

THE
KARABAGH
FILE

The ZORYAN INSTITUTE
For Contemporary Armenian Research & Documentation

The Karabagh File

DOCUMENTS AND FACTS
ON
THE REGION OF MOUNTAINOUS KARABAGH
1918-1988

Gerard J. Libaridian
Editor

First Edition

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Designed by Aramais Andonian

The crimes of massacre and genocide have become political weapons used against those aspiring for change and reform or seeking redress of grievances.

This volume is dedicated to the latest victims of such crimes, the children of Sumgait, and to the children in whom the sense of justice, freedom, and happiness will survive.

"In the name of our much oppressed population, we have the responsibility to warn respectfully the Peace Conference that all arbitrary solutions that would sacrifice the legitimate aspirations of Armenians [in Karabagh and Nakhichevan] would in the future become the source of new conflicts and perpetual convulsions."

Letter from the government of Armenia
to the Peace Conference in Paris
15 May 1919

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PREFACE

In February, 1988 the terms Karabagh, Nagomo-Karabagh, and Mountainous Karabagh dominated international news.

The Armenian majority of that region, currently under the jurisdiction of the Azerbaijani S.S.R., had petitioned the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. to mediate the transfer of that territory to the nearby Armenian S.S.R. Karabagh Armenians and Armenians in Soviet Armenia had backed the petition with massive yet peaceful demonstrations.

The demonstrations and the violent reaction in Soviet Azerbaijan leading to the massacre of Armenians in Sumgait, Azerbaijan, have raised a number of relevant questions as well as some fears. Meanwhile, much idle speculation and abstractions have been offered as interpretations of the causes and significance of these events.

Events progress, nonetheless, independent of the judgment of observers and, on occasion, of their organizers.

All indications are that, whatever Moscow decides to do, the determination awaited in Moscow, the question will not be resolved in the near future for two basic reasons. The problem posed by Karabagh Armenians is more (or less) than territorial or cannot be equated to it: the question deals with basic social, economic, political, human, and cultural rights which are currently denied by the Azerbaijani government. An administrative solution dictated from Moscow is likely to change neither the Azerbaijani behavior nor the Armenians' search for a more dignified existence. The question has also been invested with larger significance in the context of the politics of reform in the Soviet Union, thus making it even less likely that a permanent and fundamental solution will be found.

The purpose of this volume is to introduce the multi-faceted nature of the question of Mountainous Karabagh through actual documents and other relevant data, with the hope that it will help readers understand why it has reemerged at this time and why it is not likely to go away, even if a determination is made by media managers or experts that it must.

*

To facilitate the reading, understanding, and assessment of the material that follows, some comments are in order.

1. The region in question has a long history, inhabited and

administered by various peoples. Place names have changed and each has more than one spelling. Different systems of transliteration at different times and in different countries have made the problem much worse. In order to avoid confusion, in most texts and documents in this volume we have used the current, internationally accepted form of the name. The same applies to names of individuals, whether historical or contemporary.

A few details must be clarified further.

Stepanakeri, the capital of the Autonomous Region today, was once Khankend. Ganja (Armenian Gandzak) was Elizavetpol, the regional administrative center to which Karabagh was attached during the tsarist period.

2. Because of the very involved history of the ethnic composition of what is today Soviet Azerbaijan, its people have been called by a variety of names, including Azeris, Azeri Turks, Tatars, Tartars, Azerbaijanis. There has been no attempt in this volume to standardize those designations.

3. The term Karabagh may be used and is used to designate three different geographic entities. Traditionally, the Karabagh designation includes the plains as well as the mountainous segment of the region. Mountainous Karabagh often refers to that portion of Karabagh which is, in fact, the mountainous part. The Autonomous Region of Mountainous Karabagh or the region in question, on the other hand, is the legally defined political entity in question, which is in the geographic region of Mountainous Karabagh. The Autonomous Region is smaller than the geographic area known as Mountainous Karabagh. These distinctions will be helpful particularly in understanding the maps and statistical data included in this volume.

4. While much material exists on the history of Karabagh prior to sovietization, very little is available on the period since. Although Armenian and Azerbaijani historians have produced a wealth of information on the history of their respective republics, neither has dealt seriously and systematically with the Autonomous Region of Mountainous Karabagh. It is possible to assume that Azerbaijani political leaders and historians had no reason to explore the history of a region which was inhabited largely by Armenians and remains contested; their Armenian counterparts in Soviet Armenia avoided the issue to escape the "nationalist" label, particularly during the Stalin years. Relatively more is done by diaspora Armenian historians who, nonetheless, lack access to sources to the more recent history of the region.

5. There is frequent reference to the Nakhichevan or the Autonomous

Republic of Nakhichevan, since the fate of that region was linked closely to that of Mountainous Karabagh. Both were part of historic Armenia, populated densely by Armenians until the 1920s. In addition, both regions have been the subject of intense geopolitical concern for the Ottoman Empire and its successor state Turkey. This interest has evolved as part of Turkey's regional strategy or in the context of Pan-Turanic designs which occasionally motivate its leaders.

Nakhichevan is to the Southwest of Soviet Armenia and has no common border with Azerbaijan. It has, nonetheless, lost most of its Armenian population, thus diminishing the value of the demographic argument of Armenian claims on that region. Nakhichevan also represents a fate Armenians are trying to avoid in Mountainous Karabagh.

6. Most of the documents included in this volume have been translated from Armenian, some from French and other languages.

The original of a few of the documents is in the English language. In such cases, we have reproduced them with minimal corrections (name spellings, elementary grammar). This should explain the antiquated style and syntax and occasional awkwardness in the documents.

March 15, 1988

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INTRODUCTION

There is a strange fascination with the word Karabagh, a place which deserved only one mention in the New York Times during the last fifty years. Recent events in Mountainous Karabagh and Soviet Armenia sent reporters into a difficult search for hard to find photos, films and videotapes. Most experts had to refer to maps to identify that exotic sounding name.

The fascination may be explained by the multiple dimensions of the story, and the symbolic and real significance these events have for countries and peoples in the region, and in the West.

The dimensions are, in fact, fascinating. Armenians in Mountainous Karabagh, a small enclave in the southern corner of the Soviet Union, take the word of the country's new leader seriously, and petition for redress of grievances. A people, with little experience with democratic institutions as understood in the West, turn the mechanisms of Soviet structures into forums for debate and articulation of long standing claims. Then, they back their demands with peaceful demonstrations. Glasnost, they argue, gives them the right to air grievances and petition their government; perestroika gives them the right to expect a radical change in their legal status sanctioned by Stalin. Isn't, after all, Mikhail Gorbachev himself challenging Stalin's assumptions and system?

This logic, disarming in its simplicity, elicits the support of Armenians in Soviet Armenia nearby. Now the smallest of the republics of the U.S.S.R. witnesses one third of its citizens, close to a million of them, take to the streets for a week, in support of the demands of Karabagh Armenians. They, in turn, are joined by Armenians in other parts of the Soviet Union, such as Moscow, and in the Diaspora (North and South Americas, Western Europe, the Near East), where demonstrations and petitions increase pressure on Soviet diplomats.

More than numbers

The question of the Autonomous Region of Mountainous Karabagh is a relatively simple one for its 80% Armenian inhabitants. Karabagh, the historic Artsakh province, has been part of the Armenian patrimony for over a millennium.

It is central to Armenian cultural and historical identity and statehood. Since the region was annexed to Azerbaijan between 1920 and 1923, the Azerbaijani government has developed a policy of economic and social discrimination and political repression, making life intolerable for its citizens in a variety of ways.

Armenians also fear that the purpose of these policies is to force them to migrate and thus dilute one of the few remaining districts of historic Armenia still inhabited by a majority Armenian population. Such a development constitutes, for Armenians, part of a cycle which started with Ottoman Turkish policies of repression a century ago in Western Armenia, now Eastern Turkey, and included the turkification of Nakhichevan, with collusion between Turkish nationalists in Turkey and Azerbaijan.

The current problems plaguing the region are traced to the transfer of Mountainous Karabagh to Azerbaijan at a time of cooperation between Soviet Russia and the Nationalist Turkish leadership.

For Azerbaijan, the fact that the majority of the Mountainous Karabagh population is Armenian is incidental and secondary to other facts: Karabagh is theirs now and it has been part of the development of Azerbaijani national consciousness, largely a post-sovietization phenomenon. Azerbaijani nationalists consider Karabagh part of their homeland whence have come many of the country's intellectuals and political leaders. Finally, any change in the status of the territory would be considered at the present time an unacceptable blow to Azerbaijani national pride. Thus, it seems unlikely that the government of Azerbaijan would accede on its own to Armenian demands to return Mountainous Karabagh to Armenia. The Soviet Constitution does require, though, that any changes of boundaries between two soviet republics be with the consent of both.

While awaiting the final response to the Armenian request promised by Gorbachev for the end of March 1988, it is worth exploring as to why the original fascination, even sympathy for the Armenian demonstrators, weakened gradually to an extent that demonstrations were seen to threaten Gorbachev's position.

How can glasnost threaten glasnost?

How did it happen that those who gave body to the doctrine of glasnost and perestroika, were charged by experts and the media with threatening the same glasnost and perestroika? How could the peaceful exercise of a doctrine be defined as a danger to that doctrine? How could the experts and the media insist that Armenians are threatening Gorbachev's reforms, when reform is what Armenians want?

It is possible that the media and the experts do not believe that there are serious problems in Mountainous Karabagh that fuel Armenian nationalism in Karabagh. It may also be that, upon further reflection, they do not believe that it was a mistake for British, Soviet Russian and Turkish leaders between 1918 and 1923 to award Mountainous Karabagh to Azerbaijan. These, however, are unlikely hypotheses. The media has failed to present arguments to that effect or produce any tract of research.

The demonstrators in Yerevan whose banner stated "Perestroika is not extremism" seem to have been aware of the danger of being defined within contexts irrelevant to the real problems.

While it would be naive and wrong to expect that an act will be defined in history solely in terms intended by the actor, imposing one's own fears, prejudices and expectations hardly constitutes an alternative methodology. The documents and facts introduced in this volume on the basis of an extensive search indicate that such an alternative must be rejected on scientific as well as humanitarian grounds. Just as we do not have the right as historians to disregard overwhelming documentary evidence that negate our views, we also do not have the right to condemn others to perpetual waves of conflict just because we do not possess the moral courage or political will to favor corrective measures. In the absence of such a will, distorting the significance of the facts, if not facts themselves, appears an acceptable method of harmonizing conflicting values.

"Why don't they assimilate?"

The history of soviet nationalities policy, statements of General Secretary Gorbachev and his advisors, and the 1977 soviet constitution indicate that the question of nationalities is posed differently in the Soviet Union than the "ethnic"

dimension is in American politics. Soviet nationalities policy encompasses everything from the function assigned to ethnic/cultural identification within ideology, to the development of a quasi nation-state structure within the larger soviet system.

The question posed to me recently by an experienced reporter, "Why do ethnic groups within the Soviet Union insist on preserving their national identity instead of assimilating like we do in America?" is more of a commentary on the reporter than on the Soviet Union or on the role of nationalities in Soviet politics.

However bent on seeing a new soviet identity emerge, soviet leaders and the state ideology they embody have come to reflect the realization that ethnic/cultural/linguistic categories are and can be invested with great dynamism, that these could become vehicles for substantial change in history, i.e., the national dimension can be part of the solution and not just the problem. Nationalism can be used, and has been used, of course, to keep conflicts alive and to justify the continuation of an empire, or to create one. Nationalism has also appeared in history in a more positive light. The patriotism promoted by Stalin during the Second World War is only the most obvious example. One can also think of the history of national liberation movements to know nationalism has assumed such functions outside Soviet ideology too.

Is it possible to imagine, then, a role for the ethnic factor in the perception of glasnost and perestroika? Is it possible to imagine a function for a reinvigorated, more imaginative nationalities policy? Could it be, that Gorbachev is contemplating such a strategy to promote an open society? This would explain his apparent calm and restraint in dealing with the demonstrations in Yerevan. Considering, further, the opposition he is facing and the weight of the bureaucracy functioning against his reforms, public support expressed through massive demonstrations may be one of the few real weapons he has against the reactionaries in his government. It is not surprising, for example, that such monumental demonstrations became possible in Yerevan, where Karen Demirjian, the First Secretary of the Communist Party of Armenia, is despised by the Gorbachevian intelligentsia intent on fighting corruption and pollution and is considered as one of the few anti-Gorbachev local leaders left in power.

According to eyewitness accounts, the only power that was threatened during the week long demonstrations was the government of Demirjian, which had become irrelevant. Mass demonstrations with grass roots organization, without a single incident, without police or army intervention, could only benefit glasnost.

Who is causing problems for Gorbachev?

What then is a problem for Gorbachev? The answer that emerges here should have been, again, the reaction in Azerbaijan. A million peaceful and disciplined demonstrators carrying Gorbachev pictures and banners saying "A no confidence vote for the government of Armenia" could not have threatened Gorbachev. Massacres of demonstrators or of their compatriots could. Someday it may be possible to determine whether there are any links between the government of Azerbaijan, which must have at the least tolerated the pogroms against Armenians, and the reactionary wing in the Kremlin. One must also wonder about the impact of Gorbachev's sacking from the Politburo two years ago of Gaydar Aliev of Azerbaijan, a man identified closely with the policies of Brezhnev and Andropov.

A question which can be and has been raised is, "Why would Gorbachev encourage or tolerate the rise of such issues at this time? Didn't he expect trouble?" One answer is that even Gorbachev, perhaps particularly Gorbachev, cannot micromanage a country of 100 nationalities and ethnic groups. A more comprehensive answer can be found, though, in a corollary to the alternative interpretation presented above. Gorbachev may not have had much choice but to raise the issue before it exploded; just as he could see no choice but to take his chances with economic and political reforms before the state organization collapsed.

The need for solutions to the various nationalities problems for which Stalin is only partially responsible seems to be as imminent a task as the more commonly understood need for radical changes in the economic and political fields. While it has not as yet found a coherent and acceptable form of articulation, the demographic dimension of ethnic politics, the increase in the proportion of Muslim soviet citizens, the fear of fundamentalism, and the Iranian and Turkish options in regional strategy are certainly important issues affecting Gorbachev's agenda. In that context, the

Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict is exacerbated by the religious and ethnic differences between the two groups. But these factors are also complex and cannot support a simplistic explanation of events.

It is also clear that, if the above argument has any validity, the response to the demonstrations in Azerbaijan--denials of responsibility for the state of affairs, denials of facts, and massacres--has as much political significance as the demonstrations themselves. Their clear impact is the institution of an atmosphere of terror which is not conducive to further democratic "experimentation." In consequence, such a reaction eventually leads us to condemn the peaceful demonstrators, those seeking change and reform, for having dared to define and articulate their own problems. This logic leads us to tell those seeking change that to preserve the right to freedom of speech they must not exercise it; to have the right of redress of grievances, they should not express or strive for them.

State terror as antidote to reform

Our business as usual interpretation ensures that a regional government such as Azerbaijan, assumed powerless in Moscow, can paralyze the reform program under way in the U.S.S.R. This "logic" can be extended to other areas of reform in the Soviet Union. State terror and massacres as antidotes to reform movements have worked in the Philippines, in Central American countries, and elsewhere. Could that happen in the Soviet Union? Is that what we want to see happen in the Soviet Union?

One hopes not. And yet, how else could one explain the total absence of moral outrage and indignation in official circles at the confirmed news of the Sumgait and other massacres of hundred of civilians, including pregnant women and babies? The widespread willingness in the media and among experts to blame Islam and particularly the Shiite branch is, to begin with, an insult to the faith of millions of peoples.

It is also an insult to one's intelligence, and memory. Armenians and Muslims have lived in that and in other parts of the world in peace and mutual respect, without "hatred" or "clashes." There have been, on the other hand, serious problems with particular regimes bent upon neutralizing reformist movements among Armenians. Whether one refers

to the 1894-1896 massacres of over 200,000 Armenians in the Ottoman Empire following the rise of a liberation movement, to the Genocide of the Armenians beginning in 1915 in the hands of the proto-fascist Young Turks, or to the massacres of 1905-1907 (during the First Russian Revolution) and again in 1917-1920 (The October Revolution) in the Transcaucasus in the hands of Azeri Turks, the problems have been political in nature. The purpose of such massacres have been to destroy the penchant for reform which all self-respecting but repressed groups--whether nations, religious sects or classes--eventually develop.

More often than not, wholesale murders are extensions of the power which states exercise to make adjustments in the political agenda of their subjects; and presenting such conflicts as "religious hatred" is naive, at best.

Carrying the burden of big power contradictions

History has repeated itself in still another respect during the last month, and experts and reporters may yet find meaning in history. It does appear that the absence of moral outrage at Sumgait is not independent of the interpretation imposed on the events. Had the sequence of events we witnessed in the Caucasus occurred in a different setting, events at Sumgait could have led us to think that perhaps the residents of Mountainous Karabagh have good reason--reasons beyond abstract nationalism and territorial identification--to wish to change their political status. In fact, no government "expert" or major reporter has ventured an opinion in that respect. Opinion makers have been more concerned about a "Pandora's Box" that would threaten the Soviet Union--the same Soviet Union whose collapse many are predicting and a few are hoping. Once again a small nation is carrying the full burden of the contradictions inherent in big power politics; and Karabagh Armenians will probably be asked to continue accepting the status quo in order not to disturb the peace of others, in order not to spoil the big power game.

Many of those who objected in the past to any use of force by Moscow were eager to see Kremlin use it now--and seemed almost disappointed that it did not do so. The hope was that force would be used against the demonstrators in Yerevan.

One experienced reporter asked, "Why did the Soviet Union,

which has the political will and military muscle to impose anything it wished on its subjects, tolerate such large scale demonstrations, for so long?" It is obvious that neither Vietnam and Afghanistan, nor Iran and the Philippines have been able to shake the unwavering faith many have in the ability of arms to defeat peoples. That may be the root cause of the faulty interpretations we give to events.

By not using force against the demonstrators Moscow allowed "an ethnic group that should have disappeared long ago" to make glasnost work for them or for a moment, even to define it. Gorbachev allowed a small nation, made up of real people--rather than the superpower race and the abstractions it generates--to legitimize, in a way no other mechanism could, perestroika. This, in fact, may be the reason for the disappointment the media and experts are feeling from the word Karabagh, a word which only two weeks ago seemed fascinating.

HISTORY AND POLITICS

- I. To 1917**
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 - v. Position of the Armenians in the Diaspora**

I. TO 1917

Karabagh (Gharabagh, in Armenian) is known in official Soviet parlance as Nagorno-Karabagh or, "Mountainous Karabagh Autonomous District." It is a region of 1,699 square miles with a current population of approximately 153,000 people, of whom 80 percent are Armenian. Its name means "black garden." The area is known for its rugged beauty, its wild mountains, and its inaccessibility to the rest of the Caucasus.

In ancient times, the region of Karabagh and most of eastern Transcaucasia was inhabited by a people called Albanians, not to be confused with the people of the same name now living in the Balkans. According to the Greek geographer Strabo (1st c. B.C.), Karabagh, which then encompassed both the mountainous Nagorno-Karabagh of today and the larger lowlands, surrounding it, had a highly developed economy and was famous for its cavalry. Caucasian Albanians maintained close contacts with the Armenians. In the fifth century, shortly after the Armenians converted to Christianity, the Albanians too adopted the Armenian brand of Christianity. The first church established in Karabagh, in the region now known as Martuni, was established by Gregory the Illuminator, first Catholicos of Armenia. Tradition has it that Mesrob Mashtots, the monk who created the Armenian alphabet, founded the first school in Karabagh.

Given the centrality of religion to social life during that period, it is not surprising that in the following two centuries the Albanians merged with the Armenians. The nobility intermarried, the region's bishops were often Armenians, and by the seventh century the separate identity of the Albanians was lost.

The territories of both Mountainous Karabagh and the larger surrounding lowlands became parts of the Armenian provinces of Utik, Sunik and Artsakh. In the seventh and eighth centuries much of this area was conquered by Arabs, who converted a portion of the population to Islam. In Karabagh, only a very small minority was converted. The situation of Karabagh changed radically in the eleventh century when the ethnic Turkish invasions began. The Turks had emerged from Central Asia, had conquered Iran, and founded the Seljuk Turkish dynasty, which first raided,

then invaded Armenia. From 1020 on, these invasions destroyed much of Armenia, and Karabagh, especially its lowlands, suffered greatly. By the mid-eleventh century, the Armenian kingdom was destroyed. But the feudal principality of Sunik, which occupied the mountainous territory in the southeast of today's Soviet Armenia and Mountainous Karabagh survived and became beacons to the rest of Armenia. In the following centuries, thousands of Armenians found refuge in Karabagh, under the protection of native lords.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries Karabagh gave rise to the pioneers of the Armenian emancipatory struggle. Representatives of the region attempted to interest the monarchs of Russia and other European powers in embarking on a "crusade" to liberate the Armenian plateau, the eastern portions of which were occupied by the Ottoman Turkish and Persian Empires. During the 1720's, the rebellion of the Armenians of Sunik and Karabagh, led by David Beg, achieved notable though temporary success. The Russian Empire, expanding southwards in the Transcaucasus, annexed the territory of Karabagh in 1805.

The Russian annexation of Karabagh was officially recognized by Persia in the Treaty of Gulistan in 1813. Thus Karabagh came into the Russian Empire earlier than the areas of Yerevan and Nakhichevan, which were ceded to Russia by Persia in the Treaty of Turkmenchay in 1828. This earlier annexation benefited Karabagh in some ways, but also created a major problem for the future. Because of the time it came into the Russian empire, Karabagh was made part of Elizavetpol Province, which later became Azerbaijan. Administratively, then, Karabagh could not be joined in 1813 to the as-yet un-annexed Armenian territories of which its history and population made it a natural part. Yerevan and Nakhichevan, when they were attached to the Tzarist empire in 1828, were organized in the Armianskoy region, later the Yerevan province. Here, as in other empires, decisions made by colonial administrators laid the foundations for future difficulties.

II. REVOLUTION, REPUBLIC, AND CIVIL WAR

During the first months of the Russian revolution of 1917, the situation in Karabagh was relatively calm. The Russian army had penetrated deep into the Ottoman Empire, and there was no Turkish threat to Karabagh. But by the end of 1917 the Russian army had disintegrated, and in February 1918 the Ottoman Turkish army moved into Armenia. The Ottoman Turks threatened Yerevan and made a desperate drive to oil-rich Baku, then held by a multi-ethnic coalition of Bolsheviks (headed by the Armenian Stepan Shaumian) and small Armenian military forces. While this struggle went on, representatives of the Armenians, Georgians and Azeris met and formed a short-lived Transcaucasian Federation. By May, 1918 this federation failed and three separate, independent republics were proclaimed: Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia formed the cores of today's Soviet republics in the same region.

The capital of the Azerbaijani Republic was at Elizavetpol (Ganja). The new government, indifferent to the wishes of its Armenian inhabitants, claimed Karabagh, as part of the territory of the new republic. The commander of Ottoman Turkish forces, Nuri Pasha (brother of the Minister Enver Pasha), ordered the Armenians of Karabagh to submit to the new government of its ethnic ally, Azerbaijan.

In August 1918, the Armenians of Karabagh formed their own national assembly, called the First Assembly of Karabagh Armenians, which then elected a People's Government of Karabagh. This government rejected the demand that Turkish troops be permitted to enter their capital of Shushi. By the end of the summer, on September 15, the Turks took Baku. With the ethnic Azerbaijani Turks at their side, they carried out a systematic massacre of the Armenians in the city, during which it is estimated that 15,000 to 20,000 Armenians died. When the news of that massacre came to Karabagh, Armenians understood they too were incapable of resisting successfully the regular troops of the Ottoman Turkish army. On September 25, they submitted to the Turks and 5,000 Turkish soldiers entered Shushi. Within a week, 60 prominent Armenians had been arrested, the townspeople disarmed, and gallows ominously erected in the central square of the town. There is no telling what would have happened had the Turks stayed much

longer.

Faced with this Turkish occupation, the Karabagh Armenians were looking for aid from armed Armenians outside their borders. The newly-founded Armenian Republic around Yerevan was much too weak to help. The only force of any consequence was the independent command of General Andranik, an ingenious guerrilla fighter and military leader, in Zangezur. General Andranik decided to help and he moved toward Shushi. This advance, however, was hindered by Muslim resistance and by lengthy discussions among Armenians, which resulted in a fatal delay. Before Andranik could reach Shushi (he got within 26 miles), the First World War ended and Turkey, along with Germany and Austria-Hungary, surrendered to the Allies.

The British occupation forces would now play the key role in eastern Transcaucasia. The British ordered Andranik to stop all further military advances and to await the solution of the Armenian Question at the Paris Peace Conference. Andranik, not wanting to antagonize the British, retreated to Goris in Zangezur. Thus the Armenians placed the fate of Karabagh in the hands of the British and the Western Allies. The Armenians had every reason to expect that they would be treated well by the British; after all, Armenians had fought with the Allies and had been the victims of their enemy, the Ottoman Turks. President Wilson had pledged support for the Armenians. At the same time, the Azerbaijanis had been allies of the Turks in 1918. Despite all this, within a few months the British shifted their support in eastern Transcaucasia to the Azerbaijanis, motivated both by a traditional Turkophilia and by their geopolitical assumption that they needed to favor and dominate emerging Muslim entities in the Middle East, between the Suez and India, particularly those controlling petroleum reserves.

The Armenians of Karabagh could expect help from no one, and so, on August 22, 1919, their leaders signed an agreement with the Republic of Azerbaijan, accepting its authority until the final decision on Mountainous Karabagh was made at the Paris Peace Conference. By this agreement, the Armenians of

Karabagh were granted cultural autonomy. This agreement established an important precedent concerning the relations of Mountainous or Nagorno-Karabagh and Azerbaijan.

In the same month, August 1919, the British began their withdrawal from Azerbaijan. But the effects of their short stay in that region are felt to the present day. It is as a result of British support of the Azeri-Turkish position on Karabagh, despite the predominant Armenian majority in the area, that this region was included in the independent Republic of Azerbaijan.

1
[20 September 1918]

Report on Turkish General Khalil Pasha's Visit to Yerevan.

Republic of Armenia
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
M.F.A.

Political Mission to Georgia
Tbilisi

To: Constantinople
Delegation of Armenia

26 September 1918
No. 871

On the morning of August 31st, Khalil Pasha, V. Kress and Baron Frankenstein, accompanied by me, entered Yerevan. The reception was quite warm. Mr. Aram, the Minister of Internal Affairs, an old friend of Khalil Pasha, had come to the station. Khalil Pasha ran towards and hugged Mr. Aram. Following this, Khalil Pasha reviewed the honor guard and then, accompanied by the honor cavalry, went to town with Mr. Aram. During the whole procession the band played military marches.

[...]

The third question concerned the situation of Karabagh. [Prime Minister] Kachaznuni explained our views regarding this issue, which was the following: The regions of Mountainous Karabagh and Zangezur are densely populated Armenian territories and there can not be any argument favoring their annexation to Azerbaijan. However, since the latter raises objections with regard to this solution (annexation to Armenia), the government of Armenia believes that the political status of Karabagh has to be resolved either at the Constantinople Conference or by the people of Karabagh themselves. Until such a resolution of this problem, the government of Armenia does not want to intervene in the internal affairs of Karabagh and demands that Azerbaijan not interfere either. Khalil Pasha stated that he personally is in agreement with our view and promised to talk to the Azerbaijan government about this, as an intermediary between them and us.

[...]

During these conversations Khalil Pasha also made a significant slip: "We Turks do not think of enslaving any nation; however, we have an ideal and want to realize that ideal. We desire to reestablish our ties with our ancient homeland, Turan, and for that we want the road uniting our two fatherlands to be free of any alien jurisdiction." In this way, the Turkish desire to expand their domination all the way to Turkistan found a very specific articulation in the words of Khalil Pasha.

[...]

Very Respectfully,

A. Jamalian
Envoy of Armenian Republic in Georgia

[Republic of Armenia Archives, File No. 65]

2

[28 September 1918]

Confidential report to Yerevan from Armenian envoy to Georgia on Azerbaijan's occupation of Shushi.

Diary of the Armenian Mission No. 7
Tbilisi, 28 September 1918

Mr. Jamalian has met Von Kress regarding the coming events in Karabagh.

The Azerbaijani government has sent troops to Shushi to conquer Karabagh. The secret information available to us shows that the troops have orders from the government to turn everything upside down. The question of a trip by our delegations to Shushi is not yet resolved.

Thus Azerbaijan does not agree with our viewpoint, which is to wait until the completion of the Constantinople Conference. Mr. Jamalian brought to the attention of the conference and of Von Kress that the people of Karabagh being militant, clashes between Armenians and Turks will expand throughout the country in response to the Turkish depredations, which may engulf the whole of Karabagh.

Von Kress has stated that it is difficult to enter into any negotiations with Nuri Pasha, due to strains in their relationships. He fears that his mediation will only speed up the events, such as occurred with regards to the Baku affair...

Mission Advisor Mik. Tumanian

[Republic of Armenia Archives, File No. 65]

[15 January 1919]

In January 1919, Colonel D. I. Shuttleworth of the British Command issued the following circular, which drew violent protests from the people of Karabagh and the government of Armenia.

The English Command declares to the entire population of the counties of Shushi, Zangezur, Jebrail, and Jevanshir that:

1. the government of Azerbaijan, by its decision of January 15, 1919, has appointed Dr. Sultanov as governor-general. He enjoys the cooperation of the English command;
2. in conformity with existing laws, a six man council of capable Armenians and Muslims is to be found in the governor-generalship to minister to the needs of the entire population;
3. an officer of the English Mission may join the council as the representative of the English Command;
4. the Azerbaijani treasury will be responsible for the salaries of officials and for all other expenses in the governor-generalship;
5. the final solution to all disputed questions will emanate from the [Paris] Peace Conference;
6. the English Mission will be informed in advance about all military movements within the boundaries of the governor-generalship;
7. with this communique the English Command wishes to emphasize that in order for the Governor-General to fulfill the obligations placed on him, including preservation of law and order in the governor-generalship, all regulations and directives issued by the Governor-General and his bureaus must be enacted without opposition, and the English Command lends its full support to all legally adopted measures.

[Republic of Armenia Archives, File No. 9]

4
[26 January 1919]

Protest Note of the Armenian Government to Azerbaijan on Karabagh.

Annex No. 5

To the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Baku

According to information that has reached us through private sources, the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan has decided to establish a Governor Generalship over Jevanshir, Shushi, Jebrail, and Zangezur.

I am instructed by my government to protest the above decision which is contrary to the territorial rights of Armenia.

January 26, 1919
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Tigranian

No. 129

[Republic of Armenia Archives, File No. 8]

5
[20 February 1919]

Protest Note of Karabagh Armenians to Allied Governments.

Armenian National Council of Karabagh
20th February 1919

The Armenian General Assembly of Karabagh in its fourth sitting on 19th February 1919, having examined the response of the government of Azerbaijan to the Armenian Government, protests energetically against the clearly expressed intention of the Azerbaijan government to consider Karabagh as a part of the territory of Azerbaijan.

The Armenian population of Karabagh, basing its attitude on the right of nationalities [to self-determination], as it has been acknowledged by the Peace Conference, appeals to the public opinion of the whole world and protests energetically against this attempt on the part of the Government of Azerbaijan to overlook this right as far as Armenian Karabagh is concerned. Karabagh never has acknowledged the authority of the government of Azerbaijan within its boundaries, and never will.

The General Assembly begs the Representatives of the Allied Governments in the Caucasus as well as the Peace Conference to defend their rightful claims.

This act of protest is being addressed to the Commander of the Allied Forces at Baku, General Thomson, to the Armenian Government and finally to the Armenian Delegation at the Peace Conference.

Signed:

President
Secretary

[Republic of Armenia Archives File No. 9]

6
[20 February 1919]

A Proposal for the provisional administration of Karabagh.

Armenian National Council
20 February, 1919

The Project of a Provisional Administration of Armenian Karabagh

1. Pending the decision of the Peace Conference, Armenian Karabagh is to be administered as follows:

Note I. Armenian Karabagh is considered the mountainous region [composed of] the following districts: Shushi, Koriagin, Jevanshir (Jraberd), Elizavetpol (Gulistan) with a compact Armenian majority.

Note II. The Zangezur district is to be administered separately.

2. The Government is in the hands of a Provincial Council, residing in Shushi.

3. The Council is composed of 7 Armenians (1 of the town of Shushi, 1 of Khachen, 2 of Varanda, 1 of Dizak, 1 of Jevanshir, 1 of Elizavetpol district (Gulistan) and 3 Mohammedans, one from the town of Shushi and 2 from the districts.)

Note I. On the ground of a special agreement the Armenian and Azerbaijani republics are represented in the Council by a delegate each.

4. The Head of the British Mission in Shushi is the chairman of the Council "ex officio".

5. The British representative is entitled to control the proceedings of the Council, to

abolish or to suspend any of its decisions.

6. The Vice-president of the Council is elected by the Council.

7. All the officials are appointed by the Council.

8. The administration complies with the laws of the Russian Empire (including those of the Provisional Government.)

9. The bills of supplementary laws to add are noted by the Council with a special permission of the British Authorities.

10. The movements of troops by both contracting parties cannot be undertaken without a special previous permission of the British representatives. Both contracting parties are bound to bring the troops back to the line where they had been at the moment of the arrival of the first Mission. In the most important strategic points British detachments and pickets are to be established. The Mission is to determine the number of troops of both contracting parties to stay in the zone under dispute.

