

twentieth century. In both instances, a deliberate attempt was made by government to destroy in part or in whole an ethno-religious community of ancient provenance that had existed as a segment of the government's own society... The perpetrators of the Armenian Genocide were motivated by a variant of nationalist ideology. The victims were a territorial ethnic group that had sought autonomy. In contrast, the perpetrators of the Holocaust were motivated by ideologies of racism and anti-semitism, an ideology of globe scope. The victims were not a territorial group, and for the most part they had sought integration and assimilation instead of autonomy. The death camp was the characteristic method of destruction. As in Armenia (Turkey) the ideology of perpetrators was a variant of nationalism; and the method of destruction included forced deportation, starvation, and massacre''²⁶ .

Thus, the recent thoughts of the Armenian historians' and European sympathizers' are revealed: the Armenian genocide is as severe as the Jewish Holocaust. The Germans recognized the genocide and suffer for it; the Turks should recognize the massacre and receive their punishment, they should even leave the so called historical Armenian homeland to the Armenians. The latest point that is reached in this argument can be clearly observed in the 10th class history textbook of Armenian Republic's Ministry of Education and Science Secondary Education Department. Armenian children are being brought up with genocide literature and hatred towards Turks. Today, the Armenian youth holds much more hatred for the Turks than their ancestors and this situation will increase more and more with each new generation.

²⁶ Robert Melson, "Paradigms of Genocide: The Holocaust, The Armenian Genocide and Contemporary Mass Destructions", *Annals of the American academy of political and Social Science*, Nov.1996, vol.548, pp. 156-169.

The mentioned book includes the following information under the title of "The Armenian Genocide"²⁷.

"The Exile and Annihilation of Armenian Nation:

The First World War gave the chance for Armenians living in the Turkish Land to settle old scores with the Turks. It was planned that non-Muslim people living in the Empire who were not Turks should be turned into Turks and that Christians should be completely eradicated. In June 1914, the Young Turks Government started to send out the 90 thousand Greeks living in Thrace and Anatolia.

The places in West Armenia and Anatolia in which Armenians used to live were exposed to the Young Turks' non-humane politics. The creators of this were Talat Pasha (Minister of Internal Affairs, Prime Minister between 1917-18) Enver Pasha (Minister of War), Cemal Pasha (Minister of Navy, commander of the Palestine Front), Bahattin Şakir Bey (Committee Member of the Young Turk Party), Nazım Bey (Central Committee Member of the Young Turk Party, Minister of Education) and the others. The Young Turks thought to end the Armenian Problem by eradicating the Armenians. Armenians and Armenia was a problem in the way of the Ottoman Empire's Pan-Turkism programme. During that time Pan-Turkism was the main goal of Turkey. They were thinking of founding the Great Turkish Republic. The Young Turks desired to gather all the Turkish speaking nations together in the same republic and to lengthen its borders from Constantinople to Altai.

Another reason to eradicate the Armenians was the Armenian bourgeoisie's having a strong and powerful position in all the financial areas of the Empire. It was essential to get rid of that strong economic rival which was not wanted by the Turkish bourgeoisie. Thus, there

²⁷ It is interesting that there is not enough information about the massacres of Turks carried out by the Armenians in the history books of Turkey.

were all the political and economic reasons to start the Armenian genocide.

The notables of the Young Turks took into account that the war which had just started would not enable Great Britain, Russia and France to interfere in their internal affairs. Nazım Bey's speech made in one of the secret meetings of the party is good evidence of this matter: "I had told many times before and now I'm repeating it, The Armenians should be destroyed utterly so that there will be no Armenians in our country and this name would be completely forgotten. Now, there is a war. There wouldn't be such a suitable time anymore. Other countries cannot interfere in this affair and world wide media would not be able to withstand this.

In the autumn of 1914 "A Private Organization (Özel Teşkilat)" was founded and its chairman was Bahattin Şakir Bey. Generally murderers and people that came out of jail were accepted into that Organization. The mass genocide of the Armenians was ordered to the Private Organization. They were also ordered to exile Armenians during the First World War and to eradicate the Assyrian, Greek and Arabian nations.

The barbarism of the Turkish State alarmed those nations and worried Armenian politicians who were not able to foresee this disaster. In order to carry out the genocide, the Turkish State did not give the Armenians the chance of defence. At the beginning of the war more than 60 thousand Armenians were enrolled into the Ottoman Army. From the spring of 1915 they were disarmed and sent to the back of the fronts. They were removed to the worker unions. Greeks in the Ottoman Army were also disarmed. The disarmed Armenians were given the most difficult duties, such as making roads, building bridges and fortifications and carrying loads. Later, Armenian soldiers were taken out in groups of 50 and 100 from their places in the control of soldiers and policeman to be murdered. They imprisoned 3000 Armenian

soldiers in the barracks of Arceş and did not give any food to them. After 100 of them were executed by shooting, the rest attacked the guards, took their weapons and were able to escape. At the same time, the police collected most of the weapons and ammunitions from the Armenians.

The next step of the Young Turks was arresting the leader of the Armenian Party, spiritual representatives and minds of Armenians in order to exterminate them. By doing this, the government aimed to deprive the Armenians of the powers that had ruled and organized them. Some of the imprisoned and murdered Armenians were Noraşharhian, Nikogas Bogosian and Onnic Dercakian. More than 100 Armenians were imprisoned and murdered in Urfa.

Generally Armenian men between the ages of 18 and 24 were exiled and murdered. Then the Young Turk government began to exile and massacre defenceless women, children and the elderly. The governors were ordered to do so.

The exile and massacre of Armenians by force started from the autumn of 1914 and spring of 1915. The Turkish State forced the Armenians into exile to the desert between the rivers. During the exile the immigrants' properties were pillaged. They were accompanied by soldiers, police and Kurdish murderers. Beautiful girls were sent by force to the Muslim Harems. So, few of them were able to reach the place of exile. For example, of the 18,000 Armenians starting out from Harput, only 150 were able to reach Aleppo. The rest were murdered, kidnapped or died because of hunger, drought and various diseases.

Until the end of the 1915, the living places of Armenians in western Armenia and Anatolia were completely cleared away. No social class could escape the massacres. The policies carried out by the Young Turks towards the Armenians between 1914 and 1918 were called genocide. This was because their aim was to eradicate the Armenian nation. There were about 3 million Armenians living in the Ottoman

Empire and 1.5 million of them were murdered, or died because of starvation, various diseases and torment. The survivors abandoned the country; their possessions were pillaged or their religion was changed”²⁸.

In this part of the Armenian History textbook, so called Turkish barbarism and the Armenian genocide are explained. In the other part, entitled "Defence Wars" the events before the relocation are explained and, in addition, how the Armenians were organized in eastern Anatolia and fought with the Russians as heroes. It is very ironic that this part has a chronologic error with the previous one. Teaching history from only one perspective and using unproved information that is full of hatred about neighbouring nations determine the relations among governments. Moreover, it is against the decisions of the United Nations.

²⁸ Armenian Republic Education and Science Ministry of Secondary Education 10th class History Lesson Book, Redaktor: Prof. V. B. Barhudariani, Yerevan, 2001, pp. 139-152.

PART I

THE ARMENIANS UNTIL THE FIRST WORLD WAR AND THE ARMENIAN QUESTION

I- Armenians in the Ottoman Empire

The Armenians probably lived in the Mount Ararat Region of the Urartu Kingdom before the second half of the 8th century (B.C.). As that region has a geographical location enabling passage to Anatolia and the Euphrates basin, the Armenians were scattered by the other powers of the region. In 387 B.C. Armenia was divided into two according to the treaty made between Sassanids and Byzantine Empire. The East of Armenia was left to Iran and the west was left to the Roman Empire. The Sassanids forced the Armenians to immigrate. As a result, some of them migrated to the western region of the Euphrates, to Syria and some others migrated to Istanbul. During the Arabian domination until the end of the 9th century most of the Armenians from the Bitlis region immigrated to western Anatolia. In the 11th century a new immigration of Armenians towards Cilicia and the Taurus Mountains started because of the Seljukids' arrival to eastern Anatolia. In 1375 when the Mamlukes came to Cilicia, thousands of Armenians immigrated to Cyprus, Rhodes, İzmir and other Byzantine lands. After the conquest of Istanbul by the Turks in 1453 most of the Armenians from Cilicia, Arapkir, Bursa and Amasya migrated to Istanbul and settled down there. Also, in the first part of the 17th century, many Armenians escaped from the pressure of the Iranian Shah Abbas and settled down in Ottoman lands. Armenians chose to live in Istanbul, İzmir and other Ottoman cities for their comfort. Thus,

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by the 19th century the Armenians were spread over most of the Ottoman regions²⁹.

Armenians took on a lot of duties under the dominance of Ottoman Empire and they became to blend in with the Turks. Helmuth Von Moltke, who was in Turkey between 1835 and 1839, wrote the following about the Ottoman Commander in chief's Armenian translator and his family: *"Those Armenians can be called Christian Turks in reality. Though Greeks protected their own characteristics, the Armenians adapted Turkish customs and even the Turkish language. Armenian women can not be differentiated from Turkish women"*³⁰.

As it was recorded in 17th century travel logs, the Armenians were not a combatant community. They dealt with trade in eastern Anatolia and the Causasus, and the Ottoman Empire did not put restriction them. They were religiously very weak, and because of this feature Catholic travellers wrote the following in their travel logs: *"If the Armenians were forced to change their religion, they would become Catholics without any resistance"*³¹. Orthodox, Catholics and Protestants benefited from this weakness. France was the protector of the Catholics, Russia of the Orthodox; and Britain and the USA of the Protestants. All these countries tried to take the Eastern Anatolian Armenians on their sides and wished to dominate the Independent Armenia that would be established in order to influence the Ottoman Empire. In other words, the goal of these great powers was to take larger shares from the Ottoman Empire, which was about to

²⁹ Vartan Artinian, *The Armenian Constitutional System in the Ottoman Empire (1839-1863)*, Istanbul, 1971, pp.3-7.

³⁰ Nejat Göğünç, *Osmanlı İdaresinde Ermeniler*, Istanbul, 1983, p.50.

³¹ Jack Lewis Vartoogian, *The Image of Armenia in European Travel Account of the Seventeenth Century*, Colombia University Ph-D., 1974, pp. 216-217 and 245.

collapse, rather than the Armenians having an independent country.

When Catholics and Protestants started to spread over the Ottoman Empire, the Armenian Catholic Congregation (1831) and the Armenian Protestant Congregation (1850) were established. The Armenians were divided into three according to their religion. In the 19th century the interest towards Armenians increased in various European countries. An Armenian department was established by Napoleon in the Paris School of Eastern Cities (1810). In the same century, European scientists started to come to Mount Ararat and Van in order to carry out research. During the 1826-1828 Russia-Iran War Armenians waited for the Russians to rescue them. They expected to have a local authority in small provinces under the domination of the Russian Czarism. In time, Armenia became a province of Russia. The Lazarian Institute established in Moscow (1816), and the Nersessian Seminar opened in Tbilisi (1823) turned into centres of education for the Armenians. Dorpat University together with its Moscow Institute became a headquarters where Armenians received higher education, during which revolutionary ideas were imposed on them³².

At the beginning of the 19th century, the Russians followed a policy that aimed to increase the Armenian population in the old Turkish sovereignties that included a small amount of Armenian people. As a result, the Armenian population of the Yerevan Province increased because of intensive immigrations there, and the possibility of building a

³² Kemal Beydilli, "1828-1829 Osmanlı-Rus Savaşlarında Doğu Anadolu'dan Rusya'ya Göçürülen Ermeniler", *Belgeler Dergisi*, XIII/17, TTK., Ankara, 1988, pp. 386-390; Luis Nalbadian, *The Armenian Revolutionary Movement, The Development of Armenian Political Parties Through the Nineteenth Century*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1963, p. 39 and 51.

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new Armenian country arose. The basis of this policy was the migration of populations the Russians enforced between 1828 and 1830.

The Turks living in that region had to immigrate to other places³³. From the second half of the 18th century the number of Armenian schools and newspapers began to increase in the Ottoman Empire. These were the Armenian newspapers and magazines published between 1832 and 1855 in Turkey:

Lroy Gir Meci Terutian Osmanian (1832-1840, Istanbul; Stemaran Pitani Gitelead (1839-1854), İzmir; Azdarar Biwzandean (1840-1841), Istanbul, editor Haçatur Oskanian; Arsalays Araratian (1840-1886), İzmir, editor Lukas Baltazarian; Yaytarar Gir Lroy Meci Tarutian Osmanian (1841-1848, Istanbul; Hayrenaser (1843-1846), Istanbul, editor Haçatur Y. Melikselumian; Germonioy' Ekelecway Dipuacnere (1845), İzmir; Ceritie Havadis (1849) Istanbul; Hayastan (1846-1852) Istanbul, editor Patueli Teroyen and Mıkırdıç Alaton; Surhandak Biwzandian (1847-1850), Istanbul; Banber Partizakan (1849, Istanbul, editor Yauhannes Mikrian; Hayrenaser (1850-1853), Istanbul, editor Abraham Muratian; Banaser (1851-1853), Istanbul, editor Yahannes Hisarian; Masis (1852-1907, Istanbul, editor Karabet Ivitczian; Burastan Sahakian (1852-1853), Istanbul; Noyean Alwini (1852-1853), Istanbul, editor Sahak Aproian and Grigor Markosian; Mecmua-i Havadis (1852-1863), Istanbul, editor Vartan Pasha; Arpi Arartian (1853-1856), İzmir, editor Tarutin Teteian; Entani Imastaser (1854-1855), Istanbul, editor V. Sofalian; Tutak Haykazian (1854-1864), Istanbul and Van, editor Migirdich Khrimian; Awetaber (1855-1915), Istanbul, the

³³ Tuncer Baykara, "Rusların Doğu Anadolu'da Bir Ermeni Yurdu Yaratma Girişimi", *The Announcements of 8th Military History Seminars*, I, (24-26 October 2001), Ankara, 2003, p. 409.

publication of the American Missionary Committee; Akspare Constantine (1855-1858), Armenian-Turkish; Zuhai (1855), Istanbul, editor Patveli Teroian, Armenian-Turkish³⁴.

Among these newspapers *Mosis* was the most popular Armenian newspaper between 1852 and 1907. It explained western ideology to the Armenians, and taught modern journalism, also³⁵.

Converting the Armenians of Turkey into Catholics meant cutting their ties with the Ottoman Empire, and taking them directly under the influence of French King, who was the protector of Catholics. When the ways of breaking Ottoman Empire into pieces were thought, the first name that came into mind was Louis XIVth. Missionary priests were France's most important power on Turkey. It was they who filled the minds of eastern Christians with affectionate French legends and imposed desires for freedom from the Turks into their hearts. The Patriarchs became alive with these desires and they dared to write letters of request to Louis XIVth. The Armenian Patriarch of Aleppo wrote the following after long eulogies and mentioned one of the religious matters: "*Armenia will be rescued by the most powerful Kings of France.*" When the Ottoman Empire discovered this, it understood the intention of France and began to think of the acceptance of the Catholic religion by the subjects as a rebellion and disloyalty towards their Empire. At the same time most of the Armenians also complained about those who were trying to spread Catholicism and to propagandize Ottoman Empire among themselves. The Catholic propaganda which had been made by France and the Pope had continued for centuries and had indelible religious and historical impacts on the

³⁴ Artinian, *The Armenian Constitutional System*, p. 69.

³⁵ *Ibid*, p. 72.

Armenians who were trying to weaken the Ottoman Empire and rid themselves of the Turkish administration³⁶.

In order to understand the great changes in the Armenian Church in the 19th century, it is necessary to understand the pressures on the Sublime Porte beforehand. Although until 1833 a Russian effect on the Sublime Porte had mostly been felt, after that year a British effect began to be felt. France was in second place opposite these two powers. Each of the three states wanted to use the Armenian Church according to their own means. This situation resulted in significant confusion in the Armenian Question, and the Armenians chose to benefit from each of these three powers because they thought that they needed the help of a great power in order to be independent³⁷.

The Armenian youth was the group upon which Missionary Priests dwelled most. They educated them in their schools and used to send them to Europe. These educated young Armenians were of great importance to Armenia. In the Hayastan Newspaper (5th February 1849), which was the official publication of the Patriarchate, Nikolas Zaraian addressed Armenian students saying: *"Our public mostly needs experts in agriculture, machinery, industry, trade and medicine."* The youth was hoped to awaken their people after returning from abroad³⁸.

The Armenians were subject to some administrative arrangements in the Ottoman Empire after the Imperial Reform Edict and the Imperial Reform. The Armenian National Assembly

³⁶ Ahmet Refik, "Türkiye'de Katolik Propagandası (Hazine-i Evrak Dosyasına Nazaran)", The Periodical of Turkish History Council, year: 14, no:5(82), pp. 257-270.

³⁷ About the awakening and changing of Armenian Church see Leon Arpee, The Armenian Awakening, a History of the Armenian Church (1820-1860), Chicago, 1909.

³⁸ Vartan Artinian, The Armenian Constitutional System, p. 62.

was established in 1863, the function of which was stated in the Edict as to deal with the Armenian properties and management of religious affairs. However, as time passed, that assembly changed its nature and became the parliament of Armenia and politics were made there. Britain viewed this parliament as a means to Armenian autonomy. It formed a committee and sent it to Saint Petersburg in 1864. That committee asked the Russian Czar to make Ottoman Empire accept new rules and regulations about the duties of the Armenian Catholicos. The Patriarch, Nerses Efendi, also applied to the Sultan and asked him to make reforms for the Armenians³⁹. Russians made many Armenians immigrate to their country after the Russo-Turkish War of 1828-1829, and sent presents to the Armenian Bishop of Erzurum even as the war was in process⁴⁰.

There had been important changes in the Armenians' condition in Turkey from 17th century until the middle of the 19th century. New churches were built and the existing ones were renewed by John Golod (1715). Zekeriyos Galzwan constructed hospitals in 1773 and Harutane Bezgian built schools in 1832. The Armenian Church used Christianity in order to establish Armenian nationalism. The church became the centre of the Armenian language, literature and nationalism's emergence and expansion. The Armenian Patriarchate became the centre where Armenian national duties were carried out. The Armenian Patriarch of Istanbul Nersey Varjabedian, Nepazer Migirdich Khrimian and Horan Narbey expressed the desires of the Armenian nation in the Berlin Conference (1878). The church thus

³⁹ B.O.A. Yıldız Esas Evrakı (YEE), 91 / 42.

⁴⁰ Fred Burnaby, *On Horseback Through Asia Minor*, vol. II, London, 1877, pp. 81-82. Writer says the followings in his work: "*I understood that the Armenian's stories about Van and Erzurum, that were told me before, were not true. I lost my belief in Armenian stories*" (p.128).

compensated for the non-existence of a political authority⁴¹. When Khrimian returned empty-handed to Istanbul, he gave the following sermon in which he cried out his anger: "*Diplomats put a bowl of food on the table. The others had come with a sword each. They took their own shares with iron ladles from this bowl of freedom. But Armenians were not able to take their shares because they came only with a spoon. The Armenian people, you certainly know what the sword has been able to do and what it will do. Thus, when you turn to your father's land, to your relatives and best friends get armament! Ye! People! Turn your hopes for liberty into your own power and use your mind as well as your fists. Humans strive for their liberty on their own*"⁴². This anger can also be seen in his articles published in Van in the Artsui Vaspuragan Magazine. In one of his articles Khrimian addresses to Van's Armenians thus: "... *this is the law of nature, if you are like sheep, if you don't have the horns of a bull in order to fight and if you are unarmed you will always be throttled. Do you think you will be able to obtain the liberty you have desired without shedding blood?*"⁴³. After this provocation Van's public became agitated. Even the Armenian newspapers published in Istanbul were disturbed by these rebellious ideas⁴⁴.

⁴¹ Hagop A. Çakmakçian, *Armenian Christology and Evangelization of Islam*, Leiden, 1965, pp. 97-98 and 102-103.

⁴² Vigen Guroian, "Armenian Genocide and Christian Existence", p. 330.

⁴³ Rubina Peroomian, "The Heritage of Van Provincial Literature", *Armenian Van/Vaspuragen*, Edited by Richard Hovannisian, California, 2000, p. 149.

⁴⁴ In the Armenian magazine named as Maghu (published in Istanbul) Khrimian's bold manner was explained like this: "*New Gutenberg arrived Van by carrying the world's luminous flambeau and by struggling with snow and ice. In Addition to this, local authorities weren't happy to see him. A little feudal Lord of Van says 'He is talking and talking. What is he talking about? He brought newspapers and filled the environment with rubbish and noise'*". (Peroomian, "The Heritage of Van Provincial Literature", p. 149.)

Khrimian's choosing this kind of action gave its fruits in a short time. Van became the centre of the secret Armenian organizations. Van's Bishop Srvandztiants gave the biggest support to Khrimian's actions. Their actions became the starting point of the events that were described as genocide by the Armenians. In the Berlin Conference that was held at the end of the Russo-Turkish War (1877-1878), it was stated that the Ottomans accepted to make reforms for Armenians. Sultan Abdulhamid II was aware of the tricks the powerful nations tricks had prepared in order to found an independent country (Armenia) in eastern Anatolia, as they had done in the Balkans before, so as to divide the Ottoman Empire. In order not to give a chance to these countries to interfere in its affairs, the Ottoman Empire took extraordinary precautions in the east of Anatolia. It imposed martial law in Erzurum and sent two battalions there in order to ensure the safety of the Armenians. Reform applications were stopped temporarily⁴⁵.

In reaction to these situations, the Armenians increased their activities and tried to attract the attention of the European countries' by stirring up trouble in Anatolia. They were able to carry out their activities by means of the Hunchak (1887) and Dashnak (1890) revolutionary organizations.

The Hunchak Association was the first socialist association in Turkey and Iran. All its founders and theoreticians were Marxists. It was founded by seven Russian Armenians who had left Russia to be educated in Europe and whose families were generally rich. None of them had ever lived under Turkish rule, but they were closely interested in the living conditions of the Armenians. In 1886 Auatis Nazarbekian and his friends prepared the following programme of Hunchak Revolutionary Association:

⁴⁵ Tahsin Pasha's Yıldız Memories, Istanbul, 1999, p. 395.

1- Minorities rule over majorities in many parts of the world. In order to achieve real and complete freedom, a humanist and socialist based regime should be established. This regime can be realised only by a revolution. 2- The main goal of the party is Armenia's political and national independence. The situation of the Armenians in Asian Turkey is not clear and Hunchaks should intensify themselves in that land. Armenians who live as slaves in that region must be rescued. 3- In order to fulfil these goals, the Hunchaks should use propaganda, provocation and terrorist methods in Turkish Armenia.

Propaganda: The public will be activated against the present regime by being informed about the regime's badness. Education is the most important element of the propaganda.

Provocation and Terrorism: Protests will be arranged against the government, payment of taxes will be rejected, reforms will be demanded and the Ottoman Empire will be lead to terrorism⁴⁶.

The fifth item among the main principles of the revolution group is about the committee's assuring weapons and stirring up trouble: *"The Fifth Item: Places containing weapons, stores, the government's granaries and other foundations in addition to the mansions of governors, financial officers and head officials of districts should be attacked; weapons should be taken on and, by reducing the governments' power, public servants should be temporarily removed from their positions and, lastly, excitement should be aroused. Some buildings and institutions should be ruined, public servants in high status should be captured by force and ransom should be demanded from the government in order to set them free"* ⁴⁷.

⁴⁶ Nalbandian, the Armenian Revolutionary Movement, pp. 108-109.

⁴⁷ Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler, vol. 7, no:119

The Hunchaks chose Istanbul as their centre of organizations and studies. They enrolled 700 members in seven months. They sent their members from Geneva and Istanbul to Anatolia in order to organize the Armenians. These members started to work in Bafra, Merzifon, Amasya, Tokat, Yozgat, Arapkir and Trabzon. The society put forward its power first with the Protest of Kumkapı in June 1890. The aim of this protest was to awaken the suppressed Armenians and to warn the Sublime Porte about the wishes of Armenians. The event that started on the 5th of January 1893 in Merzifon was organized by Anatolia College's teachers Tomaian and Kayaian. The Sason Events followed in 1894. At the end of these events, thousands of books, brochures and articles were published and distributed in Europe and America.

In these publications, the events were presented as if Armenians had been massacred during that time. Britain, France and Russia presented an Armenian Programme to the Sultan on 11 May 1895. Sultan Abdulhamid had to sign this programme on 17 October 1895 because of the pressures. On this occasion, Hunchak Newspaper as a publication organ of Hunchak Society published the following: *"We were able to make known Armenian nation's voice and rights. This is a victory of our society's struggle"*⁴⁸.

The British and Russian agents and consulates' strives also influenced those activities. British Prime Minister Gladstone, James Bryce from the United States of America and Greek administrators provoked Hunchaks by telling those: *"If the Armenians want special privileges this cannot be done in this way. They must kick up a giant fuss. Some people should be hung, some should be cut down, and you should fight with the Muslims so that we can*

⁴⁸ Nalbandian, *the Armenian Revolutionary Movement*, pp. 118-126.

interfere in the events and enable you to fulfil your aim"⁴⁹. Actually, this situation was a reflection of the helplessness of the Armenians and large nations, because the Armenia they were thinking of establishing was not a country that was surrounded by natural boundaries, like Bulgaria and Greece, and it was not described with and limited to a united mass of people. Armenians formed only 13 % of the population. Even if all the Armenians living on the earth gathered together and settled down in eastern Anatolia, it would not be possible for them to make up the majority of the population⁵⁰. For this reason, it was necessary to stir up trouble and to create an atmosphere that would render the formation of Armenia necessary. As a matter of fact, the Armenian Patriarch of Istanbul, Nerses, visited the ambassadors in Istanbul in order to attract their attention to the Armenian Problem and stated the following in his meeting with the British Ambassador:

*"If rebellion is necessary to gain the sympathy of European countries, then there is no difficulty in starting such a movement"*⁵¹.

To organise themselves in order to achieve their goals, the Armenians followed the same method as the Bulgarians. Russian money and agents had started to come in 17-18 years before the Bulgarian war. Since 1880, Russian agents had been working among the Armenians of Van by wasting money abundantly. Meanwhile, the Caucasian Armenians dealt with the Anatolian Armenians with the encouragement of the Russia. The Russian Consul visited all of the eastern Anatolian cities and provoked the Armenians about nationalism. The Armenians of Erzurum

⁴⁹ The writing from Ankara governor Abidin Pasha to Mabeyn dated 30 January 1893, Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler, vol. 11, no: 118

⁵⁰ Anahide Terminassian, Nationalism and Socialism in the Armenian Revolutionary Movement, Cambridge, 1984, p.19.

⁵¹ Kamuran Gürün, Ermeni, Dosyası, Ankara, 1985, pp. 83-84.

and Van were provoked by the "L'Armenia" and "Haisdan" newspapers from abroad⁵².

The events of 1894-1896 occurred not only around Sason and Van but also in many cities of eastern Anatolia. One of those cities was Şarki Karahisar. The Armenians used trivial events to create chaos; they gathered together in churches and graveyards; they kidnapped and killed the assistant of attorney general Necip Effendi, who came from Sivas; they fatally injured the correspondence clerk and two soldiers, one of which was murdered afterwards. At the end of some investigations, it became clear that these events occurred as a result of the provocations of the comitadji⁵³. In September 1895, the Armenians attempted to carry out an armed revolution in that city, but when they were faced with security guards they shut themselves in churches, schools and their houses and started to shoot from there. 2.000 Armenians and 1.000 Muslims died as a result of this skirmish. It was difficult to calm things down⁵⁴.

The Dashnaks became the second important committee responsible for spreading the opinion of revolution after the Hunchaks. The Dashnaksuthiun was founded in 1890 in Tiblisi and chose for itself terrorism as a method. The Dashnak Committee which thought "*a gang that can dispatch a dozen of weapons is more influential than a dozen of programmes*" did not have any programmes for three years. The committee's main goals were to combine the Hunchak Committee and the Armenegans Committe (with a centre in Van), to help the gangs to pass to

⁵² Report dated on 14 May 1889 sent from vice Consul Devey in Van to Trabzon's Consul Chermiside. Anita L.P. Burdett, *Armenia-Political and Ethnic Boundaries (1878-1948)*, London, 1998, pp. 144-145.

⁵³ From Mutasarrıf Mustafa Bey to Mabeyn Head Clerk, 11 September 1895 (B.O.A., Y. Mtv. 128 / 65).

⁵⁴ Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler, vol. 36, no:178, Istanbul,1992.

Turkey from Russia, to establish a defence committee, to collect supporters to rebel and carry out a revolution to obtain Armenia's independence and to arm them. The Dashnak Committee's password was thus: *"Kill Turks, Kurds, the one's breaking their promises, the disloyal and spies wherever you see them, under any condition, and take your revenge"*⁵⁵.

In fact, there was a more important occurrence that was provoking the Armenian incidents and putting the decisions of the committees into practice: the *Fedais* (guerillas). The revolution movement became identical with the Fedais movement in the minds of Armenians. Be they Caucasian, Ottoman, intellectual, priest or peasant the fedais were an armed gang that devoted their lives to their nation which had been awakened by their movements and death. They were based on Armenian village brigandage. The first goal of the travelling gangs that were composed of 10 or 15 armed bandits was arming the Armenian villagers⁵⁶. The following gang leaders most remembered by Armenians today are Serop, Andranik⁵⁷, Dro, Hamazsp etc.

Armenian Gangs entered the Ottoman Empire via Russian or Persian frontiers. Russia provided their weapons by smuggling them from the Caucasian frontier to the eastern Anatolian Armenian villagers. The Armenians began to arm themselves in 1880. Obtaining weapons from outside the country and the militant Armenians' desire to be armed were part of the

⁵⁵ Mehmet Hocaoglu, *Armenian Genocide and Armenians on Archives Documents*, Istanbul, 1976, pp. 163-164.

⁵⁶ Anahide Terminassian, *Nationalism and Socialism in the Armenian Revolutionary Movement*, Cambridge, 1984, p. 19.

⁵⁷ About Andranik's life and political activities see Haluk Selvi, *"Anadolu'dan Kafkasya'ya Bir Ermeni Çete Reisi: Andranik Ozanyan"*, Eighth Military Seminar Announcements, I, Ankara, 2003, pp. 459-457.

hopes they had of the foreign military consuls who wanted to guarantee Armenia's boundaries. Armenian committees or groups of sympathisers in many European cities provided either weapons or money to buy weapons. Later, these weapons were taken into Turkey in various ways. They were generally transported by foreign boats with the help of Christian passengers. Sometimes, the money for buying weapons was sent from the several parts of the world. The Etchmiadzin Armenian Church which was within the Russian border undertook an important role in providing money for buying and transporting weapons. Now and then, Armenian agents came from America to one of the European capital cities, such as Athens, and completed the buying and transferring of weapons⁵⁸.

In June 1894, gunpowder was found in wheat sacks that were brought from Baku to Van. Furthermore, in Erzurum cartridges of rifles were found in rice sacks⁵⁹. Twelve armed Armenian guerrillas were arrested while they were trying to pass the Ottoman frontier from Russia on the same date⁶⁰. More than 100 gangs had come to the environs of Eleshgird⁶¹. Documents which provoked Armenians into rebellion were found as a result of searches made in many Armenian houses in Van⁶². In a letter dated 29 December 1893 to Mabeyn, the 4th Army commander Zeki Pasha notified that they were informed about the Russians' distribution of weapons to the Armenian villages⁶³. Armenian committees in the Caucasian region saw the invasion of Erzurum

⁵⁸ Türkkaya Ataöv, "Ermeni Terörizminde Silah Sağlanması: Osmanlı Belgelerine Dayalı Gerçekler", *International Terrorism and Narcotic Smuggling* (17-18 April 1984), Ankara, 1984, pp. 163-168.

⁵⁹ B.O.A. Y. Mtv. 99 / 36.

⁶⁰ B.O.A. Y. Mtv. 99 / 32.

⁶¹ B.O.A. Y. Mtv. 196 / 10.

⁶² B.O.A. Y. Mtv. 273 / 160.

⁶³ B.O.A. Y. Mtv. 88 / 153.

and its neighbourhood by the Russians for their benefit and they spread this thought among the Armenian villagers⁶⁴.

The weapons bought by the money collected in Europe were brought into Turkey in various ways. As a result of such activities, by April 1894 Armenians in America bought 50,000 martini, 75,000 pistols, 2 million rifles, bullets and dynamite in different amounts and sent all of them to Anatolia⁶⁵. American diplomatic correspondences gave place to the Armenians' attempts at armament and stated the following: Weapons and explosives were not taken into Turkey via big cities. They were brought from the shores of the Black Sea, from small towns in Trabzon and its neighbourhood to the land, from mountain boundaries to eastern Anatolia and sent to the places of Armenian committees or agents. Sailors were persuaded to transport illegal goods⁶⁶.

The Armenians wanted to add the Americans to these attempts, and they established "the Association of Armenian Friends' Unity"⁶⁷. The Erzurum and Bitlis delegates were the pioneers of the idea of revolution. On the one hand they informed governors that they had no relation with the events, and on the other they wrote to Patriarchate to notify that the occurring events were very tragic and it seemed that there were no Armenians left alive⁶⁸. The delegates of Erzurum, Van and Bitlis were also in contact with the Persian Armenians⁶⁹.

⁶⁴ From ex Erzurum Governor Mustafa Nazım Pasha to Mabeyn, 26 February 1906 (B.O.A. Y. Mtv. 259 / 139).

⁶⁵ Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler, vol. 19, Document no: 20.

⁶⁶ Erdal İltar, *Socialist Armenians in Turkey and their Armament Activities (1890-1923)*, Istanbul, 1995, p. 41.

⁶⁷ Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler, vol.19, Document no: 63.

⁶⁸ Captain C.B. Norman, *Armenian's are showing their true colours*, Prepared to publication by Yavuz Ercan, Ankara, 1993, p.15 also Bitlis governor Hasan Pasha sent a code in 30 August 1900 to Mabeyn that

The following can be concluded from the events occurring between 1890 and 1908: Russia was on the one hand trying to give no respite to the Armenians living within its own borders, while on the other it was secretly provoking the Ottoman Armenians by using the authority of Catholicos Khrimian⁷⁰. Russia was aiming to weaken the Ottoman Empire by following these politics and to show that the Armenians could establish their desired autonomous administration, not under the protection of Britain, but under the protection of Russia. Gladstone, the prime minister of Britain, was aiming to increase his political prestige under the mask of protecting the Armenians humanistically and religiously⁷¹. Armenians were thinking of obtaining intervention by the means of the independent media and religious associations of so called democratic countries and by agitating the humanistic and religious feelings of the whole Christian world and these countries. While failures were leading the commitadjis to excessive behaviour on the one hand, on the other they were causing the disagreements inside the Armenian community. The Ottoman Empire was trying to put an end to the Armenian events with every available possibility before they enlarged. At the same time it was trying to respond to the

included the information about Armenian's sedition as well a Muş and Bitlis delegates' provocation of Armenians and informing Patriarchate wrongly (B.O.A. Y. Mtv. 2006/33).

⁷⁰ Bitlis Governor Hasan Tahsin Pasha's telegram sent to Palace in 16 April 1894 includes the following information: "There is a transfer of weapons from Iran to Van and those weapons are hidden in churches. In providing weapons Ahtamar Armenian Representative in Van, Van and Bitlis Armenian representatives helped and this was found out during the Judgement of Muş Armenian religious representative. They organized themselves in the same way as the Bulgarian committees and started to collect money from each Armenian (B.O.A. Y. Mtv. 77/2).

⁷⁰ Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler, vol. 16, Document no: 1, 34, 73, 76, İstanbul, 1989.

⁷¹ Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler, vol. 16, Document no: 35.

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enduring campaign of slander and lies. Furthermore, Ottoman Foreign Affairs attempted continuously not to allow such kind of activity in Britain, but it was told that in countries with democratic regimes it was not possible to prevent the broadcasting activities of such associations⁷².

With the proclamation of the *Meşrutiyet* (Constitutional Monarchy) in 1908, the Armenians started to follow a different way in order to fulfil their goals.

II. Community of Union and Progress (CUP) and the Armenians

The Young Turk Movement was started with the aim of bringing equality, freedom and justice to the country. In order to achieve their aim, they were hoping to unite all the nations within the country, such as the Arabs, Greeks, Albanians and Turks. Having found no support at international area, some Armenian committees chose to come to an agreement with the Young Turks. Since the Young Turks interpreted the cause of the Armenian events as the bad administration of Sultan Abdulhamid, they felt no objection towards working with the Armenians. So, they made contact with the Armenian committees and mutual help was established. The belief that Armenians would be loyal citizens after the Constitutional Monarchy would be held by the Unionists for a long period. During the days following the Constitutional Monarchy, the effects of this union was observed, the Armenians committees stopped their work for a while and announced that they would work for the progress of the country.

⁷² Ibid., Document no: 45, 48, 54.

On August, 6th, 1908 Dashnaksithuin community published an announcement and demanded that the land taken from them after the 1895 massacre be returned to them, that pressure and tyranny be abolished, that all Armenian political criminals be released and free movement in the country be provided. Moreover, through a report they gave out in Anatolian provinces at the end of August, they exalted the new administration by celebrating the declaration of the Constitutional Monarchy⁷³.

Nevertheless, the events following the revolution appeared completely different. The Greeks firmly opposed the CUP in order that their real aim not to come true. Freedom and equality were against their aim and interests. Equality meant the equality of all Ottoman citizens at interest and work. The Armenians and Bulgarians tried other ways to achieve their aims. Some in Anatolia, some in Rumelia, they were struggling for their national identity rather rapidly and openly with the purpose of defying the government at the first opportunity, thanks to the freedom provided by the *Kanun-i Esasi* (the Main Constitutions on which proceeding constitutions were based), and getting an autonomous administration and finally independence after intervention by Europe. While they were pretending to be in favour of a union and loyal to the constitution towards the Young Turks, towards Europe they were complaining about the old and new administration, trying to prove the ongoing Turkish atrocity and get proof for the claims through political committees. The Adana incidents (1909), rowdiness and crimes in Rumelia were then attributed to the Muslim people⁷⁴.

⁷³ Aykut Kansu, 1908 Devrimi, Istanbul, 1995, pp. 235-236.

⁷⁴ Talat Paşa'nın Anıları, Edit by Alpay Kabacalı, Istanbul, 2000, pp. 22-23.

The declaration of the second constitution was welcomed with street demonstrations, "Liberty, equality and fraternity" slogans, artillery fire, thanksgiving ceremonies in church and commemorative ceremonies held in cemeteries for those who had died during the reign of Sultan Abdulhamid. Pardon was granted for all political criminals. Politically criminal Armenians who had gone abroad started to return to the Ottoman country. The old Armenian Patriarch Izmirlian Efendi, who had been removed from office and sent into exile by Sultan Abdulhamid, returned to Istanbul on 24 August 1908 benefiting from the pardon and was welcomed with exuberance by a great crowd. Moreover, he was selected as the Istanbul Armenian Patriarch on 7 November 1908. Many Armenian gang leaders who had played important roles in incidents since 1890 returned to the country⁷⁵. Applying to the administration, the Patriarchate demanded new measures be taken in Anatolia. Furthermore, measures for the settlement and feeding of Armenians coming from abroad were taken⁷⁶.

The most prominent trouble between the Armenians and CUP administrators occurred during the 1908 elections. The Unionists had opposed Armenians' Istanbul candidate Kirkor Zohrab. However, once the Armenian committee announced they would withdraw their support for the elections, Unionists backed down from this candidacy matter⁷⁷. This situation was a sign of both parts' intentions. The Unionists were trying to organize a new and harmonious environment, whereas the Armenians were

⁷⁵ Hamparsum Murat Boyacian was one of the planners of 1890 Istanbul incidents and 1894 Sason incidents when followed he had fled abroad. After the declaration of the constitution, he participated in the elections and became the deputy of Kozan.

⁷⁶ Recep Karacakaya, *Kaynakçalı Ermeni Meselesi Kronolojisi (1878-192) Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Gen. Müd. Yayınları, İstanbul, 2001, pp. 42-46.*

⁷⁷ Kansu, 1908 Devrimi, pp. 297-298.

thinking of their own nation's self interests. Therefore, it was obvious that the period of moderate relations of the constitutional monarchy would not last for long.

Since they had taken part in the revolution, it was seen as the Armenians' right to take advantage of some privileges. Some Armenians had taken an active part in power, ranging from the parliament to the ministry offices and councils in the provinces. The arming of the Armenians was being overlooked as a result of their share of the political power. Their economic activities that Sultan Abdulhamid had restricted were made completely free. In addition to the June 1909 coup and the taking of total power by the CUP, the editorial offices of all newspapers were shut down and the arena was left to the Armenian Mihran Efendi's *Sabah* for a long time. Hamidiye regiments were made completely ineffective. This also brought forth the problem of tribes in the east of Anatolia⁷⁸. These attempts started to destroy the friendship among the Unionists and Armenians.

In fact, some Armenians groups had opposed the constitutional monarchy from the beginning and accused those acting with Unionists of betrayal. Those in committees in particular regarded such a venture as very hazardous for the future of Armenia and advocated the necessity of carrying on the fight. The gang leader Andranik (Ozanian), for instance, was one of the main ones. For him, the Armenians cooperating with the Unionists were people sold for 5 kurush and the Armenian deputies were "people sold for 50 pieces of gold each". According to him, the fight against the Armenians and Unionists had to be continued; otherwise foundation of Great Armenia

⁷⁸ Recep Şahin, *Türk İdarelerinin Ermeni Politikaları*, İstanbul, 1988, pp. 211-212.

would be impossible. The declaration of the constitutional monarchy was a big trap set for the Armenians⁷⁹.

The incidents broke out in the Balkans in 1908 had particularly made the Armenians think that the Ottoman Empire was being shared. As a result, they had started to behave differently so as to get their share and started to plan for the foundation of an independent Armenia by rebelling, and therefore, getting the intervention of big powers. Armenians started the Adana rebellion on 14 April 1909 in an environment where Bulgarian, Serbian and Greek committees were fighting for the sharing of Macedonia and the events of 13 April 1909 caused turmoil.

Taking advantage of the atmosphere of freedom prevailing during the period of the Constitutional Monarchy, the Armenians started to arm themselves hastily. In particular, the fact that the Hamidiye Regiments had been abolished and a huge migration from the east had taken place around Adana and its surroundings started to make the condition in the region tense. Moreover, due to the removal of the watchtowers on the beaches, there had been a substantial increase in weapon smuggling which was done through Cyprus. The situation was very suitable for the provocation of Armenian nationalism. Mersin Gregorian Armenian Bishop Mushek carried out this duty by stopping at each village. He preached to the Armenians that they should not pay taxes to the government nor pay the sum for exemption for military service. With this and the struggle of Paul Terzian, the

⁷⁹ DJ. Kirakosian, *Zapatnaya Armenia Vyodi Pervoy Miravoy Vaynı* (Western Armenia During the Years of World War I), Yerevan, 1971, p. 60; Andranik Chelabian, *General Andranik and Armenian Revolutionary Movement*, USA, 1988, pp. 188-189; Hratch Dasnabedian, *History of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation Dashnaksution (1890-1924)*, Milan, 1989, p. 61.

regional bishop of Adana for the foundation of an Armenia including Marash and Adana, the conditions for trouble to break out were right⁸⁰. The events which started on 14 April 1909 would get more serious and spread across the region due to the lack of armed forces and the incapability of the local authorities.

Just after Adana incidents, the parliament appointed a research commission consisting of Kastamonu deputy Yusuf Kemal (Tengirshenk), Tekirdag deputy Agop Babikian, Armenian Kadi Mustekian and the clerk Arif Bey. Complaining about the hot weather in Adana, Babikian, who was on duty on the commission, returned to Istanbul without waiting for the investigation's end. Yusuf Kemal Bey concluded the investigation staying in Adana for 22 days. The British council Major Doughty Wylie, having dictated a report of 8 pages, returned to Istanbul and handed in the report to Babikian. Yusuf Kemal Bey, who received the report the day after, noticed that the concluding part was missing. It had been taken by Babikian. Yusuf Kemal Bey related the situation as follows: "Babikian came to the Tokatlian Khan with the Hunchak committee leader Muratian and explained why he had taken the concluding part, gently turning to Yusuf Kemal Bey: "Kemal, you pity your children don't you?"⁸¹. The Armenians were somehow trying to mask their deed through this kind of pressure and they attributed the responsibility to the faulty administration of the Ottoman Empire.

⁸⁰ Son Vak'anüvis Abdurrahman Şeref Efendi Tarihi 2. Meşrutiyet Olayları (1908-1909), Hazırlayanlar: Bayram Kodaman, Mehmet Ali Ünal, Ankara, 1996, pp. 77-81.

⁸¹ Yusuf Kemal Tengirşenk, Vatan Hizmetinde, Ankara, 1981, p. 118; Özgiray, "Mark Mazower ve Ermeniler Hakkında Gerçekler", pp. 374-375.

After the events of the 31 March, after the Armenian troubles in Adana, a treaty was signed between the CUP and the Istanbul board of the Dashnak committee in September 1909. The reason for the treaty was stated as to maintain the independence of the country and protect its integrity and politics till the end. However, this treaty only concerned the latter⁸². Other Armenian groups started to work more determinedly to realise their aims of before the constitutional monarchy.

