

հայդույն

Haytoug

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE ARMENIAN YOUTH FEDERATION

February 2000

Փետրուար 2000

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Brief History of Nagorno Karabagh

Stories about our Immortal Heroes

ANC Postcard Campaign

Genocide Denial



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ԽՄԲԱԳՐԱԿԱՆ

1920-ական թուականներին սկսեալ, ամէն տարի Մայիս 28ին երբ սփիւռքի տարածքին կը նշուէր Հայաստանի Հանրապետութեան Անկախութեան տարեդարձը, Դաշնակցական բանախօսները իրենց խօսքերուն մէջ այլ հարցերու կողքին կը վերանորոգէին մեր ուխտը եւ հաւատքը, Հայաստանը վերստին Ազատ եւ Անկախ տեսնելու, փշրելու մեր հայրենիքի ազատութիւնը կաշկանդող Խորհրդային շրջանները եւ վերստին Հայկական Եռագոյնի ծածանիլը տեսնելու Երեւանի շէնքերուն վրայ:

Այս խօսքերը երբ կ'արտասանուէին բեմերէն եւ ամպիոններէն, մեծ էր թիւը այն թերահաւատ հայերուն, որոնք տարակուսանքով կ'ընդունէին նման գաղափարները, չսեւելու համար հեգնանքով, միշտ մատնանշելով որ նման երազ մը պիտի չիրականանար մինչեւ այն ատեն որ գոյութիւն ունէր աշխարհի երկու տիրապետութիւններէն մէկը նկատուող Խորհրդային Միութիւնը:

Այսօր սակայն, կը տեսնենք, որ Վրացեաններու, Նաասարդեաններու, Ռուբէններու, Զէթեաններու եւ Մարութեաններու մարգարէութիւնը իրականութիւն դարձած է եւ Հայ ժողովուրդը յաջողած է վերականգնել իր ազգային արժանապատուութիւնը եւ նուաճել ազատ ապրելու իրաւունքը:

Հիշող վերոյիշեալ օրինակով, 1988 թուականին երբ ծայր առաւ Արցախեան Պահանջատիրութիւնը եւ կարճ ժամանակ ետք, ժողովրդային խաղաղ ցոյցերու նախաձեռնած ժողովուրդը իր գոյութիւնը պաշտպանելու նպատակով դիմեց զէնքի, վերը յիշուած նոյն թերահաւատ եւ նուազագոյն ճնշումի տակ ընկրկելու հակամէտ անձերն ու քաղաքական խմբաւորումները վերստին կասկածով եւ սնահաատութեամբ գնահատեցին կացութիւնը, այս անգամ պատճառ բռնելով այն հանգամանքը, որ Ղարաբաղը եւ Հայաստանը միջոցներ չունին պայքարելու համար Ազրպէյճանի եւ Խորհրդային Միութեան դէմ: Բոլորս ալ սակայն, ականատես եղանք, թէ ինչպէս հայութեան միասնական ուժերով, ինքնապաշտպանութեան համար սկսուած պայքարը վթրածուեցաւ ազատագրական պայքարի, տեսանք թէ ինչպէս Ղարաբաղի մէջ կռուող Դուշմանները, Բեկորները, Միերներն ու Մեղրեանները թշնամին քշելով դրին հիմքերը Լեռնային Ղարաբաղի Հանրապետութեան:

(Շարունակուած էջ 3)

հայտուկ

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

For all Armenian Youth residing in Western
America who strive of the national, social and
economic liberation of the Armenian people.

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(Շարունակում է 2-ին)

Իր ստեղծման օրէն, Հայ Երիտասարդաց Դաշնակցութիւնը եղաւ այն կազմակերպութիւնը, որ միշտ իր առջեւ դրաւ իրապաշտ եւ գործնապաշտ մարդուն համար անկարելի թուացող Հրամայականներ եւ տեսլականներ, հաստատելով որ յարատեւ եւ հետեւողական ճիգով, չկան անյաղթահարելի եւ անլուծելի խնդիրներ: Այս սկզբունքէն մեկնելով էր, որ Արցախեան պայքարի առաջին օրէն սկսեալ, Հայ Երիտասարդաց Դաշնակցութիւնը ոգի ի բոյն լծուեցաւ այդ պայքարի յաջողութեան ի խնդիր: Դրասահաաքներով, լուսինակի աշխատանքներով, դպրոցներու օգնութեամբ, հասնելու համար մինչեւ Youth Corps-ի ծրագրին, որուն միջոցով ամէն տարի երիտասարդներ կը մեկնին Արցախ եւ իրենց մասնակցութիւնը կը բերեն նոր բնակավայրերու շինութեան գործին:

Այսօր երբ Արցախը դարձած է Լեռնային Ղարաբաղի հանրապետութիւն, մենք իբրեւ հայ երիտասարդներ, կը տեսնենք մեր երազը իրականացած: Իսկ անդին, վերը յիշուած թերահաատները, անդրադառնալով հանդերձ որ անգամ սը եա դէպքերու իրենց մեկնաբանութիւնն ու կանխատեսումը սխալ էր, կը շարունակեն նոյն ընթացքով վերաբերիլ մեր ազգային կեանքին մէջ արձանագրուող Զանազան իրադարձութիւններուն, պարտաւորեցնելով մեզի պահել մեր սկզբունքայնութիւնը եւ մնալ յառաջամարտիկ, մնալ առաջնորդողի դերին մէջ եւ անվրդով շարունակել տասնամեակներ առաջ սկսած եւ իր արդարացիութիւնը քանիցս փաստած երթը:

ՀԱՅԴՈՒԿ

- Ապստամբական ազատ խումբի պատկանող ռազմիկ
- Անկանոն բանակի զինուոր



ԳՐԵՑԷՔ
ԸՆԿ.
ՀԱՄԲԻԿԻՆ

Hampig Sassounian C88440
CA State Prison-LAC D-5-232
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To Those Who Don't Believe

As many of us sit around a table sipping a mug of coffee or a glass of iced mocha, often we are carried away with topics that involve the existence and strengthening of Armenia, Artsakh or the Diaspora. Nearly a dozen years ago, when the Artsakh movement began, many individuals did not believe in the movement. While some questioned the timing and correctness of demanding independence as the sole mean to gain cultural and civil rights, others didn't believe that the freedom fighters of Artsakh had a real chance against the enemy. In the minds of the latter group, victory was imminent for the Azeris.