11. The expenses occasioned by the administration are to be covered by the establishment of taxes and duties. In the case of a deficit the Council has to find the necessary sums by way of credit.

12. The details of the project are determined by the Council together with the Mission.

Bagaturov,

Member of the Karabagh National Council and delegate of the Fourth Assembly.

7

[24 February 1919]

Memorandum of representatives of the Fourth Assembly of Armenians of Karabagh to Commander of Allied Forces in Transcaucasia.

To General Forester-Walker 24th February, 1919 Commander of the Allied Forces in Transcaucasia

General,

The Armenian National Council, elected at the fourth District Assembly, begs to communicate to you, through the intermediary of Mr Hrant Bagaturoff and Mr Nushavan Tér-Mikaelian, Members of the Council, its views on the present situation in the region

of Karabagh.

You know by the news published in the press, as well as by the Council's report to General Thomson, that the Armenians of Karabagh took up arms to defend their liberty and their rights to independence. They refused to submit to the power of the Azerbaijanis in any form whatsoever, and nothing can cause them to alter this decision.

At the request of General Thomson the Armenians of Karabagh suspended all military action and movement of troops. But while the Armenians of Karabagh acted absolutely in accordance with the demands of the British Mission, the Azerbaijani Government moved its armies to important strategic points such as Askeran, Khankend, Zabangh, Shushi and Koriagin.

At the same time, within the boundaries of Karabagh, the Turkish troops continued their operations under the command of Turkish officers.

These acts are taken by the Armenian population of Karabagh to be the preliminaries of a policy of aggression on the part of the Azerbaijani Government, and there is consequently much natural anxiety and indignation among the people.

Basing their attitude on the standpoint of the Peace Conference in regard to questions of nationality, the Armenians of Karabagh, in order to preserve their rights and authority, and firmly believing that the Peace Conference will satisfy the inflexible desire unanimously expressed by the entire Armenian population of Karabagh to unite this essentially Armenian region with the territories of the Armenian Republic, are of [the] opinion that the only logical provisional solution, pending the decision of the Peace Conference, is to maintain the situation as it was before the arrival of the Turks.

The line of demarcation between the Armenian zone of Karabagh, in which Armenians number 75% to 90% of the population, and the Muslim zone, is clearly defined, and has been fixed with precision by the Transcaucasian Committee on territorial question[s].

In this Armenian portion of Karabagh, joined to the Armenian portion of the district of Elisavetpol (Gulistan) with which it possesses indivisible ties, we consider it indispensable to organize self government under the control of the British Mission, and on the principle of proportionate representation, the rights of the Muslim minority being entirely safeguarded.

The details of the project will be presented by our delegates. It would appear from the project elaborated by the British representative at Shushi, Major Monk Mason, as well as from a letter addressed by the General B. Thomson to Major Varand Socrates Bey Melik-Shahnazaroff, that with the consent of General Thomson it is thought desirable provisionally to create a joint Turco-Armenian Government General of the Districts of Zangezur, Shushi, Koriagin, and Jevanshir, in which the British Military authorities should also be represented.

A heterogeneous Government of this sort, and the union of the two distinct Armenian and

Muslim districts of Karabagh, are absolutely inadmissible in view of the actual conditions of existence prevailing there. At every moment there would be regrettable friction and discord which would not conduce to peaceable cohabitation but, on the contrary, would only envenom the relations between the two peoples.

The Armenian National Council of Karabagh, sincerely anxious for peace and order, finds it impossible to assume the responsibility of such an organization of local authority, which is in contradiction with the clearly expressed will of the people to govern independently of the Azerbaijanis the Armenian territory of Karabagh, and to maintain as previously stated, the status-quo until the Peace Conference announces its decision.

In view of the above considerations the Armenian National Council of Karabagh begs you not to refuse to have a radical change made in the proposed scheme for a mixed Government-General, and to settle the question of the Government of the Armenian Zone of Karabagh in accordance with the principles outlined above. At the same time it begs you to propose measures for the withdrawal from the Armenian boundaries of Karabagh of the armies which, notwithstanding the order of the British Mission, have advanced and occupied Armenian points of importance.

In view of the supreme importance of the question, and of the complexity of the situation, from which grave consequences may arise, the Armenian National Council begs you kindly to transmit the present request to the High British Command.

Assuring you, on behalf of the Armenians of Karabagh, of this unwavering loyalty and devotion to the great Allies who have always shown so much interest in the unfortunate Armenian people, the Armenian National Council begs you, General, to accept the expression of the profound respect and devotion of the suffering Armenian population of Karabagh which is convinced that it will find in you, now as ever, a powerful protector of its interests and legitimate aspirations in the settlement of the provisional regime pending the decision of the Peace Conference.

Herewith copy of the resolution of the Armenian Council of Karabagh concerning the relations with the Azerbaijanis, together with copy of its project for the administration of the district.

President of Council: A. SHAHNAZAROFF

Secretary: T. TER-GRIGORIAN

[Republic of Armenia Archives, File No. 9]

8
[20 March 1919]

Telegram sent by Colonel Chardigny, Chief of the French Military Mission in the Caucasus and Tiflis.

From the Government of Yerevan:

"Armenian population of Transcaucasia in serious danger from Muslims. Significant Tatar forces organized under direction of Turks in Sharur, Nakhichevan, Surmalu, Karabagh, have disarmed local Armenian forces and declared Governor Generalship in Azerbaijan. Awaiting imminent serious incidents. Indispensable that Allied governments stop the Tatars to avoid shedding of blood by prompt and energetic action, and to avoid possible complications. [The Tatars] should open up the necessary routes to the evacuees from Turkey and should reestablish the communications with the Armenian government.

Signed: Tigranian
Minister of Foreign Affairs

[Republic of Armenia Archives, File No. 105]

9
[25 April 1919]

Resolution unanimously approved by the Fifth Assembly of Armenians of Karabagh on the issue of a provisional government.

The Fifth Congress of Armenians of Karabagh, having heard during its formal session of April 23, 1919, the presentation on administrative programs for the establishment of a provisional government in Karabagh as presented by General Shuttleworth, representative of the British Command, and having examined in depth this same program during its official session of April 29, resolves that:

1. The Fifth Assembly of Armenians of Karabagh aspires ardently toward the reestablishment of order and peace in Karabagh.
2. It accedes with all sincerity and all its heart to the requests formulated by the British Command for the reestablishment of friendly relations with our Tatar neighbors, a position that has been the policy adopted by the Armenian population throughout Karabagh.
3. We take note, as General Shuttleworth has stated himself, that all questions relating to

territory and frontiers with regard to Karabagh will receive a definitive solution at the Peace Conference.

The Fifth Assembly of Armenians of Karabagh finds, however, that the program it has been presented does not correspond to the wishes and vital interests of the Armenian population of Karabagh as clearly defined in the directives and critical mandate that the Assembly has given to its representatives.

The Assembly therefore finds the administrative program creating jurisdictional links with the government of Azerbaijan unacceptable, and it believes that the realization by force of such a program would create grave and bloody conflict between the two races, for which the Congress would not wish to assume responsibility.

The original is signed by all the members of the Bureau, a total of 48 delegates.

Shushi, 25 April 1919
Fifth Assembly of Armenians of Karabagh

10
[25 April 1919]

The Fifth Assembly of the Armenians of Karabagh to General Shuttleworth, Commander of the British forces in the Caucasus.

The Armenians of Karabagh do not oppose their Tatar neighbors' rights of self-determination but, while awaiting the final arrangements by the Peace Conference of all territorial questions in litigation, they do demand for themselves the right to determine their fate.

With regard to the extension of Azerbaijan's jurisdiction over Armenian Karabagh, the Fifth Assembly of Armenians of Karabagh believes it is its obligation to declare that Azerbaijan has always been and remains today an accomplice and ally of the Turks and of all the cruelties committed by the Turks against Armenians in general and against Karabagh Armenians in particular.

Azerbaijan has always shown and continues to show itself today an adherent of the Turkish orientation.

It is Azerbaijan that invited the Turks into Transcaucasia; it encouraged by all possible means acts of treason in the rear of the fighting forces, thus breaking the Transcaucasian resistance force and facilitating the triumphant entry of the Turks into the interior of our country. This "State" does not seem to have lost all hope of seeing the dream of the return of the Turks into Transcaucasia realized, and continues to persecute Armenians

systematically.

The economic boycott to which Armenians were subjected at the time of the entry of Turkish pashas into Transcaucasia is now turned into a systematic governmental policy to oppress Armenians.

Brigandage, pillage, massacres, and armed attacks on main highways constitute ordinary means by which Azerbaijan wants to realize its goals.

And all these violent acts are committed when Armenians in Karabagh are not even yet subject to the government of Azerbaijan, while the representatives of powerful Britain are still here to defend us.

We have the firm conviction that the real Azerbaijan, following the example offered by its elder brother, Turkey, wants to suppress Armenians in general as constituting the only cultural element sympathizing with Europe and not the East, and to suppress the Armenians of Karabagh in particular, the latter having succeeded in defending to this day their rights and having suffered relatively fewer massacres and devastations.

The Assembly also concludes that the political, historical, cultural, juridical, and especially economic condition of the Armenians of Karabagh could under no circumstances legitimately enable Azerbaijan to impose on the Armenian people the acceptance, even provisionally, of Azerbaijani authority and administration.

The Fifth Assembly of the Armenians of Karabagh, based on these facts, finds it impossible therefore to accept the authority of any administration that is attached to the government of Azerbaijan.

With regard to the reestablishment of the means of communication, the Assembly concludes that this question has no relation to the recognition of the authority of Azerbaijan's governor-general, since the question of free communication and security of the means of communication constitute a vital necessity for the whole country and form a distinct economic issue.

We are convinced that the state of peace that Great Britain is in the process of establishing in Transcaucasia will hasten the realization of the conditions which are essential for the revival of economic activity.

The question of free passage through the territory of Armenian Karabagh of herds being taken to pasture by Azerbaijanis had already received a satisfactory solution, even though at the time Karabagh was surrounded by Turco-Tatar bands assisted by Baku. This question would not have presented any difficulty at all if the Armenians of Karabagh had not been forced to recognize the authority of Azerbaijan.

By attaching the text of the resolution, which was approved unanimously by the Congress and signed by all the delegates, and which rejects the temporary authority of Azerbaijan's governor general, the Fifth Assembly of Armenians of Karabagh declares

that it has based its decision on the firm and unwavering will of the people that has given it its mandate; the British command can discover the same by popular referendum.

Recognizing fully that cultural and economic factors play a significant role in the solution of such important political questions, the Fifth Assembly of Armenians of Karabagh is firmly convinced that Great Britain, in the person of its military commander in the Caucasus, would never want to force Armenians to be subjected to the rule of the Khans of Azerbaijan, from which it has freed itself over a hundred years, at the cost of immense sacrifices and indescribable suffering.

The Fifth Assembly of Armenians of Karabagh, being informed of the imperative demand repeated by General Shuttleworth for the recognition of the authority of the government of Azerbaijan and having examined the reasons that have motivated these demands, concludes nonetheless that it is impossible to review its rejection of provisional Azerbaijani rule. That was dictated by the unwavering will of the whole Armenian population of Karabagh, which no delegate of the Assembly could have disobeyed. The delegates cannot accept the responsibility of bloodshed which may result from the forced establishment of Azerbaijani power on Armenian Karabagh.

[Republic of Armenia Archives, File No. 9]

11
[15 May 1919]

Copy of letter from Avetis Aharonian, president of the delegation of the Republic of Armenia, addressed to the presidents of the delegations of Italy, France, England, and the U.S.

Paris, 15 May 1919

Dear Mr. President,

Certain regions of Caucasian Armenia are also claimed by our neighbors, the Georgians and the Tatars [Azerbaijan]. While the government of the Republic of Armenia awaits with patience and confidence the decision of the Peace Conference, our neighbor, the Republic of Azerbaijan, is seeking to create a fait accompli.

In conformity with the decision of the British High Command, the Armenian government has, since the month of December, ceased all movements of its army. By contrast, the government of Azerbaijan has begun marching its troops toward Armenian Karabagh and has occupied regions which are, without question, part of our territory. In conjunction with this occupation, the government of Azerbaijan has, by an official act, proclaimed the annexation of these occupied regions and has sent to it a Governor-General, Mr. Sultanov.

The General Assembly of the Armenians of Karabagh, meeting in Shushi on February 19, has rejected with legitimate indignation all pretense of Azerbaijan with regard to Armenian Karabagh, which said Assembly has declared an integral part of Armenia in virtue of the principle of nationality itself, proclaimed so many times by the powers of the Entente.

We have noted with deep regret that the Allied High Command in the Caucasus has given consent to the nomination of this Governor-General while declaring that this is only a temporary arrangement and that the final determination of the frontiers depends entirely upon the decision of the Peace Conference.

It is infinitely painful for us to know that a territory which has always belonged to Armenia and which encompasses an absolute Armenian majority may be delivered, even temporarily, to an alien administration profoundly hostile to the Armenian element.

[...]

In fact, Armenian Karabagh, the mountainous districts of Elizavetpol, Kazakh, and Zangezur, have a total population of 494,000 inhabitants; of these numbers 358,000 are Armenians, 24,000 other Christians, and only 112,000 are Muslims, Tatars, Kurds, etc. In addition to these ethnographic considerations, it is to be noted that this strip of land constitutes an indivisible part of Armenia, being the immediate prolongation of the Armenian plateau, with the same physical and geological formation, the same culture and the same history, and forming, in addition, the naturally defensive ramparts of Armenia against Turanic invasions.

All these questions are minutely exposed in the attached memorandum which the Delegation of the Republic of Armenia has the honor to submit to your Excellency. This memorandum proves in concrete fashion that the province of Karabagh and the adjacent districts as well as the valley of the Arax to Zangezur can, under no circumstance, be incorporated in another state.

[...]

The Armenian people which, during the terrible years of the war and at the cost of major sacrifices, has resisted the direct and indirect attacks of Tatars, Turks, and Germans, and has fought on the side of the Great Allies for the cause of justice and for the defense of its native soil, continues today the same struggle under extremely difficult conditions with the firm conviction that the Peace Conference will do justice to its undeniable rights.

In the name of our much oppressed populations, we have the responsibility to warn respectfully the Peace Conference that all arbitrary solutions that would sacrifice the legitimate aspirations of Armenians are bound to become in the future the source of new and perpetual conflicts.

The Delegation of the Republic of Armenia requests to be heard before a decision is taken concerning the future destiny of the Armenian people and the frontiers of its territory.

Please accept, Mr. President, the assurance of my highest regards.

Signed,

A. Aharonian
President of the Delegation of
Republic of Armenia to the
Peace Conference

[Republic of Armenia Archives, File No. 105]

12
[11 June 1919]

Resolution passed by demonstrators in Yerevan following news of massacres in Karabagh. The resolution was supported by all the Armenian political parties. Similar resolutions were also adopted at rallies in other cities, including Tbilisi.

The extent to which the Armenian people have been massacred in Turkey, in Karabagh, in Azerbaijan has exceeded all previous bounds. It is enough! We can tolerate no longer the slaughter of our women and children under the very eyes of the representatives of the great peoples of Europe.

[...]

We protest emphatically and, in the name of civilization and the self-determination of peoples, express our boundless admiration for our brothers of Karabagh, who are struggling heroically against the tyranny of Sultanov.

[Republic of Armenia Archives, File 66a]

13
[15 August 1919]

Agreement of the representatives of the Seventh Assembly of Karabagh Armenians with Governor-General Sultanov, accepting provisional Azerbaijani rule.

Whereas the fate of Mountainous Karabagh shall be determined by the Peace Conference, whereas every hostile encounter is disastrous to the nationalities inhabiting Karabagh, and

whereas in whatever way the question of Karabagh may be settled, Armenians and Muslims will continue to live together, the Seventh Assembly of Karabagh Armenians, in its morning session of August 15, 1919, resolved to uphold the following points constituting the temporary agreement with the government of the Republic of Azerbaijan:

1. The contracting parties accept this provisional agreement until the Peace Conference renders a decision, which both sides shall accept as equally binding.
2. The Armenian-populated mountainous sector of Karabagh (Dizak, Varanda, Khachen, Jraberd), in the counties [uezds] of Shushi, Jevanshir, Jebrail, regards itself to be provisionally within the boundaries of the Azerbaijani republic.
3. The counties of Shushi, Jevanshir, and Jebrail remain as a distinct administrative unit within the governor-generalship of Karabagh, and the internal structure of that unit shall be such that the administration of the mountainous Armenian sector is composed of Armenians, with the rights of minorities guaranteed.
4. In the mountainous portion of Karabagh (Dizak, Khachen, Varanda, and Jraberd), administrative officials shall be named on the recommendation of the Armenian members of the council (see point 5).
5. A six-member council of three Armenians and three Muslims shall be created in the governor-generalship of Karabagh.
6. The Council's Armenian members are to be chosen by the assembly of the Armenian population of Mountainous Karabagh. The assembly has the right to reelection.
7. All fundamental questions of an interracial nature cannot be acted upon until they have first been considered by the council.
8. The council has the right of initiative in matters relating to the arrangements and the administration of the governor-generalship.
9. The council has the right to oversee and counterbalance the administration of the governor-generalship but without the right to interfere in the operations of the administration.
10. The post of governor-general's assistant in civil affairs shall be established, and an Armenian must be appointed to that post.
11. The Armenian assembly shall present to the government of Azerbaijan two candidates for the position of assistant in civil affairs, one of whom will be confirmed.
12. The Armenians of Karabagh shall enjoy the right of cultural autonomy.
13. The right of cultural autonomy is to be vested in the National Council of Karabagh Armenians, which will be elected by the periodically convened assemblies of Karabagh

Armenians. The assembly is summoned by the National Council.

14. The government of the Azerbaijani republic shall regulate the activities of the Armenian National Council through Armenian intermediaries.

15. The [Azerbaijani] garrisons shall be stationed at Khankend and Shushi in peacetime strength.

16. Any and all movements of armed forces in the mountainous Armenian-inhabited sectors of the counties of Shushi, Jevanshir, and Jebrail shall require the consent of two-thirds of the council.

17. No person may be subjected to persecution, either by judicial or executive procedures, for his political convictions.

18. All Armenians who have been constrained to leave for political reasons shall have the right to return to their homes.

19. The disarming of the Armenian and Muslim population shall be suspended in Karabagh until the question of Karabagh is resolved by the [Paris] Peace Conference.

20. The government of the Azerbaijani republic is to give material and moral assistance to the population of Karabagh for the rapid restoration of the devastated Muslim and Armenian villages.

21. For the purpose of improving interracial relations, the council shall periodically sponsor general and local Armenian- Muslim congresses.

22. There will be absolute freedom of assembly, speech, and press. But because a state of martial law exists throughout Azerbaijan, meetings shall be authorized by the administration.

23. All crimes of private and official persons shall be prosecuted according to judicial procedure, except for the felonies and criminal acts excluded from the normal judicial order by the binding decision of June 11, 1919 of the Committee for State Defense of the Azerbaijani republic.

24. No one shall be persecuted for having taken part in interracial clashes up to the present time.

25. This agreement comes into effect from the moment of its acceptance by the Seventh Assembly of Karabagh Armenians.

26. This agreement shall remain in effect in all circumstances, including siege, warfare, and so forth.

The delegates appointed by the Seventh Assembly of Karabagh are authorized to conclude

with the Azerbaijani government the final provisional agreement, which has been approved by all members of the Assembly, to select the two candidates for the post of civil assistant to the provisional governor-general and the three members of the council formed alongside the governor-general, and to settle all technical questions relating to the administration of Karabagh on the basis of the provisional agreement that has been accepted.

[Republic of Armenia Archives, Files 9 and 66a]

14
[20 November 1919]

Statements made by Nasib Beg Usubbekov and Alexander Khatisian, the Prime Ministers of Azerbaijan and Armenia respectively, following private discussions, on the conflict between the two countries, to Col. James C. Rhea of the U.S. Army. The discussions were followed by an agreement signed on 23 November, 1919 in Tbilisi, reflecting the major concern, the cessation of hostilities.

Mr. Usubbekov: We have agreed that all military operations must be stopped, but we have not yet agreed on details. We will discuss these questions further and in case we are not able to agree, we ask You [Col. Rhea] to decide the questions. I have proposed to the President of Armenia that Armenia withdraw all her regular troops, officers and military agents now in Zangezur, that no war material shall be left in Zangezur, all guns, rifles, etc. be withdrawn, and the people disarmed; that the roads leading into Zangezur shall be kept open for traffic and that refugees are to be returned to Zangezur.

Mr. Khatisian: I agree also that all military operations shall stop and that troops remain in the status that they were two weeks ago and that we decide our differences by Conference, Colonel Rhea to be the umpire in any case we cannot reach a decision.

Armenia has no regular troops or armed troops in Zangezur. The people who are armed there, are the local population. It would be impossible to withdraw the local population or to take their arms away from them. I could not issue an order to them and have it obeyed. Therefore, it is better for me not to issue an order. Anyway, it would be bad policy to issue such an order at this time due to the excited state in which the people find themselves.

The repatriation of refugees will require some time, and also this is hardly the psychological moment. The question of refugees will have to be settled at a special Conference.

I suggest that all roads should be opened. When the local population feels safe enough to

use their roads, their Government will give them all assistance.

On the whole, I do not see that there is any great disagreement; there may be a difference of opinion about choosing the psychological moment; as for instance, if there were a pending battle or some similar circumstance, the movement should not be attempted; this should be left to the Conference.

We have decided to meet tomorrow at eleven o'clock to reach some agreement and we have both decided that if there are any points in disagreement, we will refer them to You.

Mr. Usubbekov: I think that although there may be no disagreement on particular points, there is some difference of opinion on details; for instance - the roads. I think the people should be ordered to open the roads, while Mr. Khatisian thinks that assistance only should be given in opening the roads.

Mr. Khatisian: I am especially anxious that there should be no ordering about as, particularly in the Caucasus, one must be very careful in this regard. I do not wish to order anyone about for fear that the order would not be executed.

Mr. Usubbekov: The trouble is that an order is very often given and no one uses the force to enforce it. On the other hand, I think that the population of Zangezur should not be treated as a separate state. They have no business keeping arms. They should be taken away.

Mr. Khatisian: I do not consider the Zangezur district a separate state. However, as long as this district is surrounded by hostiles, I can not advise them to disarm. In the southern part of Karabagh, there are Kurdish units which are very hostile; we must be very careful.

Mr. Usubbekov: Unless we are prepared to order and enforce our decisions, it is useless to make decisions, because the population will not follow them.

Mr. Khatisian: In that case, it would be necessary to disarm not only the one district, but the whole of Azerbaijan and Armenia. Otherwise, any order would be unfair to one population or the other.

Mr. Usubbekov: I have nothing at all against the universal disarmament of the civil population.

Colonel Rhea: Would the gentleman be willing to take all the arms off his battleships? (General laugh[ter]) As far as I can see, You have agreed on only one point and that is, that there shall be no more fighting. Would the gentlemen like to come here tomorrow at eleven o'clock? It is convenient and I will be here. I am very much obliged to the gentlemen and am glad they have gotten as far as they did.

Mr. Khatisian: If we have any disagreement, we will elect You as arbiter to decide the disputed points. If a section of the population in Armenia revolts, the state should have

the right to put down that uprising. Every state should have the right to deal with the population within its own borders. If there was a village in Azerbaijan which mutinied against the Azerbaijan Government, they could not be expected to wait for the Peace Conference to handle the situation.

Mr. Usubbekov: We have not many days left before the general Conference and shall not raise these points now. I quite agree, that there should be a line drawn between the two cases, that is, subjugation of those who revolt by administrative measures and the other is by military and punitive measures, and they should not take place until the Peace Conference decides our fate.

Mr. Khatasian: I prefer not to approach the question in this form because it touches the sovereignty of my state and limits its power.

Mr. Usubbekov: In the same way I think that there is raised also a question of the sovereignty of Azerbaijan in regard to the Zangezur district. I think that no military force should be used for subjugation of the population. (Armenian diplomat raises the question of minorities.)

Mr. Usubbekov: It would be impossible to apply two different rules to the same subject. There should be one rule for both parties. For instance, Nakhichevan; if the Armenian Government had thought of subjecting it, Azerbaijan would feel fit to declare war. It would be just to find one principle to apply to both parties equally.

Mr. Khatasian: I do not object against the methods - I object against the principle. We have talked about a district where we have no authority; now the Minister raises the question of sections of country which are under Armenia. I feel that Azerbaijan would have a perfect right to put down the revolt. I object to the question with reference to internal administration.

Mr. Usubbekov: Exactly for this reason I was quite astonished that the Armenian Government took very much to heart this Zangezur affair. When the Azerbaijan Government thought it best to subjugate this district, the Armenian Government was quite ready to declare war about it.

Colonel Rhea: If we can settle the Zangezur question, all this talk will be unnecessary. I suggest that as You are all tired and hungry, that You confer again tomorrow. Other questions may be settled and discussed later.

Mr. Khatasian: I have about a dozen questions of general character, but these can be the subject for the Conference to convene later.

Colonel Rhea: If You can settle the status of Zangezur and decide what other questions are to be decided by the representatives appointed by You, You will have accomplished much.

Mr. Khatasian: Otherwise we will be here a week and have constant meetings with the

Prime Minister of Azerbaijan, and that is something for the Conference to do.

Mr. Usubbekov: I think that there should be a general agreement about stopping military operations wherever they may be because, for instance, in the district of Zangibassar, if the Armenians thought that they could subjugate this population by military measures we would of course consider ourselves justified in issuing an ultimatum.

Mr. Khatisian: If You take that standpoint, then I also have a dozen questions of the same kind. We have definite information that in the Nukha district there are a lot of Armenians, who cannot go out of their villages. The Armenian Government does not intend to have any military operations now but still thinks that refraining from use of the military to subjugate certain districts violates the sovereignty of the state.

Mr. Usubbekov: I raise this question of general principle, to apply not only to Armenia, but to Azerbaijan and do not think there is anything wrong in that.

Colonel Rhea: This is opening up a big question, which I think ought better to be put off until tomorrow. In the meantime, the gentlemen can make up their minds as to what questions they want to discuss.

Mr. Usubbekov: There is no great disagreement. If we do not agree on certain points, we will ask You to act as Arbitrator.

[Republic of Armenia Archives, File No. 3]

15
[4 March 1920]

Memorandum on the Armenian political situation in Karabagh presented by the Eighth Assembly of Karabagh to the representatives of the Allied Powers and Transcaucasian Republics.

In its Seventh Conference on 15 August 1919 the General Assembly of the Armenians of Karabagh had examined in detail the political situation of the region and had expressed the opinion that definitive incorporation of contested regions to this or that state depends on the Peace Conference and that, therefore, it was necessary to avoid the useless shedding of blood and to establish a modus vivendi between the two peoples.

Adhering to this point of view and in accord with the representatives of the government of Azerbaijan, the Seventh Conference elaborated a regulation of provisional understanding. The representatives of the Armenian people hoped that on the basis of this accord the two peoples would live in good relations without harming each other and that the Tatar government would treat the two peoples in a spirit of impartiality and would insure the

social order be observed.

The Eighth Armenian Conference assembled at Shosh is unfortunately obliged to make the following painful observation: since the conclusion to the accord to the present, the government of Azerbaijan has been unable to organize and bring any order into Karabagh and has produced nothing but anarchy. Never has the Armenian population been subjected to such misdeeds, been victimized by so many murders, felt so much economic prejudice as since the signing of the Agreement, and this due to the arbitrariness and weakness of the government.

Assassins and noted bandits kill and rob in full daylight the peaceful inhabitants without the government taking any counter measures, without criminals being bothered. The Askers [regular Tatar soldiers] pillage Armenian homes, massacre men, women, children, and remain unpunished. The inhabitants of destroyed villages wander to other villages and wait in vain for the government to take measures that will allow them back into their homes.

The principal clauses of that agreement have been violated by the government of Azerbaijan. The first clause has the following formulation: "The present temporary accord is accepted by the parties until the solution of the problem." However, the temporary governor-general of Karabagh in his note number 1927 dated 19 February 1920, addressed to the Armenian Council of Karabagh, states the following: "Therefore, with regard to the first clause of the accord on this political situation of Karabagh, I request that you submit for discussion the question of the definitive incorporation of Karabagh into Azerbaijan as its economically inseparable part." In addition, the temporary governor-general of Karabagh, Sultanov, has clearly stated on 19 February to the representatives of the Armenian Society meeting with him, "The Peace Conference no longer exists. France and Italy are incapable of regulating their own affairs, let alone our affairs. We must rely on our own efforts to end this abnormal situation." These words indicate clearly that Sultanov does not attach any value to the decision of the Peace Conference.

In the fifteenth article of the accord it is stated: "The quantity of [Azerbaijani] troops to remain in Khankend will be maintained at peace time levels."

However, for six months this clause has not been respected by Azerbaijan. Thus, during the campaign against Zangezur, many regiments came to Khankend and Shushi. They came from Ganja, Baku, Zakatala, provoking strong emotions among the Armenian population of Karabagh. Tatar troops returning from Zangezur have even killed 15 Armenian peasants and 2 teachers near Mazikamuljeh.

The sixteenth clause states, "All movement of troops in Mountainous Karabagh region [District of Shushi, Jevanshir, and Jebraill] inhabited by Armenians cannot take place without the agreement of 2/3 of the members of the Armenian Council." This clause has been brutally violated from October 1919 to the present. In October, Azerbaijan transported 12,000 soldiers to Zangezur through Askeran, Khankend, and Shushi without any consultation with any members of the Armenian Council.

The Eighth Congress of Armenians in Karabagh, examining the present situation of the country and cognizant of the above-mentioned facts, adopted the following resolution:

RESOLUTION:

Considering that the government of Azerbaijan has continuously violated the most essential clauses of the temporary accord,

That on 22 February 1920 Khankend, Askeran, and on the Shushi-Evlakh route many hundreds have been massacred by the troops and agents of Azerbaijan,

That the Armenian quarters in Khankend have been pillaged,

Addresses its vehement protests to the civilized world against these abominable persecutions,

Attests that the continuation of similar misdeeds will obligate the Armenians of Karabagh to take the necessary measures to defend their lives and their honor,

Exhorts at the same time Tatar peasants of Azerbaijan to join their protests to those of Armenians.

Copies of this resolution have been forwarded to Colonel Haskell, the representative of Allied Powers in Transcaucasia, to the Diplomatic and Military Envoys of the Allies, to the governments of the Free Republic of Transcaucasia, as well as the temporary Governor-General of Karabagh.

[Republic of Armenia Archives, File No. 9]

16
[16 April 1920]

Excerpts of confidential report of Armenian diplomatic envoy to Azerbaijan to Minister of Foreign Affairs on atrocities in Karabagh.

M[inistry] [of] F[oreign] A[ffairs]
Republic of Armenia
Political Diplomatic Mission to Azerbaijan

16 April 1920
No. 665

With regard to the events in Karabagh, until today we do not have official information

from more or less reliable Armenian sources. Letters at our disposal received from Tatar soldiers or volunteers, who were there or participated in the clashes, shed considerable light on the events in Azerbaijan and the horrible atrocities committed by the Azerbaijani soldiers. The letters are addressed to their relatives and family members; although written in concise or informal language, these letters describe the massacres and looting taking place in Shushi and neighboring villages. In those letters Tatars are once more demonstrating that they cannot distinguish between armed fighters and unarmed, defenseless women, children, and the elderly. When they do not succeed in destroying armed troops or reducing their power, they take their revenge upon peaceful citizens, subjecting them to barbaric massacres, burning their houses and looting their belongings.

[...]

Diplomatic Representative (Signature)
Secretary

[Republic of Armenia Archives, File No. 70]

17
[1 May 1920]

Resolution passed by demonstrators on May day 1920, when the government of Armenia had just received an ultimatum from Azerbaijan to clear Karabagh and Zangezur of Armenian troops within three days.

We express our utmost outrage against the executioners who exploit the name of the Turkish peasants and workers and, in the name of Soviet authorities and Communism, continue the bloody campaign of the former regime. The laborers of Armenia extend their brotherly hand to the workers of Azerbaijan and demand an end to expeditions against Karabagh and Zangezur; they also demand that the peasantry and proletariat of those provinces be allowed to express their will. The laborers of Armenia trust that the Soviet authorities of Russia will not tolerate the aggressive policy of Azerbaijan. The workers of Armenia also demand from their government that it defend Armenia and the liberty and freedom of the Armenian proletariat and recommend that this, a resolution of the federation of workers' unions, be communicated to the proletariat of all nations and to the socialist caucuses of European parliaments.

[Simon Vratzian, Republic of Armenia, p. 388]

18
[5 August 1920]

Discussion between T. Begzatian, Armenia's envoy to Georgia, and Soviet Russian negotiator Legran, from the copy of a secret report by Begzatian.

5 August 1920
#373

To the Minister of Foreign Affairs
Republic of Armenia

[...]