The CUP saw Armenians' efforts and got a written contract from the church governors on 3 October 1911 stating the fact that they would not be involved in politics⁸³. The Armenians had hoped they could form independent, pure Armenian provinces under the management of the CUP; however, the latter were for a centralized government. After a short period of time, when these ideas became more obvious, the Armenians continued the Fedai Movement, especially through the support of Russians. Nevertheless, the CUP continued to act together with the Dashnaks until 1914. During the Balkan Wars, many Armenian volunteers fought in the Bulgarian army against Ottoman soldiers. The Bulgarian King Ferdinand awarded Andranik a medal of service due to his effort in this war⁸⁴. The Dashnaks encouraged the Armenians by means of their

⁸² Esat Uras, *Tarihte Ermeniler ve Ermeni Meselesi*, Istanbul, 1976, pp. 576-577.

⁸³ B.O.A. *Dahiliye Nezareti Mütenevvia Evrakı* (DH.MTV', 17/52). The patriarchate was trying to show that the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire were living in hard conditions, claiming that they had died of hunger in villages. These claims were later found to be speculative by the government (B.O.A. DH.MTV.44/42). Another complaint of the patriarchate was that trouble was made for the people who were collecting money for Armenian schools (March 16th, 1911. B.O.A. DH.MTV.28/7).

⁸⁴ David Marshall Lang, *The Armenians: A People in Exile*, London, 1988, p.107.

newspapers to desert the Ottoman army. Andranik was committing atrocities in Adrianople, Keshan, Malkara and Tekirdag. At the same time, communication was taking place between the Patriarchate and Russia⁸⁵. With the provocation of the Armenians coming from Russia on 13 July 1913, a demonstration had been held in Ruschuk and it was decided to carry out bombing and plundering activities in Anatolia⁸⁶. Some Armenians under Ottoman rule were pleased that Adrianople had been captured by the Bulgarians⁸⁷.

At the end of Balkan Wars, the Ottoman Empire had lost its land extending from the Balkans to Adrianople. While the war was continuing, the Armenians, resorting to the Russian Czar, proposed for the reform issue in Eastern Anatolia and got the formation of a committee for the reforms in Anatolian provinces accepted by the Russian Czar. Furthermore, the Armenian Patriarch Arshoroni Efendi made statements about the land issue, reform committee and foreign officers' control over this reform in several newspapers. In Armenian newspapers it was stated thus: *'We do not believe that a general reform made by the Minister for Internal Affairs nor a law published by the Sublime Porte can reform part of the country. We have witnessed several times that no good is obtained from such attempts'*⁸⁸. When the situation of Ottoman Empire began to change at the end of the Balkan Wars, the Dashnaks' attitude began to change as well. During their 7th congress held in Constanta in 1913, the Hunchaks decided on an

⁸⁵ Ermeni Komitelerinin Amal ve Harekat-ı İhtilaliyesi, pp. 80-81.

⁸⁶ B.O.A. Dahiliye Nezareti Emniyeti Umumiye Şubesi Evrakı (DH.EUM.EMN.) 28/2.

⁸⁷ Organizing various meetings upon the fall of Edirne, Migirdich, Armenian delegate of Ergani, stated joyfully that the Edirne event indicates the fall of Ottoman Empire is close (B.O.A. Dahiliye Nezareti İdare Evrakı (DH.İ.D.) 113/45).

⁸⁸ Tanin, 3 Mayıs 1329 (19 Mayıs 1913)

open enmity toward Turkey⁸⁹. Through these decisions, it had been aimed to distribute weapons to Armenian villages in İskenderun by bringing them from Pire on December, 10th, 1913⁹⁰.

Owing to the British, French and Russian influence, the Ottoman Empire started to assume that Eastern Anatolia would go out of its possession as in the case of Balkans. For this reason, the Sublime Porte announced to the ambassadors discussing Armenian question and to the Armenians as well that it would never accept the control of states in the reform of Eastern Provinces. Despite this decision, on 2 July 1913, the Italian, Britain, Russia, French and German ambassadors came together and decided to assemble a committee of embassy officers for the investigation of the reform case to be carried out in the Anatolian provinces⁹¹.

Britain, Russia and France on the one hand and Germany, Austria and the Ottoman Empire on the other approached the reform project differently. According to the Russian plan, the east had to be divided into two. The first part was to include Erzurum, Trabzon and Sivas while the other included Van, Bitlis and Harput. These provinces were to be governed by two European inspectors. The CUP administration claimed that this plan would disintegrate the Ottoman Empire and form an Armenian rule in Eastern Anatolia⁹². Through this plan, Russia wanted to encircle Turkey with the independent Armenia they wished to found in Anatolia, and thus completely cut off the Turks' relations with Muslims in the Caucasus. Afterwards, they would carry out the plan for Istanbul. As soon as the Armenians

⁸⁹ Uraş, Tarihte Ermeniler, p. 580.

⁹⁰ B.O.A. DH.EUM.EMN. 40/17

⁹¹ Karacakaya, Ermeni Meselesi Kronolojisi, pp.90-93.

⁹² Salahi Sonyel, The Great War and the Tragedy of Anatolia, Ankara, 2000, pp.74-75.

found out about this plan, they leaned toward Russia and thought it was time and opportunity to gain their autonomy from Turkey. Such national Armenian units as Hunchak, Dashnak, Ramgavar united with Armenian Patriarch. The Ottoman Empire set out to lessen Russia's proposals, yet could not get a favourable result. After then, the government tried to persuade the Armenians of the reform and suggested that the reforms be done together, rejecting any foreign intervention. Nevertheless, the Armenians expressed that they would no longer trust the government and rejected their proposal. Furthermore, they informed the Sublime Porte that they agreed with the proposal of the Russian ambassador for the Eastern Provinces⁹³. The appointment of two foreign inspectors to Eastern Anatolia on 8 February 1914 was accepted by the Ottoman Empire⁹⁴. At the time of these negotiations, the eighth general congress of Dashnaksution was held in Erzurum in July and August 1914. It was attended by thirty members from several regions in the world. The following decisions were held concerning the politics to be followed against the Ottoman Empire: the Unionists had assumed a deceptive attitude towards Armenians so far, which made the committee keep the opposition, criticize the political programme and firmly struggle against their organization⁹⁵.

However, when the First World War broke out and the Ottoman Empire mobilized and went to war on 3 August 1914, the government put an end to the reform project with the

⁹³ Talat Paşa'nın Anıları, pp.28-29.

⁹⁴ Even before inspectors started work, it had been heard that general pardon was granted for all Armenians in Eastern Provinces, which was agreed by the Sublime Porte. The government however warned provinces that the news was speculative (B.O.A. Dahiliye Nezareti Emniyet-i Umumiye Evrakı (DH.EUM.EMN.)78/27

⁹⁵ Chalabian, Andranik and Armenian Revolutionary Movement, pp. 213-215.

decision taken on 31 December 1914. That the Ottoman Empire ended the project and was on the side of Germans paved a new hopeful way for Armenians to realize their dreams.

Between the years 1912 and 1914, when the CUP Regime, by which Armenians claimed they were deceived, was fighting at the front, the decision was made to open many Armenian churches and schools, and they were carried out. The following examples are an obvious sign of this and proof that the real aim of the Armenians was to found an independent state in the lands of the Ottoman Empire.

17 August 1912- Permission was given for an Armenian school to be opened in Chanlı Monastery at Sanjak Mush⁹⁶.

10 December 1912- Permission was given for the reconstruction of a ruined Armenian school in the district of Divrigi⁹⁷.

18 December 1912- Permission was given for the construction of the bell tower of a church owned by the Armenian community in the district of Kigi⁹⁸.

1 January 1913- Permission was given for the construction of an Armenian Catholic Church, delegation centre and a school opposite the train station in İzmit⁹⁹.

21 April 1913- Permission was given for an Armenian church school in the district of Mihaliccik¹⁰⁰.

⁹⁶ B.O.A. DH. İD.30-2/8.

⁹⁷ B.O.A. DH. İD.30-2/34.

⁹⁸ B.O.A. DH. İD.162-1/43.

⁹⁹ B.O.A. DH. İD.162-1/47.

¹⁰⁰ B.O.A. DH. İD.162-1/53.

12 May 1913- Permission was given for the construction of a church in addition to an already existing bell tower in the district of Bogazlian¹⁰¹.

29 May 1913- Permission was given for the construction of a church, a school and a room for the bishop in the district of Bogazlian¹⁰².

8 October 1913- The existence of an unlicensed Armenian church in the district of Akçaabat in Trabzon was confirmed¹⁰³.

22 November 1913- Permission was given for the reconstruction of a ruined Armenian church in village Bayezid¹⁰⁴.

28 April 1914 - Official permission was given for the Armenian church and schools in Aydın and Ödemiş¹⁰⁵.

7 May 1914 – Construction of an Armenian school for the Armenian community in Menemen in Aydın was licensed¹⁰⁶.

10 May 1914 – Construction of an Armenian church on the state owned land in the district of Bahçe was licensed¹⁰⁷.

4 June 1914 – A decision was taken to enlarge Armenian INAS School and repair classroom and parsonage in Trabzon¹⁰⁸.

14 June 1914 – Construction of an Armenian school in Refahiye village in Erzurum was licensed¹⁰⁹.

¹⁰¹ B.O.A. DH.İD.162-2/3.

¹⁰² B.O.A. DH.İD.162-2/6.

¹⁰³ B.O.A. MV.231/368.

¹⁰⁴ B.O.A. MV.230/94.

¹⁰⁵ B.O.A. MV.234/180

¹⁰⁶ B.O.A. MV.235/62.

¹⁰⁷ B.O.A. MV.235/17.

¹⁰⁸ B.O.A. MV.235/97.

¹⁰⁹ B.O.A. MV.235/160.

1914 – Construction of a church for the Armenian community in Geriviran district in Erzurum was licensed¹¹⁰.

4 January 1915 – Construction of a bell tower and church for the Armenian community in Osmaniye village was licensed¹¹¹.

5 January 1915 - Construction of a boys-girls school for Armenian community in Giresun village was licensed¹¹².

While official permission was given for the construction of churches, Hunchak and Dashnak committees influenced the churches and wanted them to follow their lead¹¹³. Armenian delegates in some provinces were applying to the Etchmiadzin Patriarchate rather than the Patriarchate in Istanbul¹¹⁴. Most churches started to turn into armories¹¹⁵. The barracks constructed before in Saraydüzü village in Amasya had been removed from the village due to the uneasiness of the Armenian population¹¹⁶. The cause of this uneasiness would later be understood and it would be discovered that they made and sent bombs to the provinces in the neighbourhood¹¹⁷. Permission had been given on 16 February 1914 for the opening of a branch of the

¹¹⁰ B.O.A. MV.232/66.

¹¹¹ B.O.A. MV.162-1/60.

¹¹² B.O.A. MV.232/108.

¹¹³ B.O.A. DH.KMS.18/27 (March 25, 1914). Dashnaks in Trabzon were forcing the Armenian delegate who was not in cooperation with them to resign. (B.O.A. DH.İD.139/9. July 3, 1913).

¹¹⁴ B.O.A. DH.İD.113/32.

¹¹⁵ In Muş, some Armenians and the priest Sahak were caught since they had stores arms in the monastery. (May 17, 1914. B.O.A. EUN.EMN.72/31).

¹¹⁶ B.O.A. DH.İD.19-2/11. February 25, 1912.

¹¹⁷ B.O.A. EUM.EMN.88/33. In Amasya during the police search made among the Armenian community in March 1914, there were captured many malicious documents, arms and dynamites. Complaints were made as to the impropriety of the search in the Patriarchate. (B.O.A. EUM.EMN.60/9).

Armenian General Charity Foundation which was founded by Bogos Nubar Pasha in Egypt with the purpose of helping poor Armenians materially in Anatolia¹¹⁸. The true nature of Bogos Nubar Pasha's deeds would later be understood.

However well the Armenians were treated by the Ottoman Empire, they were, nevertheless, continuing their struggle to realize their aims. For this reason, the second Constitutional Monarchy period provided a freer atmosphere for this struggle.

¹¹⁸ B.O.A. DH.ID.126/55.

PART II

ARMENIANS DURING THE FIRST WORLD WAR

I- The Dispatch, Settlement and Relocation of the Armenians

1- Armenian Incidents until the Relocation

While dealing with the reform question, the Ottoman Empire was also following the events on the international arena and looking for new allies. On getting no solution for the attempts it made with France and Britain in July 1914 it signed a treaty of alliance with the Germans. Meanwhile, Armenian militants, hoping that the Ottoman Empire would disintegrate, took some initiatives in order to be powerful in the dispute to occur. On 5 August Etchmiadzin Catholicos Kevork V sent the following letter to the Caucasus General Governor Vranzof in Russia.

"We had requested Czar to protect the Armenians on 2 October 1913. According to what we have learned, the CUP government will not make the Armenian reform. Therefore, the Armenians' thoughts and demands are as follows:

a. to be a separate and undivided Armenian district in the provinces where Armenians mostly live,

b. to have a high positioned-ranked officer appointed to this district by Russia,

c. to have an independent administration established in these districts consisting equally of Muslims and Christians,

d. to be only given the application and control of an Armenian reform to Russia..."

Haluk SELVİ

The Caucasus General Governor Dashkof gave a positive reply to the letter and added:

"I feel the necessity of reminding the Armenians both living in Russia and Turkey of acting in accordance with my order. If Turkey goes into a war with Russia, this should happen spontaneously and there shouldn't be any action taken by us. Therefore, an untimely rebellion by Armenians in Turkey would be inappropriate and have serious drawbacks. I will also give the necessary command to Armenians in Russia using the authority of Armenian Catholicos on this issue"¹¹⁹.

Armenian Caucasus had started even before the Ottoman Empire went into a war with the Russia. Armenian volunteers from any side started to go to the Caucasus, Tbilisi so as to join the Russian army, the gangs fighting against Turkey and revenge regiments. With the purpose of coordinating gangs, leaders were sent to Tbilisi, such as Karakin Pastirmadjian, Erzurum deputy in the parliament, was sent to the Caucasus. The Dashnaksuthiun firmly supported these acts. The Russians, granting a pardon, sent many Armenians who had been exiled to Siberia for some political reasons to the Caucasus to organize the gangs there¹²⁰.

The Russian Czar Nikolas II sent a declaration dated 10 September 1914 to the Caucasus governor, who read it at an assembly of Armenian leaders. In his declaration the Russian Czar said:

"Armenians, Russia's influential people, influential from west to east have accepted our invitation. It is time eradicate the situations that have caused many of you to be oppressed for centuries and to gain

¹¹⁹ Uras, Tarihte Ermeniler, p.587-592.

¹²⁰ Belgelerle Ermeni Sorunu, Genelkurmay Başkanlığı Yay., Ankara, 1983, p.174.

freedom. Your loyalty lasting for centuries is a proof that you will carry out our duty for our armies' victory. Armenians, you will obtain the satisfying benefits of freedom and justice as a result of submission to the Czar's orders and administration"¹²¹, and thus called the Armenians to war against the Ottomans promising independence.

Armenian charity foundation in Egypt was also sending its delegates to Adana and its neighbourhood to prepare the ground for the revolution.¹²² Armenians in New York were attempting to assassinate the minister of war Enver Pasha, yet were caught in Beirut¹²³.

In his report sent to the British ambassador in Istanbul on January 10, 1914, Ian Smith, the British consul in Van mentioned that in 1913 Dashnaks in Van had organized and armed all villages and the Armenians had a better equipped army than the Muslims at that time. According to him, though Armenians made up only two fifths of the population they could gain their independence under the control of Europe¹²⁴.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs was aware of the fact that the Armenians were making attempts. In the report sent to Beirut and Aleppo on 22 March 1914 action was called to be taken against the decision to bring plenty of weapons and ammunition to Zeytun and its neighbourhood from Europe¹²⁵.

¹²¹ İkdam, 9 Teşrin-i evvel 1914 (9 October 1914), Numro: 6334

¹²² Telegram dated 3 June 1914 from the Ministry of Internal Affairs to Adana and Halep Provinces. BOA.Dahiliye Nezareti Şifre Kalemi (B.O.A. DH.ŞFR.) 41/154.

¹²³ B.O.A. DH.ŞFR.43/169

¹²⁴ Sonyel, *The Great War*, p.76

¹²⁵ B.O.A. DH.ŞFR.37/47. The major in Zeytun was an Armenian. Due to the fact that he was forcing the public to be Armenian, he was complained to the government by Armenian catholic leader Dermanasyon. The major was warned later about his behavior in February, 1912. (B.O.A. DH.İD.116/35).

Zeytun was a region the Armenians set out to get organized before the war¹²⁶. Armenians in Zeytun had disregarded the mobilization call dated 3 August 1914¹²⁷. Rebellious on 1 September 1914 an Armenian gang of 40 people robbed 21 passengers on their way from Marash and started to attack¹²⁸. A police group was sent to Zeytun to stop this rebellion. The armoury battalion centre in Marash was removed to Zeytun and it was decided to collect people's arms there¹²⁹. After having been noticed to have taken an encouraging role at these events, the Zeytun Armenian delegate was dismissed¹³⁰.

During the attacks in Zeytun, Ottoman officers' houses and police detachments were directly on the spot. At the meeting presided by Zeytun Hunchak committee leader Chakiroglu Patos, the decision was made to attack the courthouse and get the ammunition and kill all the officers together with their families and destroy telegraph lines¹³¹. At the beginning of the year 1915, a serious event broke out. The Zeytun Kaimakam, taking shelter in barracks, could not get to the courthouse, and Ottoman soldiers suppressed the rebellion here with difficulty¹³².

¹²⁶ Cezmi Yurtsever, *Zeytunlunun 311 Mirası*, Ankara, 1999; Ahmet Eyicil, *Osmanlı'nın Son Döneminde Maraş'ta Ermeni Siyasi Faaliyetleri*, Ankara, 999; Ahmet Eyicil, "1878 Zeytun İsyanı" *AU. OTAM Dergisi*, no:10, Ankara, 2000, pp. 27-58; Ahmet Eyicil, "1895 Maraş ve Zeytun İsyanı" , *AU. OTAM Dergisi*, no:11, Ankara, 2001, pp. 157-210; Yaşar Akbıyık, "Arşiv Belgeleri Işığında Zeytun Ermeni Meselesinin Halli", *Belleten* , no: 209 (Nisan 1990), pp. 435-461.

¹²⁷ B.O.A. DH.ŞFR.44 / 233

¹²⁸ *Askeri Tarih Belgeleri Dergisi (ATBD.)*, sayı: 81, Belge No: 1806.

¹²⁹ B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 45 / 65

¹³⁰ Dahiliye Nazırı Talat Pasha'dan 30 Eylül 1914'te Halep vilayetine şifre (BOA. DH. ŞFR. 45 / 140).

¹³¹ B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 45 / 190.

¹³² B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 51 / 88, 51 / 207

Taking measures, the government sent some evil-minded Armenians in Zeytun, Marash, and its neighbourhood to Konya; and for the second group it was decided to send to the southeast Aleppo and Zor and Urfa neighbourhoods¹³³.

With the onset of war, Russia's politics triggering Armenians became more apparent. Nearly 8,000 Anatolian Armenians from Kağızman and 6,000 from Iğdır and other provinces went to take military education in south Caucasus, which was governed by Russia. These people then turned back to join local rebels and the rebellions spread throughout the whole east. The Ottoman Empire suspected there were 30,000 rebels just in Sivas province. The first spot they would attack was military locations. The telegraph cables would be cut, strategic mountain gates would be observed. Rebels in particular spotted the Ottoman officers in charge with recruiting soldiers in the East. The first attacks against remote Muslims villages and atrocities against Muslims started. The Ottoman soldiers supposed to be on the frontiers had to suppress rebellions in their regions¹³⁴.

When the Russians organised the Caucasian Armenians including the Turkish Armenians, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, through two reports sent to Eastern provinces, on 17¹³⁵ and 28¹³⁶

¹³³ B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 52 / 102

¹³⁴ Justin Mc Carthy, "Bırakın Tarihçiler Karar Versin", *Ermeni Araştırmaları Dergisi*, sayı:2 (Haziran, Temmuz, Ağustos 2001).

¹³⁵ The telegraph's origin was as follows:

" To Van, Bitlis, Erzurum, Mamuretülaziz, Trabzon, Diyarbakır, Sivas, Adana,

It has been learned from reliable sources that Armenians in the Caucasus especially committee members have sent their families to Yerevan, the committee members in Erzurum have sent their families to Russia and Yerevan and Russian Armenians have been insulting Muslims settled in Russia, saying they will revenge, and the Caucasus General Governor has been giving presents and banquet in Armenians' at high posts honor. Of this information, especially the part about Armenians in Eastern Provinces

September 1914, demanded they take necessary cautions against Armenian and Russian struggles.

Some officers from Petersburg were sent to the Caucasus to form groups, Armenians in Tibilisi started to enrol volunteers at meetings, which they decided to carry on in other Caucasian provinces¹³⁷. One of the Dashnak gang leaders Samson, having

is more important and appalling. After the investigation of whether these deeds are based on certain aim, how many Armenian families have been sent to the Caucasus so far, and whether there exists such revolutionarist ideas developed among Armenians settled there, the result has been reported by the Army Commandership. It is required for the situation to be investigated urgently and to be reported.

To the honor of Minister (September 4, 1330) (B.O.A.DH.ŞFR.44/43).

¹³⁶ " To Van, Bitlis, Mamuretülaziz, Adana, Diyarbakır, Sivas,

Russians have triggered Ottoman Armenians through Caucasian Armenians that the captured places on Ottoman land will be given to them. They have attempted to organize gangs sending many people in village, and brought arms and ammunition as to deliver to some points on the border. It has been learned from reliable sources that on the condition that war is declared, it has been decided for Armenians in the army to join Russian side with their arms, to keep silent if our army moves ahead and to act against us in gangs when our army backs off. In some Armenians houses searched by this aim, there has been found arms. It has been reported to units that non-Muslims crossing the border and carrying no passport will be caught, the ones attempting to cross arms and ammunition will immediately be killed, and when an act against us is performed, it will be suppressed firmly and the doers will be ruined. It has been reported to the Sublime Military Command that the issue of organizing militia forces, that will stay in Muslim villages and turn back when necessary, has been notified to Erzurum by the 3rd Army Commandership. Owing to the seriousness of the information about Armenians, it is required to make investigation there and to act with army corps commandership and inform here about the situation.

September 15,1330

The Minister (signature)

(B.O.A. DH.ŞFR.45/115).

¹³⁷ Code dated 20 September 1914 to Van from the Ministry of Internal Affairs (B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 45 / 166).

come to Selmas together with two hundred Armenians, handed out weapons to all the Armenians¹³⁸.

Apart from this, the Russians formed an organization in Constantina for the dispatch of Armenian volunteers¹³⁹. In an album collected "Volantaire Armenian" published in the Caucasus, displaying the photographs of Armenian volunteered leaders, it said: "*The whole nation has noticed that time for revenge has come. This kind of change does not repeat itself through history. The Armenians have to struggle for the destruction of the Turkish administration with all their power*"¹⁴⁰. Some Russian civil servants sent by the Caucasus governor of Russia, were spying by secretly getting in touch with Greeks, Kurds and Armenians under the pretext of trade¹⁴¹.

While organising themselves in the Caucasus, Armenians were also getting prepared for a revolution. Van was one the most crucial of the all revolution spots. As stated before, Armenians in Van had taken up arms during the year 1913. They were also commanded not to take any action before the onset of the war. Armenians in Van taking action first in December 1914 destroyed the network first, which caused a skirmish between Armenians and Ottoman forces¹⁴². Even in the Armenian school in Van, there was wireless telegraph used for communications¹⁴³.

Van's general condition as of 2 December 1914 was as follows: Armenians in the city centre kept their silence; however,

¹³⁸ Code dated 19 October 1914 to Van and Bitlis from the Ministry of Internal Affairs (B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 46 / 37).

¹³⁹ B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 52 / 28.

¹⁴⁰ Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler (1915-1920), Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müd., Ankara, 1994, pp. 167-168.

¹⁴¹ B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 40 / 174.

¹⁴² B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 48 / 7.

¹⁴³ B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 47 / 60.

all the Armenians in Selmas started a common war with the Russians, gangs on the frontiers were led by Andranik, Dro and Gar and committee leaders advising the Armenians in this region to keep silent for now and telling them to wait for the appropriate time.¹⁴⁴

Telegraph cables between Reşadiye and Vastan-Van were cut by the Armenians, and the Pelli Gendarmerie station commander was assassinated again by them. Moreover, a real war broke out between the Armenians and the gendarmerie under the order of the Gevash Kaimakam. These actions of the Armenians were performed in line with the decision taken by the administrators. The names of all the gangs were found out by the government¹⁴⁵. The Ottoman Empire started to think of several solutions to prevent the events happening in Van. Besides, Governor Cevdet Bey was not in a condition to come over these events due to seriousness of them¹⁴⁶.

Having learned the troops from the province centre had set out to suppress the rebellion in Chatak, Havasur, Timur and Kadesh, the Armenians in Van set fire to the Hamit Aga Barracks, and committed a big atrocity in the city. Just in Van, the number of rebellious people exceeded five thousand and all were equipped with the best arms. About seven hundred rebels bombed Van castle. On 20 December 1914, rebelling Armenian villagers located between Van and Bitlis had cut telegraph cables and ambushed and killed some military officials who were transporting Van post documents to the Gevash Qadi between Van and Gevash¹⁴⁷.

¹⁴⁴ ATBD. No: 86 (April 1987), Doc No 2050.

¹⁴⁵ B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 48 / 85.

¹⁴⁶ B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 48 / 220.

¹⁴⁷ B.O.A.DH.ŞFR.44/188. German Felix Guse, the Ottoman 3rd Army General Staff Officer Head who was on duty in the Caucasus front for three and

These rebellion acts continued up until April 1915. Towards the mid April four Armenian gangs of at least one hundred people each started to trespass the frontier under the command of Russian officers¹⁴⁸.

In response to these events, the governor, warning the provinces, demanded the propaganda movement be suppressed and prohibited the import of Armenian papers from the frontier¹⁴⁹. The following command was sent to all provinces on February 28, 1914:

"To all provinces,

Armenian bandits have appeared in Bitlis, again their attacks against soldiers in Aleppo and Dörtyol, and many bombs found in Kayseri, the communication documents coded in Russian, French and Armenian all signify a preparation for a revolution venture by our enemy. Against all the possibilities, a notification from the representative of supreme military command to the armies was given about the action to be taken in provoking provinces and the armed

half years reports the events: "Mostly there has been given fallacious information about Armenian question which found echo during the World War. There is no place inhabited only by Armenians. Even at the time of mobilization, Armenians were caught with Russian arms, and it was learned by Caucasus Armies Supreme Military Command that an alliance had been formed between Russian Supreme Millitary Command and Ottoman Armenians. There was a severe crisis in Turkish Caucasus Army. It was impossible to reinforce this army since everything in hand was transmitted to Çanakkale Front where so many critical days were being experienced. Therefore, the crisis by Armenians seemed so terrifying. In such a condition, just for once, let us be in Turks' shoes! Armenians were taking an oath of loyalty at places where Turkish units were so dominant. However, when an attack by Russian was expected, there heard the shooting from villages behind the front".

¹⁴⁸ Talat Paşa'nın Anıları, pp. 71-72. For Zeytun and Van events see Azmi Süslü, Ermeniler ve 1915 Techir Olayı, Ankara, 1990.

¹⁴⁹ B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 45 / 237-1; B.O.A.MV. 193 / 34.

Armenians. It is firmly advised that care be taken for the necessary cautions to be taken in line with the discussions made with the military services on military subjects. 15 February 1330 Minister Talat"¹⁵⁰.

The Armenian *Hrac* newspaper, which was published in Erzurum and sowed discord among the public, was shut down by a decision on 16 March 1914 taken by the council of ministers¹⁵¹. The *Perkir* newspaper again published in Erzurum was shut down due to its harmful publication on 15 June 1914 by the decision of the council of ministers¹⁵². On the notification dated 6 September 1914, the Ministry of Internal Affairs commanded all provinces to watch closely the Armenian politics party leaders who had been aiming at some political opportunities and were not refraining from any trouble and damnable acts, and committee ringleaders, and to act in accordance with the notification¹⁵³.

On the notification dated 4 May 1914 sent to Bitlis and Van, it was required not to give the Armenians a chance for their inappropriate actions and to make the necessary warnings¹⁵⁴. Moreover, on the code sent to provinces on 24 April 1915, it was required not to give travel license or permission to any travel out of the country to the suspicious Dashnak Armenians and entrepreneur leaders¹⁵⁵.

Upon noticing that Tomas Migirdigian, an Armenian translator at the Diyarbakir consulate, handed a report the consul

¹⁵⁰ B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 50 / 127.

¹⁵¹ B.O.A. DH. KMS. 18 / 33.

¹⁵² B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 42 / 19.

¹⁵³ B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 44 / 200.

¹⁵⁴ B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 40 / 141.

¹⁵⁵ B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 52 / 95.

including the number of soldiers and people going to Elazig, he was impelled to the court of war¹⁵⁶.

Since it was discovered that the Caucasian Armenian Istepan Korigianor, named Sabah Gülpan, who was the leader of the Hunchak committee Paris office and had sent some men for the assassination of government officers in Istanbul, had reached Van through the Caucasus, it was understood that he had had some relation with the Van events. Armenians also took some soldiers and sergeants from the gendarmerie who were on duty in Van to their sides. The government sent a note dated 20 August 1914 to Van stating that these struggles should be brought to an end¹⁵⁷.

The minister of internal affairs, Talat Pasha, on the notification he sent to Van on 20 April 1915, reported "All measures taken for sentencing revolutionary people quickly and constantly are worthy of esteem"¹⁵⁸.

On the notification sent to Mamuretülaziz on 23 September 1914, it was demanded that the acts of Harput office members, who were working in the service of Armenian democrat socialist Hunchakian committee Paris office and displaying revolutionary behaviour, be watched closely¹⁵⁹.

The Ottoman government started to inspect the schools and churches it thought were directly related with Armenian provocation and also demanded that Adana carried out inspections of the Adana Armenian delegate Kirkor Vertabet who had had revolutionist ideas in his mind for a long time and had

¹⁵⁶ B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 47/ 243.

¹⁵⁷ B.O.A. DH. ŞFR 44/68.

¹⁵⁸ B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 52/46.

¹⁵⁹ B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 45/70.

taken crucial roles in the Adana events. (21 September 1914)¹⁶⁰. It was furthermore understood that in the history books taught in the Armenian school in Adrianople, Armenian children were brought up with such a hatred for Turks with the aim of destroying Ottoman social order. These books were confiscated from the school¹⁶¹.

The Ottoman government announced that, considering the bad effects of foreign schools and institutions on the Christian matter, they had decided all these would be moved to far points in case of a war. The government asked provinces what their opinions were about this, which foreign officers existed, and where it would be appropriate to settle these people¹⁶². After the Ottoman's entrance to the war, in his code dated 19 November 1914 and sent to provinces and sanjaks the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Talat Pasha, reported as follow: "...Necessary cautions should be taken in order for nuns and monks at education institutions of enemy states not to be attacked while relocating. The aim is not the punishment of these, rather the relocation, the required easiness..."¹⁶³. Moreover, on his code sent to provinces on 29 November 1914 about the plan about religious functionaries to be carried out, Talat Pasha required for "the permission for one monk from among the monks to be relocated to stay for the church"¹⁶⁴.

The decision taken by the government had aimed at missionary institutions. In the report by John E.Meill, one of the

¹⁶⁰ B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 45/44.

¹⁶¹ B.O.A. The Sublime Porte Evrak Odası (BEO). Sadaret Evrakı Amedi Kalemî Meclis-i Vükela (A.AMD.MV.105/12).

¹⁶² 1 October 1914, code from the Ministry of Internal Affairs to Erzurum, Trabzon, Van, Bitlis, Mamuretülaziz, Diyarbakır, Musul, B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 46/119.

¹⁶³ B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 47/85.

¹⁶⁴ B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 44/250; 47/280

protestant priests of American consulate, after mentioning the events in Zeytun, it was stated as follow: *"The relocations of the literate and competent Christian society in Maraş are a stroke against the interests of American missionaries. The result of a fifty year struggle and thousand dollars expense is endangered..."*¹⁶⁵. Thus, the reason for the States' hatred for the Ottoman Empire was disclosed.

While the Armenian committees were destroying the order in Caucasus and Anatolia at the time of war, the ones in Europe and America were not silent either. American National Defence Committee in America, in the report they submitted to the British prime minister Edward Grey on 23 March 1915, stressed that the war was an chance for independence for Asian Christians, especially the Armenians; thousands of Armenians fought on the side of Russian army at that time; American and British Armenians helped them; and these could be carried to Cilicia provided that a volunteered unit was sent to Cyprus¹⁶⁶. In addition, they required the allies not to keep silent against the

¹⁶⁵ Gürün, Ermeni Dosyası, p. 201

¹⁶⁶ Since it was turned over to Britain temporarily in 12 July 1878, Cyprus had been the base for arm smuggling to Anatolia. Especially, Armenian committees were making use of the island as a base, and these activities were supported also by British. When the First World War broke out and the Ottoman Empire went to war on German side, Britain annexed the island on 5 November 1914. 4000 Armenians France had let escape from the Musa Mountain on 14 September 1914 were brought to Cypus. In order to organize a military unit in the east, France, benefitting from these Armenians, formed an Armenian military camp in strategically located Monarga Village in Cyprus in 1916. France brought many young Armenian people from various places on earth to the camp, had them undergo a military education, instilled enmity of Turks, and caused many innocent people to die by sending them to Anatolia. They benefited from these Armenians on the Syrian Front and after the war, at the time of their invasion in Southeast Anatolia. The Armenians were feeling full of revenge. (For details see. Halil Aytekin, Kıbrıs'ta Monarga (Boğaztepe) Ermeni Lejyonu Kampı, TTK. Ankara, 2000.)

Armenians' demands¹⁶⁷. The British Armenian Committee leader, Aneurin Williams, on his notification again submitted to Edward Grey on 3 April 1915, mentioned his concerns about the Armenians' condition at the end of war and demanded that this matter be not wholly submitted to Russian demands; that other "Great Powers" deal with this issue lest Armenians stay under Russian control; and that the British control the Armenians. Furthermore, he went on to say that the Armenians admitted their share of a half population in Eastern Anatolia, yet they were open to progress and under such circumstances they could not rule a completely independent Armenia¹⁶⁸.

The Armenians had even at the beginning of war understood that the Russians did not think of an independent Armenia for themselves. However, it was a must for them to take the support of a great power for the foundation of an independent Armenia. The Armenians in the Caucasus were also aware of that. Therefore, they started to wish for British and American control in the region rather than Russian, yet by the confidential treaties signed at the onset of war, Eastern Anatolia was given to Russian control.

2- Relocation Law and Execution of Relocation "*Tehcir*"

Arabic in origin, the term "*tehcir*" means "making someone moves". This word does not include the meaning "putting in concentration camps". In other words, it is not a synonym of the word "deportation" in English and French. A deported person is a captive one having no connection with the world. Such meaning and its practice are not worth discussing in

¹⁶⁷ Burdett, *Armenia Political and Ethnic Boundaries*, pp. 344-345.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.* p. 353.

the word "*tehcir*". States at war send citizens of enemy state nationalities to concentration camps. This practice is an admitted and applied method nearly in each country. On 7 December 1941, Japan caused great damage to the American navy with a surprise attack on Pearl Harbour. A short while after this attack upon the observation of Japan submarines on the west coast of America, within two days America dispatched its Japanese citizens settled on the west coast to the inner parts of the country (19 February 1942) Those who did not leave the region within two days were put in concentration camps and starved¹⁶⁹. The Armenians with Ottoman nationality had cooperated with the Russians. Any country at war considers its citizens working for the enemy and blocking its war power as traitors, which carries the death penalty.

When the Ottoman Empire, having entered the war, noticed that the Armenian committees were cooperating with the enemy, that rebellions in Anatolia were breaking out one after another, and that the Armenian incidents were continuing, the empire did not take firm cautions, hoping the incidents would calm down. However, when the incidents intensified, Talat Pasha warned Erzurum deputy Vartakes Efendi that firm cautions would be taken in the event of the Armenians continuing to cooperate with the enemy¹⁷⁰. The Ottoman Empire had tried to prevent the incidents of the Armenian committees with the precautions stated above up until the break out of the incident in Van. While the Ottoman Empire was fighting on the frontiers at this time, the Armenians were acting on and beyond frontiers in favour of the enemy. The Armenians who wanted to take

¹⁶⁹ Orhan F. Köprülü, "1915 Ermeni Tehciri ve Pearl Harbour (7 Aralık 1941)", *Bilge*, c. 7 (2001 Bahar), sayı: 28, p. 6.

¹⁷⁰ *Ermeni Komitelerinin Amal ve Harekat-ı İhtilaliyesi*, pp. 235-237.

advantage of the fact that those belonging to the church were exempt from military service were introducing themselves as church members, and organizing under this guise. The Ottoman Government announced to the patriarchate that there could be two officers in each village church in order to prevent this situation¹⁷¹. Taking advantage of the situation, the Armenians complained to Europe saying that "Turks are interfering with our religious life"¹⁷², thus aiming to provoke the Europeans' religious beliefs.

In the circular sent to all units on 25 February 1915 by Supreme Military Command, calling attention to the fact that the Armenians were organizing gangs in different places, operating as bandits running away from military service, and many weapons and bombs had been found during police searches, which could signify a rebellion, the following precautions were required to be taken: Armenian privates would not be worked in portable army and armed services, commanders would resist armed attacks, when necessary martial law announces, police searches would not be carried out where there was no planned operation, and no harm would be given to loyal subjects¹⁷³.

In March, incidents started to break out in Van and the Governor Cevdet Bey reported Supreme Military Command that revolution in Van was about to start. Eventually, on 17 April 1915 the rebellion spread all over the province. On 7 April 1915, the Governor telegraphed the following message to the 3rd Army Commandership:

¹⁷¹ B.O.A. Dahiliye Nezareti Idare-i Umum Evrakı (DH. İUM) 88 / 1-3 / 12.

¹⁷² B.O.A. DH. İUM. 88 / 1-3 / 26.

¹⁷³ Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler (1915-1920) Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müd. Yayınları, Ankara, 1994, p. 6.

"1. Revolutionaries have started to shoot at Armenian neighbourhoods in the province, and nearby police stations and houses. They are being resisted and defended.

2. The Gevaş line has been repaired and communicated with.

3. Today, the Başkale-Havasar, Mirmurtal-Peşet lines have been cut. They have been started to be repaired"¹⁷⁴.

Governor Cevdet Bey telegraphed the following message to the Ministry of Internal Affairs on April 24:

"So far nearly four thousand Armenian rebels have been brought to the region from the surrounding area. Rebels have assaulted and robbed the neighbourhood villages and set them on fire, which is impossible to suppress. Now, many children and women have been left without home and town. Is it appropriate to dispatch them to west provinces?"¹⁷⁵.

Having been greatly defeated in Dilman on 11 May 1915 by Russian forces, the Ottoman forces evacuated Van and backed off to the south of Lake Van. At the fight in Dilman, there were 1,500 Armenian volunteers among the Russian forces that were under the control of Andranik, whose company had been sent to the Dilmen district under General Nazarbeg's command. After the capture of Van by the Russians, Andranik and Dro (Drastamad Kanayan) advanced towards Bitlis and the south of Lake Van¹⁷⁶. Armenians from west were settled in Van, Bitlis, Erzurum and Trabzon. Necessary measures were taken for

¹⁷⁴ ATBD, Doc. No: 1826 year: 31 No: 81

¹⁷⁵ Gürün, Ermeni Dosyası, p. 206

¹⁷⁶ Dasnabedian, History of Armenian Revolutionary Federation Dashnaksution, p. 117.

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agriculture in these districts¹⁷⁷. The Armenians were trying to get rid of the Turks dwelling in the south of Lake Van.

Armenian gangs under Hamazasp and Dro's command fought with a great desire and evacuated Turks from the villages of Vastan, Çatak and Müküs, on the way to Siirt. The Armenians captured Senan on 20 June, and Sorp on the 25th ¹⁷⁸. In the meantime, the Armenians under the advisory of Prof. M. Manassian manufactured steamless gunpowder, cartridge and three canons, which were welcomed with joy by the Armenian public. 200 cartridges and sharp blacksmith's spears were manufactured a day. If they ran out of ammunition, they would fight with Turks using these spears. The Armenians revenged by setting the province on fire¹⁷⁹.

After the victory in Van, the Aspires in Tbilisi published the following news on 24 September 1915:

'Victory

7 April, 1915

In Van, use your bullets in accord; we have nothing left in return. Armenian volunteers, Andranik, Vartan and their friends, take your arms off for revenge, death and sorrow have exceeded so far. Revenge, just revenge. Any Armenian who pities is a scoundrel. From now on, the word 'revenge' should be a synonym of Armenian nationality. In fact, what are we left except revenge?'¹⁸⁰.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid. p. 219

¹⁷⁸ W.E.D. Allen, Paul Muratoff, *Caucasion Battlefields (1828-1921)*, Cambridge, 1953, p. 301.

¹⁷⁹ Ahmet Özgiray, "1915 Yılında Haziran-Temmuz Aylarında Ermenilerin Van'da Kurduğu Otonom Cumhuriyet", *Balıkesir Üniv. Belgelerin Işığında Ermeni Meselesi Semineri (24-25 Mayıs 2003)*, Balıkesir, 2004, pp.36-37. It is interesting that the Armenians' struggle in Van be reported by Armenian researchers as "Van Defence" as if it has been the Armenians predominating legally in the city for ages.

¹⁸⁰ *Ermeni Komitelerinin Âmâl ve Harekât-ı İhtilaliyesi*, p. 277.

As the revolt was continuing at full speed and the Armenians' aim was to be noticed, in other districts Armenians were rebelling, robbing and assassinating people in the villages they raided. Since the Turkish army was at war, it could not prevent the incidents beyond the fronts. The Ottoman Government was not able to solve the trouble in the nine-month period since the announcement of mobilization in August 1914. On the contrary, it could also not control the Armenians settled inside its borders. A circular dated 24 April 1915 was sent to provinces and sanjaks in order to disperse the committee offices that had initiated all the Armenian incidents and armed the Armenians leading them to revolution. In this circular, it was ordered that the committee offices be shut down, their documents be confiscated, and the leaders be caught. In accordance with this order, 2345 people were caught in Istanbul. This decision day, the end for the committees, is remembered every year as the massacre day by Armenians.

As the representative of the Commander-in-chief, Enver Pasha sent the following message to the Minister of Internal Affairs, Talat Pasha, as a start to relocation on 2 May 1915:

'To the Minister of Internal Affairs 19 April
1331

Strictly Confidential. Armenians at certain posts around Lake Van and the province have been in a struggle for rebellion and revolution. I am of the opinion that these people should be removed, thus the point of rebellion would be dispersed.

As reported by the 3rd Army, the Russians dispatched the Muslim population in their borders naked into our borders on 7 April so as to both resort and fulfil the aim stated above:

*It is necessary to dispatch the recalled Armenians either to Russian borders, or to certain places in Anatolia. I ask for the choice of the appropriate option and its execution. If there is no objection, I would prefer to dispatch the rebels' families and rebellion spots to beyond the borders and place the Muslim population from beyond the borders into their emptied places*¹⁸¹.

Considering the seriousness of the situation, the Minister of Internal Affairs, Talat Pasha, started the 'Armenian Relocation' without the decision of the *Meclis-i Vükela* (House of Representatives) and need for any law. Thus, he took on the responsibility himself. Firstly, on 9 May 1915, he gave orders to the governors of Van, Bitlis and Erzurum for the dispatch of the Armenians in these provinces to outside the area of war. With his order, he reported that dispatch of the Armenians of this region to the south had been decided and that a notification had been written to the 3rd and 4th army commanders by the representative of the commander-in-chief for any aid to be given to the governors for the immediate execution of the decision. In addition, governors were requested to make contact with the army commanders and commence the execution immediately¹⁸².

In the report the Supreme Military Command sent to the Ministry of Internal Affairs on 26 May 1915, the principles of the execution of the "relocation" were as follows: "*The dispatch of Armenians from eastern Anatolia, Zeytun and such densely populated places to the south of Diyarbakır, the valley of river Euphrates, and Urfa, Süleymaniye neighbourhood was decided orally. These ideas were considered first in order that dense of treachery not be formed again:*

¹⁸¹ ATBD. No: 81 (December 1982); Doc. No: 1830

¹⁸² Yusuf Halaçoğlu, *Ermeni Tehciri ve Gerçekler (1914-1918)*, Ankara, 2001 p. 48.

1. *The Armenian population should not exceed the 10 % rate of the Muslim population in the places to which they are dispatched.*

2. *Villages to be formed by the dispatched Armenians should not be of more than 50 houses.*

3. *Armenian immigrant families should not remove their houses to closer spots for travel and transfer*¹⁸³.

As can be seen from the information above, the Armenians had armed and caused trouble even before the Ottoman Empire had gone to war and the "relocation" law had been passed. However, Britain, France and Russia, fighting against the Ottoman Empire, took up this issue to make their public more eager about war. They related the incidents in Anatolia as if the Armenians had been slaughtered by the Muslims, and they succeeded. In response to the decision taken by Talat Pasha, the governments of Britain, France and Russia, published a declaration through Havas Agency on 23 May 1915 and firmly criticized the precautions taken by the Ottoman government¹⁸⁴.

The Ottoman government, in its objection to the declaration, reported that these claims were not true and related

¹⁸³ Yusuf Hikmet Bayur, *Türk İnkılabı Tarihi*, vol. III, Chapter 3, Ankara, 1983, p. 37

¹⁸⁴ The declaration was organized as follows: "France, Britain and Russia have agreed on the publication of this declaration. For a month, Turks and Kurds together with Ottoman officers committed atrocities mainly on days around 15 April in Erzurum, Tercan, Bitlis, Muş, Sason, Zeytun, and the entire Cilician region. In addition to the community of nearly 100 villagers killed in Van, the Ottoman Government has bothered innocent Armenians in Istanbul. Central Powers' Governments are to notify the sublime port of members of the Ottoman Government, the ones who committed atrocity and the ones to join due to the crimes of Turks against humanity and civilization." (Uras, *Tarihte Ermeniler*, pp. 609-610; Burdett, *Armenia Political and Ethnic Boundaries*, p. 346)

the ventures of revolution the Armenians attempted in Anatolia, especially in Eastern Anatolia¹⁸⁵.