On the other side of the coin, you had individuals and organizations within the Diaspora who never compromised the legitimacy of the Artsakh struggle. Proof of that is found both in their actions and confidence displayed in attaining a positive outcome to the struggle. The Armenian Youth Federation was definitely a catalyst in this group. We knew that the will and desire to live freely was reason enough for the freedom fighters to secure victory. We understood that after 70 years of oppression, destiny was in the hands of the Armenian people. We understood that the right of self-determination was vital for the nation's survival. With these thoughts in mind, the AYF played an integral role in the involvement of the youths in the efforts to support Artsakh through fundraising activities and through the establishment of programs such as the Youth Corps.

As history now has proven, Artsakh was victorious and is now nurturing its independence as it focuses on the strengthening of its infrastructure. The people of Artsakh sent a strong message to those who didn't believe by proving that their will and determination created the path to achieving the impossible.

At the beginning of the new millenium, a full 12 years after the Artsakh movement began, there are still those that do not believe. They carry themselves with the same arrogance as those before them. The only difference is that the movement in which they do not believe is you: the youth of the Armenian People far too often, we hear comments doubting the commitment of the youths to the Armenian Cause (Hai Tahd). Many people are ready to insist that the youths don't care about Genocide recognition, the struggle against assimilation or the rebuilding of Armenia and Artsakh. If that were so, then why would the AYF organize the Youth Corps program every summer? If that were so, then why would the AYF organize Genocide demonstrations, vigils and partake in the Genocide recognition postcard campaign? If that is so, then why would the AYF organize summer camps, among other activities, in order to help the Armenian youths get better acquainted with their heritage and culture? As we all march down the road of time and take on the challenges that we must face as the communities of the Diaspora, let us all remember that there are still those who don't believe in you.

AYF YOUTH CORPS: Working for Our Homeland

By Chris & Hagop Minassian

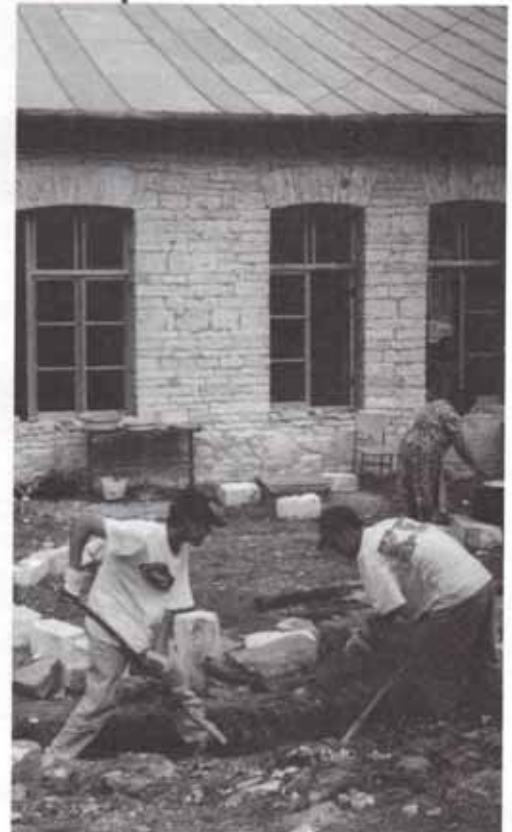
Members of the AYF San Fernando Valley "Sardarabad" Chapter

During the Armenian genocide of 1915 my great grandfather, the sole survivor of his family, was forced to flee from his homeland. Despite the horrors he experienced during this tragic time, he always hoped to one-day return. However, as circumstances would have it, he never had the opportunity. Likewise, because of their political affiliation, future generations of our family were neither wanted nor accepted in a soviet Armenia. Yet, eighty-five years and four generations later, my brother and I are the first members of our family to return to Armenia.

"The fact that we built personal friendships with the villagers further developed the bond that tied us to this land."

The decision for us to participate in the Youth Corps in the summer of 1999 came suddenly and without hesitation. My brother and I had always hoped to go to Armenia together, and the Youth Corps provided us with this opportunity. Our voyage became all the more meaningful in that by working in Kharabagh we not only saw Armenia for what it really was, but we would also contributed to the cause of rebuilding the homeland. At times, the group didn't seem to get along as we were not well acquainted with each other, and the work got harder by day, however we never stopped in our efforts to do what was asked of us. The fact that we built personal friendships with the villagers further developed the bond that tied us to this land. Understandably, working together as brothers did have its ups and downs. At times, like the rest of the group, we felt obliged to comment on each other's performance or work habits. On the other hand, when one of us needed something, the other would always be there to provide. This helped in building a strong working relationship between amongst participants.

During the Youth Corps interviews it was mentioned to us that our experience would be more fulfilling if we as brothers somewhat separated and interacted individually with the group. However once in Armenia, we discovered that this naturally happened. This is an experience that every individual sees and feels on a very personal level. Armenia takes every person in his or her own different way. However, when as a group we worked and lived together day in and day out, it was impossible not to feel an attachment to the other members. After all, I came to Armenia with my brother, however when leaving it was hard for me not to feel like a brother to the rest of my group. Youth Corps 99 proved to be an incredible experience for us. It showed us a land that we had only read and dreamed about. Yet, more importantly, after almost a century of separation, it marked the reunification of our family to its homeland.



AYF YOUTH CORPS: Working for Our Homeland

(cont'd from page 4)

By Tanya Gregorian

Member of the AYF Crescenta Valley "Zartonk" Chapter

Okay, so I have been asked to describe my Youth Corps 1999 experience, and I can honestly say that there are no words that I can use in any language to describe to you the way that I feel about it. I know that I can say that I think the Youth Corps is one of the best opportunities that the West Coast AYF Region has to offer. It is extremely difficult for me to look back at this past summer and imagine what my life would be like without going to Artsakh. I not only became more aware of my culture and my homeland, but also myself. When we worked and stayed in Ashan, we were fortunate enough to create a strong bond with the villagers and each one of them became my unger, my brother, and a father figure to me. I looked up to their motivation and passion for life, and this fire that they held inside inspired me so much in that it made me find the fire within myself. The fact that we spent every moment of every day for 4 weeks with men who had fought and risked their lives was extraordinary. I could truly feel an awesome "vibe" coming from them, and it astounded me how powerful each one of these men was not only physically, but also mentally. Sure enough, when it came time for us to part the villagers and leave, I was balling my eyes out. I couldn't understand how these simple yet beautiful "kuugh" had moved me so that it put tears to my eyes. I didn't want to think of how my life would be without them there, and I didn't know how I had passed my days to this point without the fulfillment that I have received from them. Their warmth, incredible hospitality, and sincerity had been the trigger to the tears which I possessed, because all my life and all this time living in the mostly white Caucasian surrounding that I had lived in, I had never once felt an ounce of the generosity that I felt when I was in Ashan. Their mannerisms and philosophies had refreshed me so that it had come to the point where I was in a dumbfounded state of mind. I was speechless...they had stolen my words from right under my breath, and placed it in their hearts, and I was grateful.