[Legran stated that] there are no Turkish forces in Nakhichevan with whom the Russian Red Army could have conspired [to approach Armenia]. It is true, [he said] that they have a treaty with Turkey, but the purpose of that treaty is to assist Turkey, which is now inspired by the idea of a national renaissance, of realizing that idea and freeing itself from untenable imperialist rule. Is it then possible, he added pathetically, but I believe quite sincerely, that Armenia has such a bad opinion of Soviet Russia that the latter could sign a treaty with the Turks against Armenia? That is impossible. We are helping the Turks and we will help them get rid of the Entente occupation, but not in their fight against Armenians. On the contrary, we have spoken to Kemal and he is in agreement that all concessions should be made to the Armenians on the question of territories, accepting as we do the existence of an independent and free Armenia. But when I asked Legran, "since you accept our independence, why is it that you are not ready to sign an agreement to that effect and are postponing the issue?" he answered, "If you so wish, I am ready to sign such an agreement right now, but don't you realize that that wouldn't be a realistic pact? We wish to create such conditions that the newly created states could live without disputes and wars so that they can begin the phase of cultural development. Don't you realize that, if we signed such a declaratory statement without clearing the most crucial disputes between you and Azerbaijan, tomorrow or the next day you will be in conflict again? As an ally of Azerbaijan and your sincere friend, Soviet Russia will be obligated to intervene again. For that purpose it is more appropriate that, even if we cannot delineate the definite frontiers now, we determine and mention in the agreement those principles on the basis of which your disputes will be resolved in the future without resorting to arms.

[...]

The following statements were also interesting in yesterday's discussion: "I'm not altogether informed on the issues of Zangezur and Karabagh," Legran said. "But that Nakhichevan must be yours even with its Turkish population, that is clear to me and it seems to me it is a necessity for your statehood..." He's still speaking positively.

[Republic of Armenia Archives, No. 67]

III. SOVIETIZATION

Early in 1920 the Armenians of Karabagh revolted against their Azerbaijani rulers. This time the Armenian Republic sent aid, and a full-scale war broke out over Karabagh between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Because of the war and because of the fact that Azeri troops were tied up in Karabagh, the Red Army was able very easily to move into Azerbaijan and in April 1920 to take over the city of Baku. This operation was headed by Anastas Mikoyan and the Georgian communist, Sergo Ordzhonokidze.

At the end of November 1920, the Bolsheviks began their move against the Republic of Armenia, which was threatened from the East by the Red Army and from the west by the Nationalist Turks. On December 1, one day before Armenia became a Soviet Republic, the Baku Soviet in Azerbaijan issued a declaration in which it announced that Karabagh, Nakhichevan and Zangezur were to be part of the Armenian Republic. That declaration was made public, proclaimed and written up in Pravda, and no less a personality than Stalin himself called this a historic act of world significance. However, by the spring and summer of the following year, Karabagh and Nakhichevan were once again part of the Soviet Azerbaijani Republic. In other words, this decree, supported by the central Soviet government and lauded by Stalin, was never put into effect. The inclusion of Nakhichevan within the Soviet Azerbaijan republic was confirmed by treaties between Soviet Russia, speaking for the Caucasian republics, and Turkey. The treaties of Moscow and Kars, signed respectively in March and October, 1921 also left Azerbaijan with control over Mountainous Karabagh.

19
[1 December 1920]

Telegram sent by the Soviet Azerbaijani government to the Armenian republic regarding the decision to cede Armenian territories. The decision was first read at a formal session of the Baku Soviet and was later printed in several newspapers.

As of today the border disputes between Armenia and Azerbaijan are declared resolved. Mountainous Karabagh, Zangezur and Nakhichevan are considered part of the Soviet Republic of Armenia.

Chairman of Azerbaijan's Revkom [Revolutionary Committee] N. Narimanov
Commissioner of Foreign Affairs
Huseinov

[Komunist, December 2, 1920, no. 2]

20
[1 December 1920]

Simon Vratzian, the last prime minister of the Republic of Armenia, on the Azerbaijani decision ceding Karabagh, Nakhichevan and Zangezur to Armenia.

On December first, when Armenia had not yet been sovietized, the formal session of the Baku Soviet took upon the issue of the "Sovietization of Armenia." Ordzhonokidze, the military commissar of the 11th army, orated: "Comrades, it will indeed be difficult to find a more auspicious gathering than this . . . Today, in this hall, the Baku proletariat welcomes the birth of the Soviet Armenian Republic . . ."

At the same meeting, the president of the Revolutionary Committee of Azerbaijan, Nariman Narimanov, read out the declaration of the Revkom [Revolutionary Committee], in which it was stated that Soviet Azerbaijan is graciously ceding Mountainous Karabagh, Zangezur and Nakhichevan to brotherly Armenia.

For Ordzhonokidze, this too was an occasion for high oratory: "Comrades, the appearance of Comrade Narimanov at this meeting is very dear. He read to us his declaration. The names of Zangezur, Nakhichevan, and Karabagh are alien to Russian ears. Zangezur, all bare mountains, has no bread or water. There is nothing there. As for Nakhichevan, it is all made up of malaria-ridden swamps and nothing else. And what is there in Karabagh? Nothing. And now Comrade Narimanov states: 'Take these for you. Take those infertile lands for Armenia.' It was as though Azerbaijan was getting rid of an extra burden. Yet,

in those infertile lands, in the Caucasus, resided the knot of the so called Armeno-Muslim conflict."

Ordzhonokidze, recalling the bloody Armeno-Turkish clashes of the Tsarist era, continued, "And today the leader of the Azerbaijan Republic enters the scene and declares that, 'The conflict belongs to the past . . . ' This is an act of great significance, one which is unprecedented in the history of mankind."

Eventually it became clear that neither Narimanov's nor Ordzhonokidze's speeches were sincere; rather, they had the intention of deceiving the Armenian bolsheviks and the public in general. Karabagh and Nakhichevan remained and still continue to remain under Azerbaijani rule. A deceit which, indeed, "is unprecedented in the history of mankind."

Stalin, too, expressed his fascination regarding this event. "On December 1st," he wrote in the December 4th issue of Pravda, "Soviet Azerbaijan is willingly turning over to Soviet Armenia Zangezur, Nakhichevan and Mountainous Karabagh . . . The centuries-old animosity between Armenia and the surrounding Muslims was solved by one stroke, by the establishment of brotherly harmony among the proletariats of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Turkey."

[Simon Vratzian, Republic of Armenia, p.500]

21
[12 June 1921]

Announcements of Armenian-Azerbaijani agreement on disputed territories.

Based on the declaration of the Revolutionary Committee of the Socialist Soviet Republic of Azerbaijan and the agreement between the Socialist Soviet Republics of Armenia and Azerbaijan, it is hereby declared that Mountainous Karabagh is henceforth an integral part of the Socialist Soviet Republic of Armenia.

Signed by Chairman A. Miasnikian and
Secretary M. Garabegian,
the Peoples Commissars of the Armenian Socialist Soviet Republic.

June 12, 1921, Yerevan.

[Archives of the Historical Museum of Yerevan]

22
[19 June 1921]

Headline of an official declaration.

Socialist Soviet Republic of Armenia Council of Peoples Commissars

Mountainous Karabagh attached to Armenia. The agreement in accordance with Azerbaijan's declaration.

Signed Alexander Minasnikian

[Sovetakan Haiastan, official journal of Soviet Armenia, June 19, 1921, no. 106.]

23
[3-5 July 1921]

Change in Soviet policy regarding the status of Karabagh.

[3 July 1921.] The plenary session of the Caucasian Bureau of Soviet Russia's Communist Party Central Committee composed of Kirov, Makharsatian, Nasikian, Nazaretsian, Narimanov, Stalin, Orakhelashvili, Ordzhonokidze, and others, examined the issue of Mountainous Karabagh and decided to attach Mountainous Karabagh to Soviet Armenia.

[5 July 1921.] The same plenary session met, reviewed the issue again, and decided "that considering the necessity of national harmony between Muslims and Armenians, the economic linkage between upper and lower Karabagh, and its permanent ties to Azerbaijan," Mountainous Karabagh should be left within the boundaries of the Azerbaijani Soviet Socialist Republic, while declaring it an autonomous region with Shushi as its administrative center.

[Hrand Avetisian, The Communist Youth League of Transcaucasia under the Flag of Proletarian Internationalism.]

24
[July 1923]

Committee of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan finalizing the incorporation of Karabagh into Azerbaijan.

1. To form, as part of the Azerbaijani Soviet Socialist Republic, an autonomous Armenian region in Karabagh with Khankend as its center.
2. The administrative organs of the autonomous region are the regional executive and the local soviets.
3. Until such time when a regional executive committee can be organized, to create a provisional revolutionary committee whose responsibilities will include the invitation of the regional soviet conference within two months, for the purpose of instituting a permanent executive organ.
4. The financial and technical resources for the region's executive committee will be provided from the general resources of the Azerbaijani Soviet Socialist Republic; immediate arrangement to be made in this regard by the Azerbaijani central committee.
5. To invite a mixed commission composed of representatives from Mountainous Karabagh, Plains Karabagh, Kurdistan and the Central authorities of the Azerbaijani S.S.R. to devise the region's constitution, facilitate the transformation of authority to the autonomous region, and to determine the borders of the region, all by no later than August 15.

Signed

Vice President of the Central Executive M. Gasumov and
Secretary M. Khanpudaghev

[G. A. Hovhannisian, The Establishment of Soviet Rule in Mountainous Karabagh.]

IV. FROM STALINISM TO THE BREZHNEV ERA

During the long years extending from its incorporation in the Azerbaijani S.S.R. to the end of the Brezhnev era, the region of Mountainous Karabagh suffered the consequences of a dual burden: the impact of Stalinist policies and the pressures of Azerbaijani nationalism often fueled by Pan-Turkic or Pan-Turanic ideological schemes.

Economic underdevelopment, social inequality, political repression and ethnic/religious discrimination kept alive the goal of reunification with Armenia.

Outbursts, clashes and petitions have kept the region in a state of almost perpetual upheaval, despite Soviet censorship and official ideology.

[15 February 1928]

An eyewitness account of events in the 1920's by a refugee from Mountainous Karabagh to Iran.

[...]

Karabagh's old folks relate that even under the Kezelbashes and the cruel local rulers of tsarist times, no such oppression, repression, pillage, corruption and acts of violence had taken place. Yes, we couldn't take these insults any longer and we decided to leave at any price, to flee from the claws of this repressive government.

[...]

A respectable number of Armenian communists of Karabagh themselves were working with us in seeking the reattachment of Karabagh to Armenia. Of course many of them are now in prisons. Nonetheless the number of those following them is increasing in time.

[...]

The society known as "Karabagh to Armenia," which has branches in all regions of Karabagh [extends] all the way to the Armenian regions of Ganja and [is doing much work]. The society is non-partisan and includes Dashnaksakans, old Hnchakians, Bolsheviks, Social Revolutionaries, and Mensheviks. At the beginning of November 1927, the society distributed thousands of leaflets in all regions of Karabagh with the slogan "Karabagh to Armenia".

[...]

A second leaflet at the end of the same month states: "If the present leaders of Armenia have condemned the hundreds of thousands of Armenians of Karabagh and cannot actualize the declaration of the Turkish Communist Narimanov that 'Karabagh belongs to Armenia' then what is their function, what is their role, and what is it that they are doing sitting on the banks of Hrazdan in the role of lackeys?"

[Haratch, Paris, February 15, 1928.]

26
[1924-1936]

Events in Mountainous Karabagh as described by an eyewitness, O. N. Jegnavorian.

The international conflict in the Caucasus became very serious and manifest in 1929. In Azerbaijan there were marked Pan-Turanic movements and there were many arrests as a result. There were also revolts among the Ajars, the Ossets, and Akharts who wanted to be separated from Georgia. The Armenians of Akhalkalak and Karabagh wanted to join Armenia.

[There were many in both countries who were exiled because of their advocacy of these issues.]

To prevent the pending disaster, Stalin, while increasing the range of reprisals, developed a new draft for a constitution which would fix the boundaries and relations of the multi-ethnic and multi-linguistic empire.

[...]

For the Armenian people nestled in the Araratian Plain, the new constitution was fatal, since it sanctioned all the injustices that had taken place in the territorial arena by granting Georgia control over Akhalkalak and by validating the Azcri annexation of Nakhichevan and Mountainous Karabagh.

On this occasion, Armenians in Tbilisi organized a demonstration which led to the arrest of 150 individuals. It was a tense situation and the interracial relations increased. The Secretary of the Armenian Communist Party, Aghasi Khanjian, in vain shuttled between Yerevan, Tbilisi and Moscow trying to find a solution to the situation. On July 1935, during a meeting of the State Committee in Tbilisi with his Russian and Georgian friends, he got into an argument and he was shot with a pistol. His body was moved to Yerevan the 12th of July and was buried unceremoniously.

[Azbarez , Fresno, September 1, 1961]

3) The management of construction works is under the jurisdiction of Minkechaour, which is located 120 km away from Stepanakert. The immediate result of this arrangement was the removal of the best machines to Minkechaour and their replacement by useless and antiquated implements and technical systems. The top laborers of one particular concern were flatly dismissed and were replaced by Azerbaijanis.

4) The combine of Mars which produces silk and employs 3,000 workers (the only industrial concern of Mars) has been placed under the administrative jurisdiction of a comparable but much smaller enterprise in Nuchi, which is 120 km away from Stepanakert. The dye factory has been transported to Nuchi, as a result of which the wage fund has been reduced and the wages of the workers of Stepanakert have been lowered. The silk spinning factories of Khntzoresian, Seyidshen, Gheshlach and other villages have been closed.

5) The *sojuzpetchat* department of Mars (in charge of distribution of newspapers and other printed material) has been transferred to Aghdam (since May 1962). Now Aghdam is to plan what we are to read. As to the workers of Stepanakert *sojuzpetchat*, they remain jobless.

6) The cement factory in Stepanakert has been placed under the jurisdiction of the region of Barda (60 km distance), which has absolutely no connection with the factory.

7) The Tartarkes project has been made part of the post-war five year plan, but until today has not been realized. Tartarkes is meant to solve the problems of electrical energy and irrigation of the semi-mountainous and mountainous regions. The construction of Tartarkes has been discontinued because of the construction of Minkechaour, which can not solve the problems peculiar to Tartarkes.

8) A number of projects provided in the recent five year plans for Mars have not been fulfilled. Still, nothing is being done, even though those projects have been made an integral part of the seven year plan, e.g., the cake combine, the wine factory of the Gurbadkino, etc.

9) The auto repair plant, provided in the seven year plan for Stepanakert [Karabagh], has been erected in Kirovabad [Azerbaijan] instead, in spite of the problems this presents in terms of available personnel and other prerequisites.

10) In forty years, not one kilometer of new road has been constructed between villages and the regional center; nor have existing roads been repaired.

11) No possibilities have been explored for developing the agriculture of the region. The corn, potato and vineyard acreages have not been expanded. There is no increment in the rate of the growth of produce. Cattle breeding is in decline; the authorities are oblivious to the problem of water resources. Reservoirs have been erected on the banks of a number of rivers of mountainous Karabagh, but only Azerbaijani villages are benefiting from these waters. The kolkhozniks of Karabagh have not been given the right to utilize the waters of their own rivers. Since ancient times Mountainous Karabagh has been famous

for its mulberry farms which often were cultivated despite great difficulty on the rocky slopes of the highlands. These farms were utilized to produce spirits and *doshab*, and were also used for construction material and fuel. Disregarding the protests of the population, with a stroke of the pen they forbade the extracting of spirit and ordered the cultivation of mulberries for the sole purpose of feeding the silkworms. As a result, large numbers of mulberry trees were destroyed, and the rocky slopes became barren and useless for agriculture. Besides, the mulberry wood is known to have precious qualities for industrial use.

Mars has not been carefully studied in terms of its soil and climatic conditions; no narrowly specialized subregions were created for the purpose of enhancing productivity.

The experimental station of the region of Martushaven has been placed under the jurisdiction of Baku. One is led to believe that the management in Mars is not interested in investigating its agricultural problems and in resolving other problems of local significance.

12) Culture and education are in decline. The low level of work in the field of education is particularly evident in the results of tests taken by our students in order to gain entrance to the higher educational institutions of Armenian SSR. The two-year Pedagogical Institute and the Conservatory of Stepanakert is a notable cultural achievement, but it has been instituted at the cost of relinquishing the Armenian Theater in Baku -- in spite of the fact that there is a large contingent of Armenians in Baku.

We could go on with the description of the illegal and harmful measures and operations inflicted upon the Autonomous Region and its Armenian population. The cursorily described cases above fully reveal the abnormal and critical status of the population of the Region. It is a status which mocks the idea of autonomy, the interests of the Armenian population, the rights of Soviet citizens, and the Leninist policy of nationalities.

The aims pursued [by the Azerbaijani government] on various occasions and for many years are now coming close to fruition. They consist of the propensity to subordinate the institutions and enterprises of Mountainous Karabagh to corresponding enterprises which are located at a distance of 40-60 km and are integral parts of Azerbaijani regions (Aghdam, Barda, Mirkechaour, Kirovabad, Nuchi, etc.); of transferring the institutions and enterprises of the region to the regions of Azerbaijan SSR; of blocking the construction of the industrial concerns and of all other necessary enterprises provided in the plans for the region. As a result of all these, the managerial-administrative functions of the region have all but disintegrated.

These unilaterally harmful measures have deprived the Armenian population of the region of its livelihood and wellbeing and forced it to abandon its own ancestral homeland.

This is the reason why in the last twenty-five years there is a total lack of increase in the growth rate of the Armenian population of Mountainous Karabagh. It should be noted that the above-mentioned decline has made it possible to populate Karabagh with Azerbaijanis.

It can definitely be stated that a chauvinistic, pan-Turk policy is being pursued which is at once inconceivable and inimical to the principles of Soviet rule, but which evidently is acceptable to the authorities of the Azerbaijani Republic.

This policy has had more abominable applications for the Armenian regions of Shamkhor, Shaumian and Khanlar, which are outside the Autonomous Region of Karabagh.

The situation is unbearable there. Discrimination is everywhere and in everything. Our plight at present is more grave than during the conquest period of 1919-1920 Soviet friendship and fraternity. We have previously also protested that there is in fact no Autonomous region. We tried to explain the reasons of grievances of the masses, but were subjected to impermissible methods of treatment. For instance, Bagirov had convened a session of the Party Aktiv in Stepanakert in which he declared:

"Whoever is opposed to the annexation of Karabagh to Azerbaijan SSR is invited to leave the meeting."

Under the circumstances, it is obvious what fate might befall any person disposed to leave the meeting. Another incident occurred just recently. To obtain explanations [concerning our situation], only the [central] administrators of the region were approached; this was done, of all places, in Baku. (Comrade Suchitdinov).

The policy of discrimination and oppression is engendering justifiable hatred against the source of that policy, namely, the Azerbaijani Republic and the leadership of the Autonomous Region. The regrettable fact is that undesirable relationships between the nationalities are developing in consequence.

In these days when we are building communism, we can not live under such circumstances. It seemed to us that the implementation of such a brutal policy of national chauvinism was incredible and impossible.

But there is no doubt about it. The steps undertaken since early 1962 have fully convinced us.

We request a prompt decision so as to reincorporate Mountainous Karabagh and all adjacent Armenian regions into the Armenian SSR, or to make them part of RSFSR.

We request the treatment of the Armenians in Karabagh to be attuned only to Lenin's policy of nationalities.

[The Armenian Review, Autumn, 1968]

[19 September 1967]

An appeal by residents of Mountainous Karabagh to the People and Government of Armenia, Central Committee of the Party, and Public Authorities.

Dear Compatriots:

With this, the afflicted people of Karabagh are appealing to you as our situation is worse than it has ever been even under the tyrannical Khans and Mussavats.

None of us are now safe to leave our houses or to return to our home in the evening. Our honor is being insulted. Our dignity and rights are being denied. No one is listening to our voice of protest. No one is listening to our supplications. We have sent hundreds of requests to the Central Government in Moscow and to the Government of Azerbaijan, and the answer to all of that has been total silence or fanatic persecution against us and our children. Today dozens of young Armenians of Karabagh are illegally imprisoned or denied employment. They have pushed us to a point where we have to leave our ancestral lands and become refugee people without a fatherland. The tyrants are not satisfied with that. They are insulting and violating the corpses of our dead and forcing us to resort to criminal activities. Of the many instances let us mention a few so that you can visualize what is happening in Karabagh.

Two years ago in the center of Aghdam, they killed a young man, Avanessian. When they asked the Azerbaijani as to why he killed an innocent passerby, his obscene answer was, "I was aiming at the bird. My bullet got him. Whatever the fine is, I can pay."

A year and a half ago in front of the Party Regional Committee of Shushi two Azerbaijanis stopped a communist agronomist of Karabagh and said, "We were going to kill an Armenian at this moment. You turned up." And they shot him on the spot. To this day, the criminal remains unpunished because he is a relative of the Azerbaijan prosecutor and the brother of Bilarov, the Vice President of the Executive Committee of the Karabagh Soviet.

The chief of the Martuni Region Sovkhoz, Grisha Solomonian, was killed and his body thrown on the side of the road. Two other youths, tractor drivers, were killed at night. And none of the criminals have ever been apprehended because they are Azerbaijanis.

They killed the 10 year old son of the chief of the local Martuni Sovkhoz, Benik Movsesian; they mutilated and violated his body. This time, too, the government was not able to "apprehend the criminals." They would never have been apprehended if people's patience had not been exhausted and the family of the victim itself had not apprehended the villains.

[description of the means by which justice was nevertheless evaded in this case]

The criminals ended up with 5 years of imprisonment and 5 years probation. The State police responded to the anger of the public by spraying sewage water over them from fire engines. The guards opened fire on the father of the victim who was running right and left not knowing what to do. Then there were fatal bullets fired as the father's family was trying to reach him. Twelve were killed and their bodies have not been brought out yet. Only then did the people, boiling with anger, attack the criminals, kill them, and burn their bodies.

The chauvinist leaders of Azerbaijan had planned this event and were not late in concluding it their way. Alikhanov, the President of the Council of Soviets and the person who has special feelings against the patriots of Mountainous Karabagh, reached Stepanakert, gathered all the leaders, declared that there is an anti-Soviet nationalist organization in the region and that his compatriots were victims of this alleged organization and that this is the result of nationalism provoked by Soviet Armenia.

[...]

"There is no nationalism here," declared the official Akhundov at a meeting of the party members. "This is a feud between two families." At any rate he warned by shaking his fist at those present: "Forget about your demand to join Armenia. You should know that Mountainous Karabagh is and will remain an integral part of Azerbaijan. No one who cares about his head can stand up and insist to the contrary." Upon his departure, there began the days of Stepanakert which reminded us of the horrible time of 1918-1920.

[...]

The militia and the state security personnel that came from Baku and filled the city with foreign soldiers surrounded the center of the region and began an unending series of questions and persecutions as a means to demoralize its people. They're imprisoning all those who dare and all those who care. Those who protest against the arbitrary decisions are released of their duties and persecuted. The fate of the Armenians of the region is in the hands of all the old and new traitors, spies, and their like. There is no end to this. And if there is, it is the end of every Armenian situation where there have been life and death struggles for defense until now.

[...]

The Armenians of Karabagh are awaiting salvation from you, people of the motherland.

[Azbarez, September 19, 1967]

[15 October 1977]

Letter by the novelist Sero Khanzadian on Mountainous Karabagh addressed to Leonid E. Brezhnev, General Secretary of the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R.

Dear Leonid Ilyich,

During the March plenary session of the Mountainous Karabagh Communist Party Regional Committee (1975) everything was done to demean the successes and achievements of socialist Armenia. Things got to the point of such desecration that the professed and violent enemy of Soviet Russia--the massacrer of millions of Armenians, Russians, Greeks, Bulgarians, and Assyrians, Talaat Pasha was characterized in the Soviet press (Sovetakan Karabagh, March 23, 1975) merely as an "unpleasant personality." Such an evaluation was given to the enemy of many peoples and to the person who [more than any other] incited and organized the genocide of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire .

During that same period many representatives of Soviet Armenia, insulted in their human and national feelings, addressed themselves to you and other responsible authorities, requesting strongly that you condemn the activities of the leadership of the Autonomous Region of Mountainous Karabagh and punish the guilty. As it became clear to us and it became known to us, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union communicated instructions to the party organization in the Autonomous Region with regard to the mistakes that have been tolerated.

Passions were eased, particularly when the Central Committee of Armenia's Communist government conducted informational work among the party organizations trying to avoid all kinds of incidents.

Personally, I have met after the plenary session with the leaderships of the Azerbaijani S.S.R. and Mountainous Karabagh. The main purpose of my mission was to avoid all kinds of undesirable reactions which were possible in that extremely heated atmosphere. We were all convinced that similar incidents could no longer occur in or about Mountainous Karabagh.

However, all of us were extremely surprised when again today in the current issue of *Problems of Peace and Socialism* (number 6, 1977), the most widely distributed monthly in the world, considered to be the theoretical and informational publication of the world's Communist and workers' parties, published in 32 languages and distributed in 145 countries, I found a discussion of Karabagh, again in the name of the leadership of the Autonomous Region, in which insults are addressed to Soviet Armenia. To the natural question as to "why is Mountainous Karabagh under the jurisdiction of Azerbaijan and not Soviet Armenia from which it is separated by a narrow strip of land?" they answer that although the Karabagh Autonomous Region is close to the Armenian Soviet Republic, nonetheless, the two are separated by high mountains. Such an argument, allow me to

say, is not only ridiculous in our century of technology but is also incorrect.

Throughout the century, the historically Armenian Karabagh region has never been separated from the Armenian motherland by these mountains, (which are no different from mountains all over the Caucasus; but that is not the most important point. To the question as to whether everyone has consciously accepted this kind of argument as a reason why a historically Armenian region is cut off from the Armenian motherland and incorporated into a newly established Azerbaijani S.S.R. Armenians answer in the following manner: "I would prefer to have a bad life but be attached to Armenia."

I think this statement could be made by every person who has pride, every Russian, Czech, Slovak, Frenchman; every man who loves his fatherland would say that. Every man can state with pride that he has not chosen his fatherland, that he agrees to everything as long as he is attached to his fatherland. The leadership of Autonomous Region of Mountainous Karabagh consider such people "backward" and "people who do not understand" but even that is still nothing. Ultimately, each person understands and interprets his own love toward the fatherland in his own way. Consider that such a statement, "Let me live badly but be attached to Armenia," applies to Soviet Armenia. It is alleged that it is good for an Armenian to live in Azerbaijan and it would be bad for him to live in Soviet Armenia and this is said after the fact that you, dear Leonid, noting the flourishing and rebirth of Armenia, stated: "The people, Communists, non-party members, workers, peasants, and intelligentsia of Armenia have wonderfully brought together the spirit of patriotism with another, no less valued characteristic, the internationalism of the Soviet man."

I am convinced deeply that they have misled the editorial collective of the monthly *Problems of Peace and Socialism*, which includes representatives of Communist and workers' organizations from 53 countries just as they have misled the authors of the article "We Saw the Brotherhood of Nations." There is one thing that is not comprehensible. Who benefits from the propaganda of such pan-Islamic ideas in our country and in our community? It is incomprehensible that on the eve of the sixtieth anniversary of the establishment of Soviet rule to say throughout the world: "Let me be poor but be part of Soviet Armenia." Does such a statement correspond to the title of the article published in the monthly, "We Saw the Brotherhood of Nations"?

At a time when we are examining the draft of the new constitution for the U.S.S.R., how is it possible to write in 38 languages and to distribute in 15 countries a statement such as: "The Armenian people of Mountainous Karabagh have obtained statehood within Azerbaijan and that fate they have accepted willingly." This is a grotesque distortion of historical facts.

[...]

Second, the Armenian population of Mountainous Karabagh has never accepted willingly its destiny of today which has meant its separation from the motherland; and such a "destiny" is, in itself, an injustice which must be liquidated because as the great Lenin has said, "Nothing so corrupts or perverts the development and solidification of proletarian

class harmony as national injustice."

Dear Leonid Illich, this is not the first time that the unresolved problem of Karabagh is disturbing the friendship between the two peoples. You are our hope. We are all hoping that you will finally resolve a question which for more than half a century has embodied injustice.

The Armenian region with its over 80 percent Armenian population, Armenian schools, and official Armenian language that is within the boundaries of our great state must be under the jurisdiction of Soviet Socialist Armenia.

The just solution of this question will be appreciated by peoples as a new victory of the Leninist nationalities policy.

Sincere Respects,

Sero Khanzadian

Member of the Central Committee of Soviet Union, 1943

Writer and Member of Executive Committee of the Writers' Union of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

[Zartunk, Beirut, October 15, 1971]

30

[11 December 1977]

"Armenians Ask Moscow for Help, Charging Azerbaijan With Bias."

A territorial and ethnic conflict between Armenians and Azerbaijanis in a mountainous region of the Soviet Caucasus had led - according to reports filtering across the Soviet border - to tension, clashes, protest demonstrations at public events and pleas by Armenians to Moscow for help, including a recent letter to Leonid I. Brezhnev. The disputed area is the Nagorno-Karabagh Autonomous Oblast, a pocket of only 1,699 square miles and 153,000 people engaged primarily in livestock raising, food-processing, light industry and such old crafts as rug making and silk spinning.

Although 80 percent of the area's inhabitants are Armenians, it was assigned in 1923 to Azerbaijan, whose people are of Turkic-Islamic background.

The Armenians in Karabagh charge that they are victims of cultural oppression, economic discrimination and other ethnic disadvantages. They demand, with increasing insistence, that Karabagh be put under the Armenian Republic.

Moscow's decision to turn over the Karabagh region to Azerbaijan was in conflict with earlier promises to the Armenians. The promises were reflected in a declaration on Dec. 4, 1920, in the Communist Party newspaper Pravda by Stalin, then Lenin's Commissar for Nationalities.

Stalin, in a commentary on the Communist victory in Armenia, said Azerbaijan had relinquished claims to Karabagh and other territories historically Armenian. He went on to proclaim: "The age-old enmity between Armenia and the surrounding Moslem peoples has been dispelled at one stroke by the establishment of fraternal solidarity between the working people of Armenia, Turkey and Azerbaijan."

The Nagorno-Karabagh Armenians have been trying to have their region transferred to the Republic of Armenia, which is adjacent but across a mountain range.

The recent letter to the Soviet leader was sent by Sero Khanzadyan, Communist Party member since 1943 and at one time a member of the Central Committee of the Party in the Armenian Republic. Mr. Khanzadyan complained of various disorders, which included "casualties," and urged Mr. Brezhnev to intervene on behalf of the Armenians, according to a copy of his letter taken out of the Soviet Union by travelers.

Mr. Khanzadyan's letter was made available to The New York Times, in English translation, by Dr. Vahagn N. Dadrian, an authority on Armenia and a professor of sociology at the State University of New York at Geneseo.

Dr. Dadrian visited Armenia recently and met Mr. Khanzadyan in Yerevan, the capital city.

In the letter to Mr. Brezhnev, Mr. Khanzadyan charged that a "national injustice" existed in Karabagh and accused the local authorities of insulting Armenians and calling them "backward" and "ignorant" for their nationalist sentiments.

Mr. Khanzadyan, an author of historical novels, denied that the Armenians in Karabagh had "voluntarily" accepted their status as part of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

"The purely Armenian region of Karabagh, which is part of the frontiers of our mighty country --with its 80 percent Armenian schools, with its claim for Armenian as the national language -- must be incorporated into Soviet Socialist Armenia."

The complaint to Mr. Brezhnev by Mr. Khanzadyan seemed a bold step with uncertain consequences. In 1975, Armenians in Karabagh were sharply rebuked, and some were ousted from the party or imprisoned on charges of nationalist agitation contrary to "the principle of Leninist friendship of peoples and proletarian internationalism."

[Raymond H. Anderson in the New York Times, December, 1977]

31
[7 October 1977]

Excerpts from the text of the Constitution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, relevant to issue of Karabagh, as adopted at the Seventh Session of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., Ninth Convocation, on October 7, 1977.

[...]

Article 5. Major matters of state shall be submitted to nationwide discussion and put to a popular vote (referendum).

[...]

Article 9. The principal direction in the development of the political system of Soviet society is the extension of socialist democracy, namely ever broader participation of citizens in managing the affairs of society and the state, continuous improvement of the machinery of state, heightening of the activity of public organizations, strengthening of the system of people's control, consolidation of the legal foundations of the functioning of the state and of public life, greater openness and publicity, and constant responsiveness to public opinion.

[...]

Article 20. In accordance with the communist ideal — "The free development of each is the condition of the free development of all" — the state pursues the aim of giving citizens more and more real opportunities to apply their creative energies, abilities, and talents, and to develop their personalities in every way.

[...]

Article 34. Citizens of the U.S.S.R. are equal before the law, without distinction of origin, social or property status, race or nationality, sex, education, language, attitude to religion, type and nature of occupation, domicile, or other status. The equal rights of citizens of the U.S.S.R. are guaranteed in all fields of economic, political, social, and cultural life.

[...]

Article 36. Citizens of the U.S.S.R. of different races and nationalities have equal rights. Exercise of these rights is ensured by a policy of all-round development and drawing together of all the nations and nationalities of the U.S.S.R., by educating citizens in the spirit of Soviet patriotism and socialist internationalism, and by the possibility of using their native language and the languages of other peoples of the U.S.S.R. Any direct or indirect limitation of the rights of citizens or establishment of direct or indirect privileges on grounds of race or nationality, and any advocacy of racial or national exclusiveness,

hostility or contempt, are punishable by law.