With the publishing of an interim law on 1 June 1915, official requirements for Armenian dispatch were completed. These were as follows:

"1. During the war, in case of any opposition against the government's decision, national defence, public order, army, army corps division commanders and their chief commanders are allowed and obliged to prevent this.

2. Army, army corps and division commanders are allowed to dispatch on the villages that they suspect of espionage and betrayal, either individually or collectively.

3. Duty is valid as of the publication of this law"¹⁸⁶.

As to the purpose of the "relocation", two documents seem to state the purpose. The first one is Enver Pasha's code dated 2 June 1915 and sent to the Porte. In his code, Enver Pasha reported that the Armenians' malicious acts, their betrayal to the government, their cooperation with the enemy states were proven, and he mentioned the necessity of rendering them harmless, the prevention of their participation in enemy fronts, and he finally proposed the following solution:

"The Armenians receding from eastern Anatolia, Zeytun and Syria, Adana region in a scattered way to Anatolia and inner parts should be obliged to communicate in Turkish to those who stay in the region and abroad countries. Permission should not be given to open Armenian schools and their children should be educated in public

¹⁸⁵ Uras, *Tarihte Ermeniler*, p. 610

¹⁸⁶ M Hanefi Bostan, "Birinci Dünya Savaşı Sırasında Ermenileri İskan Meselesi ve Bazı Gerçekler", *Türk Dünyası Araştırmaları Dergisi*, no:57 (Aralık 1988) p. 112.

schools. No Armenians older than 16 or younger than 60 should not enter or exit their new regions. For now, only the Armenian newspapers in Istanbul should be allowed to publish and their newspapers in other provinces should be banned"¹⁸⁷.

The second document is the telegraph sent by Minister of Internal Affairs Talat Pasha on 29 August 1915:

*"The desired outcome of the government's relocation of Armenians from their places is to prevent them from carrying out activities and to assure that they will be unable to follow-up their national aim to establish an Armenian government. As individuals and named persons are not executed, every precaution is taken to save their lives, and food is supplied from the appropriation allocated to the migrants. Moreover, Armenians other than those who are to migrate should not be relocated and anyone attacking the migrants will be punished..."*¹⁸⁸.

The relocation was carried out in regions that would directly affect the safety of the fronts. Moreover, it did not only involve Armenians. The word "Armenian" was not used in the relocation decree; it covered all the elements that carried out malicious activities behind the front lines. The relocation was carried out in Erzurum, Bitlis and Van, regions that are behind Caucasian and Iranian frontlines; and Mersin and Alexandretta, regions that are behind the Sina front lines. Later, this application covered the rebelling and Armenians harbouring the Armenian committee in other provinces. Close routes without difficulty were selected during the relocation, and the required precautions were taken for the migrants' security¹⁸⁹. The Armenians were

¹⁸⁷ BOA. BEO. A. AMD.MV.105 / 11.

¹⁸⁸ BOA. DH. SFR. 55 / 292; Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler (1915-1920), pp. 87-88

¹⁸⁹ BOA. DH. SF. 54 / 156.

settled in houses built by the government in villages or small towns according to the situation and region. The lives and properties of relocated Armenians were protected and they were able to take their portable properties with them. The properties that they did not take with them were recorded by a commission or were sold in auction, with the money being paid to the owners¹⁹⁰. Other than food and settlement expenses, 2,250,000 kurush (piaster) was assigned from immigrants' allotment to manage relocation regularly and additions were made according to the situation¹⁹¹.

Despite all these measures, some people wanted to benefit personally from the situation and committed many homicides. Governors tried to present the incidents as unimportant with the fear of responsibility. When the Ministry of Internal Affairs heard about this, decrees were sent to provinces to take precautions. With a decree delivered on 30 July 1915, Talat Pasha asked the related posts to cancel sales if they were made at low prices and to take required precautions to prevent lawless profiting. He also promised health controls of the relocated people, to give the necessary care to the ill, women, children and

¹⁹⁰ BOA. DH. ŞFR. 53 / 303; 55 / 107; *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler (1915-1920)*, pp. 10-11; Mim Kemal Öke, *Ermeni Sorunu*, İstanbul, 1996, p. 167. On 4 October 1915, Law Consultancy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs decided on the maintenance and utilization of the deserted goods of immigrant Armenians. (BOA. Law Consultancy of Foreign Affairs Ministry (DH. HMs.) 12 / 25).

¹⁹¹ *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler (1915-1920)*, p. 11, Sabahattin Özel, "Tehcir Konusunda Bazı Gerçekler ve Milli Kurtuluş Savaşı'nda Vatansever Ermeniler", *İstanbul Üniversitesi Uluslararası Türk-Ermeni İlişkileri Sempozyumu (24-25 Mayıs 2001)*, p. 41.

old people, by railway and remaining with horses and carriages, to supply food to all groups and guards to accompany them¹⁹².

With the notice that was sent to Mamüratülaziz province on 25 June 1915, the Ministry of Internal Affairs asked that the required precautions be taken when the Armenians relocated from Erzurum were murdered by Dersim bandits¹⁹³. When this kind of incident occurred, four different commissions were formed by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and sent to Anatolia. The commissions dismissed many officers and sent them to military courts¹⁹⁴. On 4 October 1916, Asım Bey in El-Aziz and Mazgirt Kaimakam Tevfik Efendi were sent to military court because of their abuse during the relocation of the Armenians¹⁹⁵. The Ministry of Internal Affairs warned the Housing and Migration management on 28 November 1916 and asked the type and amount of properties and food belonging to Armenians that were handed to the military regardless of their type and amount to be determined¹⁹⁶.

438,758 Armenians were relocated from different places of Anatolia and 42,766 were left in their places from 9 June 1915 to 8 February 1919. 382,148 of the Armenians that were dispatched reached the relocation area. Out of 56,610 Armenians, 500 were murdered by bandits and Arab tribes between Erzurum and Erzincan, 2000 in Meskene between Urfa and Aleppo, and 2000 around Mardin. Around 5000 Armenians lost their lives as a result of the attack made to groups in the Dersim region. In other

¹⁹² Metin Ayışığı, "Tehcir Soykırım Anlamı Taşır mı?", Balıkesir Üniversitesi Belgelerin Işığında Ermeni Meselesi Semineri (24-25 Mayıs 2003), Balıkesir, 2004, p.104.

¹⁹³ B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 54 / 162.

¹⁹⁴ ATBD, No: 85, Doc. No: 2018; Talat Paşa'nın Anıları, p. 77

¹⁹⁵ B.O.A. DH. KMS. 2 / 2-9; 2 / 2-10.

¹⁹⁶ B.O.A. DH. I-UM 89 / 5-1.

words, 9-10 thousand people were murdered during relocation. Other than this, it is estimated that 25-30 thousand people lost their lives because of diseases such as typhoid fever and dysentery. In addition to this, before and after the war, many Armenians escaped to Russia or America¹⁹⁷.

Except for those who set out, on 27 October 1915 the provinces were informed that the relocation should not be restarted¹⁹⁸, and by an order given to the provinces, it was stated that the relocation had been stopped and demanded that no more dispatches be made after that time¹⁹⁹. In addition, through a notification the Ministry of Internal Affairs sent to the provinces on 30 April 1916, it was required that the families under no protection be settled in villages where no Armenians existed, for the young and widowed women to be married, and for the children to be settled in orphanages²⁰⁰.

Thus, the dispatch and settlement was completed successfully²⁰¹. Yet, allied powers related the incidents during the dispatch in an exaggerated manner.

¹⁹⁷ Yusuf Halacoglu, Hikmet Ozdemir v.d., *Ermeniler: Sürgün ve Göç*, Ankara, 2004, pp. 114-130; Halacoglu, *Ermeni Tehciri ve Gecekler*, pp. 75-77.

¹⁹⁸ B.O.A. DH. SFR. 57 / 135.

¹⁹⁹ B.O.A.DH.ŞFR.62/21. The original order is as follows: In view of the necessity and military and administrative causes, it is notified that from now on, no Armenian will be dispatched since it has been decided to stop the dispatch.

²⁰⁰ BOA. DH. ŞFR. 63/142.

²⁰¹ What Talat Pasha told Rauf Bey about the dispatch of the Armenians on the days he was to leave Istanbul reflects the views of Ottoman government: "...We went into war thinking we could only save the country in that way. There are many studies against and for our thinking. Besides, there is the Armenian dispatch we have been criticized for by our allies and enemies. However, whoever was in our shoes had to do for the sake of the independence of the country. Look! Could you think of any other way than dispatching in a time when Armenians cooperated with

During the 7th congress held by the CUP between 28 September and 3 October 1916, the Armenian question was reconsidered deeply and, having mentioned the Armenian rowdinesses, the necessity of the dispatch and its well conduction was agreed upon²⁰².

According to the claims, all the Armenians in eastern Anatolia were exposed to atrocities in 1915. No tangible documents about these atrocities have been shown to support this claim so far. A document of permission dated 26 July 1915, proves the falsity of the Armenians' claims. This document is about the appointment of an Armenian delegate by Sultan Mehmet Reşat to Erzincan, which was under the control of the Armenian Patriarchate and states that Priest Havyuian Merkeztek Efendi was appointed for the position. In the document the delegate's duty and responsibility were mentioned, and it was required not to allow anyone to intervene in his religious service²⁰³. Furthermore, by a decision dated September 1916, the Ministry of Internal Affairs announced its acceptance of priests and rabbis as members of their village council²⁰⁴.

Is it possible for a government to eradicate a nation and, at the same time, to appoint a priest to help them with their religious activities and also to appoint these priests as representatives to the local authorities? As the Ottoman government did not expose all Armenians in eastern Anatolia to the dispatch, how could it have committed such an atrocity?

the enemy, while our troops were trying every way to overcome such well equipped enemy armies? No, there was not any other way! (Rauf Orbay, *Cehennem Değirmeni-Siyasi Hatıralarım*, I, İstanbul, 1993, p. 44.)

²⁰² İttihat ve Terakkinin Son Yılları 1916 Kongresi Zabıtları, Simplified: Eşref Yağcıoğlu, İstanbul, 1992, pp. 19-23.

²⁰³ B.O.A. A.AMD. MV. 105 / 13.

²⁰⁴ B.O.A. DH. KMS. 1 / 2-6.

There was some crucial progress on the fronts in 1916-1917:

The Ottoman armies' Sarıkamış attack on the Caucasus front and the Channel operation on the Palestine front ended in a decisive defeat. At the end of the Sarıkamış operation made at the end of the year 1915, the 3rd army deteriorated completely. Having begun to attack, the Russians invaded Van, Erzurum, Muş, Bitlis, Trabzon and Erzincan. Until the first months of the year 1917, there was no other incident except a reconnaissance movement on the Turkish-Russian front. When the Ottoman army was in such a critical position, the revolution breaking out in Russia in February 1917 prevented the fall of the Ottoman eastern army. When the Russian army captured Erzurum at the beginning of 1916, the Russian commander-in-chief said: "the Armenians do not have a right to settle in Erzurum." Russian politics concerning eastern Anatolia was not to found an independent Armenia, but to make it Russian territory. Therefore, they started to eliminate Armenians in their armies from the first quarter of 1916 on. More than 300 Armenian were dismissed; the crowded unit of Andranik whom they had appointed as general, and the units of Dro and Hamazs were all dispersed. They were then placed into regular Russian units. Grand Duke Nikola Nikolayevich did not want volunteer Armenian units to cause a national problem²⁰⁵.

²⁰⁵ Hovannisian, *Armenia on the Road to Independence*, p. 63

II. Armenian Politics in Eastern Anatolia

1. Political Developments

The Eastern front was one of the first fronts that the Ottoman State set after entering the First World War. There were 150.000 Armenian volunteers in this front and many of them were transferred from the European front. Their duty was to support the Russian ordered units and to lead them in this region²⁰⁶. The leaders of the volunteer groups were the Armenian guerrilla chieftains who had taken part in many rebellions throughout Anatolia since 1890. They were the political criminals who had fallen into a definite disagreement with the Ottoman State. These gangs were extreme Armenian nationalists; they had a very strong Turkish enmity and they had no regular military training .They just thought it was necessary to get rid of the Turkish people in Eastern Anatolia in order to establish an independent Armenia. The gangs started to put these thoughts into action as soon as the war was announced²⁰⁷. Even the Russian commanders could not prevent these Armenian excesses. The commandant of the Van military unit, General Nikolayevich, complained about Armenian volunteers in his telegram dated 1 June 1915 to the Caucasian Army commander, stating that they were continually plundering and enjoying all kinds of murder. He also added that a court martial in Van had been set up and disciplinary unions had been formed in order to stop them. He asked for the authorities not to accept voluntary groups any more²⁰⁸.

²⁰⁶ Hovannisian, *Armenia on the Road to Independence*, p. 44

²⁰⁷ Chalebian, *General Andranik*, p. 227-228

²⁰⁸ Azmi Süslü, *Ruslara Göre Ermenilerin Türklere Yaptığı Mezalim*, Ankara, 1987, p. 27.

In 1916, Andranik and his gang set all the villages around Van and Bitlis on fire and assassinated thousands of people. Arschak, a gang leader under the command of Andranik, did the same thing in Bayburt and Ispir, and in Erzurum and Erzincan²⁰⁹. These gangs were supported by the Armenians in America and Europe. By mid 1915, the Dashnaks in America had sent 4.700 rubles to these gangs²¹⁰. Eastern Anatolia was left to Russia by secret treaties among the Allied Powers. Russia, promising the Armenians the establishment of an independent Armenia in this region, was secretly trying to make this region Russian.

The Russians' aim of exiling Muslims from Caucasus between 1914-1915²¹¹ was put into action by these gangs as from 1916 in the occupied regions of Eastern Anatolia. New developments after February 1917 and the outbreak of the revolution in Russia made Russian soldiers reluctant to fight and Armenian gangs started to take their place. A new situation in the international arena occurred. Britain and France took steps to profit from this new situation in the Caucasus and they started looking for solutions in order to prevent the Ottoman Empire from settling in this region. The first remedy was the Armenians fighting against the Ottoman State from the very beginning of the war. The British in the Caucasus, the French in Cilicia provided their ready and prepared soldiers, Armenians, with the military equipments and arms. This situation drew the Armenians' attention from Russia to Britain and France. After this step, the British took charge of the establishment of Greater Armenia in Eastern Anatolia. Thus, they not only encouraged, but also

²⁰⁹ Arşiv Belgelerine Göre Kafkasya'da ve Anadolu'da Ermeni Mezalimi, I (1906-1918), Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Md., Ankara, 1995, s.273-330.

²¹⁰ ATDB. No:76, Doc. No: 1645.

²¹¹ Süslü, Ermeniler ve 1915 Tehcir Olayı, p. 109-110.

connived at the massacre of Turkish people in the Caucasus and Eastern Anatolia.

As a result of the Soviet government's demand for peace without annexation, the separation on the Russian-Caucasian front accelerated following the Bolshevik Revolution. With this, national unions came into existence behind the Russian front and Armenian troops were formed. Russian authorities, with political desires, were trying to form Armenian troops. It was worrying for Turkish and Muslim people that these troops, equipped with Russian arms and commanded by Russian and Armenian officers, had started to function in the Russian districts.²¹²

After the revolution in Russia, as a result of the idleness in the Caucasus, the Armenians, the Georgians and the Azerbaijanis founded the Trans-Caucasian Government whose capital was Tbilisi on 14 November 1917. This government regarded itself as a part of Russia, but the nations of this government had no agreement of opinion. The Georgians, the Armenians and the Azerbaijanis each set up their own national organisations and started to achieve their national goals. Since both the Soviet authorities and the Allied Powers supported them, the Armenians and the Georgians completed their military organisations²¹³.

The Bolsheviks, who successfully put an end to the revolution in Russia, published a "Peace Treaty" on 26 October 1917, the day after the revolution. According to this treaty, the battling nations had to stop fighting immediately, declare an armistice, and make a democratic peace without annexing any piece of land or paying any war indemnity.

²¹² Akdes Nimet Kurat, *Türkiye ve Rusya*, Ankara, 1990, p. 301-302.

²¹³ İzzet Öztoprak, "Maverayı Kafkas Hükümeti", *Sekizinci Askeri Tarih Semineri Bildirileri I*, Ankara, 2003, p. 127-128.

Upon reaching no conclusion, the Bolsheviks applied to the countries of the Triple Alliance (Germany, Italy and Austria). The Ottoman and Russian delegates declared an armistice in Erzincan on 18 December 1917. This armistice brought an end to the Ottoman-Russian War which had started on 29 October 1914²¹⁴. After the Erzincan Armistice, the peace negotiations started in Brest-Litovsk on 9 January 1918 and ended with the treaty signed on 3 March 1918. With the peace, the war between Russia and the countries of Triple Alliance ended officially. As a result of this peace, the Ottoman Empire regained the possession of *Elviye-i Selase* (Kars, Ardahan, and Batum; three cities in Eastern Turkey) which it had left to the Russians in the 1877-78 war²¹⁵. Brest-Litovsk had been the starting point of some important political developments in the Caucasus. With the impact of this peace, the Caucasus, which had once been the scene of important military and political developments in the spring of 1918, became the focus of attention in Europe and this attention turned into a conflict of interest. The Ottoman Empire, on the other hand, did not want to break its historical and cultural ties with the Caucasus, so she wanted to follow the events in the region closely and direct them.²¹⁶

Soviet authorities did not also want to give the Caucasus away. While the peace negotiations were being held in Brest-Litovsk, a manifest called "Decree No.13" was published in the Pravda on 13 January 1918. It was signed by Lenin, Stalin, Bonch-

²¹⁴ Kurat, *Türkiye ve Rusya*, p. 332-333.

²¹⁵ For more information about Brest-Litovsk peace negotiations see Selami Kılıç, *Türk-Sovyet İlişkilerinin Doğuşu (Brest-Litovsk Barışı ve Müzakereleri)*, İstanbul, 1998.

²¹⁶ Selami Kılıç, "Unutulmuş Barış: Brest-Litovsk – Mart 1918 – Yankıları, Türk ve Dünya Tarihindeki Önemi", *Osmanlı*, c. II, Yeni Türkiye Yay., Ankara, 1999, p. 634.

Bruevich and Gobunov. The items below were the emphasised points in this manifest.

Assurance for the Armenian future

The committee of public superintendents broadcast the following decree: We will help the Armenians in Russia and Turkey until they gain their independence. This can be realised as follows:

1- The military corps should immediately withdraw to behind the Turkish-Armenian frontier. A council should be formed of Armenian people for the protection of personal and financial privacies.

2- The Armenian people who have immigrated to various countries should be returned to their own countries.

3- The Armenian people who were forced to emigrate by Ottoman Government should be returned to their lands in eastern Turkey. The public superintendents stipulate this condition in their peace negotiations with the Turks.

4- The Armenian people should form a temporary parliament by means of democratic elections.

5- Stephan Shaumian should declare to the people in the Eastern Turkey that they should draw their military corps back from the Armenian lands.

6- The frontiers of Armenia would be determined after the negotiations with the neighbouring countries.²¹⁷

This decree showed that Russia would withdraw from Turkish lands after arming the Armenian people. Following this

²¹⁷ B.O.A. BEO. Sadaret Evrakı (A. VRK.) 817/40 (from a copy of *La Sivil* newspaper dated 18 Kanunısani 1918); Gürün, *Ermeni Dosyası*, s. 233; Kurat, *Türkiye ve Rusya*, p. 336-337.

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decree, the massacre of the Muslim citizens by the Armenians increased.

After the Erzincan Armistice, the Armenian corps began to take the place of the Russian forces emptying the fronts. Apart from these corps, an Armenian territorial force was formed in order to save a so-called public peace. Armenian civil servants were appointed to the local administration by the Russian military authorities. Thus, as to the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty, after the Russian forces' withdrawal from the Eastern Turkey, serious preparations were made to enable the foundation of an Armenian state in this region. Lenin and the Armenian Bolsheviks had planned to give the control of this region to the Armenians before the Russians' complete withdrawal, and to prevent this region from being returned to the Turkish people.²¹⁸

According to the Erzincan Armistice, the region from Trabzon to Van-Başkale would not be violated by any of the sides. However, the situation changed when Armenian gangs came on the scene in this region. Enver Pasha, in a telegram dated 17 December 1917, told the 3rd Army commandant Vehip Pasha that on the occupied lands the Armenian gangs were torturing the Muslims. He also wanted the authorities to apply to the Russian Army to take the necessary precautions.²¹⁹

At the beginning of the war an Armenian army including the Yerevan, Van, Erzincan districts was formed. This army was commanded by general Nazarbekov, responsible for Northern Iran-Van, and it consisted of three brigades. The first brigade was commanded by General Dro (Drestamet Kanaian) who fought

²¹⁸ İ. Ethem Atnur, *Osmanlı Yönetiminden Sovyet Yönetimine kadar Nahçıvan (1918 – 1922)*, Ankara, 2001, p. 9.

²¹⁹ Enis Şahin, *Türkiye ve Maveraya-yı Kafkasya İlişkileri İçerisinde Trabzon ve Batum Konferansları ve Antlaşmaları (1917 – 1918)*, Ankara, 2002, p. 173.

against the Ottoman Empire with Armenian volunteers in 1914-1915; the second brigade by Colonel Silikian and the third was commanded by General Andranik²²⁰. These three brigades had already started the massacres before the Erzincan Armistice. The massacres committed by the Armenians were published in the Tanin dated 13 March 1918:

"Since the signing of the armistice with Russia, and the withdrawal of Russian soldiers from Eastern Anatolia, the Armenian gangs, dressed up as Russian soldiers and with the possession of arms left by (the Russian soldiers) them, have undertaken a terrifying systematic massacre. This massacre has been various; destroying the villages completely; killing whoever they met (children and old, men & women) violently; or gathering the people in some buildings and setting them on fire; burning the children after pouring gas on them; raping; burglary, in short they have done violently whatever they could have. It is evident that, the Muslims in Eastern Turkey have had many tragic days under the torture of Armenian gangs with villainous hate and rage, and they were doomed to bloody ends.²²¹

What Armenians did in Erzincan and its neighbourhood was also declared to the 3rd Army commandership with clues²²². Vehip Pasha sent a wireless message to General Perjovalski, the commander in chief of Russian Army, on 29 January 1919. In this message, including the information about the massacre by Armenians in the Eastern Anatolia, Vehip Pasha wanted this massacre to be stopped in the name of humanity²²³. Despite all the warnings, Russian General Odichelidze Georgian was trying to get rid of the responsibility saying that he found what Vehip

²²⁰ Hovannisian, Armenia on the Road to Independence, p. 114.

²²¹ Tanin, 13 Mart 1334 /1918, No: 3324; Şahin, Trabzon ve Batum Konferansları ve Antlaşmaları, p. 175-176.

²²² ATDB. no: 81, Document No: 1850.

²²³ ATBD. no: 81, Document No: 1851.

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Pasha had told to be exaggerated. However, in a telegram dated 6 February, he said he felt sorry for the events in Erzincan, and he assured that he was going to severely punish the ones who were responsible for these events²²⁴. This was a sign that the Russians were losing control over the Caucasus.

Nevertheless, the attitude of the British was making the situation about the Armenian events more complicated. After the Revolution of October, some Armenian leaders applied to the British government and asked for support in their fight against the Turks. This was a great opportunity for British Caucasian politics, and they did not want to miss this opportunity; the war was going on at other front lines²²⁵. To remove the destruction caused by the battle between Turkey and the Iranian Armenians and to give some help, the British government founded the Armenian Red Cross and the organisation of Immigrants in 1915 and appointed Lord Bryce as the chairman. This organisation would also give sanitary support to the Armenian volunteers.²²⁶ Having a deep trust in British support, Andranik, one of the most important leaders of Armenian voluntary groups, had a meeting with the American representative Willoughby Smith in Tbilisi after the Revolution of February on 29 May 1917. Smith asked Atranik how he would keep Erzurum and Bitlis in case of the success of Russian Revolution. Andranik, planning to press the Turks between two forces, proposed that the British units disembarking at Alexandretta from Cyprus proceeded to the east, and the Allies formed a unit of Turkish Armenians. Smith submitted Andranik's proposal to the Russian, French and British military attachés in Moscow. Andranik's plan was accepted. The

²²⁴ ATBD. no: 81, Document No: 1857.

²²⁵ Sonyel, *The Great War and The Tragedy of Anatolia*, p. 157.

²²⁶ Akaby Nassibian, *Britain and the Armenian Question (1915 – 1923)*, New York, 1984, p. 62-63.

Russians agreed to supply food and dress, while the British and the Americans would give financial assistance and protection to the Armenian soldiers' families. Furthermore, the Russians awarded Andranik with medals and the rank of general. Boghos Nubar Pasha, who lived in London and represented the Armenians in the international arena, sent a telegram to Andranik guaranteed financial support and told him to defend Van, Bitlis and Erzurum with all his military potential; and the Russian government, ignoring the Dashnaks, started to negotiate directly with Andranik ²²⁷, which annoyed the Dashnak authorities. Thus, the relations between the Armenian gangs and the Yerevan authorities became strained. The Batumi Treaty would make this problem clearer when the gangs would not accept the terms of the treaty.

The situation of the Armenians settled in Eastern Provinces during the war became more critical after the civil revolution. They could stay neither on the Caucasian border nor in Yerevan. Who could protect these Armenians from the Turks? The Armenians were worried about their future. Having exploited the Armenians, Russia began to place the Tatars and Kazakhs in these regions. Under these circumstances the only power to defend Armenians was the other Allied Powers. Therefore, the British authorities liberally made a declaration that the Armenians should have been rewarded for their efforts during the war. The British demanded that Armenian troops fight in Iran, Mesopotamia and the Caucasus. Boghos Nubar, agreeing that the Armenians must fight in the Caucasus, informed British Government that there were 35,000 Armenians

²²⁷ Chalebian, *Andranik*, p.306; Hovannisian, *Armenia on the Road to Independence*, p. 82.

on the Armenian frontier and this would increase to 150,000 when the other Armenians were added.²²⁸

2- The Massacres by the Armenians in Eastern Anatolia

It would be useful to know about the Armenian gangs' approach in order to clarify their massacres in the Eastern Anatolia and the Caucasus. First of all, the Dashnaks indoctrinated their soldiers in the spirit of *fedai* which unites with robbery and violence, hatred and annihilation of the Turks²²⁹. The characteristic features of the volunteers may easily be observed in the acts of bloodthirsty *fedais* Andranik, Hamazsp, Dro and others. Their detachments dared to kill Turkish women, children, old people and the ill. An Armenian gang, Vahram defines one of his massacres in Beyazid: "*I killed the Turks in Basargeçer without minding their ages. They should be destroyed regardless of their conditions*"²³⁰.

The Armenian gangs, having the same thoughts, massacred an incredible number of people from the revolution in October 1917 until their withdrawal from Eastern Anatolia in April 1918. Erzincan, Erzurum, Van, Kars, Sarıkamış were completely destroyed, and peaceful and unarmed Muslims were massacred.

²²⁸ Nassibian, Britain and Armenian Question, p. 97-98. The Ministry of Internal Affairs, warning Iraq Army Commandant Halil Pasha and the Governor of Musul in March 1918, demanded that precautions should be taken against the support of the Armenian committee, led by Bogos Nubar, to the Armenian gangs.

²²⁹ Myasnikian, "Ermenistan Kızılordusu", Khorurdian Hayastan, 29 Kasım 1921, (internet service. <http://Karabagh.org> , 3.4.2001).

²³⁰ A. Lalaian, "Karşı İhtilal Daşnaksütyun ve Emperyalist Savaş (1914-1918), (<http://Karabagh.org> , "Staggering Facts", 3.4.2001).

The 3rd Army Commandant Vehip Pasha's appeal to the Russian Army Commander Odichelidze for the prevention of the massacres by Armenians did not yield any results. In the meantime, the peace negotiations in Brest-Litovsk were brought to an end as a result of the senseless behaviour of the Russian authorities. Consequently, on 12 February 1918, Turkish unions set out to save the regions under invasion of the Russian Armenian unions. After the Erzincan Armistice signed on 18 December 1917, the 3rd Army 1st Caucasian Corps Commandant Kazım Karabekir Pasha was appointed to defend Eastern Anatolia. On 13 February, Erzincan and Mamahatun were saved²³¹. Bayburd, Trabzon and Gümüşhane were saved on 14 February; Sarıkamış on 5 April, Van on 7 April, Batum on 14 April and Kars on 25 April by Ottoman armies²³².

Kazım Karabekir Pasha, describes the situation in Erzincan in the coded telegram dated 12 February 1918: "nearly 1500 women and children were killed, 650 Muslims were taken to work in the fields and murdered, the Armenians have destroyed everything in small villages and towns, and massacred even newborn babies and old people"²³³.

When the Turkish troops moved towards Erzincan after entering Erzurum the Armenian gang leader Andranik, dressed up in Russian General Uniforms, came to Erzurum on 7 March 1918. His aim was to set a defence line against the Turkish troops. He took over the command of Erzurum from Colonel Morel. First of all, he held a meeting with Russian officers and declared that he was going to keep order and discipline in the city, and that his

²³¹ Atı, 15 Şubat 1334 / 15 February 1918, No:46.

²³² Kazım Karabekir, *Doğu'nun Kurtuluşu, Erzincan ve Erzurum'un Kurtuluşu, Sarıkamış, Kars ve Ötesi, Yayına Hazırlan: Enver Konukçu, Erzurum, 1990, p. 156-165.*

²³³ ATBD. no: 86, Document No: 2061.

being in that city was in Russia's interest. In the meantime, the Armenian troops were about to quit the ranks. However, Andranik was trying to hurry them to the front at sword point. As the Turkish troops, who had saved Erzincan, approached Erzurum, the Armenians massacred more and more people. Andranik could not prevent the gangs from fleeing; even the artillery he placed in Köprüköy did not stop the deserters. Andranik and the Armenian officers resisted for two days, destroyed as much as they could, and decided to leave the city. The so-called "freedom fighter" Armenian bandits swarmed from Erzurum on the evening of 11 March²³⁴. They left leaving a trail of destruction behind them: 9.500 dead women, children and old people. They did not let even a tree live²³⁵. They annihilated not only Erzurum and Erzincan, but also all the towns and villages on their way. An eye-witness Kantarcızade Mustafa describes the situation in Erzurum:

"The Turkish Army entered the city on Wednesday 11 March. The tyrants packed hundreds of people in the houses of Mürsel Pasha and Ezirmikli Osman Ağa in Dervişağa Street and burnt all those innocent people. In the meantime, they were taking away many innocent people to Kavak Kapusu, that is the Station Bridge, Kazan Stream and the Soap Factory in Mahallebaşı and in Kavak Street where they stabbed them to death, and slaughtering them.

In Yeğenağa Street, 450 innocent people were burned in Sheikh Ahmed Efendi's house. Throwing bombs and missiles into the houses, they massacred the people in fire. In Hacı Ahmed Han, among 1373 martyrs beheaded by axe, were unrecognisable, there were 94 women

²³⁴ Twerdo Khlebef, Notes of Superior Russian Officer on the Atrocities of Erzurum, 1919 (B.O.A.B.E.O.A.VRK. S.40/10).

²³⁵ Halil Kemal Türközü, Osmanlı ve Sovyet Belgeleri, Ermeni Mezalimi, Ankara, 1982, p. 78.

and children... As this tragedy went on in the city centre, the tyrants were massacring as many as they could while leaving the city centre.

*I was ordered by the division commanders who have occupied and regained the city to conduct the duty of assistant chief constable. I immediately went on assignment and staffed 185 police officers of voluntary and honorary members to secure the city. The victims of this catastrophe in Erzurum city centre were 9.562 people, but presumably the number would double in the towns and villages. The injured I had sent to the hospital were 212 people. The situation made the Turkish army and the commandant cry."*²³⁶

One of the responsible partners of this massacre, Andranik sent a report to the Caucasian Army Commander General Odichelidze on 27 February 1918:

*"The escape of the Caucasian Armenian soldiers and the disorganisation of Turkish Armenians caused us to lose Erzurum extremely quickly. About 3.000 of our soldiers, without mentioning the commands of the officers, hurried into the railway cars and fled to Sarıkamış. The Armenians around Hınıs withdrew to Karaorgan and they were commanded to complete their preparations there. It seemed impossible to defend Sarıkamış, since our soldiers had deserted..."*²³⁷.

The quick fall of Erzurum without any defence resulted in Andranik's resignation from the Russian army, he took off his General uniforms and put on gang leader clothes. He sent delegates to General Nazarbekhov and reported that he wanted to come to Gümrü and fight against the Turks in the District of Zengezur. Nazarbekhov agreed to this plan and approved his arrival to Gümrü. On 10 April 1918, Andranik founded "The

²³⁶ Yavuz Aslan, "Erzurum'da Ermeni Mezalimi Hakkında Kantarcızade Hacı Mustafa'nın Hatıraları", Atatürk Üni. Atatürk İlkeleri ve İnk. Tar. Enst. Dergisi, Cilt 1, sayı: 6, Erzurum, 1993, p. 91-92.

²³⁷ ATBD. no: 81, Document No: 1871.

Private Operation Team" consisting of 400 select Turkish Armenians. The purpose of this team was to guard the Russian frontier and prevent the Turks from entering to the Caucasus²³⁸.

On 15 March 1918, the Ottoman State formed an investigation committee in order to explore and collect evidence of the massacres by Armenians throughout the places emptied by Russian people. The committee conducted some research around Trabzon, Erzincan and Erzurum²³⁹. The report of these investigations was sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 22 March 1918. This telegram was sent by Hamid Bey, the general manager of the 3rd Army Headquarters in Erzurum, and declared that the central villages and the city centres of Erzurum and Erzincan were completely destroyed; the destruction had been carried out by the Russians and the Armenians after their departure following 23 January, the date the Russians left the city, 1.300 people including women and children were found murdered violently; in Erzurum the massacres started on 12 February 12, that is when the Russians left, and continued until the salvation of the city; more than 2.500 human remains were found on the streets, excluding the ones massacred before; the villagers on the fleeing Armenians' route were violently murdered, it was impossible to determine the number of the people needing immediate help²⁴⁰.

Other than this committee, there were also other observer committees sent to Eastern Anatolia. One of these committees consisted of the historian Ahmet Refik, the German war correspondent Paul Weitz, the Austrian journalist Dr. Stefan Steiner, Lieutenant Fahri Bey and the German ex-consulate of

²³⁸ Chalebian, *General Andranik*, s. 360,371.

²³⁹ B.O.A. DH. ŞFR.86/133 DH. ŞFR . 88/12;DH. ŞFR.88/196.

²⁴⁰ B.O.A. DH. İUM. 20-18 / 12-15, lef. 3-4.

Erzurum Edgar Anders. This committee travelled to the eastern provinces from 17 April to 20 May 1918²⁴¹. In his memoirs, Ahmet Refik Bey, one of the members of this committee, displayed the situation of Eastern Anatolia under occupation²⁴². He also notified the capital city Istanbul of the situation with a report:

"From Erzurum to the Secondary Dept. Manager of General Headquarters Seyfi Beyefendi,

Erzurum is in ruins after the Armenian massacres. Before withdrawing, the Armenians locked in nearly 300 Muslims in a mansion and set the house on fire. Under the ruins of the house you can see the pieces of brain among the corpses. There are many buildings that Armenians set on fire, filling hundreds of Muslims into them. The ones who organised this massacre are Andranik Pasha and the French Colonel Morel. The number of human remains, including women and children, in Erzurum is four thousand. There are almost two thousand children and women massacred by Armenians in Ilcalar. Armenians not only set the people on fire locking them in buildings, but also massacred them outside the city under the pretence of employing them in a new road construction. The number of missing people on this pretext is 111. This amount of massacre does not include the villages. The journalists, together with the governor, were on the spot of atrocities for nearly half an hour. Two or three days later, we are coming back via Kars-Batum. I had the photographs of the ruined places and the scenes of atrocities taken in Erzurum. I introduce to your notice.

²⁴¹ For Paul Weitz, Stefan Steiner and Edgar Anders' notes about this travel see Selami Kılıç, *Ermeni Sorunu ve Almanya*, Istanbul, 2003, pp. 107-136; ATBD. no: 81, Document no: 1880.

²⁴² Ahmet Refik Altınay, *Kafkas Yollarında*, Edited by Yunus Zeyrek, Ankara, 1981.

8 May 1334 General Headquarters 2nd Office Captain Officer Ahmet Refik".²⁴³

It was confirmed by the Ottoman State authorities that in Eastern Anatolia, a total of 363.141 people were murdered by the Armenians throughout Van, Bitlis, Muş, Trabzon, Erzurum, Sarıkamış and Kars between the years 1914-1919.²⁴⁴

While the Ottoman Government was investigating the events in Eastern Anatolia, the Istanbul press was announcing the massacre in their pages. Sabah, Ati, Tanin and İkdam wrote about these events. The following was written in the 51st issue of *Ati*, dated 20 February 1918:

"Our duty in Eastern Anatolia

*In the Eastern Anatolia, emptied by the Russians, the Armenians have massacred lots of people, even the children. Our army is struggling to rout them. Three years ago, a few gangs were armed to betray Ottoman Army. We then gave their punishment, as we did today. However, in the time being, the government has to do two things: the first is to save each citizen's life and the second is to keep order and discipline in the country."*²⁴⁵

²⁴³ The reports about the investigations and the documents of the massacre are published: Askeri Tarih Belgeleri Dergisi, sayı: 81-85; Arşiv Belgelerine Göre Kafkaslarda ve Anadolu'da Ermeni Mezalimi I-IV, Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müd., Ankara 1995; Ermeniler Tarafından Yapılan Katliam Belgeleri, I-II Başkanlık Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müd., Ankara, 2001; Enver Konukçu, Ermenilerin Yeşilyayla'daki Türk Soykırımı (11-12 Mart 1918), Ankara, 1990. There are also some studies about the eye-witnesses: Gürsoy Solmaz, Yaşayanların Dilinden Erzurum, Sarıkamış, Kars'ta Ermeni Zulmü (1918-1920), Van, 1995.

²⁴⁴ Ermeniler Tarafından Yapılan Katliam Belgeleri, I, p. 375-377.

²⁴⁵ *Ati*, 20 Şubat 1334 /20 February 1918, sayı: 51. What the Armenians did in Erzurum, Hınıs, Köprüküy and Hasankale were told in the forementioned newspaper no:84, dated 25 March 1918.

Russian generals were also complaining about what the Armenians did. Even General Odichelidze wrote these things about the Armenians: *"The Armenian corps has terribly maltreated either militarily or in the aspect of their behaviours towards the innocent residents. Even the Caucasian frontier commander General Lebedinsky, being a great Armenian supporter, has raised doubts about maltreatment of Armenian corps leaders, upon the information given by the Armenians personally, and has decided to inquire into the fall of Erzurum."*²⁴⁶

The Armenian gangs, which withdrew from Eastern Anatolia, came to Karabagh, Zengezur and Nahcivan districts in the Caucasus. They wanted to do the same things as they had done in Eastern Anatolia. However, the signing of Batumi Treaty between the Turks and Armenians on 4 June 1918 complicated their situation. Andranik did not approve of this treaty and followed a different route. According to Andranik, Erzurum, Van, Muş and Bitlis should have been within the frontiers of Armenia. This treaty caused great many problems between the Caucasian Armenians and Turkish Armenians. The Caucasian Armenians were complaining about the gangs that created social unrest²⁴⁷. The execution of Mudros Armistice on 30 October 1918 would spoil the advantageous position of Ottoman Army in Caucasus and start a new hopeful period for the Armenians.

²⁴⁶ İkdam, 8 Şubat 1335/8 February 1919, No: 7901.

²⁴⁷ Chalebian, Andranik, s. 409. In a notice dated May 1921 published in Armenia, it was declared that the political aim of National Defence Committee was having larger lands by getting Trabzon, Mamahatun, Diyarbakır and Mosul under the rules of Armenia; and it was noted that since they could not give up this idea, they were concerning themselves with the dream of Great Armenia, having affected by the imperialist propaganda. It was stated that the Armenians should have realized that the national prosperity would not become true by enlarging the lands but by treating the other nations in amity and justice (Sabahattin Özel, Milli Mücadelede Trabzon, Ankara, 1991, p. 228).

PART III

THE ARMENIANS

IN THE PERIOD OF THE MUDROS ARMISTICE

I- The Armistice and the Armenians

As the First World War came to an end, it was obvious that the Central Powers were at low ebb, and how the war would end was clear. For this reason, the Ottoman State went to a change in the government on 14 October 1918. The new government was founded by Ahmet İzzet Pasha still as the Minister of War. The Cabinet was mostly composed of the Unionists. Their first mission was to end the ongoing war. The new government made some attempts on this matter. Since Britain and France announced that the Ottoman State would be hold responsible for the treatment of the Armenians, it could be clearly seen that by the end of the war, the most disturbing case for the Ottoman State would be the minority problem. Therefore, the new government gave importance to this issue²⁴⁸. This government achieved important tasks during their 25-day-rule; they made important assignments in Istanbul and Ankara, and let the arms in the military stores be dispatched to Anatolia.²⁴⁹

Grand Vizier Ahmed İzzet Pasha announced the government programme in the Parliament on 19 October 1918. In his speech he said: "Under the magnificent sovereignty of our Sultan, all Ottoman citizens will equally benefit from liberty and justice regardless of their race and sects. His sublime humanity will not let the orphans and willows of the exiled Arabs and

²⁴⁸ Sina Akşin, *Istanbul Hükümetleri ve Milli Mücadele*, I, İstanbul, 1992, p. 27-29.

²⁴⁹ Metin Ayışığı, *Mareşal Ahmet İzzet Pasha (Askeri ve Siyasi Hayatı)*, Ankara, 1997, p. 160, 169, 179.

assassinated Armenians be sentenced to poverty. There will be no more tears in exile.”²⁵⁰

The government signed the Mudros Armistice on 30 October 1918 with such an approach. Below are the items of the armistice concerning the Armenians:

Item 4 – The captives of Allied Powers and the Armenian captives will all be gathered in Istanbul and delivered to the Allies unconditionally.

Item 11 – The Turkish troops in the Caucasus and the Southeast of Iran will withdraw.

Item 24 – Upon a disorder in Six Provinces, the Allied Powers have the right to occupy any piece of this region²⁵¹.

Soon after the Armistice, the British, demanding that the Turkish troops withdrew, invaded Baku on 17 November 1918. Having profited by the opportunity of Ottoman forces' retreat to his ex-borders in 1914, the Georgians conquered Ahisha on 1 March 1919. The Armenians entered Kars on 19 April, and the Georgians entered Ardahan on 20 April. The Allied Powers Navy disembarked soldiers to Istanbul on 13 November 1918. Britain and France started to occupy the places which they had shared in collusion during the war.

Following the signing of the Armistice, an enmity towards the Unionists began to spread in Istanbul. Especially the political opponents of the Unionists blamed them for various things. The situation of the Armenians was also mentioned in

²⁵⁰ Meclis-i A'yan Zabıt Ceridesi, c.I, Devre:3, İçtima Senesi: 5 (19 Teşrinievvel 1334 /19 October 1918), Ankara, 1990, p. 24-26.

²⁵¹ For the complete text of the armistice see Ali Türkgeldi, Mondrso ve Mudanya Mütarekelerinin Tarihi, Ankara, 1948, p. 17-20.

these accusations. The opponents were unconsciously bringing grist to the mill for the Armenians in the political arena.

The government and the opposition were hoping to be appreciated by Britain, France and the USA; and thereby sign a milder treaty. In his speech at the Senate on 21 November 1918, Damat Ferit Pasha, having noted the legal grounds of Armenian relocation, defended that these justifications were senseless²⁵². On the other hand, Ali Kemal, in *Sabah*, charged Said Halim and Talat Pasha with assassinating the Armenians²⁵³. Liberty and Entente Party Chairman of Konya Dept. Mehmed Efendi demanded that the Unionists, who had murdered the Muslims and the Christians, immediately be punished in his telegram dated 3 January 1919 to the Grand Vizier²⁵⁴. The attitudes of the government, the opposition and the Allied Powers helped the Armenians pluck up their courage; as a result, by bringing up the subject in their parliament, they entreated the government to punish the ones responsible for the relocation²⁵⁵. On their proposals dated 2 November 1918, Emanuelidi, the delegate of Aydın; Vangel, the delegate of İzmir; and Tukididi, the delegate of Çatalca, having informed the presidency of their Parliament about the actions of the former government, asked the government of that time what they would do about this²⁵⁶. Taking the change of government as an opportunity, the

²⁵² Meclis-i A'yan Zabıt Ceridesi, c. I, Devre: 3, İctima senesi:5 (21 Teşrinisani 1334 / 21 November 1918), Ankara, 1990, p. 122-123.

²⁵³ *Sabah*, 27 Teşrinisani 1334 / 27 November 1918.

²⁵⁴ B.O.A. B.E.O. A. VRK. 824 / 45

²⁵⁵ Meclis-i Mebusan Zabıt Ceridesi, c. I, Devre: 3, İctima senesi:5 (4 Teşrinisani 1334/4 November 1918), Ankara, 1992, p. 112-116.