Even today, approximately 6 months to the day we left, I sit in my home, in my not so Armenian neighborhood, and reminisce my times with the best Youth Corps gang ever. Sometimes I cry in remembrance of our great times, and sometimes I laugh at the stupid things that we did. But most of all...I just remember, and place myself there, because that is where my heart is.

"... that is where my heart is ..."

If you are interested in obtaining more information about the AYF Youth Corps Program, please fill out and return this form to the Youth Corps Committee at the following address:

AYF Youth Corps Comm.
104 North Belmont Street
Glendale, California 91206

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

IMMORTAL heroes

Ashot "Pegor" Ghulian

Ashot Ghulian was 33 years old and part of the Artsakh first division. He was also a member of the ARF. Born in Baku, later moved to his native village of Khntsoresdan, Artsakh. Ashot Ghulian is legendary throughout Artsakh and Armenia. Wounded 11 times, he carried inside his body pieces from mine explosions, GRAD missile attacks, grenades, bullets... Hence the name "Pegor".



When his fingers would urge him to go home and have them surgically removed, Pegor would answer, "Ays mee Kyoughn el azadakrenk, hedo..." Let's free one more village and afterwards... He didn't have time to have the fingers removed. Pegor died in defense of Dromdon of the Mardakert region, on August 23, 1992. He left behind his wife and three children.

Ashot Hagopian

Member of the ARF, 40 year old Ashot Hagopian fought in scores of battles in Karabagh. Yet his heroic death did not take place on the battlefield. On May 28, 1994, the anniversary of the first republic of Armenia, Ashot was driving a bus taking 54 volunteers from Armavir to Artsakh, a rough drive through mountainous terrain. Ashot knew well the urgency of his mission, since every volunteer was greatly needed in the Artsakh battles. As he was driving downhill, the brakes suddenly gave out and the bus soared down the road out of control.

*"... giving his own life
and saving the lives of
his 54 fingers ..."*

Ashot knew there was only one way to stop it and he drove the bus into the side of the mountain - giving his own life and saving the lives of his 54 fingers who survived what could have been a fatal accident.

Artur Gharipian

Artur Gharipian was one of the best students of art and sculpture. During his short-lived yet full life Artur became a legend. The life of battle was not what he had been prepared for. He had always been quiet, modest, and extremely studious. Yet, he interrupted his studies and volunteered to fight for the defense of Karabagh. A young soldier tells of Artur and his men...

"We were out-numbered when the Azeris were still terrorizing and burning Gerjgan. I was crying over the corpse of my brother. Suddenly I heard the familiar melody of an Armenian Revolutionary song. Their voices seemed to ascend over the chaos and noise of the battle. I stood up and moved towards that magical sound. It was Artur and his men. All of them were singing. We joined them and together we became stronger. The Azeris were completely startled and after a few hours they fled from Gerjgan."

A few days later Artur and his khoump were given orders to move to Lesno near Shushi. That night together, with five of his fingers and two horses carrying ammunition, Artur began the difficult journey over the snow-covered mountain. On the second day when one of the horses died and the other could not walk, Artur turned to his men and said "We must carry the ammunition ourselves and carry out the mission." For four days, hungry and cold, they continued towards Lesno. When they reached their destination the battle had already begun; they took their positions and fought for many hours. In the end Artur and his men had won without having any dead or wounded. In November 1992 while fighting with his unit in Martakert, Artur was killed.

Aghvan Minasian

"The sun set heavily in Sisian on August 30, 1994. Alarming murmurs spread and whispered into the ears of the city...it's Aghvan, Aghvan Minasian... It's difficult for me to write about him now, because it's hard to believe that he is gone, that his kind, simple and contagious smile no longer will greet me in his birthplace, Ldzeni, when he and I would meet in the streets of Sisian. He was romantic even with a gun in his hand, you could say the gun was his pen and he wrote lines of struggle on every bit of land he defended. There were rebel fires in his soul, whether he wrote poetry or fought in battle. There was so much life in him. His life was unfinished, his love unfinished, his poems unfinished in the notebook he kept in his pocket. Yet his commitment and love for his homeland was complete. "My mother's face in front of me, I am going far away to pay the debt to my fatherland," he had written before he went to battle. The land yearned for blood and blood was priceless, and with his priceless blood the land became even more invaluable. "Sad are the colors this spring, And my heart bears some sort of sad news..." And his 23rd spring ended. No, he was a poet soldier, and the gun was the pen of his battle days, the pen that defended the borders of our homeland. Unfinished poems. This is how we know him. The soldier boy who loved all and was loved by all. As for us, in the streets of our city, as for his fellow ungers on the battlefields, we continue to search for his eternal and soulful face, to understand the deeper message of his poems and his battles..."



Վարդան Գերմանի Պապիկեան

13 տարեկան էր Վարդանը, երբ Շարժումը սկսավ: Ոչ մէկ հանդիպումէն չէր բացակայէր: Հանդիպումներէն տուն կու գար, մեզ կ'ստիպէր, որ պատմենք 1915-ի, Արցախի, Նախիջեանի մասին, կ'ուզէր մինչեւ վերջ հասկնալ, թէ ինչ է կատարուած եւ ինչու : Տակափն երեխայ էր:

Օրերով կ'ուսումնասիրէր Հայկական հանրագիտարանը, շարունակ փաստ գտնելու նպատակով: Երթալով ամէլի ինքնամփոփ կը դարնար: Գիշերները ուշ կը վերադարնար, գաղտնի պահելով իր ուր ըլլալը: Անհանգիստ էինք, ըսելով թէ փոքր ես, աշխատիր հեռու մնալ, վտանգաւոր է ետալն: Պատասխանը մէկն էր՝ ամէն ինչ հնարաւոր է, որ պատահի, յետոյ՝ ինչ . . . : Անդարնալի դարձած էր: Հասունցած էր:

Զինուած ինքնապաշտպանութեան ալիքը անոր ամբողջովին գրաւեց: Սահմանամերձ շրջաններէն չէր վերադարնար: Յունուար 16-ին Կոռնիձորէն վերադարնալով, խօստացաւ երեք օր տունը մնալ: Երկու օր ետք ամսուն 18-ին, ուրախ ներս մտաւ ու հպարտութեամբ յայտարարեց թէ պէտք է նորէն երթայ, այս անգամ Մովսէս Գորգիսեանին հետ: Առանց պատասխանին սպասելու, վազեց դուրս:

Գիշերը զացինք ու տեսանք թէ Մովսէսը անոր չէր տարած: Նեղուած վիճակին ըսաւ՝ Գացէք, ես մի ժամից կգամ: Անցաւ մէկ ժամ, յետոյ երկրորդը, երրորդը . . . ու մինչեւ հիմա . . .