[...]

Article 40. Citizens of the U.S.S.R. have the right to work (that is, to guaranteed employment and pay in accordance with the quantity and quality of their work, and not below the state-established minimum), including the right to choose their trade or profession, type of job and work in accordance with their inclinations, abilities, training and education, with due account of the needs of society. This right is ensured by the socialist economic system, steady growth of the productive forces, free vocational and professional training, improvement of skills, training in new trades or professions, and development of the systems of vocational guidance and job placement.

[...]

Article 42. Citizens of the U.S.S.R. have the right to health protection. This right is ensured by free, qualified medical care provided by state health institutions; by extension of the network of therapeutic and health-building institutions; by the development and improvement of safety and hygiene in industry; by carrying out broad prophylactic measures; by measures to improve the environment; by special care for the health of the rising generation, including prohibition of child labor, excluding the work done by children as part of the school curriculum; and by developing research to prevent and reduce the incidence of disease and ensure citizens a long and active life.

[...]

Article 46. Citizens of the U.S.S.R. have the right to enjoy cultural benefits. This right is ensured by broad access to the cultural treasures of their own land and of the world that are preserved in state and other public collections; by the development and fair distribution of cultural and educational institutions throughout the country; by developing television and radio broadcasting and the publishing of books, newspapers and periodicals, and by extending free library service; and by expanding cultural exchanges with other countries.

Article 47. Citizens of the U.S.S.R., in accordance with the aims of building communism, are guaranteed freedom of scientific, technical, and artistic work. This freedom is ensured by broadening scientific research, encouraging invention and innovation, and developing literature and the arts. The state provides the necessary material conditions for this and support for voluntary societies and unions of workers in the arts, organizes introduction of inventions and innovations in production and other spheres of activity. The rights of authors, inventors and innovators are protected by the state.

Article 48. Citizens of the U.S.S.R. have the right to take part in the management and administration of state and public affairs and in the discussion and adoption of laws and measures of All-Union and local significance. This right is ensured by the opportunity to vote and to be elected to Soviets of People's Deputies and other elective state bodies, to take part in nationwide discussions and referendums, in people's control, in the work of

state bodies, public organizations, and local community groups, and in meetings at places of work or residence.

Article 49. Every citizen of the U.S.S.R. has the right to submit proposals to state bodies and public organizations for improving their activity, and to criticize shortcomings in their work. Officials are obliged, within established time-limits, to examine citizens' proposals and requests, to reply to them, and to take appropriate action. Persecution for criticism is prohibited. Persons guilty of such persecution shall be called to account.

Article 50. In accordance with the interests of the people and in order to strengthen and develop the socialist system, citizens of the U.S.S.R. are guaranteed freedom of speech, of the press, and of assembly, meetings, street processions and demonstrations. Exercise of these political freedoms is ensured by putting public buildings, streets and squares at the disposal of the working people and their organizations, by broad dissemination of information, and by the opportunity to use press, television, and radio.

[...]

Article 54. Citizens of the U.S.S.R. are guaranteed inviolability of the person. No one may be arrested except by a court decision or on the warrant of a procurator.

Article 55. Citizens of the U.S.S.R. are guaranteed inviolability of the home. No one may, without lawful grounds, enter a home against the will of those residing in it.

Article 56. The privacy of citizens, and of their correspondence, telephone conversations, and telegraphic communications is protected by law.

Article 57. Respect for the individual and protection of the rights and freedoms of citizens are the duty of all state bodies, public organizations, and officials.

Article 58. Citizens of the U.S.S.R. have the right to lodge a complaint against the actions of officials, state bodies and public bodies. Complaints shall be examined according to the procedure and within the time-limit established by law. Actions by officials that contravene the law or exceed their powers, and infringe the rights of citizens, may be appealed against in a court in the manner prescribed by law. Citizens of the U.S.S.R. have the right to compensation for damage resulting from unlawful actions by state organizations and public organizations, or by officials in the performance of their duties.

[...]

Article 64. It is the duty of every citizen of the U.S.S.R. to respect the national dignity of other citizens, and to strengthen friendship of the nations and nationalities of the multinational Soviet State.

[...]

Article 68. Concern for the preservation of historical monuments and other cultural values is a duty and obligation of citizens of the U.S.S.R.

[...]

Article 70. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is an integral, federal, multinational state formed on the principle of socialist federalism as a result of the free self-determination of nations and the voluntary association of equal Soviet Socialist Republics.

The U.S.S.R. embodies the state unity of the Soviet people and draws all its nations and nationalities together for the purpose of jointly building communism.

[...]

Article 72. Each Union Republic shall retain the right freely to secede from the U.S.S.R..

Article 73. The jurisdiction of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, as represented by its highest bodies of state authority and administration, shall cover:

- (1) the admission of new republics to the U.S.S.R.; endorsement of the formation of new autonomous republics and autonomous regions within Union Republics;
- (2) determination of the state boundaries of the U.S.S.R. and approval of changes in the boundaries between Union Republics;
- (3) establishment of the general principles for the organization and functioning of republican and local bodies of state authority and administration;
- (4) the ensurance of a uniformity of legislative norms throughout the U.S.S.R. and establishment of the fundamentals of the legislation of the Union of Soviet Republics and Union Republics;
- (5) pursuance of a uniform social and economic policy; direction of the country's economy; determination of the mainlines of scientific and technological progress and the general measures for rational exploitation and conservation of natural resources; the drafting and approval of the state plans for the economic and social development of the U.S.S.R., and endorsement of reports on their fulfillment;

[...]

Article 77. Union Republics take part in decision-making in the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., the presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., the government of the U.S.S.R., and other bodies of the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics in matters that

come within the jurisdiction of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

A Union Republic shall ensure comprehensive economic and social development of its territory, facilitate exercise of the powers of the U.S.S.R. on its territory, and implement the decisions of the highest bodies of state authority and administration of the U.S.S.R.

In matters that come within its jurisdiction, a Union Republic shall coordinate and control the activity of enterprises, institutions, and organizations subordinate to the Union.

Article 78. The territory of a Union Republic may not be altered without its consent. The boundaries between Union Republics may be altered by mutual agreement of the republics concerned, subject to ratification by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

[...]

Article 82. An Autonomous Republic is a constituent part of a Union Republic.

In spheres not within the jurisdiction of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Union Republic, an Autonomous Republic shall deal independently with matters within its jurisdiction.

An Autonomous Republic shall have its own Constitution conforming to the Constitution of the U.S.S.R. and the Union Republic with the specific features of the Autonomous Republic being taken into account.

Article 83. An Autonomous Republic takes part in decision-making through the highest bodies of state authority and administration of the U.S.S.R. and of the Union Republic respectively, in matters that come within the jurisdiction of the U.S.S.R. and the Union Republic.

An Autonomous Republic shall ensure comprehensive economic and social development on its territory, facilitate exercise of the powers of the U.S.S.R. and the Union Republic on its territory, and implement decisions of the highest bodies of state authority and administration of the U.S.S.R. and the Union Republic.

In matters within its jurisdiction, an Autonomous Republic shall coordinate and control the activity of enterprises, institutions, and organizations subordinate to the Union or the Union Republic.

Article 84. The territory of an Autonomous republic may not be altered without its consent.

Article 85. The Russian Soviet Federated Socialist republic includes the Bashkir, Buriat, Dagestan, Kabarda-Balkar, Kalmyk, Karelian, Komi, Mari, Mordovian, Severnaia Osetia, Tartar, Tuva, Udmurt, Chechen-Ingush, Chuvash, and Yakut Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics.

The Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic includes the Kara-Kalpak Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic.

The Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic includes the Abkhazian and Adzhar Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics.

The Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic includes the Nakhichevan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic.

Article 86. An Autonomous Region is a constituent part of a Union Republic or Territory. The law on an Autonomous Region, upon submission by the Soviet of People's Deputies of the Autonomous Region concerned, shall be adopted by the Supreme Soviet of the Union Republic.

Article 87. The Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic includes the Adygei, Gorno-Altaï, Jewish, Karachai-Cherkess, and Khakass Autonomous Regions.

The Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic includes the Iuzhnaia Osetiia Autonomous Region.

The Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic includes the Nagorno-Karabagh Autonomous Region.

The Tadzhik Soviet Socialist Republic includes the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region.

Article 88. An Autonomous Area is a constituent part of a Territory or Region. The law on an Autonomous Area shall be adopted by the Supreme Soviet of the Union Republic concerned.

V. THE ERA OF PERESTROIKA

After the demise of Stalin and his oppressive policies, a more benign political climate permitted a moderate revival of national sentiment . This naturally had its limits and restrictions concerning the extent to which the ethnic peoples living under the Soviet system could express their discontent over the denial of their national rights.

The first major demonstration in Armenia was held on the occasion of the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Genocide of 1915, on April 24, 1965, in Yerevan. This demonstration, not fully sanctioned by Soviet authorities, soon got out of hand, with demonstrators shouting "Our Lands, Our Lands" and demanding that the Soviet Russian government help Armenians win their lands back from Turkey and from Azerbaijan.

The Soviet government, cognizant of the fact that Armenian nationalism in general is not anti-Russian, responded to this new rise in national feeling by significant concessions. Monuments were built to national heroes and a memorial to the victims of Genocide was constructed on a prominent hill in Yerevan.

With the selection in 1985 of Mikhail Gorbachev as leader of the Communist Party in the USSR and his adoption of the policies of perestroika (restructuring) and glasnost (openness) many believed and hoped that some fundamental changes would take place. This feeling was voiced, in an unprecedented open manner, by well-known Soviet figures. Most notable, perhaps, was the optimism and the confidence they conveyed in their remarks and other public utterances.

Gorbachev has been arguing that a greater degree of political tolerance will unleash the initiative and talent needed to produce a dynamic and modern technological state. What is often not realized in the West is that for Gorbachev and his supporters, problems of nationalities and past outrages in the arena of nationalities policies are taken as seriously as economic stagnation and political repression. The same attitude was reflected in the statements of three prominent Soviet Armenians -- Abel Aganbekian, Sergei Mikoyan, and Zori Balayan -- who have helped articulate issues of concern to Armenians in the context of these new policies. All claimed that the new policy of openness had provided Armenians with

a new opportunity to present their case to the general public. The fate of the people and region of Mountainous Karabagh became one of the major issues to erupt on the Soviet Armenian scene. It represented, of course, long standing grievances both in socioeconomic and juridical dimensions. The issue of Karabagh also highlighted the division within the Soviet Armenian leadership over perestroika. Those supporting an environmental clean-up and an anti-corruption campaign support liberalized political structures, favor a review of the status of Mountainous Karabagh, and oppose the current secretary of the Armenian Communist Party, Karen Demirjian, known as an anti-Gorbachev local leader.

The status of Mountainous Karabagh and the needs of its inhabitants became a major subject of discussion again among Armenians within and without the U.S.S.R. in the fall of 1987. Fueled by new anti-Armenian incidents in the region and by a perceived sense of willingness by the Soviet leadership to review the situation, Karabagh Armenians organized a massive petition drive to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., followed by a formal request to be attached to Soviet Armenia, voted upon by the government of the Autonomous Region of Mountainous Karabagh.

Armenians in Soviet Armenia, already galvanized by the anti-pollution and anti-corruption campaigns, supported massively the Karabagh petitions.

By the third week of February, 1988, when the petition had been rejected in Moscow, demonstrations broke out in Karabagh and soon after in Yerevan, reaching unprecedented proportions.

Western media were fascinated by the implications of the demonstrations and claims; diaspora Armenians gave their unanimous support, while Western governments kept their mysterious silence, even as the Azerbaijanis reacted by organizing new pogroms against Armenians living in different parts of Soviet Azerbaijan.

General Secretary Gorbachev promised to review the status of Mountainous Karabagh . But perceptions within and without the U.S.S.R. and larger interests extraneous to the problems of Karabagh Armenians may have already precluded a change of boundary, while reforms within Karabagh and increased links to Soviet Armenia may constitute positive action for Moscow.

V.i THE NEED FOR RADICAL CHANGE

32

[28 December 1986]

Pravda editorial on the nationalities issue.

"In a Unified Soviet Family"

Every year at the end of December we celebrate a noteworthy date -- the formation of Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Its birth was an important milestone along the path of resolving the nationalities question and the continuation of the cause of Great October. Favorable conditions were created for developing and strengthening the friendship of all our country's nations and nationalities.

[...]

However, our achievements must not give the impression that there are no problems in national processes..... Today it is particularly important to see to it that all the republics' contributions to accelerating socioeconomic progress and developing a unified national economic complex match their increased economic and spiritual potential. Socialist internationalism in action means primarily honest, conscientious, and wholehearted labor by all peoples for the common good. To make this kind of labor the norm is the most important obligation of every republic's party, soviet, and social organizations. It is necessary to resolutely rebuff any attempts to place local interests above statewide interests, be it a question of a desire to "outdo" others in the utilization of union-wide funds or the unseemly practice of padding statistics or distorting plan and pledge fulfillment data.

The buildup of the Soviet state's might and wealth depends on the realization of the potential of every republic and every economic region. This will be promoted to a considerable extent by the territorial approach to planning and management. This is the objective of the measure to broaden the rights of republic and local organs in managing construction, intersector production processes, the social and production infrastructure, and many enterprises producing consumer goods.

[...]

The economic and social progress of all the nations and nationalities has led to the growth of their national self-awareness. At the same time, pride in successes which have been achieved has nothing in common with national arrogance and conceit. Let us state frankly that phenomena of this kind have still not been eliminated.

[Pravda, December 23, 1986.]

33
[2 January 1987]

**Discussion on Soviet nationalities policy by Yuri Reshetnikov,
host on "The Soviet Union Looking to the Third Millennium"
internationally broadcast program, with August Voss of
Latvia.**

[Excerpts] [Reshetnikov] At the turn of the year, 30th December marked 64 years since four Soviet republics joined in a union to form what is now the USSR, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. [Passage omitted containing historical background] The motley fabric of the union when it was formed did not, however, make for any easy solution of the nationalities problem.

[...]

The USSR is a kind of mosaic of nations, sharing common political and social attitudes. In a country with one large ethnic group, such as the Russians, who make up the majority of the population, it would be natural to expect other minority groups to be swamped culturally, to expect the country to be something of a melting pot. But this has not been the case in the Soviet Union, explains Avgust Voss, the chairman of the Nationalities Chamber of the USSR parliament -- he himself is a delegate from the republic of Latvia, one of the 15 constituent republics.

[...]

[Reshetnikov] Like any multinational country, however, the Soviet Union is not immune to problems of nationalism. As the Soviet Leader Mikhail Gorbachev noted, our achievements should not create the impression that there are no problems in this field because a tendency towards national isolation and local interests still persists and makes itself felt quite painfully at times. A case in point was the recent nationalistic outburst in the Kazakh capital of Alma-Ata where rampaging youths, goaded by nationalistic elements, caused a minor disruption of public order.

[...]

If there is one lesson to be drawn from the events in Alma-Ata it is that while some problems in ethnic relations are solved others may emerge. This is true of any multinational country's development, all the more so with regard to national relations among people who were for centuries divided by deep cultural and religious rifts.

[Moscow Radio eight language broadcast, January 2, 1987]

34
[13 February 1987]

Academician Yu. Bromley under the rubric "Questions of Theory on the National Processes in the USSR: Achievements and Problems".

The USSR's solution of the nationalities question in the form we inherited it from the past is one of the most evident achievements of socialism. At the same time, as M.S. Gorbachev noted, "our achievements should not create the impression that the national processes are problem-free."

Consistency and continuity in the implementation of the Leninist nationalities policy do not preclude but, on the contrary, presuppose a thorough consideration of changes occurring in this sphere. Under the considerations of restructuring this acquires particular importance because, as the CPSU Central Committee January (1987) Plenum pointed out, "the negative phenomena and deformities against which we have launched a struggle are also present in the sphere of national relations."

[...]

The solution of modern economic problems is impossible without taking into account both the interests of the country as a whole and the interests of each republic. Consequently, the Basic Guidelines for the Economic and Social Development of the USSR in 1986-1990 and in the Period Through the Year 2000 presuppose profound qualitative advances in the structure of republican economic complexes. A special system of measures for efficient utilization of production potential will be implemented in each one of them.

Demographic factors, including migration by the population, also have an effect on national processes. The result is an increase in the number of nationalities living in each republic. At present, approximately 20 percent of the country's population comprises people who do not belong to the indigenous nationalities of republics where they live.

[...]

Peoples' traditions, customary norms of behavior, and value orientations are factors of the acceleration of the republics' socioeconomic and spiritual development and of the overcoming of negative phenomena in society's moral and ethical life.

[...]

At the same time, it would be incorrect to reduce everything to the development of national cultures while overlooking the importance of bringing them closer together. "... It is important," the 27th party congress noted, "to ensure that healthy interest in everything valuable that exists in each national culture does not degenerate into attempts at isolation from the objective process of interaction and alignment of national cultures."

Meanwhile, unfortunately, some works of fiction and art and scientific works contain attempts to idealize reactionary-nationalist and religious remnants of the past under the guise of national originality, to embellish the history of one people, and to diminish the role played by other peoples.

[...]

The improvement of socialism depends largely on the extent to which we succeed in mobilizing the spiritual energy and boosting the labor and social activity of people. It must be borne in mind in this work that the problems of the human factor have their national and ethnic aspect. It is, after all, specific people who are the direct vehicles of the national element. But our social scientists concentrated their attention mainly on studying the correlation of national and international elements at the republican and inter-republic level, while the individual's specific national features were overlooked. The result was an underestimation of the problem of the dialectical combination of national and international elements in people's awareness and behavior.

[Pravda, 13 February, 1987]

35

[17 September 1987]

Statement of Propaganda chief of the USSR Communist Party Central Committee on the issue of nationalities.

"Soviet Leader Accuses West of Encouraging Nationalism Among Soviet Ethnic Groups"

The Kremlin's No. 2 man said Wednesday the Soviet Union's opponents are trying to stop its reform program by encouraging nationalism among Soviet ethnic groups.

Yegor Ligachev, the Communist Party propaganda chief who ranks second only to Mikhail S. Gorbachev, told a special conference of senior media and propaganda officials that Soviet opponents are changing and unifying their tactics, the Tass news agency said.

"On realizing that the Soviet Union will emerge from the restructuring even stronger than it is now and that the attractive force of socialism is growing, these opponents have started gathering into a single front all reactionary forces with the aim of impeding or, if possible, torpedoing our policy of accelerations, renewal, and democratization," it said.

"Special hopes are being pinned on rekindling nationalistic sentiments," it said.

In the last nine months there have been nationalistic disturbances and demonstrations in the Soviet Union by Kazakhs, Crimean Tatars and residents of the three Baltic republics.

Ligachev did not identify the opponents he was talking about. On September 10, KGB chief Viktor Chebrikov accused Western intelligence agencies of trying to foment discontent among the Soviet Union's ethnic groups...

Soviet media accused Western radio stations of spurring the protests that took place in the Baltic states of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia on Aug. 23 to protest the non-aggression treaty between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union that led to the Soviet takeover of those republics in the 1940's.

Ligachev, who is thought to take a more cautious approach than Gorbachev to some reforms, also cautioned the media officials and propagandists against taking Gorbachev's policy of Glasnost, or greater openness, too far.

He said some publications, which he did not identify, have a one-sided approach to history and only publish material that agrees with their point of view.

He urged them to respect the accomplishments of previous generations of Soviets and the opinions of those who disagree with them.

[Armenian Reporter, New York, September 17, 1987]

36
[10 February 1988]

General Secretary Gorbachev's call for a special session of the Central Committee of the USSR Communist Party on the nationalities policy.

"Gorbachev Urges Party to Update Communist Theory"

Mikhail S. Gorbachev, continuing his campaign for major changes in Soviet society, told Communist Party leaders today that key elements of Communist doctrine were outdated and calcified.

In a speech on ideology at the conclusion of a two-day Central Committee meeting, Mr. Gorbachev repeatedly defended the proposals for change in the Soviet Union that he has lumped under the general rubric of "perestroika."

[...]

Among the specific proposals made by Mr. Gorbachev today was one to hold a special Central Committee meeting to discuss Soviet policy toward the various nationalities within the Soviet Union, one of the touchiest problems in Soviet society today.

[...]

Mr. Gorbachev, for instance, in his discussion of nationalities, called for the free development of the different national cultures within the Soviet Union while reminding the Central Committee that nationalism was unacceptable.

[...]

"Soviet patriotism is the greatest of our values," he said. "Any manifestations of nationalism and chauvinism are incompatible with it."

[...]

Calling nationalities policy "the most fundamental, vital issue of our society," he proposed that the Central Committee devote a future full meeting to an examination of the problem.

Mr. Gorbachev also seemed ambivalent about how far to push for openness in the press and in historical writings.

[The New York Times, February 19, 1988]

37

[28 February 1988]

Statement of Abel Aganbekyan, chief economic advisor to General Secretary Gorbachev, on the scope of reforms.

"Architect of Perestroika Sells It in The West"

[...]

Mr. Aganbekyan came to New York to say openly what was once unthinkable for a Soviet economist to express: that the Soviet Union must change its ways to survive. He even expressed a readiness to learn from the experiments of China and Hungary. Perestroika, said Mr. Gorbachev's economic guru, "means nothing less than the total restructuring not just of the economy but of society in an extremely radical way."

[Christopher Wren in the New York Times, February 28, 1988]

V. ii RADICAL CHANGE AND THE QUESTION OF MOUNTAINOUS KARABAGH

38

[25 February 1987]

Excerpts from interview by Zori Balayan, Literaturnaya Gazeta Yerevan correspondent, with Abel Aganbekyan, chief economic advisor to Secretary Gorbachev and member of the USSR Academy of Sciences.

"Along the Paths of Renewal"

Balayan: *Abel Gezevich! The CPSU Central Committee January Plenum oriented the party and all the people toward deepening and expanding the restructuring that has begun. I would like to ask you, has the very essence of the restructuring become clearer today?*

Agatha: I think it has. The plenum formulated the ultimate objective of the restructuring. It is a question of the renewal of all aspects of our society's life and of revealing to the full the creative potential of the socialist system.

Balayan: *To be more specific about the future of our economy, can any particular fundamental features be singled out?*

Aganbekyan: The economy of the future is above all a system in which production is entirely subordinated to the satisfaction of social needs. There are no shortages. The market for means of production and objects of consumption is saturated. The consumer chooses whatever is advantageous to him.

Moreover it is an economy of the intensive type, receptive to the achievements of scientific and technical progress. Naturally, it is also a social economy, an economy for people. Finally, it is a democratic economy, an economy of self-management by the people

[...]

[*"Along the Paths of Renewal," Pravda, February 25, 1987*]

39
[September 1987]

Zori Balayan on Armenian writers in the diaspora and in Soviet Armenia.

"Should We Still Remain Silent?

[...]

How is it possible that the wallets of Armenian writers are empty just at that time when the people and the times sense the need for a truthful and passionate word? As if the political report of the XXVII conference has not been submitted, where it was underlined: "Our achievements should not create the impression that the national processes are exempt from problems." As if the January plenum has not invited people to see the prospects and real development of picture of the relations between nationalities

[...]

"Henceforth not a single territorial issue [between us]," stated N. Narimanov on December 1st 1920 in the name Baku Soviet, "can become a reason for bloodshed between two neighboring peoples, Armenians and Muslims (Mohammedans). The provinces of Zangezur and Nakhichevan constitute inseparable parts of Armenia, while the laboring peasants of Mountainous Karabagh are given full right of self-determination." And was it not Stalin who disrupted and made impossible the realization in the Leninist spirit of the decision? There are hundreds of Documents about this. But the wallets of the Armenian writer are empty.

[...]

Who has given us the right to remain silent?

Should we still remain silent, now, when the party conference has unanimously raised the leninian flag which carries the words of the leader of the revolution "Our strength lies in stating the truth".

[Vozni , Yerevan, September 1987]

40
[24 October 1987]

Historian and journalist Sergei Mikoyan on Karabagh and Soviet Armenia.

"Sergei Mikoyan sees new opportunities for Armenians to claim Karabagh"

[...]

Asked about renewed attempts by Armenians living in Armenia demanding the return of Nakhichevan, Mr. Mikoyan said that it would be more realistic to ask for the return of Karabagh, where there still live hundreds of thousands of Armenians, while due to certain factors only a few thousand Armenians presently reside in Nakhichevan. He went on to say that the Armenian community in Moscow is very active especially now that the glasnost (openness) has given a new impetus and opportunity to the Armenians to present their case to the general public. He commented that pollution in Yerevan had reached intolerable levels, and that the Communist Party First Secretary, Karen Demirjian, was seen in Moscow as responsible for this state of affairs. Mr. Mikoyan is a member of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, with a doctorate in history. He is editor of the Academy's Latin America scientific magazine.

[The Armenian Mirror-Spectator, October 24, 1987]

41
[10 November 1987]

News account of press conference by Catholicos Vazgen I in Los Angeles.

During a news conference in Los Angeles on Tuesday, Nov. 10, His Holiness Catholicos Vazgen I belittled reports of dangerous pollution in Soviet Armenia, saying they were "exaggerations" and even "incorrect." He then hedged his statements, saying he had spoken with government officials in Armenia about the problem.

"In almost every city there is air pollution , more or less. Yerevan, too, has some pollution, but to say that breathing and living there causes difficulties, that is not true. A resident there does not feel it, does not notice it, therefore it is not a catastrophic situation. That is an exaggeration and even incorrect."

The Catholicos of All Armenians blamed most of the pollution on automobile exhausts, saying that 50% of air pollution was caused by the increased use of automobiles. "I have spoken with government officials, and they are concerned about it. There is some talk of removing some of the factories, but that there is a health hazard to the people, that is

wrong."

Asked if he read Soviet Armenia's *Kragan Tert* or Soviet Armenia newspapers where the reports about the increased health hazard for the population of the republic were exposed, the religious leader replied, "Sometimes, yes." The Catholicos adamantly said he did not know about the Armenian intellectuals and scientists who had first brought attention to the danger over a year ago. "I don't know what they say," His Holiness said.

[...]

The religious leader was asked pointblank why doesn't the Catholicos of All Armenians join his voice to those who call for the reunification of Karabagh to Soviet Armenia?

His Holiness replied that those were "political issues outside the limits of our activities." Doggedly, the questioner pursued the issue asking if the Catholicos did not feel any moral obligation to bring the church's voice to help reunify a portion of Armenia's historic homeland?

"There is no such movement," the Catholicos said. "There are groupings, and intellectuals who have issued such requests before. This is not the first."

The meeting with the press concluded soon after an announcement was made that His Holiness had to attend another function.

Also present at the press conference was Primate Archbishop Vatche Hovsepian of the Western Diocese and Archbishop Nersess Bozabalian, Chancellor of the Mother See of Etchmiadzin.

[Asbarez, November 4, 1987]

42

[16 November 1987]

Statement of Abel Aganbekyan, economist in Paris, on Karabagh.

I expect that in the context of perestroika the question of the annexation of Karabagh and Nakichevan to Armenia will find its solution.

[...]

As a specialist I am interested in the economic dimension of the issue and according to my analysis from the economic point of view, Karabagh is closer to Armenia than to Azerbaijan and not the other way around. I have written a letter in this respect to the

government and of course this is my counsel as a scientist who does not have a governmental position. . . but I do believe that this issue will be resolved.

[Aganbekyan indicated that the Soviet Union has recognized the Genocide of the Armenians and that he was a close friend of the late historian John Kirakosian, Foreign Minister of Soviet Armenia before his death two years ago. In this interview, Aganbekyan also discussed the environmental pollution in Armenia and particularly the Medzamor Nuclear Plant.]

[Masis, Los Angeles, December 5, 1987]

43

[November-December 1987]

Excerpts from Zori Balayan interview on patriotism and Karabagh by Sasun Paskevichyan.

Balayan: I think that we must accept glasnost as a weapon in the real sense of the word. For example, for me as a writer, as a publicist, as an Armenian living in this period, glasnost is a weapon a very sharp weapon

[...]

If we do not use that weapon, the future will never forgive us just as we cannot forgive some of the mistakes made by our ancestors at different times of the past

[...]

Q- One of the most critical conjunctures of the Armenian Question is the internal diaspora, particularly the question of reunification of Karabagh and Nakhichevan with Armenia. What is your opinion on this issue?

Balayan: . . . The history of Karabagh and Nakhichevan that is the result of Stalin's action and that is a horrible thing...Now come, let us think about glasnost, about democracy, about reconstruction; the time for perestroika is exactly the time when we need to speak about Karabagh and Nakhichevan. We must connect that to the problem of Stalin.

[...]

Eighty per cent of the population of Mountainous Karabagh are Armenians and they constitute about 130,000 individuals. The region is about 4500 square kilometers. There are 187 Armenian schools, which unfortunately are administered not by the Ministry of Education of Armenia, but that of Azerbaijan, in which there isn't a single inspector or a

single person who knows Armenian. This is a very dangerous thing and it is harming us. Therefore the struggle will not stop until that question is resolved. And there's only one solution to that question. Karabagh is an Armenian region and must enter within the jurisdiction of the Armenian Republic. I do not see any other solution...The newspapers of the diaspora have written that 400,000 signatures were collected for a resolution on this issue.

[...]

In my view, the important thing is what has been done in Karabagh itself, that is, how many of the Armenians in Karabagh have signed it, and I say that if about 100,000 signatures have been sent, of these approximately 45,000 are from Karabagh. And I should also say that this isn't the first time. Such a precedent was set in 1966; at that time, too, as many Armenians in Karabagh had signed the plebiscite, and there were even more than 100 Azerbaijanis who signed it, preferring to see Karabagh attached to Soviet Armenia.

I do believe though that the question will not be resolved by signatures alone.

Q- What was Moscow's reaction?

Balayan: ...The posing of the question itself is a major achievement. We're not even expecting that there will be an answer immediately. The question has been forwarded by the Armenians of Karabagh and they're expecting the answer. That is of concern to all of us. I understand the question in the following way.

A people that does not consider itself defeated is in the right. We [Soviet Armenians] are not considering ourselves defeated on this issue. If for no other reason than that without Karabagh we cannot live on this rocky piece of land [Soviet Armenia] physically, spiritually, historically; it is difficult to visualize our future without Karabagh... You see the land of our historic fatherland continues to remain occupied and we are gathered in a small place and we cannot continue like this.

[...]

Therefore, patriotism for us is struggle in the real meaning of the word, but we should not equate patriotism with nationalism, where one is disdainful of others and places oneself above others...patriotism, first of all is struggle in the name of the fatherland, thinking of the future because we are here today, gone tomorrow, but the fatherland must continue to be there...We must wait for the right moment, but not passively so that something is offered to us on a tray. We must be ready for that particular time.

[Hye Gyank, Los Angeles, December 25, 1987 to February 19, 1988]

**Excerpts of an interview by Ara Kalayjian with historian and
journalist Sergei Mikoyan and writer Zori Balayan on
contemporary Armenian concerns.**

Q- Mr. Mikoyan, it's now more than two years that perestroika [restructuring] and glasnost [openness] have been in effect in the Soviet Union under Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev's initiative. Now, how would that affect the constituent nationalities of the Soviet Union; how will perestroika and glasnost bring new initiatives and new opportunities to all the nationalities, but in particular the Armenian people living in the Armenian S.S.R. and the more than two million Armenians living outside Armenia but in the Soviet Union.

Sergei Mikoyan : Well, of course we believe that perestroika must be connected not only with the administration of our economy, but with every aspect of our life

[...]

Of course perestroika means that we begin to look anew at many many issues which were for the last decades in a state of stagnation. Among those issues is of course the very important problem of national - I would like to say ethnic since this is the word used in English - aspects of our life. I would say that Armenians living in Moscow - and there are many- will have the opportunity to teach their children Armenian, because it's difficult to continue to keep their identity in a huge city like Moscow, where everybody speaks only Russian. So I hope that I myself will be able to learn Armenian in Moscow in a school for adults, and also my son will be able to do so. But the most important issue for us Armenians in the Soviet Union, is of course the question of Karabagh.

Q- Not also Nakhichevan?

Mikoyan: You see, as a matter of principle, Nakhichevan is also an Armenian land. It's a pity that the authorities of that region did everything during the last decades toward changing the ethnic proportions of Nakhichevan, so that now only one or two percent of the population is Armenian.

Q- I think presently there are not more than 5,000 Armenians out of a population of approximately 250,000 people. That is, there are a quarter of a million Turks in Nakhichevan, as against only 5,000 Armenians.

Mikoyan: But if we compare that with those Armenian lands which are now in Turkey, one must understand that even if there are very few Armenians living on our ancient lands, still we believe those territories to be Armenian in spite of the ethnic change, especially when the change is realized through actions we will never forgive or forget.

Q- So that applies also to Nakhichevan. That is, it doesn't matter how many Armenians

presently live in that area, Nakhichevan is part of historic Armenia, as it has been since the beginning of our history.

Mikoyan: Yes.

Q- And we have a right to that land.

Mikoyan: Yes, we have that right. In my interview with you last October I did not mention Nakhichevan in that respect because I understand it will be very very difficult to get back Nakhichevan.

Q- And you believe that at present preference should be given to Karabagh, where the demographic situation is different.

Mikoyan: Yes, it's more realistic and I think Bismarck said that politics is the art of the possible-

Q- It was Benjamin Disraeli.