²⁵⁶ B.O.A. B.E.O. A. AMD. MV. 106/4; Meclis-i Mebusan Zabıt Ceridesi, c.I, Devre:3, İctima Senesi:5 (4 Teşrinisani 1334/4 November 1918), s.109. It is clear that the MPs were anxious that the Ittihadist leaders would flee. On the 3rd of November, Talat, Enver and Cemal Pasha fled abroad.

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Armenian and Greek Patriarchates started to reorganise and reactivate²⁵⁷.

1. Armenian Convicts, Their Return and the Restitution of their Goods

After the armistice, the Allied Powers began to use the Armenian emigration and the allegations of massacre as a reason for the occupations. Having made it clear that they could be supported by the big states about the foundation of an Armenian State on the strength of the statements in the 24th article of the armistice, the Armenians appealed to the Allied Powers for the foundation of an independent Armenia on 30 November 1918²⁵⁸. The Armenians strived hard in favour of the European states not only in the French occupation region including Çukurova, Urfa, Antep, Maraş, Eastern Anatolia, but also beyond the eastern border through the Armenian Republic.

The Commander of the British Occupation Power in Istanbul, Admiral Calthorpe gave broad rights to the Greek and the Armenians. According to the British, the Armenians and the Greek were the ones who had been tortured for so many years under the rule of the Turks and they had been deprived of some important rights. Taking advantage of this situation, the Armenians would increase the anxiety of the Turkish population through their propagandas. Furthermore, occupying powers were said to have allowed the Greeks and the Armenians to massacre the Turks and to have been just onlookers to the destruction of the Turks' houses in some of the provinces. It was also alleged that the Christian families were being treated in a

²⁵⁷ B.O.A. DH. KMS. 49-2/59.

²⁵⁸ Uras, *Tarihte Ermeniler*, s. 672.

respective way. Calthorpe said, '*Not providing any help to any Turk has become our consistent policy*'²⁵⁹. As soon as Calthorpe had arrived in Istanbul, he impounded the communication network and released the Armenian and Greek convicts in the prisons²⁶⁰.

On January 9, 1919, Ministry of Internal Affairs General Police Department demanded in the request sent to the provinces that the Armenian captives and political prisoners also the orphans, girls and women were released²⁶¹. The Ottoman Ministry of Internal Affairs, having been exposed to the British pressure, sent one more telegram to the provinces on January 22, 1919 and reminded them of the previous telegrams. The telegram told that the orders had not been carried out, the Armenians had not been released, the current states were gradually getting worse because of the over pressure of the British and the Armenian prisoners, the widow and the orphans withheld by the Muslims had to be released²⁶².

²⁵⁹ Alan Palmer, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğunun Son Üçyüz Yılı*, Translator: Belkıs Dişbudak, Istanbul, 1995, p.386.

²⁶⁰ B.O.A. B.E.O.A.VRK. 824/95.

²⁶¹ B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 92 / 245.

²⁶² Below is the content of the telegram: "It was asserted in the inscription from The British Chief Superintendent Office that the Armenians under arrest had not been released yet. Even the consideration about the existence of Armenian convicts in the regions which had not yet been visited by the British officers can make the current situation more difficult. So, it is strictly demanded that the Armenian convicts should immediately be released. As declared on the cipher telegrammes dated 18, 19, 21 October 1334, 5 November 1334 and 5 December 1334 and 18 January 1335, the Armenians under arrest or the political convicts, or the ones who were driven to various places under an administrative order and the Armenian orphans, girls and women with the Muslim families and in the official and private bureaus should be set free without question. Otherwise there will be undesired events, so you should know that any negligent act will bear personal responsibility. The situation should be under control and we should be informed in three days." (B.O.A. DH.ŞFR. 95/212).

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The Cabinet decided to release the war captives, the exiled and arrested Armenians in accordance with the 4th article of the armistice²⁶³. The British delegates began to release not only political prisoners but also the murderers during their visits to the prisons; however, General Police Department, having alerted the provinces on 12 April 1919, demanded them not to allow such kind of executions²⁶⁴.

Having taken the courage from this, the Armenians started to make a range of demands from the government. Sending an official message to the Ministry of Internal Affairs on 8 November 1918, the Armenian Patriarchate declared that the Armenian Sansarian Inn had been used as the Erzurum Police Department for two and a half years without any charge, and requested that the amount which was exactly 3.000 liras be paid immediately. The Patriarch demanded a 27.000-lira-rent per year for that building from that time on.²⁶⁵ It was also suggested by the Armenian Patriarchate that the Sansarian Inn be vacated, and consequently the building was vacated on 28 August 1918²⁶⁶.

Taking the advantage of the armistice, the Armenians and the Allied Powers tried to increase the Armenian population in Anatolia. The Ottoman State had paralysed the Armenians with the success they made in Eastern Anatolia and the Caucasus since the beginning of 1918. However the signature of the treaty, the dissenters' using the Armenian emigration as a national politics element and the British activities gave hope to the Armenians. Thus, they got the chance to carry the issue of their attempt to make Eastern Anatolia their homeland to an international field.

²⁶³ B.O.A. Meclis-i Vükela Mazbataları (MV.) 214/28

²⁶⁴ B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 98 / 132.

²⁶⁵ Vakit, 14 Teşrinisani 1335 / 14 November 1919, No: 731.

²⁶⁶ B.O.A. Dahiliye Nezareti Kalem-i Mahsus Müdüriyeti (DH. KMS.) 52-4 / 45.

The 12th article in particular, taking place in the Woodrow Wilson's -President of the USA- 14 principles which served as a basis to peace, was predicated on the bulk of population and the Armenians then alleged that they were the majority in the Eastern Anatolia throughout the pre-war period. In the period of the armistice, the Armenians made a great effort to increase the population in the Caucasus and Eastern Anatolia. The Dashnaks, by propaganda in Syria and the other regions, were announcing that they would donate one million liras to the Armenians who would migrate to the Ottoman State²⁶⁷. In order to put this into action, the British stipulated that the Armenians who had been subject to relocation would return to their former locations.

Before the armistice was signed, the cabinet of Ahmet İzzet Pasha made a decision that the Armenians who had been relocated would return to their former locations. In the decision, a prerequisite was mentioned for the Armenians coming to the Eastern Provinces, and it was accepted that they be settled down after the supply of food and safety²⁶⁸. In other words, these regions, including Erzurum, Diyarbakır, Mamuretülaziz, Van and Bitlis, were temporarily left out of the housing area because of the impossibility of transportation, shortage of accommodation and difficulty of catering. The immigrants would only be allowed to return when the deficiencies were dispelled²⁶⁹. That the grief of the Muslims who had been massacred by the Armenians was too

²⁶⁷ B.O.A. Dahiliye Nezareti Emniyet-i Umumiye Asayış (DH. EUM. AYŞ.) 8 / 91, 19 Mayıs 1919.

²⁶⁸ B.O.A. Hariciye Mütareke Evrakı. (HR. MU.) 43 / 34.

²⁶⁹ B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 90/176; 92/187; 93/26; 93/97; 94/160; 96/100; Genelkurmay Başkanlığı Askeri Tarih ve Stratejik Etüt Başkanlığı Arşivi (ATASE), Klasör (K). 367, Dosya (D). 16/6, Fihrist (F). 1; İ. Ethem Atnur, "Osmanlı Hükümetleri ve Tehcir Edilen Rum ve Ermenilerin İskânı Meselesi", Ankara Üniv. TİTE. Dergisi, Atatürk yolu, Yıl: 4 (Kasım 1994), sayı:14, p. 125.

deep, yet, very much influenced this decision. The accommodation of Armenians in these regions would lead to a civil turmoil. So on 27 January 1919, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, in an official message sent to Erzurum and Bitlis provinces, demanded that the inhabitants should be kept calm in order to prevent any attack on the Armenian families who would arrive there²⁷⁰. Other than this, the government also warned the provinces about the welcoming of the Armenians who were returning²⁷¹ and wanted the travel expenses and the catering of the Armenians to be paid. *"The head of the family will be given an official document showing how much they will be paid in return for their caterings, the distance they will travel, the number of their old and young members and the kind of their transport vehicles²⁷²."* In another note dated 23 February 1919, which was sent to the provinces, the Armenians who were in need were ordered to be given any help they needed²⁷³.

The Christians of Çanakkale, who had returned after the relocation, wanted to be exempt from taxes as a pretext of their poor conditions²⁷⁴. Thus, with a verdict on 10 February 1920, all the Armenians returning from the relocation were exempt from the taxes including the years before the relocation and during the relocation. However, they were obliged to pay the taxes between the years 1919-1920²⁷⁵.

The Ottoman Government had also tried hard to enable the return of the goods which belonged to the Armenians and the Armenian children who were under protection of Muslim

²⁷⁰ B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 95 / 245.

²⁷¹ B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 95 / 256.

²⁷² B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 94 / 92.

²⁷³ B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 96 / 277.

²⁷⁴ B.O.A. DH. İUM. 3/2 - 1/47.

²⁷⁵ B.O.A. DH. Umur-ı Mahalliye ve Vilayet Müdürlüğü (UM.VM.), 162 / 52.

families²⁷⁶. After the relocation, the Legal Advisory had decreed that the portraits and the other goods that were found in the churches on 1 February 1916 be kept for future delivery²⁷⁷. After the armistice, on 9 November 1918, the General Directorate of Tribes and Immigrants, in the official note to the provinces, demanded that the sanctuaries, schools, religious delegate houses, the residences of clergy and estates and properties which belonged to the Armenians and Greeks who had been transferred to other places because of the war, be emptied²⁷⁸. The Internal Affairs Legal Advisory announced their decision to the government about the return of the goods, and on 19 February 1919 the return of the goods started in accordance with this decision²⁷⁹. Despite these endeavours, the British authorities, sending a note to the government in March 1919, insisted on the return of the assets and estates which were alleged to be captured²⁸⁰.

During the period when the Paris Peace Conference was held, the Ottoman Government had paid special attention to keep Anatolia in peace and warned the provinces regularly about treating the Christian people well. The Armenian Patriarchate's pressure on the government and their attempts at the Allied Powers were also influential on this attitude²⁸¹.

²⁷⁶B.O.A. DH. KMS. 53-1 / 81; DH. ŞFR. 98 / 195; 98 / 86; 96 / 15; 95 / 212; 94 / 92; ATASE. K. 332, D.1 / 33, F.14; Hadisat, 9 Kanun-ı Evvel 1334 / 9 December 1918, No: 51.

²⁷⁷B.O.A. DH. HMS. 12/73.

²⁷⁸B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 93/108; 93 / 259. Later on 31st December 1918, the chandeliers, which were taken from the Church of Adapazarı and given to the mosques against receipts on 31st December 1918, were returned to where they belonged. (B.O.A. DH. İUM. 19/3-1/71).

²⁷⁹B.O.A. DH. HMS. 4-2 / 11-22; 8/2-25; 8/2-30.

²⁸⁰B.O.A. DH. KMS. 50-1 / 69.

²⁸¹The Ministry of Internal Affairs sent the cipher below to the provinces and counties on 16th April 1919: " It is announced by the Armenian

On the note sent to the province of Trabzon on 22 June 1919, it was emphasised that the Armenian immigrants who would come to the region should be treated fairly and helped for their accommodation and catering, and that such an attitude would strengthen our situation in view of Europe ²⁸² The Turkish nation, who were counted as defeated in the war and every day read the news of their country's approaching breakdown, despite all the negativity, treated the returning Armenians well²⁸³.

2 – The Armenian Orphans

While the Allied Powers were acting as they wished, making use of the power they had got with the armistice, the Armenian and Greek supporters were acting with the desire of revenge on the Turks. During this period, the Armenians tried to

Patriarchate that there is no public security in the provinces, the Armenians are massacred one by one, the Muslims are being armed and the Armenians are threatened by the officers. For the sake of peace and welfare in the country, the treatments which could cause misunderstanding and hatred among the people have to be prevented. The attempts or proceedings that would cause such a chaos will be eliminated by immediate interventions throughout that region. Thus, you should be on the alert and comply with the orders and prevent any action that would cause a disadvantage." (B.O.A.DH.ŞFR. 98-187).

²⁸² B.O.A. DH. KMS. 53-1 / 81.

²⁸³ The demands of the Armenians about the real estates are still valid. Prof. Dr. Mehmet Çelik, attracting notice on the subject, suggests that the real estate reports of the districts where the Armenians had been relocated especially before 1915 should be investigated and he proposes that a real estate scheme of those districts should be prepared (Mehmet Çelik, "Azınlıklar ve 1915 öncesi Gayri Menkulleri Üzerine Bazı Düşünce ve Öneriler", Balıkesir Üniversitesi Belgelerin Işığında Ermeni Meselesi Semineri (24-25 April 2003), Balıkesir, 2004, p. 91). Nearly all the Armenians had sold their properties to the Turks. However, since these are generally unregistered sales, the Armenians can easily lay claim to those estates.

suppress the Turks in Istanbul in various ways. The case of the Armenian orphans was particularly abused by the Armenians. Some Armenian children who were orphaned by the relocation were taken under the protection of the state. Among these were also the ones whose identities were unknown. On the official note sent to the provinces on 10 January 1919, the government demanded that the women who had become Muslims and the orphans staying with the Muslim families were delivered to the leaders of their own religious communities²⁸⁴. Two weeks later, on 15 January it was ordered that the Armenian orphans were protected by the government in the places where there was no Armenian community²⁸⁵. In another official statement, dated 6 February, it was required that the Armenian orphans, girls and women were not kept by Muslim families; “...that they stay under protection of some families after being registered in the places where there is no Armenian community, is up to the civilian authorities”²⁸⁶.

On 16 April 1919, the Ministry of Internal Affairs sent another declaration to the provinces and ordered the Armenian orphans to be delivered to their own communities. It was also declared that those who were negligent in this matter would be punished severely²⁸⁷.

It is obvious that the government had contradictory statements on the Armenian orphans and women. This is the result of both the pressure of the British government and the Armenians' free hand. Following the armistice, in order to determine the orphans without identities either with Muslim families or in institutions, a committee was formed of a Turkish,

²⁸⁴ B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 96/15.

²⁸⁵ B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 95/163.

²⁸⁶ B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 96/86.

²⁸⁷ A secret code to the provinces from the Minister of Internal Affairs, Mehmet Ali Bey, B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 98/195.

an Armenian and an American woman. This committee, despite the warnings of the Turkish representative, co-operated with the officers of Allied Powers and began to pick the children they claimed to be orphans²⁸⁸. Some Armenians, without being accompanied by a police officer or a member of patriarch staff, went about picking the orphans from Muslim families²⁸⁹. The Armenians became so insolent that the National Armenian Mutual-Aid Association kidnapped a girl from the house of the former Sheikhülislam (*the chief religious official in the Ottoman Empire*) Musa Kazım Bey's house, claiming that she was an Armenian. However, as a result of an inquiry, it was revealed that the girl belonged to a Muslim family²⁹⁰.

The Armenians placed the orphans they picked in Istanbul to Kuleli Military School, which was allocated for their use by the Allied Powers, and here they started educating them under the supervision of the clergy. Kuleli Military School had been used as an Armenian orphanage for nearly two years. During this period, having kidnapped and Christianised many Muslim children, the Armenians trained them as Turkish antagonists²⁹¹.

When the government realised that the Muslim orphans were also being picked by the Armenians, it demanded the

²⁸⁸ B.O.A. DH. KMS. 52-2/ 78, (28 Nisan 1919); B.O.A. DH. İUM. 19/7-1/5, (7 Haziran 1919).

²⁸⁹ B.O.A. DH. İUM. 19/3 - 1/43.

²⁹⁰ B.O.A. DH. İUM. 17/7 - 1/5.

²⁹¹ Zekeriya Türkmen, "İşgal Yıllarında İstanbul'daki Uygulamalar; Mütareke Döneminde Ermeniler Tarafından Kaçırılması ve Hristiyanlaştırılması", *Kök Sosyal ve Stratejik Araştırmalar Dergisi*, vol. II, no:2 (Güz 2000), s. 265-283. The British have discharged Kuleli Military School after the *Büyük Taarruz*. (Internet Service, <http://www.kuleli.net> (03.02.2002)).

provinces take the necessary precautions²⁹². Nevertheless, the Armenians went on their free hand. 339 orphans of Turkish martyrs, who were sent to Istanbul from Kayseri, were extorted at Haydar Pasha Station and brought to Beyoğlu Balıkpazarı Church. After various attempts, only 165 of them were taken back²⁹³. The patriarch had also asked for a building for the orphans gathered in the province centres²⁹⁴. The British asked for the allocation of two mansions in Nişantaşı; however, despite the fact that landlords were residing in them²⁹⁵, the buildings were deforced and given to the Armenians²⁹⁶. Besides this, the Ottoman Government had accepted to subsidise 1.000 liras per month for the Armenian orphans²⁹⁷.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs published a book in Istanbul in 1921 and described the policies about the Armenian orphans in the book called "League of Nations and the Armenians and the Greeks in Turkey":

"For thousands of Armenian and Greek women and their children, who were supposedly hidden in various harems and houses in Istanbul, the decree of League of Nations on the assignment of an inspector to Istanbul upon Roman Mademoiselle Vakaresko's submission, has been considered unacceptable because of these three reasons:

First of all, the seven-century-history that Turkish, Armenian and Greek nations have shared in the same lands since the 14th century

²⁹² B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 96/248.

²⁹³ Celal Bayar, Ben de Yazdım, vol.V, Istanbul, 1967, p. 1503.

²⁹⁴ B.O.A. DH. KMS. 50-2/45.

²⁹⁵ B.O.A. DH. KMS. 50-1/16.

²⁹⁶ B.O.A. DH. KMS. 50-1/11.

²⁹⁷ B.O.A. MV. 217/112, (13 November 1919).

and the stages concerning their educational, economic, sectional and political rights were not examined thoroughly.

Second, on the basis of some exceptional policies for their own citizens and the provocations of some foreign governments, the Armenians and Greeks have spread some publications and launched some events which were not investigated on the spot by contacting these three nations in question.

Lastly, there has been no information about the collective studies of Ottoman government staff and the Allied Powers, particularly, the British delegates after the signing of the Armistice.

The explanation of the second reason:

While the Turkish people know a lot about Europe, the Europeans rely on some foreign publications, even ten percent of which is unreal. For example; at the end of the third page of the book which is a compilation of the reports he has written to the Russian General Staff, General Mavevski, who has been a consulate in Erzurum and Van, declares that: "those who should be held responsible for Armenian maltreatment of the Turks are firstly the Armenian revolutionists who have co-operated with Armenian revolution committees; secondly, the foreign governments who have encouraged and supported them."

The second chapter of the ninth page reports that: "It's not acceptable to believe that the peaceful Armenians living in Kurdistan have always been raped by the Kurds. In that case, there would be no more Armenians living there. In fact, the wealthiest and the most prosperous residents were the Armenians on those lands."

The second chapter of page 67 reveals that: "The Turkish people are the best examples of not only Muslims but also the others who live a peaceful life. They never deserve the accusations written against them in the Russian and European press."

The number of children delivered to the police, their benefactors and the Christian societies after the Armistice is 270. The number of children who were not Armenians in fact, but claimed to be so is 18; the number of children who were Muslims in fact, but taken by the Armenians and whose names were changed is 14.

The number of Muslim children who were sent to Haydar Pasha from Kayseri and whose names were changed is 174.”²⁹⁸

3 - The Punishment of War Criminals

Immediately after the signing of the Armistice, the Allied Powers began to make plans in order to punish the Unionists who maltreated the Armenians that helped the Allied Powers. The British and French were also assuming that, such wind of an action would last the Armenians' faith towards them.

The Cabinet decided to form committees of internal affairs and judicial staff in order to study the events that happened during the relocation. The committees would be sent to these regions:

1- Ankara – Kastamonu – Bolu 2- Trabzon – Samsun 3- Bursa – İzmit – Edirne 4- Karesi, Çanakkale – İzmir 5- Konya – Eskişehir – Karahisar 6- Sivas – Kayseri and Yozgat 7- Erzurum – Van and Bitlis 8- Diyarbakır – Mamuretülaziz 9- Adana – Maraş 10- Urfa – Zor and Ayıntab²⁹⁹.

Two days after this decision, it was also decided that those accused of relocation and rebellions would be judged

²⁹⁸ Cemiyet-i Akvam ve Türkiye’de Ermeniler ve Rumlar, Dahiliye Nezareti Muhacirin Müdiriyyet-i Umumiye Müdüriyeti Neşriyatından: 6, İstanbul, 1337(1921), p. 6–9.

²⁹⁹ B.O.A. M.V. 213/60-61.

according to the Martial Law³⁰⁰. A month later, the cases were examined and sent to the Martial Law Presidency³⁰¹. The courts had not yet started in February, but arrests had³⁰². The Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent a note to the Grand Vizier on 5 February 1919, saying that it would empower the Ottoman Government in the international arena to take the arrested ones of the Armenian relocation to the court as soon as possible; and suggested that the courts start immediately.³⁰³

As a result of this approach, the judgement of the arrests started in March in Istanbul: After many trials with events, a ruling was given on the execution of Kemal Bey, Yozgat Province, Boğazlıyan District Head Official; and the imprisonment of many ex-officials. Kemal Bey's execution on 10 April 1919 caused great public demonstrations and reactions.³⁰⁴

On 4 August 1920, the following judgement was published concerning those who were responsible for the relocation of the Erzurum and Bayburt Armenians:

"It was decreed that those who are responsible for the massacres and theft during the relocation of Bayburt Armenians, the ex-governor of Bayburt and Urfa Nusret Bey and a dismissed soldier Erzurumlu Mehmet Necati Efendi should be sentenced to death. It was also approved by the Primary Martial Law Court of Istanbul that the

³⁰⁰ B.O.A. M.V. 213/62.

³⁰¹ B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 95/18.

³⁰² Bolu ex-lieutenant colonel Abdulkadir Bey was issued a warrant of arrest (B.O.A. DH KMS. 49-1/53, 25 Dec. 1918), Kırkkilise Lieutenant Colonel Hilmi Bey was called to Istanbul because of his embezzlement on the Armenian relocation (B.O.A. DH. KMS. 49- / 58, 31 Dec. 1918).

³⁰³ B.O.A. A. A. AMD. MV. 106/69.

³⁰⁴ On the execution of Kemal Bey see Nejdet Bilgi, *Ermeni Tehciri ve Boğazlıyan Kaymakamı Mehmet Kemal Bey'in Yargılanması*, Ankara, 1999.

twenty-six people who were proven guilty to the charge of relocations in Erzurum and Bayburt and Ergani Madeni should be sentenced as required by law."³⁰⁵

As the trials were going on in Istanbul, the Armenian Patriarchate accelerated its activities on 8 April 1919. The patriarch was alleging that the ones responsible for the relocation around Ankara, Sivas and Izmit had not been punished and the Armenian women who were detained had not been sent back.³⁰⁶ The Yozgat Armenians were blaming other people as they had blamed Kemal Bey, and they sent messages containing some names and complaints to *the Jamanak*³⁰⁷. The ex-governor of Isparta, Hakkı Behiç Bey and the Deputy of Konya, Major Yanyalı Rıza Bey, and the governor of Nallıhan and ex-chief constable of Sivas were also subject to this kind of blame³⁰⁸.

4 – Other Armenian Events

The Armenians were applying to the Allied Powers via their bishops and alleging that they were treated badly. In this way, they were implicitly demanding for the occupation of their regions by the Allied Powers, in compliance with the clauses in

³⁰⁵ B.O.A. B. E. O. Nezaret Gelen-Giden Defterleri, İrade-i Hususiye, Defter No: 340/8

63. These judgements and sentences have the highest priorities on the points that Turkish Nation lost about the Armenian Question. Kemal Bey and Nusret Bey were declared by the National Assembly to be national martyrs and their families were put on salaries. Mustafa Kemal Pasha have taken a strong interest in these families (Şenol Kantarcı, "Ermenilerce Atatürk'e Atfedilen Sözler ve Divan-ı Harbi Örfi ile Ermeni Teröristler Tarafından Şehit Edilenlere Atatürk'ün Gösterdiği İlgi", Ermeni Araştırmaları, no: 4 (Dec.2001- Jan. Feb. 2002, ss. 102-116).

³⁰⁶ B.O.A. DH. KMS. 50-1/73.

³⁰⁷ B.O.A. DH. KMS. 50-1/86, 29 April 1919.

³⁰⁸ B.O.A. DH. KMS. 49-2/11; 49-2/14; 49-1/89.

the armistice. The representatives of the Allied Powers were putting the government under pressure. The Armenians in the villages of the Boğazlıyan District had alleged that their possessions were captured by the Muslims, but after an inquiry, it was seen that those allegations were completely without any foundation³⁰⁹. The said Armenians had also attacked the house of Lieutenant Colonel Ağâh Efendi in Boğazlıyan³¹⁰. Upon the circular which had been sent to the provinces, it was announced that there had been no attack or violation against the Armenians in the provinces³¹¹. Yağışeyan Effendi, the Chief Priest of Keskin, applying to the government, had alleged that the renegade Armenians who wanted to be Christians again were put under pressure and tortured by the lieutenant colonel and the police. However, the inquiries made it obvious that such an event was completely groundless³¹². The representatives of the Tokat, Erba'a, Çarşamba, Kavak, Merzifon and Vezirköprü Armenian communities sent telegrams to the General Staff in October 1919, announcing that the allegations on maltreatment of the Armenians by the Muslims were completely false³¹³. Upon this, the Armenian press organs also started propaganda, writing that an Armenian group travelling from Kayseri to Istanbul was attacked by a Turkish gang in Niğde and their possessions were stolen. Nevertheless, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs investigated the subject and revealed that the claims were without basis³¹⁴. Upon the news about the murder of two Armenians in Izmit, the

³⁰⁹ B.O.A. DH. KMS. 65/18, 28 May 1919.

³¹⁰ B.O.A. DH. İUM. 19/3.

³¹¹ B.O.A. DH. KMS. 50-1/69, 7 April 1919.

³¹² B.O.A. DH. FUM. AYŞ. 11/34, 2 June 1919.

³¹³ B.O.A. HR. MÜ. 71/11; *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler, (1915-1920)*, s.252-256.

³¹⁴ B.O.A. DH. KMS. 50-3/1, 18 October 1918.

case was investigated and it was understood that the said Armenians were killed in a shootout with the police³¹⁵.

In Karacabey and Yenişehir, the Armenians were said to be violated and their possessions were claimed to be sacked; in Balıkesir, the Muslims were accused of provocation. Again the allegations were proved to be baseless³¹⁶.

The Patriarchate, who made a complaint that Armenian people were questioned brutally by being invaded in their privacies, was responded that the inquiries on these allegations showed that they were completely untrue³¹⁷. The Patriarchate once more claimed that the arms belonging to the Armenians in Yalova Büyük Yeniköy were seized; however, it was soon understood that there was not such a village. On the contrary, Dutluca Village in Orhangazi County, the Province of Hüdavendigâr, was set on fire under the raid of Armenian gangs; the possessions of the inhabitants were sacked³¹⁸. It was alleged that, the county police levied on the Armenians in Sungurlu, Muslims set up gangs against the Armenians and Greeks in Akdağmadeni, the county police chief Yahya Efendi armed the Muslims against Armenians and Greeks in the District of Foça in Canik³¹⁹, there had been a rage and slaughter against the Armenians. Eventually, all were proved to be baseless³²⁰. That the mufti of Yozgat provoked the inhabitants, one of the Armenians was murdered by a Muslim and the Armenian women were raped³²¹, the Ottoman soldiers donated the Turks with arms

³¹⁵ B.O.A. DH. KMS. 50-1 / 53, 25 March 1919.

³¹⁶ B.O.A. DH. KMS. 50-1 / 86, 29 April 1919.

³¹⁷ B.O.A. DH. KMS. 49-2 / 22, 2 May 1919.

³¹⁸ B.O.A. DH. İUM. 19-14 / 1-17.

³¹⁹ B.O.A. DH. KMS. 51-2 / 20.

³²⁰ B.O.A. DH. KMS. 53-2 / 86, 27 July 1919.

³²¹ B.O.A. DH. KMS. 50-2 / 34, 8 August 1919.

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against the Armenians ³²² were all nonsensical allegations, and the Armenians, who were said to be murdered on their way to Boğazlıyan from Yozgat, were found alive³²³. Such nonsensical Armenian tales carried on until the Treaty of Lausanne. While the Armenian Patriarchate was asserting these claims, it ignored the fact that British and American soldiers were arming the Armenians and thereby provoking them.

The reports of the officers appointed by the British and American governments showed that the situation was far different from what the Armenians told. Upon the official complaint about the torment on the relocated Armenians, the committee, under the chairmanship of Gregory Velis, appointed by the American government, made some inquiries around Bursa, but to their surprise, they witnessed the peaceful life of the Armenians and Greeks there³²⁴. In another inquiry between the dates 2 July – 11 August 1919 through various Anatolian cities, British Captain Holl had also witnessed that the Armenians were very well treated, but he concluded that although well they were treated, they would not give up complaining³²⁵.

After the beginning of National Struggle, the Armenian Patriarch Zaven Effendi had the *Kuvayi Milliye* (National Forces) as a target. In his letter published in *The Neologos*, Zaven Effendi claimed that many Armenians, frightened of the national struggle movement, had immigrated from Anatolian provinces like Erzincan, Erzurum, Samsun, Izmit and Adapazarı³²⁶. Mustafa Kemal Pasha, as a reply to his claims, stated that no Armenians had emigrated from those regions, that the public peace in

³²² B.O.A. DH. KMS. 53-2/86, 20 August 1919.

³²³ B.O.A. DH. KMS. 50-2/40, 24 August 1919.

³²⁴ B.O.A. DH. EUM. AYŞ. 16/40, 23 July 1919.

³²⁵ B.O.A. DH. KMS. 55-1/28.

³²⁶ ATASE. K.185, D.91/21, F.17, 8 October 1919.

Anatolia had been the best ever; and if there had been any immigrants, these would have been the ones who were provoked by the patriarchate and the Armenian committees with the dream of forming the bulk of an imaginary Armenia in Adana and its neighbourhood³²⁷.

Besides this kind of Armenian, there were also some Armenians who wanted to work for the Ottoman State. Portal Pekmezian Effendi, who had been educated in Europe, in his letter dated 14 February 1919 which he had sent to the Grand Vizierate, said that he would like to represent the government by giving speeches in Europe³²⁸. There were also some Armenians who collaborated with Turkish people in Anatolia throughout the National Struggle. Berç Kerestecian, David Sahakkulu and Pandikian Effendi are only a few of them³²⁹. The Armenian gangs had not only threatened, but also slain the Armenians who rejected collaboration with themselves.

The representatives of the American and British governments distributed the arms they had brought to Merzifon to the Greek and the Armenians³³⁰, the Armenian gangs, armed with Russian weapons, occupied the Giresun plateau³³¹. The Armenians were acting extravagantly under the guidance of British soldiers³³². In Merzifon, the British were enrolling the Armenians and the Greeks in the army, and they were bringing some boxes possibly containing arms and ammunition³³³. On 23

³²⁷ İkdâm, 2 Teşrin-i evvel 1335/2 October 1919, no: 8152; Atatürk'ün Tamim Telgraf ve Beyannameleri, IV, Ankara, 1997, p. 117.

³²⁸ B.O.A. B.E.O. A.VRK. 825/3.

³²⁹ Sabahattin Özel, "Tehcir Konusunda Bazı Gerçekler ve Milli Kurtuluş Savaşında Vatansever Ermeniler", p. 47-49.

³³⁰ B.O.A. DH. KMS. 52-2/65, 18 August 1919.

³³¹ B.O.A. DH. EUM. AYŞ. 15/21. 18 August 1919.

³³² B.O.A. DH. KMS. 56-2/25, 19 November 1919.

³³³ B.O.A. DH. KMS. 53-1/41, 8 June 1919.

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June 1919, the Armenians, under the support of the British, wanted to disembark arms from Kumkapı, but these arms were seized³³⁴. Meanwhile, the Armenian gangs were under the command of British officers, and they were in action all through Anatolia³³⁵. The Armenians of Sivas were having meetings in the British Orient Carpets Company where they were debating about their course of action. The Armenians had claimed that this company was destroyed, but the Ministry of Internal Affairs had the case investigated and it proved to be a lie³³⁶. The Armenian civil servant Hasip, who worked for the British Deputy in Karahisarısahip, and his partisans became under the control of the British and hurt the feelings of Ottoman citizens by treating them arrogantly³³⁷.

The Armenians got more and more impudent after the formal occupation of Istanbul on 16 March 1920. The Ministry of Internal Affairs received some news about the Armenians' preparations of a revolution of revenge in Istanbul³³⁸. The Armenians in the Aegean Region, which was under Greek occupation, were also actively working. The Gemlik immigrants, who escaped from the torment of the Armenian and Greek gangs, were located in the slums of Istanbul³³⁹. These Armenians, who were armed by the Greeks, started massacres around Yalova³⁴⁰. The Greeks were also recruiting the Armenians around Thrace and its neighbourhood by using force³⁴¹. After the occupation of Bursa by the Greeks, General Yuvanov made a speech in the

³³⁴ B.O.A. DH. KMS. 49-2/32, 25 June 1919.

³³⁵ B.O.A. DH. KMS. 53-2/4, 5 July 35.

³³⁶ BO.A. DH. KMS. 50-3/28, 12 February 1920.

³³⁷ B.O.A. DH. KMS. 49-2/70, 6 March 1920.

³³⁸ B.O.A. DH. KMS. 60-1/16, 21 November 1920.

³³⁹ B.O.A. DH. KMS. 60-2/19, 23 May 1921.

³⁴⁰ B.O.A. DH. KMS. 60-2/55, 28 July 1921.

³⁴¹ B.O.A. DH. KMS. 60-3/2, 9 August 1921.

Armenian Church there, telling that they were satisfied with the sympathy that the Armenians had towards themselves and insisting that the Greeks and the Armenians should collaborate³⁴².

On the other hand, the French set to the patronage of Catholics in Anatolia, and tried to act in favour of Catholic Armenians. The Istanbul deputy of France, applying to the government, requested that Erzurum Armenian Catholic clergy Vahan and Khatchurian Serop Efendis, who were appointed in Sivas, were treated kindly. This request of the deputy was conveyed to the Province of Sivas on 12 November 1919³⁴³. Moreover, the publishing of the newspapers *Artamarad* and *Ekler* in Armenian were let free upon the request of French Admiral Frachet d'Espéry³⁴⁴.

Having lost the control over the citizens and beginning to get worried about the armament of the Armenians, the governors were being calmed by the Ministry of Internal Affairs which showed a state of concession. In the coded telegram the Ministry of Internal Affairs sent to the Province of Bitlis on 19 January 1919, it was declared that since it was natural to defend the rights of Ottoman State and Nation, without being affected by the vile signs, they should insist on serving the nation and expect to reach the truth³⁴⁵.

Another point about the state of Armenians during the period of armistice that attracted notice was that the government had tried to restore the churches all over Anatolia. Below are some examples of these churches:

³⁴² B.O.A. DH. İUM. 20-24/14-60, 14 September 1920.

³⁴³ B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 95/109.

³⁴⁴ B.O.A. MV. 213/88, 30 December 1918.

³⁴⁵ B.O.A. DH. KMS. 50-1/86, 29 April 1919.

06/5/1919 – the refund of the expenses for the repair of the Armenian Church in Ergani³⁴⁶,

31/5/1919 – the repair of the Armenian Church and school in Urfa³⁴⁷,

16/6/1919 – the construction of an Armenian church on Alaeddin Hill in Konya³⁴⁸,

26/7/1919 – the repair of the Antep Armenian Protestant Church³⁴⁹ and the necessary funding³⁵⁰,

20/9/1920 – the donation of a public domain next to the Armenian Church in Şişli to the Armenian Orphanage³⁵¹,

27/2/1921 – the repair of Balıkesir Armenian Church and the construction of a school³⁵².

II. Armenians on the Eastern Front

When the Turkish Army withdrew from Northwest Iran and the Caucasus in view of the Mudros Armistice, these states stood in the Caucasus: Northern Caucasus Republic, Azerbaijan Republic, Georgian Republic and Armenian Republic. Besides, the Acara Council Government was founded in the region of Batumi, Ahısha and Ardahan.

³⁴⁶ B.O.A. MV. 215/92

³⁴⁷ Prime Ministry State Archives General Directorate Archives of Republic (Cumh. A.) Fon Kodu: 272-00-11, Yer No: 13.48-9. The information on the Archives of Republic are from the internet service <http://www.bybs.gov.tr/devletarsivleri/katalog>

³⁴⁸ Cumh. A. Fon Kodu: 272-00-11, Yer No: 13.48-12

³⁴⁹ Cumh. A. Fon Kodu: 272-00-11, Yer No: 14.50-7

³⁵⁰ B.O.A. DH. KMS. 50-2/15

³⁵¹ B.O.A. DH. UMVM. 86/7

³⁵² Cumh. A. Fon Kodu: 272-00-74, Yer No: 69.52-21.

During the retreat of the Turkish Army to the 1914 borders, the Muslim and Turkish community, with the necessity of protecting themselves against potential Armenian attacks and atrocities, established local Council Administrations. The most significant of these were the South-western Caucasus and Nahcivan Council Government³⁵³. During the withdrawal of Turkish Army, having received the support of the British, the Armenians invaded Gümrü, Etchmiyadzin, Arpaçayı and the banks of Aras River and İğdır Region, into the vicinity of borders. Armenian forces were bringing artillery near the Turkish border and attacking Turkish villages.

The reason for the Armenian attacks was to make Muslims migrate so as to ensure the population dominance. Similarly, in the Kars region, which was left to Armenians by the British, the same treatment was being conducted.

1- Armenian Massacres in the Caucasus

The Armenian cruelty, which would continue in the Caucasus well until the Orient Operation, started in Kars and in its vicinity as well after Armenians fled the eastern Anatolia. This was made possible after the British invaded Kars, granting them some privilege. The Armenians, who had come to Eastern Anatolia during the First World War, had to return to where they started. A group of one thousand emigrants were helped into

³⁵³ For further information on these governments see: Ahmet E. Gökdemir, *Southwestern Caucasss Government*, Ankara 1998; İbrahim E. Artnur, *Osmanlı Yönetiminden Sovyet Yönetimine Kadar Nahçivan (1918-1921)*, Ankara, 2001.

Armenia by the soldiers administered by gang leaders under the command General Nazerbekhov³⁵⁴.

From January to March 1918, Bolsheviks and some Armenian national parties were speculating on the idea of attacking Muslims, and Soviet authorities were assigning Armenians to important duties. Stefan Shaumian, the administrator of the Caucasus to the Soviets, was one of them. Towards the end of the war, the Christian community in the Caucasus was getting armed. After the abolition of the Caucasus front, Russian regiments, on the way home, were selling their weapons and ammunition to Christians, especially to Armenians. From 20 March on, the Dashnak Party, disturbed by the situation in Bakü, felt it necessary to take over. On the other hand, the Entente Powers helped the Christian community in the Caucasus get armed and the British relied heavily on local Christians to stop the Turkish army coming all the way from Mesopotamia. As the British were away from Caucasus, the Armenians thought that it would be more convenient to collaborate with the Bolsheviks. It was evident that Armenians were ready to utilise any sort of disguise to make their dream of '*Greater Armenia*' come true.³⁵⁵

In the first half of 1918 the Karabagh region was of vital importance. In May, following the declaration of independence, Azerbaijan attempted to take over this place and the city of Zenzegur. However, while Ottoman-Azerbaijani forces were concentrating on Baku, Andranik, a Turkish Armenian, and his

³⁵⁴ Ismail Ra'in, *Katliam-ı Ermeniyan Der Deveran-ı Selatin-i Al-i Osman*, Tahran, 1351, p.120; Kamil Pasha, *Sheikh Şamil's Son*, applied to the Ottoman Government on 26 March 1918, and asked to be given responsibility to fight against Armenian Gangs but was refused.

³⁵⁵ *The Republic of Azerbaijan (1918-1920)*, Azerbaijan Academy of Sciences, Bakü, 1998, p. 65-66.

gang penetrated into Zenzegur and killed lots of Muslims. This enabled Armenia to take the control of the city³⁵⁶. Andranik's endeavours in this region kept the Turks from entering the petrol spot. Thus, Andranik had made a tremendous contribution to the Allied Forces. Armenians committed a huge atrocity on 31 March 1918 and ten thousand Muslims were killed by Red Army troops along with Armenians under the command of Stefan Shaumian³⁵⁷. They had obviously, been armed by the Russians just before the operation. Armenians later denied this number, saying that only one thousand Muslim died, but they failed to prove this³⁵⁸.

As well as assisting the policies of Great Powers in the region, Andranik was in search of making his ideals come true. Upon his arrival, the massacres in the region hastened and 10,068 people were killed and 115 villages destroyed. Muslim delegates in the Yerevan Region said in a telegraph sent to Azerbaijani Premier '*Andranik and his men left for Yerevan. Some Armenians from Turkey are with him. Their purpose is the destruction and migration of the Muslims within the region.*'³⁵⁹

Andranik invaded many counties of Yaycı, Arza, Kerim-Kulu, Culfa, Ordubad and towns like Cemaldu, Kıрма, Beneniyar and burnt down the houses, school buildings, mosques and granaries. Having established his base in Küznüt, a city twelve

³⁵⁶ Nassibian, *Britain and The Armenian Question*,s 156; Christopher J.Walker, *Armenian and Karabagh*, London,1991, p. 90.

³⁵⁷ Abdulhaluk Çay, *The Massacre of 31 March 1918 Armenians committed in Baku*, *The Symposium on the Turks' Relations with Armenian Community Throughout History*, The University of Atatürk, Ankara 1985, p. 243-252.

³⁵⁸ *The Republic of Azerbaijan (1918-1920)* Azerbaijan Academy of Sciences, Bakü, 1998, p. 73.

³⁵⁹ <http://www.Karabagh.org>. 'Staggering Facts', 3.4.2001.

kilometres away from Nahcivan, Andranik attacked Nehrem. However, he withdrew when the Nehramians responded back³⁶⁰.

Under Andranik's command there were about 3.000-5.000 unorganised troops. In addition, thousands of Armenian immigrants having emigrated from Turkey and Armenia accompanied him to Zenzegur. After the Batumi treaty, he attempted to get in touch with the British troops located in Northern Iran. However, he came back after a defeat against the Turks near Hoy. Andranik launched three major attacks to Turkish villages, during which more than one thousand Muslims were killed. The survivors found refuge in Nahcivan and Gence. The atrocities committed by Andranik were severely denounced by Halil Pasha. The Armenian Government evaded the responsibility by noting that they had no control over the gangs and that the organised troops had left long ago.³⁶¹

There were other towns where Armenian massacres occurred: Samahı, Kuba-Kacmaz, Lengeran Hacıkabul ve Salian. In Samahı, in April 1918 about 7.000 people were killed. These killings were conducted by S. Lalayev under the command of S. Shaumian. In Samahı, where 15000 people (80% of whom were Muslims) had lived in 1918, the population was only 1.700 in 1921. Hamazsp, the special deputy of S. Shaumian, was administrating the troops in Kuba. By April, 122 Muslim villages had been dismantled and hundreds of Turkish families were scattered. Armenian Church took on an active role in this policy of genocide. The purpose of the atrocities committed by

³⁶⁰ Cafer Guli Mirzayev, 'Nahcivan Kebdlerinde Andranik'in Türeddiği Vahşilikler ve Ona Karşı Mubarezenin Teşkili', 21. Yüzyıla Girenken Tarihe Dostça Bir Bakış: Türk-Ermeni İlişkileri Ankara, 2000, p.126.

³⁶¹ Birinci Dünya Harbinde Türk Kafkas Cephesi, 3.Ordu Hareket, c.II, 2.Kitap, Genelkurmay Başkanlığı Yay. Ankara,1933, p. 537.

Armenians in March and April in 1928 was to settle Azerbaijan, after taking over Baku and moving onto Gence.³⁶²

The Armenians regarded the Mudros Armistice and the victory of the Allied Powers as a festival. The withdrawal of Ottoman-German forces from the Caucasus and Allies replacing them yielded a convenient environment to reach what they had been ideally working on. In this respect, they increased their demands for land. The *Greater Armenia* plan required an ethnically smooth territory. Thus, Armenians, making use of the new political climate, hastened their efforts on the way to ethnic eradication.³⁶³

Armenian gangs committed a comprehensive atrocity in Nahcivan in Şahtahtı in July 1919.³⁶⁴ The Ottoman Government, through a resolution in August 1919, required the Eastern Provinces to prevent the massacres that Armenians exposed to the Muslim community³⁶⁵. On the other hand, through another telegram sent to the same region due to British pressure, it was proclaimed that it was not religiously acceptable to go past the Caucasus to fight the Armenians³⁶⁶.

British officers were spreading the rumour that in accordance with the treaty the Armenians were granted the regions involved in Eastern Anatolia and saying that many other Armenians from the Caucasus were to join them soon³⁶⁷. The British were concentrating on ways to stay longer in Iran rather than on the ways to strengthen Georgia and Azerbaijan or the

³⁶² The Republic of Azerbaijan (1928-1920), p. 74.

³⁶³ Musa Kasimov, Mahir Abdullayev, *Beynelhak Münasebetler Tarihi* (XX. Asr I. Hisse 1900-1945 ci iller) Bakı, 1998, p. 82.

³⁶⁴ B.O.A. DH. KMS. 53-2/56

³⁶⁵ B.O.A. DH. KMS. S 54-2 / 11.