Գրիգորեան Լիզա՝ Մայրը

Վարդան Յարութիւնի Տէրտէրեան

Վարդան Տէրտէրեան 1988-էն սկսեալ մասնակցած է Ղարաբաղեան Շարժման: Երբ ստեղծուեցաւ յատուկ գունդ մը, Վարդանը տեղափոխուեցաւ ու ընդունուեցաւ այս նոր գունդին, որպէս մարտիկ: Վարդան Տէրտէրեան եղած է համեստ, խելացի ու բոլորի կողմէ յարգուած ու սիրուած: Մասնակցած է Երասխաւանի, Արցախի մարտերուն, նաեւ Շահումեանի շրջանի էրթեջ, Մանաշիդ գիղերուն ազատագրմանը:

Վարդանը վերջին անգամը մասնակցելով Վերին Շէնի ազատագրմանը, իր երկու ընկերներուն՝ Զիւանի եւ Կոլիայի հետ միասին փրկել է 20 ազատամարտիկներու կեանք: Յուլիս 21, 1991 թուականին զոհուեցաւ Վարդան Տէրտէրեանը:



Original Artsakh Recipes

Անձրեւ

Terteroug

- Prepare dough without the yeast
- 1/2 kilo yogurt or sour cream
 - 1 tsp. baking soda
 - 1 cup water
 - dough
 - 1/2 cup sunflower oil
 - 2 cups sugar
 - handful of flour

Open dough 8 inches in width. Prepare mixture. Pour 3 tablespoons of batter evenly onto dough and close in an envelope style. Roll dough into a round ball, then, reopen it. Sprinkle flour as needed. Cook on stove in a pan until golden brown.

կաղամբ
ստեպոլին
նուռ
սոխ - նախընտրելի կանաչ
ազատգեղ
ձեթ
աղ

- Կաղամբը ջարդել փոքր մասերու
- Ստեպոլինը մանրել
- Նուռը մաքրել
- Սոխը եւ ազատգեղը մանրել
- Դնել մեծ ամանի մէջ, ձեթը եւ աղը աւելցնել եւ խառնել
- Նուռն է որ աղցանին թթուութիւնը եւ իրայատուկ համը կու տայ

Արցախեան ազատագրական պայքարի 12-րդ տարեդարձի առթիւ, այս թիւով կ'անդրադառնանք ու կը սերտենք Արցախի պատմութիւնը, հերոսները, ճաշն ու լեզուն: Այս ուղղութեամբ կազմակերպած ենք հետեւեալ մրցոյթը: Բոլոր անոնք որոնք ճշգրտօրէն ներկայացնեն թարգմանութիւնը հետեւեալ Արցախեան բարբառով գրուած պարբերութիւններէն մէկուն ու վերադառննեն Կեդրոնական Վարչութեան գրասենեակը մինչեւ Մարտ 31 կը ստանան անակնկալ նուէր մը:

Հու Վեր Անե՛՛ Տու Օտիս

Էրկու մարթ ծնակաւը քընիյիս ըն ընում վերսի: Ծրավում ըն, շոռ ըն կրամ մին ախապուր ա ցիում, էրկու ախճիզ էլ էն ըն էնում ըխապին դրաղեն նստած, էրկու ըմանում ամեզը ուրանց հետե մուշուփթոնը ուտէիս: Վրսկնենն ասում ըն.

- Սերուն ըխճըկերք, նուր տվեր մեզ:

Ըխճըկուրանցան մինը կեւվաթը մուշթաթախ, էխտուտ ճրավ լցնում ա, տամ դարիք տղըմթթունցան մնին: Էն մինն էլ թամուզ ամանը լվանում ա, ճրավ լցնում, ողող տամ, նորը լցնում, տամ էն մարթին:

Ղարիք մարթն ասում ա. - Տու անիս, տու օտիս. - թամուզ լվենողեն:

Էն մնին էլ ասում ա. - Հու վեր անե՛՛ տու օտիս:

Մին Պիծի Հափուտ

Մարթը էն ա ընում գելաս քղէիս: Արչը կրամ ա, թա. - Մարթ ախպեր, թուլ տո, գելաս օտիս:

Մարթն ասում ա. - Իմ հափուտաւ մին կեր:

Արչը անգուշ չի օնում, ուրան հափուտաւ մին ա օտում, սկսում ցռելը:

Աղվեսը կրամ ա, թա տղավ անց կենա, մարթը համեցէք ա անում. - Աղվես ախպեր, եկ գելաս կեր:

Աղվեսն ասում ա. - Վեր գելասը լավ ընի, արչը ծառեն տակեն հպարապ կենալ չի:

Զուր չըն ասում. «Թոթը հփըռհափուտ կեր, գելասը՝ մին հափուտ»:

CHALLENGE TO LEAD GENOCIDE CHALLENGE RECOGNITION CAMPAIGN

By Maria Hovsepien

"The Armenian massacre was the greatest crime of the war; and the failure to act against Turkey is to condone it the failure to deal radically with the Turkish horror means that all talks of guaranteeing the future peace of the world is mischievous nonsense." The U.S. president Theodore Roosevelt wrote this statement on May 11, 1918 in a letter to Cleveland Haddley Dodge.

Today, nearly eighty two years after Roosevelt wrote this letter and recognized the importance of acknowledging the Armenian Genocide, the Armenian National Committee has launched a nationwide million postcard campaign calling on leading presidential candidates for the 2000 elections to, like Roosevelt, finally realize the relevance of acknowledging Armenian's as victims of the 20th Century's first Genocide. In a November 7 press release, ANCA Executive Director Aram Hamparian said, "This million postcard campaign is the first in a series of major initiatives designed to reach out to presidential and congressional candidates, educate Armenian American voters, and ensure that our community goes to the polls in record numbers throughout the primary season and on election day next November 7th."