Mikoyan: Yes, Disraeli. So I think that it's now much more realistic to demand the return of Karabagh to Armenia. And I think It's only now, during perestroika, that we may not only speak about it, but have very strong hopes that it will be done.

Q- Do you have any sources or channels in Moscow to have your voice heard in the higher circles of the Soviet government?

Mikoyan : Well, personally I don't have any special opportunities or means, but thanks to the openness in our press now I can make my opinions known to wide circles of people. For example, I wrote an article explaining that I could not understand why one autonomous region [Karabagh], one ethnic group [Armenian] was included in the republic of another ethnic group [Azerbaijan S.S.R.]. So, I expressed my opinion in the press that this was a mistake of the period of the 1920's, and that it was time to rectify it. So I did it in the press. I don't have other opportunities or channels.

Q- Do you think such opportunities will be available in the coming days, weeks or months in Moscow, where a lot of Armenians have influential positions in the arts, sciences, in the government, for the solution of the Karabagh problem?

Mikoyan: You see, I think the important factor is not whether there are many influential Armenians in Moscow, but the fact that this idea [of reunification of Karabagh with Armenia] is a correct one, and nobody can dispute or deny the fact that 70 or 75 percent of Karabagh's population is Armenian. So, the only objection can come from Baku [the capital of Azerbaijani S.S.R.]. I also think that it's very important for the people of Karabagh, those who live there, to be very strong and very decisive, otherwise we in Moscow cannot do anything.

Q- In what way and manner can Karabagh Armenians be more decisive and determined?

Mikoyan: I think they must demand a referendum to be held in Karabagh on this issue. And as I understand it, there is now some work being carried out in this direction.

Q- In Karabagh itself?

Mikoyan: Yes, both in Karabagh and from outside. Signatures are being collected for this purpose - for the holding of a referendum.

Q- If, then, such a petition is readied, to whom should it be addressed - the Baku government? Would the government of Azerbaijan hold a referendum?

Mikoyan: Well, we have the Supreme Council of the U.S.S.R., and I think that's the proper authority to send the petition to.

Q- And of course the referendum would be held only in Karabagh and not in Azerbaijan.

Mikoyan : Yes.

Q- Not in Azerbaijan.

Mikoyan : Of course not.

Q- Only in Karabagh, where 75% of the population is ethnic Armenian. So it's evident that the referendum's outcome will be for the reunification of Karabagh with Armenia.

Mikoyan : Yes, yes, but many people in the Karabagh villages are not active; Armenians living in those villages are not so active.

Q- How do you explain that. Is it because they are afraid?

Mikoyan : You see, for many decades of stagnation of our political life, they used to believe that nothing could change. So our aim and duty now is to convince them that perestroika is a reality - a reality not only in Moscow but in every part of our country.

Q- It seems that these Karabagh villagers would be more confident and more forthcoming if perestroika really arrived and was established in the Republic of Armenia itself.

Mikoyan: Exactly. You're absolutely right. And unfortunately the struggle between those who are for and against perestroika may not benefit the Karabagh Armenians. And it is not accidental that those who are against perestroika are also opposed to the idea of referendum.

Q- That's the old guard; old customs and mentalities die hard. It's very difficult for people to adapt to change. Now then, unless openness takes root in Armenia, the Karabagh villagers won't try to do anything that would seem to them to be dangerous, because of past history.

Mikoyan: No, I don't believe they will think that it's dangerous for their families or their lives to ask for a referendum. They simply believe that it's useless. The most dangerous thing is this passivity.

Balayan: Let me say that the petition is ready. Secondly, I must stress that you should not use the term Azerbaijan. There is no such thing as a distinct country called Azerbaijan. There is only the Soviet Socialist Republic of Azerbaijan, a multinational state.

Q- Yes, the term came into use only after 1920.

Balayan: We can understand the terms Georgia, Russia, Armenia- but not Azerbaijan. By using such a term we confirm the existence of such a country. There is no such country. In the land now called the Azerbaijan S.S.R. have lived, in Lenin's words, "Caucasian Tatars," and the Republic was established by bringing together different ethnic groups such as Tatars, Russians, Armenians - it was a multinational republic, which was later christened Azerbaijan by Stalin. The nucleus of the Azerbaijan S.S.R. was the Baku Commune. Later in the early 1920's, thanks to Stalin we lost Nakhichevan, Mountainous Karabagh as well as the plain of Karabagh to the Azerbaijan S.S.R.

Q- It's a fact that only 9% of Soviet Armenia's soil is arable - and this for a country whose area is not more than 29,000 sq. kilometers. It means that Armenia cannot sustain an ever increasing population, and that's why thousands of young Armenians leave their homeland and settle in different regions of the Soviet Union. Now, in the event that Mountainous Karabagh is returned, can this situation be improved; that is, can Karabagh feed its more than 150,000 inhabitants and contribute to the agriculture of Armenia?

Balayan: Karabagh is a very fertile region, notwithstanding its name [Mountainous]; it is tiny.

Q- It's 4,400 sq. kilometers.

Balayan: Yes, 4,400 sq. kilometers, but it can feed both its inhabitants and those of Armenia. A reunited Karabagh can improve things tremendously - it can guarantee our existence for another hundred years.

Q- But Karabagh's agriculture and industry are not developed, and it's because-

Balayan: Well, that's done intentionally, on purpose.

Q- And it's proven, and documented, isn't it - this intention to keep Karabagh underdeveloped?

Balayan: But of course, and at various times letters of protest signed by local intellectuals and scientists have been sent to Moscow. This is not a secret, and I am not divulging classified materials or news. The newspapers in our country have written about all these, and have discussed the problems openly.

Q-Let's return to the petition on a referendum in Karabagh.

Balayan: Yes, almost 100,000 people in Karabagh signed it and it was sent to the Communist Party Central Committee in Moscow.

Q-What is the next step, now that a petition of 100,000 signatures is in Moscow?

Balayan: Under the leadership and guidance of Secretary General Gorbachev, the Central Committee has appointed a special Commission to deal with the various problems and issues pertaining to the nationalities. The Commission was to receive a delegation from Karabagh - 13 people from Karabagh, and 4 from Moscow. They have presented him with a report, complete with historical data and government and Party documents proving the right of the Armenian people to Karabagh, and have complained that for the past seventy years they were branded as nationalists for expressing their desire to see Karabagh reunited with Armenia. The head of the Commission has replied that on the contrary, they were patriots since they were talking about their homeland, and therefore he did not think of them as being nationalists. This is true glasnost. The issue of Karabagh is not the problem alone of the Armenian-Azerbaijanis. The issue of Karabagh is, in effect, a Russian problem. It's a strategic issue. The same is true for Nakhichevan. For centuries, Russians and Armenians have fought for a secure southern border for the Russian Empire. And along that southern borderline were erected Russian/Armenian defensive zones - such as Alexandropol [Leninakan] and Kars. This togetherness and cooperation was motivated by a mutually felt strategic-tactical necessity. And both peoples never betrayed that mutual trust. But what happened suddenly in the 1920's? A single person called Djugashvili, that is Stalin, took it upon himself to accede to Turkish demands and to put Nakhichevan and Karabagh under Azerbaijani jurisdiction and control. Can you picture this? He was definitely used by the Turks. And the fact is the Turks were able to turkify this southern region - a region that had been for a long time a Russian zone and a security bastion. And why was this done? Because Turkey's intent was to deny Armenia the regions of Nakhichevan and Karabagh, and to incorporate them into Azerbaijan, for Turkey thought of this latter region as her own natural domain. But Azerbaijan is a multinational Soviet Socialist Republic - it's ours, it's part of the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics. Turkey can not have any claim to it.

Q- Who, in your opinion, would be most opposed to the solution of the Karabagh and Nakhichevan problem?

Balayan: I definitely would say the Pan-Islamists. Pan-Islamists are the fascists of Islam. Pan Islamism is allied with Pan-Turanism and Pan-Turkism. Pan-Islamism that emanates from Ankara, has already centers inside the Soviet Union, such as in Baku, Tashkent, Makhachkala and Ufa. We know about Pan-Islamist activists who have come from Turkey; they do not have too many followers in the Soviet Union; they are against the reunification of Karabagh and Nakhichevan with Armenia. And their position is clearly against Russia, and against Russian strategic interests.

[The Armenian Mirror-Spectator, Boston, February 6, 1988]

45
[20 January 1988]

**Excerpts from an interview with writer Zori Balayan on
glasnost and emigration.**

Q- Last week the citizens of Krasnodar demonstrated. . .

Balayan: And in Minsk.

Q- Yes, in Minsk too, against the building of a nuclear power plant there.

Balayan: Yes, a lot has changed with the advent of glasnost [openness] and perestroika [restructuring]. Who asked our opinion, the population of Armenia, when the Medzamor nuclear power plant was being built? No one! Those were different times. But let me tell you this: we need a nuclear power plant. Don't get upset! It's easy for you to criticize and demand that there shouldn't be nuclear power plants in Armenia. Then what is your alternative? Are we going to use Lake Sevan's waters and kill it for good? How is Armenia to survive? Tell me. We have to have nuclear power plants, provided we choose the best and least dangerous site. Erecting the Medzamor plant in the heart of Armenia was a crime.

[. . .]

Q- . . . Now, what do you make of all these, and, more important, will the new policy of perestroika and glasnost prevail in Armenia?

Balayan: When discussing perestroika and glasnost, you cannot separate a single republic — in this case Armenia — from the general, overall process of reformation now going on in the Soviet Union. It's a general and widespread process, and tiny Armenia is just a part of it. Perestroika and glasnost aim at bringing fundamental political, economic, and even national (ethnic) changes which would transform the standing and status of the human being — us. We didn't have these possibilities during the time of Stalin, and that of Brezhnev and Suslov. Moral conditions in the 1970's were far more deplorable than at any other time. In his major speech in June 1987 in Moscow, Mikhail Gorbachev criticized the government and Party leadership of Armenia, accusing them of encouraging graft and corruption, and hindering the process of perestroika. He even mentioned First Secretary Karen Demirjian by name. The truth was said, and by the highest authority. Following on the heels of that speech, the Communist Party Central Committee of Armenia held its plenary session in July 1987 in Yerevan, where, for the first time, Haik Katanjian severely criticized the government and Party leadership and asked for the resignation of Karen Demirjian and the entire Central Committee. But this was not all. What was surprising and most refreshing was the fact that Katandian's speech — without any changes or deletions — was published in Sovetakan Hayastan. That was true glasnost. It means openness and restructuring had already been established in Armenia.

Q- What is next? When do you think Mr. Demirjian will resign?

Balayan: I don't know, and actually, I am concerned with more serious problems. Perestroika and glasnost give us, Armenians, the means and opportunity to enhance our economic and civil well-being, and, furthermore, to pursue our political aims. But thus far we have been bickering over who said what about whom, and who did what to whom. Meanwhile, our main aims and aspirations are being forgotten and neglected, or, at best, not pursued with the necessary energy and planned action. It was in this atmosphere that the December 26, 1987 Plenary Session of our Communist Party Central Committee you mentioned earlier was held in Yerevan. Haik Katanjian, and Sarkis Khachaderian repeated their criticism. And again, nothing was accomplished and this sad fact was emphasized in *Pravda* and *Izvestia*. People in Moscow ask us, "What's happening in Armenia, what's going on, how is life there?" as if our homeland were a veritable hell. . . .

Q- . . . Now I am under the impression from what you and I discussed here that the government is almost powerless to do anything — Armenia cannot sustain an ever-increasing population, thousands already leave to settle in different regions of the Soviet Union, and economic and social changes have not yet materialized.

Balayan: It may be true, but I am confident that perestroika will bring in fundamental changes and, most importantly, will be instrumental in our efforts to have Nakhichevan and Karabagh reunited with Armenia. Then it will be a totally different situation, with infinite possibilities and opportunities for our people.

[. . .]

[The Armenian Minor-Spectator, Boston, February 20, 1988]

V. iii SEEKING REDRESS OF GRIEVANCES: IN A NEW ERA

46
[5 March 1987]

Memorandum by Suren Ayvazian to General Secretary M. S. Gorbachev on Karabagh and Nakhichevan.

Honorable Mikhail Sergeyevich,

[...]

The exclusion of the Mountainous Karabagh and Nakhichevan from Armenia represents the highest expression of injustice, contradicting the articles in the laws of boundaries of the Soviet Union as laid down according to Leninist principles.

Nakhichevan in the consciousness of the Armenian people has the same place as Moscow or Novgorod have in the consciousness of the Russian people.

[...]

At the regional bureau meeting of the Transcaucasian Communist Party on July 4, 1921 at which Kirov, Ordzhonikidze, Miasnikian, Fidadner, and others were present, it was decided that Mountainous Karabagh should stay within the borders of Armenia.

[...]

According to the law of boundaries of the Soviet Union, any autonomous region located within a republic must be under the jurisdiction of that republic. This provision has been violated in the case of Nakhichevan, which has been placed under the jurisdiction of Azerbaijan instead of Armenia, of which it is a part.

[...]

In 1920, the Republic of Soviet Azerbaijan was established on the eastern territory of historic Armenia. The Turks, who were previously called "Mountainous Tatars," started to be called "Azerbaijani." Despite the fact that at that time the Turks accounted for a minority of Baku as well as other areas within the republic, they gained the right to exercise their national sovereignty over the entire republic as the majority population. It would have been logical to establish within the boundaries of Azerbaijan such entities as a Turkish Autonomous republic and a Kurdish Autonomous Region next to the autonomous regions of Mountainous Karabagh and Nakhichevan. Such an arrangement would have settled everything justly.

But it did not turn out that way. The Turks (Caucasian Tatars, Azerbaijanis) under their new title became not only an equal sovereign with the others, but also began to impose their authority over the entire region as the dominant people.

[...]

Britain's plans were dashed by the October revolution. First the Baku Commune and later, at the time of the establishment of the Azerbaijan Republic, the Leninist Bolsheviks under V. I. Lenin were most concerned with the creation of favorable conditions to unify the people of the region and also the rapid development of Baku's oil industry. Baku's oil was indispensable to the Soviet Union. Stepan Shaumian and Sergei Kirov were well aware of the importance of this economic issue and the fact that Soviet Azerbaijan had to meet the demands of the Soviet Union in this regard. It was in this fashion that multinational Azerbaijan came to the fore (and not the Turkish national Soviet Republic), where all nationalities including the Russians, Armenians, Turks, Persians, Kurds, Georgians, and Daghestanis were equally "Azerbaijanis," only in the sense that they were the residents of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Azerbaijan.

Since then, however, the Turks of Azerbaijan have come to dominate the Republic, occupied the ranks of the leading cadres of "their" republic and to administer policies whose first aim has been the expulsion of local Armenians from their administrative positions and also from their places of residence, following the republic's policy of "Azerbaijanization". "This is our republic," began to shout the Turkish "Azerbaijanis", "we are the masters here and have been living here for more than ten thousand years; the rest are all new comers. Get lost and leave our land to us." And it could be said that by following this attitude they reached their objective. If 80% of Nakhichevan's population was Armenian in 1913, today the Armenians constitute only 1.5% of the population in that region. In Mountainous Karabagh, the Armenian population has been reduced from 95% to 80% of the entire population. In regard to the other regions of Azerbaijan, the number of Armenians is also on the decrease.

But if people can abandon their homes, move away and create a new home, then what should become of historical monuments? These are being destroyed barbarously by the vandals of the 20th century for the mere reason that they are Armenian . . . There have already been such practices with the Armenian khatchkars [stone-carved crosses]. The "enthusiastic" Azerbaijani historians have started to vandalize cemeteries; they have declared the Armenian khatchkars to be the artwork of the Islamic Turks.

The Armenian khatchkars have been treated with sanctioned hatred in the republic of Azerbaijan. One of the Armenian masterpieces - the Gandzasar Vank - in Mountainous Karabagh is in total ruins; the walls are full of cracks, and its ceiling is in the verge of collapse. Even such an indisputable cultural monument which has been recorded by us and mentioned in several memoirs printed overseas as another hallmark of Armenian architecture has not been included in Azerbaijan's tourism book (Moscow, 1970). All this in light of the fact that 14 monuments are mentioned in the book of which all but one are "Azerbaijani", i.e., Turkish. There are no references to hundreds of Armenian monuments in Karabagh in almost any book. They remain silent about those

monuments, just as the distant relatives of a deceased wealthy man would be silent about the man's living children - his true heirs.

Recently, with the excuse of building roads in the central part of Nakhichevan, they demolished a fifth century Armenian monument which had been miraculously saved. At present, in the city of Agulis in Nakhichevan Armenian monuments built between 5th - 13th centuries are being barbarously vandalized. The marvelous khatchkars are being turned to gravel to be used in building roads. Along with the khatchkars the savages of the day are also destroying other kinds of monuments, all of that which comprise the pride of the Armenian people, and the thousands of years of her cultural wealth. How could such a thing happen in a civilized country like ours?

[...]

Writers, scientists and cultural workers who have arrived in Azerbaijan from Armenia are being labeled as dispute promoters and pursued overtly or covertly. Their small efforts to assist the victims of lawlessness and discrimination are seen as "open intervention in the affairs of another republic." This shrewd offensive against the Armenians has the objective of stifling them, so that the ones who consider themselves as the "owners" of Karabagh can work freely and go unpunished.

The economic and cultural achievements of Mountainous Karabagh are being grossly exaggerated. They try, as rapidly as possible, to Azerbaijanize this "foreign" region, to eliminate its Armenian spirit, and the atmosphere is characterized by pressure and harassment.

The reports of the top officials of Azerbaijan and Karabagh depicts the "evil of Armenian chauvinism", and of course they do not notice a single example of "Azerbaijani chauvinism". People are being attacked, and then their flight is attributed to their own faults. The villages of Nakhichevan are depopulated? "The fault lies with the Armenians." The Armenians are fleeing from the Mountainous Karabagh, Baku and other parts of Azerbaijan? The guilt still falls on the Armenians because of their "chauvinism" . . . As if "Azerbaijani chauvinism" does not exist. The Armenian population of Azerbaijan is decreasing while the list of Armenians killed by Azerbaijanis is getting longer. However, the names of the killers are not mentioned. They are either not caught or if they are caught they somehow escape punishment. Or, as in the case of the murder of an Armenian woman from the village of Karmir, the story was changed by alleging that the murderers were Armenians rather than Azerbaijanis. This was done according to the former Secretary of the region in order "not to exacerbate national feelings." During the period of 1966-1967 in the Martuni region of Karabagh Armenians were being murdered methodically. Important to note is the murder of the head of the Kuropotkinian Sovkhoz. A year later, his successor was also murdered. And finally, a month later they murdered his ten year old son . . . All this was being done to stifle the "minor renaissance" of the Karabagh residents in 1965, when they appealed to Moscow for permission to rejoin this autonomous Armenian region to Soviet Armenia. The Central Committee assigned the review of the issue to the top leadership in Armenia and Azerbaijan.

[...]

Where are the limits of insolence?

There are none!

[Aliiev's policies of characterizing Armenians as "rebels" in their own land by virtue of their ethnic identity is, ultimately, part of a long term policy to homogenize the population.]

It is characteristic that during the Great patriotic War Armenians gave more war heroes . . [including many from Karabagh] . . . than those from all other Transcaucasian groups combined.

[...]

To struggle and to serve . . . the fatherland; the Armenian people is capable of this. Armenians also have the ability to comprehend foreign policy issues. But why is it that it has been impossible in our land to solve the commonest and most essential problems? So many sacrifices for a socialist commonwealth, yet to have to leave its millennial fatherland in Eastern Armenia?

[...]

Finally, it is time to reunite Mountainous Karabagh and Plains Karabagh and Nakhichevan, portions of the historic homeland, with Soviet Armenia.

3 March 1987

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[Haratch, Paris, December 3-14, 1987]

47
[5 August 1987]

Update on a major case of miscarried justice which seems to have aggravated the problems in Karabagh.

"Azerbaijan Law Officials Purged For Abuses"

[...]

Two workers at the Azerbaijan SSR's Kutkashenskiy Agro-Industrial Association, general director A. Danakyan and accountant A. Bagdasaryan, [were] indicted groundlessly for embezzlement and sentenced to the supreme penalty by the Azerbaijan SSR Supreme Court, [and] were falsely imprisoned for around 3 years, 21 months of which were passed in the death cell. However, a further, more careful and objective investigation showed that the embezzlement charge brought against these people was known to have been unsupported by evidence. In other words, a most flagrant case of abuse of power had occurred.

K. Bagirov, first secretary of the Azerbaijan Communist Party Central Committee, has informed the editorial office that the article "Ibo Long a Wait" was examined at the republic's Communist Party Central Committee. A pointed and principled assessment was made of the illegality that occurred during the investigation and the trial which resulted in director A. Danakyan and accountant A. Bagdasaryan being sentenced to death and imprisoned without grounds. No one responded to their numerous petitions. Only when the USSR Supreme Court quashed the sentence of the republic supreme court and the charges made against Danakyan and Bagdasaryan failed to be substantiated in a new investigation was the case against them dismissed.

The Azerbaijan Communist Party Central Committee analyzed the facts of these most flagrant breaches of socialist legality and imposed severe party and disciplinary penalties on all responsible officials guilty of illegality in this case.

A. Sultanov, first deputy republic prosecutor, and V. Bogomolov, deputy republic prosecutor, were severely reprimanded for failure to ensure socialist legality during the investigation and judicial examination of criminal cases, including the case of Bagdasaryan; they have been dismissed from their posts. F. Agamirov, former chief of the department in charge of the supervision of inquiries and investigation in the Azerbaijan SSR Prosecutor's Office internal affairs bodies, and T. Akhmedov, former assistant to the Kutkashenskiy Rayon prosecutor, who pressed the state prosecution in court, have been dismissed from the organs of the prosecutor's office, the latter also being expelled from the CPSU. Sh. Osmanov, investigator in charge of particularly important cases in the Azerbaijan SSR Internal Affairs Department, has also been dismissed from his post and expelled from the CPSU for groundlessly instituting criminal proceedings against Bagdasaryan and others. A. Kafarov, who handed down the conviction, has been recalled prematurely from his position as a member of the republic Supreme Court.

I. Ismailov, former chairman of the Azerbaijan SSR Supreme Court, and A. Zamanov, former republican prosecutor, have been severely reprimanded. Leaders in the republic Internal Affairs Department Investigation Administration A. Rafiyev and A. Guliyev--the latter having been dismissed from the internal affairs organ-- who showed indifference to the petitions from the accused and thus committed impermissible errors during the investigation, have been punished by the party.

Guilty workers in the prosecutor's office, the militia, and court have been subject to party and disciplinary proceedings for all other instances of illegality detected. The republic party organization has adopted a number of measures designed both to improve the work style and methods of law-enforcement organs, the selection, placement, and training of cadres, and the ousting of compromised officials and to increase accountability and discipline. These questions were the subject of serious discussion at the Azerbaijan Communist Party Bureau.

[*Izvestia*, August 5, 1987]

48
[August 1987]

Petition, possibly written by Suren Ayvazian, signed by over 75,000 Armenians from Mountainous Karabagh and Soviet Armenia, to General Secretary Gorbachev. Ayvazian may have been singled out for a particularly harsh criticism by Secretary K. Demirjian for his possible role in the drafting of this latest petition.

The First Secretary of the Central Committee
of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union M. S. Gorbachev

Dear Mikhail Sergeyevich:

[...]

Over many centuries its geographic position has made Armenia a garrison for Russia and a most important strategic center. For centuries Armenia has also shed its blood, particularly during Russo-Turkish wars. It was gradually losing the space necessary for its existence, its national core. By occupying Armenian territories, and faithful to its barbarian policy of fait accompli, Turkey in 1915-16 organized the Genocide of the Armenians, which reached monstrous proportions. When creating the Soviet State, V. I. Lenin took into consideration the political situation in which Armenians found themselves. He required the Russian government to use all means available to pressure Turkey to resolve the Armenian Question. He demanded that Western Armenia be attached to Russian Armenia and that the Armenia being created have access to the sea, which was

necessary for the free existence of the Armenian people.

Unfortunately, the illness of the leader of the revolution and then his death did not allow him to realize and apply his instructions and demands. Furthermore, under the pressure of imperialist Turkey, the historically Armenian Nakhichevan and Karabagh were annexed to Azerbaijan as autonomous regions and all of this was accomplished despite the fact that on December 7, 1920, the [Azerbaijani] revolutionary committee commissariat for foreign affairs published a government decision that stated, "Beginning today Mountainous Karabagh, Zangezur, and Nakhichevan will be part of Soviet Armenia." Because of Turkish pressure, this decision remained on paper. Already at the time, Turkey was developing its illusionary plans for the islamization of Russian territories and had begun the application of the cruel concept of Turkifying Armenian regions. These two regions were thus forced into the Azerbaijani structure. Today there are no more Armenians in Arnenian Nakhichevan and Armenian historical monuments there are being destroyed in a most barbarian fashion. Every year the Armenian population of Mountainous Karabagh is decreasing, since impossible conditions have been created for the actual masters of the land. Despite this, the number of Azerbaijanis is increasing, i.e., number of Turks in Karabagh and even in Stepanakert. And in Shushi, the former capital of Karabagh, the Turkish population is reaching 95% of the total population. The contemporary proponents of Turkish Pan-Islamism are stating out loud, "That which was taken away from us by Empress Catherine without firing a shot, the communists are giving back with additional lands. They're not only kicking out Armenian and Russian inhabitants from Nakhichevan and Karabagh, but also, by realizing the plans of NATO member Turkey, they have created a string of Muslim villages which consider themselves Turkish along the Soviet Frontier." When Turkey achieved the incorporation of Nakhichevan in the Azerbaijani Republic, it also bought from Iran a strip of land to achieve common borders with Nakhichevan. Please make the effort and look at the map to see that circle of land. By stepping over the Leninist principles of nationalities policy, by separating historic territories from Soviet Armenia and incorporating them in Soviet Azerbaijan, it is as if someone in the past was working in favor of the interests of the Soviet Union's enemy, Turkey, which is the guardian of imperialism, backwardness and aggression in the south of our country. Now on each side of Soviet Armenia there are Armenian autonomous regions which are the only ones which purposefully are not named by national identity (such as Tatar or Abkhaz), but rather by their geographic names. Does this not constitute an insult to our country's nationalities policy?

The inhabitants of Nakhichevan and Mountainous Karabagh have on many occasions appealed to Moscow asking that based on the Leninist principles the question of the incorporation of Armenian Nakhichevan and Mountainous Karabagh into Armenia be resolved. On many occasions, letters signed by the whole population of the Armenian regions have been sent to the leaders of the Communist Party and the Soviet Union. Ten years ago the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union published letters addressed to Moscow by workers. In that collection one writer says rightly, "Due to events in history, a few decades ago Mountainous Karabagh was artificially annexed to Azerbaijan and in the process, the historic past and national identity of the inhabitants, their economic interests, and the will of the people were not taken in to consideration. Decades passed and the question of Karabagh continues to remain on the agenda and it is

causing concern because it is becoming an obstacle to the friendship of two neighboring peoples. It is necessary that Karabagh (Artsakh in Armenian) be joined with Soviet Armenia so that everything will have been done properly." (Note number 61, Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union, November 23, 1977.)

Dear Mikhail Sergeyevich, in the name of victory of historic justice, in the name of the realization of Leninist traditions, we are making an ardent appeal to you to reattach Mountainous Karabagh and Nakhichevan to Socialist Armenia.

Signatures.

[Droshak, Athens, October 13-14, 1987]

49

[17-18 October 1987]

Reports of demonstrations in Yerevan and Clashes in Mountainous Karabagh.

According to Associated Press reports published in the Boston Globe, Sunday, October 18, 3,000 Armenians demonstrated Saturday, October 17 in Yerevan demanding the authorities to close a chemical plant and the Metzamor nuclear power station because of their polluting effects on the environment.

The following day, Sunday, October 18, as reported in the Boston Globe of Monday, October 19, 1,000 Armenians participated in another demonstration calling for Armenian national rights in Karabagh.

According to Moscow-based sources, the Globe said, police tried to prevent the Saturday protest but took no action to stop it once the march was underway. Sergei Grigoryants, the editor of the Moscow-based Glasnost magazine, said he obtained his information from a telephone call from Soviet Armenia.

According to Grigoryants, the Globe said, the Sunday demonstration was interrupted by police officers who, swinging nightsticks and breaking placards which bore Gorbachev's picture, dispersed the demonstrators.

News sources told Ashbarez [the L.A. Armenian daily] that the Saturday demonstrators against the environmental danger were led by Armenian writers such as Silva Kaputikian, Zori Balayan and Maro Margarian and leaders from the National Survival organization. The march originated at the Opera Plaza after speakers, mainly intellectuals, addressed the crowd.

The Sunday demonstration began across from the "Marshal Bagramian" metro stop. The

demonstrators demanded the annexation of Nakhichevan and Mountainous Karabagh to Armenia, and carried placards to that effect. The police tried to physically prevent the march and after a few incidents, dispersed the demonstrators.

The same day, it was reported that clashes took place between Armenian and Tatar villagers in Chardaklu, in the Karabagh region of Azerbaijan.

[Asharez, October 24, 1987]

50
[21 January 1988]

Report of a Karabagh delegation meeting with Soviet official in Moscow.

In a press conference here on Jan. 21, a prominent filmmaker from Moscow, Edmond Keoseyan, revealed that a delegation from Karabagh has met with Dimitri Demichev, a high-ranking Soviet official in Moscow, and has presented him a petition demanding the integration of Karabagh with Soviet Armenia

[...]

Director Keoseyan said the 15-member delegation met with Demichev for more than an hour, after which it handed him the petition signed by close to 100,000 [75,000 by other estimates] persons. According to Keoseyan, the Soviet official promised the delegation members that he will forward their case to the Committee of Nationalities for their evaluation.

[Asharez, Los Angeles, February 6, 1988]

51

[20 February 1988]

Text of resolution by the government of Autonomous Region of Mountainous Karabagh requesting incorporation in Soviet Armenia.

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE 20TH SESSION, THE SOVIET OF PEOPLE'S DEPUTIES, AUTONOMOUS REGION OF MOUNTAINOUS KARABAGH.

RESOLUTION:

Regarding mediation for the transfer of the Autonomous Region of Mountainous Karabagh (ARMK) from the Azerbaijani S.S.R. to the Armenian S.S.R.

After listening to and reviewing the statements of the people's deputies of the Autonomous Region of Mountainous Karabagh Soviet "regarding the mediation of the S.S.R. Supreme Soviet between the Azerbaijani S.S.R. and Armenian S.S.R. for the transfer of the Autonomous Region of Mountainous Karabagh from the Azerbaijani S.S.R. to the Armenian S.S.R.," the special session of regional soviet of the 20th regional soviet of Mountainous Karabagh RESOLVES,

Welcoming the wishes of the workers of the Autonomous Region of Mountainous Karabagh to request the supreme soviets of Azerbaijani and Armenian S.S.R.s that they appreciate the deep aspirations of the Armenian population of Mountainous Karabagh and to transfer the Autonomous Region of Mountainous Karabagh from the Azerbaijani S.S.R. to the Armenian S.S.R., at the same time to intercede with the Supreme Soviet of U.S.S.R. to reach a positive resolution regarding the transfer of the region from the Azerbaijani S.S.R. to the Armenian S.S.R.

[Sovetakan Gharabagh, February 21, 1988]

52

[20 February 1988]

Press account of new wave of demonstrations in Karabagh and Yerevan.

An estimated 120,000 Armenians rallied today to protest the loss of part of their homeland, the second such gathering in recent days and one of the biggest unofficial demonstrations ever reported in the Soviet Union.

Moscow dissidents Alexander Ogorodnikov and Tamara Grigoryants said the streets around the Opera House in Yerevan, capital of Soviet Armenia, were mobbed with people

demanding reattachment of a small mountainous region to the Armenian republic.

Grigoryants said the region in the Caucasus Mountains, named Nagorno-Karabakhskaya, was deeded to the neighboring Soviet republic of Azerbaijan in the 1920's, even though the majority of its inhabitants are Armenians.

A woman who said she lives on the outskirts of Yerevan, about 1,100 miles south of Moscow, said by telephone that demonstrations also occurred in Nagorno-Karabakhskaya itself during the week-end.

In a highly unusual step, the government acknowledged the earlier protest today by noting that a "breaching of public order" occurred and that the demonstrators "contradict the interests of the working people."

Grigoryants said that earlier this month, the local government council asked that the disputed region become part of Armenia. The request was rejected by the Communist Party Central Committee, she said.

[...]

Grigoryants and Ogorodnikov said in separate telephone interviews that protest demonstrations in Yerevan's center had lasted from late Monday night through today.

Ogorodnikov, a former political prisoner, said 70,000 people marched through the streets late Monday to demand that Nagorno-Karabakhskaya become part of Armenia.

[...]

Both dissidents said the police behaved with restraint.

Since the 1915 Turkish invasion of Armenia in which at least 1.5 million Armenians are said to have been killed, there have been more Armenians living abroad and in other parts of the Soviet Union than in their historic homeland south of the Caucasus.

Yerevan is home to about one-third of Armenia's 3.3 million people, 90% of whom are ethnic Armenians.

[Los Angeles Times, February 23, 1988]

[24-26 February, 1988]

a.

Excerpt from the main speech delivered by one of the organizers during the massive demonstrations in Yerevan.

[...]