³⁶⁶ B.O.A. DH.. KMS .53-2 / 20

³⁶⁷ B.O.A. DH.KMS.53-1/39

foundations of a Greater Armenia. That was what they had long based their Caucasian policy on. W.M Thomson, a British General, who arrived in Baku on 12 November 1918 on a secret mission to give the Caucasus, cleared off Bolsheviks, back to Russia. Another task on the part of Thomson was to sort out the conflict between the Azerbaijanis and Armenians, making them more dependants on Britain³⁶⁸. To this end, British troops paid more attention to Eastern Anatolia.

Though the Anglo-French mission in the Caucasus demanded that the Armenians stop carrying out massacres in the region in 1918, the Armenians took no heed³⁶⁹. In March 1918, 11.000 Muslims were killed and a financial damage of 400 million rubles occurred. Some authorities reported that the operation stemming from Armenian nationalism had claimed 30.000 lives³⁷⁰.

In one case, children and women in the village of Hudadi were gathered in a mosque and killed by Armenian Stepan Lalayev³⁷¹. On 3 July 1919, the report announced in the Investigation Commission of the Azerbaijan Government revealed these villages as having been eradicated: Naracan, Karakurtlu, Karsu, Gabu, Kiblu, Kreyz Navagi village in Shemahiti Province, Divici Shahlae, Eyvatlı, Tatar, Melikli, Dudullu, Karulu, Ohtar, Kabar, İncebar, Zabug, Müslümanlar, Burcalar Derzili, Mülk, Tagamir, Karıgel, Hirdakışlak, Gemeran,

³⁶⁸ Tadeuş Svyatoçovski, Ruisya ve Azerbaijan,(Terc. Lale Microferova, Beyler Hacıyev) Baku,200,s.104-105

³⁶⁹ 6/12/1998 the report that the administrators of the Cevanşir Province wrote to the Governor of Gence (Cumh. A. Dosya No: 894-465, Fon Kodu: 930..1.0.0. Yer NO 3.48.0)

³⁷⁰ 28.10.1918 The statements of Ali Asaldullayev, the commander of II. Divison, I.Muslim Cavalry Regiment. Cumh. A. Dosya NO: 277-213, Fon Kodu: 930.1.0.0 Yer no:1.20.16.

³⁷¹ Cumh. A Dosya No: 1610-197 Fon Kodu 930..1.0.0. Yer no 6.117.3.

Günkışlak, Sirik, Malikli, Gagula, Bağrı, Zagezur³⁷² . They also killed 900 people in the villages of Kurdemir, Pasakent and Tıht.

The Armenians burnt down 91 villages in Etchmiadzin and Surmeli and 20 other villages were also destroyed, their residents being killed. 1.600 Muslims were slaughtered in Ahçinek valley (28 11 1919). On 23 May 1918, Azerbaijan retreated its soldiers from Zenzegur in accordance with the treaty signed with the Armenians. Still, the Armenians kept committing crimes within the region³⁷³.

The Armenians were using military force under the patronage of the Allied Powers. The Georgian representative to Azerbaijan condemned this on the part of the British Army³⁷⁴. Armenian troops of ten thousand caused a great destruction in Dandurlu and the governor of Susa protested that the troops had included British and American soldiers.³⁷⁵

The British supported the policy of clearing Muslims out of Yerevan³⁷⁶. Iran was also encouraging this policy and trying to attract 60.000 Muslims from Nahcivan. This would facilitate Armenia to take the control of the region³⁷⁷. The Armenians already started to execute this plan in Elviye-i Selase.

³⁷² Cumh. A Dosya No: 1610-197 ve Dosya 1061-197. Fon Kodu:930.1.0.0.

³⁷³ Cumh. A Dosya No: 897-1112, Fon Kodu 930..1.0.0.

³⁷⁴ Cumh.A. Dosya No.897-138,Fon Kodu: 930..1.0.0. Yer no: 4.56.1 12.7 1919.

³⁷⁵ Cumh.A. Dosya NO: 894-721, Fon kodu:930..1.0.0. Yer No:3.50..9. 22.1.1920.

³⁷⁶ Cumh. A. Dosya No:277-258, Fon Kodu:930.1.0.0.Yer no: 2.31.20. 23.12. 1919

³⁷⁷ Cumh A. Dosya NO:277 -258, Fon Kodu 930.1.0.0. yer no 2.31.19.

2- Cross Borders: Armenian Activities in Kars, Oltu, and Ardahan

The retreat of the Ottoman Army to the borders of 1914 in accordance with the Mudros Armistice enabled the Armenians to act freely in the region. They invested a great amount of effort to become the dominant party in the region until the resolution that would be taken at the Peace talks. They continued to execute their policy of exile and massacre the same way they did in the Caucasus.

Armenian cruelty in 1919 made its appearance after the British invaded Kars and dismantled the government there. The Armenians, with the help of the British, started slaughters in Kars, Sarıkamış, Kağızman and Ardahan and moved onto Oltu.

21 days after Ottoman soldiers withdrew; they burnt 7.060 Muslims in Kınalı Karahaç Headquarters and took 360 women with them. Two months later, in Amuspe village of Shehril, they killed 1.333 men and took hostage 60 young girls. Upon being warned by the British, they demanded that this region be left to them and stated that this was their own way of thinking rather than a resolution dictated by a peace conference. They made their way to Bayazıd³⁷⁸. The Armenians performed other massacres in the village of Issior in Pasinler in 20 may 1919.³⁷⁹

Three hundred armed Armenians came up to Kotur County to the northwest of Erzurum through Kars. According to Mustafa Kemal Pasha, the Chief Inspector of the 9th Army, these gangs were to make the current situation in the region seem

³⁷⁸May 20 1919, the code from Münir Bey, the Governor of Erzurum. B.O.A.DH.KMS.53-1 / 24 lef-2.

³⁷⁹ From Mustafa Kemal Pasha to the Ministry of War ATASE.K.82. D.304 / 7211,F19.

insecure and thus enable the Allied countries to occupy the region. In this respect, the maintenance of the 15th Army Corps in the region was imperative³⁸⁰.

The Governor of Van reported in a telegram he sent to Interior Affairs on 3 June 1919 that the Armenians had been preparing to penetrate Van and that the British had demanded a pathway from the Serdar of Makü. On the objection of this, they were reported to declare 'We will find other roads to lead us.' The telegram went on to read that there were about 6.000 Armenians and that they had cannons and machine guns, making it necessary for them to increase the number of soldiers in Van³⁸¹. The investigations showed that there were many Armenians in disguise in the region, which allowed them to spy on others and that the British representatives also approved of what was being done. It was made clear that the Armenians inhabited the regions of Kars and Sarıkamış with almost ten thousand soldiers³⁸². The Armenians, bringing their forces into Nahcivan, Kağızman, Oltu and Sarıkamış were scaring the community by saying that they would move on to Sivas³⁸³.

Mustafa Kemal Pasha, the Chief Inspector of the 9th Army, in a report he sent to Sadaret on 12 June 1919, emphasised the Armenian threat in the region of Beyazıd. The report continued as *"It is improbable to leave an inch of soil of Eastern Provinces to Armenia and even one unlawful entry in to our borders will be confronted with fire. The acceptance of Armenians will be made*

³⁸⁰ From Mustafa Kemal Pasha to the Head of General Command. ATASE. K.189. D.104/8, f18

³⁸¹ B.O.A.DH.KMS.53-1/56.

³⁸² B.O.A. DH.KMS.53-2/104.F.1-22.

³⁸³ ATASE.K.189,D.NO.104/8, F.189.

possible by a mutual agreement between the governments and with the guarantee of the government"³⁸⁴.

Rawlinson, the British representative in Erzurum at the time, admitted that the Armenians had been committing atrocities in an area ranging from Oltu to Beyazid and that more military support had to be sent in to ensure the security³⁸⁵. He also stated that Armenians were irresponsible in the way they treated the Muslim community and this had to be prevented. This, he added, resulted in some cruel incidents which the British themselves were responsible for³⁸⁶. Kazım Karabekir Pasha also reported Armenian crimes to Rawlinson. In a telegram dated 8 July 1919, he said: *"It was reported that Armenians raided two villages near Karakut in 5/7/[13]35 and massacred on the Muslim community. We would be grateful if an investigation was launched in the region.*"³⁸⁷ Similarly, Admiral Calthorpe, the High Commissioner in Istanbul, in a report he sent to Curzon, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, said: 'from what I have heard from the Sultan, the Armenians have been preparing an attack on Erzurum'.³⁸⁸

Forester Walker, the British General in Batum, held talks with Ibrahim Bey, the chairman of National Islam Council and said that the Armenians would not be brought to Kars. However, Walker himself later assigned Armenian administrators to the places with only 10% of Armenian population. On 13 January 1919 he appointed Korganof as the Governor of Kars and

³⁸⁴ B.O.A. B.E.O. A.AMD. MV.103/13: Harp Tarihi Vesikalari Dergisi (HTVD), yıl:2 (Eylül 1953) vesika 10

³⁸⁵ ATASE.K.82,D.304./211, F.34.

³⁸⁶ Alfred Rawlinson, *Adventures in The Near East (1918/1922)*, New York.1923, p.218.

³⁸⁷ ATASE.K. 323, D.44/60, F.44.

³⁸⁸ *Documents On British Foreign Policy, First Series, vol. IV, London, 1952, p.668.*

Paliianus as the representative. It was also seen that they were accompanied by a number of Armenian officers. The attempts of the British to give the Armenians the control of a region that was mainly consisted of Muslims showed clearly that they actually aimed to wipe out the Muslim population there. Disturbed by what was taking place in the region, the administrators of Kars Islam Council gave a note to Colonel Limni, the British representative. In these notes and protests, they reported that Armenians had destroyed more than ten thousand Muslim villages, killed approximately one hundred thousand women and children and damaged all the property. They also wrote that in Revan, a quarter that was recently abandoned by the Ottoman Army, they resumed their atrocities. None of these appeals, however, yielded any good results.³⁸⁹

The British were following the same course of action in Oltu as they had in Kars, dismantling the interim government and establishing a fresh administration. Faril, the British Captain arriving in Oltu on May 1919, said '*The Armenians will come to Armenia but the Georgians are allowed no farther than the Ardahan River.*' A huge number of Armenian fedais, 1500 infantrymen and 300 cavalrymen, came to Kars armed with cannons and machine guns. The Armenian Emigrants were also flocking into the area. The rumour had it that this number would rise up to 15.000 households. Captain Faril supplied all the Christians in Oltu region with arms and disarmed the Muslims³⁹⁰. The Armenians arriving in Oltu and Sarıkamış, attempted to take over, claiming

³⁸⁹ The report of İbrahim Bey, The Head of National Islam Council on behalf of the Muslim community in Nahcivan, Kars, Ardahan, Kağızman, Batum, İğdır, Kamarlı, to the Government, 16 January 1919 (B.O.A. A.AMD.MV.106/23). For further information S. Esin Dayı Elviye-i Selase'de Milli Teşkilatlanma, Erzurum 1997.

³⁹⁰ Fahrettin Kızıroğlu, Milli Mücadelede Kars Book I, İstanbul, 1960, p. 68-70.

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that the Greek population in the region demanded protection and that they were there to attain security within the area³⁹¹. Owing to the pressure, the Muslims in the region started to establish their own armed forces organisation. At the beginning of June 1919, Oltu militia attacked Kızılkilise, close to Sarıkamış, and ruined the Armenian platoon of hundred and fifty soldiers and three machine guns.³⁹²

Having faced resistance from Oltu and Sarıkamış residents, the Armenians accumulated 1.500 infantry men, ten cannons and ten machine guns in Merdenek and demanded the surrender of Oltu.³⁹³ This was a threat that affected almost 40 thousand people in the area. For this reason, the residents of Oltu asked Kazım Karabekir Pasha for support. Reporting the state to the Ministry of War, Karabekir expressed '*... as this operation has no boundaries, it only aims to destroy Muslims. Attempts have to be made on the part of Entente Powers to bring it to an end*'³⁹⁴. As it was expected that Armenians would spend the summer for preparation, some artillery and medical supply was sent to Oltu from Erzurum.³⁹⁵ the Armenians, in turn, withdrew their forces to Kars. The same application went for the armed forces in Beyazıt as well.³⁹⁶

Against a potential Armenian attack to Oltu in the spring, Hamdi Bey, the commander of the 9th Army took the following precautions:³⁹⁷

³⁹¹ A cipher to the Ministry of War from Kazım Karabekir May 27, 1919, ATASE. K. 189, D.104/8, F21.

³⁹² ATTB.IV, Ankara, 1997, p.34.

³⁹³ ATASE. K.186 D. 93/25, F.54 (23/ 10/1919).

³⁹⁴ ATASE. K.186 D. 95/22 F.207

³⁹⁵ Sami Önal, Milli Mücadele'de Oltu, Ankara, 1968, p. 58.

³⁹⁶ ATASE.K.186.D. 93/25, F.103

³⁹⁷ ATASE. K. 324, D. 6-A (1/ 63), F .114-2.

1. Three battalions of 1600 infantrymen, with the one in Narman at the centre.
2. The formation of a platoon armed with cannons and three machine guns.
3. The foundation of intelligence services in Kars and Sarıkamış.
4. The penetration into the west of Merdenek with the platoon involved and thus prevention of Armenian activities. The formation of a front there.
5. The prevention of potential Armenian attacks.

In a report he sent to the Ministry of War on 6 October 1919, Kazım Karabekir Pasha gave an account of the situation, saying *'The Armenians are continuing to commit crimes against the Muslim community, thinking they would thus take over Elviye-i Selasiye (three livas- Kars, Ardahan, Batum.) Some Armenians disguised as British prompted some tribe members to wage battle against each other by creating discord among them. On 21/9/35 they had to withdraw from Iğdır.*³⁹⁸

In the meantime, the Armenians were threatening the Muslim community that was going to inform the American committee to visit the region and saying *'we would get ugly if you ever complained about us'*. They made sure that two people with the intention of appealing to the American committee were killed.³⁹⁹

The Government in Istanbul dealt closely with what was happening beyond the borders. The ministry of Interior Affairs

³⁹⁸ ATASE. K. 186, D. 95 / 22 F.99.

³⁹⁹ A telegram to the Ministry of War from Kazım Karabekir, September 22, 1919 ATASE. K. 186.D. 95 / 22, F.180.

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sent a telegram to the Eastern Provinces and warned that the Armenians announced mobilisation and intended to devastate the Muslim population in the region, and thus precautions had to be taken⁴⁰⁰. Upon the surge of complaints in the region, the Cabinet in a resolution made on 9 June 1919 stated that necessary measures had to be established so as not to face a *fait accompli* as in the invasion of İzmir, and that it was noticeable that Armenian attackers were led by British officers. The Ottoman Government, the resolution continued, could not be held responsible for the lack of security in the region. The armies in the area had to be ready and the current situation would be conveyed to the representatives of the Entente powers⁴⁰¹. When that was done, the British claimed that the coming news was overstated and the allegations of the Ottoman Government were not true.⁴⁰² Later, the Interior Ministry sent a telegram to Eastern Provinces and required these incidents to be thoroughly investigated before being reported to Istanbul.⁴⁰³ While the Armenians were committing atrocity in the east, the Allied powers were putting pressure on the Ottoman Government. The Armenian Patriarch of Istanbul was spreading the allegations that Armenians were being killed by Muslims in the European press. Mustafa Kemal Pasha described the situation in a telegram he sent to Erzurum Province, and noted that the Armenians managed, as usual, to turn European public against us. He also required the officers to send evidence and reports to the Ministry of War as to what the Armenians had done⁴⁰⁴.

⁴⁰⁰ B.O.A. DH.ŞFR 98 / 228. In the telegram, it was demanded that Vahan Papazian be punished for his crimes in Van.

⁴⁰¹ B.O.A. MV.216/ 24.

⁴⁰² B.O.A. DH.KMS. 53-2/ 5, lef .2.

⁴⁰³ Ibid lef.1

⁴⁰⁴ ATTB.IV, p.51

The Ministry of Interior Affairs, with the provocation of Ali Galip, the governor of El-Aziz, wrote a report on 25 July 1919 to the Ministry of War, which demanded the removal of Kazım Karabekir Pasha from the region, who allegedly 'was provoking the Muslims against the Armenians and wrote messages decoded'⁴⁰⁵. The Ministry of War stated that the decision was the Cabinet's and people like Kazım Karabekir were working against Armenian aggression to prevent similar results to the ones in the case of İzmir. He was on no account to leave the command of the Eastern forces⁴⁰⁶. The Ministry of Interior Affairs shifted all its attention to the Muslims, demanding them not to conduct any attacks against the Armenians within the province⁴⁰⁷.

While the Greek and Armenian newspapers made news freely, some parts in Turkish papers, the ones on the Armenians in the Caucasus in particular, were exposed to censorship. The Ministry of War reported this to the cabinet on 8 September 1919, saying that it would be beneficial to present such stories with their documents⁴⁰⁸. It turns out that all these attempts failed, because a telegram sent by the Ministry of War to the corps on 27 August 1919 read *'The information and observations upon the cruelties the Armenians have imposed on the Muslim community have to be sent in code to the authorities and province; hence, it must be ensured that public unrest is avoided'*⁴⁰⁹.

The endeavours of the Ministry of Interior Affairs on the matter did not come to a halt. Adil Bey, the Interior Minister, who counted on the resolutions of the Allies, referred to the same incidents in his telegram of 15 September 1919. He stated that our

⁴⁰⁵ HTVD. Year:3 (September 1954), document no:192

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid. document no: 193.

⁴⁰⁷ B.O.A.DH.KMS.50-1/ 69, lef.8.

⁴⁰⁸ HTVD. Year:3 (September,1954), vol:9, doc:210

⁴⁰⁹ ATASE. K.183, D.87 / 18, F. 90.

Eastern front had to be protected from aggression and that the government had launched political attempts to prevent Armenian attacks on the Muslim community beyond the border. He added that the Allied Powers had given a guarantee and these rumours were intentionally being spread to scare the Muslim community. According to him, no incidents to distort the security should be allowed and, whether within our borders or beyond them, there should not be any harassment of the Armenians by our community⁴¹⁰. In other words, the Ministry of Interior Affairs was actually charging with aggression its own people who actually were the ones to have been attacked.

In response to the complaints from the Ottoman Government, the British High Commission reported that the situation on the Caucasus border was at stake and that the Kurds were being encouraged to attack Armenians between Karakilise and Beyazid by Ottoman officers. Some skirmishes were heard of to the south of Nahcivan and Oltu. Furthermore it was also noted any harassment of Armenians by Ottoman government will strengthen the negative impression about us, which was already felt heavily due to the relocation and casualties. Such actions would, the note went on, would imperil the political attempts concerning the Eastern Provinces⁴¹¹.

As a response he gave to this as the 9th Army Deputy Inspector, Kazım Karabekir Pasha stated *'It is not true that the Kurds are being encouraged by Ottoman officers to attack the Armenians. Rather, the Armenians, coming up to our border, are*

⁴¹⁰ B.O.A. DH.ŞFR. 102/ 319

⁴¹¹ B.O.A.DH.KMS.53-2/ 70 lef:3.; HTVD. Year:3 (September 1954) doc No:195).

*executing cruelties against us. What the Muslim community does is simply to defend itself.*⁴¹²

By December 1919 the pressure of the British had not come to a halt and the government had been warned several times not to pass the border and put any pressure on the Armenians in the East⁴¹³. It was also claimed that Christians were forced to deliver documents expressing everything was safe⁴¹⁴. This, however, turned out to be Armenian propaganda⁴¹⁵.

The American army allocated several commodities of 5 million dollars to Armenian troops. The Armenian committee of representatives in Paris was in charge of distributing these items. With a mutual agreement made by Bogos Nubar and Venizelos on the part of Armenia and Greece, the Greek government confiscated big ships within the area of Russia to carry a hundred and fifty thousand Greeks gathered in Batum. The Armenians were provided with arms and goods and their equipment were being enriched. In this way, an army capable of endangering the Muslim community and the Eastern provinces was underway. Aware of the severity of the situation that would make Eastern Provinces vulnerable, Kazım Karabekir Pasha was seeking several ways to solve it⁴¹⁶.

In a circular he released on 22 August 1919, Mustafa Kemal discussed the activities of a Greek organisation called

⁴¹² HTVD. Year:3 (September 1954) Doc no:196.

⁴¹³ The cipher to the provinces from the Interior Ministry, December 11, 1919. DH.ŞFR.105 / 195.

⁴¹⁴ B.O.A.DH.ŞFR.105/96.

⁴¹⁵ HTVD. Year: 6 (March 1955), vol: 11. doc no: 287

⁴¹⁶ ATASE. K. 184 D. 88719 F.29, 29-1. 500.000 Kilos of flour were sent to Armenia form America

Mavri Mira and said '*Armenian Patriarch Zaven Efendi is a man of Mavri Mira. Armenian preparation is the same as that of the Greeks*'⁴¹⁷.

Mustafa Kemal Pasha also retorted the allegations Patriarch Zaven Efendi published in Greek and Armenian newspapers. In his declaration as the head of Representative Community, he said:

'The Armenian Patriarch Zaven Efendi in a recent letter published in Neologos newspaper stated that many Armenian families, fearing the national movement, had been emigrating from Anatolian towns such as Erzincan, Erzurum, Samsun, Izmit and Adapazari. By doing so, Zaven Efendi attempted to associate the union that was formed merely to obtain self defence with a so-called opposition against Armenians or non Muslims. This led us to reveal the facts:

Firstly: There are no emigrating Armenian families in the region of Erzurum and Erzincan. Next, in places like Samsun, Izmit and Adapazari, the security conditions and the harmony among the people of different faiths is thankfully better off than ever and to be appreciated. Further, the spiritual leaders in Haymana and the Christian community in places like Tokat, Amasya, reported through telegrams sent to foreign representatives and the Interior Ministry that they also supported the national movement.

Secondly: There may have been a few wealthy families who immigrated to a better place for security reasons upon the statements of the Ferit Pasha cabinet, who, contrary to reality, announced the Anatolian National movement as Bolshevism and has always had a tendency to regard this country as Unionist. These families, however, are the ones that have been encouraged by the Armenian committees and

⁴¹⁷ ATBD. Year: 27 (September 1978), vol: 77 doc: 1694

*the Patriarchy itself to move in an effort to attain the majority of population in both Adana and Armenia.*⁴¹⁸

Revealing the emptiness of these allegations in this way, Mustafa Kemal Pasha denied that the National Forces felt enmity towards the Christian minority. He also suggested that being fair and decent would serve to illustrate our sense of civilisation that we possessed by nature⁴¹⁹

3- Muslim Refugees

As the officials of the Armenian Tashnak Community decided that no Muslims should be left in the quarters of Yerevan and Aras⁴²⁰, the Muslims made their way to the Turkish borders so as to evade the massacre. Those who left Revan and the neighbourhood arrived in Van, and by 14 July 1919, two thousand households were settled into the empty villages⁴²¹. The skirmishes at the border increased. Armenian cannons fired at the defenceless community beyond the border⁴²². About forty thousand emigrants gathered in Kars in 4 July 1919⁴²³. Hurşit Bey, Erzurum deputy governor, also wrote that hundreds of families fleeing from Armenian attacks came to their province⁴²⁴. The British and Armenian troops attacked Guyan and killed the villagers, causing many others to emigrate⁴²⁵.

⁴¹⁸ İleri, 22 Tesrin-i evvel 335 (22 October 1919), No 641.

⁴¹⁹ ATBD. Year: 30 (May 1981) vol: 79, doc: 1745.

⁴²⁰ ATASE. K.184,D.88/19, F.299.

⁴²¹ B.O.A.DH.KMS.53-2 / 104, lef.4.5.

⁴²² B.O.A.DH.KMS.53-3/15 lef.4.5

⁴²³ Dayı, Elviye-i Selase'de Milli Teşkilatlanma, P. 158.

⁴²⁴ B.O.A.DH.KMS.53-2/ 86, lef.2.

⁴²⁵ B.O.A.DH.KMS 53-370.

Hundreds of families from Kars, who were running away from Armenian harassment, came to the Province of Trabzon through Batum and Erzurum. At a time when the residents were already going through hardships, the administration was having trouble in accommodating and feeding the new settlers⁴²⁶.

Fevzi Pasha, the General Head of Command, reported in a memo he sent to the army corps that the Armenians continued to commit atrocities in the Caucasus region and that another two hundred and fifty thousand people had come to Beyazıd. He also stated that emigrants were suffering a lot from what the Armenians had been doing in the East and the Greeks in the west and the Sublime Port made its attempts to bring the country to its natural status at once⁴²⁷.

During the Erzurum convention, Armenian harassment began to increase. Meanwhile, as the emigrants were in very bad conditions, Kazım Karabekir Pasha sent them to the Province of Mamuretulaziz, where they would be better off⁴²⁸. Apart from the emigrants who were coming from beyond the border, there were others who once moved to the West. They now began to return to their homelands now that the area was saved from Russians and Armenians. However, as the disorder in Bitlis, Erzurum and Van was still continued, the emigrants of these provinces were not brought in until the mid-1919s⁴²⁹. The first group of ten thousand people was shipped to their area and the precautions were taken along the route⁴³⁰. Many administrators in Kars region had had to leave due to the Armenian attacks. Fahrettin Piroğlu, Kağızmanlı Ali Bey and other Turkish officials took shelter in Erzurum. The

⁴²⁶ B.O.A.DH.KMS.53-4/ 17.

⁴²⁷ ATASE.K.185. D.91 / 21, F.97.

⁴²⁸ ATASE. K. 82, D.304 / 211,F35.

⁴²⁹ B.O.A.DH.ŞFR.87/23; 94 / 160; 87 / 46,87 / 166.

⁴³⁰ Vakıf, June 9, 1355, No: 581.

new status quo that was formed in accordance with the wishes of Lloyd George and President Wilson brought about many difficulties that would prevent things from returning to normal⁴³¹.

The properties of Muslims coming from the Caucasus were being captured and most of these people were being killed nearby Kars. Seven households of Akçakale emigrants took shelter in Ottoman territory. On their departure from Kars on 2 July all of their items were seized. The Armenian Government in Sankamış confiscated five hundred rubles and all the properties of the emigrants in the name of Fahreddin Bey and his relative Sivaslı Ali Bey, and they told them that they would be deprived of everything until they crossed the border⁴³².

The British representative in Tbilisi wrote to Curzon on 4 July 1920 about what the Armenians did in the Caucasus and beyond the border: *'I can without hesitation say that it is not advisable in terms of humanity to entrust the well being of Muslims in the region to a Dashnak Armenian government. I believe that Armenians will be safe and sound under the administration of Muslims, but also I'm convinced that Muslims will never have security with a Dashnak Government.'*⁴³³ The same officer, in his speech he made in House of Commons, focusing on the actions of Armenians did in the region said *'As far as I'm concerned, you regard Armenians as little innocent girls. You are quite mistaken. Because they proved in their latest cruel action what a brutal nation they actually are.'*⁴³⁴

The emergence of the First World War and the Ottoman's siding with the Central Powers paved the way for Armenians to

⁴³¹ Allen and Murattaf, *Caucassian*, p. 498.

⁴³² B.O.A. B.E.O. A.AMD.MV.107/ 32.

⁴³³ Öke, *Ermeni Sorunu*, p. 284.

⁴³⁴ Atatürk'ün Tamim Telgraf ve Beyannameleri, vol. IV, Ankara 1997, p. 254.

attack Ottoman territory, with the Russians in the East, with the French and the British in the South and exterminate innocent people. By the end of the war, more than 1,200,000 had been exiled in Eastern Anatolia and the Caucasus and more than 1,000,000 people had died. About 2.5000.000 Muslims lost their lives all over Anatolia. If we were to call what the Turks did genocide, it would be an interesting one in which murderers died rather than the victims⁴³⁵. Another noticeable point here is that the Armenians themselves committed a worse version of the exiles and massacres they claimed to have been exposed to by the Turks. 30% of the population only in six villages in Eastern Anatolia (Erzurum, Van, Sivas Bitlis, Diyarbakır and El-Aziz) died between the years 1912-1992.⁴³⁶

While the Armenians were continuing their preparation on the Caucasian border, Rawlinson, the British Lieutenant Colonel, was trying to implement the issue of disarmament of Ottoman soldiers in view of the Mudros Armistice. He was to dispatch the cannons and artillery in the region of the 15th Army corps to Batum. The dispatch infuriated the Muslim community and it became evident that people would not give in to the sending of the cannons, daggers and bayonets unless their rights would be established⁴³⁷.

With this, Kazım Karabekir Pasha on 3 August 1919 reported the situation to the Ministry of War saying that the Erzurum community would never allow anything to be taken out of the city and thus the dispatch of the arms temporarily ceased⁴³⁸. Given that

⁴³⁵ Justin McCarthy, "Ermeni Terörizmi: Zehir ve Panzehir Olarak Tarih", Ankara Üniversitesi Uluslararası Terörizm Sempozyumu, Ankara, 1984, p. 84.

⁴³⁶ Justin McCarthy, Ölüm ve Sürgün, İstanbul, 1998, p. 273.

⁴³⁷ ATASE. K.189, D. 104/8, F.87.

⁴³⁸ ATASE. K. 189, D.104/ 8, F.60.

British officers were organising Armenian soldiers, it was clear to whom these weapons would be distributed⁴³⁹.

4-The Eastern Operation and Gümrü Treaty

The Armenians' mistreatment to the Muslim community continued well into the 1920s. They harassed the community in Dolamaç, Taşirek, and Barkley and killed 20 people⁴⁴⁰. In addition, they were bringing forces to Iğdır so as to strengthen their position⁴⁴¹.

In March 1920 some gangs of Armenians and Nestorians dressed in British fashion had been ready to attack to the tribes located to the south Van Province⁴⁴². In response to the note sent on 13 March 1920 by the Army, the British High commission said on 17 March '*a Christian attack in the region is impossible. The emergence of such a thing would imperil the well being of Christians in the region*⁴⁴³.

By taking such a course of action, the Armenians not only revealed their hostility towards the Turkish, but also prevented any sort of help to Anatolia, blocking the way between Russia and Turkey. They were also drafting plans in collaboration with Pontus Greeks and the Allies. The Armenian administration comprised completely of the members of Dashnaksuthiun Party. These officers were delivering money from the community by force and provoking the feeling of hatred against Muslims. With

⁴³⁹ ATASE. K. 184, D. 88/ 19, F.45.

⁴⁴⁰ Albayrak, 4 Kanunievvel 1355/4 December 1919, vol: 49 The newspaper reporting this stated that Yerevan administration cannot be called a government after these incidents.

⁴⁴¹ ATASE. K 189, D.102/ 33, F. 29.

⁴⁴² ATASE.K 324, D.8 / 10, F. 50-2.

⁴⁴³ Ibid. F.50-3.

the motto 'no peace without conquest', they were in search of their dream of a 'Greater Armenia' that would extend to the Mediterranean.

Mustafa Kemal Pasha, the Head of the Representative Community, logged a protest on 22 March 1920 to the European countries about the Armenian policies and massacres⁴⁴. On the same day Kazım Karabekir Pasha sent another telegram to the Republic of Yerevan said that the atrocities by the Armenians began to increase from 20 February on and these were also confirmed by the foreign representatives.

He also added that the lives of the Muslims had to be ensured by the Armenian government, saying *'I hope you will remember the justice and affection we cast towards your national identity during my presence with my forces in Erzurum following the invasion two years back, and I expect this demand of mine will be well appreciated'*⁴⁵.

⁴⁴ Mustafa Kemal's telegram was as follows: 'Having long been subjected to Armenian harassment and cruelty in the form of imposing taxes, demanding seeds and collecting weapons, the Muslim community beyond our borders once more became the victims of the attacks of several platoons in the month of February. These soldiers were formed by different classes and led by Armenian commanders. As a result of these attacks, in the districts of Kars, such as Çıldır, Zarşad, Şuragel, Akbaba forty villages were completely destroyed. More than 2000 helpless people of these villages were brutally massacred. Moreover; their property was put up for sale in the market. In addition to these painful incidents we hear about each day, a new attack by Armenians was launched from 19 May against Muslims in Orduabad, Ahur, Civa Ciyusi and Vedi. It was also discovered that another attack to Oltu was underway. We demand that your government be informed that we seriously protest these incidents and that the world would face major disasters unless they are prevented. Yours sincerely'(ATTB., IV, s. 281).

⁴⁵ Hakimiyet-i Milliye, May 29 1336, NO:18

Despite these warnings and protests, the Armenians continued the massacres and raiding villages⁴⁴⁶. They detained eight thousand people of the population in sixty four villages and killed 650 men, fifty five of whom were from Kars and Arpaçay. Those who were unable to emigrate were exposed to rape. They committed yet another atrocity in the village of Zelk.⁴⁴⁷

The persistent attacks of the Armenians prompted the Grand National Assembly to conduct a military operation in the East. Early in April 1929, Kazım Karabekir asked for permission for an operation, yet Mustafa Kemal Pasha rejected, saying that such action would endanger Turkey's position prior to the outcomes of the peace conference and would turn the European public against us. Another important point, to him, was to find out how Russia would see the process⁴⁴⁸. On the Armenian's anniversary of establishment, 28 May 1928, they released an announcement and said that they would annex the eastern cities of Turkey and declared war against Turkey. This led Kazım Karabekir to once more appeal to Ankara. However, Mustafa Kemal Pasha refused the proposal a second time noting that the preparations were not yet over and the attitude of Russians was not clear. Not until 4 June was Kazım Karabekir able to get the post and mobilisation was announced in Erzurum, Erzincan and Van⁴⁴⁹.

In the meantime, the Armenians invaded Oltu and put pressure on the locals, almost challenging the Turkish government. In a response to the note regarding their retreat

⁴⁴⁶ The note from the Commander of 12. Party to XV.Army Corps ATASE. K. 882 , D.12 /29, F.14, 14-1.

⁴⁴⁷ From K. Karabekir Pasha telegram dated June 26, 1920 ATASE. K. 882, D. 12 /29, F14,14-1.

⁴⁴⁸ Kazım Karabekir, *İstiklal Harbimiz*, İstanbul, 1990, p.707-708.

⁴⁴⁹ Sonyel, *Türk Kurtuluş Savaşı ve Dış Politika*, II, p.24.

from Oltu, the Armenians said that they would never give up their ethnographical, historical and economical rights over Turkey and Oltu was now surely a part of the Armenian Republic⁴⁵⁰. M. Hattisian, the president of the Republic of Armenia, was on his trip in Europe at the time to find military and financial support for their expedition to the eastern cities in Turkey⁴⁵¹.

When the National Government did not receive any results from the talk with the Bolsheviks, they waited for a convenient time to attack Armenia. The Armenians soon presented the opportunity. On 24 September, they attacked the towns of K tek and Bardiz with the support of a keen interest from Greeks. Turkish forces under the command of Kazım Karabekir Pasha commenced the operation and they sent Armenians away from Sarıkamış on 30 September and Kars on 29 October. The Armenians now started to contemplate the conditions of the upcoming treaty. They now turned to Russia for the support they were unable to get from the West. Their leaders claimed that the movement in Anatolia provoked the revolution in Azerbaijan, and also that, combining with Azerbaijan, they would attempt to exterminate Armenia after invading Batum. They were sending such information to Moscow and demanding that Georgia and Armenia be left as a barrier between Azerbaijan and Turkey⁴⁵².

Mustafa Kemal Pasha had mentioned about the border of Armenia approximately one year before. Asked about the matter on 13 October 1919, he stated that *'the nation is in no way content with the idea of giving one inch of soil from the border established in 30*

⁴⁵⁰ TBMM.ZC.,V, p. 4.

⁴⁵¹ Sonyel, T rk Kurtuluş Savaşı ve Dış Politika, II., p.25-26.

⁴⁵² Sonyel, T rk Kurtuluş Savaşı ve Dış Politika, II, p.30.

*Teşrinievvel 1919*⁴⁵³. Moreover, he expressed that he would be pleased by the foundation of an independent Armenia beyond the Ottoman territory⁴⁵⁴. With this, on 2-3 December 1920, Gümrü Treaty was signed between the parties. Accordingly, the war between the two was over, leaving Kars, Sarıkamış and Ardahan to Turkey. The Armenian government, having acted in the way the powerful countries wanted, now acceded to the existence of a military force only to ensure self security⁴⁵⁵. The treaty marked the recognition of the National Assembly and National Pact by Armenia and thus it's giving up its demands over Turkey. This is the first mutual agreement that involved only Turkey and Armenia. The treaty allowed some of the Turkish forces to be sent the Western front and gave Ankara a deep breath.

However, the European countries kept pushing their demands to put the Sevres treaty into force. They also tried to attract Armenians outside Armenia and those in the opposition within the country. These activities lasted until the Lausanne Treaty and, actually, have done so well into our present day. The Gümrü Treaty later was approved by the Republic of Armenia with Moscow and Kars Treaties.

Before the Dashnak administration verified the treaty, the Bolsheviks took over Armenia on December 5, 1920 and, Dro, a gang leader, helped the revolutionists to form a pro-Soviet government in Armenia. Lengrad, the Soviet representative in Yerevan, was proclaiming that the Gümrü Treaty was invalid. The new administration was firmly opposed to the treaty,

⁴⁵³ Atatürk'ün Söylev Demeçleri, Tamim ve Telgrafları, V, Edit by Sadi Borak, Utkan Kocatürk, Ankara,1972, p.78.

⁴⁵⁴ Atatürk'ün Söylev ve Demeçleri, III, Edit by Nimet Arsan, Ankara,1981, p.12

⁴⁵⁵ İsmail Soysal, Türkiye'nin Siyasal Andlaşmaları, I (1920-1945), Ankara, 1989, p.19-23.

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claiming that Armenia thus now fell into the control of Turkey. Further, the matters over borders were a subject to evaluate not with Armenians but with Russians. They were now subject to the Moscow Treaty⁴⁵⁶.

In the meantime, the description about Armenian nation by Colonel Haskell, US High Commissioner, Yerevan was as follows:

"The Armenians are professional beggars. They are liars, utterly disgraceful, being unable to, even unwilling to, help each other and they are far from any feeling of gratitude. As well as the lack of the sense of nationality among Armenians, the country does not have capable politicians and financial recourses to prosper⁴⁵⁷."

Turkish administrators, having known this for years, proposed some curious offers. One week after the Gümürü Treaty, Salih Efendi, Erzurum Deputy, bringing up the activities the Armenians had committed within Turkish borders, suggested that they send all the Armenians in Turkey to Yerevan, but this was turned down on account of the political atmosphere of that time⁴⁵⁸.

III-Armenians on the Southern Front

According to the Sykes-Picot treaty signed on 16 May 1916 between Britain and France, the entire coastline starting from Akka in Syria was under French control as well as Adana, Mersin and the vicinity of Urfa and Maraş⁴⁵⁹. Ignoring the treaty,

⁴⁵⁶ Selahattin Tansel, Mondros'tan Mudanya'ya Kadar, III, İstanbul, 1991 p.245-246.

⁴⁵⁷ Sonyel, Türk Kurtuluş Savaşı ve Dış Politika, II, p36

⁴⁵⁸ TBMM. ZC. vol. V., 9 /11/ 336. Ankara, 1953, p. 340.

⁴⁵⁹ Fahir Armaoğlu, 20.Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi, Ankara, 1998, p. 126.

Britain occupied Urfa, Antep, Maraş. By the beginning of January 1919, they had landed their forces on these places and the French to Adana.

The British and the French aimed to make use of Armenian manpower in the south to reinforce their position. Both of these countries formed troops from the Armenian volunteers in Aleppo and Syria. The return of the Armenians who were subjected to relocation was of great importance for these countries. It was worrying for them that the majority of the population was made up of Turks. For that reason, the British commander to Syria came to Istanbul and conveyed some demands. In the fifth issue it was said that the Armenians were to return to their homelands and their estates and fields should be given back to them⁴⁶⁰.

Nazım Bey, the Deputy Governor of Adana, sent a telegram to Sublime Port and said that 250.000 Armenians were being dispatched by the Beirut Commission of France and that this would bring about domestic unrest. He demanded that precautions needed to be taken, as a great amount of money was required to meet the needs of the arrivers⁴⁶¹.

⁴⁶⁰ The same Marshall, after the cruelty of the Armenians to the Turks, suggested to Hamlin, the French General, that all the Armenian volunteers be sent to Morocco, but this proposal was rejected. (Gotthard Jaeschke, Kurtuluş Savaşı İle İlgili İngiliz Belgeleri, Translated to Turkish: Cemal Köprülü, Ankara, 1991, p. 46)

⁴⁶¹ The telegram was as follows:

To the Porte

Sender: Adana 15 FEB 1335

It was understood through the note by Colonel Berhemon, the High Administrator of Cilicia, that there was a preparation to send 250,000 Armenians in Syria and Iraq to their homelands and that this operation was carried out by the Beirut Commissionary of France. According to the plan, every week about five to eight hundred Armenian emigrants were to arrive in Adana and some measures should be taken to cope with the hardships the dispatch would bring about. It was also reported that the application, despite being a temporary one,

According to the joint decision of the Allied powers then located in Adana, the deputy patriarch of Adana was put in charge of gathering the Armenians in this region. In view of yet another command by the French, all the Armenians living in the range from Sivas and Tokat were to be taken to Adana and the extent would be Tokat, Amasya, Kayseri, Yozgat, Ankara, Konya, Ereğli, Karaman, Afyon, Eskişehir and İzmir⁴⁶². In this respect, a

would force the Armenians who were exposed to mistreatment to escape to Adana. The note also indicated that if this continued the dispatch would become impossible and this would pose great difficulties in Adana. The central government had to be made aware of the developments. Given the expenses and hardships for their accommodation and needs, we demand with great significance that a special commission to deal with the issue be sent in and a supply of hundred thousand liras be allocated urgently. The transfer of financial support must be hastened for the well being of the country. The necessary investigation over what happened in Kayseri must be carried out urgently and further precautions have to be taken, as even the slightest incident would be likely to cause ill effects on the way to returning the emigrants to their country

Adana Governor Nazım" (B.O.A. B.E.O. A. VRK. 825/15).

⁴⁶² ATASE. K. 255, D. No: 6-2, F. 28; B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 107/105.

It is now apparent that Armenians are pursuing a policy of regular immigration to the places where they want to achieve the dominance of population. The intelligence on this issue is below. We demand an investigation to find out the ways Armenians are transported and their departure points and that we receive a statistical study indicating the numbers involved.

The Ministry of War.

The representatives of Allied Powers in Adana agreed that Armenians would be assembled and the French government put the Armenian Patriarch in Adana in charge of the operation. Accordingly, every Armenian emigrant in the area ranging from Maraş to Sivas is to be sent to Adana. This area includes Amasya, Kayseri, Yozgat, Ankara, Konya, Ereğli, Karaman, Afyon, Akhisar and Smyrna. Daily reports including the names and the dates are to be sent to British Headquarters. (ATASE. K. 185, D. No: 91/21, F. 103).

committee from Yerevan visited the US in 1920 to collect the Armenian youth there to send to Adana and the Caucasus⁴⁶³.

A report sent to Interior Ministry by the Governor of Adana on 22 November 1919 indicated that Armenians from everywhere were pouring into Adana and that in their political effort they made up several gangs⁴⁶⁴. The number was about 25.000. *Jamanak* newspaper in Tarsus wrote it was 50.000. Those who arrived in Adana, Antep, Urfa and Maraş, in particular, were forcing Turks to emigrate and giving them tortures. After the truce, of the 24.000 Armenians who had been relocated, 16.000 returned to Maraş⁴⁶⁵.

The Interior Ministry explained the situation in a cipher message on 2 November 1919 and reported that the Armenians were in search of gaining the majority of the population and the evidence had also to be reported to bring the matter up in the peace conference⁴⁶⁶. The Ottoman Government took the course of taking measures as well so as to prevent their gatherings in certain locations. The cabinet took a resolution on 24 November 1919 to keep the Armenians in Kayseri from immigrating to Adana⁴⁶⁷. On the other hand, the French had the intention to dispatch those coming from Armenia to Zonguldak coal mines, thinking that this would bolster their position in the region⁴⁶⁸.

⁴⁶³ ATASE.K. 188, D.99-31,F-99.

⁴⁶⁴ B.O.A. DH.KMS. 57-1 / 25.

⁴⁶⁵ Yaşar Akbıyık, Milli Mücadelede Güney Cephesi- Maraş , Ankara,1999, p. 314-315.

⁴⁶⁶ B.O.A. DH.ŞFR.104/146,147.

⁴⁶⁷ B.O.A. MV.217 / 77;217 / 132.

⁴⁶⁸ Cumh.A. Fund Code 272.0.011 Place: 15.56.4

Other areas the Armenians chose were Kilis, Maraş and Antep. From 1920 on, they were going to try to settle in the regions of Diyarbakır and El-Aziz⁴⁶⁹.

Armenians in Urfa Maraş and Antep greeted the British and French with joy⁴⁷⁰. On the first Sunday of the French invasion in Urfa, the Armenians celebrated the incident by arranging a ceremony in honour of the French. Taking over the administration there, French officers were at the same time bringing the Armenians from the rural areas to the city. Those in prisons were released. Volunteers were training the youth on how to use weapons. Some other Armenians were in charge of collecting data about the nearby troops and establishing the contact between them and the British⁴⁷¹.

The Armenians in Maraş, who preferred the French to the British, were looking forward to the arrival of French troops, because those in Adana were able to act freely under French command. In Adana they assigned an Armenian, Arzarian, as the occupational commander and Armenians were in charge of the postal service⁴⁷². The French troops were greeted with great applause and let some Armenians do the patrolling. Some others in Turkish military uniform raided the Armenian villages, trying to give the impression how innocent and oppressed Armenians

⁴⁶⁹ ATASE. K.188, D.99-31,F.26.