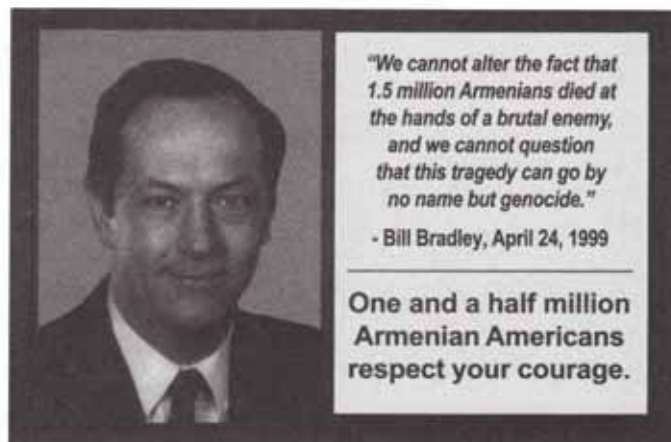
These postcards have been distributed across the nation. All Armenian Americans who feel that they are advocates of change within the political arena have signed these postcards. These postcards have been signed by grandparents, parents, professionals, and students. These postcards have crossed the paths of all those non-Armenians in the world who feel that they too want to urge these five candidates for official U.S. recognition and Turkish acknowledgement of the Armenian Genocide.

In the effort to attract the support of non-Armenians and youths alike, the Los Angeles based band System of a Down has been a key to the success of reaching beyond the Armenian American community. Their growing popularity and increasing fan base has generated dramatic interest in the Armenian Genocide. They continue through their music and their web page to educate their audience about the Armenian Genocide and Turkey's denial of the Genocide. System of a Down has rejuvenated the "new generation" and has helped today's youths take an active part in these protests of denial. The System of a Down web page, www.systemofadown.com has a link to the ANC postcard web page that allows people around the country to request postcards from the Armenian National Committee. To date, thousands of requests have been processed through this web site.

As the Armenian-American communities search for answers, only one of the presidential candidates has had a positive and bold stance on the issue. Yet for the other candidates, so far we have just asked questions to no avail. "One and half million Armenian Americans want to know why?" Four out of five of these postcards have this statement boldly printed on them. Armenian Americans want to know why? We want to know why "Al Gore has failed to recognize the Armenian Genocide or to condemn Turkey's denials." We want to know why "Steve Forbes has failed to speak out against Turkey's shameful campaign to deny the Armenian Genocide." We want to know why "John McCain voted against the Armenian Genocide resolution and has failed to speak out against Turkey's denials." We want to know why "George W. Bush has failed to speak out against Turkey's shameful campaign to deny the Armenian Genocide." We demand to know why!

Bill Bradley is the only presidential candidate who has spoken out in support of U.S. recognition and Turkish acknowledgement of the Armenian Genocide. "We can not alter the fact that 1.5 million Armenians died at the hands of a brutal enemy, and we cannot question that this tragedy can go by no name but genocide."

As we enter the 21st century, the challenge has been given and it is up to the youths to respond to that challenge. The response of the youths to this challenge is the defining factor of this campaign's success. Our proactive support and participation in the campaign must carry these postcards into the classrooms of our schools, colleges and universities. Let us create the time to explain the issue to our classmates and ask them for support. It is with the collective support of historically conscious Armenian-Americans and non-Armenians alike to turn this campaign into reality. It is imperative that every Armenian-American takes part and stands against these denials. The postcards are merely one way of taking a strong stand on the issue. For more information and to take part in this campaign please visit www.anca.org.



A letter to the editor of the UCLA "Daily Bruin" dated April 23, 1999 has recently resurfaced on the UCLA web-page. Haytoug editorial staff found it appropriate to reprint the text in order to share with our readers Mr. Ersin Sivrican's thoughts on the Armenian Genocide as it appears on the UCLA web-page.

(www.myucla.edu search word: Genocide)

We would like to hear your thoughts on this issue. Please E-mail us at Haytoug2000@aol.com

UCLA ASA Statement

As the 85th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide approaches, we, as the future of Armenia must put all our effort into preserving the atrocities done to our people in the past, in order to finally receive justice for them. When we are faced with setbacks or minor problems (such as this web site), we must quickly overcome them and move forward at a faster pace.

After initially noticing the article posted on a fellow UCLA student's web site, needless to say, our blood began boiling, causing us to think irrationally. We thought to ourselves, "How could anyone attending a school of higher education be so ignorant?" However, as we settled down, we realized we must respond, but in a sensible manner.

The tumultuous events and horrific experiences of the Armenian Genocide are a reminder to us all that even in today's world, such cruelty can exist if the perpetrators are given the opportunity to get away with their barbaric criminality. Displaying hatred and denial in a website is merely a continuation of the act of Genocide. Therefore, every Armenian must take action, in order to continue calling themselves Armenian.

If our ancestors who sacrificed their lives for our survival were to hear of these lies being posted on an international level via the World Wide Web, they would definitely turn over in their graves. However, with our continual resistance, we honestly believe they are now looking down at us and seeing that their unforgettable sacrifice was indeed worth more than one could ever imagine.

Armine Chaparyan
Mgo Krikorian
Taline Gulesserian

President
Vice President
All ASA Rep

Armenians Propel Public Bias Against Turks

By Ersin Sivrican

The Armenian "genocide" is a subject that is disputed among historians. It has not been approved or recognized as a genocide by the United Nations, so it is fallacious to call it a genocide, but this is what some want others to believe. The "genocide" is something that many Armenians have created to keep their culture alive, harassing Turks in every chance they get - poisoning the young Armenian generation and also other nations through their lies and hatred for Turks. Unfortunately, they are succeeding, because American society does not know the real story. All we hear are genocide cries from fanatics. Historians like Vahakn Dadrian claim that the 1915 "genocide" was perpetrated by the Turkish government or the Republic of Turkey. But there was no Turkish government and no Republic of Turkey in 1915. The republic of Turkey was later founded in 1923 in the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk. Furthermore, many Armenians, as well as my classmates, believe that the British court in Malta sentenced Enver Pasha, Cemal Pasha and Talat Pasha to death after World War I ("Pasha" is a title referring to generals in the Ottoman empire). Again, they are mistaken. One Pasha was set free because of lack of evidence; the other two would also have been set free, but they were assassinated by a group of Armenians. In order for killings to be considered part of a genocide, they must be directed against a particular group. But the murders of the Ottoman Empire were not directed toward one particular ethnic or religious group. In Ottoman history, there were brutal murders and punishments against its subjects involving all ethnic groups - including Armenians, Christians and even Muslims, because it was an empire of power. Sultans killed their own fathers, brothers and cousins to take power and of course killed anyone who was a threat to their Sultanate. In the late 1800s there were mass murders all over the Balkans and Ottoman Empire, but they have never been labeled "genocides." They were just a struggle for power and wealth. Christians killed millions of Muslims in Macedonia and throughout southwestern Europe and central Asia, and the same Christians killed thousands of other Christians who were not of the same ethnic origin.