I am waging this struggle in the name of justice, in the name of the motherland, and in the name of the inseparable Armenian Mountainous Karabagh. I swear to my people and the people of the world, that I shall continue my struggle until such time when the Mountainous Karabagh Autonomous Region is once and for all rejoined to Armenia. I swear [crowd repeating], I swear [crowd repeating], I swear [crowd repeating]. I swear that I shall conduct this struggle in accordance with my socialist rights and with an exceptional respect for law and order. I shall not succumb to the provocations by the Islamists, and shall act in the manner worthy of a soviet citizen. And may I be damned by my own people, if I break this covenant.

[...]

b.

Segments of speech by historian Bagrat Ulubabian, at Yerevan demonstrations on February 26, 1988. Dr. Prof. Ulubabian was born in Karabagh and was exiled from the region for his scholarly and preservation work.

Dear countrymen, my Armenian people: as people who have been subjected to constant misfortunes throughout history, . . . you have come to defend your rights in this era of restructuring and democratization;

[...]

Mountainous Karabagh was taken away from Armenia by Stalin's criminal hands. Since 1920, the people of Armenia and the residents of Karabagh have requested the return of the region to Armenia.

[...]

c.

Banners and slogans used during demonstrations. (Photos of M. S. Gorbachev and the red-blue-red flag of Soviet Armenia were also displayed.)

"One nation, one republic"

"There is no brotherhood without justice"

"Reestablish historic justice"

"Perestroika is not extremism"

"Moscow! Respond to our just demands"

"Vote of no confidence for the government of Armenia"

"Karabagh to Armenia"

"Armenians! Unite, and Take Karabagh"

"The Catholicos has crucified our faith"

[From videotape filmed by the committee organizing the demonstration. Zoryan Institute Archives]

54

[26 February 1988]

News account of events in Yerevan at the height of demonstrations.

Despite Kremlin efforts to halt them, massive demonstrations continued Thursday in Soviet Armenia over a disputed region in the neighboring republic of Azerbaijan. According to some reports, as many as 1 million people have taken to the streets in an unprecedented show of defiance.

Moscow sent three members of the Politburo to Armenia, the smallest of the Soviet republics, along with a Communist Party secretary in an effort to stop the demonstrations.

The Associated Press quoted sources in Yerevan, the Armenian capital, as saying that troops had been alerted and tanks moved to the outskirts of the city.

Foreign correspondents were prohibited from traveling to Armenia.

[...]

Pyotr N. Demichev, a non-voting Politburo member was sent to Armenia with Georgiy P. Razumovsky, a party secretary elevated to membership in the Politburo last week. Later, another member of the Politburo, Vladimir I. Dolghikh, and Anatoly I. Lukyanov, a party secretary, were also sent.

Reports from Yerevan indicate that the number of demonstrators is far greater than earlier in the week. The Associated Press quoted a source in Yerevan as saying that 1 million people - nearly one-third of the city's [country's] population - joined the protest Thursday.

[Los Angeles Times, February 26, 1988]

55

[27 February 1988]

Press accounts of meeting between General Secretary Gorbachev and Armenian representatives, leading to temporary halt of demonstrations in Yerevan.

Armenian activists, responding to a second appeal for calm from Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, called for a month-long suspension of street protests in the Armenian capital of Yerevan today, according to Armenian dissident sources.

Gorbachev, who held a meeting in Moscow yesterday with two leaders of the protests, urged them to calm the demonstrators and promised to do what he could to respond to their concerns, according to one of the sources who maintains close contacts with the key organizers of the protests.

The two activists who met with Gorbachev were Armenian poet Silva Kaputikian and writer Zori Balayan, the sources said. Both are popular figures in Armenia who had spoken before crowds in Yerevan during the street protests.

The two activists, returning to Yerevan today, had met with other leaders of the protests, and they decided to suspend the demonstrations for four weeks, the sources said.

But many protesters gathered in the streets of the Armenian capital anyway, the sources said by telephone, either because they were not informed about the suspension in the demonstrations or because they disagreed with it.

[...]

Leading Soviet officials have been quoted in the official media as saying they opposed the demands that Nagorno-Karabakh be united with Armenia.

[...]

The original protests in Nagorno-Karabakh had resulted in some casualties, Vladimir Dolghikh, a non-voting member of the ruling Politburo, indicated in an article in the Wednesday issue of the Armenian Communist Party daily, Komunist. "The affair in Nagorno-Karabagh has gone as far as clashes between groups of Armenians and Azerbaijanis, and there have been victims," Dolghikh was quoted by the newspaper as saying.

Dolghikh's comments, published in the magazine's issue that reached Moscow by mail today, were the first official report of deaths involved in the dispute.

[Washington Post, February 28, 1988]

V.iv RESPONSES WITHIN THE U.S.S.R.

56

[22 February 1988]

The statement of First Secretary of the Communist Party of Armenia, Karen Demirjian on Yerevan television.

Precious Comrades,

Circumstances compel me to appeal to you.

As you know, in the last few days there have been meetings in the Square of the Opera Theater in Yerevan in defense of the request of the population of the Autonomous Region of Mountainous Karabagh to become part of the Soviet Armenia. With regard to this question, resolutions have been drafted in meetings and forwarded to leaders of the Republic and the Union. The situation created around Mountainous Karabagh at the present time is of a serious political nature. The superficial approach to that question may bring great damage to the relations between nations and to the friendship of peoples. The situation that has evolved is causing concern and requires a deep sense of responsibility, the undertaking of decisive measures and the avoidance of the occurrence of events which can lead to unforeseen consequences or to consequences that may not be possible to correct.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has examined the many facets of the events occurring in Mountainous Karabagh. The activities and demands that the national territorial structure, currently existing in that region, be reviewed contradict the interests of the workers of the Armenian S.S.R. and the Azerbaijani S.S.R.

It has been recommended to us to undertake the coordination of means necessary to improve the situation.

[...]

Our party recognizes the exceptional significance of the development of relations between nationalities in the present phase. One of the forthcoming sessions of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union will be devoted exclusively to problems related to nationalities policy. As Comrade M. S. Gorbachev indicated during the plenary session of February of the Central Committee, "We are speaking today about the development of national consciousness of all the nations and peoples of our country; the expression of national feelings (which sometimes appear in a distorted fashion) poses a living question, and they must be resolved."

I would like to inform you that the Central Committees of the Communist Parties of

Azerbaijan and Armenia and the Council of Ministers of the Republics have been instructed to develop the necessary socioeconomic measures that must be applied in Mountainous Karabagh. The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Armenia is appealing to the workers collectives, their party organizations, all the communist workers, and our youth, and is asking them to show a high level of political and civic spirit. The friendship of nations is our priceless wealth -- the guarantee of the future developments of the Armenian people in the family of Soviet brotherly nations -- and we must keep that as a treasure in the name of the welfare of our socialist fatherland, we must solidify that friendship with our tireless efforts and enrich it with new patriotic endeavors.

[...]

Once more we are appealing to you, to the citizens of Soviet Armenia in this important moment to express bravery, self-control, thoughtfulness, patience, political maturity, a high level of organization, to more actively be involved in restructuring public life, and to the task of strengthening the international brotherhood of soviet peoples.

[Haratch, February 25, 1988]

57

[23 February 1988]

Response of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R. to the demand by the government of Mountainous Karabagh.

23 Feb. 88

Part of the Armenian population in the Nagorno-Karabagh Autonomous Region in the Soviet transcaucasian republic of Azerbaijan recently advanced demands that Nagorno-Karabagh be included into the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic.

Breaching of public order was provoked as a result of irresponsible calls by extremist individuals.

Having examined the information about developments in the Nagorno-Karabagh Autonomous Region, the CPSU Central Committee holds that the actions and demands directed at revising the existing national and territorial structure contradict the interests of the working people in Soviet Azerbaijan and Armenia and damage inter-ethnic relations.

Being consistently guided by Leninist principles of the nationalities policy, the CPSU Central Committee has appealed to patriotic and internationalist feelings of the Armenian and Azerbaijani population urging them not to yield to provocations by nationalist

elements but to strengthen in all ways the great heritage of socialism - fraternal friendship of the Soviet ethnic groups.

The CPSU Central Committee instructed the central committees of the Communist Parties of Azerbaijan and Armenia to undertake necessary measures for improving the existing situation, to direct all means of political and ideological influence to explain the Leninist nationalities policy, its essence at the current stage.

All work should proceed from the premise that the nationalities issue demands close and constant attention to national peculiarities, psychology and consideration for the vital interests of the working people.

It was suggested that the party and local government bodies in the republics normalize the situation relating to Nagorno-Karabagh, safeguard republic order and strict observance of socialist laws, work out and carry out measures for the further socio-economic and cultural development of the autonomous region.

[Tass, February 23, 1988]

58

[23 February 1988]

Comments of Ayaz Mutalibov, deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers in Azerbaijan, on Mountainous Karabagh issue.

The attempts by individuals in Nagorno-Karabagh to justify their demands for the incorporation of that region into neighboring Armenia, a Soviet republic in Transcaucasia, by its alleged economic backwardness compared to Azerbaijan (another Soviet republic in Transcaucasia) are irresponsible, a senior local government official pointed out today.

Ayaz Mutalibov, deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers in Azerbaijan, of which the Nagorno-Karabagh autonomous region is part, told a TASS correspondent:

"In many areas of the national economy, Nagorno-Karabagh, in which Armenians make up the majority, is noticeably ahead of the average indicators in the entire republic."

"Industrial output more than trebled in the region over the past 15 years. Nagorno-Karabagh plays an important role in the economy of entire Azerbaijan and is closely connected with all its other regions."

"They sent to Nagorno-Karabagh various equipment, metal articles, building materials, fuel and energy resources, raw materials and consumer goods."

"In turn, the autonomous region supplies electrical fixtures, silk fabric, musical instruments and foodstuffs."

Food and light industries were developing especially fast in the autonomous region, Mutalibov said. Machine-building accounted for more than 80 percent of industrial production. Branches of several Azerbaijani industrial enterprises were being set up in the region.

Mutalibov drew attention to the extensive program of Nagorno-Karabagh's social development, including housing construction. "There are more kindergartens, hospital beds and libraries per capita of its population compared to an average in Azerbaijan."

[Tass, February 23, 1988]

59

[23 February 1988]

Decision of the Communist Party of Armenia on Karabagh.

At a meeting of prominent members of the Communist Party of Armenia held on February 23, 1988 in Yerevan, the issue of the reunification of Karabagh with Armenia was discussed. Among those addressing the meeting were Viktor Hampartzoumian, president of the Academy of Sciences of Armenia; Karlen Tallakian, president of the Committee for Cultural Relations with Armenians Abroad; Hrachia Hovhannessian, the new president of the Writers' Union of Armenia; Vartkess Bedrossian, the prominent writer; Karen S. Demirjian, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Armenia; as well as Vladimir I. Dolghikh, a non-voting member of the Politburo of the U.S.S.R., and Anatoly I. Lukyanov, a Central Committee secretary.

The meeting concluded with the following decision:

To ask the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R. that, when preparing for the plenary session of the Central Committee devoted to the problems of the policy on the nationalities, it examine in depth the issue of Mountainous Karabagh along with other problems.

[The Armenian Mirror-Spectator, March 12, 1988]

60

[24 February, 1988]

Official reaction of "party activists" of Mountainous Karabagh after meeting with Moscow envoy.

[The] meeting of the party activists in the Caucasian region of Karabagh has approved the evaluation of the situation in this autonomous area given by the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party. The Central Committee has called for normalizing the situation and consolidating the friendship between nations. The autonomous region was formed in 1923 as part of Azerbaijan. It is situated not far from the Soviet Republic of Armenia and is populated by 49 different nationalities, including a considerable number of Armenians. [sentence as heard] Lately some extremists have been demanding joining Karabagh to Armenia instead of Azerbaijan. Meetings with such demands were held in Stepanakert, Nakhichevan, and Agdam. The Central Committee [finds] that those claims contravene the interests of both republics and harm their relations. A secretary of the Central Committee, Georgiy Razumovskiy, has stated at a meeting of the party activists in Karabagh that the extremists' activities can lead to serious consequences if responsible measures are not taken against them. There are many unsolved problems in the economic and cultural life of the region, but they ought to be solved in a businesslike way and not by a revision of the national and territorial status.

[Moscow World Service, February 24, 1988]

61

[25 February 1988]

The letter of Catholicos Vazgen I of All Armenians to Secretary of General Gorbachev.

Recently, the citizens of Soviet Armenia, led by scientists, academicians, writers, artists, students from institutes, workers and laborers, more than two hundred thousand deeply angered citizens, are demonstrating peacefully in Yerevan, demanding that the question of the incorporation of Mountainous Karabagh into Armenia receive a just and legal solution, according to the right to the national self-determination foreseen in the constitution of the Soviet Union.

As is known, the council of deputies of the Karabagh region during its session of 20th February, 1988 expressed its unanimous decision, its will on this subject in this sense.

During the last few days we have been receiving numerous letters, telegrams, telephone calls from Armenia, and in particular from our bishops and church and cultural organizations overseas which, in the name of the over two million Armenians of the diaspora, are requesting that we intervene with the high authorities in the Soviet Union,

so that the question of Armenian Karabagh receives a just solution, based on our constitution and according to a resolution of Soviet of people's deputies in Karabagh and to democratic principles.

We are deeply concerned with the serious situation created, particularly given the fact that we have received news that there have been human victims and Armenian historical church monuments have been damaged.

Our people and we have always been faithful to the idea of the brotherhood of nations within the Soviet Union, and based on the unwavering friendship historically sanctioned, are requesting your decisive contribution toward a just solution to the problem.

On this occasion allow us to communicate our warmest feelings to you and to your associates, wishing you success in your efforts toward the restructuring and democratization of our great country, efforts which have been called upon to produce historic reform and to insure a stronger and a brighter future to our great Soviet fatherland.

Vazgen I
Catholicos of all Armenians
Holy Etchmiadzin

[Hairenik daily, March 5, 1988]

62
[26 February 1988]

Excerpts from a message by Mikhail S. Gorbachev to the Soviet republics of Armenia and Azerbaijan, as read in Russian over Yerevan Radio by Politburo member Vladimir I. Dolghikh.

I am addressing you in connection with events in Nagorno-Karabagh and associated issues. The question has been raised of transferring this autonomous oblast from the Azerbaijan Republic into the structure of the Armenian Republic. Acuteness and drama have been attached to this question, which have led to tension and even actions going beyond the framework of legality.

I must say frankly that the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee has been disturbed by this turn of events. It is fraught with serious consequences. We do not wish to evade a frank, sincere discussion of various ideas and proposals. But this must be done calmly, within the framework of democratic process and legality, without allowing even the slightest damage to the internationalist cohesion of our peoples.

The most serious questions of the people's destiny cannot be placed in the power of spontaneity and emotion.

[...]

Yes, in our life there are unsolved problems. But fomenting of dissension and distrust between peoples will only interfere with the solution of these problems. This runs counter to our socialist principles and our morals, to the traditions of friendship and fraternity among Soviet peoples.

The point of Lenin's nationalities policy is that every person, every nation should be able to develop freely, so that each people may satisfy its needs in all spheres of its social and political life, its mother tongue and culture, its customs and religious beliefs. Socialist internationalism is the source of our tremendous strength: Genuine fraternity and unity of the people constitute our path.

Not a few shortcomings and difficulties have accumulated in the Nagorno-Karabagh Autonomous Oblast. The new leadership of the oblast must adopt urgent measures to remedy the situation. In this regard, the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. has issued very precise recommendations and will be watching closely for their fulfillment.

At the moment, what is most important is to concentrate on overcoming the existing situation, on solving concrete economic, social, ecological and other problems that have accumulated in Azerbaijan and Armenia, in the spirit of the policy of perestroika and renewal that is being realized throughout our country.

The traditions of friendship between the Azerbaijani and Armenian peoples that have been built up in the years of Soviet rule must be cherished and strengthened in all their aspects. Only such an approach corresponds to the genuine interests of all the peoples of the U.S.S.R.

You know that it is intended to devote a special plenum of our party's Central Committee to the development of national relations. It is planned to discuss a wide range of questions on this most important social sphere and, on the basis of principled gains of Lenin's nationalities policy, to mark out the paths for the concrete solution of social, economic, cultural and other problems.

[BBC radio, cited in the Armenian Mirror-Spectator, March 5, 1988]

63

[26 February 1988]

Account of Kurdish Support of Armenian claims in Mountainous Karabagh.

The Kurds of Soviet Armenia have adopted an official position supporting the reattachment of Karabagh and Nakhichevan to the Armenian S.S.R. and have emphasized the harmonious and friendly nature of their relations with Armenians. Many of them participated in the demonstrations in Yerevan along with their Armenian compatriots in solidarity of their demands.

The Kurdish community of Armenia, largely of the Yezidi faith, constitute close to 3% of the S. Armenian republic's population and is concentrated north of the Aragats region, at Rya Taz and Alagiaz, near Aparan. The Kurds have been able to preserve their community structures and preserve their language (Indo-European group), supported by a Kurdish language daily newspaper and an Institute for Kurdish Studies in Yerevan (another one at Leningrad).

G. Ulubeyan

[Gamk, March 1, 1988]

64

[March 1988]

Press account of anti-Armenian rioting in Azerbaijan.

A Soviet spokesman said today that an unspecified number of people were killed in nationalist rioting Sunday in the southern Soviet city of Sumgait.

The spokesman, Gennadi I. Gerasimov, declined to give a precise number but indicated that the total was close to an unofficial figure of 17 deaths reported in Moscow by a journalist who is also a dissident.

[...]

The journalist, Sergei Grigoryants, who has generally proved to be a reliable source of information about the nationalist unrest, said he was told 17 people died, and dozens injured, in clashes in Sumgait on Sunday between Azerbaijanis and Armenians.

Sumgait, an industrial center on the Caspian Sea, is in the Azerbaijan republic, which along with the neighboring Armenian republic has been shaken by nationalist protests and clashes in the last two weeks.

The disturbances have been among the most serious outbreaks of nationalist unrest since consolidation of the Soviet Union in the early 1920's.

Government officials in Baku, the Azerbaijan capital, said today that hundreds of Azerbaijanis fled from their homes in Armenia during the disturbances last week and now needed assistance.

The officials, reached by telephone from Moscow, said a Government commission had been formed to help the refugees return to their homes in Armenia.

About 160,000 Azerbaijanis live in Armenia, a republic with a population of 3.1 million.

Azerbaijan has a population of 6.3 million, including about 475,000 Armenians.

Mr. Grigoryants reported that violence flared across the two republics last week, and said one passenger train traveling from Baku to Yerevan, the Armenian capital, was badly damaged by vandals as it made the journey.

Last week the Government confirmed that two people were killed and several dozen hurt during nationalist unrest in the two republics.

The Government reported Tuesday that military forces were called in Sunday to quell the rioting in Sumgait and had remained there to enforce a nighttime curfew.

Mr. Gerasimov said today that troops were still patrolling the city and that, as far as he knew, the curfew was still in effect between 8 PM and 7 AM ...

[The New York Times, March 3, 1988]

V.v THE ARMENIAN RESPONSE IN THE DIASPORA

65
[29 November 1987]

Letter from Central Committee of the Armenian Democratic Liberal Organization (ADL) to General Secretary Gorbachev regarding Nakhichevan and Karabagh on his visit to the U.S.A. during November 1987. In addition, the ADL issued a statement of support for Armenian demonstrators in the U.S.S.R.

November 29, 1987

Dear Mr. General Secretary:

On behalf of the Armenians living around the world, the Central Committee of the Armenian Democratic Liberal Organization welcomes your visit to the United States and wishes you complete success in your endeavors to preserve world peace.

[...]

Since its inception the ADL has recognized Soviet Armenia as the sole homeland where Armenians could survive and preserve their national identity. Also, despite its difference in political ideology, the ADL has believed that Soviet Armenia remains the sole political base to help Armenians achieve the territorial integrity of their historic homeland.

Since 1921, the ADL has maintained spiritual and cultural relations with Soviet Armenia and hopes to further develop those relations in coming years.

Armenians living around the world maintain a deep interest in your policies of openness and restructuring whose goal is to improve the economic and political conditions in the Soviet Union, and consequently, in Soviet Armenia. They believe that those policies will also rectify historic errors which were committed during the formation of the Soviet state.

With the hope that those issues will be addressed by you in due course, as you vigorously pursue your new policies, we come to plead with you to consider the following unresolved questions which are of vital nature to all Armenians, within and without the borders of the U.S.S.R.

1. On October 13, 1921, the Treaty of Kars was signed between Turkey and the newly formed Soviet government which was concerned in maintaining regional peace with its neighbors. Implementing the 5th article of the said treaty, the historic Armenian region

of Nakhichevan was annexed to Azerbaijan. Prior to that annexation the Armenian population of the region was massacred or deported to pave the way for a Pan-Turanist plan which Turkey pursued.

2. The Autonomous Republic of Nakhichevan remains economically one of the more depressed areas in the Soviet Union. An area of 5,500 square kilometers of fertile land has been left uncultivated and sparsely populated since 1921, as a result of an impractical and abnormal situation, since Nakhichevan does not even have a common border with Azerbaijan, which administers the region.

3. The region of Nakhichevan is the natural extension of the Ararat Valley in Armenia, which, as you may know, enjoys a highly developed agriculture and economy.

4. Colonial Great Britain had created a similarly unjust situation in the Autonomous Region of Mountainous Karabagh. Armenians constitute 80% of the population in that region and through their culture, language and traditions are an integral part of the 3.5 million population of Soviet Armenia.

5. We are concerned with the fate of the Armenians in Karabagh who currently face the danger of assimilation.

6. It is worth reminding you here that on December 1, 1920, upon the establishment of Soviet rule in Armenia, Nariman Narimanov, chairman of the Baku Central Committee, had made the following declaration on behalf of the Baku Soviet: "From this date on there will be no bloodshed over territorial disputes between Azerbaijan and Armenia, who have been neighbors for many centuries. The region of Zangezur and Nakhichevan constitute indivisible territories of Armenia and the working peasantry of Mountainous Karabagh will enjoy the opportunity of self-determination". This declaration was made public, proclaimed and written up in *Pravda*, and Stalin himself called it an historic act of world significance, since it was the first time a people had given up territory willingly to another people. That was considered an example of Socialist brotherhood which the new system promised to the world. In this case, the promise remains unfulfilled to this date.

7. Soviet Armenia represents the sole homeland and the hope for Armenians living around the world. They all maintain strong emotional and cultural ties with the Republic whose future development will also guarantee the survival of the diaspora Armenians. Therefore, we are deeply concerned by the emigration of a segment of the population of Armenia. We understand and appreciate your compliance with the Helsinki accord which is meant to unify divided families and ease the repatriation of certain ethnic minorities to their ancestral homeland.

However, we do not believe the accord applies to the people living in the Armenian S.S.R., since in this case it contributes to the division of families and to the depopulation of our ancestral homeland; it also constitutes a brain drain, which you formulated in your recent interview with the NBC network so succinctly. If anything, emigration from Armenia violates the spirit of the Helsinki accord.

Based on the above facts, the Armenian Democratic Liberal Organization appeals to you

to exercise your influence to eliminate all economic and social factors which encourage emigration from Armenia.

In the name of the entire Armenian nation, the ADL requests the return of the Autonomous Republic of Nakhichevan and the Autonomous Region of Mountainous Karabagh to the Armenian S.S.R., to assure its territorial integrity: a) to rectify historical mistakes; b) to render Armenia as a bulwark against the expansion of the inhuman imperialism of the Pan-Turanist movement; c) to guarantee a broader economic growth to Armenia; d) to check the process of emigration; e) to allow any Armenian to return to his ancestral homeland; f) to create opportunities for the Diaspora Armenians to contribute to Armenia and to invest in its future, thereby assisting the U.S.S.R.

We hope that your kind attention will be focused on the above issues, which are of utmost importance to all Armenians.

Respectfully yours,

Central Committee of the
Armenian Democratic Liberal Organization

[The Armenian Mirror-Spectator, December 12, 1987]

66
[1 December 1987]

Memorandum to General Secretary Gorbachev from the Social Democratic Hnchakian Party on the occasion of his visit to the U.S. The Hnchakian Party reiterated its support for Armenian claims on Karabagh in an editorial on the occasion of the demonstrations in Karabagh and Armenia.

Mikhail Gorbachev
First Secretary of the Central Committee
Communist Party of Soviet Union
U.S.S.R. Embassy
1125 16th St. N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

December 1, 1987

Honorable First Secretary,

Along with all other peoples, the Armenians extend their warm welcome to you on the

occasion of your visit to this hospitable land. We are in no doubt that your presence in the United States will strengthen world peace, which is of paramount importance to the peoples of the world.

As in the Soviet Union, throughout the world, people follow with enthusiasm and satisfaction your proposed changes and restructuring within the Soviet Union. This restructuring, undoubtedly, will also have its positive and beneficial impact on Soviet Armenia's economic, scientific, cultural, ecological and social fields, and other domains. Armenians living in Diaspora appreciate your endeavor and wish you success.

As is known, Soviet Armenia is one of the smallest republics of the Soviet Union. The Armenian people there is flourishing on a small portion of its historic territory. The Armenians are determined to claim and eventually recover their ancestral land, and to do this in the name of justice and for the brighter future of the Armenian people.

We are convinced that the Soviet Government will be able to resolve the "internal" territorial issue of the Armenian people. The autonomous regions of Karabagh and Nakhichevan which, respectively in 1923 and 1924, fell under the jurisdiction of the Azerbaijani Soviet Socialist Republic, historically are part of Armenia. Justice dictates that these erroneous arrangements be rectified during your term in office.

We are optimistic in this respect and hopeful that Karabagh and Nakhichevan soon will be annexed to the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic. This will ensure the right course of justice and enhance friendship among people.

Sincerely,

Social Democratic Hnchakian Party

[Masis, December 5, 1987]

[2 December 1987]

Letter published in Azbarez, the official publication of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Dashnaksutun) of the Western U.S., offered as a model to be addressed by Armenians to General Secretary M. Gorbachev. In a February 1988 press release, the Armenian National Committee of America, representing the Dashnaksutun, released a similar statement of full support of the Armenian demonstrations and claims.

Mikhail Gorbachev
General Secretary of the Central Committee
Communist Party of Soviet Union
U.S.S.R. Embassy
1125 16th St. N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

December 2, 1987

Honorable General Secretary,

The nearly one million strong American-Armenian community welcomes you during your historic visit to the United States. We join the rest of the American public who wish for success in your deliberations with President Ronald Reagan on topics that will promote greater understanding and bring peoples closer in peace.

With great interest, the Armenian people throughout the world follow your efforts for openness and restructuring the Soviet Union. The implementation of these broad changes will undoubtedly bring a substantial and welcome improvement in the economic, social, cultural and other areas important to the peoples living in the Soviet Union, including Soviet Armenia.

In this direct context, we bring to your attention the following facts:

1. The life-threatening pollution in present-day Soviet Armenia, caused by pollutants emitted by chemical plants, especially the "Nairit" rubber factory in Yerevan.
2. The danger posed by endemic radioactivity leakage and the several accidents reported at the nuclear power plant in Armenia.
3. The distribution in Armenia of radioactive-contaminated food shipments from the Chernobyl area.

The Armenian people demand that the following emergency measures be taken to protect the entire population of Soviet Armenia and its neighbors from pathogenetic damage

beyond that already suffered by the people of the Soviet Union's smallest Republic:

1. THE IMMEDIATE CLOSURE OF THE NUCLEAR POWER PLANT IN SOVIET ARMENIA.
2. THE IMMEDIATE CLOSURE OF THE "NAIRIT" RUBBER FACTORY IN YEREVAN.
3. THE IMMEDIATE RECALL AND DESTRUCTION OF RADIOACTIVE-CONTAMINATED FOODSTUFFS IN YEREVAN.

We are confident that along with these urgent measures, other steps consistent with your stated policy of restructuring can now be taken to rectify a territorial anomaly that has plagued the Armenian people. The reunification of historical Armenian lands in Transcaucasia to Soviet Armenia from which they were arbitrarily removed, will correct a grave injustice perpetrated on the Armenian people. The permanent success of restructuring in Armenia can begin with the removal of this historical injustice.

WE JOIN OUR VOICES TO OUR COMPATRIOTS IN SOVIET ARMENIA CALLING FOR THE RETURN OF KARABAGH AND NAKHICHEVAN, NOW UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE AZERBAIJAN SOVIET REPUBLIC.

We remain confident that the cause for universal peace and justice for all peoples in this earth will be advanced with your actions on these crucial health, economic and humanitarian issues.

Sincerely,

[Ashbarez, December 5, 1987]

68

[24 February 1988]

Communiqué by the representative Committee of the Armenian Community in France.

The scope of demonstrations which are taking place in Soviet Armenia has revealed to the world public opinion the existence of an Armenian claim regarding the Autonomous Region of Karabagh ceded by the Soviet authorities to the Azerbaijani S.S.R. in 1923. Historically Armenian, this territory, whose population is 80% Armenian, has not ceased to be the object of claims for the restitution on the part of its population. It is in conformity with the principle of self-determination itself inscribed in the Soviet Constitution that the Armenian majority of Karabagh and the quasi totality of its elected officials have expressed their hope to see the region reattached to the Armenian Republic.

The Central Government to this day has not responded to this request. While following the evolution of the situation in Armenia, the Armenian community of France under the circumstances intends to support the demand that the Autonomous Region of Mountainous Karabagh be attached to Armenia in a way that has been formulated already by the Armenians of Karabagh. We share their legitimate aspirations, based on the right and the desire to build their future with their brothers in Soviet Armenia. United in the same determination we would like to believe that the expression of this unanimous will will overcome the hesitations which Soviet authorities have, so that finally satisfaction is given to this need for justice.

To attest to this solidarity, the whole community will be at a silent gathering of support, Thursday, February 25, at 6:30 in Paris, in front of the Embassy of the U.S.S.R.

Paris, 24th February 1988

[Haratch, 26 February 1988]

69
[25 February 1988]

**Resolution presented to the U.S.S.R. Ambassador to France
by French Armenians.**

The Armenian community of France brings its support to the demand to reattach the Autonomous Region of Karabagh to the Armenian S.S.R. as that demand is formulated today by the Armenians of Karabagh.

We share their legitimate aspiration based on the right and need to forge their future with their Armenian brothers of Soviet Armenia. Historically Armenian, with a current population of 80% Armenians, it is in conformity to the principle of self-determination inscribed in the Soviet Constitution that the Armenian majority of Karabagh and the quasi-majority of its elected officials have expressed their desire to see this region reattached to the Armenian Republic. This territory has never ceased to be the subject of demands for restitution with part of its inhabitants.

We would like to believe that this unanimous will manifest in Soviet Armenia will be taken into consideration by Soviet authorities and that this need for justice will be satisfied.

Archbishop Kude Naccachian, Prelate of Armenians of Paris
Locum Tenens for Europe of Catholicos of All Armenians
For the Representative Committee
of the Armenian Community in France

[Gamk, February 28/29, 1988]

70

[25 February 1988]

**Telegram sent to Secretary General Mikhail S. Gorbachev by
Alex Manoogian, Life President of the Armenian General
Benevolent Union.**

February 25, 1988

His Excellency Mikhail S. Gorbachev
General Secretary of the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R.
The Kremlin
Moscow, U.S.S.R.

We fully support your policies of glasnost and perestroika, which brought new hope of prosperity to the peoples of the U.S.S.R. and prospects of lasting peace to mankind.

Your concerns have been manifested in your sincere drive to redress past injustices. The issue of Nagorno-Karabagh is one of those injustices. Nariman Narimanov's historic statement of 1920, on behalf of the Baku Soviet, remains unfulfilled. That statement, supported by the central government, declared the region of Nagorno-Karabagh as the integral part of the Armenian S.S.R.

We urge you to consider the overwhelming wishes of the Karabagh population expressed in their appeal to you.

The Armenian General Benevolent Union is a worldwide organization and our 22,000 members join me in my appeal.

Alex Manoogian
International President

[The Armenian Mirror-Spectator, March 3, 1988]

71

[25 February 1988]

Statement by Ross Vartian, executive director of the Armenian Assembly of America, released following reports of large-scale demonstrations by Armenians in Armenia and Karabagh.

The demonstrations in Yerevan and Stepanakert (Karabagh) are based on a legitimate historical grievance that dates back to the Stalin years. To accommodate the government of Turkey, and to establish the border between the Soviet Union and that country, the

interests of the Armenian people were sacrificed.

While the Soviet Central Committee last week rejected the appeal of the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabagh to unite that land with Armenia, it is clear that the issue remains unresolved. It is conceivable that the Central Committee at some future time will have to reconsider this decision, particularly if the public outcry continues at such an unprecedented level.

Soviet society, under the banner of glasnost, is undertaking a painstaking review of the Stalin era and appears intent on addressing the consequences of errors made during that period.

The Nagorno-Karabagh question is making headlines today, but it is one of many such border questions in the multinational Soviet state that will not go away. General Secretary Gorbachev recently stated that developing a nationalities policy is "the most vital, fundamental issue of our society." The demonstrations in Yerevan and elsewhere underscore the need to address the nationalities question.

[The Armenian Mirror-Spectator, March 5, 1988]

72
[27 February 1988]

American-Armenian support of Armenian and worldwide claims regarding Mountainous Karabagh.

a.

Thousands of Armenian immigrants here, and children and grandchildren of immigrants, are watching the Armenian protests in the Soviet Union with anticipation, concern and frustration.