⁴⁷⁰ This attitude of Armenians was paralel to the one of Armenians in Caucasus. They were trying to act along with both the British and Americans and the Bolsheviks, taking every possibility into account. History moved in circles both in South Anatolia and Caucasus. Under the rule of Byzantine, Sasani, the Selchuks and Ottomans, the Armenians pursued the same pattern of policy and sided with the strong. The situation today is no different today.

⁴⁷¹ İsmail Özçelik, Milli Mücadelede Güney Cephesi, Urfa, Ankara, 1992, p. 84.

⁴⁷² B.O.A. B.E.O. A.VRK. 824 / 72.

were⁴⁷³. The French did everything to make the Armenians loyal. In Adana, some Armenians were stopped with difficulty from running away from Liçyon detachment and they were given financial support and other items⁴⁷⁴. The French High Commissioner in Istanbul demanded that Dikian Efendi, the Armenian Catholic Envoy in Malatya be brought to Istanbul on account of his ill health and this request was fulfilled 'in a respectful manner'⁴⁷⁵.

In the occupied regions, the Armenian treated the Muslim community very badly. Two patrolling Ottoman soldiers in Kilis were killed; their fingers and ears were cut off. On their departure from Aleppo, 1500 Armenians were seen off with the wishes 'take our revenge'⁴⁷⁶. Muharrem Efendi, the telegram director in Zor, was pushed off the train and killed by Armenians in French military uniform⁴⁷⁷. The attitude of the Armenians in the French troops also endangered the lives of ten thousand soldiers on their discharge⁴⁷⁸.

In a report sent from Tarsus and Silivri to Interior Ministry on 4 September it was stated that the Armenians along with the French were mistreating the community and confiscating household commodities as compensation⁴⁷⁹. Those who were coming back from the relocation process seized what

⁴⁷³ Akbıyık, Milli Mücadelede Güney Cephesi – Maraş, p. 315–318.

⁴⁷⁴ From Cevdet Bey, the commander of the 13th A.C to Interior Ministry, the cipher 23/24 Kanunisani 1336 (23-24 January 1920) ATASE K.188, D.99-31, F.99.

⁴⁷⁵ B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 102/ 16.

⁴⁷⁶ Arşive Belgelerine Göre Kafkaslarda ve Anadolu'da Ermeni Mezalimi II, Document no: Başbakanlık Devlet Arşivleri Gen. Md., Ankara, 1995, p. 8.

⁴⁷⁷ İbid. Doc. No: 5, p.13.

⁴⁷⁸ İbid. Doc. No: 5, p.13.

⁴⁷⁹ B.OA.DH. İUM. 19-8 / 1-60.

they claimed to have owned before the mobilisation⁴⁸⁰. The Ottoman Government took some precautions to prevent the Armenians under the protection of French forces from pursuing their mistreatment. The Cabinet required the Governor of Adana to dismiss Armenians belonging to the French military on account of their unlawful activities⁴⁸¹. It was also decided on 26 November 1919 that the communication was to be censored by Bitlis, Diyarbakır and Mamüretülaziz and some measures were to be taken to stop the Armenians from causing disorder⁴⁸². To what extent these resolutions of the government, unable to make the Allied representatives in Istanbul comply, were effective is open to doubt, because Armenian abuse under French command would not be prevented until the intervention of the Society for the Defence of Rights Committee.

Just like the Adana, Urfa, Antep, ve Maraş regions, Diyarbakır was also exposed to Armenian provocation. As a result of Armenian pressure Zülfi Bey and Fevzi Bey, Diyarbakır deputies, were detained by the British⁴⁸³. Furthermore the news that Normad, a French Colonel, would be coming to Diyarbakır aroused excitement among them. Cevdet Bey, the commander of the 13th Army corps,, having realised that this was an intentional course of action, wrote a telegram to Normand and asked him not to show up as it was understood through the letters written by Armenian clergymen that some meetings would be held upon his arrival and a social unrest would break out ⁴⁸⁴ The Siverek Society for the Defence of Rights expressed that they were not content with the idea of Normand's arrival as a part of the

⁴⁸⁰ Karacakaya, Kaynakçalı Ermeni Meselesi Kronolojisi, p.176.

⁴⁸¹ B.O.A. DH.KMS.49-1/85, February 9, 1919.

⁴⁸² B.O.A. M.V. 217/137.

⁴⁸³ B.O.A. B.E.O.A.VRK. 824/ 98.

⁴⁸⁴ ATASE.K 188, D.99-31, F.1-1,1-2,1-3.

invasion. Hence, Normand gave up the idea of going to Diyarbakır⁴⁸⁵.

The Bishop Kendifian , who was in Diyarbakır from 1-15 January with the claim that he was there to establish contact between the Armenians and Muslims, later moved onto Harput, and in a letter he wrote to bishop Zaven Efendi, he gave the following information about the organisation, French support and Normand:

"In Diyarbakır four groups met in front of the church in the vicinity of Zeyd. We succeeded in opening an office of our organisation in Mersin and Adana The person in question, DR, came here and this pleased us. Bells rang in the church on Thursday evening. Our beloved Suriani and Armenian people came. Talks lasted until 11 pm the next day. The place for the allied French general was prepared. Two priests of this locality also attended the meeting. I will let you know about our accomplishments in Diyarbakır when our powerful troops in Aleppo arrive.

These are really honest, unlike the former Dashanks. From now on the brightness of the Ottoman presence is fading. Soon I will write you about ours. We are very pleased with what we have found. The end of the Muslims is not far away. It's time we treated them the way they did us in the past...British inspectors are coming, and the French as well. They have ensured our lives here. The Armenian Envoy brought 6660 lira. This was distributed to both the poor and the committees. It is certain that the French general who will be accommodated in the church is Normand⁴⁸⁶."

⁴⁸⁵ Ibid. F.16, 16-1, 16-2 veF.2-1.

⁴⁸⁶ ATASE. K.188 D.99-31, F.3, 3-1,3-2,3-3; For information about correspondence.

Armenians in Aleppo sent a letter to those in Diyarbakır saying ...'while our friends in America were giving their blood for the cause, those in Diyarbakır are of no use ⁴⁸⁷. In January 1920, Armenians who gathered in Diyarbakır said that whereas the British missed the opportunity of supporting, the French were with them. Normand would come to Diyarbakır and he would, if necessary, resort to force⁴⁸⁸. Thus the Diyarbakır Armenians were relating their hopes to the French.

The French Gendarmerie Commander in Urfa appealed to the National Tribe in January to make sure that the other tribes would participate in the upheaval in Urfa. The French commander announced that he would discharge his soldiers and replace them with volunteers, paying them for their duties. In this way he calculated that they would gain the support of the tribes. He also noted that those who did not comply would be exposed to force and they would gradually invade the provinces of Diyarbakır, Harput, Sivas, Erzurum and Van so as to separate the Kurds and Turks as a service to mankind⁴⁸⁹.

In Urfa, Antep and Maraş some organisations started under the command of Mustafa Kemal Pasha. Especially, after the news about the French arrival in Maraş, the offices of the Society for the Defence of Rights were asked to provide aid for these regions. In the telegram he sent to the Malatya Headquarters, Mustafa Kemal Pasha demanded that the Malatya community help Maraş and the National forces⁴⁹⁰.

⁴⁸⁷ Ibid, K.188.D.99-31,F.38

⁴⁸⁸ Ibid, F.53.

⁴⁸⁹ From Cevdet Bey, the commander of the 13th A.C to Interior Ministry 20/1/1336. (ATASE.K.188,D.99/31,F.58).

⁴⁹⁰ The original telegram was as follows:

To the Malatya Headquarters of Society for Defence of Rights
Urgent

From the beginning of 1920 onwards, the national organisations in Maraş, Urfa, Antep, gained power and this gave French some trouble. The skirmishes that took place in the region were again regarded by the European community as the massacres against Armenians. Britain was putting pressure on the government to ensure the abolition of the National Forces. On the other hand, some people were spreading the rumour that Christians were in great danger everywhere and they had started to emigrate. The purpose of these efforts was to prevent the activities of the National Forces.⁴⁹¹ Fevzi Pasha, the Minister of War, conveyed these complaints to Mustafa Kemal Pasha, saying, *"Nowadays some Armenian newspapers in Istanbul are covering stories in a much exaggerated language which claim the Turks started the cruelty towards Armenians. They are trying to turn the Christian community completely against us. At this very moment all the Christian community is undoubtedly so. Only France is supporting us politically and in terms of the press. At such a delicate time it would be improper to offend France."*⁴⁹²

Mustafa Kemal Pasha sent a telegram to Fevzi Pasha to report the state of the Armenians; he indicated that nowhere had there been a massacre of the Armenians; that it was up to French

It was discovered that French troops entered Maraş, which was evacuated by the British forces, as opposed to the regulations of the treaty, and that they started attacks against the Muslim community there. As we had agreed on collective defence against all kinds of invasion it was decided that our committee would be providing necessary help for the people of our faith. Given the convenient location of Malatya, additional forces should be accumulated in the district of Elbistan to enable National Forces achieve a victory. Munitions and mitrailleuse will be dispatched tomorrow here. We demand that we be informed about the outcomes. (The Archive of Presidency (C.A. A:III-3,D,4)).

⁴⁹¹ Declaration from the Ministry of War to the Army Corps 16.10.1919, ATASE.K.185, D. 91/21, F.42.

⁴⁹² ATASE.K.256, D.5 5/14. F.26.

to stop the fight against the Armenians, who were armed by France in Maraş and Urfa.; that the British had such demands just to gain some time and thus the combat would continue until the invaders withdrew⁴⁹³.

The French started to evacuate Maraş in February and Urfa in April. In the meantime, Andranik, the gang leader, who had moved to Europe due to his problems with the Yerevan Government, was summoned to the Armenian National Delegation in Paris to hold talks over the Cilicia conflict. They decided to appeal to General Gourau, High Commissioner in Syria, to establish an Armenian Government under French mandate in Cilicia. They asked for permission for Andranik to form an insurgent force in the region, which the General did not approve. Despite this response, Andranik moved on to Beirut in late 1920 and met with General Gourau, without success⁴⁹⁴. As if he was not satisfied with what he did in Eastern Anatolia and the Caucasus, he now desired to commit atrocities in Southern Anatolia. However, the French did not take the risk as they were not sure about what their future position would be and they saw what the Armenian gangs had done there.

The Armenians were annoyed when the peace talks between the French and the Ankara Government started in 1921. They unsuccessfully tried to put pressure on France to prevent the treaty. Not having been able to find support from political circles in Paris to ineffective the treaty, they dispatched Gabriel Noradunkian, the former Ottoman Minister of War, to London. There Noradunkian, working together with the people with some

⁴⁹³ C.A. A. III-3,D.14,f.13; Atatürk'ün Tamim, Telgraf ve Beyannameleri, IV, Prepared By: Nimet Arsan, Ankara,p.510-525.

⁴⁹⁴ Chalebian, General Andranik, p.510-525.

weight in the press, attempted to turn the international community against the Turks⁴⁹⁵.

According to the Ankara Agreement with France, all the territory under French invasion was annexed to the National Pact borders. That there was no mention of the Armenians in the agreement can be regarded as an indicator of the failure of France⁴⁹⁶. They soon evacuated the involved regions. Before the French forces abandoned, the Armenians, who mistreated the locals during the invasion, started to run away and became the first to leave the Southern regions. In the Adana region alone it was established that 30,000 thousand Armenians and Greeks escaped from Turkey. The Armenian regiment that French formed in Egypt, the so called East Legion, had to retreat from the region in French uniforms. The same went for the Armenians in French troops in Urfa, Antep, Mersin, Haçin, Zeytun, Kozan, Osmaniye and Maraş. There were about 1000 Armenians in the French military force. Along with the returnees, they had performed all kinds of cruelties in the above mentioned towns and fearing what would happen to them, they did not wait long to run away after the Ankara Treaty⁴⁹⁷.

This getaway was again regarded as the Armenians' being driven out of Cilicia in the Western press. The British were to use it against Turkey in Lausanne.

The number of those who left the region from 1 December 1921 to 4 January 1922 is as follows:

⁴⁹⁵ The note from Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Government B.O.A. B.E.O. A.AMD.MV. 108/99.

⁴⁹⁶ İsmail Soysal, *Türkiye'nin Siyasal Andla şmaları*, vol. I (1920-1945), Ankara, 1989, p. 17-18.

⁴⁹⁷ Sadi Kocaş, *Tarih Boyunca Ermeniler ve Selçuklulardan Beri Türk-Ermeni İlişkileri*, 3rd edition , Ankara, 1970, p.239 and 250.

a. Those loaded on ships in Mersin. 37.885 (30.023 of who were Armenian),

b. Those who took the way to Alexandretta from Dörtöy 12.066 (10.000 of who were Armenians.

The number of the Christians that stayed in Cilicia until 1 January 1922 was 3.761, and only 637 of them were Armenians.

c. Those who left for Syria from Antep and Kilis were about 4.500 people. Around 5.500 stayed.

In conclusion between the above mentioned dates, 54,451 Christians abandoned the region while some 8760 people stayed where they were. The number would rise considering those who secretly used the roads. The escapees had burned down 1369 village and farms in the region⁴⁹⁸.

Today, France intends to pay what they owe the Armenians, who they used for their purposes. While doing so, parties in power exploit the Armenian citizens politically. The latest attempt on this issue is the Statute of Armenian Genocide, which they formed in Paris. On the base of the six meter monument, it is interesting to see the inscription that reads '*To the memory of Composer Komitas and the First Genocide of the 20th Century performed in the Ottoman Empire.*' and '*to the memory of the Armenian Volunteers and insurgents who died for France*'⁴⁹⁹. Further, France wants Turkey to acknowledge the so called Armenian Genocide as a stipulation for Turkey's access to European Union. This is a sign of the strength of the Armenian Diaspora as well as the France's desire to have a say in the Caucasus.

⁴⁹⁸ Belgelerle Ermeni Sorunu, Genelkurmay ATASE, Başkanlığı Yay. Ankara,1983, p.428.

⁴⁹⁹ [http:// www.tetedeturc.com](http://www.tetedeturc.com). April 8, 2003.

IV. PART

THE ARMENIAN QUESTION IN INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS

I. The Armenian Question in Paris Peace Conference

Peace treaties which would establish the new world order after the First World War were discussed at the Paris Peace Conference on 18 January 1919. Aiming to be paid back for their services to the Central Powers during the war, the Armenians also attended the conference. Britain and France, who wanted to put the reforms about Eastern Anatolia into action before the war, had the opportunity to continue on the matter now even more powerfully. The Armenians believed that the Central Powers could fulfil their wishes. The Central Powers had entered into a unique undertaking on the issue of Armenia. However, they did not want to get involved directly. Before the peace conference, they all had officially declared that they supported the idea of an independent Republic of Armenia, and the British and Americans had even made some suggestions particular to this region. On the other hand, that the Armenians could not constitute the majority of the population anywhere made the problem even worse.⁵⁰⁰

The British Government quickened their endeavours for the establishment of the independent Armenia over a large geography after the year 1917. "Gazette de Lausanne" included the ideas of the British about establishing the "Great Armenia" in the article titled "Armenia Region" dated 3 November 1917. The Gazette also mentioned that the British were trying hard on this

⁵⁰⁰ Paul C. Helmreich, *Sevr Entrikaları*, translated by Şerif Erol, Istanbul, 1996, p. 34.

issue.⁵⁰¹ Arnold Toynbee, working in the British Ministry of Foreign Affairs, wrote a telegram to Kidston, another member of personnel of the ministry, on 26 October 1918. He included his personal views and suggested that the following should be done:

"In order to protect our good name and our interest, we should establish Armenia and also do the following:

a- The atrocities of the year 1915 and those of the previous years should be paid for.

*b- We should prevent the Turanist Movement effectively and separate the Turks from the Arabs by building a "Non-Turkish and Non-Muslim" barricade on the Turkish border."*⁵⁰²

In addition to this, there were some British authorities who suggested establishing an Armenia which would include only Cilicia and North Syria. British Colonel D. G. Hogarth sent a letter to the British Ministry of Defence on 15 November 1918 and put forward this idea. He also stated that Armenians from other places should be brought there and a strong military assistance was necessary for a 50 year period to protect this land.⁵⁰³

The British Ministry of Defence prepared a booklet through these ideas and explained the situation of Armenians in 1919 as follows:

"1- Public Opinion and National Feeling:

The opinions of the Armenians cannot be measured as easily as the opinions of a nation which is widespread. The national feelings of a race which has never formed a single and wide state hardly exist. However, the Armenians have a strong feeling of sharing the common,

⁵⁰¹ B.O.A. BEO.A.VRK. 815/8.

⁵⁰² Burdett, Armenia Political and Ethnic Boundaries, p. 374

⁵⁰³ Ibid. p. 415

national pains. The will to live together in a national state is enough to form it. Unlike the Greeks, Italians and even Serbs, who work for their country with a common feeling and custom, are passionately attached, and have a central political unity, the Armenians have neither a central region nor a motherland. Although they do not have a centre like Mecca, Jerusalem or Rome, they have the shared memories of atrocities and they do not have the attachment to a single church. Yet, they are strongly loyal to the old Armenia which was attempted to be destroyed by the Gregorians, Roman Catholics and Protestants. There is no religious fanaticism among the people of different professions, small groups and especially the priests. Therefore, since the Armenians have often been the victims of atrocities, they have a great religious tolerance and they may be in a good position in the future.

2- Expansion and Improvements about the Future:

*These mainly depend on whether the Armenians become dominant in an area by willing migrations. They are famous for their skill in trade and art everywhere and their handicrafts are excellent. Although they are unarmed in many countries, they have shown their military skills (as in the Russo-Turkish wars and even in the genocide in certain places). Their success in agriculture in appropriate regions is certain."*⁵⁰⁴

Independent Armenia was established on 28 May 1918 and it was represented in London by the Armenian National Bureau. The Bureau published books to manipulate the British public opinion, organised discussions during which the future of the Armenians was discussed.⁵⁰⁵

⁵⁰⁴ Armenia and Kurdistan, H.M.S. Foreign Office Historical Section, London, 1920, p. 30-31.

⁵⁰⁵ Sedat Laçiner, "Armenian Diaspora in Britain and the Armenian Question", Armenia Diaspora, London, New York, Berlin and Ankara, 2001, p. 37.

As a result of the Armenian efforts, like those of the British, the opinions of the French public were in favour of the Armenians. French governors were thinking about the future of the Cilicia region rather than the Caucasus and trying to gain the sympathy of the Armenians.⁵⁰⁶ After disturbances were created in Anatolia and not even a small allied control was present, Lewis Heck, the Istanbul representative of the United States, sent a warning note to Paris on 4 January 1919. He stated that no official declaration should be made-for the time being- about the establishment of Armenia, if any, in Eastern Anatolia because this could add to the tension in the region.⁵⁰⁷

While in Europe some propaganda was being made about the Turks via various intrigues, some Europeans believed in the opposite. In 1919, Pierre Loti wrote in his book "*Les Massacres d'Armenia de 1919*" published in Istanbul as follows:

"Turks: Turks, our old friends, have never been an enemy to us. They were at war against Russia. The Turks are a people better than even the Orthodoxies with less fanaticism and are hospitable...Armenian Massacres: My choice of such a topic will focus all attention on myself and everybody will attack me. However, I start the issue by taking everything into consideration. Turks are a very noble and virtuous people. There are thousands of witnesses and innumerable signed letters to prove this fact. Yet, with the declaration of war, the Turks started to march over Armenians; although they knew that the Europeans would accuse them anyway. All nations have murder and relocation in their souls. However when these belong to Turks somehow, they become unforgivable. Examples for the murders of the Europeans are

⁵⁰⁶ For further information about the the attitude of the French: Yahya Akyüz, *Türk Kurtuluş Savaşı ve Fransız Kamuoyu (1919-1920)*, Ankara, 1988.

⁵⁰⁷ Helmreich, *Sevr Entrikaları*, p.35.

numerous: Spain-Jewish, the Inquisition, massacres of Muslims in Macedonia. We easily forgave what the Russians and the Greeks did, but Turks can never be forgiven. Always Turks! Always Turks! What the Armenians experienced has made them more sacred for me. Yet, I will write about Armenians just enough to defend my friends, the Turks:

All who have had any relationship whatsoever with the Armenians, mundane or business, -- business affairs above all, that turn away with antipathy after a short time. (Seventeen lines after this point-page 16- are censored by Paris) There are Armenians, everywhere in Anatolia, who practice usury by lending money to Turks and thus rob them. They finally turned Europeans into enemy of the Turks and they longed to possess the Turkish land." ⁵⁰⁸

The post-war public opinion of Europe was totally against the Turks. The Paris Peace Conference gathered under such circumstances. The armistice, which pleased Armenians a lot, would enable the Central Powers to fulfil the wishes of Armenians.⁵⁰⁹ Thus, the Armenians started some intensive political activities after the armistice. Bogos Nubar Pasha appealed to the Central Powers on 30 October 1918 and he demanded that a fully independent Armenia, including Erzurum, should be established and the independence of this state should be maintained by the Central Powers and the League of Nations. Zaven Efendi, the Armenian Patriarch, working for the same aim, went from Istanbul to Paris on 12 February 1919 and then went to London. Having met Bogos Nubar Pasha, he informed Lords Cecil, Curzon and Harding about the Armenian Question. He

⁵⁰⁸ Pierre Loti, *Türkler ve Ermeniler (Les Massacres d'Armenie de 1919)* Istanbul 1335. Another book by Pierre Loti was translated into Turkish as: Pierre Loti, *Sevgili Fransamızın Doğudaki Ölümü*, T.C. Kültür Bakanlığı, Ankara, 2000.

⁵⁰⁹ Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Republic of Armenia (1918-1919)*, Vol I, London 1971, p. 55.

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visited George V, the King of England, in order to express the gratefulness of Armenians. On his way back, he visited the President and the Prime Minister of France.⁵¹⁰

"The Congress of Armenian Union", established for Armenians in Turkey, Russia, Iran, Egypt, Syria, Europe and America, gathered on 24 February 1919 and they assigned a committee, including six people presided by Bogos Nubar Pasha, to defend Armenian wishes in the Paris Peace Conference. Avetis Aharonian, the President of the Republic of Caucasian Armenia, officially established on 28 May 1919, also attended the conference. Bogos Nubar and Aharonian, who could not normally stand each other, co-operated as a single group -despite some minor objections- , which was only possible as a result of the pressure from the Armenian Church.

In addition to these two Armenian delegates, there were approximately forty independent Armenian delegates operating in the Paris Peace Conference, too. The Armenians had an intensive political lobby in the conference. Hundreds of journalists, writers, singers, professors, senators and ex-ministers were making long speeches in favour of the Armenian cause and conferences were being organised. Armenian delegates were constantly following Wilson, Lloyd George and Clemenceau and repeatedly reminding them that they owe the Armenian cause. These "shameless behaviours" of the Armenians, everlasting demands and the way they expressed these enraged everybody and their friends started to disappear.⁵¹¹

The Armenian Delegation presented their demands at the conference on 26 February 1919.⁵¹² This delegation presented a

⁵¹⁰ Uras, *Tarihte Ermeniler*, p. 672 and 696.

⁵¹¹ Helmreich, *Sevr Entrikalari*, p.35.

⁵¹² Harry Howard, *The Partition of Turkey*, New York, 1966, p. 225.

note titled "*The Armenian Question Before the Peace Conference*" to the "Allied Council" and the demands of Armenians were as follows:

1- Kilis and Kozan, Cebel-bereket, the sanjaks of Maraş, including Adana and Alexandretta,

2- Erzurum, Bitlis, Van, Diyarbakır, Harput, and Sivas provinces and some part of Trabzon, which would serve as a gate to the Black Sea,

3- The Republic of Caucasian Armenia which would include Yerevan, Tbilisi, Elizabetpol and Kars, excluding the north of Ardahan,

4- This Armenia should be within the guarantee of the Allies and America or the League of Nations. A special mandate should be given to one of the governments by the Peace Conference in order to assist Armenia temporarily.

5- The Powers should ensure that people would migrate to the area, punish those responsible for the massacres and maintain safety in the area.

This demand of the Armenians would lead to the establishment of a Republic of Greater Armenia between the Mediterranean, the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea. The demand about Cilicia was based on a geographical thesis which claimed that the region was a part of the Armenian Plateau. Moreover, the Armenians, who claimed that they were westerners in terms of religion and culture, stated that they needed an opening gate to the Mediterranean. Believing that these lands would be given to them, the Armenians stated that around 5000 Armenians had fought together with the Allies in Palestine, while only 300-400 Syrians had fought for them. In addition to these demands, the Armenians presented the issue of population to the conference

and claimed that there were 1,403,000 Armenians, 943,000 Turks and 482,000 Turkmen Kurds in the Eastern Provinces, which they called "Turkish Armenia".⁵¹³

Lloyd, too, knew that the Armenians were in the minority in Eastern Anatolia, but he wanted to give the lands to them just because of "historical reasons". In one of his speeches, he said about the Armenian Question : "*The Armenian Question is difficult to handle, because we want to give Armenians a piece of land where the population isn't Armenian just because of historical reasons.*"⁵¹⁴

A reporter for the *Daily Telegraph* was surprised by the demands of the Armenians and stated that the wideness of the land demanded by the Armenians was very astonishing; they knew that their demand would be refused; the Armenians were unable to form an independent republic in this area since they

⁵¹³ US National Archives (USA. NA.)Paris Peace Conference, Rool:184.021/94; Vakit, March 15, 1335/1919, No: 501. İkdam Gazetesi (Gazette) answered the Armenians' claims about population like this: "*Official statistisc about the Eastern Provinces: Muslim 3.040.891 79 %, Armenian 636,306 16.5 %, others 162.352 4.5 %. Statistics in the Yellow Book: Muslim 2,669.386 73.5 %, Armenian 666,453 18.5 %, others 272,581 7.5 %. Turks and Kurds are together in peace in the region. This should be considered in the conference.*" (İkdam, March 3, 1335/ 1919, No: 7924). Vakit Gazetesi (Gazette) included these news about the Armenian demands in the conference: "*...The Journal Gazette writes these: The worst thing is that Armenians are the minority in every part of the Ottoman country. Their population density is the highest in Erzurum. Even in Erzurum there are 220,000 Armenians and 240,000 Turks and 130,000 Kurds. Under these circumstances, an Armenian administration in the region is out of the question. Bogos Nubar gave an interview to the Matin Gazete and said that they deserved such an administration because they helped the Central Powers...*" (Vakit, 19 March 1335 / 1919, No:505).

⁵¹⁴ Taner Baytok, İngiliz Kaynaklarından Türk Kurtuluş Savaşı, Ankara, 1970, p. 79.

were not used to working physically and they always needed the protection of the League of Nations.⁵¹⁵

While those who claimed some rights on the Ottoman Empire were involved in intensive activities in the Paris Peace Conference, the Ottoman Government was not allowed to participate in the conference. The Ottoman Committee could only present their note to the conference on 17 June 1919.⁵¹⁶

During the conference, the Greek Prime Minister Venizelos and Armenian delegate Bogos Nubar Pasha made a decision. According to this, the Greeks would take Istanbul and the Armenians would take Trabzon; and they would send notes to the Greek and Armenian Patriarchates to spread these ideas. After these notes, both patriarchates started to organise meetings and conferences on this issue.⁵¹⁷

As the conference was in progress, the Armenian committee in Batumi appealed to Wilson, Clemenceau and Bogos Nubar on 7 August 1919 with this telegram:

"For twenty-five years, a hundred thousand Armenians, who live in Trabzon and the neighbouring areas in order to escape the Turkish swords, have been looking for the right time to go back to their homeland by taking refuge in the Black Sea coast of Russia. During these days, which will shape the destiny of a tyrannised nation, we want the original homeland, Armenia, to be taken. In this way, the Armenians who left the land on their own will return to the original homeland. Moreover, Armenia will own a harbour (harbour) which will enable it to maintain its existence, economy and safety." (In the copy

⁵¹⁵ Vakıf, March 24 1335, No:510.

⁵¹⁶ Akşin, İstanbul Hükümetleri ve Milli Mücadele, I, p. 239 and 369.

⁵¹⁷ A telephone calls from National Police Department to the Ministry of the Interior Affairs, 8 March 1335, B.O.A. DH. KMS. 49-1/28.

*sent to Bogos Nubar, he was asked to use all his power and authority to ensure these.)*⁵¹⁸

Although they were of the same opinion about the establishment of the Greater Armenian State, Britain and France could not dare to maintain the economic and military support for such a state. The easiest solution, in this situation, was for America to take the land which had formerly been promised to Russia. Therefore, the Allies started immediately to search for an American guarantee that would take the responsibility of the Armenian mandate. Wilson, the United States President, ordered a committee headed by General J. G. Harbord, to investigate whether a mandate could be established in Anatolia or not.

Having completed his investigations in Anatolia, Harbord arrived in Paris on 24 October 1919. Harbord talked to Mr. Polk, the Representative of the American Committee, there yet he avoided giving information about his report⁵¹⁹. However, it was understood from the news leaked into the press that Harbord was against America's accepting a mandate in Armenia.⁵²⁰ Having learned a lot about the Eastern Provinces, Harbord advised, during a supper that was held in his honour, that the Armenians had to be aware of what they desired and what they did to realise these demands; they had to be reasonable above all. He also said that there were not any Armenians in the Eastern Provinces and thus it was not possible to establish an

⁵¹⁸ B.O.A. B.E.O. A.AMD.MV. 107 / 47; ATASE. K. 184. D. 88 / 19, F. 110.

⁵¹⁹ For the written form of the report: Araştırma Grubu, "Türkiye'de Kurulmak İstenen Amerikan Mandası, General James G. Harbord'ın Gizli Raporu", BTTD. c. V, No: 33 (June 1970), p. 10-14; Hovannisian, The Republic of Armenia, vol. II, p. 356; Seçil Akgün, General Harbordun Anadolu Gezisi ve Ermeni Meselesine Dair Raporu, İstanbul, 1981, p. 133-143.

⁵²⁰ Vakıf, October 28 1335 / 1919, No: 714; Yeni Gün, October 28 1335 / 1919, No: 221.

Armenian State there.⁵²¹ The American press, on the other hand, argued that the Armenians should be made happy and the only hope for Armenia was the American mandate.⁵²²

General Harbord presented his report, dated 16 October composed of 13 parts, to President Wilson. In the report, the cost of an American mandate in Armenia for a five year period was estimated at 757 million dollars and it was stated that 59,000 people were needed as the first step. Any special advice about whether or not America should accept the mandate avoided.⁵²³ As can be understood from the report, there was no consensus between the civil and military groups about the acceptance or the refusal of the mandate. Military members were against the mandate and they defended their viewpoint by underlining the necessity of military forces in Armenia. Civil members, on the other hand, argued that Turkey as a whole should be in a single mandate. For them, America's accepting the mandate would be very beneficial for its foreign trade.

The issue of a mandate in Eastern Anatolia was in the second part of the report and this part had an air of a memo. In this part, arguments for and against the mandate were presented and the military aspects of the mandate were discussed.⁵²⁴ It was also stated in the report that the committee was also in charge of making investigations about the establishment of an independent Armenia in Eastern Anatolia; in contrast with the demographic investigations, both about this issue and the mandate, that Armenians were not in majority in the area; yet the committee

⁵²¹ Yeni Gün, January 3 1336 / January 3, 1919, No: 288.

⁵²² Osman Ulugay, *Amerikan Basınında Türk Kurtuluş Savaşı*, İstanbul, 1974, p. 50-51 and 55.

⁵²³ Documents on British Foreign Policy, First Series, vol. XIII, p.60.

⁵²⁴ Belgelerle Türk Tarihi Dergisi (BTDD) Araştırma Grubu, "Türkiyede Kurulmak İstenen Amerikan Mandası", p.12-14.

was convinced that they had been before the First World War, but after the relocation they had become a minority. If an Armenian state was established there as a result of the investigations, even with those coming back, the Armenians would still be the minority and they would rule the Turk majority. In addition the committee members were told by the Erzurum governor-general that the Turks and Armenians had lived together in peace, without foreign influences, for centuries.⁵²⁵ Moreover, it was explained that there had been no Armenian genocide nor any preparation for it; it was not true that 60,000 rifles were distributed on the Russian border and there was no proof that the civilians in the province of Erzurum were preparing to attack the Armenians; that Erzurum province had Turkish-Seljuk architecture was enough to prove that the Turks had been dominant in the area for centuries.⁵²⁶ At the end of the report, which included information about the Armenians' murdering Muslims in Erzurum and neighbouring areas, it was mentioned that any country accepting the mandate in the area would face great problems. This part also included secret advice for America to refuse the mandate.⁵²⁷

Ignoring all this information, the President Wilson presented the Harbord Report to the American Senate on 3 April 1920.⁵²⁸ In those days, the American public opinion was mostly against the acceptance of the American mandate in Armenia.⁵²⁹ The members of the Senate were affected by Harbord's

⁵²⁵ Akgün, General Harbord'ın Anadolu Gezisi, p. 143-144.

⁵²⁶ Cevat Dursunoğlu, Milli Mücadelede Erzurum, Ankara, 1946, p. 85; Akgün, General Harbord'ın Anadolu Gezisi, p. 144-145.

⁵²⁷ Albayrak, February 13 1336 / 1920, No:68; BTTD, "Türkiyede Kurulmak İstenen Amerikan Mandası", p.14.

⁵²⁸ Jaeschke, Kurtuluş Savaşı ile İlgili İngiliz Belgeleri, p. 97.

⁵²⁹ Yeni Gün, November 4, 1335 / 1919, No: 228.

experiences and they said no to the mandate as they thought the mandate would cost a lot to America. Having ignored the Armenian mandate, the Americans began to seek opportunities to get in touch with Turkish Nationalists.⁵³⁰

General Harbord's mission to Anatolia and his report have a different significance for the Anatolia Movement compared to other committees and reports. The Harbord Committee granted the leaders of the National Struggle an opportunity for propaganda and Harbord informed the US public about the importance of the national movement in Anatolia. He argued that this movement should be taken into account in order to solve the Oriental Question and he made the US recognise the Turkish nationalists.

Harbord wrote in the introduction of his report "*We met the proud and strong leaders of the national struggle in Erzurum.*"⁵³¹ With this report, Eastern Anatolia, where the Central Powers had previously planned to give to the "*Greater Armenia*"⁵³², proved that it had been a Turkish province for centuries and Lloyd George, the Prime Minister of Britain, admitted that Eastern Anatolia, especially Erzurum, could not be separated from Anatolia. His idea was certainly influenced by the decision of the US Senate. That was because he agreed that the decision of the US was the key to the future of Eastern Anatolia and Armenia.⁵³³

⁵³⁰ Öke, *Ermeni Sorunu*, p. 161.

⁵³¹ Jaeschke, *Kurtuluş Savaşı ile İlgili İngiliz Belgeleri*, p. 71.

⁵³² *Documents on British Foreign Policy, First Series*, vol. IV, p.962 and 1021; Harry Howard, *The Partition of Turkey*, p. 225-226.

⁵³³ *Documents on British Foreign Policy, First Series*, vol. VIII, p.157-158.

II. The Co-operation of Armenians

During the Paris Peace Conference, the British made Bogos Nubar and Venizelos meet and they reconciled the Armenians and the Greeks about the future of Istanbul and Trabzon. Yet, the main problem for them was the formation of the Armenian-Kurdish union in the Eastern and South-eastern Anatolia. Sherif Pasha, who claimed to be the Kurdish representative, presented a note, objecting to the Armenian claims, to the Peace Conference on 22 March 1919. In his note, Sherif Pasha wrote about the history of the Kurds and he employed some statistics while trying to show that the piece of land from Esfahan to Cilicia, including the Eastern Anatolia, Van, Bitlis, Diyarbekir, Harput and half of Erzurum, was named "Kurdistan". In the note, the terms of "freedom", "autonomy" and "independent" were used.⁵³⁴

The borders of Sherif Pasha's Kurdistan collided with the borders of the great Armenia that Armenians were trying to establish. The British, too, stated that it was just a dream of his.⁵³⁵ Though they held such ideas, the British made many attempts to reconcile the Kurds and Armenians in order to solve the problem. As a new strategy, the British brought Bogos Nubar and Sherif Pasha together.⁵³⁶ On 20 November 1919, Bogos Nubar, representing the Armenians, and Sherif Pasha, representing the Kurds, made an agreement to be under the mandate of the same country and establish an independent Kurdistan and respect the rights of the minorities. According to this agreement, the border between the two countries would be drawn at the Paris Peace

⁵³⁴ Açık-Gizli / Resmi-Gayri Resmi Kürdoloji Belgeleri, Haz.: Mehmet Bayrak, Ankara 1994, p. 20-25.

⁵³⁵ Mim Kemal Öke, Binbaşı Noel'in Kürdistan Misyonu, İstanbul 1992, p. 78-79.

⁵³⁶ Hovannisian, The Republic of Armenia, II., p. 447.

Conference.⁵³⁷ On the written copy of the note the following was written: *"It is a scientific and economic duty to release the Armenians and the Kurds from the overt and covert ominous rule of the Committee of Union and Progress. Granting both nations their independence via the assistance of a great country..."*⁵³⁸

British Major Noel decided on the Armenia-Kurdistan border after his meetings with Kurds and Armenian authorities. These activities resulted in the establishment of Hoybun, a Kurdish-Armenian society, under the control of Britain in 1920.⁵³⁹ Noel's studies on determining the border were not approved by Webb, the British High Commissioner, in Istanbul and meanwhile the logic of separating different groups by leaving them on their own and offering regional system was discussed.⁵⁴⁰

While the British were trying to bring Armenians and Kurds together in Paris, some Armenian leaders were meeting some tribal Muslim leaders and offering them to work together against the Ottoman Empire. An Armenian named Hachetor contacted with tribal Muslim leaders and told them that the Armenians and Kurds would, sooner or later, come together and he wanted them to state their conditions for the union.

The answer was worth paying attention to as it showed the tribal Muslims' attitude towards the issue:

"To Baron Hachetor Agha

⁵³⁷ Öke, Binbaşı Noel'in Kürdistan Misyonu, p. 119.

⁵³⁸ Tasvir-i Efkar, February 20, 1336/1920, No: 2992.

⁵³⁹ Hoybun Society participated actively in the riots in the Eastern and South Eastern Anatolia after the Proclamation of the Republic too. Hoybun Society can be seen as the beginning of the PKK of today. (Suat Akgül, Yakın Tarihimizde Dersim İsyanları ve Gerçekler, İstanbul 1992, p. 119; Abdulhaluk Çay, Her Yönüyle Kürt Dosyası, İstanbul 1994, p. 383.

⁵⁴⁰ Documents On British Foreign Policy, First Series, vol. IV, London 1952, p. 735-736.

I have received your letter. While the Armenians were living in the embrace of Islam happily, they committed every kind of evil overtly and covertly for their main purpose and, in short, they escaped from the front and joined the Russian Army, which you cannot deny. The Armenians' betrayal and their real purpose have become fully known. Therefore, it is not possible for the Armenians to come to terms with the Muslim Kurds. The Kurdish nation cannot come together with the Armenians, who have tried to destroy Islam for five years and, against human dignity, to murder, whenever possible the Muslims with axes and bayonets and rape their women. Outnumbering Armenians in population to the tune of more than four to one, the Kurds can never be under the rule of Armenians and the Kurds can never accept this. We will try to avoid this as much as we can. You, the Armenians, cannot form the majority in population by killing Muslim people villainously and you cannot be the ruler in this way. Whether we can live with you in peace depends on the conditions in the future:

1- The Armenians mustn't go across the River Aras until the decision about peace has been made.

2- The Armenians must evacuate Iğdır and the neighbouring (neighbouring) areas for the Kurdish nation.

3- No Armenians will go across the river until the peace has been made. The local Armenians who want to stay here will obey our rule.

4- The Armenians will certainly not carry guns among us and Armenian soldiers will not be sent to this area until the peace.

5- The rights, lives and properties of our Muslim brothers and sisters who are behind the River Aras; in other words, among the Armenians, will be protected.

6- If these terms are accepted and practised, the sides will not attack or violate the terms but just expect for peace.

*These are our terms and our points of view. If these are accepted, the heat of war will be cooled down. Otherwise, it will expand and the nation of Islam will find solutions for escaping from your everlasting eyes on them and ask God for his help. 4 September 1935. Hamid Bey, Ali Mirza Bey, Ahmed Haso Bey, Yusuf Agha, Leaders of the Tribal Muslims.”*⁵⁴¹

Many leaders of the tribal Muslims declared to the public that Sherif Pasha did not have the authority to represent the Kurds in Paris and that the Kurds did not want to separate from the Ottoman Government. They also sent telegrams to some newspapers on this matter.⁵⁴²

The Ministry of Internal Affairs sent a message to provinces and districts on 19 February 1920 which said: *“Sherif Pasha, who pretends to be a representative of the Kurds in Paris, wrote a note to the Peace Conference together with Bogos Nubar Pasha later on and he demanded that the Kurds, who are of the same origin as Armenians, be granted complete freedom from the Ottoman rule.”* The Ministry asked the leaders of the tribal Muslims to appeal to the conference and say that they did not want to separate from the Ottoman society.⁵⁴³

The National Police Department investigated the activities of the Armenians and presented their findings to The Ministry of Internal Affairs via a report dated 10 February 1920. According to this; while the Kurdistan Society seemed, at the beginning, content with staying under Ottoman rule, after the peace conference and the efforts of the British they established an Armenian-Kurdish Club; they believed in the Armenians' promises for the future and they started to run after freedom.

⁵⁴¹ Albayrak, 9 Teşrin-i Evvel 1335 / 9 October 1919, no: 34.

⁵⁴² İleri, 6 December 1919, No: 686, Albayrak, 4 December 1919.

⁵⁴³ B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 107/104.

Especially the Bedirhani Family and Kurdish Mustafa Pasha together with his friends speeded up the attempts for this issue. Seyyid Abdulkadir, a member of the Ottoman Senate, and his friends sent some men to Paris secretly and these men talked to Sherif Pasha. These people, working for the Armenian-Kurdish Alliance, consisted of Ohannes Ferid Bey, Muşeyh Dikranian from Diyarbekir (a tradesman), Seyyid from Cyprus and Cemil Pashazade Ekrem (who had nothing to do but are active in such political courses), Celal from Diyarbekir (a collecting clerk in Pangaltı), Rüşdü (formerly the general secretary of the Kurdish Club but later was dismissed from the club because of his bad behaviours), Obesekian Efendi (Forest Inspector).⁵⁴⁴

The agreement between Bogos Nubar and Sherif Pasha was discussed in the Parliament in the session on 19 February 1920. In this session, the terms "Turk" and "millet (nation)" were explained and it was pointed out that the word "Turk" included various ethnic people while the word "millet (nation)" meant the Ottoman nation. During the session on 26 February it was stated that the Turks and Kurds were brothers, the Kurds did not want to separate from Ottoman society and Sherif Pasha did not have the authority to represent them.⁵⁴⁵

Senate member Abdulkadir Efendi, who sent some men to Paris secretly and co-operated with the Armenians, released some statements to the press, which made the issue even more important:

"As it is known, the Armenians wanted to have six provinces in Eastern Anatolia. Therefore, we, the Kurds, appealed to the parliament and argued that we constitute the majority in these

⁵⁴⁴ From Nureddin Bey, The Head of the National Police Department, to the Ministry of Interior Affairs. B.O. A. B. E. O. A.AMD.MV. 108/4.

⁵⁴⁵ MMZC. D.4.i. 12 (February 19 1920); D. 4.i:14 (26 February 1920), p. 208.

provinces and we wanted them to send a committee to investigate the situation. Bogos Nubar Pasha approved this. The Armenian-Kurdish Alliance that the press mentions is all this. Sherif Pasha is the representative of the Kurdish society. We think this society has a national character. Thus, Sherif Pasha can operate as the Kurdish representative. We want the control of six provinces where the Kurds reside."⁵⁴⁶

These explanations caused great arguments in the Parliament. Though the members of the Parliament suggested that Abdulkadir Efendi be dismissed from the Senate, Abdulkadir Efendi was released from this pressure by saying that those statements didn't not belong to him.⁵⁴⁷

Having observed that various people were laying claim on their land, the deputies of the Eastern Provinces formed a group in order to "protect the rights of their election district" and they published a declaration on 4 March 1920. We find it appropriate to include the declaration without any change here as it explains the history and culture of provinces in Eastern Anatolia and sheds light on the Armenian Question:

"The Eastern Provinces are, in cultural, social and historical and so on- in short in every legal aspect, a Muslim region. The claims about our land are often being repeated nowadays yet these claims are not true about the real situation. Thus, we, again, find it necessary to ask for some attention to our rights in the Eastern Provinces: World statistics and the approval of various boards of reviews have shown that so far in eastern provinces the Armenian majority(thirteen lines were deleted)... thus it is a humane duty for us to show the dreamers

⁵⁴⁶ Tasvir-i Efkâr, 28 February 1920, No: 3000.

⁵⁴⁷ MMZC. D.4.i. 17 (1 March 1336), p. 301.

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the middle course and to declare our national rights to the world that (seventeen lines were deleted)...

In fact, the Muslims are dominant in the Eastern Provinces because of not only their majority in population but also their cultural and economic situation. Although every Armenian has to know Turkish and Kurdish in order to be successful in social life, Turks and Kurds have never needed to know the Armenian language. Cultural, artistic and national values such as music, dance and sports all belong to the Muslims. Therefore, there are no legal, social or cultural situations which would bring about the rule of any other nation in Eastern Anatolia or in any smaller part of it. Ninety-five percent of the immovable properties belong to Muslims. Moreover, cattle, corn, tobacco and so on, which are the production of our eastern provinces, are produced by Muslims. No one can ever show an Armenian with a herd of cattle.