The Armenians should not have the slightest doubt that if the Ottomans really wanted to have an Armenian genocide, they would have done it easily, with no survivors, because they had the power and time to do so for 600 years. On the contrary, the Ottomans gave enormous freedom to minority populations in their empire, who were divided into groups which had their own courts, laws and judges to execute their laws. Ottomans gave minorities the chance to rise in the bureaucracy and even become a Sadrazam, what is today the prime minister. Armenians have always had important positions in the ruling class and had their own representatives in the parliament of the late 1800s. When Professor Dadrian gave his lecture on the Armenian "genocide" here at UCLA, he showed a lack of knowledge about Islam - his views reflected the same bigotry toward Islam which has caused much of the confusion. He stated that the word "jihad" means that the Koran demands all non-Muslims be killed. This is an ugly falsification. Islam is a religion of peace and brotherhood. If this were not so, there would not be a Turko-Armenian conflict, since there would be no Armenians left to have a conflict with. Moreover a "jihad," or holy war, can occur only as a means of self-defense.

"The Armenians should not have the slightest doubt that if the Ottomans really wanted to have an Armenian genocide, they would have done it easily, with no survivors..."

Dadrian also said that Armenians were not allowed to join the secret police, which is entirely untrue. The Secret Service was formed in the last 100 years of Ottoman Empire, when they had continuous conflicts and wars with Russians - and Armenians were fighting on the Russian side against their own State (the Ottoman Empire), killing their Muslim neighbors in Anatolia. Another important issue in the Turko-Armenian conflict is taking place in U.S. universities. While Armenians have established chairs in different universities to spread Armenian propaganda, they have protested and used political pressure to stop UCLA and other universities from establishing chairs for Turkish history which might raise question marks in people's minds about genocide claims. They have harassed and persecuted professors of Turkish history throughout the United States to force them to be silent regarding the facts of Turkish history. So far, therefore, students at UCLA and people in Los Angeles have heard only the Armenian point of view.

They are trying to fool the world by lying about the Turko-Armenian conflict. But they will never get what they want. The Turkish government will never accept their demands that it acknowledge an Armenian genocide, because such a genocide never took place.

If you want to study a historical genocide, then you have to remove yourself emotionally and study the subject objectively. I am sure that sooner or later an Armenian generation will find out the truth and stop this hatred toward Turkish people for the sake of peace. Until then Turks, as well as the other victims of these violent acts, have to deal with it.

Ersin Sivrican

Thoughts on Genocide Denial

By Tanya Gulesserian

"They are trying to fool the world by lying about the Turko-Armenian conflict. But they will never get what they want."

With a line like this who can not have their blood boil and their heart sink.

With a line like this who can help but have their mind freeze frame on the horrid pictures of the emaciated figures of Armenians in the desert praying for death.

With a line like this who can not help but wonder when retribution and moreover recognition will be given.

With a line like this who can not this back to stories told to the them by grandparents who lived through that hell and have tears well up in their eyes and their bodies prickle at the horror that was their lives.

With a line like this who can not ponder the fact that such close-mindedness and ignorance still persists in this day and age.

With a line like this who can not feel compelled to grab the author of the article at hand and make him understand what it could feel like to treated like animals. Having the knowledge that death would be a comfort compared to the what living would be during the genocide.

With a line like this who can not wonder as to why this was not brought to light any earlier, and why this web-site is even in existence.

With a line like this who can not want to get up and voice a strong opinion to let the other side know that no Armenian will take such slanderous words lying down.

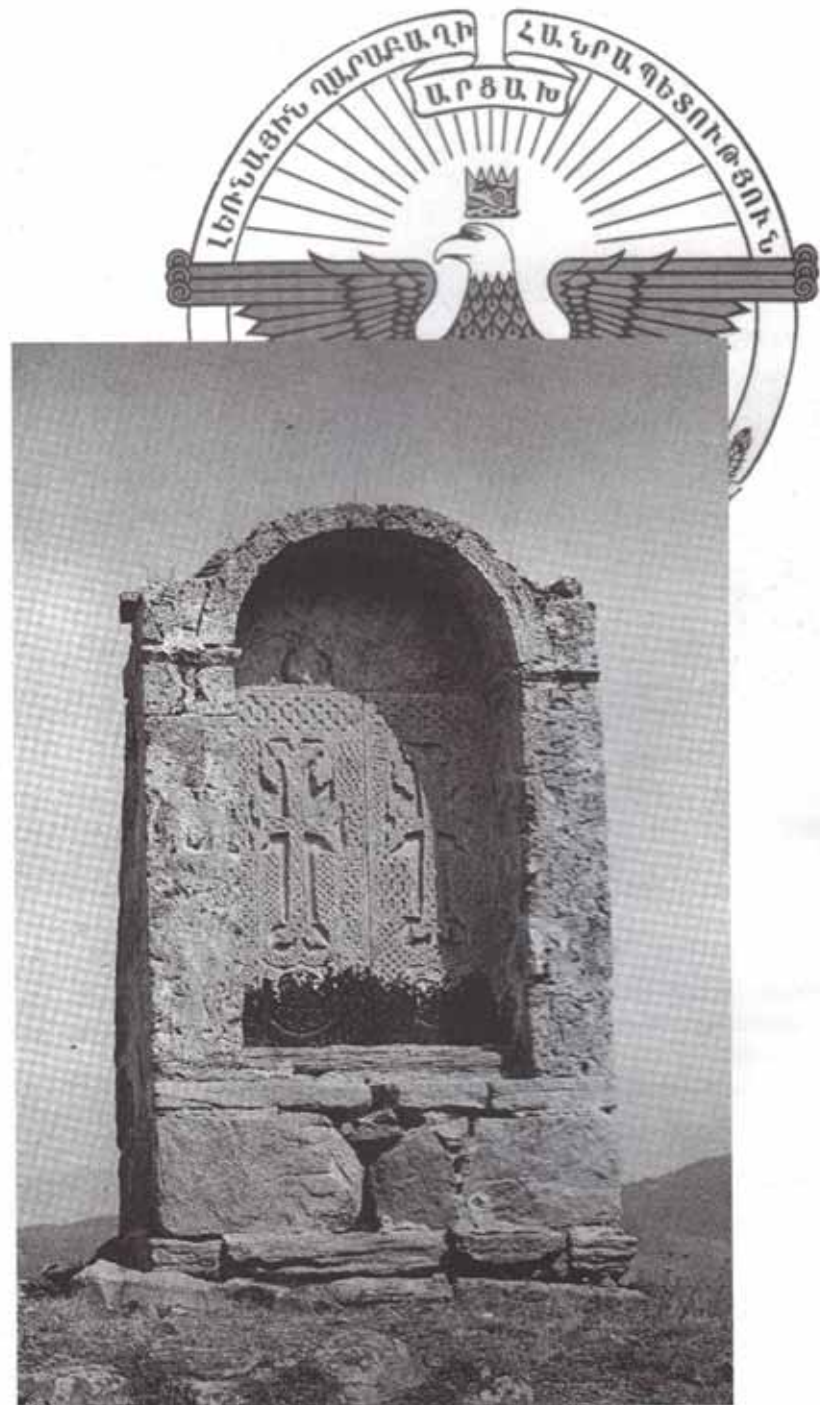
With a line like this who can not condemn someone for not wanting to voice an opinion and let a naive man belittle a mammoth genocide to a trivial mishap of war.