It is estimated that 200,000 Armenians or their descendants have settled in Los Angeles County, primarily in the suburban community of Glendale. Of those, about one in four arrived in the last 10 years, seeking jobs and fellow Armenians after being driven by war and revolution out of Lebanon and Iran.

[...]

Telephone calls into Soviet Armenia were for the most part cut Tuesday. A few callers to California on Thursday from Yerevan, the capital of Armenia, painted a picture of widespread but peaceful protest in the capital, with the police joining some demonstrations.

[...]

Armenian newspapers here have been flooded with phone calls from American-Armenians. Apo Boghigian, editor of the Glendale-based Armenian-language newspaper Asbarez, said one of his best news sources from Soviet Armenia this week was a telephone operator who could not connect him with friends.

"She said she wanted to join the demonstrators but had to work," Mr. Boghigian recalled. "She said her kids were doing the demonstrating for her family."

{The New York Times, February 27, 1988]

b.

[25-28 February 1988]

In the diaspora, rallies demonstrating support and solidarity with Armenian protesters in Armenia and Karabagh took place in Paris (3,000 people) on Thursday, Feb. 25; in New York (1,000) and Washington, D.C. on Saturday; in Montreal, Toronto, Cambridge, and Los Angeles (5,000) on Sunday; in San Francisco on Monday.

Similar gatherings were organized in Argentina, Lebanon, Greece (800 people) and elsewhere.

The Armenian communities of Egypt and Cyprus have sent petitions.

[Asbarez, March 5, 1988]

c.

[28 February 1988]

More than 5,000 Armenians -- young and old, men and women - showed a serious concern last Sunday, as they staged an organized peaceful demonstration, a march in solidarity with their brothers and sisters who were demonstrating in Yerevan and Karabagh for the return of Karabagh to Armenian rule and reunification with Armenia.

[...]

The demonstrators, led by American, California and Armenian flags and the clergy of the Prelacy as well as members of the Diocese, and some Armenian political leaders, moved south toward Los Angeles City College where the crowd of at least 5,000 gathered in front of the Little Theater, open air, in the courtyard, and attentively followed the

program.

[...]

A telegram was read, which was to be sent to Soviet leader Mikhail S. Gorbachev in support of the Armenians in Yerevan and Karabagh and asking him to seriously consider the reunification of Karabagh with Soviet Armenia.

[The Armenian Observer, March 2, 1988]

d.
[12 March 1988]

Several thousand Armenians poured into the streets of downtown Los Angeles on Saturday to protest the killings of Soviet Armenians and to demand that a mountainous piece of their former homeland be returned to them.

They marched to City Hall, where teen-age boys ran along the stone steps and jumped on a fountain to see who could wave the large Armenian flags the highest. Loudspeakers, the size of filing cabinets, sent the sound of patriotic songs and an afternoon of speeches by Armenian church, political and civic leaders drifting down side streets.

"We are not going to sleep until the people of Karabakh sleep in peace," vowed one of the speakers, the Rev. Berj Djambazian of the Armenian Congregational Church, to rousing cheers. "We won't smile until the people of Karabakh get their smile back."

[Lynn O'Shaughnessy in the Los Angeles Times, March 13, 1988]

73
[27 February 1988]

Telegram of Catholicos Karekin II of the Great House of Cilicia (Antiliias, Lebanon), to Secretary General Mikhail Gorbachev.

Your Excellency,

We, Karekin II Catholicos, the spiritual leader of the Armenian church of the Holy See of Great Cilicia, are deeply concerned with the current situation in the region of Karabagh under the authority of Soviet Azerbaijan, a situation which is troubling the life of the

Armenian people.

Your Excellency is aware that geographically, historically and ethnographically Karabagh is part of Armenia. It was a historical error to annex it to the Azerbaijani Republic. The Armenians of Karabagh, of Soviet Armenia, and all over the diaspora have never ceased to demand that Karabagh be attached to the motherland, to Armenia. The massive public expressions of the will of the Armenian people in Karabagh, Yerevan, throughout Soviet Armenia and the diaspora constitutes a telling witness of the unbreakable link which the Armenian people feel toward Karabagh, a part of the fatherland.

We sincerely believe and warmly request from Your Excellency to correct the error committed in 1923 and to make justice work for the Armenian people, by reattaching Karabagh to the Soviet Armenian Republic.

Your concern for human rights, reform and restructuring gives us the right to hope that the just expectations of the Armenian people will be realized and justice will be reestablished. We thank you for your kind attention toward the peaceful and just solution of a burning issue.

Prayerfully,
Karekin II Catholicos
The Great House of Cilicia

[Asbarez, March 5, 1988]

74
[10 March 1988]

Declaration issued by the Bureau of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Dashnaksutun) on the Killings committed by Tatars in Azerbaijan against Armenians.

The Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Dashnaksutun) considers the massacres perpetrated by Tatars against Armenians throughout Azerbaijan a situation of utmost concern. These massacres are aimed at the heart of the entire Armenian people, from Armenia to the Diaspora.

Undertaken in reaction and in response to the just and lawful demands of the Armenian population of the Autonomous Region of Mountainous Karabagh, these unbridled barbarities by the Tatars - with their concealed yet obvious scheme of uprooting the Armenian populace from their homes and lands in an effort to make those areas purely Tatar - ferociously victimize the Armenians living within the Soviet borders in a wave of anti-Armenian rampage. Akin to the historic precedent set during the days of the Tzarist Empire, and particularly reminiscent of 1905, the Tatars of Azerbaijan - as a consequence

of the deplorable political role played today by the Azerbaijani proponents of Pan-Turanist policy, such as Aliyev - have evidently embarked upon the massacre of the defenseless Armenian citizens who fall within their grasp.

Bringing this deadly threat to the attention of international public opinion, and especially to the attention of leadership in the Soviet Union, we demand that the perpetrators of these massacres be duly unveiled and brought to justice. We also expect that Soviet authorities take the necessary steps to stem the tide of these atrocities.

The Diaspora Armenians - who through their national and political bodies and organizations, have already manifested their solidarity with the just demands of the Armenians in Karabagh and Armenia regarding the Karabagh questions - cannot remain indifferent to these deplorable events.

Most of all, the A.R.F. (Dashnaksutun), which has always manifested its determination to counter by all means the dangers threatening the physical existence of the Armenian people, will not remain indifferent.

Bureau of the
Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Dashnaksutun)

[Press announcement, March 10, 1988]

APPENDICES

- A. PHOTOGRAPHS**
- B. STATISTICS**
- C. MAPS**
- D. CHRONOLOGY**
- E. ON HISTORY AND CURRENT
EVENTS: VIEWS & INTERVIEWS**
- F. BIBLIOGRAPHY**

APPENDIX-A

PHOTOGRAPHS



1.

1. Shushi, Armenian quarters, 1912.
2. Shushi, center of the town, 1904.



2.



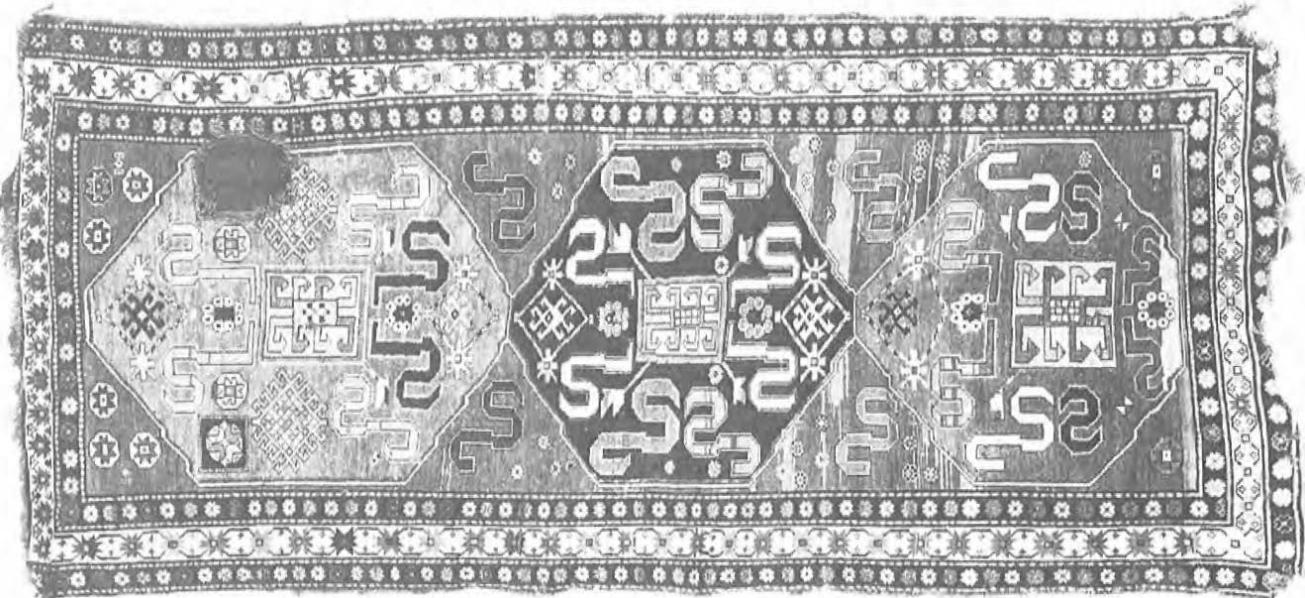
4.



3.

3. An Armenian couple from village of Vank, Martakert Region.
4. "We are our mountains" monument in Stepanakert.
5. Vishapagorg (vishap-rug) from village of Jraberd, Mountainous Karabagh, late 19th century.

5.





6.

6. Mai'n Carpet, from the town of Shushi,
Mountainous Karabagh, 1886.
7. Armenian woman in traditional costume,
from Shushi.
8. Main Carpet, from village of Jartar,
Mountainous Karabagh, late 19th century.



7.



8.



9.

9. Gandzasar Monastery, Mountainous Karabagh.
10. Mets Taghlar, villagers gathered around the spring.



10.

11. Kazanchetsots Church, Shushi.

12. Khudapirini, fifteen arch bridge over Arax river.



11.



12.



13.

14.





13. Mayraberd-Askeran fortress.

14. Village of Sos.

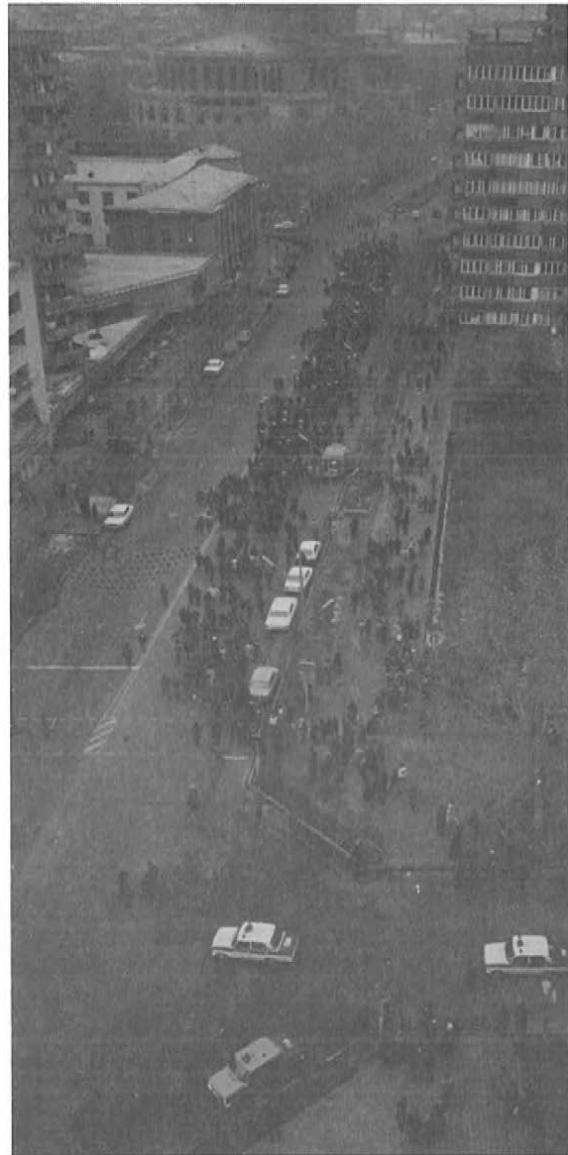
15.

15. Armenian secondary school, Shushi, 1981.

16. A view of Kert village, Martuni Region.

16.





Peaceful demonstrations in Yerevan, February 25, 1988,





demanding annexation of Mountainous Karabagh to Armenian SSR.



APPENDIX-B

STATISTICS

I. RECENT DATA

TABLE I.1: THE AUTONOMOUS REGION OF MOUNTAINOUS KARABAGH, 1976.

AREA	4,400 sq. km.
POPULATION	157,200 (35.2 Persons per sq. km.)

[Source: *Armenian Soviet Encyclopedia*]

TABLE I.2: ETHNIC COMPOSITION OF MOUNTAINOUS KARABAGH, 1976.

	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
ARMENIANS	126,546	81%
AZERIS	28,453	18%
RUSSIANS	1,415	1%
TOTAL	156,414	100%

TABLE I.3: SECTORS OF THE ECONOMY OF MOUNTAINOUS KARABAGH, 1976.

	NUMBER EMPLOYED	PERCENT EMPLOYED
INDUSTRY AND CONSTRUCTION	12,269	21.30%
AGRICULTURE	24,480	42.50%
SCIENCE, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES	11,635	20.20%
SERVICE AND RETAIL INDUSTRY	2,938	5.10%
TRANSPORTATION	2,650	4.60%
OTHER	3,629	6.30%
TOTAL	57,600	100.00%

II. DEMOGRAPHIC DATA OF PRE-SOVIET PERIOD

TABLE II.1: DISTRIBUTION OF ARMENIANS IN KARABAGH & ELIZAVETPOL, 1917.

PROVINCE	
KAZAKH	61,000
ELIZAVETPOL	54,000
JEVANSHIR	23,000
SHUSHI	98,000
KARIAGUINE	22,000
ZANGEZUR	100,000
TOTAL	358,000

[Source: Republic of Armenia Archives, File Number 6]

TABLE II.2: NUMBER OF ARMENIANS IN MOUNTAINOUS KARABAGH BY REGION, 1914.

SHUSHI	95,000
GANDSAK	59,000
DGIBRA	25,000
JIVANSHIR	20,000
TOTAL	199,999

[Source: *Hairenik Monthly*, October 1928, Vol. 6, No. 12 (71)]

TABLE II.3: DISTRIBUTION OF ARMENIANS IN TRANSCAUCASIA, 1917.

		PERCENT OF POPULATION
YEREVAN	669,000	38%
KARS	119,000	7%
TIFLIS	415,000	23%
ELISAVETPOL	419,000	23%
BAKU	120,000	7%
BATUM KUTAIS	41,000	2%
DAGHESTAN		
TOTAL	1,783,000	100%

[Source: R. G. Hovannessian, *Armenia on the Road to Independence*]

TABLE II.4: POPULATION OF TRANSCAUCASIA BY COUNTRY AND NATIONALITY, 1919.

	ARMENIA	GEORGIA	AZERBAIJAN	TOTAL
ARMENIANS	854,041	394,277	480,746	1,729,064
MUSLIMS	577,95	126,121	1,808,542	2,512,616
GEORGIANS	4,605	1,761,120	14,698	1,780,423
OTHER	154,133	466,463	273,885	894,481
TOTAL	1,590,732	2,747,981	2,577,871	6,916,584

TABLE II.5: DISTRIBUTION OF ARMENIANS IN AZERBAIJAN (AS RECOGNIZED BY THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA AND EXCLUDING THE CONTESTED REGIONS), 1917.

PROVINCE	
NOKHA	26,000
ELIZAVETPOL	14,000
ARESH	20,000
GUEUKTCHAI	20,000
SHAMAKLA	25,000
BAKU	95,000
TOTAL	200,000

[Source: Republic of Armenia Archives, File 6]

III. DATA FOR PERIOD FOLLOWING SOVIETIZATION

TABLE III.1: ARMENIANS IN AZERBAIJAN SSR, 1926.

AUTONOMOUS KARABAGH	108,000
NAKHICHEVAN	10,000
NEIGHBORING COUNTIES (INCL. MOUNT. GANDSAK)	89,000
NON-ARMENIAN REGION	93,000
TOTAL	300,000

[Source: *Hairenik Monthly*, April 1929, Vol. 7, No. 6 (78)]

TABLE III.2: TOTAL POPULATION OF AUTONOMOUS KARABAGH BY REGION (29 PERSONS/SQ. KM.), 1928.

KHACHEN	29,000
JRABERD	30,000
DIZAK	28,000
VARANDA	28,000
SHUSHI	12,000
TOTAL	127,000

[Source: *Hairenik Monthly*, October 1928 Vol. 6, No. 12 (71)]

TABLE III.3: AUTONOMOUS KARABAGH IN RELATION TO AZERBAIJAN S.S.R., 1929.

	AREA SQ. KM.	POPULATION
AZERBAIJAN S.S.R.	84,679	2,313,204
AUTONOMOUS KARABAGH	4,161	125,200
AUTONOMOUS KARABAGH AS A PERCENT OF AZERBAIJAN S.S.R.	4.91%	5.41%

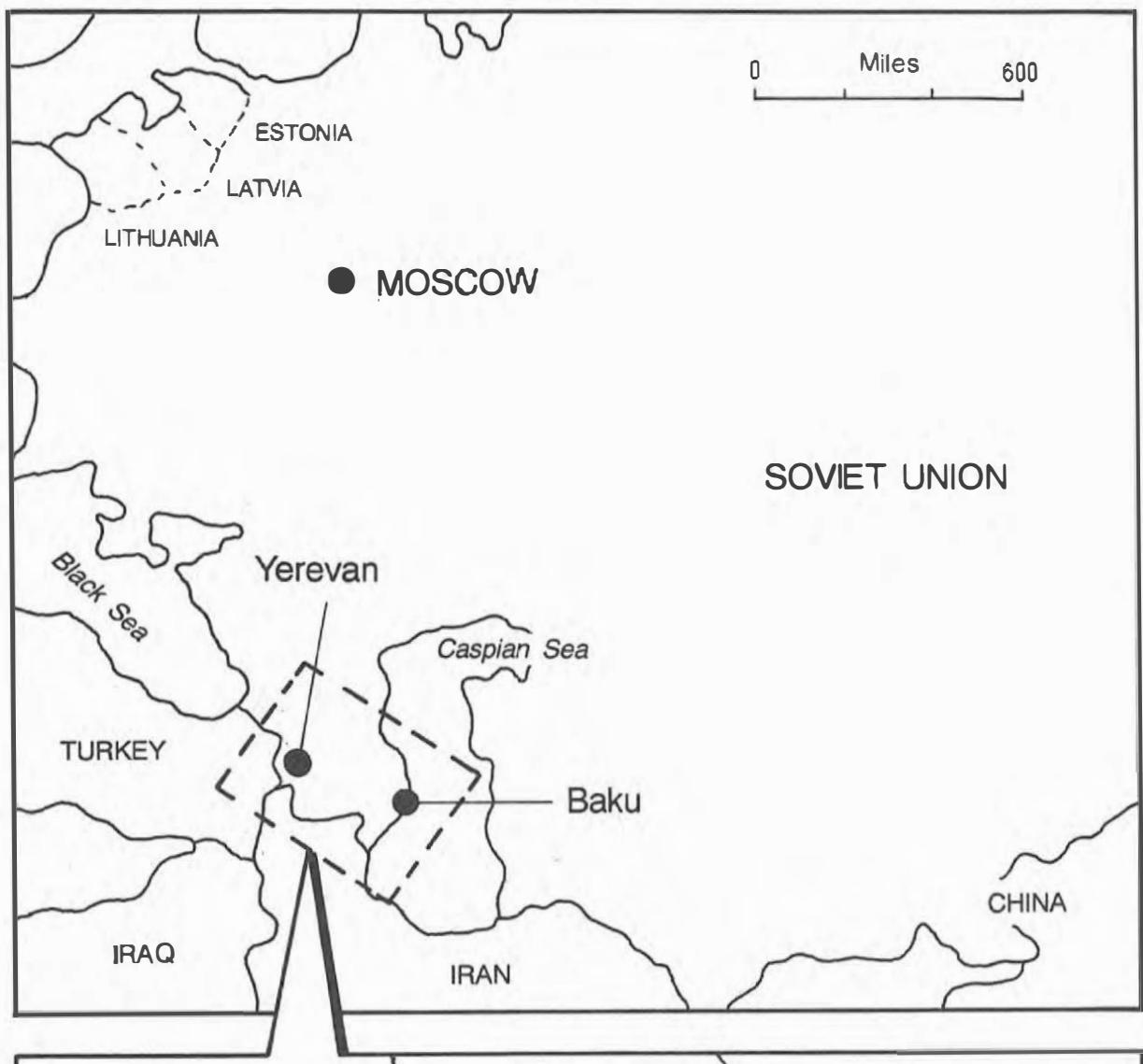
NOTE: POPULATION OF AUTONOMOUS KARABAGH = 1/3 OF
POPULATION OF MOUNTAINOUS KARABAGH.
AREA OF AUTONOMOUS KARABAGH = 1/3 AREA OF
MOUNTAINOUS KARABAGH.

APPENDIX-C

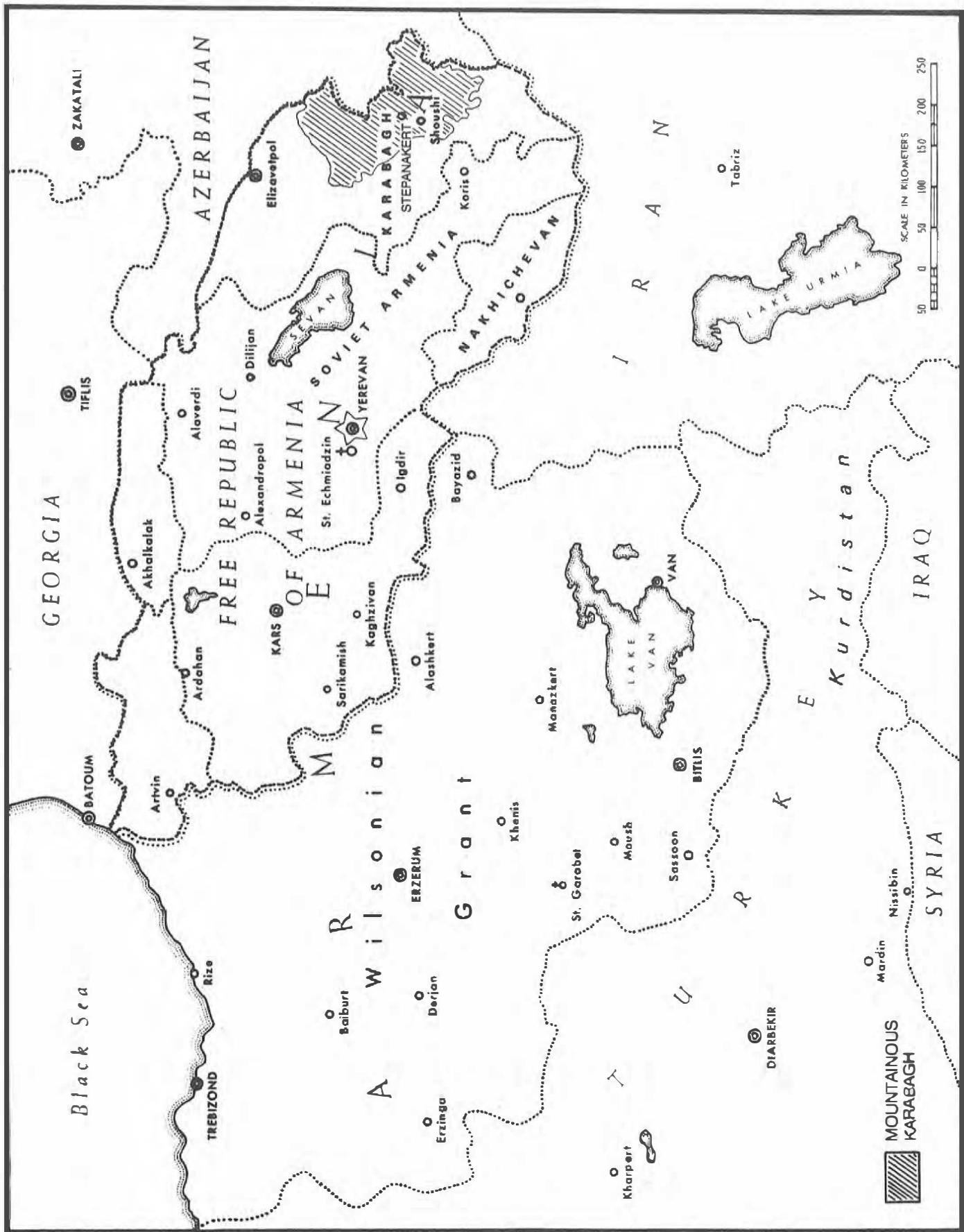
MAPS



Zoryan Institute Map 1988



Zoryan Institute Map 1988



APPENDIX - D

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

AUTONOMOUS REGION OF MOUNTAINOUS (NAGORNO-) KARABAGH

Beginning -7th Century A.D.

Slow fusion of Armenians and Caucasian Albanians leads to the creation of Armenian principality of Artsakh, which includes both today's Mountainous Karabagh and the plains of Karabagh.

8th Century

Arabs complete the conquest of Transcaucasia, including Artsakh. Beginning of conversion of a minority of the plains population to Islam.

11th Century

Seljuk Turks, having emerged from central Asia and conquered Iran, conquer Artsakh and Armenia, extend Islamization and begin Turkification.

13-15th Centuries

Invasion by Genghiz Khan's troops. Later, Turkic invasions by Tamurlane's armies increase the "Tatar" element (a variant of central Asian Turks), ancestors of Azeri or Azerbaijani Turks. Armenians increasingly restricted to safe pockets above all mountains.

Early 16th Century

Ottoman Turks conquer region. Armenians take tentative, ineffective steps towards liberation.

1639

Shah of Persia and Ottoman Empire agree to cede Karabagh to the Khanate of Ganja, a tributary of Persia.

1701

Israel Ori, born in Karabagh, labors for Western, ultimately Russian intervention to free Armenia of alien rule. He informs Peter the Great of conditions in Armenia. Gets paper promises only.

1722-8

Armenians of the whole of historic Karabagh and the neighboring district of Sunik rise against the Khans and the Ottoman Empire under the leadership of David Beg, hoping for assistance from Peter the Great, Tzar of Russia. They receive no help.

1805

Prince Tsitsianov of Tzarist Russia secures Karabagh for the Russian Empire before being assassinated on his way to capture Baku. Karabagh is annexed to the Russian empire.

1813

Russia signs Treaty of Gulistan with Persia, keeps Karabagh and most territories currently part of present-day Azerbaijani S.S.R.

1905

Instigated by local overlords, racial violence breaks out between Tartars or "Azeris" and Armenians throughout Transcaucasia. Tzarist officials, hoping to curb Armenian activism, do not intervene. Armenians put up sustained resistance, but are massacred in areas where Tartars form a majority.

1914-1917

Karabagh is occupied by Russian troops who remain until fall of Tzarist regime.

1917

January

Tzarist census shows greater Karabagh population to be 317,000 Armenians (72%) and 120,000 Tartars.

February/March

Russian Revolution, end of tsarist regime.

Departure of troops leave Karabagh in state of disarray.

Inter-party Bureau organized, consisting of Armenians and Tartars. Regional Central Executive appointed to run administration of United Karabagh-Zangezur region. Harmony and cooperation exist.

1918

March

Transcaucasian Confederation (with Armenian, Azeri, and Georgian states) proclaims itself an independent, multi-ethnic republic.

Ottoman Turkish victories in Baku. Armenians of Shushi submit to invading Ottoman armies, however rest of Karabagh resists.

May

Transcaucasian Confederation dissolves. Complete evacuation of Russian armies leaves a void in disputed areas.

In the face of Ottoman Turkish penetration into Transcaucasia, Bolsheviks and Dashnaksakans join forces and set up the Baku Commune to resist invasion.

Republic of Azerbaijan declared on May 27.

Republic of Armenia declared on May 28.

June

Treaty of Batum signed between Ottoman Turkey and Armenia. Armenia forced to cede large territories to neighboring Turkey, Georgia, and Azerbaijan.

Nakhichevan and Karabagh are given status of autonomous districts under the protectorate of Azerbaijan.

July

British forces enter Transcaucasia.

Fall of Baku Commune.

First Assembly of Karabagh Armenians formed. Elects a People's Government of Karabagh. Rejects demands that Turkish troops be permitted to enter Shushi.

September

To avoid further Turkish massacres, Second and Third Pan-Karabagh Assemblies decide to keep status-quo under Azerbaijani rule.

Turks and Azerbaijanis carry out systematic massacre of Armenians.
15,000-20,000 die.

Karabagh Armenians submit to Turks; 5,000 Turkish soldiers enter Shushi.

October

Turkish massacres intensify in Karabagh. Shushi resists the Turco-Tartar attackers, calls for help from General Andranik and his Armenian volunteer units.

November

General Andranik stopped by British High Commander of Caucasus, General Thompson. Thompson promises problem will be mediated by the Paris Peace Conference, declares military action would be unnecessary destruction. Andranik complies.

December

British military delegation arrives in Shushi to determine and oversee status of Karabagh.

1919

January

Paris Peace Conference convenes; Armenia submits claims to historic lands, including Karabagh.

Azerbaijan and Gen. Thompson appoint Dr. Khosrov Beg Sultanov, who was already suspected by Armenians as an instigator of massacres, as Governor-General of Karabagh and Zangezur. Appointment draws violent protests from Armenians in Karabagh.

Republic of Armenia protests; declares Karabagh and Zangezur to be inseparable parts of Armenia. Also protests appointment of Sultanov.

February

Fourth Pan-Karabagh Assembly declares Karabagh to be inseparable from Armenia; does not recognize Azeri rule. Elects a National Council to carry out decision.

March

Azerbaijan army and British troops dispatched to Karabagh to enforce Azeri rule.

- Effort repulsed by Armenians.
- April**
- British General Shuttleworth replaces Thompson as High Commander of the Caucasus, re-announces decision to allow Azeri rule over Karabagh; reiterates Thompson's plan of maintaining status quo until the Paris Peace Conference decides the final boundaries.
- Republic of Armenia government once again protests, sends emissary to negotiate. Emissary is banished by British.
- Fifth Pan-Karabagh Assembly meets, rejects Shuttleworth's plan. Its Congress accuses Azerbaijan of being an accomplice to Turkish goals of Pan-Turanism or Pan-Turkism, which aspired to unite all lands inhabited by ethnic Turks in Anatolia, old Tzarist Transcaucasia, Iran and Central Asia.
- British mission secretly advises Sultanov to enter Shushi with military force.
- May**
- With British knowledge, more intensive attacks on Armenian villages in Karabagh. Sultanov ignores all protests, is suspected by Armenians of encouraging attacks.
- June**
- Unable to enforce law and order, British withdraw forces from Karabagh.
- Armenian Catholicos in Etchmiadzin sends British a formal protest.
- Massive demonstrations in Yerevan and Tbilisi. Hundreds of thousands participate, representing all patriotic, political and cultural organizations demanding that authors of the massacres be arrested and punished.
- Sixth Pan-Karabagh Assembly agrees to negotiate with Azeri government in Baku.
- Armenians compromise in negotiations but leave treaty unsigned.
- British War Office announces withdrawal from entire region of Caucasus.
- August**
- Sultanov presents Seventh Pan-Karabagh Assembly ultimatum to accept Baku agreement. Because agreement had been left open, Sultanov changes terms more in favor of Azeri government. Congress bows to inevitable, accepts Sultanov's terms. Representatives create temporary quasi-autonomous district of Karabagh under rule of Azerbaijan pending final determination of Paris Peace Conference.
- Paris Peace Conference is still in progress. Armenian representatives stress that the region of Karabagh is Armenian in every detail.
- Allied High Commissioner Haskell arrives in Yerevan.
- Ninth World Congress of the Dashnaksutun (ARF) passes special resolution claiming Karabagh and Zangezur as integral parts of Armenian state.

September

Violence flares up in Karabagh once again.

October

Violence in Karabagh intensifies.

November

The Republic of Azerbaijan concludes treaty with Turkey at expense of Armenia.

Prime Ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan hold private discussion with U.S.

Army Colonel Rhea concerning conflicts between the two republics.

Discussions lead to agreement signed in Tbilisi reflecting desire to cease hostilities.

December

Conference of Armenian and Azeri representatives in Baku produces no agreement.

1920

February-March

Memorandum of Eighth Assembly of Pan-Karabagh Congress to the Allied Powers.

April

Red Army of the Soviet State rapidly conquers Azerbaijan, enters Baku as a first step in the reconquest of the Tzarist empire. Azerbaijan becomes a Soviet republic.

May

Republic of Armenia receives ultimatum from Soviet Azerbaijan and Soviet Russia to clear Armenian troops from pockets in Karabagh and Zangezur within three days.

July

Representatives of Armenian National Council in Karabagh leave for Moscow to demand annexation of Karabagh to Armenia.

Soviets make first move to accommodate Turco-Soviet plan to carve up Armenia.

August

Treaty of Sevres in Paris makes provisions for final settlement of Armeno-Azeri boundary lines.