We do not get into detail about our historical relationship in the Eastern Provinces. We just want to point out that all the historical buildings and pieces of art and national establishments, which are worth respect and show a great civilisation, belong to Muslims. We should also mention that Sultan Alparslan beat the Byzantine Emperor in Malazgirt War and imprisoned him. He gave the eastern provinces to Turkish governors. These governors did not see any Armenians among those who fought for the destiny of the eastern provinces. This is because their social order had already collapsed. That Armenians could form their own existence is the result of Turkish rulers' great tolerance and understanding. If the Turks had been really as they are faultily described by some, there would not have been any non-Turkish people left in the Ottoman countries when our swords had no rival.

We are sure that virtuous western nations, who promise a new life of fair and right terms to mankind, will follow the truest and most humane way by respecting the stable and comprehensive social

conditions in the Eastern Anatolia. They certainly agree that destroying the social condition in a land where Muslims reside in harmony with their history and forming a new, unnatural and illegal identity there is against humanity and justice. It is a duty for us to mention that even imagining such a situation is enough to harm rights, justice and human conscience. Even presuming that the Armenians, as some newspapers claim, will work for civilisation and order in the eastern provinces is in contrast with the seriousness of the issue. For us, thinking that such a strange, inhumane and illegal situation will be attempted means not trusting the western justice.

Because of these social principles and conditions, the Eastern Provinces are accepted as an inseparable part of our state; and since the true economical and social relations of these provinces cannot be concealed, separating even a part from them will affect people deeply. This is because the condition and the formation of the land, distribution of the population, having the same economic movements, religion and history and some social reasons have made these people share the same life and destiny.

We want to tell you that the eastern provinces are inseparable from one another because of these and like reasons and this principle is the wish of the all residents. We believe that virtuous mankind will respect this unshakeable perseverance and faith of ours, our legal and humane principles, and the social situation. We demand that everybody involved in the issue be informed about these."⁵⁴⁸

Despite all these objections, the British were insistent on applying their plans on the area. Curzon, the British Minister of Foreign Affairs, sent a telegram to John de Robeck, High Commissioner in Istanbul on 16 March 1920 and he explained his plans about the Armenians and Kurds as follows:

⁵⁴⁸ İleri, 4 March 1336, No:349; Yeni Gün, 6 March 1336, No: 351.

"...Our purpose for Kurdistan in the Peace Conference is not an autonomy of Britain, France or any other European country. Our purpose for them is a Kurdistan autonomy which will certainly be separate from Turkey. What we need to do is to reconcile the Kurds' interests with interests of the Armenian and Christian minorities. These will be discussed in the Peace Conference. The efforts on this issue should be done in cooperation with Kurdish leaders and the Kurdish Club"⁵⁴⁹.

After the Paris Peace Conference meetings started, issues were agreed to be discussed separately in different commissions. San Remo hosted a conference which included meetings that interested the Ottoman Government.

III. The Armenian Question in the San Remo Conference and Sevres Peace Treaty

The Central Powers could not make a definite decision in Paris and the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of these countries came together in London in February 1920. Without mentioning peace with the Turks, Lloyd George said that "The Turks had been a trouble, pressure and source of disorder for Europe for centuries; thus it was necessary to get rid of the Turks, who were unable to become Europeans, completely"⁵⁵⁰.

One of the issues discussed during the negotiations was which regions would be included in the Armenia that was going to be established. During the meeting on 16 February 1920, Lord Curzon stated that the geographical borders of Armenia would be determined by a commission of experts. Curzon also stated that the Great Powers had recognised Armenia in Paris and thus

⁵⁴⁹ Documents On British Foreign Policy, First Series, vol. XIII, p. 49-50.

⁵⁵⁰ Öke, Ermeni Sorunu, p. 249.

it was their duty to determine what could be added to this state. There were two possibilities, such as insisting that the Greater Armenia would include Çukurova (Cilicia), or just adding six provinces to Yerevan. Moreover, since the US mandate was out of question because of the Americans' unwillingness, would Armenia be under the protection of the League of Nations? These two questions had to be answered by the Assembly of Three Countries. Curzon pointed out that an Armenia including Erzurum and Trabzon could be established and this could be supported by the US Mandate. He also stated that the idea of including Erzurum in Armenia was not accepted by the British military authorities, this situation could cause danger for Armenia and thus it was possible that Erzurum could be excluded from Armenia.⁵⁵¹

M. Berthelot, the French Representative, argued that the wishes of Armenians should be accepted, but that Erzurum, Trabzon and Cilicia should be excluded from the promises. He pointed out that the Province of Erzurum could be included in Armenia, but the city of Erzurum, where only few Armenians reside, could not be included in Armenia. Signor Nitti, the Italian Representative, accepted that the Armenian Government could be established, but he argued that Erzurum, Trabzon and Cilicia could not be given to Armenians. In this negotiation, no final decision could be made about the borders of Armenia. It was agreed that the opinions of the other allies and the experts should be taken into account.⁵⁵²

The commission formed for determining the borders of Armenia presented their report to the Assembly of Three Countries on 27 February. The commission suggested that

⁵⁵¹ Documents On British Foreign Policy, First Series, vol. VII, p. 81.

⁵⁵² op cit., p. 84, 86.

Erzincan and Trabzon should be excluded from Armenian borders and this offer was accepted by the Allies. Thus, the question of giving Armenia a gate to the sea was left unsolved again.⁵⁵³ This was not a willing decision but it was the result of geographical and strategic necessities. Despite this decision, the problems about how safety would be maintained along these borders and who would supervise the region were still unsolved. At this stage, the Allies found it necessary to send arms and ammunition to the Armenians in order to suppress the incidents in Çukurova as they could not find any other solution. They were going to try to leave this issue to the League of Nations in the long term.

The Central Powers gathered together in San Remo 18-26 April 1920, in order to talk and make decisions about the terms of the treaty about the Ottoman Government. During the conference, the eastern Ottoman regions to be given to Armenia were discussed in 12 sessions. The Central Powers did not want to leave Erzurum to the Ottomans, yet they did not have enough military and administrative power to control the area. They believed they could use the Armenians for this purpose. On Lloyd George's demand, the military and navy representatives of the Central Powers were gathered by Marshall Forch, military counsellor. During this meeting, organised before San Remo Conference, how much military force should be sent to Turkey so that Turkey would accept the peace treaty was discussed. According to the reports, the Allies had only 19 divisions available in total although 27 divisions were needed. It was also reported that there were 4 well-equipped Turkish divisions in the area which was within the borders of the Armenia to be established in the future. Moreover these divisions could be

⁵⁵³ Ibid., p. 280.

supported by irregular forces. On the other hand, it was obvious that the Armenians had a force of 15,000 people which was not enough in number or equipment; thus, it was impossible for them to establish their own independence or fight against any possible threat from Turkey or Azerbaijan. Therefore, it was stated that 4 trooper divisions should necessarily be sent to the area as a backup. The representatives expressed that greater allied forces had to be sent especially to the Eastern Anatolia so that the treaty could be implemented there.⁵⁵⁴

For Marshal Forch, it was certain that the Turks had a great army in the inner parts of the country. He, thus, believed that it was impossible for the allies to send assistance to Armenians. Therefore, it was very difficult for the Armenia to administer a state and create an army on its own. On the other hand, the governments agreed that the allied forces should not be sent to Armenia.⁵⁵⁵ Under these circumstances, it was revealed that the Armenians were unable to take any part from Eastern Anatolia, especially Erzurum.

Because the San Remo Conference was the basis of the Sevres Treaty, we include here the summaries of the written records of the negotiations about the Armenian borders:

"In the meeting on 20 April Signor Nitti, the Italian Representative, stated that including Erzurum in Armenia would cause great problems and this meant taking the risk of fighting the army of Mustafa Kemal. He offered some administrators to found two partnerships in Erzurum and the central Anatolia.⁵⁵⁶ Signor Nitti mentioned again the Armenian issue on 22 April:

⁵⁵⁴ Akaby Nassibian, *Britain and the Armenian Question*, New York 1984, p. 183.

⁵⁵⁵ *Ibid.* p. 184; M. Cemil Bilsel, *Lozan*, vol. I, Istanbul 1998, p. 297-298.

⁵⁵⁶ *Documents On British Foreign Policy, First Series*, vol. VIII, p. 51.

"The Turks are the majority in the region, which may be ignored. However, it is certain that there are only a few Armenians in Erzurum. The population is composed of Turks and Muslims. This majority is not the result of war, the annihilation of Armenians or the alteration of the statistics. The population consisted of Muslims already before the war and massacres. The allies may not be able to defend the Armenians in the regions where they are less in number than Muslims. If we add the term "Armenia will include Erzurum to the peace treaty, we will certainly have difficulty persuading the Turks to sign it. Including Erzurum in Armenia will provoke people to commit massacres. In this case, the treaty will be a dead document."

M. Berthelot, the French Representative, said that the Armenian Question was discussed with special care in London Conference. He pointed out that the ideas of the British Prime Minister were taken as the basis in the issue; moreover, there was not an Armenian majority in Erzurum, and most of them were killed. Yet, he stated that there were strong reasons to give this city to Armenia; "If Erzurum is taken from Turks, Armenia will be parted from the sea. This city is a strong point. If Turks leave Erzurum, they will stay behind the Armenians. A more important factor is the Kars-Erzurum road which is the only way of transportation. Giving Erzurum to the Turks separates Armenia from the sea and inner parts. If Armenia is not connected to the sea, what can it do?" Lloyd George said that it was impossible to create an Armenian Government without Armenia and Erzurum. He also expressed that this was the most difficult and complex issue but this would be an honour for the Allies and an Armenia without Erzurum was impossible. He admitted that if Erzurum was given to Armenians, it would be impossible to make the Turks sign the treaty. M. Berthelot, the French Representative,

stated that adding Erzurum to Armenia was an honour for the Allies.⁵⁵⁷

Lord Curzon pointed out that one of the most important reasons why the Central Powers fought the war was to make Armenia independent and he demanded that Erzurum be given to Armenia. For him, there were 360,000 Turks and around 160,000 Armenians in Erzurum Region before the war; yet, the Armenians had been murdered for long years and Turks invaded the region, which made it impossible to give the region to Armenia.⁵⁵⁸

Signor Nitti said that capturing İzmir would make it impossible to capture Erzurum and in this case the treaty would never be put in force. He also stated that accepting all of the Armenian demands would make their situation impossible.

Lloyd George expressed that America could help Armenia financially and the Erzurum region could be separated into three-four parts. He said that if Erzurum was given to Armenia, the Turks could react to this with massacres; the Allies had great difficulty sending military force to the area and no one could beat Mustafa Kemal's forces because the area was mountainous. Having underlined that there was nobody in Great Britain who could send one million sterling for Erzurum, Lloyd George came up with two proposals: either the US as guarantor in the area or forming a mandate.

M. Berhelot said: "My opinion about these two proposals is: The Allies agree that Erzurum is necessary for a new Armenia. If America refuses to help, the Allies will step backwards in this issue and Lloyd George's proposals have not provided any

⁵⁵⁷ Ibid. p. 109.

⁵⁵⁸ Nassibian, Britain and the Armenian Question, p. 180.

solutions for the Erzurum problem. The issue of the Armenian borders was a big problem and the Central Powers had to solve it for their honour.⁵⁵⁹

M. Millerand said that the Erzurum Question was not as easy as it seemed; that he had underlined the necessity of giving Erzurum to Armenia in the London conference; that Armenia without Erzurum was not a complete solution. He added that the US could make such a decision.

Signor Nitti stated that the future of Armenia was related to the future of Thrace and İzmir.

In order to solve the complex question of Erzurum, the Armenian delegates in Paris were asked whether Armenia could live on by itself or not. The delegates answered confidently. Bogos Nubar Pasha answered the questions of Signor Nitti and Lloyd George. He said: "Armenia and Armenians are ready to protect Erzurum. We have 15,000 soldiers now and this can be increased to 40,000. According to recent news, five-ten thousand of American volunteers are ready to move to Cilicia at any time. The assistance of the Allies is necessary."⁵⁶⁰

Signor Nitti asked the number of Armenians in Erzurum. Bogos Nubar said that most of them had been killed or exiled; and that giving Erzurum to Armenia would encourage the Armenians who had been exiled to Cilicia to come back. He was

⁵⁵⁹ Ibid. p. 181.

⁵⁶⁰ Documents On British Foreign Policy, First Series, vol. VIII, p. 119; Helmreich, *Sevr Entrikaları*, p. 224. In Istanbul, they organized a ceremony for the anniversary of Bogos Nubar, the Head of the Armenian Vahdet-i Milliye who had worked against the Ottoman Government many times in Paris and London. Greeks attended this ceremony, too. Necessary cautions for preventing any incident were taken. (B.O.A. DH. KMS. 49-2 / 64).

sure that they could support themselves in Erzurum and would not need the assistance of the Allies.

Lloyd George asked him if they had been the majority in Erzurum Region within the past 50 or 100 years. Bogos Nubar answered in the affirmative.

Signor Nitti talked to M. Aharonian, Head of Armenian Delegates, about the importance of Erzurum and asked him if they could maintain safety in Erzurum without the Allies' assistance and drive Turks from there. He also asked M. Aharonian what he thought about the future of Armenia. M. Aharonian expressed that Mustafa Kemal's forces, consisting of 1000 or 2000 cavalrymen, were irregular; the Armenians would maintain peace and friendship in Erzurum; the Armenians had a well-equipped army of 20,000-25,000 people; they could be successful without the Allies' assistance but this assistance will earn them prestige and thus they would be able to invade the region in a short time; whoever possessed Erzurum would rule the whole region; the Armenian Government could not be safe without Erzurum. He claimed that there were 240,000 Turks and 230,000 Armenians in Erzurum Province, the Turkish statistics were false but the Armenian statistics were compatible with the European standards.⁵⁶¹

Lloyd George talked to the press on the same day, 22 April 1920, and explained that there was a very small number of Armenians in Erzurum and a great army was needed to drive Mustafa Kemal from that region.⁵⁶²

On April 24, Erzurum was again the main issue in the conference. That day, Lloyd George said that he had a lot of

⁵⁶¹ Documents On British Foreign Policy, First Series, vol. VIII, p. 118-120.

⁵⁶² Jaeschke, *Kronoloji*, p. 99.

difficulty with the Erzurum Question and did not know what to do. As he, alone, could not accept the responsibility of approving Greater Armenia, he appealed to Mr. Balfour, who was in Paris, and found out that he was in the same situation. He also believed that the idea of the Great Armenia would have a negative impact on the Muslims in India and all around the world. French Millerand argued strongly that Erzurum should be given to Armenia.⁵⁶³

Curzon, Millerand and Berthelot thought the Erzurum region should be given to Armenia not only because of military concerns, but also because it was the last stop on the railway from Yerevan and the centre of the Armenian transportation system. As Erzurum had been promised to Armenians, it would not have been honourable behaviour for the Allies to break their promise. For Lloyd George, if Erzurum was given to Armenia, it would be necessary to use force to take it from the Turks, but the Allies had decided not to send soldiers. The Armenian Government was not able to capture Erzurum without assistance.⁵⁶⁴

Lloyd George proposed the following to the US: 1. It should accept the Armenian mandate. 2. If it didn't accept the mandate, it should determine whether Erzurum was to be independent or belong to Armenia.⁵⁶⁵

Lloyd George had come up with another formula: Arming and equipping the Armenians to enable them to fight on their own. He thought that if the Armenians were unable to

⁵⁶³ Documents On British Foreign Policy, First Series, vol. VIII, p. 145; Nassibian, Britain and the Armenian Question, p. 185.

⁵⁶⁴ Helmreich, Sevr Entrikaları, p. 40.

⁵⁶⁵ Documents On British Foreign Policy, First Series, vol. VIII, p. 157-158.

protect their borders despite all this assistance, such a nation would be a worthless one.⁵⁶⁶

At the San Remo Conference, it was, on principle, decided that Erzurum would be given to Armenia, but drawing the borders was left to Wilson, the US President. Another decision was to offer the US a mandate in Armenia. In fact the Allies hoped that the US would accept the mandate or military assistance. Therefore, they expected at least an answer from the US. This way they would have a satisfactory explanation in the future for breaking their promise to the Armenians. The interesting thing was that Wilson fell for this trick. He accepted the offer personally on 17 May. He expressed that he had accepted the proposal about refereeing on the Turk-Armenian border because he wanted to contribute to the peace of the Armenian nation. Thus, the Allies had a big opportunity to escape this situation.⁵⁶⁷ Old promises, ethical responsibilities, honour and the publicity made the representatives of the Central Powers in the US decide to give the Eastern Provinces to the Armenian Republic. Later on, Woodrow Wilson acted on the same opinion. While he explained his decision about the borders on 22 November 1920, he said that he had examined the situation very fairly in the light of true sources of information. He determined to give 42,000 square kilometres of Eastern Anatolia to the Armenian Republic.⁵⁶⁸

Wilson presented the issue of mandate to the American Senate on 24 May 1920, yet it was rejected by the Senate on 1 June 1920 by a vote of 62-233. Despite this, Wilson informed the

⁵⁶⁶ Nassibian, *Britain and the Armenian Question*, p. 186.

⁵⁶⁷ Richard G. Hovannisian, "The Competition for Erzurum 1914-1921", *Armenian Karin/ Erzerum*, Edited by Richard Hovannisian, California, 2003, p. 398.

⁵⁶⁸ Nassibian, *Britain and the Armenian Question*, p. 181.

conference that he had accepted to referee about drawing the Armenian border.⁵⁶⁹

The Anatolian press covered the San Remo negotiations widely; *Vakit Gazetesi* released Armenian Patriarch Zaven Efendi's ideas about the negotiations. According to this news, Zaven Efendi said: "*Our argument about establishing Greater Armenia has some weak points. Therefore, our argument cannot work out immediately. The Erzurum Question is vitally important for us. Erzurum is our castle and one of our oldest lands.*"⁵⁷⁰

Mustafa Kemal Pasha responded to Zaven Efendi's ideas and said that the Turks are the majority in Erzincan and Erzurum regions and that no Armenian family was forced to emigrate from this region.⁵⁷¹ About the Armenian border, Mustafa Kemal Pasha stated that it had to be the line on 30 October 1918; and giving the Armenian Republic even an inch of the ground behind that line would not be approved by the people.⁵⁷²

⁵⁶⁹ Harry Howard, *The Partition of Turkey*, New York, p. 242-243. The decision of the Senate was affected by the reports the about the region submitted by Harbord and the other American committees, as well.

⁵⁷⁰ *Vakit*, June 9, 1920, No: 913. *Albayrak Gazetesi* (*Gazette*), too, included these ideas of Zaven Efendi. (*Albayrak*, May 21 1920, No: 94). *İkdam Gazetesi* (*Gazette*) replied to the Armenian demands about Erzurum as follows: "*The Armenian Press argues that Erzurum Province, especially the city of Erzurum, is very important and precious for the Armenia of the future, and that Armenia can't be without Erzurum. Yet, trying to prove this necessity, the Armenian Press can't rely on the issue of nationality. Therefore they resort to rely on another proof which is the strategic position of the city. Armenians want Erzurum and the whole region around Erzurum because the city can be dangerous, because of its position, for the independent Armenia in the future... Therefore, it is very illogical for the Armenians to rely on certain reasons and military proofs in order to take Erzurum. This also shows that their cause is unjust and they cannot rely on nationality.*" (*İkdam*, 9 June 1920, No: 8377).

⁵⁷¹ İleri, 22 October 1920, *ATTB*. IV., p. 117-118.

⁵⁷² Atatürk'ün Söylev ve Demeçleri, *Tamim ve Telgrafları*, V, (by Sadi Borak, Utkan Kocatürk), Ankara, 1972, p. 78.

Although it was obvious that the Central Powers had difficulty in sending assistance to Armenia and the British were unable to send military forces to Erzurum, this province was given to Armenia in the Sevres Treaty.

President Wilson had drawn the Armenian borders on 22 November 1920. "Wilson's Armenia" included a huge part of Van, Bitlis, Erzurum and also the westernmost and southernmost regions due to ethnographic, economic and geographic considerations. A large part of the eastern coast of the Black Sea, together with the city of Trabzon and its harbour, was also given because it would enable Armenia to reach the sea. The United Republic of Armenia, which could stand on its own feet, was established officially. While Wilson's decision became known by the allied governments in Europe, the Armenian Republic was fighting a losing battle to survive.⁵⁷³ According to Wilson's map, Armenia would take 42,000 square kilometres of land from Turkey and 26,491 kilometres square from the Caucasus, and would be 68,491 square kilometres in total. President Wilson, the American people and government supported the independence of Armenia and Wilson was making ethical and political promises for the country. Harding, Wilson's successor, behaved sympathetically, just like Wilson himself. On 30 May 1921, President Harding delivered a speech to the press as follows: *"I still support the independence of Armenia and the Armenian nation and the government is doing its duty to establish Armenia."* He also expressed, on 8 November 1922, that they would *"do everything necessary to protect the rights of the Armenian people and to put the terms of the Sevres Treaty into force."*⁵⁷⁴

⁵⁷³ Richard G. Hovanissian, "The Republic of Armenia", *The Armenian People From Ancient to Modern Times, Volume II*, New York 2004, p. 333.

⁵⁷⁴ Simon Vratzian, *Armenia and the Armenian Question*, Hairanik Publishing Company, Boston, 1943, p. 96-98.

Avetis Aharonian, the head of the delegates of the Armenian Republic in Paris, was the first parliamenter to sign the Sevres Treaty after the representatives of Britain, France, Italy and Japan. Armenia was the first country among others in alphabetical order. Armenians had a thanksgiving day in the Paris Armenian Church on 15 August and organised a reception in the delegation centre to celebrate the "Great National Day". The signing of the Sevres Treaty was celebrated in Armenia. The Armenians made their patriotism known to the whole world. They declared the day when the treaty was signed as their "Big National Day". They tried to provoke Turkish soldiers along the borders with demonstrations.⁵⁷⁵ A few years later, Kajaznuni commented on the issue with his experience: *"We were all astounded by the Sevres Treaty. It limited our reasoning and our ability to think realistically."*⁵⁷⁶

According to Sevres⁵⁷⁷, the Armenian border would be determined by President Wilson and it would be a free and

⁵⁷⁵ ATASE, K. 815, D. 12 / 7 F. 59-3.

⁵⁷⁶ Nassibian, *Britain and the Armenian Question*, p. 181.

⁵⁷⁷ The terms about Armenia in Sevres were as follows:

Article 88: Turkey, in accordance with the action already taken by the Allied Powers, hereby recognises Armenia as a free and independent State.

Article 89: Turkey and Armenia as well as the other High Contracting Parties agree to submit to the arbitration of the President of the United States of America the question of the frontier to be fixed between Turkey and Armenia in the Vilayets of Erzerum, Trebizond, Van and Bitlis, and to accept his decision thereupon, as well as any stipulations he may prescribe as to access for Armenia to the sea, and as to the demilitarisation of any portion of Turkish territory adjacent to the said frontier.

Article 90: In the event of the determination of the frontier under Article 89 involving the transfer of the whole or any part of the territory of the said Vilayets to Armenia, Turkey hereby renounces as from the date of such decision all rights and title over the territory so transferred. The provisions of the present Treaty applicable to territory detached from Turkey shall thereupon become applicable to the said territory. The

independent state, including Erzurum, Trabzon, Van and Bitlis. According to the 88th article, Turkey would be forced to recognise the independence of Armenia; all means would be employed to give Erzurum and Trabzon to Armenia.⁵⁷⁸

Terms of the Sevres Treaty represented the highest point of the East Policy of the British. The British attitude and the decisions made in Sevres brought about negative results. The national movement in Anatolia not only rejected the decisions but also began to threaten the British.

After the US Senate refused the Armenian Mandate, some thought the League of Nations could draw the Armenian border. However, the League of Nations, too, refused to organise and protect Armenia as the League was not a government and did not have the necessary armed force to carry out this duty.⁵⁷⁹ The Central Powers were neither willing enough nor strong enough to put the Sevres Treaty into force. It was obvious that even before the peace with Turkey, they could spare neither the money

proportion and nature of the financial obligations of Turkey which Armenia will have to assume, or of the rights which will pass to her, on account of the transfer of the said territory will be determined in accordance with Articles 241 to 244. Part VIII (Financial Clauses) of the present Treaty. Subsequent agreements will if necessary, decide all questions which are not decided by the present Treaty and which may arise in consequence of the transfer of the said territory,

Article 92: The frontiers between Armenia and Azerbaijan and Georgia respectively will be determined by direct agreement between the States concerned. If in either case the States concerned have failed to determine the frontier by agreement at the date of the decision referred to in Article 89, the frontier line in question will be determined by the Principal Allied Powers, who will also provide for its being traced on the spot. (M. Cemil Bilsel, Lozan, vol. I, Istanbul, 1998, p. 314-315).

⁵⁷⁸ Türk Muahede-i Sulhiyesi ve Mahiyet-i Hakikiyesi, Trabzon, 1337, p. 8-9; Documents on British Foreign Policy, First Series, vol. VIII, p. 842.

⁵⁷⁹ Recep Şahin, Tarih Boyunca Türk İdarelerinin Ermeni Politikaları, p. 224-225.

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nor the arms to put the treaty into force. The Allies and Britain built the Sevres Treaty on a power game, which deceived the Armenians. The treaty made them rely totally on the promises of the European governments. However, the treaty included no regulations for their safety. On the contrary, offering a wider Armenia enraged the Turks. They realised that Armenia was, in fact, very weak and isolated. Thus, the Sevres Treaty, celebrated by Armenians, turned out to be a source of provocation for the Turks.

Having signed the Sevres Treaty, Armenia was recognised officially by all other governments that signed it. Argentina, Brazil and Chili, from the Western Hemisphere, and the United States also recognised Armenia, Armenian ministers and politicians started to work in London, Paris, Rome, Brussels, Berlin, Belgrade, Bucharest, Sofia, Athens and Istanbul; Tehran, Tabriz, Baghdad, and Addis Abada; Tbilisi, Baku, Batumi, Sukhum, Vladikavkaz, Rostov and some parts of the former Russian Empire and Yokohama. The assimilated nations of Eastern Europe revived with a new consciousness. After having been scattered for centuries, they sent representatives to Yerevan to seek for a chance, if any, to return to the motherland. If Armenia could stand on its own feet as an independent state, they could bring back thousands of people who were living, semi-assimilated, on five different continents.⁵⁸⁰ All of these were the Armenians' new hopes created by the Sevres Treaty.

While some governments were busy shaping the destiny of Eastern Anatolia and the Armenians all around the world were chasing fantasies, Yerevan Armenians were creating disorders on the western borders and murdering the Muslims in Sarıkamış

⁵⁸⁰ Richard G. Hovanisian, "The Republic of Armenia", *The Armenian People From Ancient to Modern Times*, Volume II, p. 333.

and Kars. Thus, the Armenians would not only make Central Powers put the 7th and 24th articles of the treaty into force and also constitute the majority in population.⁵⁸¹ Mustafa Kemal Pasha did not want to let the Turks in cross-border lands suffer more, but he realised that international negotiations were not helpful. Therefore, he ordered the Eastern Operation, under the command of K. Karabekir Pasha, which ended the "Dream of Greater Armenia". With the treaties of Gümrü, Kars and Moscow, Eastern Anatolia was left within the borders of Turkey.

The British made the Istanbul Government accept the Sevres Treaty but they realised that it was impossible to get a satisfactory outcome without a treaty with the Ankara Government. Thus, they offered Ankara negotiations in London. The negotiations started on 21 February 1921. Bekir Sami Bey represented the Ankara Government. M. Aharonian and Bogos Nubar Pasha, the Armenian delegates, were ready there as well. They said they would not give up the terms of the Sevres Treaty although they had been defeated. Bekir Sami Bey stated that an independent Armenia could be accepted in the areas where the Armenians constituted the majority; Turkey and Armenia would be neighbours; and he believed that there would be no problems about this between the Central Powers and them.⁵⁸² The Armenian question was not discussed in any other way in the negotiations. It was understood that the decision was going to be taken after the victory.

⁵⁸¹ For further information about the Armenians' efforts to maintain the majority of the population: ATASE, K. 183, D.87 / 18, F. 31; K. 322, D.1 / 33, F. 100; K. 186, D. 95 / 22, F. 165 and 255; K. 185, D. 91 / 21, F. 103; B.O.A. DH. ŞFR. 98/197; 107/ 46, 104/146,147; Vakıf, July 15 1919, No: 615.

⁵⁸² ATASE, K. 120, D. 431/1, F. 8; Documents on British Foreign Policy, First Series, vol. XV, London 1967, p. 215-216.

IV. The Armenian Question at the Lausanne Conference

With the Treaty of Gümrü, 3 December 1920, the Armenian Government recognised the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA) and the National Pact; and they gave up their demands on Turkish lands. Soviet Russia and France recognised the National Pact with the Kars Treaty and Ankara Agreement. On the other hand, Britain and France made some attempts in Lausanne on the Armenian country.

While the battle was in progress in the Western Front, the Central Powers offered a peace treaty twice. Both peace offers included terms about the Armenians. In these peace offers, Sevres was a little softened and the Armenian Country, to be established in Eastern Anatolia, was brought up. The peace offer referred the issue to the League of Nations. However these peace offers came to nothing.⁵⁸³ It was understood that this attitude of the European governments could be changed by a victory on the Western Front. At the end of the Great Offensive which started on 26 August 1922, absolute victory was gained and the Mudanya Armistice was accepted as the beginning of the peace negotiations.

During the Lausanne Conference, which started on 20 November 1922, The TGNA was represented by İsmet Pasha, Rıza Nur Bey and Hasan (Saka) Bey. The TGNA Government gave the committee a directive of 14 articles. The first article was about the Eastern border and if the Armenian country was brought onto the agenda the negotiations would be abandoned. Secondly, the directive strictly requested that capitulations be

⁵⁸³ Gürün, Ermeni Dosyası, p. 298.

abolished.⁵⁸⁴ The Turkish Committee in Lausanne was there as the victorious party according to the results of the Mudanya Armistice, but Britain and France considered the conditions after the Mudros Armistice and wanted to be there as the victorious party, too. This showed that the negotiations would take place under difficult conditions.

When it was determined that a conference in Lausanne would be organised to sign a peace treaty with Turkey, the Armenian leading authorities started a campaign in order to gain access to the conference and declare their ideas. Aharonian and Hadisian, from the Armenian Republic committee, and Noradunkian and Pashalian, from the Armenian National Committee, were sent to London. The Armenians presented a diplomatic note to the conference as follows "... This war caused Armenians innumerable casualties. 1,250,000 of 2,250,000 Armenians in Turkey were murdered. 700,000 of them emigrated to the Caucasus, Iran, Syria, Greece, the Balkans and other places. Today there are 130,000 Armenians in Turkish villages and 150,000 Armenians in Istanbul. They are always ready to emigrate. There are three decisions to establish the national society:

1. The decision made by the US President; in other words, granting land for the Armenians,
2. Expanding the border of the Yerevan Republic and some parts of the Eastern provinces by granting access to the sea,

⁵⁸⁴ Türk İstiklal Harbi, vol. II., Part 6, Book 4, Genel Kurmay Başkanlığı Yay., Ankara, 1995, p. 195-196; Temuçin F. Ertan, "Lozan Konferansı'nda Ermeni Sorunu", KÖK Sosyal ve Stratejik Araştırmalar Dergisi, vol. II, No: 2 (Fall 2000), p. 213.

3. Granting some part of Cilicia, which was formerly given to Syria according to Sevres and then to Turkey according to the Ankara Treaty, to the national society"⁵⁸⁵

The British supported these Armenian demands. After the negotiations started, İsmet Pasha wanted to learn the ideas of Ankara as a preparation before the Armenian question was discussed. İsmet Pasha sent the first telegram about the Armenians to the Council of Ministers (to Rauf Bey) in Ankara on 25 November 1922. In this telegram, it was mentioned that the British and especially the Americans requested to know about the exchange of Armenians in Turkey: Who would they be exchanged with and how? İsmet Pasha expressed, in the same telegram that it would be difficult to explain to the world public the driving out of the Armenians, and a new relocation would not be appropriate in Anatolia at that time.⁵⁸⁶

İsmet Pasha sent a second telegram the following day and stated that the Armenians had come to Lausanne and had requested some land for the homeless Armenians. İsmet Pasha also warned that Armenians could clamour a lot in the conference. Rauf Bey answered the second telegram and wrote that the number of 700,000, given by Armenians, was exaggerated and that the number of Armenians in and out of Cilicia was only 45,000.⁵⁸⁷ On 27 November, Rauf Bey, the head of the Council of Ministers, answered the telegram about the population exchange. He supported that Armenians in Turkey should be exchanged with the Turks in Armenia and Turkish

⁵⁸⁵ Uras, *Tarihte Ermeniler*, p. 714, 717-718.

⁵⁸⁶ Bilal N. Şimşir, *Lozan Telgrafları, I, (1922-1923)*, Ankara, 1990, Doc. No: 23, p. 124-125.

⁵⁸⁷ *Ibid.* Doc. No: 39, p. 136.

Orthodoxies could stay in Turkey provided that they did not demand any more rights.⁵⁸⁸

These telegrams show that some parties were bringing up the Armenian issue deliberately and thus unofficially trying to understand what the Turks' attitude would be. Moreover, it was obvious from the first day that the Turkish committee was not prepared enough and it would be necessary to consult with Ankara frequently. Before the negotiations about the Armenians started, İsmet Pasha sent a telegram to Ankara on 6 December 1922. He asked Ankara their opinions about the population exchange. He asked them who he should address about the exchange and added that he thought neither the Armenian government nor Russia was the party to be addressed about the issue. Within the same telegram, İsmet Pasha wrote that all American missionaries and all Armenian communities came to Lausanne and that he wanted to explain them that he refused the idea of Armenian country and the minority rights.⁵⁸⁹

Armenian committees in Lausanne visited Turkish delegates and tried to put pressure on them. On 7 December, a committee from Switzerland talked to İsmet Pasha about the Armenian country⁵⁹⁰ and on 9 December, Armenian

⁵⁸⁸ Ibid. Doc. No: 50, p. 143.

⁵⁸⁹ Ibid., Doc. No: 86, p. 172.

⁵⁹⁰ A committee, headed by a Swiss professor, visited İsmet Pasha. They brought the Armenian issue again but they weren't satisfied with İsmet Pasha's explanations. The professor said to İsmet Pasha "We want a land for Armenians. You must give a land to them. The Armenians, at home or abroad, will reside there. This way, an Armenian land will be created in your country." This way of speaking made İsmet Pasha angry and he answered "You want something unjust. You want to break the harmony among the people of Turkey rather than forming it. Your ideas are harmful for this harmony. You are on the wrong path. You cannot be successful. You offer me to break the country into pieces. We fought hard in the World War, and four years more after the war, in order to prevent

Noradonkian Efendi visited İsmet Pasha and demanded an Armenian country for the emigrants. İsmet Pasha just gave them some advice.⁵⁹¹

During the conference, on 12 December 1922, President Lord Curzon talked about minorities. He brought up the issue of the "Armenian National Country". He said that the Armenians had suffered a lot and they deserved a land of their own in Turkey because of the promises given to them. He also asked İsmet Pasha about his opinion.⁵⁹²

While Turkish delegates were expecting to discuss the minorities, they were faced with a demand for a land for Armenians. İsmet Pasha made a long speech containing historical facts. In his speech, he pointed out that the Armenians, just like other minorities under the Ottoman rule, had lived in peace and safety; this situation was spoiled because of the influence of governments with imperialist desires in the Middle East; foreign powers made the Armenians rebel against the Ottoman government; the Armenians had committed atrocities against local Muslims and Istanbul government reacted to protect itself; those Armenians willing to stay in Turkey could live with Turkish citizens in peace; Armenians constituted majority in no

the breaking of the country. Your challenge against us is much weaker than the challenge of the countries we beat in the war. You are too weak." Having answered thus, İsmet Pasha drove the Swiss professor away. (İsmet İnönü, *Hatıralar*, Book 2, Ankara, 1987, p. 82).

⁵⁹¹ Şimşir, *Lozan Telgrafları*, I, Doc. No: 103, 110, p. 182-192.

⁵⁹² *Lozan Barış Konferansı, Tutanaklar-Belgeler*, Translated by: Seha L. Meray, Takım 1, Book 1, Vol. 1, 3rd Edition, Yapı Kredi Yayınları (Publishing), İstanbul, 2001, p. 184-186. Curzon talked about his efforts during the conference as follows: ... We tried hard to grant the Greek and Armenian minorities in the Turkish Government more than the promises written in the European treaties. Yet, I have to admit that I failed. The written proceedings of the conference prove how hard I fought for these poor people. (M. Cemil Bilsel, *Lozan*, vol. II, İstanbul, 1998, p. 563).

part of Turkey and, thus, he rejected the idea of the Armenian Country⁵⁹³. He concluded his speech by summarising the opinions of the Counsel of Ministers in the TGNA:

1. Improving the destiny of the minorities in Turkey can only be possible, before all, by avoiding foreign influences and provocations.⁵⁹⁴

2. This aim can be achieved by only exchanging the Greeks and Turks.

3. The safety and development of the minorities outside the mutual exchange will be best ensured by the local authorities and Turkish government.⁵⁹⁵

The opinions of the USA were voiced by M. Child. He made a speech on the USA's sensitivity about minorities. He made an outline of the problem and focused on establishing a homeland for Armenians. He wanted a balanced population exchange so that the emigrants could embrace their families again and live on their motherland.⁵⁹⁶

⁵⁹³ Ibid. p., 188-200.

⁵⁹⁴ Lausanne negotiations proved this idea to be true. The British collected many Greeks and Armenians as workers and sent them to their military bases. These people looked like workers but in fact they were volunteers. They were being enrolled in the British forces in Çanakkale (Dardanelles). They became around eight thousand people. The British were reinforcing their military power. On 1 December 1922, four of these Armenians made improper remarks to some Turkish women and broke the windows of some houses in Çanakkale, insulted Mustafa Kemal Pasha and they were arrested. The British stated that those men were in their service and wanted them to be released but the Turkish authorities did not give them back. (Şimşir, Lozan Telgrafları, I, Doc. No: 155, p. 230-231).

⁵⁹⁵ Levent Ürer, Azınlıklar ve Lozan Tartışmaları, İstanbul, 2003, p. 239.

⁵⁹⁶ Ibid. p. 187. American Delegates and Admiral Bristol visited Smet Pasha on December 12 and they focused his attention on the issue of minorities. They said that two governor-generals from America sent telegraphs about the situation of Armenians and thus they brought the issue of emigrants.

After this, Venizelos made a speech and said that İsmet Pasha's speech was disappointing, the issue of the minorities was quite important and he supported Lord Curzon. What Venizelos said enraged İsmet Pasha. He answered as follows:

"M. Venizelos surely ignores the fact that the invasion of Asia Minor by Greeks was the source of new griefs and misfortunes for the Armenians. These poor people were called to arms by force and added to the Greek front. The Armenian authorities in Europe are tired of pleading to the Greek Government in order to protect their citizens from such dangers. All of these warnings have been ignored. Armenians were brought to the front and forced to fight against Turks. After the defeat, many huge ravages were committed. The Greek authorities started some campaigns to attribute these crimes to the Armenians. Later on, while the Greeks were leaving Anatolia, they carried away Armenians, as well. One must accept that the government which directly caused the misfortunes of Armenians can be the last government to have pity on them.

İsmet Pasha cannot understand why M. Venizelos interferes the topic. Turkish Representative Committee wants the issue to be discussed in a wider perspective and points out that there are more than one million Turks, striving and homeless, in some countries ignored by Europe and America. Real human consciousness makes it necessary to take the situation and poverty into consideration."⁵⁹⁷

İsmet Pasha sent a report about the negotiations to the Council of Ministers on 14 December 1922:

(Şimşir, Lozan Telgrafları, I, Doc. No: 140 , p. 216). For further information on the attitude of USA about Lausanne Negotiations: Joseph C. Grew, Amerika'nın İlk Türkiye Büyükelçisinin Anıları, Lozan Günlüğü, Tükçesi: K. Mustafa Orağlı, İstanbul, 2001.

⁵⁹⁷ Lozan Barış Konferansı, Tutanaklar-Belgeler, Takım 1, Vol. I, p. 206-207.

"We have gone through the third day of the great propagandas about minorities. The commission, presided by Curzon, gathered in the morning. We presented our answer for his words of the previous day. We touched upon the Armenian' ideas that there were 3 million Armenians before but now only 130,000, and that they are not afraid of the League of Nations as their hands are clean. We also brought the issue of the Armenian country and so on. We expressed that, according to French and British statistics, there were around one million Armenians before the war ... We said that our hands were clean as we fought in unfair wars and did not attack any countries and we were ready to compare our hands to any other hands. We stated that we accept all the terms about minorities in the National Pact and this pact would definitely be carried out..."⁵⁹⁸

The next time when the Armenian Question was discussed was 30 December 1922 when America presented the "National Country (Diplomatic) Note" to the Minorities Subcommittee. American representatives suggested, in this note, the commission that the Armenian border should be drawn and Armenians to come there should be helped.⁵⁹⁹ During negotiations, Montagna, the Italian Representative, supported these ideas. Thus, Rıza Nur Bey said the Allies had the right to make those declarations because they had moral responsibilities to the Armenians and Assyrians; they used these nations politically to attack Turkey; they caused the disasters of these nations; and he would rather leave than listen to such declarations, and he left the session.⁶⁰⁰

This attitude of Rıza Bey was criticised by the British Press and deemed as "the bad temper of the Turks". Rumbold,

⁵⁹⁸ Şimsir, Lozan Telgrafları, I, Doc. No: 140 , p. 215-216.

⁵⁹⁹ Lozan Barış Konferansı, Tutanaklar-Belgeler, Vol. II, p. 243.

⁶⁰⁰ İbid. p. 280.

the British representative, said that a little part of Turkey could easily be given to Armenians.⁶⁰¹ Moreover, the British sent a note to İsmet Pasha and harshly criticised Rıza Nur Bey's behaviour. İsmet Pasha answered that they could do the same thing again when necessary and suggested forgetting about it. The Turkish committee protested many times against Armenians' speaking in the conference and each time they were faced with the Allies' insistence about this.⁶⁰²

As a result of these pressures, Armenians managed to speak in the subcommittee eventually. The Armenian committee, including Noradunkian, Hadisian, Pashalian and Aharonian, spoke in the subcommittee, where the Turkish committee was not present, on 26 December. They voiced the Armenians' demands for a homeland. They argued that assembling troops must be allowed in Armenian homeland and Patriarchate should be free⁶⁰³.

The Armenian Question was discussed, for the last time at the Lausanne Conference, on 9 January 1923, during the meeting about the report of the Subcommittee of Minorities. The Allied countries, in that meeting, gave up their demands about the protection of the non-Muslims, and they did not object to the Turks' refusing a wide-range general amnesty and the minorities' exemption from military service.⁶⁰⁴ After the commission report was accepted by İsmet Pasha and Lord Curzon, the Armenian Question was no longer discussed at Lausanne and no terms about this were included in the treaty. During the later negotiations, the Armenians were discussed within the issue of

⁶⁰¹ Ertan, "Lozan Konferansı'nda Ermeni Sorunu", p. 216.

⁶⁰² Şimşir, Lozan Telgrafları, I, Doc. No: 322, p. 345-346.

⁶⁰³ Uras, Ermeni Meselesi, p. 731-737.

⁶⁰⁴ Lozan Tutanakları, Vol. II., p. 304-307.

emigration to Anatolia, the Turks refused to make any exact promises about the issue.⁶⁰⁵ The Lausanne Treaty was signed on 24 July 1923. The terms about the Armenians were as follows:

"Nationality Article 30:

Turkish subjects habitually resident in territory which in accordance with the provisions of the present Treaty is detached from Turkey will become *ipso facto*, in the conditions laid down by the local law, nationals of the State to which such territory is transferred.

Article 31.

Persons over eighteen years of age, losing their Turkish nationality and obtaining ipso facto a new nationality under Article 30, shall be entitled within a period of two years from the coming into force of the present Treaty to opt for Turkish nationality.

Protection of Minorities Article 39.

Turkish nationals belonging to non-Moslem minorities will enjoy the same civil and political rights as Moslems.

All the inhabitants of Turkey, without distinction of religion, shall be equal before the law."⁶⁰⁶

The Armenians were not able to have any of their demands accepted in Lausanne. For Turkey, the Armenian Question was closed in international terms, too. Yet, this was not the case for the Armenians. They worked very hard during the conference and used many methods of propaganda. One of those was their efforts to gather signatures. On 16 December 1922, they gathered the signatures of French leaders and some others in the

⁶⁰⁵ Bilal N. Şimşir, *Lozan Telgrafları*, II, Ankara, 1994, Doc. No: 168, 273, 276, 369, 682, 693.

⁶⁰⁶ Soysal, *Türkiyenin Siyasal Antlaşmaları*, I, p. 93-95.

hotel where İsmet Pasha was staying and then they posted a declaration.⁶⁰⁷ Armenians gathered almost 5 million votes and they protested İsmet Pasha with applause during the ball the same night. There were rumours about Armenian bands planning assassinations to the Turkish committee in Lausanne and Turkish authorities in Istanbul. The Istanbul Armenian Patriarch visited Refet Pasha, the TGNA representative in Istanbul, on this issue and he expressed that since the Armenians wished to live in peace and loyalty to the government, those rumours were baseless. A group of delegates, accompanying the Patriarch, ensured that they were not connected to the mentioned conspiracy in any way.⁶⁰⁸ Patriarch Zaven Efendi escaped from Istanbul because of his anti-Turk behaviours during the National Struggle. Armenian representatives visited Refet Pasha and asked him which of the five candidates they chose for Patriarch Qaimaqamship would be suitable.⁶⁰⁹ However, no answer was given because the Armenian Issue was still in discussion in Lausanne.