Brief History of NAGORNO KARABAGH

*University of Michigan- Dearborn
Armenian Research Center*

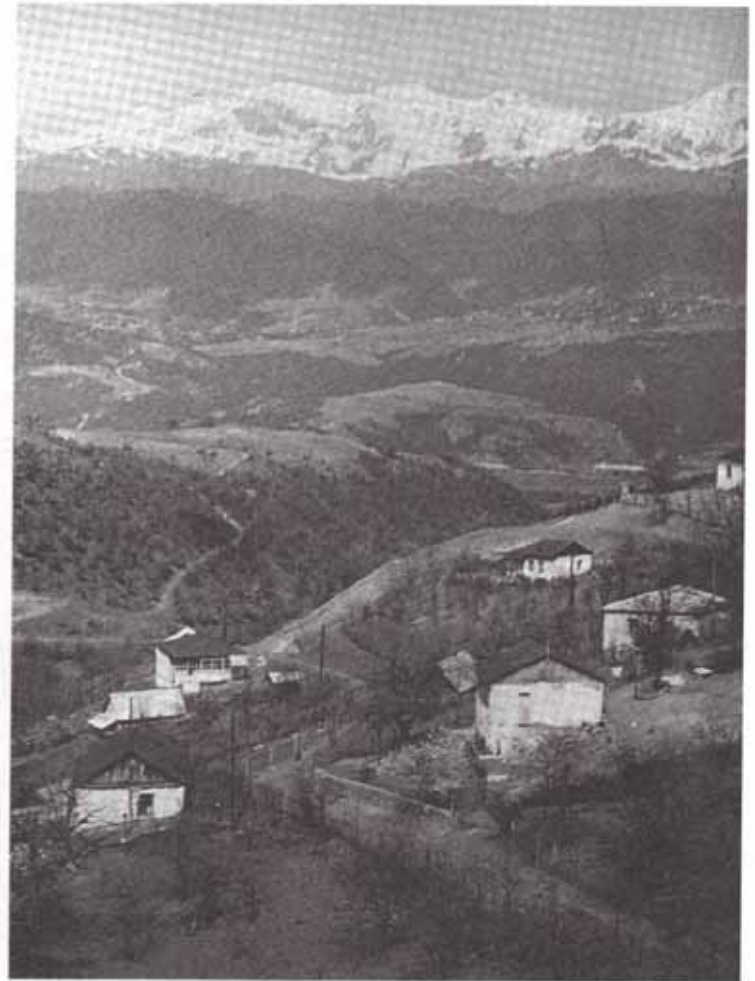
Historical Background:

Historically Armenian, Nagorno-Karabagh was connected to Armenia in ancient times, a connection that was lost after the division of the Armenian Kingdom in 387 AD. With the rise of Islam in the seventh century, Karabagh fell under Arab rule, where it stayed for 300 years. In the eleventh century, Karabagh came under the rule of the Bagratid Kings of Georgia, relatives of the Armenian Bagratids, who held it until the Mongol invasion. After 100 years of Mongol rule, Karabagh fell into Turkish hands, where it stayed until the Persians took power in the early 1600s. In 1603, Shah Abbas the Great of Persia allowed local Armenian rule in Karabagh under five meliks (kings). These five kinglets, later joined-but not supplanted-by a Muslim khanate, survived until the Russian conquest of Karabagh in 1828. Under Russian rule, a deliberate effort was made to link Karabagh economically with the "Baku Province," later to be named Azerbaijan. With the withdrawal of Russian power following the Russian democratic revolution in February/March of 1917, Karabagh reemerged as a state, governed by the Assembly of Karabagh Armenians. The Azerbaijanis, who were trying to organize their own state, contested the Armenians' right to rule Karabagh, even though it was overwhelmingly Armenian. The Azeris first turned for help to the British occupation force led by General Dunsterville, then to the Ottoman army under Nuri Pasha, and finally to the Russian Bolsheviks. With foreign aid, they won out.



Soviet Period:

At first the Soviets returned Nagorno-Karabagh to Armenia; but after a brief period, Joseph Stalin gave it to Azerbaijan as an "autonomous region," and altered the boundaries so that Karabagh was cut off from Armenia and was smaller in size. The next 70-plus years witnessed Azeri persecution of Armenians in an attempt to drive them out and replace them with Azeris, as was done in the Armenian territory of Nakhichevan. In the Gorbachev era of glasnost, the Armenians brought the persecution of their brethren to the world's attention through massive peaceful demonstrations in Yerevan, the capital city of Armenia, in February 1988. By openly and bravely protesting Soviet ethnic injustice for the first time, the reform movement in Nagorno-Karabagh ignited the independence movements in the Soviet Bloc of Eastern Europe. The "Karabagh Movement" is thus the grandfather of freedom not only in Eastern Europe but also in the former USSR itself. At that time the Armenians wanted to attach Nagorno-Karabagh to Armenia, to ensure its survival, but now they respect the wishes of the Nagorno-Karabagh Armenians to be independent. The independence movement has been met with appalling violence from the Azeris. In February 1988 there was a pogrom (massacre) against Armenians in Sumgait, a suburb of Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan. In November of 1988, there was a pogrom against Armenians in Kirovabad (now Ganja), in the interior of Azerbaijan. In 1989-90, there are joint Soviet-Azerbaijani forced deportations of Armenians living in towns and villages of Azerbaijan bordering Nagorno-Karabagh. In January of 1990, there was pogrom against Armenians in Baku itself. When the Azeris began an outright military assault on the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabagh itself, they took up arms to defend their homes, their land, and their ancient culture. The Armenians are fighting for self-preservation and for the right of self-determination, while the Azeris are fighting to expel an ancient people from their historic homeland and to preserve power over a foreign province.