Khalil Pasha visits Yerevan to discuss Karabagh; outlines Soviet-Turkish plan to unite lands free of Armenian jurisdiction.

December

The government of the Armenian Republic, facing advancing Soviet and Turkish forces, transfers power to Bolsheviks. Armenia becomes a Soviet republic on December 2.

Telegram sent by Soviet Azerbaijani government to Soviet Armenian government cedes territories of Karabagh, Zangezur and Nakhichevan to new fraternal Soviet republic. Border disputes declared resolved.

1921

March

Treaty of Moscow reverses earlier announcements, formalizes cession of Nakhichevan to Azerbaijan, thus helping to improve Soviet relations with Turkey.

April

Avis Nurichanian, the People's Military Commissar of Soviet Armenia, declares that Karabagh is an inseparable part of Armenia.

May

Soviet delegation in negotiations with local government of Karabagh agrees with Nurichanian, and promises Karabagh will be included in Armenian boundaries.

June

Once again, based on agreements between the Soviet republics of Armenia and Azerbaijan, Soviet Armenia demands acquisition of Karabagh.

October

Treaty of Kars signed between Turkey and the three Transcaucasian Soviet Republics. Policy set by Soviet government finalizing boundaries in the Caucasus.

July 1923

Karabagh proclaimed an autonomous region by decree of the Azerbaijan Central Committee, initiated by Moscow.

November 1927

Two rounds of leaflets distributed in Karabagh by the "Union of Karabagh for Armenia". Numerous arrests follow.

1929

Marked Pan-Turanic movements in Azerbaijan. Armenians of Karabagh express desire to join Armenia.

June 1935

Aghasi Khanjian, Secretary of Communist Party of Armenia, killed after submitting Armenian grievances to Stalin. Grievances include requests to return Karabagh and Nakhichevan to Armenia.

August 1960

False rumor spreads through the Armenian Diaspora that Karabagh and Nakhichevan will be reunited with Armenia on the occasion of Armenia's 40th anniversary of sovietization.

November 1960

Soviet government response to rumors states that central authorities have no right to reintegrate Nakhichevan and Karabagh in Soviet Armenian republic, but Azerbaijan could cede on its own.

1963

Petition to Khrushchev signed by 2,500 representatives of 200,000 Armenians of all of Karabagh complaining of cultural oppression, economic sabotage, and enforced population shifts.

1964

Khrushchev refuses to visit Armenia to discuss the Karabagh case.

Eighteen Armenians killed in Karabagh by Turks. Intellectuals at University of Yerevan protest; later arrested.

1966

National Unity Party is formed in Yerevan. While its main goal--the independence of Soviet Armenia, changes over time, the unification of Karabagh and Nakhichevan remains central concern.

August 1966

Soviet Armenia once again officially appeals to Moscow for Karabagh to be annexed to Soviet Armenia. Moscow says issue must be resolved between the two republics.

September 1967

Appeal by Armenian residents of Karabagh to the government of Armenia describing intolerable conditions.

November 1974

Anton Y. Kochinian Communist Party leader of Soviet Armenia, removed from post, ostensibly for inability to halt nationalist agitation.

1974 -1975

National Unity Party calls for general elections. Ukrainians, Russians, Jews, Lithuanians participate with NUP in hunger strikes.

1975

Armenians of Karabagh rebuked; some imprisoned on charges of nationalist agitation, others removed from office and exiled.

October 1977

Sero Khanzatian, leading member of the Armenian Communist Party and the Soviet Writers' Union, writes strong letter to Brezhnev arguing for the annexation of Karabagh to Armenia.

December 1977

Protest demonstrations at public events and pleas from Karabagh Armenians charge Azeris with cultural oppression and economic discrimination.

1981

Mountainous Karabagh's new constitution adopted. Local officials' authority

reduced to mere ratification and execution of Azerbaijan government decisions.

March 1986

350 Soviet Armenian intellectuals urge Gorbachev to close nuclear plant due to radiation.

1987

July

Armenian Communist Party Central Committee Plenum singles out officials for criticism. Gorbachev publicly chastises Armenian party leaders for corruption.

August

Petition for annexation of Karabagh to Armenia signed by 100,000. Other sources place number between 75,000 and 400,000.

October

Violence directed by Azerbaijani officials against Armenians in Karabagh.

While visiting Boston, Sergei Mikoyan says glasnost creates favorable conditions for discussion of Karabagh question.

Two demonstrations in Yerevan demanding closure of nuclear power plant and defense of Armenian national rights.

Haidar Aliev, Azerbaijani official, is removed from Politburo and loses other federal functions.

Clashes between Armenian and Tartar villagers in Chardaklu, Mountainous Karabagh.

December

Turkish newspaper Hurriyet reports Armenians provoked over Karabagh.

Soviet central government endorses calls for removal of First Secretary of Armenian Communist Party.

1988

January

Petition with 100,000 Karabagh Armenians' signatures sent to Moscow asking for referendum to be held in Karabagh on the status of the region. Gorbachev appoints a special commission. Commission receives 13 delegates from Karabagh and 4 from Moscow.

February

Zori Balayan, journalist from Soviet Armenia, declares at a Washington D.C. press conference that Glasnost will benefit Armenia.

February 13

Demonstrations held in Stepanakert, capital of Karabagh.

February 18

Gorbachev proposes to hold a special Central Committee meeting to discuss Soviet policy toward nationalities within the Soviet Union. Calls for free development of national cultures.

February 19

Protest rally held at Yerevan Opera House, in front of Council of Ministers' Building. No intervention by police.

February 20

Soviet of People's Deputies of Karabagh holds special session in Stepanakert; votes to intercede with Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. for the transfer of Mountainous Karabagh from Azerbaijan to Armenia.

February 22

Mr. Razumovsky, representative of U.S.S.R. Central Party Central Committee in Stepanakert, states that any attempt to break Karabagh away from Azerbaijan is unacceptable.

Thousands of Azerbaijanis march toward Stepanakert, burning buildings on their way.

February 22-27

During an entire week, close to a million demonstrators take part in peaceful demonstrations in Yerevan to protest Politburo's decision not to return Karabagh to Armenia. No incidents reported.

February 24

Tass reports that Henrig ["Genrikh"] Pogosyan is named by the regional party committee to replace Boris Kevorkov as party head of Karabagh.

February 25

Demonstrations in Paris in support of demonstrations in Yerevan.

Alexander Katonsev, Assistant Attorney General of U.S.S.R., denies rumors of massacres of Armenians by Azeris.

Authorities in Moscow move to limit flow of information from Azerbaijan and Armenia.

Kremlin formally installs Genrikh Pogosyan as Communist Party Chief in Karabagh.

Red army troops arrive in Yerevan.

Four Armenian deaths reported in Karabagh.

February 26

A. Mutalibov, Vice-Premier of Azerbaijan reports to Tass that relations between Armenians and Azeris are tense.

Gorbachev calls for calm, reaffirms friendship between two peoples.

Writers Zori Balayan and Sylva Kaputikian meet with Gorbachev to discuss the case of Karabagh. Gorbachev promises to review the problem during the next 30 days and at next meeting of Central Committee.

Armenians demonstrate in San Francisco, Hollywood, Montreal, Toronto, and New York showing support of Armenian Diaspora in U.S. and Canada; telegrams of support sent to Gorbachev.

February-March

Rioting in Sumgait, Azerbaijan; attacks on Armenian individuals, homes, and businesses. Fighting between Armenians and Azeris in Mountainous Karabagh, Tass reports 31 dead.

March

Gorbachev summons party leaders of Soviet Armenia and Azerbaijan to Moscow, orders "profound and all-round" study of grievances in Karabagh.

March 11

As of this date, Western sources estimate 300 Armenians dead in Azerbaijan as a result of what Azeris call "punitive expeditions"; some Armenian sources accept a much higher number of casualties.

March 14

During a state visit to Yugoslavia, Secretary Gorbachev blames predecessors for situation and asserts he will consider grievances of Armenians.

APPENDIX-E

ON HISTORY AND CURRENT EVENTS: VIEWS & INTERVIEWS

1.- ON BRITISH POLICY IN THE CAUCASUS

Britain and the Question of Mountainous Karabagh

[...]

The motives governing British policy regarding Transcaucasian territorial disputes in general, and the Karabagh conflict in particular, seem too complex to be explained by several recently advanced theories. Richard H. Ullman argues that British officers favored Christian Georgia and Armenia if they had previously served in Europe, whereas those British officers who had been in India supported Muslim Azerbaijan. Such an interpretation cannot account for every British decision on territorial conflicts in Transcaucasia. However, the pro-Muslim sympathies of British officers formerly serving in India did influence their arbitration of the Karabagh dispute. This view is stressed but not documented by Richard G. Hovannisian. By contrast, Briton C. Busch argues that the background of British officers played no significant role in shaping British policy. The Karabagh case weakens his argument. Moreover, historians have failed to emphasize the fact that the British officers entrusted with the task of imposing law and order in Transcaucasia had insufficient troops to control a hostile Azerbaijan. Thus, expediency played a very important role in the shaping of policy towards Karabagh, for nothing could have proved more ruinous to British efforts to keep Azerbaijan quiet than a decision in favor of Armenia.

The British policy toward Karabagh [withdrawal of British and occupation by Azeris] aroused general indignation in the Republic of Armenia. At the end of August 1919, Lieutenant-Colonel John C. Plowden, the British military representative in Erevan, reported:

The handing over of KARABAGH to Azerbaijan was, I think, the bitterest blow of all. KARABAGH means more to the Armenians than their religion even, being the cradle of their race, and their traditional last sanctuary when their country has been invaded. It is Armenian in every particular and the strongest part of Armenia, both financially, militarily and socially.

The Armenians felt that their just cause had been betrayed by their British "ally."

[...]

In spite of the strength of the Armenian case, Britain and the Peace Conference were incapable—or unwilling—to change the status of Mountainous Karabagh in favor of the Republic of Armenia. The fate of Karabagh, and of the other disputed Transcaucasian territories, was eventually decided by force of arms, not on the basis of the high-sounding moral principles proclaimed by the Allies during and immediately after World War I. The struggle for Karabagh, however, did not end with the sovietization of Armenia and

Azerbaijan in 1920.

[Artin Arslanian, "Britain and the Armeno-Azerbaijani Struggle for Mountainous Karabagh, 1918-1919," Middle Eastern Studies 1 (1980) : 92-104.]

2.- USSR: HISTORY AND POLICY IN CONFLICT

"We should busy ourselves most thoroughly with the nationalities policy at the present stage. This is a most fundamental, vital question of our society."

Mikhail Gorbachev, Feb. 18, 1988

General Secretary Gorbachev's policies of openness and restructuring have raised expectations in the Soviet Union, especially among those nationalities with historic grievances stemming from decisions made during the Stalin era. As Soviet society attempts to face the Stalinist legacy, fundamental injustices are being revealed. The Armenian nationality question - which prompted the vast protest demonstrations earlier this month - is one such case.

Against a backdrop of increasing ethnic tensions, Gorbachev's recent declaration about the need to reassess policies regarding the multinational and multireligious society is an acknowledgement that the longstanding assertion that the Soviet peoples live in brotherhood and harmony has often struck a hollow chord.

More than 100 ethnic groups, including 15 republics of which Armenia is one, constitute the Soviet state. In dealing with the nationalities question, the Soviets have alternated between firmness and reform in response to appeals from its ethnic minorities. Those appeals have ranged from requests for greater cultural autonomy to objections to Russification programs to outright demands for independence. The general intent of the Soviet Union has been to allow as much cultural autonomy as possible without having that autonomy lead to nationalist expression. The minimal objective of each nationality has been to maintain its ethnic identity and historical integrity. The tone and content of each appeal was based upon each group's perception of a particular Soviet administration's nationalities policy. When those objectives are in conflict, headlines are made in the West.

Hence the latest outbreak of protests in Soviet Armenia, the most southern of the 15 Soviet republics, which borders Turkey. The demonstrations began two weeks ago in Nagorno-Karabakh, a 1,700-square-mile district in Soviet Azerbaijan, and spread to Yerevan, the capital of Soviet Armenia. With protesters reportedly numbering in the hundreds of thousands, they are considered to be among the largest unauthorized mass meetings ever held in Soviet history.

In general, the complaints registered by ethnic minorities of the Soviet Union have been directed against the policies of the central government. But the Armenian demonstrations are motivated by an historical grievance of a different nature -- a question of land and boundaries. Armenians are asking Moscow to unite the Nagorno (mountainous) Karabakh district in Azerbaijan with the Soviet Republic of Armenia.

The district of Nagorno-Karabakh has a population of about 200,000 of whom some 80

percent are Armenian and the rest Azerbaijani. Armenians in Karabakh complain that discrimination by the Soviet leadership in Azerbaijan against the Armenian population has hindered development of the area and is intended to encourage Armenian emigration.

A historic center of Armenian life and culture, Karabakh through the centuries remained semi-autonomous under the rule of Armenian princes even when the rest of Armenia had been conquered by the Persian and Turkish empire. Thus Armenians have always regarded the area to be of prime historical, cultural and strategic significance.

After Karabakh's annexation to Russia at the beginning of the 19th century, the Armenians lived in relative peace until the Russian Revolution of 1917 led to a period of chaos in the Caucasus region. When the Armenian and Azerbaijani peoples declared their independence in the wake of the temporary Russian retreat from the area, Karabakh became a bone of contention. Azerbaijan, with a Shiite Muslim population speaking the Turkish language, claimed and occupied Karabakh, despite the intense resistance of the Armenian population which demanded unification with the Armenian state.

The entry of the Red Army into the Caucasus in 1920 brought the fighting to an end; and when Armenia was Sovietized, Azerbaijan renounced its claims to Karabakh and agreed to its unification with Armenia. Nationalist Turkey, then under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal, was opposed to seeing a large Armenian state on its borders. An accommodation was reached by the terms of the Treaty of Moscow, signed in March 1921 -- the first official treaty between the Soviet Union and Nationalist Turkey -- which sanctioned the diminution of Armenia and awarded the disputed territories to Soviet Azerbaijan. These violations of territorial integrity were agreed to by Joseph Stalin. In 1923, parts of mountainous Karabakh were given the status of an autonomous district within the Soviet republic of Azerbaijan.

The Karabakh question poses a challenge to the Soviet system. Sensing a regime of genuine reform under Gorbachev, the Armenians of Karabakh are demanding neither greater autonomy nor separation from the Soviet Union. Their sole aim is to be reunified with their kinsmen not 10 miles distant.

If this comparatively straightforward question cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of hundreds of thousands of Soviet citizens now in the streets of Stepanakert and Yerevan, Gorbachev's new nationalities policy may end before it begins.

[Richard G. Hovannisian, in the Washington Post, February 2, 1988]

3.- A SOVIET PARADOX

The irony and paradox of the Soviet decision to give both Karabagh and Nakhichevan to Azerbaijan is that the act is inconsistent from ethnic, historical and geographical principles. The strongest argument in favor of the Armenian position is the ethnic argument. According to Lenin's nationality policy, peoples in every area are supposed to determine themselves what republic, what kind of government, they will have. From the ethnic point of view, then, Karabagh, with a population that is 80 percent Armenian at this point, should clearly be in the Armenian republic. By that same ethnic argument, Nakhichevan would be part of the Azerbaijan Republic. Second, if one accepts the historical argument, then both of these areas, having been part of historic Armenia, should be part of the Armenian Republic. Such a solution, it should be noted, would be resisted by the Azerbaijani majority in Nakhichevan and would create enormous difficulties. If a geographic argument is used, then Karabagh and Nakhichevan, by their geography and topography, are really parts of the mountain plateau that makes up Armenia. By that argument Nakhichevan should be part of Armenia, since it is surrounded by the Armenian Republic and is part of the Armenian plateau. Karabagh, on the other hand, is also part of the mountainous plateau, although it is much more inaccessible from the west, from Armenia. Therefore, the geographical argument as far as Karabagh is concerned cuts both ways.

[Prof. Ronald G. Suny, Alex Manoogian Professor of Modern History, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, and member of the Board of Directors of the Zoryan Institute, lecture, 1978]

4.- GLASNOST AND NATIONALITIES POLICY: An Interview with Ronald G. Suny

[...]

Ian Masters: *A million people demonstrating in the streets in Armenia, what do you think is going to happen in this situation?*

Suny- I was very happy to hear the news this morning that after Gorbachev's appeal yesterday, the Armenians in Yerevan agreed to postpone demonstrations for a month while negotiations over this issue take place. The second thing was that there were rumors that the Central Committee in Moscow had said that this area, Karabagh, which is in Soviet Azerbaijan, and which is claimed by Armenians, would be incorporated into the Armenian Republic. But now it seems that the game has not been fully played. That in fact remains a possibility.

Q- *But just looking at the map, it's not exactly contiguous, is it? It seems to be somewhat in the middle of Azerbaijan. How would it be incorporated without it looking like a rather distorted contour?*

Suny- There are only a few miles between the border of Armenia and the area of Karabagh. There are mountains and valleys in between. But if you look, there is another area that is part of Azerbaijan, called Nakhichevan, which is completely separated from Azerbaijan, and surrounded on at least two sides by the Armenian Republic, so that's not

a big problem. This can be done. Of course, communications and so forth would have to be improved. Most of the roads go the other way towards Azerbaijan, and the capital of Baku. These are minor problems.

The real issue is whether or not this new Gorbachev government is willing to follow its own rhetoric. They've been talking a lot lately about a return to Lenin and Leninist principles and one of the most fundamental issues which Lenin fought for (indeed it was his last political struggle against Stalin) was the idea of national self-determination and cultural autonomy for various non-Russian peoples. This is precisely the issue in Karabagh. Here is an area where 80% of the population is Armenian, which has for a long time wished to be part of the Armenian Republic. Various promises have been made, but time and again there have been delays. The Armenians tried petitions. They wrote letters to Khrushchev, to Brezhnev. Just last September to Gorbachev, and finally, as these demonstrations indicate, their patience has worn thin and they took to the streets. And now, at least, everyone, including the New York Times, is paying attention to it.

Q- You obviously agree with the notion that Gorbachev has set himself up as the heir apparent to Lenin.

Suny- I think that's right. There are two models of how the Soviet Union will emerge from the next few years. One is the model that Gorbachev calls the Stalinist model or the conservative model of the state-run economy and centralization. And the older model which Gorbachev calls Leninist (and one can debate whether it's really Leninist or not) which looks back to an earlier period. The period of the so-called New Economy Policy, which was prominent in the Soviet Union in the 1920's, which was a much more market-oriented economy, with much more cultural and literary independence and freedom within, obviously, the controls of the Communist Party, and a much more tolerant political atmosphere. So, there is at least, in Gorbachev's reading, a precedent for the reforms that he is proposing. That of course gives him a kind of legitimacy. You're not abandoning Marxism and you're not abandoning Soviet history. You're going back to an earlier period. Of course, that means that every issue of Soviet history, of the injustices that were done is going to be reopened, including this incredibly dangerous, difficult Pandora's Box of ethnic nationalism.

Q- But I would think that Gorbachev is beginning to get a little worried. The hard lines are starting to say we're going too far. It's happening all over -- in Estonia. In Armenia, the Pandora's Box is really opened, isn't it?

Suny- I was more dismayed yesterday, because here, Gorbachev went public, put himself on the line and said, "Look, I'm asking you to have a period of calm." Now, if somehow the Armenians had refused to do that, then it would have been a difficult choice for the government. What would he do? He would have to send in troops, or Gorbachev would look weak. But Gorbachev, very shrewdly, (and obviously he's a great communicator, probably the greatest communicator in the world today) brought in several Armenian writers, talked to them, and the message that was conveyed back to Armenia was that there will be discussion, the issue is open, and that we should suspend demonstrations for a month. And apparently, the situation is calming down. What this means is that Gorbachev has actually increased his prestige over this issue, and that he is in control.

Q- Isn't it interesting that he would bring in cultural figures -- writers, and not political figures. That in itself I find remarkable.

Suny- There are two reasons. Gorbachev's most supportive allies are the intellectuals. Look how he started this whole campaign for perestroika. The first step was the opening up of the press. The intellectuals and the writers were sort of the first people to go to barricades for him.

The second reason is that there is some political problem in Armenia. For the last half year or so, Gorbachev (or let's say the central government and central party apparatus) has been very critical of the Armenian political leadership of the secretary of Armenia's Communist Party, Karen Demirjian. And there was much talk recently that Demirjian would fall. Now, at first, Demirjian didn't seem to be supporting these demonstrations for Karabagh. The Armenians forced him to take a stand. Recently he supported them. So he's sort of caught between his own people and his supporters in Moscow. I don't know what is going to happen to him. Perhaps that's the reason why Gorbachev didn't turn first to the political leaders of Armenia.

Q- It's been a very extraordinary phenomenon. Obviously there's a division among Soviet scholars in this country. There are those like Marshall Goldman who think he's going to go any day now. I get the feeling Gorbachev's going to surprise people and be around for a long long time.

Suny- I think you're right. One can never predict, because there are contingencies and accidents in history. But I would go with another scholar who recently published a book by University of California Press, Moishe Lewin, whose very interesting book argues that these changes are not a matter of personality, that these changes have been brewing in Soviet society. This society is a different society from the one which Stalin ruled. It's a mature, better educated, more urban, more mobile society and one which demands and needs the kinds of change that Gorbachev is proposing.

Q- I want to thank you for joining us and filling us in on this little known part of the world. Particularly since it's a part of the world with a million people on the streets. That would be a lot of people anywhere, and especially in a country where the whole population is three million. Wouldn't you say?

Suny- Yes, yes, and thank you.

[Prof. Ronald Suny, interviewed by Ian Masters on February 28, 1988, on 90.7 KPFK FM, Los Angeles]

5.- CLAIMS AND EXPECTATIONS: An Interview with Gerard J. Libaridian

Peter Meede-We are just trying to get a backdrop in terms of the Soviet Union and how the Soviets may view this. Could you do the same things for us in terms of the Armenian side of the issue - the geography, the disputes, and where all of this fits into the Soviet picture.

[...]

Libaridian- The territory in question is to the east of Soviet Armenia; it is a part of

historic Armenia and still constitutes, in the minds of Armenians, part of the historic homeland. Its population is still 80 percent Armenian and that is close to 130,000 living very close to what is now Soviet Armenia. The issue at hand is not just territory, although I heard Mr. Jones explain it that way. It has been a problem since the 1920's, when Soviet authorities decided to attach Mountainous Karabagh to the Azerbaijani Republic.

Since then there have been pressures on the Armenians, both cultural and economic. In addition, there have been incidences of violence against Armenians that have been reported occasionally in the Western press but never recognized as a major issue. During the 1970's, there were major outbursts of opposition to the Azeri jurisdiction over Karabagh for those reasons. Even under Brezhnev, Armenians had appealed to the Soviet authorities for assistance in this area.

Now, the description of the situation as strictly territorial or nationalist makes it a very abstract issue. People don't become nationalist just because they are Armenian or Turkish or Russian. They do so because they have serious grievances. So in order to understand why several hundred thousand people in Mountainous Karabagh are appealing to the Soviet authorities in Moscow, or according to the reports, a million people in Yerevan are demonstrating in the streets, you must realize it is not just a question of abstract nationalist aspirations. It is a question of survival, particularly for Armenians who experienced the total disintegration of their community during the Genocide in 1915. Armenians refuse to see another region of historic Armenia, under cultural, economic and political pressure, become disintegrated, as it is now becoming. The region has lost a significant part of its Armenian population during the last fifteen years. It used to be 95 percent Armenian. In this context, it is obviously more than just a question of abstract nationalism.

Q-What is that one can realistically expect that Soviet Central Committee or Mikhail Gorbachev will do about this?

Libaridian- I should first say it seems that from the Western press accounts, travellers who just returned from there, and also some scholars who have been visiting us in the diaspora in recent months, that the demand Armenians have in the Soviet Union, in Soviet Armenia particularly, are related to the larger policies of glasnost. It is not just a question of ethnic relations but also of the larger philosophy of the state Gorbachev wants to lead. That is why about ten days ago he was proposing a special session of the Central Committee of the Party devoted to the nationalities issue. He sees in that a whole dimension of the repressive nature of the state. So, providing more justice and perhaps autonomy in the ethnic areas is part of it. The demonstrators in Yerevan expect that democracy will mean a solution to these problems.

In terms of specific expectations, I am not sure, and the people that I have talked to are not sure, whether Armenians in Yerevan and in Mountainous Karabagh expect that Karabagh will be annexed to Soviet Armenia.

I do agree with Mr. Jones that it is a very difficult step to take. I also have difficulty imagining that all of this could have happened without some kind of perception on the part of Armenians that their request would get a fair hearing. And I should emphasize that the problem has not evolved in just a matter of a week; it has been brewing for some time now. In the last few months, there have been major declarations, even articles in the Soviet press, on the issue.

Q-What is the most optimistic end that we can hope for?

Libaridian- I think that depends on whether Mr. Gorbachev can add the issue of nationalities to his agenda of reform. If that can be done, then perhaps there could be territorial adjustments. Although, as I said, it is very difficult to foresee that at this point. Had the economic and political reforms been achieved already, that might have been a problem to tackle more easily. At this point, I would expect, as Mr. Jones said, that there will be more cultural freedom and autonomy and perhaps in the political arena there will be more contacts with Soviet Armenia. I would also expect that there will be a larger portion of the Soviet Azerbaijani budget directed toward economic development of Mountainous Karabagh. I am not sure that Soviet Armenians or Armenians in the diaspora, who fully support the demonstrations, will be satisfied. It may be that this is one place where they find it no longer acceptable that due to external considerations, their historic homeland will continue to disintegrate. I am not sure of that, but that is something that will be determined in the Soviet Union along with the nationalities issue.

Q- Gerard, do you have a sense of what Armenians around the world may be able to do to impact this and at the same time any sense of what the Muslims may do to impact this and do you think it makes a difference to the Soviet Central Committee?

Libaridian- Well, it makes a difference, obviously, to Armenians around the world. Soviet Armenia is one of the few republics within the Soviet Union that has a very large diaspora. Armenians live throughout the world and, therefore, although small in numbers, they do represent more than just numbers.

Q- Sure, there aren't that many Estonians and Ukrainians. I hear your point.

Libaridian- Well, there are quite a few Ukrainians in the Western world, but it is more a question of the sense of identity and the strength of the Armenian diaspora communities. Because of the threat of assimilation, after the losses of the genocide in 1915, Armenians tend to be much more protective of their culture, ethnicity, and the lands that are still Armenian populated, than other nationalities. Consequently, they contribute politically much more than their numbers indicate. And I assume that is the reason why there have been very large demonstrations - in Paris, Montreal, Toronto, New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles in support of Armenian claims within the U.S.S.R. The Los Angeles demonstration on February 27 had over 5,000 participants and the Montreal demonstration had 5,000. I think there are indications that at least Armenians in the diaspora feel that what they have to say may make a difference to the Central Committee.

The Azeris are Muslims; they are also of Turkic background, and this is another dimension of the issue. At the time when this division of territory was taking place, the Azeris and the Soviet authorities allied, or at least were aligned, with the Turkish authorities in Turkey. As a result of the nationalist movement in Turkey, there had been a coalescence of efforts between the Turks in Turkey and the Turks in Azerbaijan to deny Armenia its existence or ensuring that it had an insignificant portion of historic lands. So it has a dimension that is much more than the strictly Armenian/Azeri relationship and the ramification of this will not just be within the Soviet Union. I do assume that the Turkish government today on the Western side of Soviet Armenia is watching this situation closely. That may be much more important than the religious aspect.

I also would like to comment on Mr. Jones' statement about religion and ethnic differences. I think ultimately this is a political issue. Certainly, religious and ethnic

differences exacerbate the situation, they make it more difficult. And memories among traditional peoples-- not just Armenians -- are certainly long. But it is a very living issue, for Armenians at least. Whether it is cultural survival, political survival, community survival - these are important things to all nationalities. All nationalities define their own national interests and do strange things in that name. Just because Armenians are a very small nation, have been subjected to genocide, have lost more than half of their territory and historic homeland, does not mean that everything should be viewed from a realpolitik point of view. It is possible that Soviet authorities most likely will go along with what Mr. Jones predicted, that is, they will sit down and say it is too dangerous, at least it is not timely, and therefore the most we can do is some sort of reform, some kind of pressure on the Azeris to make things easier for Armenians in Mountainous Karabagh. It is unfortunate also that there are enough factors and forces, whether it is the reactionary Soviet leadership opposing Gorbachev or others on the outside, who will attempt to manipulate the situation into an ethnic conflict or at least help define it as such. And it is my understanding, in fact about 20 minutes ago I heard it on BBC, that some anti-Armenian riots have erupted in Azerbaijan and there has been the violence that we heard about over the weekend and continued today.

Meede: Well, we will continue to follow that here at WBZ. I am a bit surprised at the lack of coverage in some of the Boston papers to tell you the truth. It has received more coverage in the New York Times and the Washington Post to date than it has in any of the Boston papers.

[Gerard Libaridian, director of the Zoryan Institute and editor of the Armenian Review, interviewed by Peter Meede, WBZ AM Radio, Boston, on February 29, 1988 . This segment was preceded by an interview with Mr. Tony Jones of the Russian Studies Center at Harvard University].

6.- NEED FOR RADICAL REFORM: An Interview with Gerard Libaridian

Peter Gzowski- What exactly is this dispute about? What is at the heart of all this?

[...]

Libaridian- Secondly, these complaints have concerned the economic underdevelopment of the region. The budget of the republic does not allot a fair amount of rubles to the region; therefore the region remains economically underdeveloped. And, finally, there have been consistent reports of violent attacks on Armenians, sanctioned by the government to some extent. This is one level and the Armenians perceive this to be a systematic policy aimed at depopulating the region of its Armenian inhabitants. In fact, since the region has been annexed to Azerbaijan, the percentage of Armenians has decreased from 95 to about 80 percent at the present time. Armenians do fear that after the depopulation of Western Armenia by genocide during the First World War, yet another historically Armenian region is being depopulated from its Armenian inhabitants and Armenians do not think they can afford this.

Q- This division, does it go back to 1923?

Libaridian- Yes, it was sanctioned and finalized in 1923. When in 1920 both Azerbaijan and Armenia, then in the federated republics, were sovietized, there was an understanding that the region would be annexed to Armenia. But, as The Toronto Globe and Mail pointed out this morning in its editorial, to accommodate the nationalist Turks on the western side of Armenia, the Soviets kept Mountainous Karabagh within Azerbaijan...

Q- I want to return to some of the underlying issues in a moment. Is it possible that glasnost plays a part here? Is it not that this dispute has arisen now partly because it is more possible to rise?

Libaridian- Certainly, that is very true. In fact it appears that General Secretary Gorbachev's understanding of glasnost and perestroika include not just economic and political reforms but also tackling this very very difficult issue of nationalities, i.e., relations between ethnic groups as well as relations between Moscow and the various nationalities. Armenians seem to perceive that this gives them the right to place the issue on the agenda and that the process of democratization allows them to express openly their concerns with regard to the future of the region.

Q- Is that working in any way? Is there any sense that Moscow is hearing?

Libaridian- Well apparently they have heard it... It does seem that there is some understanding that the issue is a legitimate one. It is also my impression that the demonstrations can be used against Gorbachev by the reactionary forces within the Central Committee.

Q- There are people within the Central Committee who will say, "I told you so. The more you try to ease pressure on things the more you are going to get into trouble with dissident states."

Libaridian- I certainly think the conservatives, who are gearing up for a major battle within the Central Committee when it convenes in June, are trying to prove that glasnost which Gorbachev professes may prove to be too much for the people although Gorbachev has claimed that this will not be the case and has shown restraint so far. To the extent that Armenian demonstrations have been very quiet and peaceful there has not been any show of force on the part of Soviet authorities. That is not the case in Azerbaijan, where there have been riots, Azeris have attacked Armenians, and the army has intervened. So far, it seems, Gorbachev takes demonstrations as an expression of concern and he was willing to listen on that basis. The danger to Gorbachev cannot come from peaceful demonstrations. Only from violent reactions.

[...]

Q- If the solution is to redraw the boundaries now, does that not open up an impossible can of worms for the Soviet Union?

Libaridian- Well, probably. It seems to me that the issue could have been brought up after Gorbachev had anchored his economic reforms and introduced political reforms, at least the ones he professes he wants to implement. However, there seems to have been a degree of impatience coming from the Karabagh region and Armenians in Armenia, in the sense that this problem has been unresolved for many decades, and it is really difficult to

contain. Even the organizers of the demonstrations in Yerevan probably did not expect this kind of outburst. Now, there are two points in answer to your question. The first is whether the issues raised are legitimate and whether reannexation to Soviet Armenia is the best solution for the people of Mountainous Karabagh. Armenians expect this to happen. For once they are saying perhaps external concerns should be left outside and the Armenian people should regain part of its historic territory and have its people begin again to live a decent, dignified life. It is also true that in the larger context, this is a major problem for the Soviet Union. It is not possible to bring up one problem without raising other issues. The solution some have suggested is for Azerbaijan to allocate a larger share of its budget to Karabagh and permit closer social and educational ties to Armenia. Time will tell.

Q-Thank you very much.

Libaridian: You are most welcome.

[Gerard Libaridian interviewed by Peter Gzowski, host of Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's "Morningside Program" in Toronto, on March 2, 1988.]

APPENDIX - F

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