Thus, the Armenian Question and relocation, which were brought by Western countries during the war, ended legally and politically. The Armenians, supported by the West in Anatolia, looked for support in Lausanne as well. However, they were left

⁶⁰⁷ The document mentioned here was a typical Armenian propaganda paper: This paper titled "Call for the Conference for Armenia" ,and dated December 8, 1922, was available for signing in Paris. This document claimed, in short, that the Allies announced during the war that they would establish the "Turkish Armenia" but they did not accomplish that yet; and 1.200.000 Armenians died and more than 600.000 of them were homeless and dispersed in different areas; and an instant Armenian Homeland was required. (Şimşir, Lozan Telgrafları, I, Doc. No: 153, p. 229-230).

⁶⁰⁸ Salahi R., Sonyel, Kurtuluş Savaşı Günlerinde İngiliz İstihbarat Servisi'nin Türkiye'deki Eylemleri, Ankara, 1995, p. 292.

⁶⁰⁹ Şimşir, Lozan Telgrafları, I, Doc. No: 172 , p. 246.

off the agenda again because their lies and slanders were revealed and Turks worked hard in Lausanne. The Armenians, used by European countries since 19th century, were used in Lausanne negotiations in the same manner to put pressure on the Turkish Committee.

During the months when the Lausanne Conference was in progress, Armenian associations in Armenia and Europe, such as Tashnaksutyun, United Committee of Armenians, and Armenian Friends Association and so on, continued with their diplomatic attempts. They wrote letters to many governments, sent reports and requested that the new established situation be changed. Most of these attempts were left unanswered. Only a few of the governments, who provoked and used them in war, answered them, but those governments stated that there was nothing they could do and they only consoled Armenia, their former, little ally.⁶¹⁰

Aharonian, the Head of the Armenian Republic Committee in Lausanne, sent protests to the League of Nations and the representatives of the Allied Countries on 9 August 1923. In those protests, he expressed that the Armenians were disappointed because they had fought for Allies, but Sevres, the reward of this self-sacrifice, was forgotten because of Lausanne. He also expressed that the Allies had let the Armenians down and they would object to the terms of Lausanne⁶¹¹.

After the Lausanne Treaty, the Armenians created some new objectives for themselves and put them into practice. These objectives can be outlined as follows:

⁶¹⁰ Türk Tarihinde Ermeniler (Temel Kitap), Prepared by: Azmi Süslü, Fahrettin Kırzioğlu, Refet Yinanç, Yusuf Halaçoğlu, Ankara, 1995, p. 294.

⁶¹¹ Uras, Tarihte Ermeniler, p. 741-745.

1. Trying to improve the Armenian Republic economically and culturally,
2. Continuing with the Armenian claims among European Governments, the League of Nations and political associations and trying to realise them,
3. Keeping national spirit, language and culture, political ideals of Armenians, spread all over the world, alive,
4. Using all the possible ways to help Armenian people and emigrants and look after their orphans⁶¹².

Therefore the Armenians withdrew into their shells. Since then, they have commemorated the so-called incidents and their casualties every year and have kept on passing down the same stories to new generations. This way, they focus on the necessity of pursuing the desired aim. As a result, every Armenian generation has more and more hatred for the Turks and Turkey. Therefore it is not surprising to see Armenians in every incident that is harmful for Turkey.

⁶¹² Ibid. p. 747.

CONCLUSION

Armenians declared, in international terms, their ideals of establishing a government in some part of the Ottoman Country for the first time during the negotiations in Berlin in 1878. Although their struggle ceased legally with the Gümürü Treaty, they have proven that their ideals are still, and will be, valid in thought and action. During the period between these two events, the Turks of the Caucasus and Anatolia suffered a lot and had more losses (casualties) than the Armenians. Provoked by European countries which had dreams about the Turkish land, the Armenians caused great losses (casualties) for both Turks and themselves, the first being greater. Despite all they have done, the Armenians, today, have become experts in misinforming the world public about what really happened.

It can be observed in every case that the Armenians and the powerful countries supporting them have deceived their public and themselves about the Turks just because of their own interests. That the attitudes during the war are still valid today is worth considering as this shows that the Armenians still have the same ideals they could not realise during the war. Rather than making peace and having normal relationships with Turks, Armenians prefer tension and enmity for them. Unfortunately, Armenian authorities, today, believe that Armenian existence can be kept alive only with the feelings of being slaughtered, being exiled and taking revenge. This attitude makes it impossible to solve the problem. Using documents in this study, we have tried to focus on cases that Turkish authorities were not responsible for and the truth. As Lord Curzon said in 1919, Armenians "*weren't innocent five-year-old children*". The Turkish people of Anatolia suffered more and had more losses and casualties than the

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Armenians in the war. However, the Turks left everything in the battlefield and did not try to assassinate any Armenian leader or even kill a single Armenian. Still, the Republic of Turkey has to take necessary precautions for its safety. These precautions will not be approved by those countries that provoke and use Armenians. These useless attitudes must come to an end and Armenians must give up their claims on Turkey. The policies they follow today have permanent effects on the young. Every generation has a greater and greater enmity for the Turks and, thus, hopes about the solution of the problem are terminated.

The Armenians have always tried to maintain the genocide policy which, they believe, is the key for them to live in different countries without being assimilated. Therefore, one must take these into consideration while thinking about the claims of genocide and the Armenians' dreams about Turkey. Armenian intellectuals believe that their current policy will benefit them in any case. Even if their demands are not realised, this will enable a nation without a motherland to keep the spirit of living on as a whole nation. The Armenians will not give up these efforts before gaining a part of eastern Anatolia. This attitude, of course, cannot make Turkey stop its actions on the issue. Armenian lobbies, supported by some Europeans, are trying hard to put Turkey on the spot. It is necessary to reveal the truth to the European public opinion via scientific studies. It should be obvious that we are working as much as Armenians.

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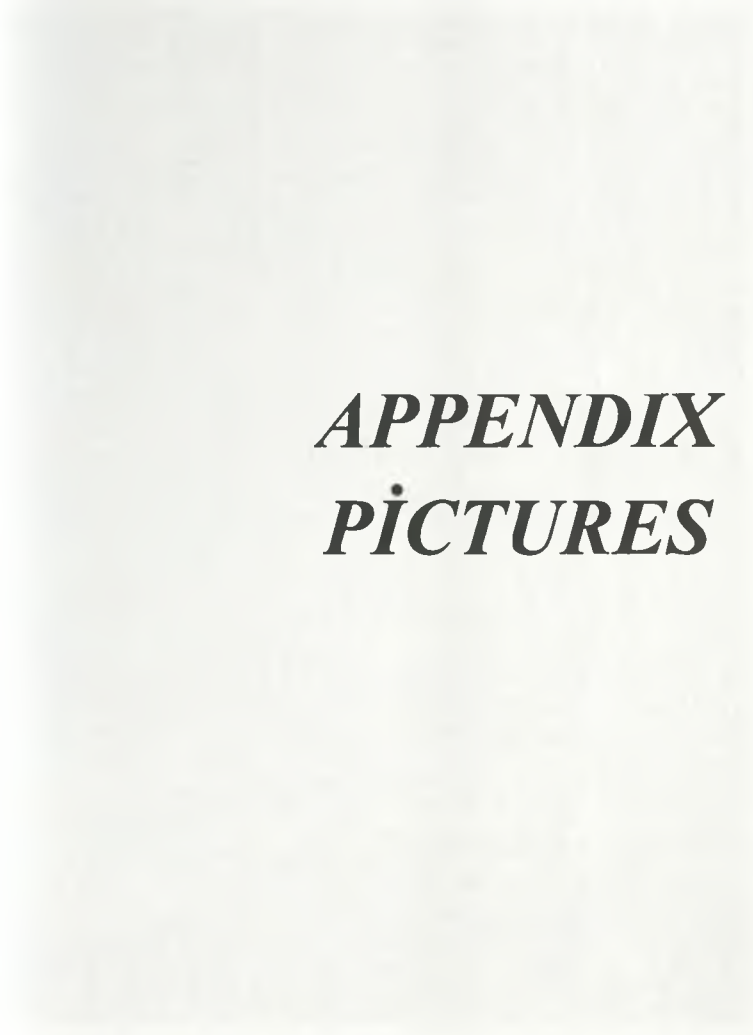
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APPENDIX PICTURES



***APPENDIX
PICTURES***

APPENDIX / PICTURES

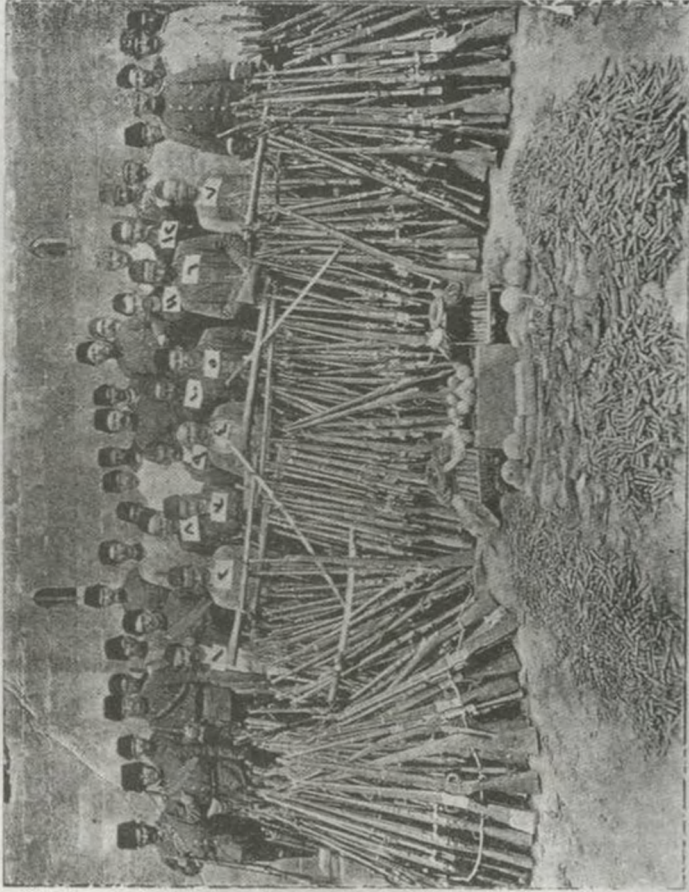
Picture 1



Ecmbes, armes prohibées et engins explosifs saisis à Diarbékír pendant les perquisitions opérées le 14 avril.

Bombs, prohibited arms and explosives discovered during perquisitions made at Diarbekir on the 14th of April last.

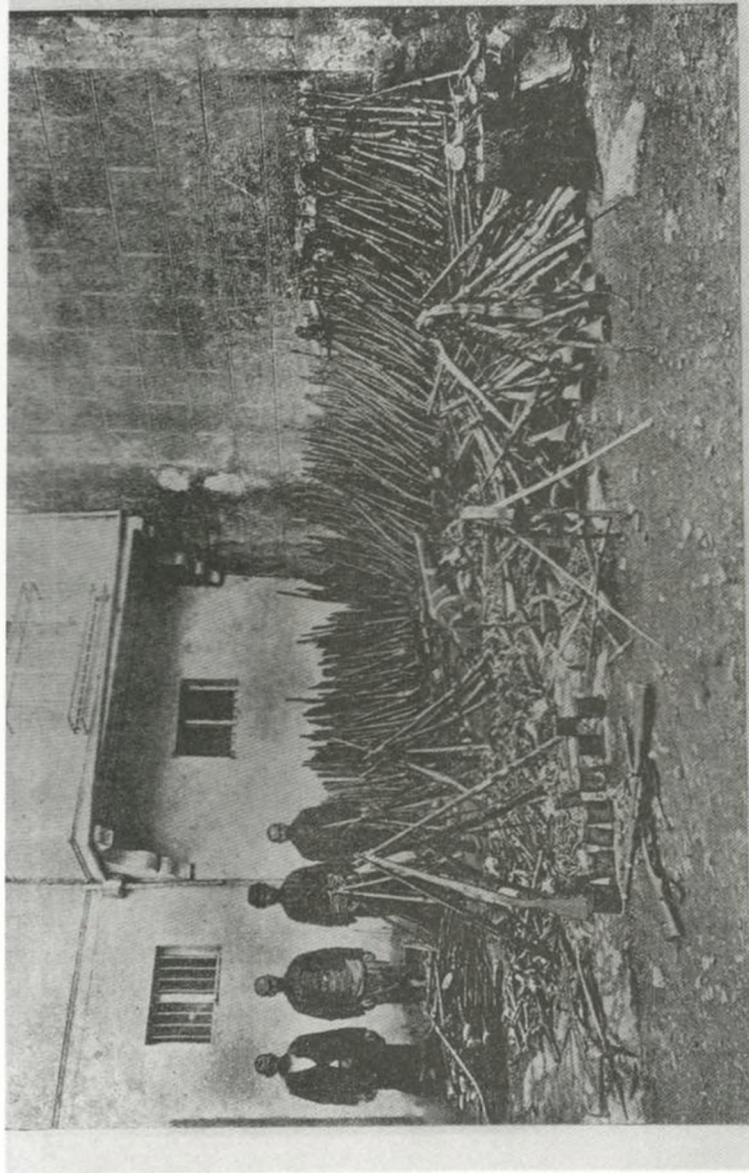
Picture2



Hommes et bombes saisies aux arméniens à Diarbékir et une partie des affiliés du comité révolutionnaire arrêtés.
Men and bombs taken from the Armenians of Diarbekir. A few arrested men belonging to the Armenian Revolutionary Bands.

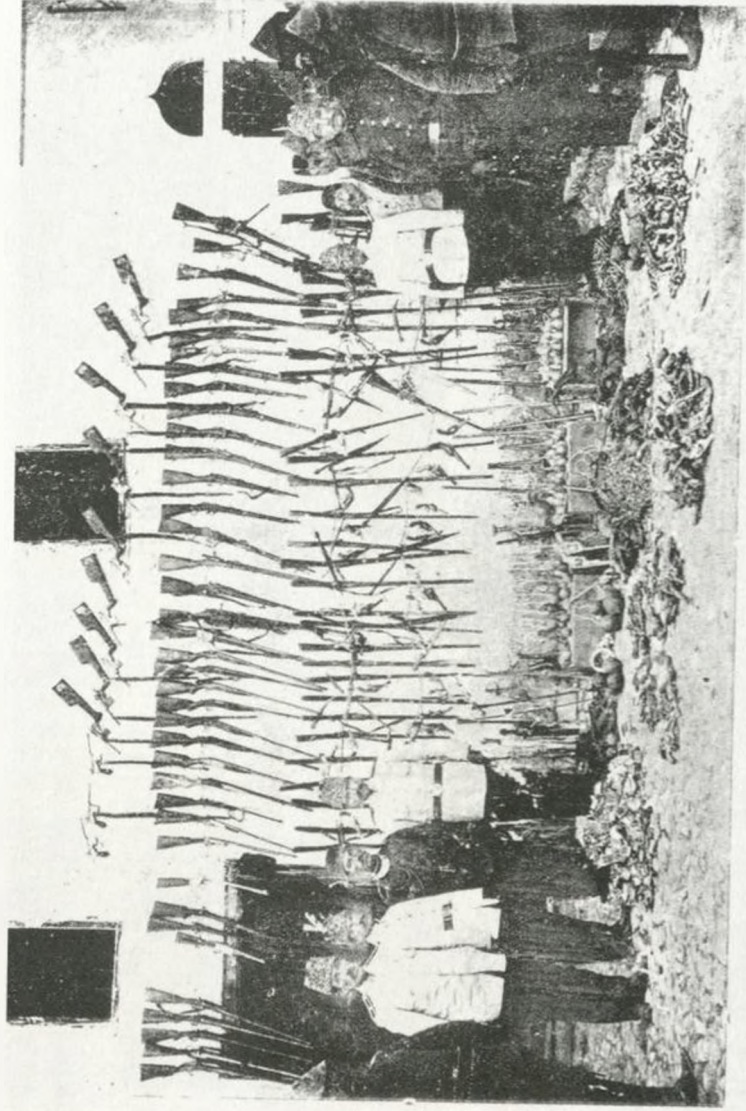
The Armenian Aspirations and Revolutionary Movements Album No: 1, p.33

Picture 3



Brigands arméniens arrêtés à "Tchénghiler," (Vilayet de Hudavendighiar) avec un canon, armes à feu et uniformes.
Armenian Brigands arrested at Tchenghilar, vilayet of Broussa, with a cannon, firearms and military uniforms therein captured.

Picture 4



Une partie d'armes et de matières explosives saisies aux arméniens à la suite des perquisitions opérées dans le chef-lieu de Mamouret-ul-Aziz et dans ses dépendances.
Some of the arms and explosives taken from the Armenians during perquisitions made at the chief place of Mamouret-ul-Aziz and its neighbourhood.



23 Temmuz 1915'te Diyarbakır'ın Lice ilçesine bağlı Kum ve Çum köyleri dolaylarında elleri ayakları bağlanarak Ermeni komiteleri tarafından şehit edilen hava değişimi için izinli askerlerin olay yerinde çekilen fotoğrafları

Photographie, an Ort und Stelle aufgenommen, einer Gruppe beurlaubter türkischer Soldaten, die am 23. Juli 1915 durch die armenischen Banden in der Nähe der Dörfer Kum und Tschumi, Vororte von Lésche im Vilâyet Diarbekir, ermordet wurden.

Photographi'e, prise sur place, d'un groupe de soldats turcs en congé, assassinés par les bandes arméniennes le 23 Juillet 1915 après avoir été ligotés près des villages de Koum et Tchoum, dépendants du Casa de Lidjé, Vilâyet de Diarbekir.

Photograph. taken on the spot, of soldiers belonging to the Turkish Army, and afterwards murdered by the Armenian bands in the neighbourhood of the villages of Koum and Tschoum, dependent on the Casa de Lidjé, Vilâyet de Diarbekir.

Picture 6



Diyarbakır'ın Şark bucacağına bağlı olup, erkeklerinin çoğu silah altında bulunan Hızır İlyas Köyü kadın ve çocuklarının 23 Temmuz 1915'te Merseni deresinde Hono ismindeki Ermeninin başını çektiği çete tarafından humar ve canavarca şehit edildikleri yerde çekilen fotoğrafıdır.

Photographische Aufnahme von Frauen und Kindern des Dorfes Hızır İlyas (in der Nähe von Scharık im Vilayət Diarbekir), die trotz ihrer Hilflosigkeit infolge der Einberufung der gesamten männlichen Bevölkerung des Dorfes unter die Waffen, durch die Bande des armenischen Banditen Hono am 23. Juli 1915 bei Merseni-Dere durch Kugelschüsse und Dolchstosse ermordet wurden.

Photographie des femmes et des enfants du village de Hızır İlyas (Chark Nahiesi-Diarbekir) dont toute la population mâle se trouve sous les armes, assassinés le 23 Juillet 1915, à Merseny Déré, à coup de balles et de poignards par la bande du bandit arménien Hono.

Photograph of a group of Mohammedan women and children belonging to the village of Hızır İlyas, Şark Nahiesi, Diarbekir, helpless and defenseless on account of the absence of their husbands and male relatives serving in the Army, were, on July 23 th, 1915, slaughtered, at Merseny Déré, by means of daggers and shot by rifles in a most pitiless and horrible way by an Armenian Band under the notorious and well known bandit Hono.

Picture 7



29 Ağustos 1915'te Ermeni çeteleri tarafından Urfa-Siverek yolunda Karacadağ civarındaki ziyaretgahdan alınarak canlı hedef yapılıp barbarca şehit edilen müslümanların olay yerinde çekilen fotoğrafları.

Photographische Aufnahme einer Gruppe von Muhammedanern, die am 29. August 1915 von armenischen Banden in einem bei Karadscha-Dag, auf der Strasse Siverek-Urfa, gelegenen Wallfahrtsorte verhaftet, als lebendige Zielscheibe dienen und auf die barbarischste Weise gemordet wurden.

Photographie d'un groupe de musulmans qui, arrêtés par les bandes arméniennes le 29 août 1915, dans un lieu de pèlerinage situé à Karadjja Dagh, sur la route Siverek-Ourfa, ont servi des cibles vivantes et furent martyrisés de la manière la plus barbare.

Suapsho t of a group of Mahomedans who, on the 29th of August 1914, after being arrested by the Armenian, Bands w hile visiting the tomb of a Saint on the Siverek-Oourfa high-road, near Karadjja-Dag, were used as living targets by the latter and assassinated in a most barbarous way.

Picture 8



Daha sonra Silvan dahilindeki Bepnik Ermeni köyüne sığınodğı anlaşılan, Van ve Taloriden gelip (Durian Dano) ve kardeşlerinin yönetiminde bulunan Ermeni çeteleri tarafından 11 Temmuz 1915 tarihinde Şeytan Kaya mevkiinde şehid edilen milis Hamid Beyin komutasındaki ertak kafilesi ve jandarma subayları.

Photo von Gendarmen und Offizieren, den Nahrungsmittel-Kolonnen der Kais. Osmanischen Armee angehörend und durch den Milizoffizier Hamid Bey betheilt, welche am 1. Juli 1915 durch die armenischen Bänder bei Sheylan-Kaya ermordet wurden. Diese Bänder, die zum grossten Theile aus Wan und Talory kamen, standen unter dem Befehle des berühmten Banditen Durian Dano und seiner Brüder und flüchteten sich später nach Bachnik, einem armenischen Dorf im Kasa Silvan.

Photographie des gendarmes et officiers appartenant à la Colonne d'approvisionnement de l'armée Ottomane, commandée par Hamid bey, officier de Milice, qui ont été assassinés par des bandes arméniennes à Cheylan Kaya le 11 juillet 1915. Ces bandes, qui venaient pour la plupart de Van et de Talory, se trouvaient sous le commandement du fameux bandit Durian Dano et de ses frères. Elles se sont réfugiées dans la suite au village arménien Bachnik du Kasa de Silvan

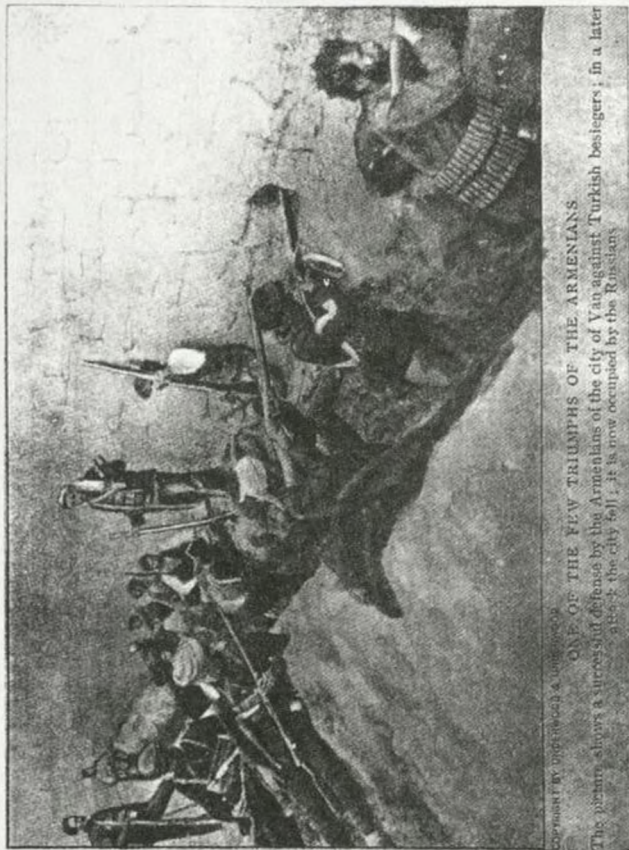
Photo of gendarms and officers belonging to the Provisions Columns of the Imperial Army, commanded by Hamid Bey, an officer of the Militia, who, on July 11th 1915, were assassinated by the Armenian bands at a place called Sheylan Kaya. These bands which had specially come from Van and Talory for the purpose of terrorizing the locality were under the leadership of the famous bandit Durian Dano and his brothers, and who afterwards were discovered to have taken refuge in the Armenian Village of Bachnik, in the Kasa of Silvan.

The Armenian Aspirations and Revolutionary Movements Album No: 1, p.48

Picture 9

Van'ın Rus ordusu tarafından işgalini kolaylaştırmak için isyan eden Ermenilerin Osmanlı askerlerine karşı siporlerde çarpışmaları.

Aufständische Armenier kämpfen in den Schutzengraben gegen die türkischen Truppen um die Einnahme von Van durch die Russen zu erleichtern.



ONE OF THE FEW TRIUMPHS OF THE ARMENIANS
The picture shows a successful defense by the Armenians of the city of Van against Turkish besiegers; in a later attack, the city fell, it is now occupied by the Russians.

Arméniens révoltés, luttant dans les tranchées contre l'armée turque pour faciliter l'occupation de la ville de Van par l'armée russe.
Revolted Armenians fighting in the trenches against Turks for the purpose of facilitating the task of occupation of the city of Van by the Russians.

Picture 10

Ermeni Hinçak Göñüllü Alayının İkinci Bölüğü. [«Yeridassart Hayastan» (Genç Ermenistan) Gazetesinden 20 Temmuz 1915]
Zweite Kompanie des armenischen freiwilligen Regiments Hinischak [entnommen aus dem Blatte «Yeridassart Hayastan», (Jung-Armenien) vom 20. Juli 1915]



Deuxième compagnie du régiment volontaire Hinitchak (Du journal «Yeridassart Hayastan» (Jeune Arménie) du 20 Juillet 1915.)
Second Company of the Armenian Voluntary Hinsochak Regiment - Yeridassart Hayastan - (Young Armenia) 20th July, 1915.

Picture 11



Armoiries brodées de soie du comité révolutionnaire arménien Tachnaksoutioun (saisies dans une évêché)

***APPENDIX
DOCUMENTS***

APPENDIX / DOCUMENTS

Document 1

CLASSIFICATION CANCELED AUTHORITY LETTER
OF 1-8-58 FROM W. H. ANDERSON, STATE DEP'T

BY *James J. Doyle* DATE *5 May 61*

Approximate number of Armenians in the world, November 1922.

Of the total indicated below, 817,873 are refugees from Turkey. The figures as to the refugees are based upon information furnished by the British Embassy, Constantinople, and by the agents of the Near East Relief Society, in 1921. The total given does not include the able-bodied Armenians, who are retained by the Kemalists, nor the women and children,- approximately 95,000,- according to the League of Nations- who have been forced to embrace Islam.

1.- In Turkey :

Constantinople.....	160,000	
Asia Minor.....	<u>131,000</u>	291,000

2. In Russia :

Republic of Erivan	1,200,000	
Georgia	400,000	
Azerbaijan	340,000	
Region of TransCaspian	30,000	
Other parts of Russia	<u>228,000</u>	2,195,000

3. In Syria, Palestine

and Mesopotamia	104,000	
Egypt, Sudan and	28,000	
Abyssinia	18,000	
India, Java and	<u>50,000</u>	194,000
Australia		
Persia		

4. In Greece and Cyprus

Bulgaria	79,000	
Romania	48,000	
Central and Western	43,000	
Europe	<u>58,000</u>	208,000

5. In the United States

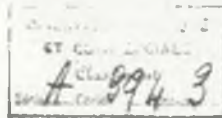
and Canada	125,000	
South America	<u>3,000</u>	128,000
		3,004,000

AEA 867.4016/816
 James W. Goodwin Taylor; Baker; Baker; Baker

Britania Istanbul Ambassodor ... Near East Relief Society's
document number of Armenians in the World at 1921
Belge: US Archives, Nara 867.4016/816. Jan.10,1923 (www.ttk.org.tr)

Arménie

(E)



101

Mr. Sazonov télégraphie à Mr. Lewolsky que les arméniens de Tiflis ont reçu par un envoyé de la colonie arménienne de Van, une lettre cousue dans la doublure de son vêtement, dont la teneur suit: "Dans la province de Van on a tué jusqu'à six mille personnes. Van et Chatak se défendent énergi- - quement. Les obus ont causé peu de dégâts à la ville de Van. Nous faisons notre dernier effort. Nous attendons journelle- - ment des secours. Supplions de faire hâte. Après il sera trop tard. "

Cette lettre porte la date du 28 Avril.

Les Ambassadeurs de Russie à Paris et à Londres sont chargés de porter les renseignements ci-dessus à la connaissance des deux Cabinets. //

Paris le 14 Mai 1915.

Russian Ambassador at Paris, Sazanov's report dated 14 May 1915,
Armenians killed 6000 person at Van and Çatak
Belge: Turquie/Vol.887, Armenie-I
(Aout 1914 - Decembre 1915) (www.ttk.org.tr)

THE NUMBER OF ARMENIANS IN THE PROVINCES OF THE

There are now approximately 600,000 Armenians in the provinces which formed part of the old Ottoman Empire before the Treaty of Sevres.

2-

HOW ARE THEY DISTRIBUTED?

The following statistics show the number of Armenians in each Sandjak of the Empire. In Villayets where the Armenian population was small, the number of Armenians living in the whole Villayet is given.

1-Constantinople	180,000
2-Villayet of Andrinople	6,000
3- Thracian (Independent Sandjak)	20,000
4- Khudavendighiar	
a- Sandjak of Broussa	11,000
b- Sandjak of Biledjik	4,500
5- Kalesi Sultanes (Independent Sandjak)	900
6- Karassi	5,800
7- Affion Karahissar	"
8- Kutahia	7,000
9- Villayet of Aidin (Smyrna)	10,000
10- Villayet of Kastamonu	
11- Bolou (Independent Sandjak)	8,000
12- Angora	
a- Angora	
b- Kirsehir	2,500
c- Chorum	
d- Yozgat	3,000
13- Gasarea (Independent Sandjak)	4,000
14- Villayet of Konia	10,000
15- Sivas	
a- Sandjak of Sivas	12,000
b- " " Sokat	1,800
c- " " Atasia	2,000
d- " " Shabir Karahissar	1,000
16- Trebizond	
a- Trebizond	

Document 3.2

b-Iazistan	10,000
c-Gümüş Hane	
17- Djanik	5,000
18- Villayet of Erzeroum (Erzeroum, Gardjanis Kodoukmal)	500
19- Villayet of Van (only in the city)	500
20- " " Bitlis, Nobody	
21- " " Diarbekir	3,000
22- Mamouret ul Aziz	
a- Harpout	30,000
b- Malatia	2,000
c- Dersim	3,000
23- Villayet of Adana	180,000
24- Aleppo	
a-Aleppo	5,000
b-Aintab	52,000
25- Ourfa (Independant Villayet)	9,000
26- Marash (Independant Villayet)	10,000
27- Jerusalem	2,000
28- Villayet of Damascus	400
29- Villayet of Beirut	1,000
30- Villayet of Bagdad	1,000
31- Villayet of Basra	400
32- Villayet of Moussoul	800
	<u>546,100</u>
	<u>18,000</u>
	<u>564,100</u>

In addition to this, there are still Armenian orphans and young girls in Moslem houses, who have yet been liberated. It is known that in the Arabia desert a large number of Armenian orphans is still held in bondage by Arab tribes.

Orphans and young girls in the district of
Deir el Zor

a- Near the Zébar, Egedar and Yragora tribes	500
b- Near the D'ibour tribe	600
c- Near the SKamar tribe	700
d- Near the Amnese tribe	2,000

In Mus-ul-Ain near the Tchatahen tribes	2,000
In Constantinople and its surroundings	6,800
Diarradia	
Brousse	
Belinossir	2,000
Karahissar	
Salou	2,800
Eskishehir	
Kocia	2,800
Kastamonu	800
Trebizond	2,000
Sivas	3,500
Caesarea	2,800
Syzeroum	3,000
Marberkir	25,000
Mardin	
Harpout	5,000
Bitlis	8,000
Van	
Total number	624,000

But however the total given above does not represent the entire number. Many Armenians had adopted Islam to get rid of the unspeakable crime and of the persecution organized by the Ittihad, and many others, who had been deported, lived in different districts in disguise.

Rev. Vartan Akirhanian, who managed to remain in Harpout during the whole period of the war, informed us that a great number of strangers, who were known to the Turks or were disguised in Turkish dress during the war, revealed themselves to be Armenians after the armistice. Moreover, it is believed that many Armenians still hide themselves in some safe shelter perhaps on the mountains and do not dare to come out for fear of being subject to persecution even now.

It would not be safe to estimate the number of the people but in all probability there are as many as 20,000 of them.

Translation of an appeal published by the Catholicos of Etchmiadine and addressed to the Armenians.

(Extract from the August number 1914 of the «Arants», official organ of Calouss.)

Kework, Servant of Jesus Christ, by the eternal will of God, Catholicos of all the Armenians, Holy patriarch of the High Seat of the Mother-Church of Ararat, Catholicos of the Saint-Etchmiadine.

In the name of Christ, greetings and blessings of the Seat of Catholicos to all honourable Archbishops, illustrious Bishops, venerable priests, notable and happy riches, traders and industrialists, and peasants all earning their bread by the sweat of their brows, school masters and instructors who render marked services of beneficence, people who deal with national questions, in a word, all those true sons of the Mother-church.

You know well that the enemy has attacked from outside our fatherland, the great Russia.

In spite of the pacific desires of our Government and its efforts based upon its good intentions a terrible war has unfortunately broken out amongst the civilised states and nations of Europe.

In such a historical moment like this, full of misfortunes and terrors, the only thing which brings consolation to the people of Great Russia is to work together, just like the members of the same family, by uniting their activity and their loyalty for the defence of the right and justice and for the preservation of the nations against tyranny and injustice.

Union assures victory and happiness, and concord produces good acts and constitutes the foundation of heroic actions.

We will console ourselves by recommitting our sons that each of them, wherever he may be, should fulfil personally and with enthusiasm and energy their civil and political duties towards the Government to defend our motherland as well as its glories.

Armenians must show the world their feelings of devotion towards the majestic and magnificent throne of the Emperor of Russia, devotion which dates since centuries, as already proved by history, they ought equally to show the world that they are all animated with the same feeling of constancy and firmness of this ideal.

Being sure that our sons will follow the footsteps of their farfathers, they will consequently fulfil their personal duties with courage and bravery, we hasten to invite them by the present appeal, to extend their brotherly help, moral and material, to the families standing in need of assistance of those who are to fight for the safety and the honour and triumph of the Great Russia, our fatherland.

During this terrible war a great number of wounded will be in need of care and assistance and it is the duty of the sons of fatherland, as christians, to hasten to help them and to try to soothen their sufferings as good Samaritans.

I pray God for the success and victory of the heroic Russian soldiers. You be blessed all, and implore the divine blessings, so that the Great Russia will be kept out of all dangers and mischicks of the enemy.

Let it live eternally in full victory and let its loyal population enjoy a long happiness.

MEYORK V.

Catholicos of all the Armenians.

Document 5

Extracts from the December issue (1914) of the Armenian paper - *Hintchak* », published in Paris.
organ of the Armenian Hintchak Committee.

The Hintchak Social Democrat Committee representing the Armenian nation, exposed to vexations and deprived of its rights, which has been working since over a quarter of a century in a bloody path to obtain the liberation of the Armenians in Turkey, now descends, driven by the power of actual political events, from the Taurus Mountains and the borders of Armenia down to the battle-field, blowing the trumpet of strife and revolution, to drown in blood the Ottoman tyranny.

In this gigantic struggle where existence of nations is at stake, the Hintchak Committee as well as the entire Armenian nation, will join their forces, moral and material, and waving the sword of revolution in their hands, will enter into this worldwar.

As comrades of arms of the Triple Entente and particularly of Russia they will co-operate with the Allies, making full use of all political and revolutionary means they possess, for the final victory in Armenia, Cilicia, Caucasus and Azerbaydjan, being always led by their patriotism and thus fulfilling their duties towards themselves and towards civilization.

Let all heroes who will sacrifice their lives for the great cause of the Armenian freedom, come forward with all their moral and material strength for the realisation of this national aspiration.

It is only by these means that the Armenians, proud for having shed their blood for their own cause and that of civilization, may represent the nation at the Congress to be held on the morrow of the war.

Let it obtain its political liberty; let it show to the world that it has a right to live, and finally let it obtain, through the consent of the Triple Entente, the independence granted to their fatherland for which it has shed its blood.

And from the rays of liberty let the sun of right, justice, liberty and fraternity rise.
Well, then, forward Comrades . . . Forward to work. Let us crush down the death, death which threatens Armenia, so that it lives and it lives for ever . . .

(Paris 1914)

Head offices of the social Democrat Hintchak Committee.

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING DATED 30 MAY 1915

No: 163
Date: 30 May 1915

Communicated to: Ministries of the Interior, War, and
Finance
Communicated on: 31 May 1915

Summary

Some of the Armenians living in areas close to the battlefields have recently become involved in activities aimed at creating difficulties for our army in its fight against the enemy to protect the Ottoman borders. These Armenians are trying to impede the operations of the army, and the transfer of supplies and ammunition. They are combining their aspirations and activities with those of the enemy and are fighting against us in the ranks of the enemy. Inside the country, they dare to carry out armed attacks against the military forces and the innocent civilians, thus becoming involved in acts of murder, looting, and plundering of the Ottoman cities and towns, to provide supplies to the enemy's navy and to inform them of the fortified posts positions. The conduct of such rebel elements rendered it necessary to remove them from the area of military operations and to evacuate the villages serving as bases of operations and shelter for the rebels.

To achieve these aims, a different manner of action has begun to be implemented. Within this framework, the Armenians living in the provinces of Van, Bitlis, Erzurum; with the exclusion of the centres of Adana, Sis, and Mersin, the sanjaks of Adana, Mersin, Cebel-i Bereket and Kozan; the sanjak of Maras, with the exclusion of the centre of Maras; the towns and villages of the districts of Iskenderun, Bilan, Cizr-i Sugur, and Antakya of the province of Aleppo, with the exclusion of the central district of Aleppo have begun to be rapidly transferred to the southern provinces. The transfer and settlement of the Armenians to the province of Mosul, excluding the northern part of the same province which is close to the border with the province of Van; to the sanjak of Zor; to the southern parts of the sanjak of Urfa, excluding the centre of Urfa; to the east and south-eastern parts of the province of Aleppo; and to the eastern part of the province of Syria, have also begun.

Those Armenians are being relocated in the places designated by the government. The memorandum of the Ministry of the Interior dated 26 May 1915 and no. 270, which underlines certain points, including the necessity of establishing the rules and orders regarding the implementation of the measures of relocation undertaken for the protection of the basic interests of the state, have been read.

Decision

It has been concluded to be an absolute necessity to resort to effective means in order to fully eliminate such harmful activities, which create adverse effects on the efforts to protect the existence and the security of the state, and on the wide-scale reforms being implemented. Therefore, the process initiated by your Ministry has been found appropriate. In that framework, it has been found appropriate to carry out the transfer of those Armenians needed to be sent to other places from the villages and towns, the names of which has been written in your report. To ensure the comfort of those Armenians to be transferred on their way to the places allocated for their resettlement, to ensure their arrival to the places of resettlement, to facilitate their rest and protect their lives, and property on their journey, and to provide food and shelter for them from the immigrants fund until their final settlement. To distribute real estate and land among them in proportion to their previous financial and economic status, to build houses for those who are needy and if required, distribute seeds for sowing to the farmers and tools to the artisans. Return to the subjects in a convenient manner, the properties and possessions they have left back, or the money equivalents of those properties and possessions, settle the immigrants and tribes to the evacuated villages and distribute the real estate and land among them after evaluating the prices of those properties.

Document 6.1

To distribute among the immigrants the immovable properties left back in the cities and towns by the transferred people, after determining their value, amount, and type, and sell by public auction or lease the olive groves, mulberry orchards, vineyards, and orange orchards as well as the immovable properties such as shops, commercial buildings, factories, and depots which could not be utilized by the immigrants since they are out of the scope of the commerce and experience of the immigrants, and transfer the money to be obtained from the sale or lease of the said properties to the local offices of the Treasury, to be later given in a convenient way to the original owners of those properties.

It has been considered appropriate to meet the costs to be required for doing all of the above mentioned from the Immigrants Fund. Through the implementation of the provisions of the regulation prepared by the said Ministry, it has been decided to ensure the protection and management of the abandoned properties, to accelerate, arrange, examine, and inspect the process of general resettlement, and regarding the resettlement procedures, take and implement decisions in compliance with the regulation and the orders of the Ministry.

With this aim in mind, a secondary commissions directly subordinate to the Ministry of the Interior is going to be formed. These commissions will be authorized to employ paid officials, and they will consist of a president and two members, one of them to be elected among the officials of the Ministry of the Interior, the other among the officials of the Ministry of Finance. The said commissions are going to be sent to the places they will be appointed to. In the places where no such commission may be sent, the implementation of the above-mentioned regulation will be left to the governors. The above-mentioned points have been discussed and it has been decided to be communicated as a response to the abovementioned Ministries that the provisions of the said regulation were considered appropriate to be implemented.

(Signatures of the members of the Council of Ministers)

DOCUMENT DATED 13 AUGUST 1915 - TO THE GOVERNORATES OF PROVINCES AND SANJAKS REGARDING
THE NEW MEASURES NEEDED TO BE TAKEN IN THE FACE OF THE SERIOUS OVERCROWDING
OBSERVED AT THE TRAIN STATIONS

Ottoman Government
Ministry of the Interior
Directorate for the Settlement of Immigrants and Tribes
Department of Statistics
General: 455

Cipher message to:
The Governorates of Erzurum, Adana, Ankara, Bitlis, Aleppo, Bursa, Diyarbakir, Trabzon, Elazığ, Mosul, and Van Provinces,
The Governorates of Urfa, Izmit, Samsun, Zor, Balıkesir, Kayseri, Akyon, Maras, Eskişehir, and Niğde Sanjaks,
The Presidencies of the Commissions for the Administration of Abandoned Properties in Adana, Erzurum, Aleppo, Samsun, Sivas,
Elazığ, Diyarbakir, and Izmit, -

It is understood that there is serious overcrowding at the railway stations, interruptions are occurring in the military transportation, and difficulties are posed for the [adjacent] provinces around, due to the fact that the Armenians to be removed are only being transferred to the outer limits of local borders of the provinces and sanjaks they were living, and then they are left there. In order to resolve this situation, the Armenians to be relocated henceforth will be sent in convoys which shall be arranged beforehand, and their arrival at Aleppo, which is accepted as the centre of distribution to their places of resettlement, will be ensured through continuous communication with the provinces and sanjaks located on their routes of transfer. Overcrowding of the Armenian subjects at the military stopovers should be prevented, and officials charged with meeting the needs for provisions and other requirements of the subject individuals should accompany the convoys. All relevant costs will be met from the Immigrants Fund.

13 August 1915

On behalf of the Minister
Ali Münif

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Haluk Selvi,
Director of Sakarya University
Turkish-Armenian Relationships
Research Center. Selvi's selected researchs:

- Erzurum in the Turkish National Struggle (1918-1923), Ankara, 2000 (Turkish)
- Armenian Question, From the First World War to Lausanne, Sakarya 2001 (Turkish)
- Armenian Question and Europe (editor), Sakarya, 2006. (in Turkish)
- *Occupatin and Protest: Protest Telegrams About Occupation of Smyrna (15 Mayıs 1919-30 Temmuz 1919), Değişim Yayınları, İstanbul 2007. (Turkish)*
- "Turkey-Armenia Relations-Now and Next", Genkur. Başk. Stratejik Araştırmalar Dergisi, sayı: 2 (Eylül 2003) (Turkish)
- "Ottoman Goverments' Armenian Politics (1908-1914)", Türk Yurdu, cilt: 26, Sayı: 225, ss.107-115 Turkish)
- From Anatolia to Caucasia an Armenian Guerrilla Chieftain: Andranik Ozanyan " Sekizinci Askeri Tarih Semineri, İstanbul 25-26 Ekim 2001 (Turkish)
- "Armenians Activities in USA. (1893-1896)", ASAM Ermeni Araştırmaları Enstitüsü Türkiye Ermeni Kongresi, Ankara 24-26 Nisan 2002.(Turkish)
- "Armenians Avtivities in Yozgat (1890-1892)", Doç. Dr. Günay Çağlar Armağanı, Erzurum, 2004 (Turkish)
- "Armanian Brigands Activities (1900-1918)", Gazi Üniversitesi Türk-Ermeni İlişkilerinin Gelişimi ve 1915 Olayları Uluslararası Sempozyumu Bildirileri, Yay. Haz. Hale Şıvgın, Ankara, 2006 (Turkish)

From the Ottoman Interior Ministry to Vilayets:

“ To Van, Bitlis, Mamuretü'laziz, Adana, Diyarbakır, Sivas,

Russians have triggered Ottoman Armenians through Caucasian Armenians that the captured places on Ottoman land will be given to them. They have attempted to organize gangs sending many people in village, and brought arms and ammunition as to deliver to some points on the border. It has been learned from reliable sources that on the condition that war is declared, it has been decided for Armenians in the army to join Russian side with their arms, to keep silent if our army moves ahead and to act against us in gangs when our army backs off. In some Armenians houses searched by this aim, there has been found arms. It has been reported to units that non-Muslims crossing the border and carrying no passport will be caught, the ones attempting to cross arms and ammunition will immediately be killed, and when an act against us is performed, it will be suppressed firmly and the doers will be ruined. It has been reported to the Sublime Military Command that the issue of organizing militia forces, that will stay in Muslim villages and turn back when necessary, has been notified to Erzurum by the 3rd Army Commandership. Owing to the seriousness of the information about Armenians, it is required to make investigation there and to act with army corps commandership and inform here about the situation.

September 28, 1914
The Minister
(signature)”