Today, a tenuous cease-fire is in place and has been holding for the past 5 years. However, the Azeris number eight million and have a wealth of oil resources to draw upon in the coming years, and the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabagh only 160,000 and scant resources. Very little would prevent the Azeris from reopening hostilities and starting a full-scale war once the oil money enters its coffers. Genocide similar to that of 1915 is threatened unless the world takes an interest in and protects the lives of the embattled Armenian minority. Despite numerous acts of provocation on the part of Azerbaijan-including a twelve-year-old blockade of Armenia-the Armenian government has studiously avoided being drawn into the war between the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabagh and the Azeri leaders in Baku. In October 1992, the US Congress enacted legislation banning direct US assistance to the government of Azerbaijan until the blockade is lifted and the aggression ends. The twelve-year-old war has taken the lives of more than 16,000 people, and over 1,000,000 have been displaced. Azerbaijan currently has 600,000-1,000,000 refugees, Armenia 400,000 refugees, and Nagorno-Karabagh 60,000 refugees. The current situation is one of "no peace, no war." Negotiations continue, but with Azerbaijan insisting on the principle of "territorial integrity" (despite the fact that Eritrea was recognized by the world community as independent from Ethiopia after a war), little progress has been made.

**Send your
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suggestions to
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Educational Seminar 2000

By Tanya Gulesserian

The annual AYF Senior Seminar took place on the weekend of February 4, 5, and 6, in the familiar site of the AYF Campground nestled in the Angeles National Forest. Over 90 AYF members were ready for the weekend's activities, which included educationals, a khrahjank, and a variety of games. As any senior member could see, many new faces were present in the crowd. Novices and transfers made up a great portion of the members present. For some, this was the first time that they had ever come to a seminar, as you could see on their awestruck faces, as they stared at their surrounding feeling slightly overwhelmed from the atmosphere. The camaraderie of the participants and the spirit of the camp definitely made the younger ungers feel at ease.

Friday night started off with welcoming remarks made by the director for the weekend, unger Raffi Sarkissian. After a relaxing evening amidst the pine trees and its surrounding, Saturday's activities began early and lasted well into the night. An educational was given to members by unger Bedig Kazandjian who spoke of the state of the organization and led a very interactive discussion. Later, unger Ara Khanjian talked about the moral character and responsibilities of the AYF member. Meanwhile, Ungers Razmig Chamelikian and Vahe Manuelian led discussions with the novice and transferring members in the arts & crafts lodge.

This was one seminar where boredom was not a factor. The educationals were always interesting for the participating members. Saturday's activities also included a self-defense class and a very fun and challenging game of charades, during which the clues given were from Armenian historical events.



A fun game of Charades



Sensei Mhuran demonstrating some self-defense



Seminar participants

The mood of the weekend was lightened by an extremely fun khrahjank on Saturday evening. This was a night that was in true AYF spirit and proved to many that the spirit of the Armenian youth was not lost to any degree. Participants danced to traditional Armenian tunes and finished the night with the singing of patriotic songs.

After such an enjoyable evening, the educational portion was completed on Sunday morning with a motivational presentation by unger Raffi Hamparian who had flown in from Washington DC especially for this occasion. Many walked away from this seminar with a renewed faith in AYF and a renewed faith in the novices and transfers in attendance who were present in such a great force.

It was such a thrill to hear younger AYF member excited to be treated like equals with the more senior AYF members with the educationals and treatment that they were given. They truly did feel that they mattered in the AYF organization. On a different note, this seminar also had senior members of the organization think about what it really meant to be an AYF member, and reaffirmed their faith and belief that the AYF will move forward and strive for a long time to come.

*Party time*

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STATE OF OUR DIASPORA: introductory thought for armenian youth

*Christopher Guldjian, student at Whittier College of Law
Member of the AYF Orange County "Ashod Yergat" Chapter*

Conforming to the norms of any Diaspora requires some form of assimilation. The unfortunate consequence is the "over-mingling" and extreme adjustment to a land that we hope to be only temporary. Where does the Armenian youth consider their domicile and why have they come to that conclusion? As the years pass, the Armenian youth became accustomed to forming a society not of its traditional views and upbringing. In fact, they create new methodology for social and economic systems for the majority benefit of everybody other than their nation. The potential and energy that is demonstrated in non-nationalistic organizations and causes is a loss of their existence.

Those who in the name of fame and publicity decide to choose the means of another have wasted their talent in a place where they will be unnoticed. They ought to turn to their nation (as a whole) for the prospering of their own interests as well as their national identity. This concept is essential to the ideology of our survival. The youth should uphold a nationalistic identity, but has failed to enter a new century because it does not recognize the importance of unified progress. The twentieth century was one of freedom and has set the framework of advancement; however, the mere concept of progress should not detach the nationalist momentum that has lasted through the struggle for freedom. The obviously important character of freedom does not negate national identity; rather it should strengthen the fundamental theory of democracy allowing the choice to retain a romantic ideology-in the context of survival as a nation.

The often-controversial question to the thesis presented above should be handled with gentle discourse minded by the concept of modernity. What may be true yesterday may not necessary be true today. However, the ultimate goal cannot change direction or focus under any circumstances including economic and political pressures from outside forces. A Diaspora must realize its existence outside the system of assimilation. The Armenian youth must use the Diaspora, instead of allowing its machine to exploit us. Together the "ultimate goal(s)" can be accomplished.

Another question (and possibly the most important) remains to be answered: what is the youth's goal for this century? We are caught between the vast array of armed struggle, genocide, politics, independence, communism, assimilation and armed struggle and independence-again. What is our job today? There unfortunately is no definite answer. However, all that can be offered at this point is groundwork and a base to prepare for a more definitive struggle.

The basis in which the Diaspora can maintain an identity is found in individual struggles that join the entire spectrum of the Armenian cause. Each individual youth can create the desire to become a part of an ultimate outlook. The interests of a young person can flourish within an Armenian community. It is the obligation of the Armenian community to assure that its members' interests are fulfilled within an Armenian context. These interests should work towards strengthening our national identity.



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